



Friends Connection Friendship Force of Sarasota

May, 2009

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President's Message

April showers bring May flowers – well, we didn't get much rain in April, but hopefully we will get flowers in May. Texas didn't get much rain either, so those ambassadors that traveled to Austin in April spent a day touring the Texas Hill Country looking for bluebonnets (the Texas state wildflower) which were not to be found. The trip was delightful, with or without bluebonnets. Come to the May meeting to hear all about it!

I understand that the Hob Nob - Booker Visual Arts Evening was a huge success – good food, good theater, good friends! A big Thank You to Babe Baptist for making the evening possible for us.

Our May 21 Meeting will be at Selby Library at 6:00 PM. Anne Hurst, who spoke to the Women's Association at Church of the Palms, will give a short presentation on the founding of FFI and the founding of our Sarasota club. Our newer members may not know just how exciting and interesting that was. Let's be prompt so we can leave the library in pristine shape by 7:45 PM.

We have received "It's a Match" from FFI for combining our outbound exchange to the Belgian Coast, Belgium and Halle-Salle, Germany next April. And I am delighted to announce that our multi-linguist and past president, Helga Ponischil will be the ED for this exchange.

We are working on having an International Dinner for our June meeting – please see information on this elsewhere in the newsletter.

Explore – Understand – Serve - In Friendship.

Katy

Calendar of Events**more info inside

May 21

General Meeting at Selby Library 6P

June 1

Board Meeting at home of Judi Stratton

June 18

International Dinner Meeting 5p**

July 16

Summer Happening 10 AM**

Sept. 27

20th Anniversary Party at Whispering Sands – **Save the Date!**

Did you Know.....

- Art Swenson had rotor cuff surgery April 29. We wish him a speedy recovery.
- Judi Stratton received an email from Elena McCarty, FFI Atlanta, notifying her that the Friendship Force Club of Tashkent, Uzbekistan had been selected as a host for a Global Exchange for the Atlanta Club next year. Being a Global Exchange means that members of any other club are welcome to join the exchange. So - if some of you would like to visit Uzbekistan next year, you might have the opportunity. Elena did not give dates or prices.

- Ramona McGee was a speaker on Friendship Force at the April 19 meeting of Singles on the Go (SOTG). She showed the new FFI marketing video and had a lot of questions and interest from the members. The program chairman, Grace Rowland, spoke on other types of organizations for travel. Several of our FF club members are also members of SOTG.
- Ann Hurst told the story of Friendship Force at a recent meeting of the Church of the Palms Presbyterian Women, reiterating that the primary purpose of Friendship Force is to bridge international barriers through friendship, and to bring peace and understanding through personal contacts and experiences with people of other cultures and nations.

You Are Invited to an International Dinner!!! June 18, 5PM

Our General Meeting for the month of June will feature our almost annual, almost traditional International Dinner. Everyone is asked to bring their favorite cuisine from somewhere in the world. Now that leaves you with a fairly large choice. So whip up enough for 8 and bring it along to the Pine Brook South Club House in Venice. Look for address and directions in the June *Friends Connection*. And don't forget to wear that little number you picked up on one of your travels. (yes, I do mean clothing) Your costumes add to the festivity of the evening. Soft drinks and paper goods will be provided. BYOB! Bobbie and Jay Jabas are coordinating this event. Please call or email Bobbie at 751-6129 or bigcat54143@yahoo.com and tell her what you are bringing and how many are coming. Deadline is June 13.

SUMMER HAPPENING Thursday, July 16, 10AM

Something different is being planned for our traditional Summer Happening this year. A Fun Day at Sun City Center is in the works. Sun City is a 55+ retirement community off I-75, a few miles southeast of Tampa. We have all been invited for the day to learn about their community, have lunch at the Cypress Creek Country Club, and tour the grounds and facilities. We will meet at their Community Hall at 10AM. The total cost for day is \$15. We hope to have carpooling for this event. If you are interested and/or can drive, let Katy know as she will be making the arrangements.

There will be more specific information in the June *Friends Connection*.

Katy Goodwin can be reached at www.katygoodwin@msn.com or call her at 379-9954.



Community Hall

Good walking shoes are suggested.

Yes, Count me in for the Summer Happening July 16!

NAME _____

COST is \$15 pp. x ___ people = \$ _____

I am willing to drive and can take _____ passengers.

Mail coupon and check to Katy Goodwin, 4505 Lake Vista Dr. Sarasota 34233

Exchanges

Inbound

There are no more Inbound Exchanges planned for 2009. The next one so far is Ottawa, Canada, scheduled to come in November of 2010, but stayed tuned - you never know when another club will ask us if they can visit!



Outbound

Calgary, Alberta, Canada - Bus Tour August 7-12 & Homestay August 12-19

We have 26 Ambassadors, all from our chapter, participating in the exchange. Twenty-



two of us will be going on a pre-exchange bus tour which includes Banff, Lake Minnewanka, Jasper and Lake Louise. Payment has already been made to our treasury and to the Calgary chapter. We are sure this will be a great exchange and we are looking forward to seeing our friends in Calgary who visited us in Sarasota 3 years ago.

Linda and Jack Vendeland, EDs Phone: 941-342-6278 E-Mail: linvende@aol.com

Jasper National Park

Belgian Coast, Belgium and Halle-Salle, Germany April, 2010

Helga Ponischil has agreed to be the Exchange Director for this excursion. There will be more information about this trip during the coming year, but if you might be interested, keep your times open around this date.

2009 International Conference – Okinawa, Japan - Friday, Nov. 20, - Sunday, Nov. 22, 2009

Experience a unique blend of Japanese, Chinese and Pacific Island culture while participating in our annual global gathering of Friendship Force leaders from around the world. The conference is set in the city of Naha - central to all of Okinawa's attractions. In addition to the conference sessions and workshops there will be opportunities for excursions to various cultural centers on the island. Following the conference you may extend your stay in the region by returning to the Japanese main islands for a post-conference homestay.

Austin, TX Exchange Report – April 2 – 9 Ange and Leaf Wanless, EDs

Fifteen Sarasota Ambassadors were met at the Austin airport with a big Howdy. We had the feeling they showed us the whole state in five days. We were introduced to all the major buildings downtown; the green showcase of the their new City Hall on Lady Bird Lake, the grandiose Bullock History Museum and the Texas Capitol with a walk to the UT Club on top of the stadium; a fancy luncheon place. The next day we made a big tour to LBJ Ranch on the Bluebonnet loop with stops in Fredericksburg and Enchanted Rock, a solid mount of basalt. Leaf's favorite visit on Sunday was a Gospel Brunch at 10 am which featured famous musicians. In the afternoon we stopped at the Elizabeth Ney Studio Museum. She sculpted Lady Macbeth for the Smithsonian and Sam Houston and Stephen F. Austin for the Texas capitol. We didn't miss the Lady Bird Wild Flower Center, which had a great layout in the Hill country. The official Exchange ended with a visit to the LBJ Library followed by a super dessert array in the historic Driscoll hotel, where LBJ had a suite. The exchange was ended with an invitation from our club. We would love to see them visit us.

The tour to San Antonio was a two day tour, which covered many of the exciting and historical parts. With rental cars we made a stop at the McNay Museum, the oldest one in the state of Texas. It had all the famous artists, such as Picasso, Van Gogh, etc. We took the obligatory boat ride on the Riverwalk and ate TexMex there after visiting the Alamo. We ate at the famous Pioneer Mill and walked the King William district. We shopped at the La Villita district and El Mercado.

We finally made it back home from the only state that had six different flags fly over the capitol. Can you name them? Answer at end of newsletter.....No peeking!



Texas Bluebonnets



Austin Exchange Group

NEWS FROM THE WEB



The latest addition to our web site is music. You can now view the web site pages while listening to Mindy Simmons's song "I Wish You Peace". The instructions on how to play the music are on the Home page.

www.friendshipforcesarasotaflorida.org.

Linda Vendeland, Webmaster linvende@aol.com

Answer: The six flags that ruled over Texas are Spain, Mexico, Texas, Confederate, France, USA.



The Friendship Force of Sarasota, Florida

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