



friendship force
CEDAR RAPIDS-IOWA CITY

**CEDAR RAPIDS-IOWA CITY
FRIENDSHIP FORCE CLUB**

www.friendshipforcecr-ic.org

Follow us on Facebook:
Cedar Rapids- Iowa City Friendship Force

January 2023

Calendar of Events

Jan 13 2023 Zoom Trivia
7:00 PM

Jan 19 2023 Leo Czech Station
3:00PM Cedar Rapids, IA

March/April 2023 Outgoing to New Zealand and Australia

June 2023 Incoming from Taipei, Taiwan

Sept/Oct 2023 Incoming from Edmonton, CA

October 2-5 2023 World Conference Dubrovnik, Croatia

President's Message

First of all, thank you to everyone who participated in any way during the Kosovo OPEN WORLD. Connie did a fabulous job organizing and scheduling, but it truly does take a village to pull it off and everyone was part of the village. The trip went SO well and the group seemed to get so much out of it. My delegate, Diana, told me they had so many meetings but nothing was boring and they learned so much....and she had her picture taken with Santa for the first time! And I think Bajram was totally blown away that we had a birthday cake for him, so much fun!

As we head into 2023, I wish you ALL the Happiest of New Years. I am looking forward to a very busy and eventful year, as we get back to "normal" and the things Friendship Force is known for. With a major outgoing Journey to Australia/New Zealand, several incoming Journeys, another Kosovo OPEN WORLD and the World Conference in Croatia, it promises to be a whirlwind of a year!

Patty Potter 2022 Club President

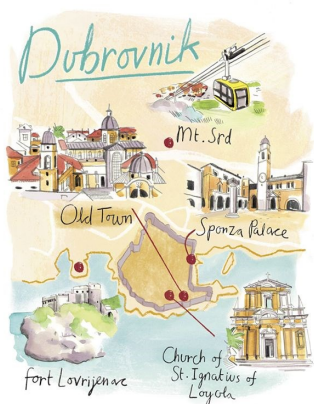


LEO January 19 Czech Town Station

Come join your Friendship Force Friends for a LEO (Lets Eat Out) on **January 19** at Czech Town Station. It is located at **69 16th Ave SW Cedar Rapids, IA 52404** in the heart of Czech Town. Breakfast is served all day and there is plenty of parking behind the restaurant. A sign up Genius has been sent. Looking forward to seeing you there.



World Conference - Dubrovnik, Croatia



Next International Conference!!! Save the date for the Friendship Force World Conference 2023: October 2-5, 2023 * Our host will be Dubrovnik, Croatia, on the beautiful Adriatic Sea. * Plans are underway, including pre- and post-conference tours in the region. There is already a small group from our club planning to attend. Look on the international web site for more information. <https://friendshipforce.org>

Club Zoom Trivia

The next Club Trivia zoom gathering will be Friday, January 13 at 7:00 pm. If you want to join in on the fun contact or watch for the email with the link, and jump on:

Audrey audrey.b@mchsi.com, or Judy jjbm526@aol.com



New Post Office Box

The club has a new Post Office Box . It's primary purpose is to have a consistent place for other clubs, organizations, etc. to mail checks and other information without having to change address's when we change officers. It is :



FF CR-IC

PO Box 1001

World Friendship Day



World Friendship Day will be coming up this Spring. The Club is working on putting the program together. We typically invite foreign student from the local high schools and colleges to a pot-luck dinner. Please keep an eye out for the details. It is always a fun and inspiring event.

Traveling Globally

Did you know that you may have the opportunity to join another clubs journey both domestically and globally. There is a list of exciting new places to explore. There are also Global Journeys. Please go to your individual FF Portal to check them out. Open your Portal, click on Help Center and then click on Journeys.



Open World and Friendship Force of Cedar Rapids-Iowa City Welcome Kosovo Delegates

Friendship Force of Cedar Rapids-Iowa City hosted Diana Nokaj, Majlina Kelmendi, Dea Gaxha, Bjram Jasaraj, Valon Xhabali and their facilitator, Luljeta Gjonbalaj for an Open World leadership program from Dec 9-17. After a mad dash through Chicago O'Hare, they made their connection to Cedar Rapids and were warmly welcomed by their hosts, Patty Potter, Joanie Lacayo, Stephanie & George Schulte and Jean & Dean Thomas at the Eastern Iowa Airport.



Each day of the week contained components for learning, exploring, and socializing. The theme was 'Sustainability of Civic Society Organizations'. The planning committee members were Judy Frascht-Miner, Gayle Bray, Shirley Rosencrans, Christine Allen, Mary Ann Nelson, Laura Thomas, Patty Potter, Connie Williams, Jim Steggall, and mentors, Steve Williams and Vic Klopfenstein.

On Saturday, the highlight was a tour of Steeple Square in Dubuque. Formerly the St. Mary's campus, the block was overhauled to serve it's neighbors. The church was



converted to an event center, and the convent, school and rectory have become transitional housing, low income housing and a day care center. Shirley Rosencrans and Connie Williams hosted the group with lunch at Lot One, then on to the Mississippi River Museum and a quick stop at St. Francis Xavier Basilica on the way home.

Sunday was a day spent with hosts, then gathering as a group at Wickiup Hill Nature Center to meet with naturalist, Kent Rector. Kent joined the delegates, hosts and club members for an American classic Thanksgiving Dinner of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy and a potluck variety of side dishes and desserts. The interpreter, Qazim Doda, joined us for this event.



Kirkwood Community College hosted the delegates on Monday, led by Mary Ann Nelson and Jim Steggall with presentations focusing on finance and sustainability. We thank Dean Dawn Wood and other professional Kirkwood faculty members for this day. The day ended with home hosted dinners provided by Rosie Russell & Jocko Hindricks, Nancy York & Tom Hess, and Margaret & Ron Nelson.



Highlights of Tuesday in Des Moines were the meeting with Deputy Secretary of State Michael Ross, then a tour of the Capitol, with lots of photo op's. We received a warm welcome at the Consulate of the Republic of Kosovo by Artan Duraku and Fatmir Rrahmanai, then stayed



for an end of year celebration reception attended by Iowa National Guard leadership, Iowa Sister State board members and many Kosovar Nationals. The day hosts were Judy Frascht-Miner, Jim Steggall, and Connie Williams.



Wednesday began at Groundswell, with breakfast and presentations by Matthew 25 and Feed Iowa First. After a tour of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, Laura Thomas moderated a panel discussion with representatives associated with Tanager Place, NewBoCo, Kiva Iowa and several other non-profit boards. The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation shared their experiences with us. By 4pm, the group was ready to move on to Craft'd, where they were met by Councilwoman Ashley Vanorney, City Manager Jeff Pomeranz, and several others in the business community. Ashley gave the delegates a tour of City Hall!

On Thursday, Iowa City arts spokespeople and University of Iowa Arts Directors provided a tour of public art downtown, a round table discussion on community engagement & sustainability efforts and a visit to Riverside Theatre, all areas of interest to several of the delegates. After lunch at Encounter Cafe, round table discussions were hosted by University of Iowa professors from the College of Law, the Dean of International Programs, Tippie College of Business, and College of Education. This provided a new perspective, as several professors have worked with Kosovo students both in Iowa and in Kosovo. Gayle Bray, Christine Allen and Dean Thomas hosted the delegates.

Friday was the day when delegates met one-on-one with local professionals in their areas, which they all enjoyed immensely. The tired, but happy group, reported the highlights of the week at the wrap up lunch session. After free time, the group attended an Orchestra Iowa Winter Concert at the Paramount Theatre with 25 Friendship Force members. The concert served as the farewell, as they had a 6am flight the next morning. I hope we all stay in touch with our Kosovo friends!



This final report serves as a record of an Open World/Congressional Office of International Leadership hosting experience. In review, please know that the delegates were all very complimentary about their experiences and adventures, and enjoyed the time shared with all of the Friendship Force hosts. Luljeta, the facilitator and Qazim, the interpreter, were very impressed by the quality of the experiences, both in the programming and people we were able to pull into this week long workshop, and with how smoothly the week progressed. And it is all due to the excellent cooperation, coordination, creativity and caring of our Friendship Force club, particularly our wonderful planning committee. Thank you so much! Additional kudos to the hosts, drivers, day hosts and dinner hosts. Thank you! We are all richer for this experience, it was a pleasure.

Connie

Journey Calendar by Judy Frascht-Miner

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!! 2023 appears to be full of exciting/interesting activities. I encourage you to get involved in our journey's even if in a small way. There are so many ways to be involved. I will use my most favorite word for Friendship Force **"ENRICHING"**. Don't wait to be asked, contact me and discuss options: Judy Frascht-Miner jjbm526@aol.com 319-540-1701

March/April 2023 -Tamworth Australia, Adelaide Australia; and Tauranga Western Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. The beginning date is **March 14, 2023**. Flights have been purchased, planning is in full swing, and bags will be packed soon!

LATE JUNE 2023—TAIPIE, TAIWAN will be visiting for an inbound. It looks like they will visit in late June if we can dispel their concerns about tornados. Preparing for their visit will pick up after the Holidays. Connie Williams has volunteered to be the Host Ambassador. There are several of you that traveled with us to Taiwan a few years ago. What a great committee to be on. If you want to be involved with the committee contact Connie Williams cmw1226@yahoo.com 319-396-4747.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023 -EDMONTON, CANADA-Communication to solidify dates has started for our inbound 2023 assignment. We will need a Host Coordinator to put together a committee and plan the itinerary during their visit. You do not do this alone and it's a wonderful experience. Contact Judy Frascht-Miner if interested, jjbm526@aol.com 319-540-1701

DECEMBER 1-9, 2023 - Open World with KOSOVO. Yes, a different group from Kosovo will be coming again in December. If you would like to be involved contact Connie Williams cmw1226@yahoo.com 319-396-4747

I look forward to traveling with many of you soon!

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