



friendship force  
NORTHERN COLORADO



Cathie McCallum  
Editor and Publisher

September  
October  
2025

## Estes Park, Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, Windsor and Surrounding Areas

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### FROM OUR PRESIDENT SUZI GOSSARD

Greetings Friendship Force of Northern Colorado!

It's September already! I hope you had a great summer with family and friends enjoying all that Colorado has to offer! It seems like forever since our last meeting in June, but now it's time to get back into our regular schedule with monthly meetings on the second Friday of the month. This month, we will have an interesting presentation by our own Nancy Benson on fashion through the ages. October and November will also have informative programs, focusing on being global citizens. In December, we will have our annual Holiday Party at the ElderHaus. If you would like to help plan this fun event, let one of our Board members know!



During their recent Journey, our friends from FF Baton Rouge made a generous donation of \$100 to go to the charity of our choice. Since we have partnered with ElderHaus and appreciate their generosity in being able to use their lovely facility, the Board voted to add \$400 to their donation to purchase one of their outdoor benches. It will be inscribed with *Friendship Force of Northern Colorado*. A big thank you to Elizabeth McCoy (Journey Coordinator) and Carol McGrath (Treasurer), who will deliver the checks to ElderHaus this week.

We hope to get the membership committee together this fall to look at how we recruit and welcome new members and to look at ways to encourage their involvement. We're looking for some of our newer members to work on this committee along with some of our seasoned members. Let one of the Board members know if you are interested! One event they will be coordinating will be a new member orientation coming up in October, led by Marcia Ross.

Perhaps you have been wondering what is involved in being a Journey Coordinator – both inbound and outbound. We hope to put together training for that sometime this fall. Marilyn Garner, our Journey Director, and Cathie McCallum, both seasoned members, will be involved in that opportunity. Let them know if you are interested in learning more or helping out!

Are you concerned with the future direction of Friendship Force International and of our local club? Ken Weaver and Rocky Padden are leading a committee to plan a Regional Retreat, probably in October of 2026, at the YMCA in Estes Park. Other clubs in our region (Cheyenne, Denver, Colorado Springs, Western Colorado, Salt Lake City and Albuquerque) have expressed interest in such a meeting to share ideas and best practices for moving forward. Let them know if you would like to help.

Looking forward to a wonderful Fall!

In friendship,  
Suzi Gossard, President

**Next meeting:**  
**September 12**  
**Elderhaus**  
**6813 S. College**  
**7 pm**  
**Invite a friend!**



## September 12 Program: History/Fashion

**Nancy Benson** will be sharing how her interests in history and fashion came together in her historic costume rental business. Have you ever wondered what influences fashion changes throughout history? How did men begin wearing ascots? What IS an ascot? How



did the flapper look in the 20s begin? The first poodle skirt? Have you ever seen a collapsible top hat? What is a fainting couch and why?

*Come find out at the next meeting!*

## FF Rocky Mountain Region

**Nancy Wood**, Rocky Mountain Field Rep for FFI, and the presidents of the Friendship Force clubs in the Rocky Mountain Region will now be receiving our FFNC newsletter and sharing theirs with us. The other clubs within our region include Cheyenne, Greater Denver, New Mexico, Pikes Peak Region, Utah, and Western Colorado.

## Annual Picnic with Cheyenne

Thanks to FF Cheyenne for hosting our 2025 annual joint picnic at Holiday Park. Cheyenne provided the main dishes and drinks; Northern Colorado provided desserts. Next August FFNC will host the picnic.



## 2025 Inbound from Baton Rouge

From August 19 - 25 Friendship Force Baton Rouge visited us. We showed them the best we have to offer. We began with a welcome dinner at Elderhaus on Tuesday. On Wednesday we visited the Colorado State University Trial Gardens, and had lunch at Mishawaka, followed by a free afternoon and small group dinners. Thursday began with a tour of Art Castings. This was a big hit with our ambassadors. After the tour we hosted lunch and a walk around the Benson Sculpture Park highlighted by a lecture by Marcia Ross on the beginnings of the Benson Sculpture Park. That evening our ambassadors enjoyed a quiet dinner with their hosts. Friday was our Rocky Mountain National Park excursion, followed by our ambassadors taking their hosts out to dinner. Some ambassadors chose to make gumbo for their hosts! On Saturday we visited the Centennial Village Museum and Railroad Museum in Greeley followed by a happy hour/pizza party hosted by the Weavers. Sunday was a free day for our ambassadors to explore parts of Northern Colorado they had not seen, followed by our farewell dinner catered by Qdoba. The evaluations have been incredibly positive. Our ambassadors had a wonderful time. Thanks to all who helped in any way!

*Elizabeth McCoy, Host Coordinator*



**QUEEN ELIZABETH**  
Host Coordinator, Elizabeth McCoy, models the crown and beads awarded by the Baton Rouge ambassadors during their farewell performance of a Mardi Gras parade.



## July 17: CLEO+Games at Rocky's house



Left to right around the table Larry, Carol, Cinda, Marcia, Karen, Susan, Rocky, and LaDonna were the eight players just right for this game.

THANK YOU ROCKY for graciously hosting!

## October 16: *Brown Bag* CLEO + \$25 Mosaic Class



On October 16, Felicity Sentance will guide a maximum of 12 participants in a 2-hour craft session (11:30-1:30) where for \$25 (payable at the beginning of the session) they can decide to make either a pendant OR a pair of earrings for pierced ears. For additional information *text* Felicity at 214-499-5218. **RSVP to Rocky** so she can arrange adequate workspace and Felicity can order enough materials for the project.





## 2026 International Journey



Suzi Gossard shared the exciting news that Friendship Force has assigned our club an international journey to **Indonesia** tentatively scheduled for August of 2026! *It is now time to start planning for that adventure* and we are in need of an **Ambassador Coordinator**. If you are willing to consider this role, please contact Marilyn Garner, Journey Director.

To get a taste of Indonesian culture, here is 4 minute YouTube of **Surabaya**,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOb6OfkzOls>

Here is one of **Banjarmasin**, the other city assigned.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onapb2q1yMA>

## 2025 Outbound to New Hampshire Seacoast

The New Hampshire Seacoast Journey is set for September 15th through the 22nd. A few members are extending the journey with a week exploring the Canadian Maritimes and seeing the setting of *Anne of Green Gables* through an optional pre-journey Canadian Maritime motor coach tour with Caravan Tours which starts September 7th and ends on the 15th. **We hope to have a full report at our January 2026 meeting complete with photos!**

## Watch for trainings and orientations.....

Plans are under discussion for trainings available to all FFNC members for roles as **Journey Coordinator** for both inbound and outbound journeys.

**New member orientation** will be scheduled as needed for FFNC, but is also available online from time to time at [www.friendshipforce.org](http://www.friendshipforce.org).



## Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup> presentation by Caid Law, FFI Intern

Caid has begun to develop Friendship Force International materials on how to be a citizen of the world and practice citizen diplomacy. Caid will present his first module for our feedback.

Caid holds a BA in Sociology and a Certificate in Peace, Conflict & Security Studies from the University of Colorado, Boulder. His passion for peacebuilding has taken him from the USA to Taiwan and Sweden, studying topics ranging from diplomacy and nuclear disarmament to ecological sustainability and collective memory. Caid's experience in international education and nonviolent conflict resolution led him to his current role as a Communication Assistant at Friendship Force International.



To read a recent article by Caid about *The Power of Unity in Difficult Times*, go to <https://friendshipforce.org/changing-times/>.

At the 2024 North American Conference Caid led a workshop on *How traveling well can change the world* and *What does good global citizenship look like? Insights from Rick Steves*. Here are three of Caid's slides, well worth re-publishing here for us to think about.

### Why Friendship Works: Contact Theory

**Connection** between individuals who belong to conflicting groups can, under certain conditions, facilitate **sustainable** conflict resolution and **transform** relationships between group members.

#### Conditions and Mechanisms:

- Efforts are made to equalize power dynamics
  - Reduces entitlement, resentment, and oppression
- Participants have a shared objective
  - Motivates people to find a way to coexist amicably
- Participants collaborate to achieve said objective
  - Incentivizes people to form interpersonal relationships, prejudice is reduced, and trust is built
- Supportive authorities
  - Intergroup contact is legitimized by an overarching authority that all parties respect



## Travel as a Political Act: Insights from Rick Steves



## Top Three, What Will It Be?

<b>Travel Like a Medieval Jester</b> (take on the role of citizen diplomat)	<b>Travel on Purpose</b> (be open to novel experiences)	<b>Connect with People</b> (and be transformed)	<b>Stow Your Preconceptions</b> (appreciate people on their own terms)
<b>Take History Seriously</b> (everything means more in context)	<b>Overcome Fear</b> (embrace the discomfort of uncertainty and risk)	<b>Celebrate All Dreams – Not Just the American Dream</b> (know that there is no right way to be)	<b>See Inequality for Yourself</b> (better understand your fortunes and advocate for the less fortunate)
<b>Choose to be Challenged</b> (intentionally venture outside of your comfort zone)	<b>Religion, with an International Spin</b> (explore other worldviews, as well as your own through the eyes of others)		

### Food for Thought

- Which of your personal strengths do you want to nurture?
- Which elements of good citizenship are lacking in your club?
- Which elements of good citizenship are you confused about/uncomfortable with/uninterested in?



## 2026 OFFICERS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU!

Susana Garner, Rocky Padden, Pam Morrison, Nancy Benson, and Carol McGrath are *elected officers*. It is **YOUR TURN** to volunteer to participate in support of FFNC on a committee or in any way that interests you. An active member is a happy member!

### ELDERHAUS DONATION!

Larry Clark contacted Jenny Langness of Elderhaus to inquire about ways we might support their mission, since they provide our wonderful meeting place free of charge. Jenny informed him that they are currently working on an outdoor patio and could use donations toward that project. Specifically, they are asking for people to sponsor seating benches and tables for the patio: \$500/bench and \$1000/table. **Sponsorship comes with the donor's name on a plaque. IT IS HAPPENING THANKS TO A \$100 DONATION FROM FF BATON ROUGE PLUS \$400 FROM OUR ACCOUNT.**

Another way FFNC could help them is through volunteering. Jenny mentioned that they have an ongoing need for volunteers. They are currently creating a workspace for memory care individuals to come and work on special projects. When it is completed, they will need volunteers to oversee the projects and assist the individuals here. She also indicated that she sends out email whenever they need volunteers with the particulars and sees who is available to help. FFNC has been added to that email list. Suzi will make sure the membership gets this information in case any of you would like to be involved. It's a great way to give back to our community!

## 2025 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**PRESIDENT:** Suzi Gossard  
**VICE PRES:** Susanna Garner  
**SECRETARY/HISTORIAN:** Cinda Clark  
**TREASURER:** Carol McGrath

**Journey Directors:** Marilyn Garner  
**Meeting Greeter:** Gerald and Ann Loader  
**Meeting Hospitality:** Elizabeth McCoy  
**Meeting Music:** Rosemary Donovan  
**Membership:** Cathie McCallum +committee  
**Reporters Coordinator:** Suzi Gossard  
**Newsletter Editors/Publishers:**  
 Sue Cummins  
 Marilyn Garner  
 Cathie McCallum

**Programs:** Cathie McCallum  
**Social Activities:** Rocky Padden  
**Store Manager:** Debby Jones  
**Ways and Means:** Nancy Benson  
**Website:** Rick Lohmeyer

*If you are willing to help with any position, please contact Suzi Gossard, president, or the chair of the committee that interests you.*

*Committee chairs, invite someone to work with you! It feels good to be needed and wanted,—an active member.*

Refer to our club website, [ffncoloro.com](http://ffncoloro.com), for back issues of newsletters and information on programs, journeys, leadership contacts, upcoming events and for opportunities to apply for other regional club journeys. Thanks to Rick Lohmeyer for an outstanding website that can provide up-to-the-minute information between newsletters. Refer to [www.friendshipforce.org](http://www.friendshipforce.org) for broad information about Friendship Force and [my.friendshipforce.org](http://my.friendshipforce.org) for information specific to members and secure for sharing personal information needed for journey registration.