

Friendship Force of Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Yours in Friendship November 2011

After a very busy year with a very wonderful group of Friendship Force friends here and around the world, I will be wrapping up my tenure as president with our Annual Dinner Meeting and Silent Auction on December 4 at the Clarion. We will also have a business meeting, with year-end reports and election of officers for 2012. I have every confidence that next year will be as fulfilling and exciting for our club as 2011 proved to be.

I want to thank everyone who participated in any way, and especially those who helped host, organize and lead with the Open World from Russia in February, the Las Vegas Exchange and the Wayne Smith Legacy Award to the Rays in June, the Tokyo Exchange in July, the Indonesian Teacher Exchange in October and the Costa Rica Exchange in November. I want to thank those who helped set up every general meeting, decorating tables, bringing food, pouring coffee and providing programs. Thanks to the hosts of our LEO (Let's Eat Out) events, the volunteers at Freedom Festival and Farmer's Market and to all who gave time and talent. And please join me in thanking our talented, cooperative and supportive Board, I could not have asked for better people to work with. You are the rock stars of Friendship Force.

from Connie Williams, president

Calendar

November 6-18: Outgoing Exchange to Costa Rica – BON VOYAGE!!!!

Vic Klopfenstein, Exchange Director: vpklopfenstein@msn.com 360-2776. We have 20 ambassadors going to San Jose, Costa Rica.

December 4, Sunday at 5pm: Business Meeting, Election of Officers, Silent Auction and Dinner at the Clarion Hotel Gather up your white elephants for the Silent Auction! Invite a guest! Enjoy the company of friends! The buffet dinner menu features Baked Spiral Ham and Sage Stuffed Chicken with Lemon Sauce and includes side dishes and desserts. The cost is \$21.50 per person, which includes tax, service & gratuity. (A very good deal!) Cash Bar will be available. Please send your check as your RSVP to Connie Williams, 3960 Johnson Ave NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405 by November 29th.

Our nomination committee of Frank Stull, Victor Klopfenstein and David Detwiler has presented the slate of officers for the 2012 elections. The nominees are Dick & Veta Hildebrand, Co-Presidents-Elect; Dale Moore, Treasurer; and Steve Williams, Secretary. Dave Detwiler will transition from President-Elect to President.

The New Direction of Exchanges

At the 2010 International Conference in Washington DC, the 2011 Regional Conference in Lincoln, NE and the 2011 International Exchange in Hamburg, much time was

dedicated to the introduction of the Themed Exchange. In order for Friendship Force concept to continue to grow and bring in new members, both Global Exchanges and Themed Exchanges have become a new possibility. While the traditional and sometimes reciprocal Exchanges will continue, it's important to remember that Friendship Force should adapt and change to stay fresh and interesting to new and long-time members alike.

Pat Meyer, our new Regional Director from Northern IL club, with her husband, Dave Meyer, recently led an international group for a tour of the Mississippi River from St. Paul to St. Louis. Below are reports from club members about the most recent Indonesian Teacher Exchange and a Niagara Canada Bike Exchange. I have no doubt that our club will be involved in one of the next Midwest Themed Exchanges. It will be a great way to make new friends!

from Connie Williams, president

CR/IC TEACHER THEMED EXCHANGE

Our first themed exchange was a success, due to the work, dedication and hospitality of our members and the openness and willingness of our Indonesian guests.

Our board congratulates and thanks everyone who participated in our successful teacher exchange. You were all great. We can be proud that we were able to put together a wonderful experience for our Indonesian Friendship Force friends on such short notice. All the participants are members of Friendship Force; there are 7 FF clubs in Indonesia.



Teacher exchanges are specifically designed for teachers or school administrators. We hosted both, 11 teachers and 3 administrators. Their exchange director, Tedja, is the President of the Malang FF Club. Our exchange included classroom experience with professional development components, school visits and discussions with other educators and administrators (Linn-Mar, Cedar Rapids, and Kirkwood). This experience helped them become more comfortable and knowledgeable of English as an added language. It also gave them a first hand experience of Iowa hospitality in the process.



The FFI Legacy Fund presented scholarships to fund part of the cost, with the ambassadors also contributing half of the usual exchange fees. Some of Indonesian schools paid part of the cost for their teachers. At the end of their Iowa stay, we transported the ambassadors to Dodgeville, WI where the Milwaukee FF club picked them up for the second week of continued educational experiences. Tedja let us know that all had gained a great deal of practical English language skill and proficiency. All were very appreciative of their time with us; the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Friendship Force now has good friends in another part of the world.

from Dave Detwiler, president-elect

NIAGARA CYCLING THEMED EXCHANGE – from Marian Wetjen, director at large

Earlier this year, the Friendship Force of Niagara invited FF members to join the first FF Global Cycling Exchange in Canada in early June. There were 25 of us who were accepted. We were from ten states-Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, N. Carolina, Nebraska, W. Virginia, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin, Iowa and two Canadian providences-Alberta and Manitoba. I was the only one from Iowa and I traveled with my sister, who is a FF member in Michigan. Our ages varied from the youngest being 54 and the oldest was an 82 yr old gentleman from Texas.

On our applications we were asked about our cycling skill level. Were we experts or recreational? Thank goodness everyone responded as recreational, which I certainly was as I had ridden my bike only 1+1/2 hours before going on this exchange!

The exchange was Sunday to Sunday. We rode bikes Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The Niagara Club had this extremely well planned. They said they spent nearly a year planning everything and it was obvious! The Niagara area is well known for its cycling paths as the area is mainly gently rolling farmland.

The club rented bikes and helmets for us. On the biking days we'd meet around 9 am in different parks where the bike shop would deliver our bikes, then off we'd go! Besides the 25 of us, there were usually 8 or so members of the Niagara FF club who biked along with us. There were two support cars that followed us with drinks and snacks and they were always available if someone needed to hang up their bike for awhile. We stayed together as a group and everyday we rode a different bike route. The scenery was gorgeous and the weather was perfect. Along the routes we stopped and sampled at three different wineries, a cheese shop, toured a nature center and rested at a lock and dam, watching a ship go through. We rode along canals, through vineyards, in residential areas and in tourist areas. Around noon we'd stop at a park where we enjoyed catered gourmet meals. The ride was over around 4 pm when the bike shop would arrive at the park to pack up our bikes and then our hosts would pick us up to go home.

On Monday, we biked 25 miles, Tuesday 41 miles, Thursday 20 miles and Friday 39 miles for a total of 125 miles. I wish I could hold my head high and say I rode all 4 days, but by Friday I was "too pooped to pedal" so I rode along in the support car all day and helped with the snacks and drinks. But as we all know, things have a way of working out as on Friday one of the guys seat broke and since I wasn't biking, he was able to take the seat off my bike and put it on his and he was able to keep going.

On Wednesday, our non-biking day, their club arranged for us to tour Niagara Falls and ride the Maid of the Mist tour boat and see other tourist sites. Two nights during our exchange, we enjoyed potluck meals at other FF members homes so our circle of friends grew even larger!

As I've always found with the Friendship Force organization, for some reason we randomly get matched with the perfect hosts and always have a great adventure with life long memories. Am I glad I tried this themed cycle global exchange? Absolutely! Am I glad I have new friends in ten states and three Canadian providences? Absolutely! Do I wish I had trained more on my bike before I left? Absolutely!!! ;-)

Friendship Force International Offerings

Lincoln, NE to Ireland March 15 - 24, 2012

Experience Ireland during the St. Patrick's Day holiday. Specialized guides will lead us through different parts of the country to get a more personal tour. This exchange does not include home hosting, but the Friendship Force of Causeway Coast will meet and join us for a day on our journey. From thatched cottages to rugged coasts to cosmopolitan cities, you will get to see tourist and local sights of Ireland. 25 spaces available – Contact **Laurie Ann Scott FF Lincoln at 402-488-1915**

Friendship Force of the Quad Cities has been invited to Indonesia from March 6-25, 2012. Two weeks of home hosting will be in Jakarta and Solo-Surakarta, with a few days of Bali as an add-on option. The cost of the entire trip, including air fare from Moline, is approximately \$2800 per person and there are **4 spots** still available.

Contact Exchange Director, **Judy Greiman for the details at 563-289-3132 or jgreiman@gmail.com** soon if you are interested or have questions about this exchange.

Friendship Force of Greater Harrisburg, USA has been invited to Berlin, Germany October 2012 – Exchange 11008. Feel free to contact Lisa Cordell, exchange director at lisacordell@embarqmail.com to see if there are still spots available on the exchange.

See World of Friends for other exchange possibilities at <http://catalog.thefriendshipforce.org/>

Updates

Friendship Force Dues

In 2010, total dues for CR/IC Friendship Force Club members was set at \$20 per person. Club dues are used to pay International dues of \$6 for individuals and \$10 per couple, as well as other operational expenses.

In 2011, Friendship Force International changed the required dues to \$10 for individuals and \$17 per couple. This change was made after we had already collected some dues, so your Board decided to maintain our dues at \$20 per person. The International dues increase resulted in about \$400 of additional cost for our club, compared to the previous year. To make up for the \$400 difference, the Board decided to charge \$5 per person at general meetings. This helped to defray the cost of refreshments, room rental and speaker honorariums.

This charge was done at 3 meetings this year, resulting in about \$550 of income. This strategy more than offset the additional budgeted costs; however, we have received several negative comments from the membership regarding the \$5 charge at general meetings.

In 2012, International dues will remain the same as 2011. The Board discussed the topic of dues and meeting charges for 2012 at length at the October Board meeting. As a result, your Board recommends that the CR/IC club dues be increased from \$20 to

\$25 per person for 2012. Accordingly, your Board is committed to NOT charge for general meetings unless there are additional costs, such catered or served dinners or additional entertainment for the attendees of that meeting.

This issue will require a vote of the general membership and will be brought to the December 4 meeting. If you have questions or comments, please contact a Board member.
from Dale Moore, treasurer

Continuing notes from the New Club mentoring committee with FFI

The committee is looking for possible countries in which to mentor a new club. Then it will choose several possibilities to get further information on. Do you have friends, relatives, or acquaintances in another country that would be interested in setting up a Friendship Force Club? If so contact one of our committee members.

Friendship Force Merchandise – Please see Dave Detwiler, daviddetwiler@msn.com for the following items:

New Item: Green Tote Bags. Just in time for holiday shopping and gifting, our green tote bags are great for carrying your purchases, using as environmentally friendly gift wrap or as a practical and popular gift. They are a bargain at \$3 each or two for \$5 and they tell advertise our Friendship Force club mission.

Also available: Polo Shirts, Notebooks, Luggage Tags, Table Blessings and Note Cards

Board Members 2011

Connie Williams, President

Dave Detwiler, President-Elect

John Haack, Secretary

Dale Moore, Treasurer

Audrey Bradford, Past President

Steve Williams, Exchange Coordinator

Marty Novak, Membership

Vic & Pat Klopfenstein, Communications

Jill Rinkenberger, Activities

Marian Wetjen & Lynette Nuehring, Directors At Large

In friendship,

Connie Williams & Dave Detwiler