

Friendship Force of Manitoba Newsletter Winter 2021



Jim Ryan of Avalon Apiary

Celebrating Bees in the Great Outdoors

At our September meeting, Kristina and Jim Ryan gave us a very well prepared and informative presentation on beekeeping – as well as a delicious gift for each of us of a cute little jar of their honey, for which we thank them.

The presentation included many images of the inside of the hives and lots of information on the habits of bees including the queen and the drones. Both Jim and Kristina showed a great deal of knowledge and enthusiasm for their enterprise, giving us a real feeling that we had learned a lot about beekeeping.

We also thank Susan Finlay for hosting us for the last time in her huge yard, before moving to a new smaller home.

Contributed by Joan Boyd



Turning photos into beautiful books

At our October 6 meeting, accomplished “bookmaker” Eleanor Suderman shared her expertise in making memorable books from personal photos and memories. A creator and author of over 70 photo books, Eleanor described how to use online programs such as Blurb and BookSmart to produce attractive and impressive finished products. She gave additional tips on choosing, organizing and placing pictures and provided a useful handout reinforcing her suggestions. Eleanor’s husband Barry Garbutt handled the AV duties for this excellent presentation.

Many of us who have hundreds (or thousands) of pictures sitting unused on our computers were fascinated to see some of the beautiful books she had produced on exceptional trips, special celebrations, or simply outstanding nature photos. Eleanor has also written several guides to bookmaking and can be reached at eleanorsuderman@hotmail.com.

Contributed by Helen Norrie



*Helen Norrie, Eleanor Suderman
and Barry Garbutt*

Events



Let's Party!

Holiday gathering

Thursday, December 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Norwood Hotel, 112 Marion Street



Enjoy a plated dinner and visit the cash bar. After supper we will learn about festive customs followed in Holland and by families around the world who celebrate Chanukah.

It will be even more fun if you get involved in the other program activities. These include:

- ✓ Bring a Tin for the Bin. Donations will go to Winnipeg Harvest.
- ✓ Bring and buy baking. Please wrap your items securely and price it in even dollar amounts (like \$2 or \$3). Deliver your baking between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. Sale starts at 6:00 p.m. Cash only.
- ✓ Dig out your ugliest sweater and enter the Ugly Sweater contest. You know you have at least one!
- ✓ Play games and win prizes. It may be your lucky day!
- ✓ Eat, drink and celebrate with friends.



All participants must show proof of current vaccination status. Please wear your membership badge!

Contributed by Lynne Foley on behalf of the Program Committee

FFM Joins Canadian Blood Services' "Partners for Life"

FFM held its first group blood drive in September to help with the increasing demand. I was a little disappointed at first that only seven members had stepped up to donate but when I spoke with the Territory Manager at Canadian Blood Services, he informed me those were excellent numbers and that I should be very pleased. So, thank you to all those who took the time to donate!

I'm in the process of signing up FFM as a Partner for Life. We will have our own Team ID number which I will pass along to our members. This is an easy way to track donations made on behalf of the group. No matter when someone donates, their donation goes toward our yearly pledge.

Appointments are available for our group on **December 6 and 8**. Please make your appointment by booking online at www.blood.ca or calling 1-888-2Donate (1-888-236-6283) and letting them know that you are booking on behalf of Friendship Force Manitoba.

Please note you can donate blood if you are 17 years and older and there is no longer any upper age limit. If you are unsure if you can donate, you may call Canadian Blood Services at 1-888-236-6283 and have a screening done over the phone with a nurse to ensure you are eligible before registering.

While you may never know the patient who receives your donation, know that every donation you make matters. It matters not only to patients themselves but their loved ones, too.

Contributed by Diane Schipper

Travel

In spite of being in the fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Friendship Force International and FF Manitoba are making plans for Friendship Force journeys to resume.

As of mid-November, Tokyo's seven-day average of new infections was 24.4. That's well below the current rates in Manitoba. Japan has recently started relaxing its border restrictions for foreigners. Even with those positive steps, it is still too early to start booking flights. However, we are keeping our fingers crossed that FF Manitoba's multiweek journey to clubs in Japan will happen in March/April 2022. We are anticipating that 16 fully vaccinated ambassadors will be accommodated by fully vaccinated hosts in Japan.

Japan Journey Director Denise Lawson continues to be in regular contact with the various clubs in Japan. She is keeping an eye on the airline schedules and fares, and is reconnecting with the Toronto travel agent that had been recommended. Stay tuned for further details.

Our outbound journey requests for 2023 would normally be submitted now. The pandemic has altered the schedules, but FFI has allowed clubs to request their postponed 2021 journeys to 2023. We had been assigned to visit FF clubs in Seferihisar and Urla of Greater Izmir, Turkey.

Those clubs are only 30 kilometres apart so the Turkish clubs suggested that we visit only one of them. We have received a positive reply from one of the clubs. Therefore, we will confirm that week with FFI and will request a second week in another part of Turkey when the outbound request form comes out in January.

FF Manitoba anticipates two inbound journeys in 2022. FF Koriyama, which we plan to visit in the spring, hopes to visit us sometime in August. FF Lower Columbia (including any Ketchikan, Alaska ambassadors) anticipates visiting FF Manitoba in the second or third week of September. As noted in the last newsletter, FF Lower Columbia's club policy is that all of their ambassadors be fully vaccinated and they will only stay with hosts who are fully vaccinated.

In this time of uncertainty exact dates and other details are still pending for all of the above. In the

meantime, most FF Manitoba club members probably received their second Covid-19 doses several months ago so we will be eligible for booster shots soon. And don't forget about the seasonal influenza vaccine too. After coping with 30 months of the Covid-19 pandemic, one wouldn't want to have a bad case of the flu derailing one's journey plans!

Journey directors and journey committee members are needed for both of these incoming groups.

Don't forget about the FFI Virtual Experiences <https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/> while you are waiting for the real thing.

Susan Finlay, Journey Coordinator

To go or not to go... Japan 2022

We are still in a holding pattern waiting to see what happens with Covid numbers in Japan. Their government travel site states that opening to tourists will not happen until at least January or February. They have lessened the on-arrival quarantine period for business, foreign national and essential travellers. At present, we have no idea if tourists will be able to land in the new year without a period of quarantine. These are all unknown variables.

Both clubs in Japan which have been waiting for us for over a year are being very patient – they can respond with very short notice if we are able to travel. Presently, I am watching a multicity flight price Winnipeg to Hiroshima; Matsuyama to Sendai; Tokyo to Winnipeg. The price for these flights is fluctuating between \$1,650 and \$2,200 CDN. Travel from Hiroshima to Matsuyama, Sendai to Koriyama and Koriyama to Tokyo will be by ferry or train at an additional cost.

I have surveyed all ambassadors and people on the wait list to confirm interest. If you have not responded, please do so.

Denise Lawson, Journey Director

FFM: Brought to you by...

President's Message

We are coming to the end of a unique year. However, there was still much to be thankful for in 2021. We hope to welcome 2022 as a more normal year where we can have our in-person meetings and start travelling once more.

I would like to thank those who attended our AGM at the Norwood Hotel on Wednesday, November 3. We had 36 in attendance, which included two guests – Joan Boyd's guest, Brenda Barbour, and Helen Whetter's guest, Yingke Li. Welcome to Brenda Barbour, who became our newest member. It was also encouraging that many of you renewed your memberships, and we thank you for that.

I would like to thank Denise, Thelma, Sina and Diane and their committees, our elected board members, and also our committee chairs Lynne, Gail and Susan. We will be forming our committees for 2022 early in the new year. I would like to encourage all members to consider volunteering to serve on one of the following committees. Getting involved in this way is a very gratifying experience, and it also allows you to get a better picture of how Friendship Force works:

- Program
- Communications
- Audit
- History
- Membership
- Fundraising

Additional committees may be created as needed.

Our Program Committee is in the process of planning a fun Holiday Party. We hope to see all of you there wearing your "ugly holiday sweaters."

I am looking forward to 2022 and anticipate that it will be wonderful year. We have one outbound journey and two inbound journeys in the planning stages. We will keep our fingers crossed that they will happen. FFI is implementing changes that will enhance communication between clubs and all members

throughout the world such as sending out information in eight different languages.

Happy Holidays! Continue to stay safe and we look forward to travelling and hosting in 2022.

Peggy Smith



2022 Board Members

Thelma Sures, Treasurer
Denise Lawson, Vice President
Lynda Walker, Secretary
Peggy Smith, President

Board Members (2021)

President: Peggy Smith phsmith448@gmail.com

Vice President: Denise Lawson frdelaws@mts.net

Secretary: Diane Schipper dschipper@shaw.ca filling in for Sina Romsa

Treasurer: Thelma Sures thelma@escape.ca

Committee Chairs and Members

Journey Coordinator: Susan Finlay sufinlay@shaw.ca, 204-339-7956

Past President: Gail Keeley gailke@hotmail.ca, 204-257-9837

Program Committee: Lynne Foley

lynne_foley007@hotmail.com, Diane Schipper, Helen Norrie, Joan Boyd, Kathy Hansell, Jacky Molyneux, Miriam Fenster

Communications Committee: Gail Keeley, Bev Phillips, Lynne Foley, Marilyn Ouimet, Lynda Walker (Facebook) lyndadawnwalker@gmail.com, Lynne Roberts, Shirley Twerdun, Douglas Jackson

Newsletter Editor: Bev Phillips 204-942-5453, phillipb@mymts.net

Website: Marilyn Ouimet mouimet1@me.com

Journey Director: Denise Lawson, Japan 2022 frdelaws@mts.net

FFM Miscellany



FFM's Own Book Club

After our 2019 FFM trip to Thailand, several of us formed a book club.

Every month, one of our nine members submits a book of their choice and we usually have a month to read it before our discussion. We met virtually throughout the Covid-19 restrictions but for the last three months were able to have more pleasurable in-person get-togethers, hosted by the person who submitted the book for that month.

Every book selection definitely expanded our interests in varied topics and perhaps even our favourite authors. Many books were very enjoyable and flowed with emotion that made you want to turn pages and race to the end. Others took their time to develop a theme and plot but eventually did reach a conclusion that was worth contemplation.

Nonetheless, every novel had memorable, thought-provoking moments and supplied much fodder for energetic discussions within our group. Many times words pulled at our hearts and touched our emotions. Expressing our thoughts and often baring our hearts openly and honestly has brought us closer together in friendship.

Contributed by Kristina Ryan

New Member Orientation Returns

Before the November meeting, I held the first new member orientation in a very long time. New members received a club polar bear pin, a name tag and an information folder about FFI and being part of a journey, a copy of our bylaws and our standing rules of order. I also briefly explained how the AGM and elections would proceed and encouraged them to get involved by joining one of the committees. There was a short Q and A and discussion before the new members returned to socializing.

We already have had one new member join, and there are rumours that a couple of others are interested in joining so these orientations may become more regular. If one is announced and you would like to join us, by all means sit in.

Denise Lawson, Vice President and Membership Chair



We celebrated FFM's 25th anniversary at our November meeting with this delicious cake!

The Back Page

FF Basics

Membership renewals

Memberships run from January to December.

Renewing member: \$60

New member: \$60

Associate member: \$30

All members are being asked to complete a membership renewal form at the time they pay their membership. Please see Vice President Denise Lawson if you have paid your membership and did not complete a renewal form. This will allow us to update our membership list. Also, contact Denise with any inquiries about membership.

Address changes / Have you changed your address, email address or phone number? Please tell our VP Denise Lawson right away so she can update our membership list.

Club website / friendshipforcemanitoba.org

Club property / If you have any items belonging to the club (books, paper records, etc.), please tell our Secretary, Lynda Walker.

FF International / Go to friendshipforce.org for up-to-date information.



Great advice from Jim and Kristina Ryan of Avalon Apiary!

FFM Outreach at RRC

On October 21 I accompanied Gail Shimonek to a meeting of the Heritage Club, a retirement club for Red River College employees, to talk about Friendship Force Manitoba.

Due to Covid, the meeting was held in a gym where we were all spaced at least 10 feet apart. Gail had prepared a PowerPoint, added her personal experiences since joining the club and then invited me to share my experiences. Gail is an excellent speaker and the presentation was well received. I like the fact that she was able to clearly express how Friendship Force travel is different from other travel, and that our purpose is to promote friendship and goodwill throughout the world by meeting new people from different cultures and sharing experiences.

This was the Heritage Club's first meeting since Covid and 24 members attended. A number of people expressed interest in the group but at this time they are all reluctant to travel. However, we introduced them to FFM, and that's a first step.

Contributed by Lynda Walker

From the Editor

Thanks to our Communications Chair Gail Keeley and all the many contributors to this issue.

It was great attending two meetings at the Norwood this fall – a return to normal life, although some of us still felt it was strange after being isolated from other people for more than a year. It's been a hard year but things are getting better. I echo Peggy's hope that 2022 will be better in many ways.

Would you like to contribute to the newsletter? Contact Gail at gailke@hotmail.ca. Enjoy your holidays!

Bev Phillips

