

Friends Connection
Friendship Force of Sarasota
www.friendshipforcesarasotaflorida.org

April, 2012

President: Judi Stratton
jaspetite@comcast.net
Vice Pres: Gloria Grenier
Secretary: Debbie Boyd
Treasurer: Bob Joyce

Publicity: position open

Membership/Directory: Judy Joyce
Mentor/Membership Book chair: Ramona McGee
Donna Schaeffer, Gene Burke, Joan March, Reeta Dean

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Editor: Nancy Rehbock
RNRehbock@tampabay.rr.com
Historian: Vivian McNamara
Sister Cities: Terry Neuss
Sunshine: Marty Swenson
Social: Betty Kuhns, chair, Shellie Ramey
Lynne Barrett, JR Seuss, Jean West-Walker
Web Administrator: Linda Vendeland
Past Pres. - Jack Vendeland

President's Message

A big thank you to everyone who worked hard to make our International Dinner in observance of World Friendship Day March 1 a great success: Ramona McGee and her Mentoring/Membership committee who invited our guests and made them feel welcome, club members in international dress who brought interesting foods to share, the Social Committee (plus Reeta Dean and her hors d'oeuvres) who organized all those wonderful foods and beverages, photographers who contributed photos for "Where in the World is Carmen Sarasota?", Linda Vendeland who prepared the photo contest slide presentation, Bob Joyce who stepped in to replace Linda as our technology expert when she had to go out of town for a death in the family, as well as all the members and guests who pitched in to help set up and clean up the Waldemere Fire Station meeting room. Please see the newsletter banner above for the names of all those committee members. Five of our dinner guests have since joined Friendship Force. You will find some biographical information about them elsewhere in this newsletter; please make them feel welcome.

Another big thank you goes to Gary Kuhns who organized our Friendship Force Sarasota information booth at the Sarasota Folk Festival March 24-25 at Oscar Scherer Park and to Debbie Boyd who provided eye catching international themed decorations. Thanks also to these club members who staffed that booth, distributing FFI brochures and offering a sign-up list to interested Festival attendees: Ramona McGee, Katy Goodwin, Bonnie Frey, Bob & Judy Joyce, Sandy & Perry Miller.



We have received notification of our proposed international inbound exchange for 2013; it's Lima, Peru tentatively in April. Our board has approved this proposal and we are waiting for "It's a Match" notification. For our 2013 international outbound exchange and as part of FFI's Global Expansion Plan, we have agreed to mentor the formation of one or two new clubs in the Ukraine, Yalta & Odessa, which would then host us as their first exchange.

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

- Contact me if you would be willing to serve as Publicity Chair in charge of media calendar announcements, creating flyers for posting for club events, and scheduling presentations about Friendship Force to area clubs. Our Publicity Chair Jim Stefan has resigned due to other commitments.
- See Ramona McGee if you have not yet received your directory.
- Submit your database information form to Judy Joyce to make it easier for the exchange planning committees to do their work.
- Join other members in attending 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 have lunch and 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.
- 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 August 9-16.

Judi

Calendar of Events**more info inside**

No April General Meeting

April 11	Booker High School Spring Play & HobNob Fine Dining***
April 19	Embracing Our Differences***
April 24	Board Meeting at home of Bonnie Frey 7:30pm
May 3	General Meeting at Waldemere Fire Station 7pm
May 19-26	Inbound Bogotá Exchange****
May 29	Board Meeting 7pm at home of Gloria Grenier
June 7	General Meeting at Waldemere Fire Station 7pm
June 26	Board Meeting at TBA 7pm

Membership Bits 'n Pieces

- Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to JR and John Seuss. JR's son was recently killed in a car accident elsewhere in the US. We send our deepest condolences for this tragic loss.
- Please remember Wayne Peterson as he is in and out of the hospital recently due to side effects of his chemo.

Meet Our New Members

Please welcome five new members that joined us in March. Don Geyer, Lynne Barrett, Nancy Heart, Peggy and Hal Hayden

Don Geyer expressed an interest in Friendship Force after hearing a friend talk about her recent trip and joined us for our Intl. Potluck Dinner. Don is originally from Chambersburg, PA and has lived in Sarasota for about 15 years, residing in The Meadows. He was an insurance broker and risk adjuster. Since retirement, he is very active in his church and volunteers 2 days a week at Doctors Hospital. Don has a step-daughter.

Let's meet **Lynne Barrett!** Lynne attended our Intl. Potluck Dinner in March and joined Friendship Force. Lynne is originally from Indiana & lived in Connecticut, before moving to Sarasota in 1994. She was a school teacher, then devoted full time to raising her children. Lynne then worked for The Girl Scouts both in Connecticut and in Sarasota, retiring as Director of Marketing for Gulf Coast Development. She is a member of Encore Club of Sarasota and vice president, in charge of membership. Lynne has 3 grown children & six grandchildren. She lives on Siesta Key in Sarasota. Lynne enjoys traveling, walking and reading.

Nancy Heart, a former member, gave up her membership in the Sarasota Friendship Force to be a caregiver for her mother, but now feels she has the time to participate in the organization. Nancy came to Venice about 10 years ago from Connecticut where

she enjoyed her career as a clinical social worker. She worked part time as a private counselor until she opened her own private practice from which she is now retired. She has a variety of interests and hobbies. She is a sculptor. Nancy taught classes for the Mystic Guide Association in Connecticut and now teaches at the Venice Art Center. She enjoyed skiing in Vermont and now she enjoys bike riding, roller blading, gardening and walking her Cocker Poo in her Pine Brook neighborhood. Nancy is looking forward to the activities of Friendship Force and traveling with the group.

Peggy & Hal Hayden contacted us as a result of watching the Jack Perkins Show on Public Television in February that was made about Friendship Force when East Germany Clubs visited us. They joined us for the March 1st Dinner & are most excited about our organization. They moved to Sarasota from Bristol, Rhode Island in 2010 and live in the Lakeridge Falls Development of Sarasota. Hal & Peg were both Educators. Hal taught in universities and spent his last 10 years in Social Service Research at Brown University. Peg taught at university level, spent time in administration and as a facilitator of planning. They both enjoy travel, bridge, gardening, the arts, plus the gym. Hal has recently taken up golf. The Haydens have one daughter. Peggy & Hal are excited about joining us on the exchange to Tirana, Albania in September.



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’s tickets are sold out, but 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!

Thursday, April 19 at 10:00 am – Docent-led Tour of the 2012 winning entries of the Embracing Our Differences International contest.

The winners have been selected and the display at Island Park along Sarasota’s beautiful bay front is being installed. This 9th annual outdoor art exhibit will contain 39 billboard-sized original works of art accompanied by inspiring quotations. We will meet our docents at the entrance to the exhibit and tour for about an hour. There are plenty of benches for rest breaks along the way, if needed. Members of the Suncoast Friendship Force Club will join us for the tour and the Dutch-treat lunch at O’Leary’s. I have 15 names on the list and am still taking reservations. Please email me or call if you decide to take part in this exciting and informative tour. Lunch is optional but a head count would be helpful since the restaurant does not accept reservations.

Gloria Grenier ggrenier@tampabay.rr.com
941-358-1383



Exchanges

Inbound

Bogotá, Colombia – May 19 – 26

The Bogota exchange is now just 2 months away and the activities chair people, Chuck Reist and Margaret Mills, have put together a terrific schedule. It includes the Southeastern Guide Dogs (everyone enjoyed them last time), Ringling, Mote, Myakka boat ride, Le Barge sunset cruise (this was a big winner for the last group we took aboard) and of course the welcome and farewell dinners, and dinner parties (lots of eating). The welcome party will be at Whispering Sands on Sunday May 20th at 4:00 pm with a BBQ theme. The farewell party will be at Cafe Baci on Friday evening the 25th of May. There will a meeting of all those involved in this exchange in early May, but if you have any questions please contact Reeta Dean or Bonnie Frey. There are reservation forms at the end of this newsletter that include the menu, times and cost. Please fill them out and return them with your check to the appropriate chair-people. It's important that we know exactly how many will be eating with us. It may come as no surprise, but we could use some extra bodies to help with the set up, and clean up for the welcome party. If you can help please contact Charlotte Neagle at charlotte.neagle@gmail.com or fill in the reservation form.

It promises to be a great exchange and we encourage you to come to the parties and be ***involved*** in whatever way you choose.

Also, all members who have passes to Ringling Museum and Mote Marine and are willing to take in members please contact Chuck Reist 966-1602.

This will be a very exciting and fun exchange so please participate.

Reeta and Bonnie, EDs

Outbound

Seattle-Tacoma, Washington - August 9-16

These dates have been selected for our upcoming domestic exchange to Seattle-Tacoma. Seattle, the Emerald City of the Pacific Northwest, is reported to have two seasons: rainy and August. Aren't we lucky to be going in August!!

Seattle has many wonderful attractions both indoors and out. Many think of the Space Needle, the symbol of the 1962 Worlds Fair, but the Fair left a complete 74 acre park known today as Seattle Center which houses the Pacific Science Center, Paul Allen's Experience Music Project, fountains, theaters and much more. Puget Sound, linking Seattle to the Pacific, is a major port for Alaska cruises and cargo ships as well as an extensive ferry system to neighboring islands. Museums, parks, gardens, falls, markets, quaint neighborhoods, and, of course, welcoming Friendship Force members await our arrival.

Our hosts have suggested many interesting things to do doing our week with them and indicated that they can accommodate 20 ambassadors. Our members will make their own travel arrangements to and from Seattle so extra individual excursions can be included before or after the exchange dates if so desired. I have 12 names on my list at this time. If you are interested in being a part of our select group, please contact me at 379-9954 or katygoodwin@msn.com. Let's have a full group heading to Seattle in August!

Katy Goodwin, ED



Tirana, Albania – September 10-28

The exchange to Albania is coming along slowly. We presently have about 18 people interested in this trip. On Monday March 19th, we had a wonderful talk and photo show by Jim Stefan about his travel experiences in Albania and surrounding countries from his visit there about four years ago. We had some members from the Orlando FF here also, who will be coming on the trip with us.

Thank you very much, Jim! It was lovely.

If anyone from our club has an interest in this Albania FF exchange, there is still time to let us know. I would like very much to have just a few more people from our Sarasota club join us.

Ramona McGee, our treasurer for this trip, has made down payments to the airline company to hold seats for our travels as well as to the tour company.

We will have another get-together in the near future.

I will stay in close contact with all travelers and keep you informed.

Helga Ponischil (your exchange director)

If you want to call me, my phone no: 349-6706

International Dinner Review

The annual International Dinner can once again be called a success. 52 members and 23 prospective guests were wined (non-alcoholic, of course) and dined at the last meeting on March 1st. Abundant trays of Italian antipasto and sparkling cider awaited the attendees as they arrived for the Social Hour. The main course was diverse and plentiful, from Austria, Lebanon, Mexico, Germany and many other countries. The photos quiz game "Where in the World is Carmen Sarasota?" was fun and competitive and captured everyone's attention.

Thank you to all who attended and made the evening a success just by being there and being so generous with your food offerings.

Another big thank you goes to the Social Committee who worked hard to have everything in place, Linda Vendeland for putting together the photo quiz, and Ramona McGee for coordinating the guest list. So many others came early to set up and stayed late to clean up. You were most appreciated.

Take a look....there are some pictures of the International Dinner and pictures of the



dinner meeting at the Oriental Buffet in our web site Photo Gallery. **More pictures of the International Dinner are needed, so, if you took any pictures that evening, we would love to share them with everyone.** Send the photos to linvende@aol.com.



Thanks, Linda Vendeland, Web Administrator

Looking For Somewhere Different to Travel To?

I have been in many places, but I've never been in Cahoots.

Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends, family and work. I live close so it's a short drive. I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favorite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenaline flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

And, sometimes I think I am in Vincible but life shows me I am not.

People keep telling me I'm in Denial but I'm positive I've never been there before!

I have been in Deepdoodoo many times; the older I get, the easier it is to get there. I actually kind of enjoy it there.

So far, I haven't been in Continent; but my travel agent says I'll be going soon.

Anon. from the internet

BOGOTA EXCHANGE SCHEDULE

Sat. May 19th---Bogota ambassadors arrive

Sun May 20th--2:00 Ski-A-Rees (water skiing exhibition) optional
4:00 Welcome party at beach condo community room
7:00 Drumming circle on Siesta beach, optional

Mon May 21st--10:00 am Ringling Art Museum, Circus Museum, and Ringling Home

Tue May 22nd--10:00 am Southeastern Guide dogs, then Ellenton Shopping Mall, optional
evening- time to take hosts out to dinner

Wed May 23rd--10:00 am Myakka State Park boat ride,(including alligators)
evening- dinner parties in homes

Thu May 24th --10:00 am Mote Marine Aquarium (including Manatees)
evening-- Le Barge sunset cruise on Sarasota Bay

Fri May 25th--- Free day for shopping or beaching
6 pm Farewell dinner Café Baci

Sat May 26th-- Departure of Bogota ambassadors

WELCOME PARTY FOR BOGOTÁ EXCHANGE

SUNDAY May 20th Whispering Sands Condo Club House-Siesta Key 4PM

Menu – pulled pork, baked beans, cole slaw, potato salad, tea or lemonade, watermelon
Cost - \$12.50 per person

Name _____ Phone _____

No. attending _____ X \$12.50 _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sarasota FF and send to Charlotte Neagle, 701 Silk Oak Dr. Venice, FL 34293

I can assist with Set up _____ Serving _____ Clean up _____

FAREWELL DINNER AT CAFÉ BACI May 25th 6 PM

Dinner includes salad, entree, dessert (Tiramisu), coffee, tea. Cost \$25.00 including tax and tip
Entree choices are:

- CHICKEN ALLA MARSALA
- FLOUNDER ALLA FRANCESE
- LASAGNA (HOMEMADE SPECIALTY)

Name _____ No. _____ X \$25= _____ Total

Chicken _____ Flounder _____ Lasagna _____

Make checks payable to Sarasota FF and send to Rae Aloisio, 5581 Stonehaven Lane, SRQ, FL 34233
no later than **May 16**.

There is an elevator available to the upstairs private room.

LE BARGE SUNSET CRUISE on SARASOTA BAY

Sunset Cruise is \$20 per person for 2 hour cruise. Exact time TBA

Name _____ No. _____ X \$20 = \$ _____ Total

Make checks payable to Sarasota FF and send to Bonnie Frey, 2411 Britannia Rd. SRQ 34231