

# The Friendship Force of Greater Omaha

Newsletter

February, 2021

COVID EDITION

**See p. 2–Please pay your dues now (unless you have already)!**

We are certain that you have guessed by now that the whole world has been shut down by Covid-19. So has this newsletter! But, it may be time to update you a bit on the Friendship Force of Greater Omaha.

In particular, to note that we have lost Sharon Mendlik who was a member for more than a decade. She has passed away from a heart attack in Phoenix where she and Mike spend the winter.



Sharon Mendlik ---- in memoriam

If you wish, you may send a note to Mike at 5525 N. 163<sup>rd</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68116.

Friendship Force of Greater Omaha  
Membership Application



friendship force  
greater Omaha

APPLICANT NAME(S):

#1 Last: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
#2 Last: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
#3 Last: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS:

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE:

HOME: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL \_\_\_\_\_  
WORK: \_\_\_\_\_ ALT: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF APPLICATION: \_\_\_\_\_NEW \_\_\_\_\_RENEWAL

IF RENEWAL, has any of the information changed? \_\_\_\_\_YES \_\_\_\_\_NO

MEMBERSHIP (check one): \_\_\_\_\_Single (\$35) \_\_\_\_\_Family (\$45) all residing at the same address

The following is optional. The information is used only within the FFGO club to identify interests of our members.

I AM INTERESTED IN:

\_\_\_\_\_Home Hosting \_\_\_\_\_Day Hosting \_\_\_\_\_Dinner Hosting  
\_\_\_\_\_Transportation \_\_\_\_\_Journey Director \_\_\_\_\_Website  
\_\_\_\_\_Activities \_\_\_\_\_Membership

REFERRAL: \_\_\_\_\_Friend/Neighbor \_\_\_\_\_Website \_\_\_\_\_Media \_\_\_\_\_Other

Please make dues checks payable to: Friendship Force of Greater Omaha (or FFGO)

Send completed application and check to:

Gordon Todd, Treasurer, FFGO  
5807 S. 119<sup>th</sup> Plaza, Omaha, NE 68137

## Events at a glance:

Date	Time	Status	Where/What?
open		open	Depending on Covid-19 restrictions, we have told Friendship Force we could host one or two inbound exchanges in 2022. We have not asked for an outbound exchange.

## Announcements Committee doin's...

Please take note – as you know scheduled activities are in flux at the present!

### Leadership

Leadership for 2021 continues under Bob Smith.

! Bob Smith and Mary Van Sloan continue to monitor our FFGO contact phone 402-620-5089.

### Treasurer: Gordon Todd (this is new in 2021)

! We are fiscally solvent. We do have to pay our assessment dues to Friendship Force International, therefore we need our members to continue their memberships!

### Journeys: Joy Schaal & Claudiana Todd

! All journeys have been canceled. If journeys continue in 2021 under strict Covid-19 protocols we will let you know. We have indicated no desire to have an outbound exchange and have said we could host one or two inbound exchanges if the Covid situation improves.

### Open World: Dave Crouse

! All of these activities have been canceled for the foreseeable future.

### Website, newsletter: Warren Hill

! Our website is friendshipforcegreateromaha.org . We will update it in the near future.

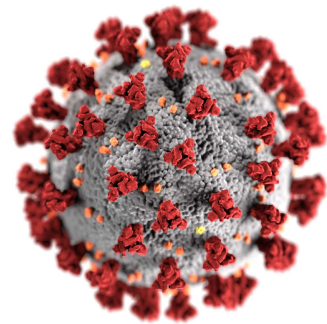
### Friendship Force International (FFI)

! As you can imagine for an organization focused on international exchanges, things have been tough at the Atlanta headquarters. Here is the latest news on what the future may hold.

FFI will have NEITHER a [vaccination policy](#) NOR mandated requirement for members to journey or host. Rather, [these decisions will be left to the clubs](#).

FFI is developing [On-line Membership Access](#) for all members in all clubs. The [Member Portal](#) – other than email addresses for some but not all members, FFI has no master list or information on membership. The goal is to put member information into a single system to make things more efficient for FFI and simpler for the member. The portal will be the ‘go-go’ place for most activities. Registering as a member and providing contact information will give each member a specific membership ID that links to all things FFI. This will be a SECURE platform with an app but for members who don’t use technology, they can be on boarded manually. It will NOT be a requirement of FF membership that you be FFI-registered on this portal but very strongly encouraged. Benefits for members will include registering for journeys with ‘interests’ going straight to a journey coordinator, arranging stay-overs with other clubs, connecting internationally, registering to be a Pen Pal, giving journey reviews, making payments, registering for virtual experiences, webinars, conferences, training and seeing their transaction history. There are several concerns with this that will be resolved, but when fully developed it will provide better on-line tools for all members.

FFI is [exploring a restructuring of member fees](#). In the past, FFI derived most of their income from exchange fees. Obviously with no exchanges, that structure collapsed! They asked clubs for donations to survive. We sent \$5,000 from our treasury to help, so did others, and they have survived but certainly not prospered. They want to change to a system that supports central FFI functions through dues from members and eliminate most or all of the exchange fees collected from Ambassadors visiting new friends around the world. Timeline for Fee Structure considerations – 2021 build and educate; 2022 pilot with a handful of clubs; 2023 roll out of one annual member fee as a second option.



kick the corona virus out of here!

## **FFGO Leadership Council**

### **Coordinator**

Bob Smith 402-830-7381

[lrs.jr@hotmail.com](mailto:lrs.jr@hotmail.com)

### **Treasurer**

Gordon Todd 402-334-2374

[gtodd@cox.net](mailto:gtodd@cox.net)

### **Journey Coordinator**

Claudiana Todd 402-334-2374

[chtodd@cox.net](mailto:chtodd@cox.net)

### **Membership Coordinator**

Bob Elkins 515-441-5203

[beto1110@hotmail.com](mailto:beto1110@hotmail.com)

### **Activities Coordinator**

Margie Stolte 402-330-0248

[marstolte@cox.net](mailto:marstolte@cox.net)

### **Newsletter + Webmaster Coordinator**

Warren Hill 402-330-1208

[whbjh@q.com](mailto:whbjh@q.com)

## **Friendship Force Mission**

"To promote global understanding  
across the barriers that separate  
people."



**friendship force**  
greater Omaha