



friendship force
FLORIDA SUNCOAST

Summary of year
September 2019
Until
August 2020

Jane's Friendship Force Goals

2019 – 2020

1. To engage all members
2. To find the background and skills of all members
3. To increase membership and to have membership recruiting programs, and to request funds for membership recruitment parties
4. To have each member on a team as well as on a committee.
5. To have leadership and planning meetings to work on the future of the Friendship Force Florida Suncoast Club

The above goals were made by our president Jane Lee as she began planning for our club meetings in September. Jane began a notebook with information on each of our members. She found out what career each member had, what their hobbies, activities, and volunteer places are. This helped her get to know each member and to find interests to match current members to new members. With almost 100 members it was her goal to know each one. She also asked for anything unusual about members so that we could use these facts when we play games at social events. Because of our size, Jane also divided the club into four teams. This was confusing in the beginning, but it is getting everyone involved in the club. There are four teams and this year one team oversaw our outbound

exchanges, another the inbound exchange, and one team oversaw the picnic, and another team in charge of the holiday party. Next year each team will have a new assignment. That will give everyone experiences in what it takes to run a club. Since January, we have had four new members join and three former members returned.

During the summer months, the future president, Jane Lee, invited team members to her home to explain what she expected from teams and to have each team learn about their responsibilities for the coming year.

August 30 through September 11, seven members of our club led by Chuck and Betty Oldanie journey coordinators from our club, initiated the first Friendship Force/Habitat journey to Moinesti, Romania. This group worked on building a second story quadplex building that would house four families. They also visited the Friendship Force Club in Bucharest. The first meeting in September was designed to give members an opportunity to meet their fellow team members. Members were also given an overall picture of what to expect at future meetings.

Aaron Fodiman, editor, and publisher of the Tampa Bay Magazine was the speaker for our October meeting. Aaron told us about his vision of Pinellas County in the future and provided information that we can pass on to those ambassadors visiting us. Chris Michalek organized an activity to a dinner theater and Ellen Henderson organized an activity to the Florida Orchestra. October was also the St. Petersburg International Folk Festival and some of our members volunteered to help with this. Teresa Farr Klinger is our liaison for this organization.

Because of a planned FF trip to Armenia May 1 -7, 2020, Dr. Albert Hambardzumyan was the guest speaker in November. He shared many slides of his beautiful country, Armenia. This gave our members journeying there in May lots to look forward to and those unable to take the journey some insight of a country that we know little about. The Munda May Mexico Club was supposed to come this month and Gretchen and Art Worth were the Journey Host Coordinators. Unfortunately, after much planning, the incoming club had to cancel.

December, there was a holiday party at Bellissimo's Restaurant in Largo. This was the first team effort and was led by the Diamond Team. This was a great success and was a nice social to get to know more about one another. At this party the club also collected many blankets for the migrant workers.

The January meeting was devoted to members who went to Romania for Habitat of Humanity. Betty Oldanie shared a power point program telling the club about the experiences our members had there. This journey also got us local publicity thank you to Chris Michalek who provided the media with the information. In January there were field trips that our members enjoyed. One was a luncheon at Jacobson Culinary Academy in Tarpon Springs led by Sue Olnick. Teresa Farr Klinger led a group to the Pinellas County Solid Waste Energy Plant, and Marilyn Whelan and Pearl Gershon arranged an art walk at the Raymond James Financial Center, This was the month of our first Book Club meeting hosted and initiated by Sandy Gourdine.

At our February meeting Sandy Gourdine presents a program on domestic journeys. She shared slides of our Milwaukee journey. This was also the month that we hosted ambassadors from Raleigh, NC Feb. 20-25. Art and Gretchen Worth were the journey coordinators for this. The field trips were to the Florida Polytechnic University, a pontoon river cruise on the Cotee River set up by Ellen Henderson, a wine tasting party at Sue Olnick's and Quentin Smith's home, and a Metropolitan Ministries tour.

Florida Suncoast had lots of wonderful plans for March, April, and May. We had our regular board meeting in March, but because of the coronavirus sneaking up on everyone, we decided to cancel our general meeting the 3rd Saturday of the month. The couple who were supposed to present a message on travel tips had already bowed out because of her compromised immune system. We found another member to do a program, however with things closing we decided to just cancel the meeting. We had a picnic planned for April and all the committees were set up for that and most things shut down. Even though we didn't have meetings, our newsletter staff continued to work hard, and we had some phenomenal information; games, highlights on current and new members, FFI updates, and so on, sent to us for all to enjoy. At the end of April, a journey to Armenia was well planned and 12 of our members were participating. Journey Coordinator, Chris Michalek, spent many hours coordinating a pre-visit with a

German Club prior to the Armenia visit. This was canceled. Sandy Gourdine and Mair Murphy were journey coordinators for a Spokane, Washington visit in August and that was also canceled.

On Friday, May 29, the board tried their first Zoom board meeting. It was nice to see everyone's face and to hear their voice. We are excited that next June we will host a Montana Club, and in October we will be hosted by the Long Island Club. Because it is unlikely that we will be able to travel overseas in 2021, we will probably be looking for more domestic exchanges. We are basing our exchanges on people having the Ovid-19 vaccine to keep everyone safe.

Despite the absence of meetings, the club nominated and elected a new slate of officers for the coming year. They will begin their term in September. During the months of July and August there will be a newsletter to keep the members up to date with club information. Because of the continuation of multiple Covid cases in Florida, the earliest possibility of a general meeting for our club will be in September 2020.