friendship force OTTAWA

Capital Connections

Newsletter of the Friendship Force of Ottawa, Canada

September 2026 www.friendshipforceottawa.ca

TWO FFO EVENTS IN ONE - all on Tues Sept 15th at the Riverside United Church

11am **FFO GM** will highlight latest news items.

Lunch of assorted subs, home-made cookies, soft drinks or water. $10 pp. Indicate any dietary concerns when you make an e-transfer payment to Liz Ford treasurerffo@gmail.com by Sep 08th

Friendly Wanderers presentation will feature Joanne & Michael Curran and their Philippine experiences.

INBOUND JOURNEYS 2027

➢ **Up to 40 planning committee volunteers are needed for EACH inbound. Plan to volunteer……..**

1. JUNE 2027 1ST WEEK - FF VOLTA LAKE, GHANA

Preliminary discussions with their club president revealed that interested members are young and active. Contact Host Coordinator Mary Jane Kelleher to volunteer mjkelleher@bell.net (613-400-0372). A new member, Roxanne Buckle, has volunteered to be Deputy Host Coordinator



Volta Lake, Ghana

2. SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2027 - FF WINNIPEG, MAN

Our competitors for the world's longest/largest natural outdoor skating rink are coming to town! We need **2 FFO members to volunteer** now for the **Host and Deputy Coordinator positions.** Please contact Barbara Davignon (journeysffo@gmail.com).

FFO BOARD 2026-2027

President	VP Journeys
Lynne Deachman (Temporary Replacement)	Barb Davignon
Secretary	VP Membership
Michael Curran	Lynne Deachman
Treasurer	Past President
Liz Ford	Anna Rochon
Director-at-Large	Director-at-Large
Gail Sherman	Lorraine Chartrand

Advisor to the Board - Joan Kinnie until AGM elections

CALENDAR OF FFO EVENTS

2026

Sep 12	All-Hosts Meeting 10am for FF Colorado Inbound @ 200 Rideau Terrace. Party Rm
Sep 15	GM Meeting **and** Friendly Wanderers: Philippines - Joanne & Michael Curran Riverside United Church, 11am Lunch included.
Sep 21-28	Inbound FF Western Colorado, USA
Oct 20	FW Cycling through Italy - Julie Breeze
Nov 09-16	FFO Outbound to Perth, Australia
Dec 08	AGM at RUC with turkey dinner, dessert & beverage. $40pp. By Leatherworks

OUTBOUND JOURNEYS 2027

1. April 25 - May 9 (tentative) FF BURSA, TURKIYE & FF BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

We have already begun our planning with these clubs. Bursa can accommodate 12 ambassadors, while Baku can take up to 19. **DEADLINE October 1, 2026**. Contact Barbara Davignon journeysffo@gmail.com to reserve a spot on this double journey.

2. AUGUST 2027 - FF SRI LANKA HILL COUNTRY CLUB

We are moving forward with plans for a one-week journey to this club while exploring, with FFI, the possibility of an additional hosting opportunity in that part of the world. More to follow.

FFO INBOUND JOURNEY 2026

FF Western Colorado, USA (Sept 21-28, 2026)
FFO Journey Coordinator: Pierrette Benoit

The activities planned for this journey include visits to popular downtown Ottawa sites and to the towns of Almonte (including a visit to Vodkow) and Wakefield. Cheers, groans and laughter are expected to be heard when FFO members challenge the ambassadors to a friendly game of mini putt in Chelsea (see photo below). **The Program Activities are open to all FFO members. Come out and join in the fun!** To receive a copy of the program, please contact the Journey Coordinator Pierrette Benoit. benoitpierrette7@gmail.com



FFO OUTBOUND JOURNEY 2026

Perth, Australia Journey (November 9-16, 2026)
FFO Journey Coordinator: Lynne Deachman

Seven FFO members will be travelling on this journey to Australia along with two FFI global members from Mumbai, India and one member from FF Missouri, and one from Cheyenne, Wyoming, USA. Potential highlights may include the Perth Mint, Bell Tower and King's Park. **Caversham Wildlife Park** features koala, wombats, kookaburra and kangaroos.



UPDATE ON COMPLETED INBOUND JOURNEY 2026

FF Western N Carolina, USA (June 7-14, 2026)
FFO Journey Coordinator: Petra Friedrichson

The Western North Carolina ambassadors made a point of expressing how grateful they were to FFO (especially their hosts) for the very warm reception extended to them by our club and for the wonderful variety of activities organized on their behalf (English Country dancing, visits to cottages, bowling). Seeing our FFO members share high fives, huge smiles and jumps into the air while bowling with their U.S. ambassadors was definitely a highlight for me as journey coordinator.

It took **38 volunteers** to plan and execute this inbound journey and we did it - thanks to all FFO members who participated!

- Thanks to Anna Rochon who has provided the following link to the YouTube video of this FF WNC inbound journey to Ottawa. https://youtu.be/cyh_gthvh_o



Congrats to FFO member Andrew Nicholson who earned the top score in bowling



WNC Ambassadors enjoyed a Beavertail pastry in the Byward Market

FFO FRIENDLY WANDERERS - WHAT'S NEXT?

THE UNEQUALED HOSPITALITY OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE – A WELCOME LIKE NO OTHER



Join FFO members Joanne and Michael Curran on Tues Sep 15th. Discover why it's worth traveling half way around the world to experience the overwhelming warmth of the Philippine hospitality, postcard-perfect white beaches with crystal clear water, astonishing biodiversity, and the electric hum of its urban centres.

LOCATION: RIVERSIDE UC - FOLLOWING GM & LUNCH

➢ **RSVP BY SEPT. 08, 2026 @ 4:00 PM**

➢ **treasurerffo@gmail.com (Liz Ford)**

****

FRIENDLY WANDERERS - RESERVE THE DATE!
Tues. Nov 10, 2026 - Julie Breeze at 11:30am

TITLE: BIKE AND BARGE THROUGH THE JEWELS OF NORTHERN ITALY



Come and hear about our experiences on a bike and boat trip through northern Italy, sharing the beautiful places, memorable encounters, and unexpected moments that made this trip so special.

WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE?

Quite simply balloons and balloonatics! I am the Vice President of the National Capital Balloon Club (NCBC). Since 2005, I have crewed in Ottawa, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu & Levis, Quebec; as well as Sussex, New Brunswick. I even crewed for a world record flight!



I've spent hours helping to design, cut, and sew special shape balloons. It is a fascinating world with exceptionally kind people. Up, up, and away!
See photo right of the *Queen Bee balloon* which Lynne helped design and construct.

Lynne Deachman

Janice Leroux, a relative newcomer to FFO, joined our club's spring outbound journey to Leuven, Belgium and she is currently involved in the upcoming inbound from FF Northern Colorado as a member of the planning committee.

HERE'S WHAT MAKES JANICE SMILE!

Seeing the sweet treats in a local bakery which remind me of the glorious pastries in a Portuguese cafe makes me smile.



Hearing a men's chorus sing in beautiful harmonies which makes me tap my feet and smile. Completing a baby quilt with soft embellishments or intricate embroidery always makes me smile. Bidding and making a slam in a bridge game is great fun and makes me smile. Sharing the sign of peace and a hug with a friend at church brings a sense of calm and a smile. A guest speaker (like Bill Stewart at our recent GM) whose rich life experiences are such a delight brings a sense of admiration and makes me smile in awe. Everyday life brings many gifts to me. Contacts with family, friends and even newcomers plus my own memories of past loves constantly make me smile. I smile because I am blessed.

Janice Leroux

UZBEKISTAN, A COUNTRY RICH IN HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE & HOSPITALITY

Cathy Datars and Conny Adams Menger will be presenting their journey to Uzbekistan to our club on January 28, 2027. To whet your appetite for this Friendly Wanderers presentation, we're sharing a few of their trip highlights below!

OUR TRIP TO UZBEKISTAN on a GAventures tour felt like stepping into a living museum shaped by centuries of trade and cultural exchange, from the vibrant streets of Tashkent to the ancient Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva. One of the highlights was experiencing the incredible Islamic architecture - turquoise domes, intricate mosaics, and beautifully preserved madrasas that were even more impressive in person than in photographs. Each city had its own distinct atmosphere: Samarkand felt grand and monumental, Bukhara more intimate and timeless, and Khiva like a perfectly preserved desert fortress.





Beyond the landmarks, what stood out most was the warmth of the people. Everywhere we went, locals were eager to share stories, tea, and recommendations. Uzbek cuisine was another memorable part of the journey, especially traditional, fresh bread, grilled meats, and the lively local markets filled with spices and dried fruit. Travelling in Uzbekistan also offered a fascinating glimpse into a country balancing deep historical roots with rapid modernization.

High-speed trains connected ancient cities, while new cafes, art spaces, and cultural projects reflected a growing sense of openness and energy. (Cont'd)

Overall, the trip was an unforgettable mix of history, culture, food, and human connection - and one of the most rewarding travel experiences we have had in recent years.

Cathy Datars & Conny Adam Menger

Why Bonnie and Vic Hudon, longtime members of Friendship Force Ottawa, chose to remain with the club as ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Bonnie and I joined FFO in 2006 and found great pleasure in travelling and making friends locally and around the world.

Eventually we started travelling to other destinations as we wanted to visit those countries and places that were not available through FFI. We continue to travel but we keep in touch with FFO for planned gatherings such as Christmas luncheons, hosting for incoming journeys and other functions where we can meet and talk to new and regular members.

FFO got us into enjoying and learning how best to travel. We felt we should continue to support FFO in promoting Friendship Travel by being an Associate Member.

Bonnie and Vic Hudon



***** Vic recently volunteered to take photos of FFO members at our general meetings. Associate Members have demonstrated over the past year how their involvement with FFO extends well beyond attending social events.***