



PASSPORT

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Mongolian Delegates Visit Friendship Force of Lincoln through Open World

The week of November 8 to November 15 was an intense 32-hour learning experience for five Mongolian leaders who visited Lincoln and stayed with Friendship Force of Lincoln members in their homes. This Open World Journey was sponsored by the Congressional Office of International Leadership (COIL). Friendship Force of Lincoln has hosted many international visitors, mainly from former Soviet Union countries.

All the Delegates work for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in Mongolia. They requested to visit and learn from NGOs in Lincoln. They visited Lincoln Community Foundation, Center for People, Counseling Services, OutNebraska LGBTQ+, Friendship Home, Child Advocacy Center, Appleseed, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), Disability Rights of Nebraska, Lighthouse, the State Capitol, and Civic Nebraska.

In addition to the rigorous schedule, they enjoyed a night with FFL friends for a welcome dinner to celebrate a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner; enjoyed an evening at the Lied Center for a performance of The Little Mermaid; and tasted local cuisine at Valentino's and Runza. Home hosts and programmers were treated to a dinner of foods prepared and served in the Mongolian tradition.



Mongolian Visitors and their Home Hosts met at the home of Karen and Gary Heusel for dinner after their two day stay in Washington, D.C.

Left Back row: Karen and Gary Heusel with their guest Tsevenravdan (Seven) Tsogbat; Phyllis Arth and her seated guest Emkhdelger (Deggii) Bayanbaraat. On the couch: Jan Sibal and her guests Ariunaa Jamiyankhorloo and Ulziitungalag (Ulzii) Khuajin. Back row: Milt and Gayle Bayer with their guest Nomin Enkhbaatar, facilitator, between them; Eloise Hiatt and her guest Dorhnaljirmaa (Namee) Dagvarenchin. Their “American” name is in parenthesis.

From the FFL President, November 2024



By Arlene Rea, President

Greetings! This past week some international members reminded me of how important Friendship Force is to me and the other community and world members. Seven people from Mongolia, a nation with Russia to the South and China to the north, included five delegates, one facilitator, and one interpreter and were guests in our homes to learn about the American culture. They so willingly shared their culture with us as well.

A huge thank you goes to Julie Albrecht and Judy Keetle, who co-chaired the week. In addition, Phyllis Arth, Milt and Gayle Bayer, Eloise Hiatt, Karen and Gary Heusel, and Jan Sibal home-hosted the delegates. They, along with Maxine Moul and I, helped with the programming. Go to fflincoln.org to read more about their visit and to see some pictures.

Friendship Force of Lincoln has been active throughout the summer months with two special day trips, several LEO's, and Breakfast and Conversation every second Saturday of the month at Stauffer's Pie Shoppe. The Diversity and Community Service Committee has continued to learn more from the Muslim community. Maxine Moul is Coordinator for an outgoing Journey next June to Indonesia. Several journeys are scheduled for 2025.

Thirty members attended our Annual Meeting in September. Officers were elected. Congratulations to Midge Dublinske as Vice President, Ann Quinlan as Secretary, and Milt Bayer as Treasurer. Thank you for giving me the honor to continue as President. See page 5 for more details.

On a personal note, I want to thank Midge Dublinske for stepping up her vice-presidential duties by taking over some of my responsibilities while my husband is undergoing cancer treatment. It is comforting to know that Midge and the Board are willing and ready to step in when necessary.

I encourage you to visit our Facebook page, Friendship Force of Lincoln, Nebraska, and FFL's webpage, at fflincoln.org. On the latter, you can access many important pages such as applications for journey coordinators, membership, dues grants, travel grants, etc. All can be found on the main page at fflincoln.org under About FFLincoln.

I hope you can join other members for Elite Tours' Lincoln's Holiday Lights on December 8. See page 3 for more details. Join other members as they contribute gift cards to "older kids" through the Center for People. See page 4 for details.

In friendship,
President, Arlene Rea

FFL Board approves dues grants

The FFL Board, to encourage membership, is offering free dues to community members who may not have the means to pay the \$50 membership dues for 2025. In return for the dues grant, we ask the "member" to commit to participating in one or more activities of Friendship Force of Lincoln or Friendship Force International.

If you know someone interested in applying for a dues grant, please contact Midge Dublinske, chair of the scholarship committee, at 402-560-2884 or midge.dublinske@gmail.com. First come, first served as there are a limited number of grants each year.

FFL Journey to Java, Indonesia is June 25 to July 7, 2025

By Maxine Moul,
Journey Coordinator

The international Journey for Friendship Force of Lincoln to Yogyakarta and Bogor, Indonesia has been scheduled for June, 2025. We have 11 Ambassadors indicating an interest in participating in 2025, from Lincoln and members of other clubs.

Our hosts have put together great potential itineraries, and I am looking forward to experiencing those. Our host club at Yogyakarta will be June 25 to July 1 and Bogor will host us July 1 to July 7. Please contact me at mmoul1@allophone.com or phone at 402-432-1386.

Holiday Celebration Starts with Tour of Lights

There's still time to sign up for the FFL holiday celebration. Do you yearn to view the beautiful residential holiday light displays but dread researching the best routes or dealing with driving at night? Now's your chance to see the displays with your FFL friends in grand style. On December 8 at 6:30 p.m. we'll depart from the Seacrest Field parking lot (near the recycling area) aboard a luxury Party bus. Sing-along to Christmas Carols with a deluxe sound and light system. Hot chocolate and cookie bar will provide treats, a prize will be awarded for the best holiday sweater/accessory, and you may go home with a gift from drawings.

The cost is \$20.00 per person, please put your payment in the mail today! Checks should be made out to FFL and mailed to Julie Splichal, 215 E 9th St #2, Crete, NE 68333. If you have questions or need a ride to the pickup location contact Julie at 402-499-7784.



Happy Birthday to our FFL Club Members

Ridenour, Brian	2-Nov	Shibata, Maryjo	25-Dec	King, Pat	9-Jan
Heusel, Karen	4-Nov	Arth, Phyliss	29-Dec	Anderson, Dorothy	14-Jan
Purtzer, Lois	16-Nov	Zwiebel, Joanne	30-Dec	Behmer, Bill	22-Jan
Brown, Joann	15-Dec	Sander, Sharolyn	2-Jan	Moul, Maxine	26-Jan
Ridder, Barbara	22-Dec	Spahr, Kathleen	7-Jan	Rea, Jim	30-Jan

Brownville Explored on FFL Day Trip

By Judy Keetle, Day Trip Chair

On a beautiful, warm autumn day, Friday October 11, seven FFL members took a day trip to Brownville, Nebraska: Dorothy Anderson, Midge Dublinske, Susan Grieger, Jacque Scholz, Julie Splichal, Marilyn Watson, and me.

A docent from the Brownville Historical Society showed us several buildings on Main Street including the Brown-Carson House, the Town Hall and Opera House, Middleton Shop/Wheel Museum, Brownville Post Office, and the Brownville Historical Society Office. We talked with an artist who paints with pastels on sandpaper. Lunch was at the charming Lyceum. After lunch George Newbert gave a tour of his fascinating Flatwater Folk Art Museum. A visit to the Whiskey Run Creek Vineyard and Winery ended our day in Brownville.

Some interesting facts we learned about Brownville:

1. Founded in 1854, the entire town of Brownville is a National Register Historic District.
2. Daniel Freeman, the first homesteader to file a claim under the Homestead Act of 1862, staked his claim at a New Year's Eve party in Brownville on January 1, 1867.
3. At its peak in 1880, Brownville had a population of 1,309. There were three banks, four drug stores, 12 churches and 17 saloons. The 2020 census was 132.

Day trips are a good way to learn about interesting places in Nebraska, while enjoying the company of fellow FFL members. On the way home we brainstormed ideas for future day trips. Watch for announcements about FFL day trips in 2025.



Dorothy Anderson, Marilyn Watson Enjoy Brownville.

Help Teenagers in Need with Gift Cards for the Holidays

An activity with our Mongolian visitors was at the Center for People. They helped pack Thanksgiving boxes. It was a small dent in the 3,400 boxes the Center will distribute. For the Holidays, The Center will distribute similar food boxes with gifts for children. New donated toys, clothes, games, etc. will be distributed with food boxes around December 16.

Appropriate gifts for older children are not as easily obtained. Therefore, the Center gives gift cards. The Center needs donations of gift cards (\$20 or other) from the community. In the past around COVID time, FFL collected gift cards for the Center. The Board has agreed we should encourage the members to do so again. The cards can be from Target, Wal-Mart, Scheels, Dick's Sporting Goods, Kohl's, Dollar Tree, grocery stores, etc.

Susan Grieger will collect the gift cards and deliver them to the Center for People on December 13. She will accept the cards in person at the December 8 Holiday Bus Tour of Lincoln, or they can be mailed or delivered to her home, 2645 Van Dorn, 68502, between December 8 – 12. If you plan to deliver them, please call ahead at 402-570-3366.

Syracuse Brewery, Mr. Hui's No. 2 are LEO Restaurants

**By Bruce and Carlene Keim,
LEO Co-Chairs**

On September 25, the Lincoln Friendship Force went to Syracuse Nebraska for a Let's Eat Out at the Roc Hopper Brewery. Fourteen members and one guest found that Ben Biehl started his brewery from a homebrew kit. Ben and Katy then bought the old pharmacy building and turned it into a very nice addition to Syracuse. The building was formerly the location for the Syracuse Opera House, an Oliver farm equipment dealership, and the ASCS farm government agency. Ben still brews the beers at his home south of Syracuse.



Lincoln FFL members enjoyed their visit to a Syracuse brewery.

Our last LEO of the year was held at Mr. Hui's No. 2 on October 22 with 17 members and one guest present. With many menu options, the manager/waitress, Yuki, helped us understand what we were ordering. Yuki came from China to Brooklyn, N.Y., and then to Lincoln and has been here for more than 11 years. Mr. Hui's had many choices of large beef, chicken, and seafood dishes.

We thank all the members who participated in the LEOs this year and hope to see you next year. We will probably have the first LEO in March or April, 2025. If you did not have a chance to make it this year, watch for next year's listings as it is a great way to meet members.

2024 Annual Meeting Includes By-Laws, Diversity Reports

Thirty members attended the annual meeting of Friendship Force of Lincoln with President Arlene Rea presiding. Twelve committees reported on their activities for the year and upcoming events. Treasurer Milt Bayer reviewed the 2023 Audit Report, the Year-to-Date Budget, and income and cash flow statements. He reminded members that the 2025 dues are payable before December 31, 2024.

The Nominating Committee moved to elect the following officers for 2025: President, Arlene Rea; Vice President, Midge Dublinske; Secretary, Ann Quinlan; Treasurer, Milt Bayer. The motion carried.

The Bylaws Committee Chair, Midge Dublinske, reviewed the summary of changes. On behalf of the committee, she moved for the adoption of the Revised and Restated Bylaws as presented. The motion carried.

The Diversity and Community Service Committee presented the program "FFL Reaching Out to Connect." The committee shared their activities with the Muslim community including teas, tours of Muslim markets, and a dinner with women from the community and FFL members.

2025 Journeys Match FFL with Columbia Cascade, Sarasota

By Pat Novak, Journey Resource Chair

On September 23-30, 2025, Friendship Force of Lincoln will host the Columbia Cascade Friendship Force (CCFF). It is a bit early in the game, but we must gather resources to give them a great trip to Lincoln. A preliminary itinerary has already been planned (subject to revision as needed), contact has been made with the CCFF and they are already generating interest in this exchange. We will need a coordinator for this exchange to oversee the event with needed home hosts, day hosts, and small dinner hosts. Check your calendars to see if you can help with this exchange and contact Pat Novak (mutanu123@yahoo.com) ASAP so we can move forward. We are anticipating 10-15 visiting ambassadors so we need your help for a success.

An outbound exchange is planned with the Sarasota, FL club in November. I have not yet received any specific dates for this journey. We will need a journey coordinator to facilitate and organize this adventure. If you are interested in serving as a leader, or just going as an ambassador and enjoying Florida in the winter, let Pat Novak (mutanu123@yahoo.com) know ASAP.

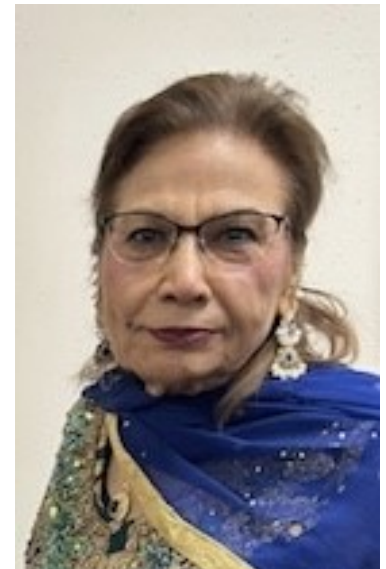
Remembering Mahe Naseem

By Janet Walters and Phyllis Arth,

Diversity and Community Service (CDSC) Co-Chairs

Can we still make a difference? Mahe Naseem, in her short time of working with FFL's Diversity and Community Service Committee (DCSC) as a liaison to the Muslim community, showed us very clearly that the answer is a resounding 'yes'. Her willingness to share information about her culture and religion enabled us to all learn how to be more sensitive hosts, guests, and friends to individuals who are Muslim.

She introduced us to her friends and invited us into her family celebrations. She had joined Friendship Force of Lincoln with a goal of serving on the DCSC committee. Mahe recently passed away while traveling in her beloved Pakistan. As a committee, we will miss her presence and wisdom. She taught us to never stop trying to make a difference and we are grateful for the **Mahe Naseem** time that we had with her.



Dues Reminder

The 2025 Friendship Force of Lincoln dues are due by December 31, 2024.

Please **complete the form on the last page** of this Passport and **mail** it along with your **check for \$50** to The Friendship Force of Lincoln, P.O. Box 30334, Lincoln NE 68506. Thank you for your promptness. We appreciate it!

Calendar December 2024 to February 2025

- Dec 2—**FFL Board Meeting and Potluck**, 12:00 noon, at Arlene and Jim’s home, 6157 Old Farm Ct
- Dec 8—**FFL Holiday Party, Elite Party Bus**, 6:30- 8:30 p.m. Seacrest Field, 72nd and A. Reservations needed.
- Dec 14—**Breakfast and Conversation**, 8:30 a.m. Stauffer’s Café and Pie Shoppe, 5600 S 48th
- Dec 31—**2025 Dues** (\$50) and completed application; send to P.O. Box 30334, Lincoln, NE 68503
- Jan 6, 2025—**FFL Board Meeting**, 2 p.m. Walt Library, 6701 South 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68512
- Jan 11—**Breakfast and Conversation**, 8:30 a.m. Stauffer’s Café and Pie Shoppe, 5600 S 48th
- Feb 3--**FFL Board Meeting**, 2 p.m. Walt Library, 6701 South 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68512
- Feb 8--**Breakfast and Conversation**, 8:30 a.m. Stauffer’s Café and Pie Shoppe, 5600 S 48th
- March –**LEO TBD**
- June 25 – July 7—**Indonesia Outbound**
- Sept 23 – 30 -- **Columbia Cascade Inbound**

When kindness is rewarded with kindness....



Vickie McDonald and Larry Harnisch and Open World delegates from Georgia

By President Arlene Rea

Vickie McDonald and her husband Larry Harnisch were hosts to several of the delegates from Georgia for our Friendship Force of Lincoln Open World hosting in November, 2023. They became fast friends. Vickie and Larry reciprocated with a trip to Georgia this year where they were welcomed into the homes of the delegates and even attended a wedding.

As a result of the visit, the Open World program has invited Vickie and Larry to Washington, DC in December at the U. S. Capitol to celebrate COIL’s (Congressional Office of International Leadership) 25th Anniversary. They have been asked to speak about their visit. We are excited for Vickie and Larry and await pictures and stories to be featured in the next Passport.

Below is the e-mail that Vickie received.

Greetings from the Open World program. Suzi and Rima have shared the details of your recent adventure in Georgia, and I was able to follow on FB. We are planning a dinner on Wednesday, December 4 at the U.S. Capitol to celebrate COIL’s 25th anniversary. We would like to invite you to say a few words about the impact that the Open World program has had on your community, what you experienced on your reciprocal visit, and any future activity/partnerships/friendships that might be sustained. Would you be able to join us for this event? We would also like to invite one of the delegates/alumni that you visited with. Might you suggest whom? Suzi had indicated “I would like to recommend Tskriala Shermadini. However, I also want to highlight the contribution of Tamta Dolenjashvili during the host family visit to Georgia. She was incredibly helpful, hosting us in Shekviteli at her family home, welcoming us at TV Pirveli (one of Georgia's most popular stations), and even inviting the delegates to a traditional Georgian wedding for a more immersive experience.” We hope that you can join us for this celebration. All my best, Lewis

FFL Things to Know — November 2024

Birthday Acknowledgment

JoEllen Polzien sends out birthday greetings to those who have volunteered to give their birthdates. She can be contacted at H: 402-483-1112 C: 402-202-6924 jwpolz1@gmail.com.

Courtesy

When an FFL member achieves something noteworthy, is ill, experiences the death of a loved one, etc., let Gayle Bayer, FFL Courtesy Chair, know so she can send a card. bayergayle@gmail.com cell 531-207-6042.

Day Trips

If you have ideas for a day trip where members of Friendship Force of Lincoln can learn and enjoy the company of those with like interests, please contact Judy Keetle, jkeetle2@gmail.com, cell 402-432-0830.

Friendship Force International – Individual Journeys

FFI has started a new program. Individuals can contact FF members who have volunteered to host individuals or families visiting their town. A list of interested FF members willing to host is kept by FFI. This is an effort to meet the needs of FF members who are unable to participate in scheduled club-to-club journeys. The host and the traveler(s) decide how the journey will be structured.

Friendship Force of Lincoln’s website:

www.fflincoln.org. It is being updated by Arlene Rea. You will find the listing of the Board of Directors, important upcoming dates, ambassador, membership and dues grant applications, a listing of Friendship Force International clubs, and more.

Member-only Website.

If you have not received notices of journeys, book clubs, pen pals, etc. from Friendship Force International (FFI), you may not have logged on to the members-only website. Go to my.friendshipforce.org. Enter your name and e-mail address. Then click on SIGN-UP. Follow the steps.

Membership and Need-based Dues Grant

If you know of someone who might be interested in learning more about Friendship Force, contact Arlene Rea, arlenerea14@gmail.com, or 402-432-4425. The membership form can be accessed at fflincoln.org under FFL Lincoln Club Resources and also on Page 9 of this Issue. The Need-based Dues Grant application is also accessible through the website.

Speakers Bureau

If you know of a group that would like a short program about Friendship Force, contact Arlene Rea. Also, let her know if you would be available to give programs to community groups.

The screenshot shows the website for Friendship Force of Lincoln. At the top, there are links for 'Lincoln Tourism' and 'Visit Nebraska'. The main header includes the organization's logo and name, along with a language selection dropdown. A navigation bar contains links for Home, About FF Lincoln, Newsletters, Club Board Members, and Calendar. The main content area features a photo of a group of people at a meeting, followed by a 'Welcome New Members to Friendship Force of Lincoln' section. This section includes text about a recent event on Saturday, February 24, and lists the names of new members: Prudence Coccodrilli, Leslie Ryan, and Migde Dublinske. Below this, there are three columns of links: 'What is Friendship Force?' (with sub-links 'Being an Ambassador' and 'Being a Host'), 'A Brief History of FFI' (with sub-link 'Upcoming Journeys'), and 'FFI Video'.

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

Date: _____ New Member _____ Renewing Member _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Number: _____ Mobile Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Birthday: Month ___ Day ___ Would you like to receive an electronic birthday greeting? Y N

Does Friendship Force of Lincoln have your permission to use your photograph in brochures, media articles, website, Facebook, etc. to promote the Organization? Y N

New Members receive a complimentary name badge. Circle your choice: Pin Magnetic

Ways I can help: (Circle as many as you like)

Club supporter

Inbound Home Host

Activities Committee

Inbound Dinner Host

Open World (COIL) Committee

Journey Coordinator

Computer/Internet Skills

Officer Nominating Committee

Diversity & Community Service Committee

Passport Newsletter Formatting

Feature article writer for Passport or Neighborhood Extra

Speakers' Bureau

Social Committee

Future Officer

Other _____

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