

Friends Connection

Friendship Force of Sarasota

www.friendshipforcesarasotaflorida.org

March, 2012

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Volume 23, No.3

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President's Message

FFI has just announced a Global Expansion Plan targeting the formation of new Friendship Force clubs around the world and increasing global capacity by 20%. This plan brings with it exciting opportunities for our club to mentor and host new clubs as well as visit new areas of the world previously unrepresented by Friendship Force chapters. More details will be available next month along with details of our club inbound and outbound exchanges for 2013.

It is with regret that we have cancelled the Russian Open World visit to Sarasota March 30-April 7 due to Wayne Peterson's hospitalization. I'm sure I speak for all of you in sending to Wayne and Barbara all best wishes for Wayne's speedy return to health.

Judy Joyce has been working hard on organizing and printing the new club directory, which will be distributed to members at the March 1 general meeting. Her next project is to set up a database with helpful information for all exchange planning committees. Please submit your information form to Judy for this database. You will find one inserted in your directory.

As always each of you has many opportunities to participate and contribute to club activities in the next few weeks:

- Contact Babe Baptist for tickets to the Booker VPA play April 11.
- Sign up with Gloria Grenier to participate in the free docent led tour of the Embracing our Differences display at the bayfront and to socialize with members of the Florida Suncoast Friendship Force club April 19.
- See EDs Bonnie Frey or Reeta Dean to volunteer to help with our international inbound exchange from Bogota, Colombia May 19-26. More dinner and day hosts are needed.
- See ED Helga Ponischil to sign up for our international outbound exchange to Tirana, Albania and a tour of the Adriatic countries September 10-28.
- Contact Katy Goodwin to sign up for a domestic outbound exchange to Seattle/Tacoma WA in mid-August.

•A big thank you to Reeta Dean, Gloria Grenier, Bobbie Jabas, Ramona McGee, Nancy Rehbock, Linda Vendeland, (and myself) who contributed photos for our geography photo ID team contest "Where in the World is Carmen Sarasota?" Linda has done a great job of organizing them, and you will be amazed by the variety of photos as well as challenged to identify them all. I hope to see you all in international dress bringing interesting foods to share for our International Dinner at Waldemere Fire Station on March 1, World Friendship Day. We hope to have many potential new members of Friendship Force with us that evening for you to meet.



Happy St. Patrick's Day

Judi

Calendar of Events**more info inside**

March 1	World Friendship Day International Dinner at Waldemere 5pm***
March 27	Board Meeting 7pm at home of Debbie Boyd No April General Meeting
April 11	Booker High School Spring Play & HobNob Fine Dining***
April 19	Embracing Our Differences***
April 24	Board Meeting at TBA 7pm
May 3	General Meeting at Waldemere Fire Station 7pm
May 19-26	Inbound Bogotá Exchange****
May 29	Board Meeting 7pm at home of TBA

Membership Bits 'n Pieces

Introducing.....

Annie Carter, one of our newer members has a varied and fascinating background. She grew up in Cincinnati, became an Occupational Therapist with a specialty in hand therapy. She worked in both Viet Nam and Korea in the early years. She practiced in the States for many years, and then about 12 years ago decided to go get a certificate in teaching English as a Second Language. After training in ESL she lived and taught in Japan, Morocco, and Mexico. She has returned to Occupational Therapy, but on a semi-retired basis so she can pursue her newest vocation of making specialty Montessori placemats for children and varied others for adults. Among her many other interests are music, reading, theater, sewing costumes for Sarasota Opera, reading to children in schools, and travel. She recently cruised to England, has visited Germany, France, Spain, Thailand, and Hong Kong, and finds FF a perfect fit for her interests. Welcome Annie!

Jean West-Walker joined Friendship Force in January and is a well-traveled, busy lady. She has visited seven continents and all 50 states. Jean lives in South Venice and has been in Florida for 35 years, originally from Pennsylvania/New Jersey area. She is widowed and has a grown daughter. Jean was director of the clinical laboratory at Venice Hospital for a number of years. She then opened her own travel agency in Englewood and later merged with another agency where she still works part-time. She has also taught English as a second language. Jean learned about FF through Judy Joyce while volunteering for the Loveland/Venice Theatre Program. She is a member of Zonta International, a global organization which works to advance the status of women worldwide. Give a warm welcome to Jean!

Have You Returned Your Database Form?

You were recently emailed a membership database form which you were asked to fill out and return to **Judy Joyce** at jjoyce5@gmail.com. If you have not already done so, please fill out this **form at the end of this newsletter** and send it to Judy or bring it to the International Dinner for her. This is a big help to those who are planning our exchanges.



WORLD FRIENDSHIP DAY



Social Hour 5pm – 6pm Dinner

The **March General Meeting** will feature our traditional International Potluck Dinner, brought back by popular demand! This year there will be a new twist - we will invite as our guests as many prospective new members as you, our members, can suggest. Entertainment will include "Where in the World is Carmen Sarasota?" a geography photo ID contest, with prizes! Please send contact information (name, address, phone, email) of prospective members to **Ramona McGee**, Membership Committee Chair, so that the committee can send invitations for this special evening.

Everyone is asked to bring a dish for 10-12 of your favorite cuisine from somewhere in the world. If you know any prospective members, invite them to join us. Costumes add to the

festivity of the evening, so this is your chance to show off some of your souvenirs you've collected on your trips. Soft drinks, paper goods and silverware will be provided. The Social Committee of Betty Kuhns, Shellie Ramey, JR Suess and Jean West-Walker will be your hostesses for this evening.

For reservations, email Nancy Rehbock at nrehbock@tampabay.rr.com and let her know how many are coming and if you are bringing a salad, entrée, or dessert for 10-12. Please make a small card with the name of your dish to be placed with it on the serving table and don't forget to bring serving utensils for your dishes.

If you can come early to help set up or stay late to help clean up, you will be most appreciated! As always, no alcohol is permitted in the Fire Station.

Please sign up now. We don't want you to come to the meeting at 7pm and have missed a great dinner and an opportunity to socialize!

No April General Meeting. April may bring showers, but they will not dampen our April FF events. **First up is Wednesday, April 11 – 7:00 pm -** "All Shook Up" musical at Booker High School. Babe Baptist has 2 tickets left to sell; otherwise you can call Judy Piercy at Booker High School (355-2967) to see if tickets are still available for April 11. The cost is \$10.00 for seniors. This musical comedy is built around a number of songs made famous by Elvis Presley. The setting is 1955 somewhere in middle America, where one girl's dream and a surprise visit from a mysterious leather-jacketed, guitar-playing stranger help a small town to discover the magic and the power of rock & roll. The book was written by Joe DiPietro who wrote the recent FST hit "The Last Romance".



If you would like to join in on some 'fine dining' before the play, you are welcome to join the group at the HobNob Drive-in at the corner of 301 and 17th St. in Sarasota at 5:30pm. Everyone welcome!

Our 2nd event on April 19th 10:00 am - Docent led tour of Embracing Our Differences display at the Bayfront followed by lunch at O'Leary's. The tour is free and lunch is "Dutch treat". Sign-up sheets will be at the next meeting. We need a head count in order to arrange for the appropriate number of docents plus we need to inform O'Leary's about the size of our group. Members of the Suncoast Club will join us for the tour and lunch.

Mid-August – Outbound Domestic Exchange to Seattle-Tacoma, Washington.

Arrangements are in the works with the Seattle-Tacoma FF Club for a mutual exchange. A mid-August date is set for our visit to Seattle-Tacoma and we expect to be able to host their club here in Sarasota in January, February or March of 2013. Katy Goodwin has agreed to be our outbound ambassador Exchange Director. Details will follow but please sign the interest sheet at the next meeting and save these dates if you are interested in this exchange.

Thursday, December 6 – Our **Annual Holiday Party** will be held at Rosebud's Restaurant in Osprey starting at 6:00 pm. **Save the date.** Details will follow in the fall.

Russian Open World Program – March 30 - April 6

It is with a heavy heart that Wayne and I have had to cancel the Open World program scheduled to be held March 30th to April 7. Judi has informed FFI and they hopefully have a backup for the



group in Iowa.

Wayne has been in Doctors hospital since Feb 6th. It is now the 15th. His problems are related to his heart. They can not get his blood pressure down to a reasonable rate and keep it there. I have thanked but want to thank again all who generously agreed to help with the project. You now have a free Holy Week!

Again we are sorry to have to do this but you know it was not done lightly. At the moment the focus is on getting Wayne back on his feet.

Peace,

Barbara Peterson

Ed. Note- Wayne is now home from the hospital with blood pressure under control.

Exchanges

Inbound

Bogotá, Columbia – May 19 – 26



The Bogota exchange is progressing nicely. However, it was a small disappointment that more people did not sign up for dinner parties and day hosting at the last meeting. This is your opportunity to get to know our guests better and by allowing them into your homes for dinners you offer them the chance to see how other people live (and cook). The dinner parties have traditionally been a lot of fun and full of interesting conversations. Please consider being a dinner host. Day hosts can get to know our ambassadors much better than by just seeing them at the welcome or farewell parties which are busy and full of people. By day hosting you get to spend some quality time with the guests plus get them to one of our great activities. These folks from Bogota entertained us a few years ago so we want to return the favor. They will have been in Dallas/Ft Worth before they come to us and surely we want to make this final part of their trip the best ever. So please get involved with whatever works best for you.

Contact Bonnie Frey or Reeta Dean. For day hosting contact Ramona McGee.

Outbound

Tirana, Albania – September 10-28

Our exchange to Albania is coming along nicely, if somewhat slowly. We are now 14 participants who will travel to Albania in September of this year. The club in Tirana is planning a beautiful exchange for us. Albanians generally are known for their wonderful hospitality. I am hoping to have a few more people interested in this exchange. We have now advertised this exchange in other FF newsletters throughout the US.

We will leave on 9-10 from Tampa and arrive in Tirana the next day. I am sure the week in Tirana will fly by in a hurry. Albania is a beautiful country with nice, sometimes isolated beaches, and very high mountains in the background, plus historic old towns and buildings. The unique sights of Albania will be hard to forget.

On 9-18 we will head by private bus to Dubrovnik and join a tour there for 10 days. We will travel by bus up the Adriatic coast and visit many most interesting sites, again an experience of a lifetime. We end up in Venice, Italy for one day and overnight and fly home from there on 9-28 via Frankfurt to the US.

I have a meeting scheduled for our travel people on March 19th, at 3PM, a Monday, in the Tower Lounge of Whispering Sands Condo, the room overlooking the beach.

Jim Stefan, a member of our club, will talk about his travels a few years ago in Albania and beyond. He also has some nice pictures to show us.

Even if you do not travel with us, other FF club members are very welcome to attend this meeting too. We will all enjoy Jim's tales.

Best wishes to all of you.

In Friendship,

Helga (exchange director)

PS. Please call me if you plan to attend at 349-6706.



Tirana Market Scene

More Membership

We wish to build a data base of information to help us when planning for home hosting of exchanges and to better know how you are willing to help us in our Friendship Force Club. Please complete this form even if you have previously filled out one.

To best complete the boxes, delete the box & enter X. For the lines, delete the line or just start keying your information & line will move. (If you do not feel comfortable doing this, you can just print out the form and bring it with you to the International Dinner.)

Please return to **Judy Joyce** at jjoyce5@gmail.com.

Friendship Force Florida of Sarasota, Florida – Membership Database

Name: _____

Past/Present Occupation: _____

Foreign Languages You Speak: _____

Special Interests or Hobbies (max 3): _____

Please check the kind of club activities you would be willing to be involved with:

- Board Member Social Activities Programs
 Membership Newsletter Exchange Activities
 Publicity Web Site Data Base

Exchange Information:

When we host an inbound exchange, the information below will help us to accommodate our ambassadors.

- Accommodate guest/s in my home
 Serve as a day host
 Provide transportation
 Host a social event at my home
 Member of a committee that plans and coordinates activities for our guests

Accommodations I can provide for guest/s:

Twin bed/s _____ Double bed/s _____ Queen _____ King _____

Number of guest rooms available _____

Gender Preferred: Female Male Couple No Preference

Do you permit smoking in your home? Yes No

Do you have pets? Yes No If yes, what kind? _____

Do you have allergies? Yes No If yes, what kind? _____