

Yours in Friendship March 2009

Friendship Force of Cedar Rapids/Iowa City has an extremely busy schedule of upcoming activities. We think you'll find something for everyone.

Our March 8 meeting for **World Friendship Day** was a big success with sixty-three members meeting at the HyVee club room. After a buffet dinner Tom Ecker entertained us with a slide presentation from his visit to the Beijing Olympics. Many of us could relate to his humorous look at Chinese attempts translate their public signs to English. Before, during and after dinner and our general meeting, members bid on a wide selection of items in the Silent Auction. The auction brought in \$650, \$250 of which will go to the Legacy Fund at Friendship Force International. The remainder will be used locally to help fund some of the many activities. Thanks to all who brought and/or took home treasures.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Communications: Vic and Pat Klopfenstein had articles on FF and World Friendship Day in the Gazette and the Marion Times and is hopeful of an additional feature article in the Gazette soon. He also will be talking to the Rockwell Retirees group and plans to promote our events on KCRG's website calendar.

Web Site: Darby Anderson let us know that Cedar Rapids Diversity Focus has added a link on their website to our FFCR/IC website. She has also added a program that will allow us to collect statistics on our website.

Promotions: Dianne Karal had researched several items for possible promotions. She will be purchasing a supply of luggage tags and journal sized notebooks that can be personalized for our group exchanges or for sale to other FF clubs. She is also looking into new logo shirts.

Fundraising: Audrey Bradford showed examples of business card-sized international table blessings that Margaret Nelson and Audrey are also making for sale.

We have applied for a Diversity Grant from Rockwell and will be hearing the outcome within a month. We are also looking for volunteers to work at a Freedom Festival event as a fundraising activity.

The final revision of the by-laws was unanimously accepted.

EXCHANGES: Steve Williams is juggling up to fifteen potential exchanges!

Outgoing to Peru: Dianne Karal is exchange director for the June 2009 exchange. Twenty-one people are going for up to 20 days in June. She said that she would still take additional travelers if anyone is interested.

Incoming from Los Angeles: Twenty people are coming from LA this May. The dates aren't completely confirmed, but will be approximately May 13th to 17th. Margaret Miller, exchange director, needs members interested in hosting to contact her soon.

Incoming from SW Florida: Betty Emrich is exchange director and is working to confirm dates for this four to five day visit sometime between August 10th and 25th, 2009.

Incoming IRIS hosting opportunity: Ten visitors from the Ukraine will be here May 27th through June 2nd. Steve and Vic will verify the schedule and are asking for home hosts.

Mystery Weekend: Sally Fairchild will lead a group to an unknown location for a weekend in October!

2010 will bring:

An outgoing exchange to New Zealand (and possibly Australia) in March.

A special Global Exchange to Azerbaijan in July.

An incoming exchange from Gifu City, Japan, possibly in August.

Potential outgoing exchanges to LA and SW Florida.

And additional opportunities with Grand Junction, CO, Omaha and Tuscon.

Great job, Steve!

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

April LEO – Zio Johnno's in Marion, Tuesday, April 21st at 6:30. RSVP to Phyllis Seidl at 377-5619 or seidlgerald@msn.com

The May Potluck dinner, coinciding with the LA exchange, will be held Thursday, May 14th at 6:30. Location T.B.D.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- Midwest Regional Conference is April 17th-18th in Madison, WI. All members are encouraged to attend. If you'd like a registration form, please contact Darby Anderson.
- Hosts are needed for the May LA exchange. Contact Margaret Miller if you'd like to host.
- Hosts are needed for IRIS guests May 27th to June 2nd.
- Volunteers will be needed to work at a Freedom Festival event. A specific date and event will be identified mid-April. Contact John and Cheryl Elliott or Audrey Bradford to volunteer.
- Would you like to help plan the Tri-Club Picnic for this summer? Contact Darby Anderson.

As you can see, it's a great time to be a Friendship Force member.

Yours in friendship,

Darby Anderson and Audrey Bradford