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## **FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF CENTRAL ARIZONA NEWSLETTER**

**May 2025**

### **2025 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President Nancy Mueller - 608-838-3575

Vice President - Maggie Wittenberg  
623-688-4245

Treasurer - Ruth Noble 602-920-8680

Secretary - Chris Kastella 208-691-4610

Journey Coordinator - Richard Mueller

Membership - Maggie Wittenberg

Newsletter - Nancy Unferth nferth@aol.com

Website - Bill Kram

Activities- Pat Forsythe

**Next Board Meeting is May 14<sup>th</sup> 4:00 pm Zoom**

### **2026 JOURNEY ASSIGNMENTS**

**Come to the May 4x4 and learn about our  
outbound and inbound journeys.**

**Clues - Dorothy and Toto, Buster Broncos  
and Tulips, Shakespeare**

**May is the last 4x4 until October**

**Sunday May 4x4pm. Bilbianos, 11001 N  
99th Ave., Peoria. 623-972-0202 Enjoy  
Mexican food from flautas to fajitas in a  
homey, festive space. Practice your Spanish.  
This phrase is helpful - “una cerveza, por  
favor”.**

We strongly encourage everyone to RSVP to  
Diane Francom so the restaurant has enough  
seating for everyone. It's VERY important  
that you be there by **3:30** since they close at  
**6 pm**. We will resume 4x4 get togethers in  
October and look forward to your  
suggestions for possible future locations.  
Diane Francom – 435-279-3687.



### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The 18 Friendship Force members who traveled to Antelope Canyon returned with fabulous photos, enjoyed scenic drives, and experienced history, geology and geography along the way. What we might not have known is that an activity like this is linked with many health benefits, like less risk of depression and longer life span. A study published Feb. 20, 2019, in The Journals of Gerontology, “found that older adults who interacted with people beyond their usual social circle of family and close friends were more likely to have higher levels of physical activity, greater positive moods, and fewer negative feelings.”

So the 600 miles of carpooling time together, meal opportunities to learn more about other members, walking the trails and climbing the stairs, and being outdoors under blue skies and viewing western landscape has the unexpected benefit of better health and well-being. Let's meet more and travel more. Nancy M.

### **2025 CALENDAR**

October 4 - 4pm, location to be announced  
October 29-November 4 - Chiang Mai Thailand  
Inbound  
November 4 - 4pm, location to be announced  
November 17-24 National Capitol Area  
(Washington DC) Inbound  
Thursday December 4 - Holiday Party, Kuntz  
Recreation Center,  
Sun City West, Dinner and entertainment



Historical club records were just received and upon review it was noted that Nancy Unferth has created the Friendship Force of Central Arizona's newsletter for more than 20 years. At that time they were paper copies and individually mailed to members. The club is appreciative of Nancy's long years of monthly dedication to prepare this critical document that keeps us informed.

### **TRAVELING WITH OTHER FRIENDSHIP FORCE CLUBS**

On the Friendship Force International website is a listing of club to club journeys that have opened to other clubs because the ambassador club could not fill the spaces. In the last month Diane Francom and Chris Kastella traveled to San Antonio and Richard and Nancy Mueller traveled to Washington DC in this way. They met members of other clubs and joined in a week of being hosted in a location of interest to them at a time convenient to them. Our club is listing our journey to Northern Colorado because they can host more than we have registered.

Here is the process. Open the website <https://friendshipforce.org> and then go to the upper right corner to find Journeys and click on it. Click on View All Group Journeys. You can see the list for the current year. If it is highlighted in blue and underlined click on it for more details. This allows you to pick places you'd enjoy and choose dates that work for you.

### **REVIEW OF APRIL 4x4**

A good time was had by all as we shared a potluck supper and a beautiful setting at the Surprise regional library park.

We were able to greet new members and visitors as well as discuss important upcoming events. Nancy shared about the Friendship Force trip she and Richard went on to Washington DC. The cherry blossoms were in full bloom and the hosts were a great match with the Muellers.

Chris Katella talked about the Friendship Force trip to San Antonio and the upcoming Northern Colorado trip that has spaces available. Pat and Al Forsythe information about the trip happening this week to Antelope Canyon with our club.



### **CHERRY BLOSSOMS BLOOM**

National Capital Area Friendship Force Journey March 19-26

When the FF club of Albuquerque had openings for ambassadors, Richard and Nancy Mueller joined along with members from 6 other states and Manitoba. The host club includes Maryland, Virginia and

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Washington DC. That's quite a collection of flags.

Every day we explored a different historical site - Mount Vernon; Old Town, Alexandria VA; the US Capitol area; several Smithsonian museums. The convenience of the metro made traveling easier in an area with limited and expensive parking. Unique experiences for us were the American Indian museum, shopping at an African fabric store, having soul food and a blues concert at Westminster Church and spending an afternoon with long time Wisconsin friends who relocated to WDC and actually knew our home hosts who lived 20 minutes walking distance apart (small world after all!).

### **Dave and Deb Hjortland at Wupati National Monument Pueblo**



### **ANTELOPE CANYON**

Three days and two nights touring this area of Page Arizona is an enticement to return again. Our highlight was the walk through Antelope Canyon, a slot canyon which gives enough light on the creviced walls so every photograph is an award winner. We stopped at Walnut Canyon, Sunset Crater, Wupatki, Horseshoe Bend, Glen Canyon Dam. There were 4 drivers, 18 club members and a blend of scheduled and free time. Credit is given to Pat and Al Forsythe who organized this club activity and Chris Kastella who assisted with many technology details. Everyone found personal highlights, learned about our state, and made new friends. The group suggests we repeat the trip for next year for those members who weren't able to join us this year.

### **Sue, Molly, Laura, Kathy**





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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**Sharon Overbagh**

I grew up on a dairy farm in southwestern New York state. I graduated from the New York University at Fredonia with a BS in Elementary Education.

I married and continued to live on the farm, later owning and operating the farm with my husband. We are parents of three sons and seven grandchildren.

My husband and I retired from farming and me from teaching, wintering in Florida. Then some friend invited us to visit them in Sun City, Arizona. Well after I saw all the rec centers and activities here, Florida was history!!!

After my husband passed away, I sold my New York property and am now a full time resident in Sun City, AZ. I like participating with the 4x4 each month, the day trips and this last trip to Antelope Canyon! This has been a great year so far. Thanks to all of you who have worked so hard in making all these activities happen.



**Sandy Jordan**

I was born and lived in Iowa most of my life. I have two degrees from Drake University and taught business subjects at an inner city high school in Des Moines for seven years and then was self-employed.

I have two daughters, one in Cave Creek and the other one in Iowa.

I joined FFI in the late 80s and I've enjoyed the club and the activities.

I have been a winter visitor in Arizona for over 20 years going back to Iowa each year. I am blessed

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING- CENTRAL AZ FRIENDSHIP FORCE**

Attendees – Maggie Wittenberg, Gordy Birschbach, Richard Mueller, Nancy Mueller and Chris Kastella  
April 9th, 2025 at 4 pm

Meeting was called to order by President NancyM via Zoom. MaggieW moved and RichardM seconded **a motion to approve March Board Meeting minutes as presented to the members in the March Newsletter.**

Treasurer's Report showed \$11,835.37 in the club Wells Fargo Account and \$2,162.48 in the Chase Journey Account. Antelope Canyon Excursion costs were deposited in the club Wells Fargo Account have yet to have expenses paid or the excursion to be reconciled.

Discussion was held regarding the club website now having the capabilities to have a member password to logon to our website. This will allow our members to view our membership list and contact info! Thanks Bill Kram! BillK continues to update the club website and if members have any recommendations or comments, please contact him. The website address is: <https://ffcenaz2.org>.

NancyM requires newsletter info by April 15th with the goal to email to members and post to the website the Central AZ FFI Newsletter on the 25th of each month. If you don't receive the email, please check your "JUNK" folder as some members have found the newsletter in this folder!

Next year, the club will work to focus on educating ourselves on native culture January through May 2026. These educational opportunities will be headed by Judith Rainforth and will be in addition to the monthly 4X4. Additionally, we hope to have a 3- or 5-day excursion in spring of 2027 for club members.

Thanks to Pat and Al Forsythe who spear headed our 3-day Antelope Canyon Excursion.

18 members participated in this excursion, and it was a huge success! We toured Walnut Canyon, Sunset Crater, Wupatki-Wukoki Pueblos, Antelope Canyon, Horseshoe Bend and Glen Canyon. A great time was held by all!

Chris K reported the club currently has 7 members registered (can take at least 12) for the Northern CO Journey starting June 23rd through June 28th. The journey has been opened to other clubs through word of mouth and listed with FFI Intl. Applications will be accepted through April 30th. The club continues to work on the Thailand and the National Capitol Journeys with additional information to follow.

Plans and locations are being set for next falls 4X4s. Currently a holiday party is set for December 4th at 4 pm, more information to follow.

The next Board of Director meeting will be May 14th at 4:00. Meeting adjourned 4:30 pm.

### **Treasurer's Report: Ending April 2, 2025** **Club Account: Beginning Balance March 20, 2025**

**\$13,835.34**

**Income: \$ -0-**

**Disbursement: \$4,014.57**

**(Antelope Canyon )**

**April 2, 2025 Balance: \$9,820.77**

### **Journey Account:**

**Beginning Balance: \$2,162.48**

**Income: -0-**

**Disbursement: -0-**

**April 2, 2025 Balance: \$2,162.48**

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