



Mountain Friends

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December 2025

FFWNC Club Website: www.ffwesternnc.org

FFWNC Mailing Address: FFWNC, P.O. Box 384, Hendersonville, NC 28793

FFI Website: <https://friendshipforce.org/>

President's Message

Dear Members,

As we conclude 2025 and look forward to the exciting developments in 2026, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support.

By this time next year, many of our members will have successfully enhanced their computer skills through online renewal.

We will have embarked on incredible journeys and connected with new friends from around the world. This is the essence of who we are and what we do.

The evolution of communication is truly remarkable. We've moved from pen and paper to emails and text messaging, much like the inspiring individuals we meet along our journeys, who encourage us to expand our humanity with peace and kindness. There has never been a moment more reflective of being alive than when we engage with others.

As we acknowledge those members who will be moving on, I feel a sense of sadness. However, if this is what's best for you, then it is indeed the right choice. To those stepping into new leadership roles, please know how deeply grateful we all are for your commitment to service. Your efforts allow us to continue spreading humanity across the globe.

In friendship,
Tessa Levizon
FFWNC President

Recap of November 16th General Meeting

The General Meeting began with the election of the 2026 Officers and the 2026 – 2027 Club Directors. As President Levizon was unable to attend, Kay Manley conducted the meeting.

Chuck Tokarski made the motion to approve the 2026 nominations of FFWNC Club Officers and Directors, and Ron Partin seconded the motion. The election resulted in the unanimous approval of the proposed slate, which is noted below:

Officers

Past President - There is no listing for Past President, as Tessa Levizon is the current President and is on the slate to continue as President in 2026.

President - Tessa Levizon
President Elect - Vacancy
Secretary - Kay Manley
Treasurer - Susan Harvey

Directors 2026

Susan Gaston
Marti Wilmering

Directors 2026-2027

Sue Davis
Larry McGaughy



In addition, the Membership agreed that, for potential journeys for 2027, FFWNC will accept one inbound domestic match and one outbound international match from FFI.

Kay Manley, along with Nancy Woods via phone, discussed FFI's "Membership for All" Global Membership Initiative. As of 2026, FFI annual dues are increasing from \$30/year/member to \$100/year/member. In lieu of this increase, the Board voted to waive the \$20.00/person FFWNC local membership dues for 2026. The Membership/Renewal Application is included in this newsletter and is also available on the FFWNC website.

Susan Harvey provided a recap on the 2026 FFWNC journeys, which is outlined later in this newsletter.

Recap of Happy Hour – Thursday, November 20th – 4:30 pm

Fourteen of us met at Johnson Legacy Vineyard and enjoyed fellowship, wine, cider and snacks. The weather was springlike. It was good to visit a “new” winery, as Johnson Legacy recently opened in May, 2025.



****There will not be a Happy Hour in December, due to busy holiday schedules.****

Save the Date

**Holiday Party - Sunday, December 14th 3 – 6 pm
Middleton Place Clubhouse
2001 Middleton Place, Hendersonville, NC 28791**

Mark your calendars and plan to share some holiday cheer! Our Holiday Party will be at Middleton Place this year on Sunday, December 14th, from 3 – 6 pm. The club will provide wine. Members are asked to bring a snack or appetizer to share.

January Activities

Board Meeting – Tuesday, January 13th – 10:00 am

The Board will meet at the Henderson County Extension Office. Members are welcome to attend.

**Next General Meeting – Sunday, January 18th – 3 – 5 pm
Middleton Place Clubhouse
2001 Middleton Place, Hendersonville, NC 28791**

Plan to be at the January General Meeting. We will begin the meeting at 3 pm and finish by 5 pm. This is not a potluck dinner-- if you choose to bring a snack for yourself, feel free to do so.

FFWNC Book Club
Friday, January 23rd, 1:30 pm – *The Rose Code*
Hosted by Harriett Hilton

Harriett has chosen a historical novel, *The Rose Code*, by Kate Quinn. We will discuss the book at Harriett's home on Friday, January 23rd at 1:30 pm. Enjoy the read.

If you have questions, please contact Gerri Gurbuz, FFWNC Book Club Chair. The Book Club meets quarterly on the fourth Friday in January, April, July and October. New members are always welcome to join the group.

Pass the Spoon

A Happy Group of FFWNC members met on October 15th for the Pass the Spoon Lunch at Papa's and Beer in Asheville. The food and service was just as good as at the Hendersonville location. It was a nice change for Asheville members to be close to home.



Gerard Stamm was the lucky person to “hold the spoon.” To avoid General Meeting months as well as winter holiday plans, the *next Pass the Spoon Lunch will not be until February 2026.*

More information regarding the date and location for the next Pass the Spoon will be announced in the January 2026 newsletter.

--Ellen Brazauskas

Save the Dates – 2026 North American Regional Conference
April 24 – 27, 2026 – Memphis, Tennessee

Interested in learning more about FFI and meeting member/friends from Canada and Mexico? Look into attending the FFI 2026 North American Regional Conference in Memphis, Tennessee. Visit the FFI website to learn about how to register for the conference and other related information. You will need to log on to the website at: my.friendshipforce.org with your password. Consider attending – it will prove to be a very worthwhile experience.

2026 FFWNC Journey Update

Trying to schedule our 2026 journeys has been a bit like playing Chinese checkers! We have two outbound and two inbound journeys to schedule, and it continues to be a challenge, i.e., waiting for journey coordinators to be appointed (from the other clubs) conflicting dates with the other clubs' journeys and availability to travel and/or host. BUT...we are making progress!

Please be patient, we are doing our best to nail down specific dates so that we can all mark our calendars and make our plans. Please feel free to contact the journey coordinator for updates for a specific journey.

This is what we know so far:

Outbound to Ottawa, Canada will be in June. Journey Coordinators are Ellen Brazauskas and Nancy Wood.

Inbound from Peru - We are shooting for August. We are also coordinating with the Virginia Club, where the Peru ambassadors will be visiting either before or after the Western NC Journey. The Journey Coordinators are Karen Brown and Tessa Levizon.

Outbound to Napa/Sonoma California has been moved to September. The Journey Coordinator is Susan Harvey.

Inbound from Orlando will be October 6 - 12. The Journey Coordinator is Harriett Hilton.

Thank you for your patience. We will share specifics as they are available.

-- Susan Harvey, Journey Committee Co-Chair

Club Member Birthdays

December

2 Nancy Wood
11 Diane Tokarski
22 Susan Neil
25 Nancy Gaughy,
Gerard Stamm

January

3 Warren Resen
13 Jeanne Resen
15 Lisa Breton
22 Sue Davis

Newsletter Deadline

If you have Club news for the newsletter, please submit your information to Tessa Levizon no later than the 15th of the month.

General Meetings

General Meetings are usually held on the third Sunday of alternate months, starting with January. Meeting locations vary and will be announced on website posts and in the monthly newsletters.

Monthly Calendar of Events

Third Thursday – Happy Hour at a local brewery/winery

Fourth/last Friday, Quarterly – Book Club – (Jan., Apr., July, Oct.) - Gerri Gurbuz

“Pass the Spoon” Lunch/Dinner – Bi-monthly, dates and hosts vary

FFWNC 2025 Full Year Calendar at a Glance
(Subject to change, as year progresses)

Updated: 11/17/25

<p align="center">January</p> <p>1/14 (Tues) - Board Meeting – 10am - IAM 1/16 (Thurs) - Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Trailside Brewing Company, Hendersonville 1/19 (Sun) - General Meeting – 3-5pm – First United Methodist Church 1/24 (Fri) – Book Club – 1:30pm – The Buzz - <i>-Man’s Search for Meaning</i></p>	<p align="center">February</p> <p>2/5 Wed – Pass the Spoon –12:30 pm – Taco Fiesta – Horseshoe 2/11 Tues – Board Meeting – 10am – Community Foundation, 3rd Floor, 401 N. Main St, H^oville. 2/20 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – St. Paul Winery, Hendersonville</p>
<p align="center">March</p> <p>3/11 (Tues) - Board Meeting – 10am - IAM 3/20 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Dry Falls Brewing Company, Hendersonville, NC 3/16 (Sun) - General Meeting – 5-7pm –First United Methodist Church</p>	<p align="center">April</p> <p>4/8 (2nd Tues) – Board Meeting – 10am – Henderson Cty Ext Office 4/9 Pass the Spoon – Biscuit Head – 11:30am Asheville 4/25 (Fri) – Book Club – 1:30pm — <i>11/23/63 by Stephen King</i>, Southern Streams Coffeehouse – Ellen Brazauskas, Host</p>
<p align="center">May</p> <p>5/13-5/19 (Tues – Mon) - INBOUND JOURNEY – FORT WORTH 5/15 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm Boodas Brewing Company, Hendersonville 5/18 (Sun) – Fort Worth Farewell and General Meeting – 5-7pm – Middleton Place Clubhouse 5/20 (3rd Tues) – Board Meeting – 10am – Henderson Cty Ext Office</p>	<p align="center">June</p> <p>6/10 (Tues) – Board Meeting – 10am – Cty Ext Office 6/19 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Stone Ashe Vineyard, Hendersonville, NC</p>
<p align="center">July</p> <p>7/08 (Tues) - Board Meeting – 10am – Cty Extn Office 7/12 (Sat) – Annual Picnic & General Meeting – Noon –Mills River Park 7/17 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Southern Appalachian Brewery, Hendersonville 7/25 (Fri) – Book Club – 1:30pm – <i>The Storyteller of Casablanca</i> by Fiona Valpy</p>	<p align="center">August</p> <p>8/6 (Wed) – Pass the Spoon – Papa’s & Beer, 1821 Asheville Highway, Hendersonville, NC 8/12 (Tues) - Board Meeting – 10am – Cty Ext Office 8/21 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – St. Paul Winery, Hendersonville, NC</p>
<p align="center">September</p> <p>9/9 (Tues) – Board Meeting – 10am – Henderson County Extn Office 9/18-9/24 - OUTBOUND JOURNEY – Western Michigan 9/28 (Sun) - General Meeting – 5-7pm – Guidon Brewery, Hendersonville</p>	<p align="center">October</p> <p>10/14 (Tues) - Board Meeting – 10am – Cty Ext Office 10/15 (Wed) Pass the Spoon – 1:00 pm - Papa’s & Beer, 100 Brevard Road, Asheville 10/16 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Dry Falls Brewing, Hendersonville 10/24 (Fri) – Book Club – 1:30pm – <i>Airplane Mode An Irreverent History of Travel</i> by Shahnaz Habib - Southern Streams Coffeehouse, Laurel Park - Gerri Gurbuz, Host</p>
<p align="center">November</p> <p>11/16 (Sun) – General Meeting – 3pm 11/13 (Thurs) – Board Meeting - 10 am Henderson County Extn. Office 11/16 – General Meeting - Election of 2026 Officers – 3 pm First United Methodist Church, Hendersonville 11/20 (Thurs) – Happy Hour – 4:30pm – Johnson Legacy Vineyard - Hendersonville</p>	<p align="center">December</p> <p>12/14 (Sunday) – Club Holiday Party – 3-6 pm – Middleton Place Clubhouse No Board Meeting in December. No Happy Hour in December.</p>



friendship force
WESTERN
NORTH CAROLINA

Membership Application / Renewal

A separate application is required

Name: _____ Application Date: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Cell Phone (10 digits) _____ Home Phone (10 digits) _____

Email: _____

Birthday: Month _____ Day _____ Circle One: New Member Renewal

**** 2026 Annual Friendship Force Membership Fee is due no later than January 18, 2026****

Annual Membership Fee for Friendship Force International Membership (per person)	\$100
Annual Membership Fee for FFWNC Club (per person)	20
(Annual FFWNC Membership Fee of \$20.00 is waived for 2026.)	-20
Associate Member Fee \$15 (Club Name: _____) (If you are a member of another FFI club and pay that club's full dues)	_____
FFWNC New/Replacement Nametag Fee \$15 (to be worn at all FF events) (This is a required one-time fee for all new FFWNC members.)	_____
Total Due ----->	_____

****Payable to FFWNC and send to Treasurer, FFWNC, P.O. Box 384, Hendersonville, NC 28793**

**Friendship Force is a volunteer organization.
Our success depends upon member participation.**

AREAS YOU ARE WILLING TO SERVE:

_____ Board of Directors or Officer _____ Journey Coordinator
 _____ Committee _____ Hosting (Home, Dinner, Day)
 (Hospitality, Membership, Publicity, Newsletter)

**Please visit the FFWNC website at: <https://ffwesternnc.org/being-a-friendship-force-host/> to learn about home, dinner and day hosting opportunities.*