

New Member Orientation



National Capital Area, USA

a world of friends is a world of peace



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New Member Orientation



1. WELCOME TO FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA!

Friendship Force is an international cultural exchange and home hospitality program. Its goal is to promote international understanding, friendship, and world peace.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with information on Friendship Force and in particular our local club, Friendship Force of National Capital Area (FFNCA). In it we explain how our club operates and the many membership benefits available to you.

As a new member (or a prospective new member,) we hope you share our interest in exploring new cultures, countries and regions. Friendship Force provides the opportunity to meet new friends through travel and home hospitality, and those experiences lead to understanding and a greater desire to serve our global village. Whenever we host visitors from another international or domestic club, all our members are encouraged to participate, so we have included quite a bit of information about traveling with Friendship Force and how you can be involved when we host an incoming group. Be sure to check the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) toward the end of this document. They provide many details you may begin wondering about as you go through this text.

We are very glad you joined us, or are considering joining Friendship Force, and we want your membership to be a rewarding experience!

2. ABOUT FRIENDSHIP FORCE

The Friendship Force was founded by Wayne Smith and introduced on March 1, 1977, by President Jimmy Carter at a White House gathering of state governors. Rosalyn Carter served as Honorary Chairperson until 2002. Since its founding, The Friendship Force has brought together millions of people, united by three aims:

- *Explore:* We explore new countries and regions. We explore new cultures and new ways to connect across the barriers that separate us.
- *Understand:* Exploration leads to understanding. By sharing a home, meals, conversations and everyday experiences, people become friends, seeing beyond governments and borders into the heart of a country and its people. By combining home hospitality with cultural exploration, we reach a new level of understanding.
- *Serve:* Understanding other people and cultures fosters kinder, more compassionate attitudes toward people who are “other.” It leads to acceptance of our common humanity and the desire to serve our global

village—with our words and our actions. Ultimately, these efforts and appreciations lead toward greater peace in the world.

In a typical Friendship Force program our local club, Friendship Force of the National Capital Area (FFNCA) prepares an itinerary of cultural activities, and hosts members of clubs in other countries and other regions of the US for up to a week.

Also, typically clubs in other countries and regions will plan cultural activities for and host FFNCA members in their homes for up to a week. Sometimes two clubs in a destination country or region will join forces in planning a journey and our members will enjoy trips of up to two weeks.

While the local clubs arrange all the details, particular destinations and hosting opportunities are assigned through the international organization, Friendship Force International (FFI.)

You can learn more at <https://www.thefriendshipforce.org>. But as a member you should also register at the members only portal <https://my.friendshipforce.org>. This is an exciting site with many resources such as news and articles about the international organization, a list of members of your particular club, and much more. This site is still relatively new but eventually it will include lists of journeys, convenient ways to pay for journeys in various currencies, even virtual special interest clubs where you can connect with people from all over the world. Don't miss the message from FFI's CEO, Jeremy Snook <https://vimeo.com/586480217/770e20075f>.

3. FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA (FFNCA)

Our local chapter, FFNCA was founded in 1979. Members of the club are primarily residents of Washington, DC or the National Capital Area including the close-in suburbs of Virginia and Maryland, and extending up to fifty miles away from DC in any direction. Sometimes members who have moved to other states keep their membership in the club.

FFNCA embraces people of all races, creeds and ethnicities and seeks to mirror the broad diversity among Washington, DC's residents in its membership. Our current members include couples and singles. Many of our members are recent retirees but we also have working families.

The Buddy System. Once you have joined FFNCA you will be matched with someone who has been a member for some time and who lives relatively near you. This person will introduce you to other members and assist you in becoming familiar with FFNCA. You will receive a Buddy System Guide which describes how this works.

Social Media. Our local club has social media presence as well!

- <https://ffnca.org>
- <https://www.facebook.com/FriendshipForceNationalCapitalArea>
- https://www.instagram.com/ffnca_usa/?hl=en (kind of still in the works)

We would deeply appreciate the assistance of any new or long-time members with expertise that can help us enhance our social media efforts.

Our Journeys

Journeys are central to the Friendship Force mission of promoting understanding, cultural education and citizen diplomacy. Journeys can involve visits to other Friendship Force clubs within a country (domestic journeys) or in other countries (international journeys.)

The journey planning process begins at least two years ahead of time, with clubs registering requests to visit specific countries with Friendship Force International. Assignments are made by FFI after matching these requests with clubs offering to host. Domestic journeys are planned through direct contact between clubs and often include reciprocal visits. Once a journey is assigned and agreed upon, planning by the individual clubs begins. This includes finding home hosts for the visiting ambassadors and planning activities that demonstrate the cultural and historic aspects of the host location. Volunteers help with tasks large and small such as planning a welcome or farewell event, leading a day's activities and more. No experience is required!

The homestay is a key feature of travel with Friendship Force. We spend up to a week with a host family, sharing meals and conversation. This is a great way to learn about life in a different place, and lifelong friendships often result. Hosting is a fulfilling experience as well. We offer training for new hosts, but basically it is like inviting a friend to stay with you. We feel that our Friendship Force guests are just friends we have not met yet. The host provides sleeping accommodations and breakfast and dinner, and also spends time getting to know their guests.

FFNCA has enjoyed many interesting and exciting journeys over the years and we hope to continue for many years to come.

- **Inbound Journeys.**

- A group of 10 to 25 ambassadors will come to the Washington area, in some cases having already visited another city in the U.S. or Canada.
- Willing members of FFNCA will host one or more ambassadors in their home for up to one week.
- Guests are treated like visiting friends.
- Hosting involves providing "room and board" for the guest(s).
- Hosts also provide, assist or arrange transportation to meeting places for group activities.
- If hosts cannot accompany their guest(s) during the day, other members can serve as "day hosts."
- Typically one day is set aside for hosts to spend with their guests doing an activity of mutual choosing.
- FFNCA arranges a welcome party and/or farewell party for guests and hosts to socialize, as well as planned daytime and evening activities for the ambassadors.

- **Outbound Journeys**

- For Outbound journeys, FFNCA applies to FFI for the countries we would like to visit.
- Once a city is offered we work with the FF club in that city to arrange dates.
- We organize a group of 10-25 members from our club or other clubs interested in this particular journey.
- The host club arranges homes for us to stay in while visiting.

- The host club arranges sightseeing and other cultural activities for us, similar to what we would do for an inbound journey.
- Some journeys include two weeks of home hosting, split between two different clubs in that country. Also optional extensions are sometimes available for additional travel in the host country (at additional cost, and usually staying in hotels)

- **Global Journeys**

- A relatively new feature for FFI, global journeys are offered by a host club and are open to FFI members from any club, including ambassadors from various countries in the same trip. News of these arrives in the FFI Journey catalog which is emailed periodically to all FFI members and is also available on the FFI website.

- **Other Travel Opportunities**

- Members may also participate in occasional Friendship Force Festivals and Conferences, as well as journeys arranged by other clubs.

4. OTHER FFNCA ACTIVITIES

- **Annual Meeting** is held usually in November where election of Governing council members for the following year takes place. FFNCA Journeys are announced and you can sign up if you want to be made aware of updates for a particular Journey. This meeting is usually held at a local restaurant, so we have dinner and a social hour prior to the meeting.
- **Other All-Member Meetings** are conducted three or four times a year and usually center around a recent outbound Journey. Sometimes, slides are shown of the journey. We often hold the event at a local restaurant where the cuisine matches that of the area visited on the journey.
- **Zoom Presentations.** Throughout the year, we hold some very successful Zoom presentations by our members. For example, Zoom is an ideal format in which to show travel photographs.
- **Governing Council Meetings** are held each month at a time and place convenient to the group. We have been holding these meetings via Zoom and will likely continue this with the possible exception of a special holiday meeting.
- FFNCA also plans various social and informational activities for members, both live and virtual, throughout the year. These are listed on the calendar page and also announced by group email as they are scheduled.

5. FFNCA MEMBERSHIP, OFFICERS AND MEETINGS

- Membership and Dues

Membership is open to anyone who accepts Friendship Force principles and pays annual membership dues. Our current dues are \$45 for individuals. This includes your initial complimentary name badge. The membership year is from January 1 – December 31. The club collects dues for the following year beginning October 1; all dues should be submitted by the end of December. New members joining after September 1 are paid up through the following year.

As a member of The Friendship Force of National Capital Area, you are eligible to apply for all the Journeys organized by both our club and Friendship Force International (FFI). Other clubs often have openings for their journeys and advertise for applications through the monthly FFI catalog of Journeys. Once you are a FFNCA member, you will want to receive this catalog of Journeys and other updates from FFI, the international org as well. Be sure to register on the FFI portal! <https://my.friendshipforce.org>

- Name Badges

New members are issued a complimentary name badge. You will be asked to indicate your name as you would like it to appear on the badge. The name badge will be given to you personally by your buddy (see Buddy Document) or presented to you at the next membership meeting after you join the club. All members are asked to wear their name badge to meetings and social events so we can get to know you. Additional name badges are available for purchase. Name badges are worn for each Journey/Hosting Activity.

- Governing Council members

Governing Council member (who are also the committee chairs) serve from January thru December. The bylaws now allow for a Governing Council which replaces the original Board of Directors. The Council consists of the Chair of each of the committees listed below. The position of Chair of each committee is accepted by the Council member in question and is held for one year.

- Committees

Committees are a vital feature of this club and widespread participation by members is crucial to our mission. The Governing Council delegates many functions to the committees. The committees determine their own meeting schedule and report directly to the Council. All members are encouraged to contribute to the vitality of the club by serving on at least one committee.

- Current committee list

- Activities Committee
 - Works with members of FFNCA to plan and organize club events, presentations and group activities
 - Promotes and facilitates smaller member-to-member social gatherings
 - Mobilizes members to assist with events and activities
- Membership Committee
 - Maintains the club membership database including keeping records about payment of club dues

- Helps recruit new members
 - Facilitates new member introduction to and understanding of FFNCA and FFI
 - Reaches out to inactive members
- Communications Committee
 - Provides maintenance and new content for the FFNCA website
 - Provides maintenance and new content for social media communications to include Facebook, Instagram and other social media outlets deemed appropriate for FFNCA involvement.
 - Encourages members to provide photos and content for the website and social media.
- Public Relations Committee
 - Develops and updates public outreach material on FFI and FFNCA (factsheets, Power Point presentation, pamphlets, etc.)
 - Plans and executes outreach activities at community events and other venues
 - Identifies like-minded peace and friendship-oriented organizations and reaches out to them for possible joint activities and sharing information about events.
 - Liaises with the media to encourage dissemination of information about FFI and FFNCA goals and activities (press releases, local radio and TV interviews)
- Finance Committee
 - Develops a budget for FFNCA
 - Identifies creative ways to raise funds for FFNCA
- Journey Coordination Committee
 - Composed of past journey coordinators and members interested in learning how to coordinate journeys
 - Assists the Council in recruiting coordinators for journeys
 - Assists the Council in recruiting members to help in journey planning and leading activities as well as hosting and day hosting.

CHANGING THE WAY YOU SEE THE WORLD

FRIENDSHIP FORCE PLEDGE

As a member of the Friendship Force, I recognize that I can make a difference. I recognize that I have a

Mission. That mission is to be a friend to the people of the world. As I embark upon this adventure, I know that others will be watching me. I know that through my example to my fellow citizens and the people of other countries, the cause of friendship and peace can be furthered.



LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

*Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God as our father, family all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.*

6. INVITATION TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN FFNCA

The success of a club depends largely upon early involvement of new members. Please mark ALL of the following committees/projects you would be interested in working with.

Hit “reply” fill in name, phone, date; place an “X” next to all items in which you would like to participate; hit “Send.”

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Home Host - Your home: this is where the ambassador/s will stay during the hosting. If you have a bed available for a couple, a single person or two singles, we need you. You’ll have a chance to “open your home and heart” to share the American culture. You will provide some meals, transportation, and companionship to your guests; share your family, favorite places and things to do in National Capital Area. Most likely you will gain new life-long friends.

Day Host - A day host may lead the ambassador group in a visit to various attractions or assist a home host by taking their guests out for a day, giving the home host a chance to plan for the evening when the ambassadors return. Serving as a day host is a great way to get to know our guests. You could be the driver, a walking companion, and perhaps host their lunch. The day may be a planned itinerary or you may have “free time” to do or go to your favorite place in town. Activities might include shopping, a visit to a museum, or a visit with your family members.

Small Group Dinner Host - During an inbound journey, we plan small dinner gatherings (6 - 8 persons) in several members’ homes. As a dinner host, you can decide the menu, how many guests you can accommodate as well as how the meal will be served. This gives a break to the home hosts from preparing an evening meal and gives others an opportunity to meet more of the ambassadors. After a day of activity it’s very welcoming to sit and relax in a member’s home. Be sure to include at least one new member as a guest at each small group dinner. You can ask a non-hosting member to help you with dinner preparations or furnish a menu item.

Committees – Committee functions are described on page 7. Please choose one or more.

Activities

Membership

Communications

Public Relations

Finance

Journey Coordination

Help us increase our membership and diversity in the club (one of FFNCA’s major goals.) Please reach out to friends and colleagues - especially those from different ethnic backgrounds, age groups and religions - and invite them to FFNCA activities.

International Service Projects - There is no need for a passport or to pack your suitcase to meet international friends. National Capital Area is a very rich community with people from all around the globe. FFNCA aims for one or two activities per year where we reach out and engage with other cultural communities. Whether it is a picnic in the park or a cultural festival in a church's activity center, our goal is that of building friendship and understanding.

If You Have Questions, Contact us at:

FFNCA@yahoo.com

This handbook has truly been a joint effort for our club. Contributing members include Barbara Macken, Barbara Williams, Mari Clarke, Sandy Tallant, Dru Tallant and Margie Johnston. We based it on a handbook the Lincoln, NB club generously shared for our use.

7. Appendix 1 – Ten Reasons to Explore the World with The Friendship Force

1. Go where you've never been

Take a journey into the heart of a country and its people. Friendship Force International conducts over 300 programs every year, in 377 communities in 56 countries. Friendship Force hosts are eager to welcome you into their culture, sharing sights and experiences that are not available to tourists.

2. Get off the beaten track

There's no better way to see a new place than with a friend who knows its "best kept secrets." You might dine in a palace in Indonesia, visit a remote village in Africa, or see a polo match in Argentina.

3. Cultural immersion

Through the unique Friendship Force program of home hospitality, international travelers are hosted in the homes of local families. In this way, you can get to know a new culture from the inside. For example, you might learn local pastimes, such as calligraphy in Japan or snowshoeing in Canada, or you could learn family recipes in your host's kitchen. You might even be invited to religious ceremonies or a wedding.

4. Personal friendships

When you travel or host with The Friendship Force, you get to know real people by sharing real life. Often, friendships are formed that last a lifetime.

5. Bring the world to your doorstep

As a Friendship Force host you can explore the world without leaving home by extending the hand of friendship to international guests. It's a rewarding experience to give your guests an up-close, insider's view of life in your country, either through overnight home hospitality or daytime cultural activities.

6. Represent your country

When you travel or host with the Friendship Force you have the opportunity to share knowledge of your country and culture with new friends from around the world. Through friendly conversation and everyday experiences, you become part of changing the way others see your culture and the world.

7. Make a Difference

There are many opportunities to make a difference in communities around the world. For example, you can help your new friends practice your language, bring supplies to a needy school, or host foreign teachers attending a professional development program in your city.

8. Pursue your passions around the world

Themed programs allow participants to come together to explore a common interest in a unique region of the world. You could spend a week exploring the gardens of England, studying biodiversity in Costa Rica, touring vineyards in New Zealand, or cycling the Niagara Falls region, all with the company of international friends who share your enthusiasm.

9. Lifelong learning

The Friendship Force promotes lifelong learning through a variety of travel and hosting programs. For example, programs especially for teachers and students promote education across borders. Language learning programs provide the opportunity to spend a week in a foreign country with a host family, in full language immersion.

10. Promote Global Goodwill

Friendship Force participants greet the world with an open mind and respect for other cultures. In this way, each person makes an individual contribution toward global goodwill.

8. Appendix 2 Ten Ways to Participate in Friendship Force from Home

1. Practice your welcoming skills.

Host one or more persons in your home for up to a week when they visit our club and city from other states or countries.

2. Don't have a guest room?

Host a small group dinner, be a day host for a working host, or just attend the club welcome and farewell dinners for incoming ambassadors.

3. Open up your world.

Serve on a committee to plan the week's activities for the incoming ambassadors; or help with an Open World visit of Russian delegates who want to learn about democracy and how it works.

4. Travel by proxy.

Attend the All-Member Meeting featuring a recent Outbound International or Domestic Journey. See their slides, taste the food from that country, and hear about our ambassador's experiences.

5. Get out of the house (or participate in events on-line).

Attend events held in National Capital Area to meet people and learn about other cultures; on-line events such as a zoom presentation by the Rumi Foundation of Turkey are an example of recent on-line presentations..

6. Build local friendships.

Serve on a committee working to build friendships among people of other ethnicities, cultures and religions in our community.

7. Be a FF leader or a coordinator.

Work on a Hosting Committee that could result in you serving as Hosting Coordinator for an incoming journey; or help coordinate local activities with other organizations such as OLLI or diversity groups.

8. Learn more about National Capital Area.

Represent Friendship Force visibly at city events that have similar goals. For example, members of our club are currently working on the African American Culture and History Global Journey to Washington DC in 2022.

9. Help FFNCA grow.

Assist in one of FFNCA's a major goals: Help us increase diversity in the club. Is there anyone from a different religion, race or ethnic background you could recruit? How about some folks in their 20's or 30's?

10. Let's party!

Participate in social events for members of Friendship Force. We have an all-member annual meeting at a local restaurant, plus many social events during the year at various locations around the National Capital Area. We also have welcome and farewell parties for incoming journeys. And during the past year, we have had Zoom happy hours for many of the holidays, plus occasions such as National Peace Day.

9. Appendix 3 – FAQ's



1. What is a home stay?

Home hospitality is the signature program of Friendship Force. This means that, on most journeys, you will have the opportunity to be a guest for a few days in someone's home, where the real power of citizen diplomacy can be experienced. You will learn first-hand the difference between travel as a tourist and the experience of being a temporary citizen.

2. Who are the host families?

Host families are members of Friendship Force. They are not paid to provide hosting but do so because of their interest in getting to know "citizen ambassadors" from other countries. Your host and their family become your inside guides to the country and its people. There is no better way to explore the world!

3. What is a Journey Coordinator?

A Journey/Hosting Coordinator is an individual who has been approved by the Governing Council to plan, organize, and be a Journey Coordinator for an outgoing journey or a Hosting Coordinator for an incoming journey. These positions are open to anyone who has the desired leadership qualities and can make the commitment of time needed for adequate planning and recruiting of Ambassadors/Hosts with a 9 to 12 month lead-time. Our club has some great experienced Journey/Hosting Coordinators who are more than willing to mentor a first time Coordinator. In addition, each year the club conducts Coordinator Workshops; all interested individuals may participate

4. How are visiting ambassadors matched with host families?

Each ambassador fills out a form listing their interests, any special dietary, mobility or lifestyle needs. Each potential host fills out a form listing their interests, etc. as well as describing the type of accommodations they are offering, the location of their home, type of room(s) and bath, available transportation, etc. The hosting coordinator does their best to match needs and interests of ambassadors and hosts.

5. What are the responsibilities of a home host?

A home host invites his/her guest to be a part of the family for the time the exchange is in National Capital Area (usually one week). If you choose to home host, you will provide your guest(s) with a daily breakfast, involve them in the activities of your family and provide some of the evening meals. Nothing fancy is required here; even take-out is acceptable. There will be at least a few evenings where you don't have to provide dinner. There may be a welcome and/or farewell party for the whole group. You may be invited to a small dinner party one evening along with your guest(s). Usually one other evening is set aside where the ambassador(s) treat the host(s) to dinner, either at a restaurant or perhaps even the ambassadors will prepare a meal typical of their culture and serve it to you in your home. You will participate in all official functions that are planned and attend any scheduled workshops. If you are unable to attend a certain function due to another obligation, the Hosting Coordinator will arrange a "day host" to accompany/entertain your guest for the day.

There is typically one free day. If your guest has a particular thing they would like to do, you should try to accommodate that. If not, you could show them something close to where you live. Since many of the planned events will be in DC, if you live outside of DC, you might want to show them something in VA or MD.

6. What can I expect when I am home hosted during an outbound journey?

You become a part of the family during your stay. The host club will have planned a number of activities for the entire group with some “free days”. On these “free days” you and your host might visit areas in which you have a mutual interest. You may also spend time with your host’s family and friends. Often this involves dessert or meals with neighbors, family celebrations & special outings.

7. Since I am a single woman, would I be matched with another woman?

Yes, that is usually the situation while couples normally host another couple. There are exceptions, but it is your decision. You can note any particular requests and concerns such as preferring to be matched with a woman on the ambassador form you will fill out when signing up for a given journey. Frequently, the number of bedrooms and type of bed(s) available play a part in matching hosts and ambassadors (guests) as do interests & occupations. Also, if host facilities allow, sometimes two single women are asked to stay together in the host’s home.

8. Will I have opportunity to communicate with my host or guest ambassador prior to my or their arrival?

*Usually that is the case. **Important:** As soon as possible, you will contact your host/ambassador by email, letter, or phone. For many, friendships, communications, & private visits continue for years and even a lifetime.*

9. What is a day host?

A day host is a club member who is not home hosting for that particular journey, but instead hosts the ambassadors for a day’s activities, perhaps ushering them through one or more of the planned museum visits or other attractions. The Day Host provides vital assistance to home hosts who work or have a previous commitment during one or more days, and are unable to participate in the hosting events.

10. What is a small group dinner?

Small, informal group dinners are often planned at the home of a club member for one or two ambassadors plus of course their home hosts and their family. The dinner is hosted at the expense of the club member who offers it. The ambassador and home hosts will be assigned to a specific home and a suitable evening will be mutually agreed upon. Some dinner hosts like to involve another non-hosting member to help with dinner preparations. Invited host club members may be asked to bring a salad, dessert, appetizer, or beverage. The host may include games or other activities in the evening’s itinerary. The whole idea is to allow the ambassadors to meet others in the hosting club and give them an opportunity to visit another home in National Capital Area. New and potential club members may also be included if space allows. Sharing, fun, laughter and conversation are the goals for the evening.

11. Is there a typical itinerary?

Each hosting itinerary is unique, and dependent upon the particular interests of the visiting club. But most will combine a Friendship Force home stay with an active program of taking in the local sites while learning first-hand about the culture by establishing a personal relationship with the hosts.

12. What are Friendship Force clubs?

Each Friendship Force club is a separate legal entity chartered by the international non-profit organization, Friendship Force International (FFI.) FFI is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, USA but has staff working virtually from various locations worldwide. FFI has more than 360 clubs in over 60 countries. Nearly 100 clubs are located in the United States.

13. What do you mean by “apply” to go on a journey?

Each Journey is led by an experienced Friendship Force Journey Coordinator. They will ask you to fill out an application prior to accepting you as journey participant. This application process ensures that travelers are physically healthy enough to make the journey and also that they are committed to the Friendship Force mission.

14. What does it mean to be committed to the FF mission?

FFI has over four decades of history bringing people together in friendship across the barriers that separate people to promote peace one friendship at a time. We think of ourselves as ‘citizen ambassadors’, each of us having the power to promote good relations at a personal level.

15. What is involved in becoming a member of Friendship Force of the National Capital Area?

Join The Friendship Force IF: you believe in the goals and mission of the organization; you like the challenge and excitement of new people, places and experiences; you believe that friendship among people of different countries and cultures can make for a better more peaceful world; and you have a curiosity about the world and enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life. To join, contact the Membership Chair; complete the Membership Form and mail with your check to the address on the form, or join online at www.ffnca.org/membership. Membership varies, but is usually equally divided between individuals and couples and currently consists of approximately 72 people.

16. If I don’t see myself traveling in the next year or so, should I still join?

Certainly! Friendship Force is not just a travel club; there are many other aspects of involvement. The mission of Friendship Force of building global goodwill through personal friendships can be served by acting as a day host or a home host, by offering a small group dinner, and just by participating in the many club social activities we offer. All these activities work to build friendships both locally and worldwide, and all of this works to further Friendship Force goals.

17. Do you plan visits to clubs in the United States?

Yes, there are almost 100 clubs in the United States and clubs can arrange what are called “Domestic Journeys” between clubs with mutual interests. Often a reciprocal visit is arranged. Here the club that hosted the initial visit goes to visit the club that had journeyed to meet them.

18. Do you travel as a group?

Yes and no; the group usually consists of 15 to 20 individuals, known as “Ambassadors.” Travel arrangements vary from departing the Washington DC area as a group to some, or all, of the individuals making their own travel arrangements & meeting at a specific time and location in the host city. The latter, provides more flexibility but group travel can contribute to a more rewarding experience. The method of travel is a decision made by the Journey Coordinator.

19. How do I find out what is happening in the club?

You will receive periodic e-mail messages about activities, new members, outgoing journeys and incoming journeys with opportunities to be coordinators. Check out the local club’s website: www.ffnca.org and for news on the international level, go to: www.thefriendshipforce.org and also the special members only portal: <https://my.friendshipforce.org>.

20. What types of social activities does the club have?

Each year a variety of social events are offered and open to all members. These might include a game night, picnic, potluck gathering, a trip to a museum or a visit to a local ethnic restaurant. There is also an Annual Dinner Meeting event at a local restaurant. We try to hold these events at places that are the most convenient to the membership, rotating between the various areas of Virginia, Maryland and DC. For each incoming journey, there is likely to be a welcome party and farewell party which gives club members who are not hosting the chance to meet our visitors. Also the Activities Committee plans for smaller group cocktail parties, teas, and dinner parties. Starting in 2020, a number of events were held online: Zoom happy hours for Halloween and Valentine's Day and we celebrated the holidays of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa in a special Zoom presentation.

21. What should I expect financially when I go on a journey?

On a Journey, we who are visitors have all or most of our expenses paid by the host club and their members; we pay for our own transportation to the host country and a fee to Friendship Force International for the Journey; another fee is paid to the hosting club to entertain us. If there is a tour before or after the Journey, you would pay the cost of the tour if you choose to go. You should expect to take your host family to dinner once during the Journey. You should purchase or make gifts for each member of your host family that represent your/their interests and/or your home community.

22. Am I required to host or go on journeys if I am a member?

There is no requirement by our club for members to host visitors or go on Journeys. We hope though, that those joining would want to actively participate in these events, as they are how we can best learn about people in other cultures. If you cannot host or travel, you may still be a day or dinner host or participate in other ways.

23. What if I am not able to go or don't care to go on the journey you have scheduled? Are there other ways for me to travel with the organization?

There are a number of other ways to travel. You may travel with another club if they have room for you. There are Global Journeys that include people from several countries. These journeys may include homestays with local clubs. They may also involve travel to countries that have not yet established clubs where ambassadors stay mostly in hotels but meet people from that country interested in forming Friendship Force clubs. Regional and International Conferences are held every other year. See the list of Journeys and events on the [Friendship Force International](http://www.thefriendshipforce.org) website. Go to www.thefriendshipforce.org and if you see a Journey you like, click on it to find out the details.