



## Newsletter May 2024

### Message from FFLA Leadership Team Chair Sumi Arnheim

Greetings FFLA members and friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. We are welcoming guests and new members, and embarking on new adventures, including a newsletter and activities. Our goal is to get to know one another better, forming new relationships and strengthening existing friendships.

Last month, we launched a monthly gathering. Thank you, Laura Clines for hosting this event. After much consideration, the Leadership Team decided to pivot from "7 at 7" to "3 at 3" (the third Sunday of each month at 3). An email has already gone out explaining our reasoning. We hope a weekend event will encourage your participation but we know it may not fit into everyone's schedule. We will continue to plan other events and activities, varying the day of the week and time. Please watch for email announcements.....in fact, our first "3 at 3" announcement has been sent. Please mark your calendars to reserve the third Sunday of each month.



Exciting news journey wise! FFLA will be going on an outbound journey to FF Atlanta in October 2024. We will welcome an inbound journey from FF Nashik Riverside, India (November 10 to 17, 2024). Our 2025 dates are tentative and once we have coordinated with the other clubs, we will update you. Outbound 2025 journeys are to FF Knoxville, TN and Norderstedt. We've been assigned, along with Central Arizona, to host FF Chiang Mai, Thailand in October, 2025. We're looking forward to these opportunities and will need everyone's help and support to ensure successful journeys!

We welcome Judy Francis onto the Leadership Team. Judy will be phasing in as treasurer as Carol Garvey phases out. Thank you, Carol, for your dedication to keeping our funds and books in excellent shape.

If you have any suggestions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me at [leadershipffla@gmail.com](mailto:leadershipffla@gmail.com) or to anyone on the Leadership Team.

In friendship,  
Sumi Arnheim, FFLA Leadership Chair

## **Upcoming Conference**

The Friendship Force North American Conference will be held in Milwaukee, WI Oct 7 - 10th. The Conference offers FFLA members the opportunity to make new friends and catch-up with friends from Canada, Mexico and US clubs. You will hear from FFI Staff and Board Members along with North American FF club leaders. There will be workshops to attend and optional excursions to explore the Milwaukee area.

To learn more, or to register for the conference use this link: [FFI North American Conference](#).

## **2024 Journeys:**

**Outbound** - Atlanta, Georgia - October 10-15th

Plans are well underway for the FFLA Club Journey to the Greater Atlanta Friendship Force Club. Atlanta has much to offer, such as, Indian Mounds, Presidential Libraries, Civil Rights history and more. There may be an optional post trip offered. For more information, reach out to Laura Clines, [lacwest@gmail.com](mailto:lacwest@gmail.com) or Pat Gomez, [pg.ffla@gmail.org](mailto:pg.ffla@gmail.org).

**Inbound - India is coming!**

The dates are being finalized and the planning will begin soon. The Nashik Riverside club will be going to Kern County around the first week of November. They will then come to Los Angeles around the second week of November (tentatively 11/10-11/17).

If you would like to participate in this incoming journey, we will need home hosts, day hosts, small dinner party hosts and various committee members.

Please let me know how you would like to contribute to the success of this journey.

In Friendship,

*Sharon Lavenberg*, FFLA Journey Director

310 210-9922 [lavenbergs@yahoo.com](mailto:lavenbergs@yahoo.com)

## **2025 Journeys:**

**Outbound Journeys:** Knoxville, TN and Norderstedt, Germany

**Inbound Journey:** Chiang Mai, Thailand

## Member Profile

We are Sharon & Larry Lavenberg. We have been members of FFLA since 1987. When we first heard about Friendship Force from a family friend, we immediately knew that this organization was for us. We had done a lot of traveling and what we enjoyed most was meeting people from various countries and getting to know what their life is like. Over the many years that we have been members, we have made lifelong friends all over the world. We'd like to tell you about one family that we have known since 1990. Louis Lu, from Taiwan, came to stay with us with his friend John. Although we had a very enjoyable week, we didn't think we would hear from Louis again since he didn't speak English. However, Louis had 4 daughters and a son. When he went back to Taiwan, he told his eldest daughter Christine, who was in high school at the time, to be Sharon's pen pal. After Christine graduated, her youngest sister Bessie became Sharon's pen pal. Over the many years, we have visited the Lu family multiple times and all 4 daughters have stayed with us. Now, Christine lives in Los Angeles and she will soon be joined by her 2 daughters. We are honorary members of the Lu family and Christine participates in all of our family events. This is only one example of the many friendships we have made through Friendship Force.



### Leadership Team

Chair and acting secretary: Sumi Arnheim [leadershipffla@gmail.com](mailto:leadershipffla@gmail.com)

Membership: Sharon Lavenberg [lavenbergs@yahoo.com](mailto:lavenbergs@yahoo.com)

Treasurer: Carol Garvey [carolg1228@aol.com](mailto:carolg1228@aol.com) and Judy Francis [judydfrancis@hotmail.com](mailto:judydfrancis@hotmail.com)

Journeys: Sharon Lavenberg [lavenbergs@yahoo.com](mailto:lavenbergs@yahoo.com)

Outgoing Atlanta Journey: Pat Gomez [pg.ffla@gmail.com](mailto:pg.ffla@gmail.com) and Laura Clines [lacwest@hotmail.com](mailto:lacwest@hotmail.com)

Member at large (on hiatus): Caren Niewisch [cniewisch@gmail.com](mailto:cniewisch@gmail.com)

### 2024 FFI Training Opportunities

Throughout the year FFI staff members will be offering online training sessions, open to all FF club members. Topics include:

Planning for Succession within your Club

Matching Process

New Member Orientation

MyFF/Help Center Navigation

Recruiting New Members

New Club Leader Orientation

Check the FFI Member Portal to sign-up for training sessions.

Once a presentation has been given, it will be added to the Virtual Experiences recordings. To access them, log into the [FFI Member Portal](#) member portal. Once logged in, you will see a scrolling carousel. When you see Friendship Force Virtual Experience and click on this, you will be taken to the virtual experiences, click on the recordings button to view all recordings. <https://friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences-for-members/>

*"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."*

*Warren Buffett*