



friendship force  
OTTAWA



**General Meeting on March 5, 2024 at 1pm at Amica Westboro.**

**SUMMARY Meeting notes**

Attending members: Anna Van Adrichem Rochon, Paul Rochon, Bryan Horton, Marie-France Horton, Michael Curran, Joan Kinnie, Leonard Bonnet, Gertraude Martin, Julie Breeze, Donna Nicholson, Andrew Nicholson, Alain Dawson, Donna Dawson, Brenda Maunder, Jaap Schouten, Maria Schouten, MaryJane Kellerher, Colin Leech, Rosemary Beseau, Rosemae Blackwood, Linda Steingarten, Masuma Rahimtula. Regrets: Vivien Runnels

1) Welcome by President Anna Van Adrichem Rochon

Anna opened the meeting by referring to last year's concerns about Friendship Force Ottawa's (FFO) future health. She also referred to her own health, but was pleased to say that positive results are forecast for both the club's and her own health. There was no report from Secretary Vivien Runnels. Pierrette Benoit introduced a guest.

Anna gave a short presentation about the website (<https://friendshipforce.org/>), and the membership portal My Friendship Force.org ([https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign\\_in](https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign_in)). Anna left some information sheets about my friendship force.org for people to look at.

Anna said thank you to Rosemae and others, including Pierrette, about their comments and input on FFI's (Friendship Force International) strategic planning discussion.

2) Report from the Treasurer – Colin Leech

Colin said we are in pretty good shape financially which was greeted with cheers! Member dues were paid to FFI – approximately \$40.55 per member (out of total \$65 FFO membership fee). The board decided not to make a donation to FFI this year as our club needs this money. Reasons for making donations in the past to FFI were discussed by the members present. Colin gave some further details about FFO's account and its health, and answered questions.

FFI financial statements are available monthly if you have signed up for FFI newsletters. The FFI budget is issued only once a year. What FFO contributes to FFI and what this money is used for, and a suggestion about a donation to Amica for the use of the room, will be discussed at a next FFO Board Meeting.

3) VP Membership - Marie-France and Bryan Horton

Marie-France and Bryan are the new V-P membership team. Marie-France said we have 82 members in the club and 4 potential new members today. We need to grow our membership.

The role of VP Membership includes contacting applicants – to find out more about themselves; and to introduce them to what the club is doing, including FFO clubs e.g. dinner and forest walk clubs, the FFO and FFI websites, and CapCon and Facebook. The VP Membership also provides the contact list to members, and is also working towards developing a ‘friendly mentor’ role for new members. There is some concern too about information overload for new members. Although Marie-France is the contact point for membership, every member shares responsibility for recruitment.

#### Raising the visibility of FFO.

If you’re on Facebook, please ‘like’ our page and share it on your own page. It raises our visibility. We compete with many organizations (CARP, CAA travel etc.) but we have a unique approach: we are not a travel club but a friendship club that travels, but we don’t have the visibility that these others have. If you are talking to a person about FFO, FFO has business cards we can hand out. Presentations and space we use for meetings (such as in a shopping mall) might also help to raise the profile of FFO.

#### 4) VP Journeys - Joan Kinnie

Journeys 2025 – Joan explained that we plan ahead by a year and we’re currently looking at 2025. We put in requests to FFI to where we would like to go, and FFI assesses these requests and informs who you are to be linked with to carry out a journey. There are two elements: inbounds (who we would host), and outbounds (where we might visit).

For inbounds (2025), FF Bakersfield have asked for a visit to Ottawa. We went there in 2022. For outbounds (2025), our club voted to request Flathead in Montana and Medicine Hat AB, and Ghana and Tanzania which were both submitted to FFI. We also made selections for Europe after FFI suggested we apply. We submitted requests for Isle of Wight and Cornwall UK, and Leuven, Belgium. We will have to wait for the decisions.

#### 2024 Journeys

Inbound: April 27 - May 4, 2024. The Mexican club have cancelled (the new visa requirements had some impact on this decision). We are now trying to find another club. We also received a note from FFI to say that the Memphis club is interested in July/August, 2024. This is a busy time of year for many (relatives visiting, cottage trips etc.). A survey of the FFO members will help to find out if an inbound can be entertained.

Inbound: Nor Peru October 2-9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Outbound: Costa Rica November 2024. 15 people have signed up for the journey to Costa Rica. If you want to be on a wait-list to Costa Rica, please email Joan Kinnie or Julie Breeze.

5) Members at large - Pierrette Benoit and Gertraude Martin

FFO wants to have a website that we can be proud of. Pierrette Benoit has been working on the website including checking links, determining what can safely be deleted, and she has collated these changes. Richard Hatherill, our webmaster, will make the changes and Pierrette will be the sole direct contact for him. Pierrette will work with the Board as well on revisions.

The website calendar of events is up to date. If you have an activity for club members, please send to Pierrette and she will make sure the information is added.

Anna thanked Pierrette for this work, and thanked Gertraude who has been working with the membership team.

6) Closing notes: President Anna van Adrichem Rochon.

In closing, Anna asked all members to please double check the location and time for our next general meeting before heading out, and thanked everyone for coming.

**Upcoming Events and Dates 2024**

FFO General meeting - April 9th at Amica Westboro at 1pm

FFO General Meeting - June 12th at Riverside United Church at 1:30pm

FFO General Meeting - Sept 11th at Riverside United Church at 1:30pm

FFO Annual General Meeting and Christmas - December 11th at Riverside United Church 11am - 2:30pm.

Inbound for 2024      Memphis/Mexico    24 May to 31 May, 2024

Inbound for 2024      Nor Peru    23 Sept to 30 Sept, 2024

Outbound for 2024      Costa Rica FF San Jose Nov 15 to 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

FF West Alajuela Nov 22 to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

FFO Executive meeting April 30 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting May 28 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting July 30 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting Aug 27 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting Sept 24 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting Oct 29 at 9AM Zoom

FFO Executive meeting Nov 26 at 9AM Zoom

