



friendship force  
OTTAWA



## FFO General Meeting - Wednesday, June 12, 2024 Summary Notes

1:30pm

Riverside United Church, Riverside Drive, Ottawa, ON

- 1) President Anna van Adrichem Rochon welcomed all and added some general comments about Friendship Force. She introduced the executive<sup>1</sup> and brought to everyone's attention that there will be a change in the executive in the Fall, including herself as president. All members are encouraged and very welcome to stand for election. She also noted that the work of the club is done by many members, not just the executive.
- 2) Secretary Vivien Runnels encouraged members to read the written materials sent out by Anna. Treasurer Colin Leech reported the closed bridge club gave \$135 to the general account, and added we are on track to have a balanced budget this year.
- 3) VP Membership Marie-France Horton said we have 85 members. She spoke about ways to introduce potential members to FFO. Gertraude encouraged our new members to have a mentor. Marie France responded all new members have been assigned a mentor (Janet Wilkinson, Kathy Hatherill, Jaap and Maria Schouten, and Pierrette Benoit).
- 4) The updated *membership list* was distributed recently. Anna said *the directory* is to be updated, and asked members to check their directory information, and send any changes to Wendy Adams.
- 5) Joan Kinnie, VP Journeys, said 2025 journey matches include Kern County California (inbound) and Bursa, Turkey (inbound). The first outbound is to Medicine Hat AB and Missoula, Montana (June is suggested, or August). The second outbound is Volta Lake in Ghana in March 2025. We have a coordinator for Ghana already. Sign-up sheets are available to indicate interest. Coordinators are required for inbound and outbound journeys. We provide lots of support for new coordinators, and there is a lot of information on FFO, FFI and FF Canada's websites. Our club is looking for many volunteers for inbounds and outbounds. 2024's inbound from Nor Peru arrives from Toronto at 2pm on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024. It's your opportunity to meet people from Peru, and to help with this inbound. For the Costa Rica November 2024 outbound, we have 15 ambassadors.

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<sup>1</sup> Anna Van Adrichem Rochon, Joan Kinnie, Marie France and Bryan Horton, Vivien Runnels, Colin Leech, Pierrette Benoit and Gertraude Martin.

The May Memphis/Mexico inbound for May 2024 was cancelled. While very disappointing, this experience has been turned into an opportunity to review what happened, what's available to help with journey decision-making and other inputs. Joan said that members will hear more about this review soon.

Discussion ensued from the floor and ranged in topics from recruitment and learning about FFO to interest in the dinner club, carrying out journeys, the number of ambassadors we would accept or be able to host, obstacles to travel (such as acquiring visas, labour interruptions), what and how clubs are doing internationally (there does seem to be less activity compared to pre-Covid), the different types of journeys available to members (FFO members can join in unsubscribed journeys and FFI global journeys), and whether home stays are being changed to staying in hotels. Information was given out on the process of applying for and matching requests for journeys. Another question was whether the club is going to the FFI North American Regional Conference in Milwaukee WI. The club is thinking about it.

- 6) In other information, it was noted that a review has been done of the bylaws on the website and changes made with respect to clarity, grammar and typos. On behalf of Shayla who is the chair of the solos group, Eugenie reported that the group has been invited to spend time at Eugenie's cottage this summer.

All members are welcome to ask questions to Joan Kinnie (Journeys), Marie France (Membership) and all of the board members. This marked the end of the business section of the general meeting and a short break was taken.

The general meeting was followed by a presentation by Meg Stickl called "Are you FIT to TRAVEL?" Meg was introduced by Marie France. Meg explained that for any traveller, fitness is all-important for having a successful trip, whether your goal is to enjoy a wine of glass in Italy, visit your family on the other side of Canada or just to negotiate the airport! Members took part enthusiastically in a short exercise routine. Meg covered every part of the body and encouraged all of us to find ideas to stay motivated, to celebrate the small wins and learn to enjoy the process, while building fitness and healthy eating into your lifestyle for lasting results! FFO members enjoyed listening, participating in and learning from Meg's presentation. Remember, it's a lifelong journey! For more information on Meg's programs, check her website [www.ActivitiesInMotion.ca](http://www.ActivitiesInMotion.ca) or call 613-869-3246 for a free 15 minute health consultation.

For a complementary read, an edited version of the presentation was published in June's Capital Connection.

Submitted by Vivien Runnels.