

friendship force

a world of friends is a world of peace

Friendship Force of Lincoln New Member Orientation

www.friendshipforcelincoln.org

www.thefriendshipforce.org

https://my.friendshipforce.org/en/users/sign_in (Members only website)

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"WELCOME TO THE FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF LINCOLN!"

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

This booklet aims to provide you with information on Friendship Force and, in particular, our local club, The Friendship Force of Lincoln; how our club operates and the many membership benefits available to you.

As a new member, 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. We have included quite a bit of information about traveling with Friendship Force and how you can be involved when we host a journey group.

We are delighted you joined us, and we want your membership to be a rewarding experience!

About Friendship Force

Friendship Force International provides opportunities to explore new countries and cultures from the inside by bringing people together at a personal level. Through the signature program of home hospitality, local hosts welcome international visitors into their culture, sharing with them meals, conversation, and the best sights and experiences of their region.

In a typical Friendship Force program, our local club, The Friendship Force of Lincoln, prepares an itinerary of cultural activities, inviting members from clubs in other countries to come and stay with them in their homes for up to a week.

Who We Are

Friendship Force International (FFI) is a worldwide network of clubs (local chapters) and individuals that advance our mission of promoting global understanding across the barriers that separate people. We do this by connecting people from different countries on a personal level. When local hosts open their homes to visitors from other countries and cultures, true understanding can develop through the sharing of meals, conversation, and the routines of daily life. Since its founding in 1977, FFI has brought together millions of people. In 2012 alone, 5,443 friendship ambassadors traveled between 54 countries, with thousands more serving as hosts. That number remained constant until COVID hit. Then the journeys dropped to zero. By 2023, 300 journeys were exchanged with approximately 1200 ambassadors participating.

Great Places **DOD** Great Faces **DOD** Great Friends

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 45 countries on six continents. 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 a 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.

TEN WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN FRIENDSHIP FORCE WITHOUT LEAVING 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 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.

Attend diversity events held in Lincoln to meet people and learn about other cultures, for example, a picnic with the local Sudanese Community.

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 an FF leader or a coordinator.

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

8. Learn more about Lincoln.

Represent Friendship Force visibly at city events that have similar goals. Maybe volunteer to help with World Day on the Mall or attend a Mosque to learn about Ramadan.

9. Be a Community Leader.

Work with the Mayor's Committee on International Friendship or a similar organization to assist in finding hosts for international visitors and students who want to experience a homestay or have dinner in an American home.

10. Let's party!

Participate in social events for members of Friendship Force. We have breakfast once a month, pool parties, Let's Eat Out, holiday parties, game nights, and quarterly meetings all at different locations around Lincoln.



FAQ's

1. What is a homestay? Or home hospitality?

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 the 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 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 journey is in Lincoln. Involve your guests in the activities of your family. Participate in all official functions that are planned and attend all scheduled workshops. If you have an obligation during the journey that is of such a nature that you are unable to take your guest, inform the Host Coordinator, and a "day host" will be arranged to accompany/entertain your guest on your busy day.

4. What can I expect when I am "home hosted" by an individual or family?

You become a part of the family during your stay. The host club will have planned many activities for the entire group with a few "free days". On these "free days," you and your host might visit areas where you have a mutual interest and time spent with your host's family and friends. Often this involves dessert or meals with neighbors, family celebrations & special outings.

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

Yes, that is usually the situation when couples normally host another couple. There are exceptions, but it is your decision. Frequently, the number of bedrooms and type of bed(s) available play a part in matching hosts and ambassadors (guests) as do interests & occupations.

6. Will I have the opportunity to communicate with my host or guest before his/her arrival?

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

7. What is a Day Host?

A club member who is not home hosting, but one who takes a home host's ambassador for a day's activities. The Day Host provides vital assistance to home hosts who work or have a previous commitment for one or more days and are unable to participate in the journey events.

8. What Is a Small Group Dinner

A small, informal at-home dinner party for one or two ambassadors plus their home hosts. The dinner is hosted at his/her own expense by a club member who is not home-hosting during the current journey. The ambassador and home hosts will be assigned to a specific home. The dinner host tells the committee the number of people she can accommodate and decides the menu, and method of serving. Some dinner hosts like to involve another non-hosting member to help with dinner preparations. You decide how many guests, in addition to the number in your family, you feel comfortable having dinner on an evening specified by the Journey Committee. The menu is your choice, and you may ask any non-hosting guests to bring a salad, dessert, appetizer, or wine. It is entirely up to you. The evening is for you to plan whether you play a game or just visit. The whole idea is to share with the guests and allow them to visit another home in Lincoln. When space allows, new and potential members are included as guests. Of course, the guest's host family accompanies them to your dinner. Sharing, fun, laughter, and conversation are the goals for the evening.

9. Is there a typical itinerary?

Each journey itinerary is unique, but most will combine a Friendship Force homestay with an active program of taking in the local sites while learning first-hand about the culture by establishing a personal relationship with your hosts.

10. What are Friendship Force clubs?

Friendship Force journeys are organized through a volunteer network of 365 chapters (clubs) in 45 countries on six continents, with over 15,000 active members (as of 12/9/2024). The clubs are connected globally through Friendship Force International (FFI), a non-profit organization with offices in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

11. What do you mean by "apply" to go on a trip?

An experienced Friendship Force Ambassador Coordinator leads each journey. They will ask you to fill out an application before accepting you as a 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.

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

FFI has a forty-seven-year history of bringing people together in friendship across the barriers that separate people. We think of ourselves as 'citizen ambassadors', each of us having the power to promote good relations at a personal level.

13. What is involved in becoming a member of The Friendship Force of Lincoln?

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 world; and you have a curiosity about the world and enjoy learning about cultures and ways of life. Contact the Membership Chair; complete the Membership Form and mail your check to our P.O. Box. Membership is usually divided between individuals and couples and consists of approximately 70 people.

14. I don't see myself traveling in the next year or so, should I still join?

Certainly, Friendship Force is not a travel club; there are many other aspects of involvement. The mission of Friendship Force is to build global goodwill through personal friendships. This can be accomplished in other ways. Consider being a day or home host, a small group dinner host, or attending social activities to build friendships with others who have an interest in the goals of Friendship Force.

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

Yes, there are 97 clubs in the States and clubs can arrange what are called "Domestic Journeys" with a club where there is a mutual interest in such a visit. FFI Staff can also arrange these visits.

16. Do you travel as a group?

Yes and no; the group usually consists of 10 to 20 individuals, known as "Ambassadors." Travel arrangements vary from departing Lincoln as a group to some, or all, of the individuals making their travel arrangements & meeting at a specific location in the host city at a definite time. 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 Ambassador Coordinator.

17. What is an "Ambassador or Host Coordinator?"

An "Ambassador or Host Coordinator" is an individual who has applied and been approved by the Board of Directors to plan, organize, and lead either the outbound or inbound Journey. This is open to anyone who has the desired leadership qualities and can make the commitment of time needed for adequate planning and recruiting of Ambassadors with a 9 to 12-month lead-time. Our club has some great experienced Ambassador Coordinators who are more than willing to mentor a first-time Ambassador Coordinator. In addition, each year the Journey Resource Coordinator conducts a series of Ambassador and Host Coordinator Workshops; all interested individuals may participate.

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

You will receive periodic newsletters titled "Passport," and frequent e-mails about activities, new members, and journeys. Check out the local **club's website**: www.friendshipforcelincoln.org When you become a member you will be asked to join the **members-only website**: my.friendshipforce.org There you can find the listing of journeys, club news, activities, etc.

19. What types of Social Activities does the club have?

The social committee and other individuals prepare several activities: day trips, welcome and farewell dinners for incoming journeys, game nights, trivia events, etc. In addition, we have a monthly Breakfast & Conversation on the second Saturday of each month at the same location; while LEO's or "Let's Eat Out" is lunch/dinner at a different restaurant four or more times each year; usually, at an ethnic restaurant where a member of the staff explains what makes the food representative of a specific culture.

20. What should I expect financially when I go on an Outbound Journey?

On an outbound journey, we who are visitors have all or most of our expenses paid by the host club and its members; we pay for our transportation to the host country and a fee to Friendship Force International for the journey; some of that fee is paid to the hosting club to entertain us. If there is a tour before or after the journey, you will 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 vour host family that represent vour/their interests and/or vour home community.

21. Am I required to host or go on Outbound Journeys if I am a member?

There is no requirement by our club for members to host visitors or go on outbound 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. 8

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

There are several other ways to travel. You may travel with another club from this country if they have room for you. There are Discover trips that include people from several countries where the Ambassadors travel somewhere and stay mostly in hotels but meet people from that country to interest them in forming Friendship Force Clubs. Regional and International Conferences are held each year. See the list of journeys and events on the **members-only website**: <u>my.friendshipforce.org</u> Go to <u>www.thefriendshipforce.org</u> to get an overview of journeys and activities.

Membership & Dues

Membership is open to anyone who accepts Friendship Force principles and pays annual membership dues. Our current dues are **\$50 per person**. This includes your initial complimentary name badge; you have a choice of a pin or magnetic attachment. The membership year is from January 1 – December 31. The club collects dues for the following year beginning October 1; all dues must be submitted by the end of December. As a member of The Friendship Force of Lincoln, you are eligible to apply for all the travel journeys organized by both our club and the Friendship Force International (FFI) office in Atlanta. After joining, you will receive an email inviting you to log in to a **members-only website:** my.friendshipforce.org Through the members-only website, you can peruse the FFI catalog of journeys, join book clubs, take virtual journeys, be a pen pal, and do many more activities.



Meetings and Social Events

- The FFL Annual Meeting is held in August or September where the election of officers for the following year takes place. FFL Journeys are announced and sign up if you want to be made aware of updates for a particular journey.

- **Breakfast and Conversation** takes place the second Saturday of each month from 8:30 a.m. until approximately 9:45 a.m. Currently, these take place at Stauffer's Café, 5600 So 48th Street. Each person will have the opportunity to introduce him/herself and address a "Topic for Discussion."

Let's Eat Out or "LEO" is held four or 5 times a year depending on the number of other social and journey activities. These meals are usually served at an ethnic restaurant. They are held at lunchtime or dinner hour. Each person orders off the menu and receives an individual check. A member of the restaurant's staff explains the significant differences in the specific ethnic cuisine.

- All-member meetings are conducted three or four times a year and usually center around a recent outbound journey.

- **Board of Directors' Meetings** are held each month. Currently, these meetings take place on the first Monday of the month at Walt Library, 6701 S. 14th.

- All meetings and social activities are listed in our newsletter and/or announced via group emails to our members and prospective members.

Passport Newsletter

Passport is produced quarterly or more times a year; it is posted on our website: <u>www.friendshipforcelincoln.org</u> A group email is sent to all members and prospective members with a direct link to each newsletter. For the few individuals who do not have email, a copy is mailed.

Name Badges

New members are issued a complimentary name badge. You will be asked to indicate your preference for a pin or magnetic attachment plus your name as you would like it to appear on the badge. The name badge will be given to you personally or mailed to you. 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 Activity, both outbound and inbound.

Officers

Club officers and committee chairs serve from January through December. We elect officers at the annual meeting in August. Our elected positions that serve one-year terms are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The newly elected President appoints committee Chairs. The President and Vice President are the only officers who are limited to two consecutive one-year terms. The President is the only officer who may not serve as an ambassador or Host Coordinator while she/he occupies that office.

Participation

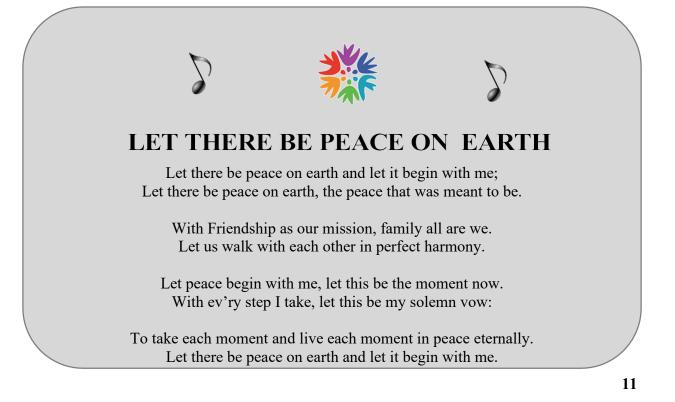
Every member of the club is strongly encouraged to participate in both incoming and outgoing journeys. This can be done in several different ways: home host ambassadors, day hosts, small group dinner hosts, and/or attend journey activities and other activities as advertised.

a world of friends is a world of peace

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.

I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE





If You Have Questions, Contact:

Marilyn Watson, <u>mkwats@windstream.net</u> 402-423-9152 (H) 402-730-3340 (C)

Mary Bryant, a long time FFL member, compiled most of the content of this Handbook. Graphics were by Betty Starr, FF Lincoln. Revised by Arlene Rea, FF Lincoln in 2024. 

We realize the success of a club largely depends on the early involvement of new members. The Friendship Force of Lincoln Board of Directors would like to know ALL the following committees/projects you would be interested in working with.

This activity list will be forwarded to you as a survey after the orientation.

- 1. Be a supporter by paying dues and participating when I am able.
- 2. Participate in an Outbound Journey to Indonesia, May 30 June 14, 2024.
- Inbound Journey Committee for 2024 from San Diego, September 30 October 4, 2024. (Journey Team Coordinator is Judy Keetle. The team will help Judy set up the program, home hosts, dinner hosts, day hosts, or any other responsibilities.)
- 4. Home Host for San Diego for one or two ambassadors, September 30 October 4, 2024. Your home: this is where the ambassador/s will stay during the journey. If you have a bed available for a couple, a single person or two singles, then we need you.
- 5. Day Host for San Diego, September 30 October 4, 2024. Another way to "take part" in the journey and get to know our guests. A home host may ask for help during the day by asking for a "day host". This gives the home host a chance to plan for the evening when the ambassadors return.
- 6. Small Group Dinner Host for San Diego, September 30 October 4, 2024 During the week we are hosting ambassadors, we plan small dinner gatherings (6 - 8 persons) in several members' homes.
- 7. **Outbound Journey Team Coordinator for 2025** (Leads a group to a host city/country. Is a member of the board during the Journey year 2025.
- 8. **Social Committee.** (Julie Splichal is the leader. Help with annual meeting, holiday party, and journey welcome and farewell events.)
- LEO (Let's Eat Out). (Carlene and Bruce Keim lead this team. Four or five times a year, members are invited to an ethnic restaurant and learn about the culture and cuisine.
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- 10.COIL (Open World) Team for 2024 and 2025. (Julie Albrecht is the Coordinator. Team helps with the development of a program in Lincoln for young people from the developing countries of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic -USSR.)
- 11. **Diversity/International Service Committee**. (Janet Walters, Nancy Comer, and Phyllis Arth are leading the committee. Help set up activities that encourage understanding and sharing with cultural groups in the city, following the FFI theme of "A world of friends is a world of peace.")
- 12. **Join FFL Saturday Breakfast:** 2nd Saturday of the month at Stauffer's Café and Pie Shoppe, 48th and Nebraska Parkway. Members share their responses to a published question prepared by Marilyn Watson and her committee.
- 13.**Day Trips:** (Judy Keetle organizes trips or events to celebrate diverse cultures in the Lincoln area. One or two per year.)
- 14.**Speakers' Bureau diplomat**. Visit with your community group(s) who may have have an interest in a Friendship Force program.
- 15. Trivia Night, on Zoom (Midge Dublinske and Phyllis Arth are the leaders.)
- 16.Game Day/Night. (Marilyn Watson is the leader.)
- 17. Feature article writer for the quarterly Passport.
- 18. Feature article writer for the Lincoln Journal Star Neighborhood Extra
- 19.**Passport Newsletter formatting.** (Format the newsletter with print-ready articles. Currently, issues are quarterly or every three months. Member of the board is optional but preferred.)
- 20. Website maintenance (Update and maintain the website with pictures, articles, and Newsletters. Being a Board member is optional.)
- 21. Photographer for local meetings and events. (Take pictures during the various meetings and activities throughout 2024. Send pictures to President Arlene Rea for publication in newsletters, FaceBook, and Neighborhood Extra. Use your cellular phone.)
- 22. Auditing Committee (Review the finances. Usually done in February or March).
- 23.Nominating Committee (Be on a committee to nominate the officers for 2025.)

The Friendship Force of Lincoln Membership Application \$50 per person

DateNew Me	ember Renewing	g Member
Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip
	Mobile Nun	nber
Email Address:	Mould you like to rea	acive on electronic hirthday greating? V
Birthday: Month Day	would you like to rec	ceive an electronic birthday greeting? Y N_
May Friendship Force of Lincoln use your photograph in brochures, media articles, website, FaceBook, etc. to promote the Friendship Force organization? Y_N_		

New Members receive a complimentary name badge. Check your choice: Pin Magnetic Name on Badge:		
If you are a renewing member and need a new name badge contact, Membership Chair Marilyn Watson at 402-423-9152		

Ways I can help: (check as many a	as you like)	
Activities Committee	_	_Inbound Day Host
COIL (Open World) Committee	-	_Inbound Dinner Host
Computer/Internet Skills		_Journey Coordinator
Diversity/International Service C		Nominating Committee
Feature article writer for Passpo Neighborhood Extra		Passport Newsletter formatting Speakers Bureau
Future Officer	-	Social Committee
Future Board Member	-	Other
Inbound Home Host	-	
		

Make check payable to: Friendship Force of Lincoln. Send to Friendship Force, PO Box 30334, Lincoln, NE 68503

