

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

MAY 2021



We're Back--Friendship Force of Lincoln Dines in at Stur 22 originally from Liberia, Wes

By Bruce Keim

NUMBER 163

The Friendship Force of Lincoln (FFL) has been impacted by COVID 19, with normal club meetings postponed or held by Zoom. But as vaccinations continue and pandemic mandates ease, Club members are getting back to normal. Traditionally, quarterly meetings have included Let's Eat Out (LEO) at many of Lincoln's ethnic restaurants. LEO committee members are Bruce and Carlene Keim and Sara Stephenson.

The May 2021 LEO, after more than a year off, was held as a "TO GO" meal from the Stur 22 Restaurant and Lounge. Twenty FFL members and one guest listened to Charles Brewer tell the story of how Stur 22 started in Lincoln. Charles is originally from Liberia, West Africa. He came to Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska on a football scholarship.

His original idea was to have Stur 22 be just a cocktail lounge. Charles had met the owner of the Rock Island Social Club (formerly Henry's on



Charles Brewer is the owner of Stur 22 in Lincoln.

South). The kitchen had been shut down and the Club was using it as a bar and Lounge. Charles was invited to serve his ethnic African and Caribbean food on several weekends using the kitchen to prepare the food. The lines were long, even in the cold weather. It was a huge success.

Charles applied for and received a Small Business Loan. He now had the money but no physical location to start his business. After looking at locations, luck had it that the owner of The Rock Island Social Club was looking to do something else. So, a deal was worked out that Charles could start his business at the current location of Stur 22 on Winthrop Road. Charles and his wife opened Stur 22 in August of 2017.

The name Stur 22 comes from when Charles was a young boy. As his mother was making meals, she would have Charles stir the pot with a spoon 22 times. The fact that his mom had an accent made the word STIR sound like STUR, and thus the name STUR 22.

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PASSPORT

Stur 22

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A menu full of African dishes, many from Brewer's mother's recipes, gave FFL members a wide variety of foods to try. Jerk Pulled Pork, Fried Plantain Slices, and Brown Stew Oxtail are just a few. The Street Tacos include one with Blackened Shrimp and the other with Jerk Pork. The Steam Veggies included potatoes, carrots, and peppers cooked in a broth that resembled pot roast vegetables. The FFL members picked up their meals and enjoyed food and fellowship at Memorial Park east of Stur 22. Charles also has a second location called Stur Fast located at 13th and O Street in Lincoln.

The next LEO will be at 5:00 P.M. on Tuesday, June 22nd at The Korea House at 5601 S. 56th Street. Hope to see everyone there. We will send out an email closer to the date.

Bruce and Carlene Keim Sara Stephenson LEO committee members





by Arlene Rea, President Things are looking up!

he past year and a half has been trying for all of us, but we have learned a lot about ourselves and each other. You have all been amazing during this time. The FFL Board has gone beyond the call of duty, taking on the responsibility to help you, the members of our club, by calling or contacting you. We care about you.

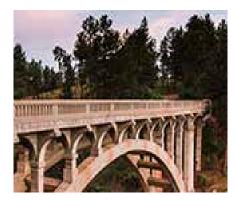
We are beginning to meet with each other as we mask up and social distant ourselves. The Saturday Breakfast group met at Stauffer's in April and May. Let's Eat Out (LEO) met in early May in the parking lot of Stur 22 and moved to a park to enjoy each other's company. By being active through Zoom during this pandemic we have been able to keep in contact, maybe not in person, but by meeting for board meetings, past journeys, Saturday Breakfast, Dorina's Happy Hour and walks in the park or mall. As the summer continues, so will our involvement.

We are planning for inbound and outbound journeys in 2022. We will be asking for your help as a journey coordinator, home host, dinner host, day host, etc. As a club we will again begin the process of examining what we can do to improve, what can we do differently?

On a more personal note, one of FFL's leaders, Mary Bryant, has chosen to step down from her responsibilities. We will miss her for her commitment to Friendship Force. See her story in this Passports.

Enjoy your summer and think positive for the future.

Be the Bridge



by Ann Quinlan, Secretary of FFL

e the Bridge is a Friendship Force International initiative designed to assist clubs with strategic planning. Learning modules are being developed that can be used to help members think creatively about club activities. Now that travel has been restricted for the past year and for the foreseeable future, this may be a time to rethink Friendship Force's role in becoming a more visible force in our communities

The proposed modules, still in the development stage, are:

- 1. The history and purpose of Friendship Force
- 2. Envisioning the club in 10 – 20 years
- Developing an action plan: club's strengths and weaknesses
- 4. Building relationships in the community
- 5. Name recognition in the community
- 6. Attracting more diverse members

FFL has already addressed many of these proposals. A strategic planning session was held in 2019 that involved gathering input from a variety of members. The Diversity committee invited members of the Yazidi community join in the 2019 Friendship Force holiday celebration. Several new members have joined FFL after learning more about Friendship Force from the articles vice-president Maxine Moul wrote for the Neighborhood Extra.

The challenge is for us to think about other groups

Walk in Pioneers Park

that we could partner with to build more name recognition for Friendship Force and its mission of improving intercultural relations, not only across the world, but here in our home town. We will continue to bring you updates as FFI develops the Be the Bridge initiative. Meanwhile, we look forward to any ideas you would like to share that could help FFL connect with other groups in meaningful ways. Please send your suggestions to Ann Quinlan at amquinlan33@gmail.com.



ayle and Milt Bayer, Brian Ridenour, Maxine Moul and Dorina Mahler stop to take a picture among the trees on May 12. Many other walks have taken place to Antelope Park, Holmes Lake and Gateway Mall during the pandemic.

International travel to Morocco, Russia shared with FFL

By Maxine Moul - VP FFL

irtual on-line travels have become the norm for Lincoln members of Friendship Force (FFL) during COVID-19. Last month, travel experiences by Lincoln members to Morocco and Russia were shared through Zoom meetings.

FFL looks forward to resuming their opportunities to visit overseas clubs at least once a year, and to host an international club in Lincoln. There will also be visits by clubs in the United States and by Lincoln members to other domestic sites. Lincoln received its journey assignments for 2022. They are Inbound: Southern New Jersey to Lincoln and a Farm to Table - Globally recruited inbound Journey together with Quad Cities. Outbound: Lincoln to Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia and Lincoln to Central North Carolina. Dates have not been finalized.



Moscow wedding traditions include tossing locks and keys into metal trees in parks. Photo courtesy of Wendy Horacek

Russian trip preview

Wendy Horacek and Betty Starr recently gave Lincoln members a preview of what the Russian trip in 2022 might be like. They joined members of the Madison, WI Friendship Force for a trip to Russia in 2013. The Lincoln members reconnected with Dmitry, a young man who stayed with the Starrs for the Open World Program the previous year. He lived in Moscow and met the Lincolnites for a tour of Kolomonskoye Park in Moscow, which had many ancient structures.

Stops in the park were at a Russian Orthodox Church and the UNESCO World Heritage Church of the Assumption built in 1532. The wedding lock tradition was seen in Moscow. The couples attached the locks to the metal trees and tossed the key into the river.

They also visited the city of Viborg, Russia for several nights. The city was interested in forming a Friendship Force Club and asked for the help of the Madison Club to provide guidance in their process. They also provided cultural events and socials, presenting their Russian heritage to the group.



A Berber boy captured the hearts of American Friendship Force members during their visit to a Berber village in Morocco. Photo courtesy of Maxine Moul

Morocco trip

Recently, Maxine Moul presented her experiences in Morocco in 2018, with the Ft. Worth, Tx Friendship Force club. Morocco has long been on her bucket list for travel, and the country proved her choice was right. Morocco's location has dictated its history: Every major European power (including the Romans) felt the necessity to control the mouth of the Mediterranean at one time or another. Each left its mark. Following centuries of Arab and occasional Berber rule, Morocco became a protectorate of France in the early 1900s; it gained independence in 1956.

Morocco trip

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Since then, the country has been ruled primarily by a monarchy. Sultan Mohammed V led the country until 1961, when his son, King Hassan II, took over. Before his death in 1999, Hassan had begun initiating political reforms that his son, King Mohammed VI, has continued. But the king still wields the ultimate authority in the country and criticizing him is considered a serious offense. Though the country has a parliament, it is not strong, and elections remain somewhat erratic.

A hallmark of Friendship Force is the ability to stay in local homes, and this trip didn't disappoint. Homestays were provided in both Rabat and Azrou. The hosts provided guided tours to the medinas and even a Moroccan wedding. A highlight was a visit and stay in a Berber village where FF travelers helped prepare a traditional tajine meal, including getting water at the village well with a donkey as transportation.

Getting to Know a New Member



Susan Briggs

By Phyllis Arth

Ur newest member, Susan Briggs, met Margaret Foster while working out at Madonna Proactive. Margaret talked about her Friendship Force journeys and Susan was intrigued. The opportunity to meet new people locally, and travel internationally, really appealed to her. The recent LEO (Let's Eat Out) at Stur 22 confirmed the welcoming attitudes of local FF members.

Susan's corporate life was with Ameritas. She was Executive Assistant to the Chairman and the CEO, then for 15 years, as a paralegal. One indicator that Susan liked her job is that her daughter is now a paralegal in Lincoln. For retirement, Susan and husband Joe sold their home, bought an RV and started a business. For 2 1/2 years they traveled and sold RV accessories at rallies and shows around the country. Other RVers frequently became fast friends sharing military experiences. When Susan and Joe moved back to Lincoln in 2012 they ran gift stores at the Lincoln VA Medical Center and then in College View, selling patriotic items. Joe passed in September 2020.

Susan sang in the First **Plymouth and Abendmusik** choirs. She toured Europe and performed in such diverse sites as Auschwitz and St. Peter's Basilica. She has performed in musicals produced by the Lincoln Community Playhouse and OLLI. She is a faithful blood donor, totaling 13 gallons, to date. Susan raises flowers outdoors and succulents and tropical plants in her sunroom. She and her beagle, Bella, enjoy walking. Susan looks forward to more OLLI classes and traveling on Journeys.

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Mary Bryant, Pillar of the Friendship Force of Lincoln



By Laurie Ann Scott

won't marry you unless there is a Friendship Force Club in Lincoln, Nebraska! Mary jokingly told Art Bryant, when he wanted her to become his bride and move here in 1993! She had so enjoyed her experiences in the Friendship Force of St. Louis since 1986. There, she had been recognized for her work by being awarded the Sasakawa Scholarship. Mr. Sasakawa was a generous benefactor to FFI in its early days.

Recently, Mary announced that she has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease and with regret, would no longer be able to participate with Friendship Force of Lincoln at the level to which she has been accustomed. She will be missed for her leadership and her institutional knowledge. Mary will remain as an Ex Officio member of the FFL Board.

Mary moved to Lincoln like a whirlwind, becoming involved in FFL and making a difference! The Lied Center was relatively new; it was discovered that you could rent the entry and public reception areas for special events. Thus, was born the EVENT at the Lied! Mary and many others worked tirelessly to make this special day exceptional with various cultural groups entertaining and beautiful displays of Friendship Force Lincoln in action describing the Friendship Force journey experience as well as the Mission of Friendship Force International. People attending registered their interest and our membership popped to over 200, the largest Friendship Force club in the world! It remained at such a level until recent years.

She was Exchange Director several times, but her 1997 four-week Journey to Hobart and Newcastle in Australia and Howick and Hamilton in New Zealand stood out. The trip included two clubs in Australia and two in New Zealand, and for the amazingly low cost of \$2,500, which included air fare!

Mary was the first person to serve as Vice President followed by three terms as president with another presidency in between.

In addition, Mary helped with the Crane Watching

exchanges and with food preparation at the ranch in Burwell, NE where ambassadors viewed the prairie chickens doing their mating dance at dawn before heading back to see the cranes. FFL sponsored this amazing mini-journey three times.

Mary worked on the committees for Taming of the Harsh Land international journeys both times it was offered.

For a number of years, Mary served as membership chair developing her well-oiled committee and system, which she shared at regional conferences. She was called upon by other clubs throughout the United States who needed help with membership issues.

She assembled and proofed the Passport. She organized countless Small Group Dinners, hosted repeatedly, and rarely missed attending a Friendship Force activity, oftentimes bringing an older member who could no longer drive.

She is a good cook, as well. Her recipe for Crown Ribs of Pork was included in the Friendship Force International recipe book.

Mary was in one of the earliest groups of US Field Representatives selected by FFI, serving the Midwest Region.

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Mary Bryant

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On March 1, 2007, she was awarded the Wayne Smith Medal in honor of the founder and commemorating the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Friendship Force. A Nebraska snowstorm grounded flights so Mary was unable to accept the honor in person. For many years, Mary volunteered to help FFI with membership inquiries. She would not only respond to the person inquiring about membership, but would locate the nearest club, contact that club president, and persisted until she was sure the person inquiring was connected to the nearest Friendship Force Club.

She shared with me that she only knows one way to do anything, her very best!

Mary, you have been an inspiration to me and many others! I thank you. We all thank you.

Pencil an outgoing journey into your 2022 plans

by Wendy Horacek

ur club has the opportunity to see the sights in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Feast your eyes on Red Square, the beautiful Onion Domes, artifacts from Catherine the Great's era and the fabulous art museums. Most of the club members are English speaking. Journey will also include a train ride from one club to the other.

Other opportunities include a journey to Winston-Raleigh, North Carolina. Sites may include a Moravian Church, the oldest protestant church in US, and the R.J. Reynolds Museum of Modern Art.

FFL Hosting for inbound journey in 2022

Southern New Jersey will be coming to our Midwest City and we're also looking forward to a Farm to Table Global journey. FFI held a training seminar on May 26 for all members involved in the planning, implementing, etc. of outbound and inbound journeys. Inbound journeys take a lot of planning to match our community to the interest of the incoming club. If you missed the seminar and are interested in being a coordinator, please contact Wendy at whoracek@yahoo.com.



Happy Birthday to You!

e thought you might like to spread some joy. Send a note, e-mail or card to someone who has a birthday between June and August. We will honor future birthdays in the next Passports. If your name is missing, send a note to Judy Keetle. Have fun giving and receiving!

Susan Pierce	June 2
Lee Rockwell	June 7
Dal Ronnau	June 26
Cathy Lund	June 29
Dorina Mahler	June 30
Nancy Comer	July 1
Richard Spencer	July 2
Jim Ecklund	July 10
Milt Bayer	July 18
Barbara Wittstruck	July 24
Betty Todd	July 28
Sharre Jahde	July 27
Richard Callaway	August 9
Betty Starr	August 10
Kathryn Neyens	August 23
Kay Straube	August 29

"Arm Chair Travel"

by Mary Verschuur

he pandemic and orders to shelter in place have severely impacted travel and the building of international relationships, two key elements of our organization, Friendship Force. These activities were brought to a complete halt and have remained off limits for almost twelve months to date. Friendship Force, and many other social and cultural organizations, out of necessity, have adapted to a new normal by providing its members with novel ways to stay connected, and to travel virtually, if not in person.

But what do those of us do who don't choose to sit in front of a screen in order to travel or to meet people? Personally, I do not enjoy screen time very much and find virtual journeys disappointing to say the least. Consequently, like others of my persuasion, I have taken to reading as my pastime of choice while sheltering in place and in a particular kind of reading I have discovered a delightful form of arm-chair travel that stirs my imagination, calls up a host of happy memories and is customized. Let me explain.

On a recent visit to the library I came across a book entitled Seasons on Harris by David Yeadon. The author is a sometime writer for National Geographic

and Harris is an Island in the Outer Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland. Back in the 1980s, my sister and I rented a cottage for a week on North Uist the island immediately to the south of Harris that is topographically very similar. I borrowed the book thinking that it might stimulate memories long stored and perhaps forgotten. It would certainly take me back to a place I had once visited and that I knew from firsthand experience. The stories and descriptions in the book would guide me on a virtual journey but above all it would, I hoped, transport me once again to a return visit to North Uist.

The book did not disappoint. By the time I had read the prologue and the first chapter I found myself on North Uist, looking across the channel to Harris from "the most perfect of beaches", "vast slowly curving strands of almost pure white sand, and utterly unoccupied for mile after mile". One of these magnificent beaches, lapped by an almost tropically colored sea, was within walking distance of our cottage and my sister later bought me a painting of this beach which now takes pride of place behind my computer desk. However, the environment and the north Atlantic are far from tropical and warm jackets, preferably rainproof, and

sturdy shoes are essential for beach walking.



Beach Scene Besides the spectacular beaches Yeadon frequently refers to the crofter cottages that dot the landscape and that stand out in irregular fashion across the treeless, boggy, windswept uplands. There are many traditional Hebridean long, low, whitewashed homes, some older ones that have been modernized and others that have been more recently built, mostly scattered but occasionally clustered together. However, one cannot fail to notice the many long-

abandoned ruins that bear witness to the "Highland Clearances" of the eighteen century.



Traditional Thatched Cottage or Black House

In between these homes we discovered, as Yeadon had found on Harris, unhospitable, often sodden land and a countless dark pools

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"Arm Chair Travel" continued

continued from page 8 or hill lochs, some no bigger than ponds, but almost all teeming with wild brown trout. We hooked a few of these one afternoon and took them home to fix in our cozy kitchen. One particular loch quite close to our cottage provided us with a rare and very memorable spectacle when we discovered it was the summer home to an elegant pair of swans. Needless-to-say, we drove by frequently to watch them glide about and occasionally lift out of the water to circle the loch.



A Day's Catch!

Anyone who visits these western isles of Scotland can expect wind, and rain and an astounding changeability of weather within the course of a day. I do not recall being "blasted by ferocious Atlantic winds" although the author spent almost a year on the Island while we were there for a mere week, though I must say we experienced unseasonably warm weather. However, wind and rain are certainly something to take into account on any outing, whether up into the hills or out on to the beach.

But as is so often the case with travelling knowing about and anticipating the weather ahead of time can allow one to arrive prepared!

Yeadon and his wife were outgoing and gregarious. They met and chatted with the islanders whenever the opportunity afforded itself and found the locals to be open, charming and talkative. They were true ambassadors who took part in the life of the island in the ideal of Friendship Force. For my part, I cannot remember meeting anyone let alone visiting with him/ her or sharing stories and insights of our respective cultures. I think that I missed a real opportunity to reach out to the local population, to see beyond the scenery and to get to know the social and cultural customs of the island's inhabitants. Friendship Force's objectives could really have helped me on that score even though ours was not a home stay. We did purchase local groceries and supplies, most memorably fresh caught crab and salmon, but we never experienced the life of the island from an insider's perspective. I would make much more effort to reach out to the resident population were I ever to return to North Uist.

Between the time of my visit and that of the author

of Seasons on Harris travel and tourism on Harris, and indeed throughout the Outer Hebrides, had become more popular. More lodging choices, restaurants and even a Sunday ferry service have made the islands more accessible and entertainment oriented. This is undoubtedly good for the economy but it has probably changed the otherworldly atmosphere that pervaded the islands when first I went there.



Moorland Scenes

As I continue to read Seasons on Harris I am engaged in a wonderful, virtual trip. Having been to the Outer Hebrides and knowing the topography and the weather; having walked on Uist's soggy, moors and on its brilliant empty beaches, I am there again in my imagination. I can savor these places, not at the speed of a movie but at the pace of a book that allows me to pause and to recollect at my leisure. Reading and re-visiting can become a delightful inner journey, a version of virtual travel and I would recommend it to anyone who has visited a place and would like to make a return trip!

My First Friendship Force Journey to Cali, Columbia in 1983



by Patricia King

Il we knew when we put down our deposit was that we were going south...Mexico, Brazil... who knew? The "Big Reveal" come at our first workshop; we were going to Cali, Colombia.

I was placed with Carlos and Stella Borrero. They lived in an old-fashioned Colombian homestead, the kind with a small moat going around the house to provide water for household use with waste continuing downhill. Of course, by then they had indoor plumbing.

Carlos was an executive with Eastern Airlines. I spent much of my time with him proofreading documents he had written in English.

Stella had three servants, young teenagers from poor mountain villages that her priest recommended. She would teach them cooking, cleaning, manners, etc. She always brought one with her to carry her purchases. She, also, brought the two girls and the boy to the farewell party.

Early on I explained I couldn't drink colas and preferred tea. When we went on a hike to a park, she prepared a thermos for me...and sent one of the maids to carry it! The young ladies also cleaned my room daily. They found my dirty clothes, washed and ironed them and returned them every day. This was the only exchange I've gone on when my clothes were in better shape when I left than when I arrived.

Following the exchange five of us continued to Lima, Peru where we joined a commercial tour. It included a tour of Lima, train ride to Maccu Piccu, and flight to Iquitos with a transfer to Amazon Camp. Maccu Piccu was stunning as I knew it would be. Amazon Camp was on a tributary of the Amazon River that I actually swam across. Knowing there were piranha in the river, I swam fast and got out faster!

In Lima we were walking from our hotel to another a short distance away, when someone came up behind on of our party and stole a member's earrings right off her ears. We never felt safe after that. This was my first exchange.



Stella with the two maids

Courtesy

f you know someone who is ill, hospitalized or needs an uplifting card and note, please contact Gayle Bayer at bayergayle@ gmail.com or 402-486-1415.

Interested in Membership?

Please contact De Tonack, recruitment and mentoring chair. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact her directly at 402-489-8097 or via email at <u>dtonack@neb.</u> <u>rr.com</u>. PASSPORT



2021 Calendar of Activities June through August*

June 7	FFL Board Meeting 1:00 PM	via Zoom
June 12	Breakfast with Linda Kistler 8:30 AM	Stauffer's Café & Pie Shoppe
June 22	Let's Eat Out (LEO) 5:00 PM	Korean House, 56th & Hwy 2
July	No Board Meeting	
July 10	Breakfast with Linda Kistler 8:30 AM	Stauffer's Café & Pie Shoppe
August 2	FFL Board Meeting1:00 PM	via Zoom
August 14	Breakfast with Linda Kistler 8:30 AM	Stauffer's Café & Pie Shoppe
August 9	Newsletter articles due with flexibility	
TBD	Annual Meeting/elections**TBD	

*The FFL Board is encouraging members to suggest ways to meet in different ways to take advantage of the outdoors. If you would be inclined to form a book club, walking, share journeys, etc., please let Arlene know and she will advertise your event, via all-member e-mail.

**The FFL Board decided not to schedule a specific date until we get further along with the pandemic. They are looking at one of the Sundays of September 12, 19 or 26.

FFL Board of Directors

Arlene Rea	President; Passports; email communications
Maxine Moul	Vice President; Marketing; Scholarship
Ann Quinlan	Secretary, ToBeTheBridge Coordinator
Milt Bayer	Treasurer; Scholarships
Julie Albrecht	
Linda Kistler	Breakfast & Conversation; Service/Diversity
Wendy Horacek	Journey Resource Coordinator
Bruce and Carlene Keim	Let's Eat Out (LEO)
Gayle Bayer	Membership Courtesy
Judy Keetle	Membership Directory
De Tonack	Membership Recruitment and Mentoring
Nancy Comer	
Sara Stephenson	Social Committee
(Carolyn Harp is representative to the board)	

Ex Officio Members

Mary Bryant	Club Consultant
Laurie Ann Scott	
Mary Verschuur	Historian
Jim Écklund	
Sara Stephenson	
Suru Stephenson	Social Committee

The Friendship Force of Lincoln Membership Form

	Family-\$75	Individual-\$4	0
Date	New Member	Renewing Member	
Name(s)			
City		State	Zip
Home Number		_ Mobile Number _	
E-mail			
New members receive	a complimentary name	badge:	
Check your choice. pro	eferpin or	magnetic clo	osure.
Name(s)on badge			
Make check payable to			
	Friendship	Force of Lincoln	

Send to: Friendship Force, PO Box 30334, Lincoln, NE 68503. Dues are for the calendar year (January-December)



The website redesign and member login go hand in hand. The website redesign will focus on attracting and educating persons who are not FFI members rather than focusing on the membership. The member who logs into my.friendshipforce.org will be assigned an ID number. This number will allow you to travel through Friendship Force and have access to information only available to members.

If you haven't yet registered, the login address is <u>https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/</u> sign_in

The login will be used for all subsequent visits to the site after successfully registering. When registering, members only need to put in as much information as they desire, but the following is required:

- Name
- Email address
- Set up your own password
- Accept the code of conduct (check box)
- Sign up for the FFI emails even if you received them now (check box)