



friendship force

CENTRAL ARIZONA

President's Message - Nancy Mueller

Friendship, Humanity, and Global Citizenship in February 2026



At the January 4x4 meeting, we listened to Jeremi Smook, President and CEO of FFI, encourage us to carry the message of friendship into our schools, communities, and civic clubs. By doing so, we multiply the impact of every

cultural exchange and help foster the understanding, respect, and peace that Friendship Force is called to lead.

This month, I will be meeting with the Sun City Rotary and the Sun City Lifelong Learning Club, where stories from our Thailand inbound will be featured as part of the presentations. Each member is encouraged to reach out to groups within their own networks. Our club offers helpful resources—including trifolds, business cards, newsletters, and websites—to support you in sharing who we are. By telling our stories, we can help global connections grow stronger.

REMINDER: Club Dues \$10 a year. Please Send your check to Ruth Noble, 4021 N. 45th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85018. You must register and pay the dues of \$100, to Friendship Force International. You can register online with Friendship Force International and pay with Credit card.

February 4X4

Welcome to Diane and Mike Spiger's home at 15909 N 109th Ave, Sun City. We will enjoy games and much laughter so please bring food items which are pink, red or made with love. RSVP to Diane at 435-279-3687.

January 30th

Friday, Jan 30th, 2026 5 pm
American Indigenous Series
19849 N 107th Dr, Sun City

Please plan to attend an educational gathering at the home of Judith Rainforth on Friday, January 30, 2026 at 5 pm at 19849 N 107th Dr, Sun City, AZ, 85373. Please bring an appetizer to share during this first of a series of speakers on the indigenous population in the US. Our first two speakers will be Tinka and Clayton Echols. Tinka's heritage is from the Sioux tribe and Clayton's is from the Chickasaw Tribe. Please RSVP to Judith at 402.880.0398

2026 Board of Directors Officers and Committee Chairs

President - Nancy Mueller

Vice President - Maggie Wittenberg

Treasurer - Ruth Noble

Secretary - Diane Spiger

Journey Coordinator - Richard Mueller

Membership - Maggie Wittenberg

Newsletter - Nancy Unferth/Chris Kastella

Website - Bill Kram

Shamrock Dairy Tour - s

Submitted by Laura Issac

On Jan 8, eleven members of our Central AZ FFI group traveled in 3 cars to Stanfield, AZ to the Shamrock Dairy Farm.



There were 10 thousand cows on one thousand acres just as advertised!! Many attendees had grown up on dairy farms in Wisconsin and New York. They were fascinated by the impressive new technologies that are currently used to produce literally tons of milk. As a city girl I learned a lot about how cows need to have a calf before producing milk!! Imagine that!! The milk and ice cream were delicious. It was an enjoyable and informative day.



AND THE WINNERS ARE.....

Yumm!! Our January 4X4 included a Meatball Competition with nine participants. All 23 members and 4 guests were able to vote on their favorite choice. From Swedish meatballs to BBQ meatballs to Sweet Hawaiian meatballs the choices were plentiful and delicious. The overall winner was Deb Hjortland with her Swedish meatballs and Nancy Mueller with her Grandma Lucille's Special meatballs. Thank you to Bonnie Yamashita for chairing this wonderful event!



2026 Travel Opportunities

- *Journey #26114 Central Arizona to St Mary's and Stratford, Ontario, Canada*

May 8th - May 15th

Activities Include -

Stratford Theatre Festival with 3 major theaters

Toyota Auto Plant

Reapers of Hope: food dispensers to people in need around the world

University of Waterloo robotics lab

Doon Heritage Village

\$500 US includes FFI charge of \$25 per night fee

Does NOT include theatre tickets or transportation to and from the host site

Must be able to walk 30 to 45 minutes on uneven surfaces!

Contact Richard Mueller, Journey Coordinator at 608.838.3575 or RNmueller@yahoo.com
Applications can be found on the FFI website.



- *Journey #26131 Tallahassee to Western Michigan*

May 4th - May 10th

Join the Tallahassee Friendship Force Club as they journey to Western Michigan.

See the Holland Tulip Festival

Vineyards and wineries

Dip your toe in Lake Michigan and hike trails

Ford Museum, Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Meyer May House to tour



Contact Wendy Johnston, Tallahassee Florida Journey Coordinator for more details at mrswendyjohnston@gmail.com if you are interested. This was a journey assigned to Central Arizona that we did not pursue. Spots might be available to join.

“Adventures in Tucson” - March 2nd and 3rd ,2026

This excursion will be a two day/ one night trip to several sights in the Tucson area. The dates are Monday March 2nd and Tuesday March 3rd.. The first stop on the way to Tucson is at the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument. That afternoon we will go to the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum. It is a unique fusion of a zoo, botanical garden, natural history museum and art gallery. On Monday night, we'll be staying at the Country Inn Radisson Airport. Free breakfast is included. Tuesday's itinerary will commence with a visit to San Xavier Del Bac, an impressive historic Spanish Catholic mission also known as the "White Dove of the Desert." The afternoon will be spent at Sabino Canyon. There is an electric shuttle tour (about an hour) to view the desert landscape and picturesque vistas. A Senior National Park pass can be used here. For those who wish to hike or bike the will be opportunity to do these activities. Approximate cost for planned activities is only \$200.00 (not including meals). Please contact Laura Isaacs (440) 668-9501 or Pat Forsyth (414) 803-5704 by phone or text to let us know if you plan to join us! Limit of 15 participants.



Coming in 2027 - FFI International Conference in

Strassburg, France (late April, early May 2027)

4X4 - Wednesday, February 4th at

4:00 pm



Come one, come all to Diane and Mike Spiger's home at 15909 N 109th Ave, Sun City for the February 2026 4X4!! This will be an afternoon of much laughter, games and great food as we stretch our brains and laughter muscles. Expect prizes for all kinds of winners!!! RSVP to Diane at 435-279-3687.



Save the Dates - Future 4X4s

4th of each Month at 4:00 pm	Location	Activity or Speaker
February - Wednesday	Mike/Diane Spiger Home 15909 N 109th Ave, Sun City	Rummikub and bring something pink, red or made with love
March - Wednesday	Sue LaVacque 9801 W Gulf Hills Dr, Sun City	Blank Slate
April - Saturday	Poppy Bushnell Home 10524 W Bellarose Dr, Sun City	Corn Hole
May - Monday	Nancy and Richard Mueller Home 10523 W Bellarose Dr, Sun City	Update on Kansas November inbound
Summer off	Summer off	Summer off
Oct - Sunday	Don Rueben's Restaurant 11340 W Bell Rd Unit 125, Surprise	Travel Trivia
November - Tuesday	Chris Kastella Home 10950 West Union Hills Dr Unit 1252, Sun City	Lawn Bowling
December - Friday	Sun City West, Kuntz Recreation Center 14401 R.H. Johnson Blvd, Sun City West	Holiday Party

American Indigenous Speaker Series Hosted by Judith Rainforth



Please plan to attend an educational gathering at the home of Judith Rainforth on Friday, January 30, 2026 at 5 pm at 19849 N 107th Dr, Sun City, AZ, 85373. Please bring an appetizer to share during this first of a series of speakers on the indigenous population in the US. Our first two speakers will be Tinka and Clayton Echols. Tinka's heritage is from the Sioux tribe and Clayton's is from the Chickasaw Tribe. Please RSVP to Judith at 402.880.0398

Historically Speaking - April 2002

submitted by Nancy and Bob Unferth

Friendship Force Next Generation - Our March general meeting was entitled the Friendship Force Next Generation. The members, somewhat to their surprise, were shown a 46 minute film produced by the Mars Society, a group dedicated to the exploration and colonization of Mars. The film dealt with the reasons for Mars explorations, plans for developing missions to Mars, and activities and research the group is undertaking to further their goals. A poll was conducted afterwards. Here are the results from the 39 questionnaires that were returned.

When do you think man will first land on Mars?

10 years or less	22%
11 to 20 years	41%
21 to 50 years	24%
more 50 years from now	13%

January 2026 Treasurer Report

Two Cents Worth from Treasurer:

What can I say about February? It is about love. So much to say, such good memories, deep feelings, our friends, children, community, country, and soul mate. May you share your love this month. Sing the song with a smile, "love is in the air."

The Friendship Force of Central Arizona Treasurer Report Ending:
January 18, 2026

Chase Bank Club Account opened April 2025

Beginning Balance:	\$ 3,841.96
Income (Club Dues)	\$ 190.00
Disbursements (Promotion)	<u>\$ 377.89</u>
Disbursements (Meetings)	\$ 25.00
Ending Balance	\$ 3,629.07

January 18, 2026

Chase Bank Journey Account:

Beginning Balance:	\$ 2,510.48
No activity in account	
Ending Balance	\$ 2,510.48

January 18, 2026

Meet Our Member!



Welcome to Poppy Bushnell one of Central AZ's newest member! She grew up in the Bay Area of California moving to Tacoma Washington in her Junior year of high school and to Sun City Arizona in 2022.

Her mother instilled in her a love of traveling at an early age. A few of the wonderful places she has been includes Rarotonga, Fiji, New Zealand, Greece, France, Germany and Mexico. She has two grown children and three 19-year-old grandchildren. She taught Architectural Engineering Design at Clover Park Technical College until her recent stroke in July 2025. She was introduced to Friendship Force in October 2025 when she hosted Nora from Thailand. She looks forward to upcoming journeys.



West Side films will be shown at Harkins Arrowhead 18
16046 N Arrowhead Fountains Center Dr, Peoria, AZ 85382
Tickets go on sale January 20, 2026

Sunday Feb 15th
3 PM Once upon my Mother - (Drama) Determined mother finds a remedy for her child
7 PM The Ring - (Drama) Recovering a ring stolen during WW2 in Budapest

Tues Feb 17th
3 PM Everything Kosher - (Light Drama) Opening a Kosher deli in an antisemitic German town
Short - A Jew Grows Up in Brooklyn
7pm - The Last Twins (Drama) - Unsung hero who saved many twins from Nazi experiments
Short - The Dolls House

Sunday Feb 22th
3 PM Henrietta Szold - (Documentary) Famous woman who founded Hadasah
Short - The Wall
7 pm Bella - (Comedy) A chase traveling between Israel and Palestine to bring Bella back
Short - The 10th man

Monday Feb 23th
3 PM The Sea - (Drama) Palestinian child's determined quest to traverse Israel to the sea
7PM Love of a Woman - (Drama) A quest for family history with a surprise to find 3 fathers

Tuesday Feb 24th
3 PM Swedishkeit - (Comedy) Comedy duo explore Stockholm Jewish community and culture
Short - My Neighbors Ass
7 pm Sabotage - (Drama) Women's underground operation to sabotage Auschwitz
Short - Last Jews of Guantamano

Sunday March 1st
3 PM Tuve el Corazon - (Light drama) about the music scene of rock and tango in Argentina
7 pm Hola & Ciao - (Light drama) Clash of Argentine and Israeli culture at a family reunion