



Friends Connection

Friendship Force of Sarasota

www.friendshipforcesarasotaflorida.org

January, 2011

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Vice Pres: Katy Goodwin

Secretary: Pat Batt

Treasurer: Wayne Peterson

Publicity: **position available**

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Directory: Gary Anderson

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Presidents' Message

A new year has just arrived and Bob Bergin was so looking forward to being your president this year. Our hearts and prayers go out to Connie and her family. It was not only their loss, but ours. Our nominating committee had to re-shuffle the officers, and under the circumstances, Linda and I agreed to continue as co-presidents for one more year. Our club is going through a challenging period where many of our long-time members can no longer participate as they are experiencing health problems. We will have to find creative ways in the new year to expand our membership. This might be accomplished by having more social activities throughout the year and creating interest groups such as wine tasting groups, bridge groups, etc. Also, we could send representatives of our club to other organizations to talk about Friendship Force. We need your creativity, so please give this some thought and contact us with your ideas.



Jack and Linda

Calendar of Eventsmore info inside****

January 6	General Meeting at Waldemere Fire Station 7P
January 24	Board Meeting at home of Barb and Wayne Peterson 7P
February 3	General Meeting at Waldemere Fire Station 7P
February 21	Board meeting at TBA 7P
March 3	General Meeting 7P at Waldemere Fire Station
March 28	Board Meeting 7P at TBA



Look What's Happening?

- New Officers were elected for the year 2011 at the Holiday Party in December. Congratulations to Jack Vendeland - President, Katy Goodwin - Vice President, Pat Batt - Secretary, and Wayne Peterson - Treasurer. Appointed officers for 2011 can be seen on the banner at the top of this newsletter.

NOTES FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

For those of you who were not at our Holiday Dinner Party, I would like to review the thinking of the Nominating Committee and the Board concerning the 2011 officers. As you know, Bob Bergin was to have been our President in 2011, but he was having major health difficulties in Moffitt Cancer Center, and it was thought best to give him a year off to regain his strength and assume the presidency in 2012. Jack and Linda Vendeland were gracious enough to accept the co-presidency for 2011 in Bobs place.

I agreed to be vice-president for 2011 because after receiving 9 refusals for the position it seemed like the only viable option.

We are a club composed of 96 members. Each of us is asked and needed to serve throughout the year in various capacities. I hope that this year of members repeating major offices will end with an abundance of other members willing to assume major roles next year. We have been a strong, vibrant club and want to continue that way.

Katy Goodwin, Nominating Committee Chairman

Robert A. (Bob) Bergin
June 24, 1935 -- December 15, 2010

Our good friend, excellent Friendship Force member and officer, Bob Bergin, passed away on December 15, 2010 after a tough, tough battle with leukemia, which had returned after a twenty-year hiatus.

Bob & Connie joined the Friendship Force of Sarasota in 2006 and, immediately, became very involved in or club. Shortly after joining, they went to the FFI International Conference in Dublin, Ireland and that hooked them on FF.

Although, most of us did not have the privilege to know Bob for many, many years, the years we did know him were most meaningful.

Bob had an irresistible personality and a love of faith, family, friends that was contagious. Of course, another big love – right there with the other three – was Notre Dame!!!!!! He was an Irish through and through.....

I had the privilege to visit Bob during his stay at Moffitt Cancer Center and he was positive during the entire time of his final fight. Personally, I've lost a dear, dear friend.

Connie and Bob were (are) blessed with a wonderful family and we know they will miss Dad, Grandpa deeply, but their love and Bob's love for them will sustain them.

Our sincere condolences and prayers and our hearts go out to Connie and Bob's family and their friends.

It is now our duty as Friendship Force members to keep Connie very involved with us and to be there for her.

May Bob rest in peace.

Wayne R. Peterson
FF Club of SRQ

Exchanges

Inbound

Edmonton, Canada – February 6-13, 2011

Our Ambassadors will be here in about six weeks! As there are still some activities in the planning stages for our exchange, an e-mail regarding all the activities and costs will

be sent when plans are finalized. All should be in place by the January Meeting. The last week of December, Home Hosts will be assigned and then we will move forward with assigning day hosts & dinner hosts. With the holidays, the organization has been difficult.

Our guests will arrive on Sunday, Feb. 6th at 6:05PM at Sarasota Bradenton Airport.

Activities planned for the week are:

- Monday: Visit to Mote Marine & a Welcome Gathering mid-day
Tuesday: Visit to Seeing Eye Dog School, followed by lunch at a Cuban Restaurant and a visit the Manatee Viewing Center at Apollo Beach in the afternoon
Wednesday: Visit Myakka State Park with a boat ride & picnic lunch - great time of the year to see many birds & enjoy the views from the canopy
Dinner Parties in the evening.
Thursday: All day visit to Ringling Museum and the other attractions
Friday: Visit to The Ringling School of Art and the Sarasota Classic Car Museum
Farewell Party on Friday evening
Saturday: Free day to visit the beach, shop, do laundry or something else your guests might enjoy (Greek Festival is an attraction that could be visited on Saturday)
Also, the Sarasota Circus is performing the week our Ambassadors will be here.
Sunday: Ambassadors will depart for Miami Airport to fly to Cartagena, Colombia, early Sunday morning, about 6:00AM from I-75 & Bee Ridge, plus a stop at I-75 & Laurel Rd. for those staying in Venice.
Finalized timing will be provided later.

Ramona McGee, ED

Outbound

Sao Carlos – March 26-April 2 & Sao Paulo, Brazil – April 2-9 + extensions

There are still 2 spaces available on the Sarasota international outbound exchange to Brazil March 23-April 11, 2011 for a couple or two persons traveling together. We will be home hosted by Sao Carlos and Sao Paulo and welcomed for a few hours between exchange weeks by the Friendship Force Club of Piracicaba as well. Extension trips to amazing **Iguassu Falls** and beautiful Rio de Janeiro will precede and follow our exchange weeks. International (RT TPA-GRU, GIG-TPA) and internal air seats, hotels, tours, and transfers for the extensions are reserved. Estimated cost \$2900 inclusive.



Contact ED Judi Stratton at 497-5684 or jaspetite@comcast.net for further information or to add your name to the list of ambassadors for the exchange. Don't delay, deadline for applications and payment is in early January. Reminder to all ambassadors: I will be at Waldemere Fire Station by 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 6, before our next general meeting to collect payments and forms due (copy of travel insurance card/policy or signed waiver and your decision about the optional add-ons to our SAT tours). You will receive an updated invoice from me and/or exchange treasurer Judy Joyce via email before the meeting date. This is a reminder that checks should be payable to Judith Stratton or Judith Joyce, not to Friendship Force. I also need your Delta frequent flyer number if you would like me to submit it for our international itinerary and have not

already emailed it. An exciting new development which should be a lot of fun: Linda and Jack Vendeland have scouted out an authentic Brazilian restaurant for our ambassadors to get together for a Brazilian meal after the Edmonton exchange and before our departure for Brazil. Tentative date is 6 pm Thursday, February 24. Please see Linda at our January 6 meeting to indicate your availability for this or alternate dates. Restaurant website: www.riosambarestaurante.com. Judi Stratton, ED

OTTAWA EXCHANGE ----- NOVEMBER 10-17, 2010

What a great Exchange!!! The ambassadors arrived as scheduled; they were feted at the Welcome Party at Colleen's beautiful home; they visited Myakka State Park, Ringling Museum, Historic Spanish Point, Mote Marine Laboratories, the Southeastern Guide Dogs campus and the Manatee Village Historical Park. We all enjoyed the wonderful food at Miguel's at the Farewell Party along with the entertainment provided by our guests. Friendships were formed and enjoyed. The memories will last forever.

Thank You to ALL who contributed to the success of this exchange. You are numerous; the home hosts, the day hosts, the dinner party hosts, the welcome and farewell parties committees, the activities coordinator Helga, the bursar Bonnie, the welcome kits Ramona and the booklet Gary Anderson. I am grateful to all of you for your dedication and support.



A toast to you and to the Friendship Force Club of Sarasota!

Gloria Grenier

ED Ottawa Exchange

Ed Note: This report was inadvertently left out of the Dec. Friends Connection.

Please renew your FF Membership for 2011 by filling out this form as soon as possible!

All dues run from January to December and need to be paid for the coming year by **December 31, 2010**. We try to put our Membership Directory out by the first of the year so it is important for you to **renew now**. Please send the following form, one per household, with your check.

****Please update with current information and indicate if it is new.**** Thank you.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email(s) _____

Dues \$ 20 per person x _____ = _____

Name Badge \$ 11 per person x _____ = _____

Total \$ _____

Please mail with check **made out to FF of Sarasota to Wayne Peterson, 4427 Opal Ct. Sarasota 34233**

If any of your Directory information has changed since last year, please email that information to Gary Anderson at gmaretired@aol.com to enable him to include all your current info in our 2011 Directory.