

YOURS IN FRIENDSHIP

FROM THE CEDAR RAPIDS/IOWA CITY

FRIENDSHIP FORCE CLUB

www.friendshipforcecrr-ic.org

September 7, 2015

September

2015

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE....

We are writing our message this month from Denver, CO. We left CR on August 19 for a nostalgic drive to Vancouver and the World Conference. For 9 days, we traveled the Black Hills, Glacier National Park in Montana, and the Canadian Rockies in Alberta and British Columbia. We had both been to many of these places with our parents, but had never returned as adults. We had a great time even though we did encounter wildfire smoke many of the days.

The World Conference turned out to be a great experience. Mary Stull and Connie Williams were our clubs official representatives and we can tell you they did a great job of networking with representatives from around the world - - 23 countries were represented. Cheryl and I are glad we decided to make this trip on our own as we found our knowledge of the organization and FFI staff to be far greater, and therefore, more helpful, than when we went to New Orleans just two years ago.

Many contacts were made including persons met on past exchanges and members from clubs offering the potential of future exchanges. We also met three ladies from Wessex area of England who will be hosting our club next June. They seemed ready and anxious for our arrival.

So, now Cheryl and I have made our way to Denver where we are staying with our two grandchildren, Emma (5) and Charlie (3), for 8 days while mom and dad are on a vacation. Busy time, but it still gives us a little time to reflect on things learned at the conference. Here are a few highlights:

1. Most clubs are struggling with declining membership. This is quite natural as our demographic is getting older. Clubs that can overcome this issue will be in the best position to be successful in the future.
2. FFI is struggling to maintain a balanced budget. This is primarily driven by reliance on fees from exchanges as their primary revenue source. Budgets are based on the assumption that most exchanges will be filled to capacity. This model was true for a very long time, but in recent years many clubs struggle to fill exchanges to capacity. Even though FFI has put a "fill the seats" policy in place, many exchanges still go unfilled. In the future, it appears that clubs that can demonstrate they can fill the seats will have an advantage in getting the "matches" they want. Building relationships and even partnerships with other domestic clubs may serve as a helpful strategy in meeting this challenge.

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Presidents Message (continued)

- Most clubs, even those located in “prime travel” areas, are anxious to make new contacts that may be interested in future exchanges. Making contacts who will eventually request our club for an exchange is an important step in the overall process. Clubs who can implement lasting strategies to make new contacts and maintain old contacts will be in a better position to acquire exchanges in the future.

So, this brings us to the last quarter of our Friendship Force Year. This has been a very busy year, but you have responded to every challenge. We are truly grateful! We are disappointed that the Mexico exchange will not happen and that the Moldova Open World has been delayed; but nevertheless the activities have been many this year. Still coming up is the General Meeting on September 13, a weekend exchange with the Central Iowa Club on October 23 - 25, and the Annual Meeting on November 15.

We are sorry we will miss the General Meeting (still in Denver) as “Kids Against Hunger” is an important mission for us. We do plan to go on the Central Iowa Exchange and hope many of you will join us. If you have not experienced the ISU campus, especially in the fall, that alone will be worth the trip.

In Friendship,

Dale and Cheryl

General Meeting, September 13, 2 pm

The September 13 general meeting will begin at 2 pm at the Shueyville United Methodist Church, Swisher, Iowa. We'll enjoy dessert, followed by a business meeting. We'll learn about the program, Kids Against Hunger, and then members will be able to participate in a program to assemble food packages for Kids Against Hunger. Our club has allocated \$500 to purchase the materials.



Kids Against Hunger is a food relief organization that unifies teams of people who package a specialized rice based soy casserole mixture which is used locally and overseas. It is based on a

simple principle of people helping people. The program not only nourishes hungry children, but the spirits of the volunteer who pack the meals.



Lion's Club Multinational Cultural Event, September 20

The Cedar Rapids Noon Lions Club is sponsoring a Multinational Cultural Entertainment from 4 to 6 pm on Sunday, September 20 at Scottish Rite Temple, 616 A Ave NE, Cedar Rapids.

The event will feature music, dances and light refreshments. Tickets are \$10 per person or \$25 per family. Proceeds will benefit the Lion's Club hearing and sight programs. Contact Dean Thomas by e-mail at rdeanthomas@hotmail.com or phone, 319 830-5091. Tickets also available at the door.

LEO at Emil's Hideaway on October 7



The next Let's Eat Out (LEO) will be on Wednesday, October 7, 2015 at 5:30PM at Emil's Hideaway. Emil's is at 222 Glenbrook Drive SE, Cedar Rapids. It is located behind Taco John's On 1st Ave. SE— Next To Home Depot.

Make reservations with Nancy/ Stephen Miller - 319-393-3580 by Sunday, October 4.

Emil's features Happy Hour from 3-6 PM Mon.-Fri, with 1/2 price Appetizers - Draft Beer Specials - \$2.00 Off Signature Drinks - \$2.00 Domestic Bottles - \$3.00 Import/Premium Bottles.

Outgoing Exchange to Ames, October 23



Enjoy the sights & sounds of central Iowa from Friday, October 23, through Sunday October 25. Friendship Force Central Iowa (Ames) has invited our club to join in some pre-Halloween fun.

On Friday, the exchange will start at 4 pm at the Wine Bar – Iowa's only automated wine bar that also serves craft beers and soft drinks. Appetizers will be provided

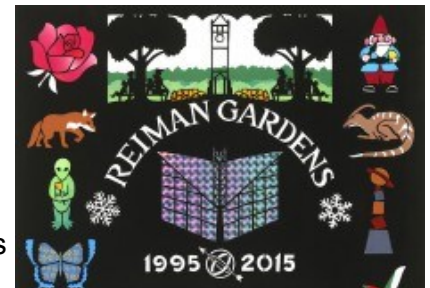
by the Central Iowa club. You will meet your host for the week-end.

Saturday morning is free time to enjoy the Farmer's Market, disc golf, art galleries and shopping. At noon, the group will board the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad to enjoy a trip through Iowa's fall foliage while being served snacks and a sumptuous dessert. In the evening, the club will host a Halloween-themed party.



Sunday morning will include an art walk and brunch. Following brunch there will be an opportunity to visit Reiman Gardens. The current exhibitions at Reiman include tree houses in the garden and model railroads in the conservatory

Cost will be \$52. Admission to Reiman Gardens is an added \$7 if you'd like to included that.



Interested? Please call or email Connie Williams—cmw1226@yahoo.com or 319 396-4747 to reserve your spot.

2016 Exchanges

Outgoing exchange to Wessex, England—June 7-14, 2016

Marian Wetjen has graciously agreed to serve as our ED for this exchange. She will contact the first 16 people interested in this exchange with additional details. If you would like to be added to or taken off of the waiting list, please contact Marian at mjwetjen27@yahoo.com.

Incoming exchange from Nashika Riverside, India, July 2016.

Ambassadors will spend a week each in Madison, WI and Cedar Rapids/Iowa City. This is a fabulous opportunity to make friends with this club, please plan to participate in this exchange. Now accepting Exchange Director applications and committee member signup.

Quilters in our group? We are exploring the possibility of hosting a themed exchange with Ames in 2016. Contact Connie if you are interested in working on this exchange. A themed exchange includes ambassadors from all over the world who share a common interest.

Global Exchanges

Have you wondered exactly what a Global exchange is? Perhaps you've heard our club members talk about the global exchanges they participated in or seen global exchanges announced in the e-mail notices we get from FFI. It's a perfect fit for those who can't travel when our club is going on an exchange or for those who want to pursue special interests and meet FFI members from around the world.

Global Exchanges are designed to attract applicants from all over the world to join a single exchange. Participants make their own travel arrangements to and from the host community. The whole exchange planning process is completed by the host club. Global exchange participants are recruited with assistance from FFI and use of its email marketing system. Steve Williams has led a global exchange to Azerbaijan; Connie and Myron Williams participated in an Australian Country Music and Wine exchange with several clubs in Australia in January.

Themed Exchanges are organized to bring people together around a particular personal or professional interest. The host program mainly focuses on that theme. Examples include:

- a. Special interest: gardening, biking, hiking, quilting, history, environmental interests, etc.
- b. Humanitarian: ambassadors engage in special humanitarian projects.
- c. Language Learning: Exchanges are designed for language instruction and practice.
- d. Teachers: Specifically designed for teachers or school administrators, these exchanges include school visits, discussions with other educators, in-the-classroom experience and/or professional development components. The Legacy Fund may be used for scholarships in some cases.
- e. Students: Examples of past student exchanges include high school band exchanges and English language exchanges. Possibilities for other types of student exchanges may be considered.

Our club is working with the Central Iowa club to plan an exchange on Quilting in the Midwest in fall 2016. See details in future newsletters.

Discover Exchanges give Friendship Force members a thorough cultural introduction to new countries or regions, particularly where hosting may be limited or not yet available. Discover exchanges feature well-developed and thorough cultural programs, but may include only a brief home stay or even none at all. Current Discover destinations include Morocco, Vietnam, Argentina and Italy, among others.

Highlights of 2015 Friendship Force International Conference, August 28-31

Building Bridges, the International Conference held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, was attended by approximately 500 members from 23 countries. Mary Stull, Connie Williams, Dale and Cheryl Moore represented our club. The Vancouver, BC club, the FFI office staff, field representatives and board of directors provided an exceptional program. We appreciated that Friendship Force hospitality on a grand scale.

Festivities began on Friday evening with a reception featuring the beautiful vocals of the Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir and including a powerful and impromptu sing along to "Let There Be Peace On Earth." Over the next two days of speakers, workshops and social events, we had many opportunities to network with other clubs worldwide.

We made international connections with club members from Korea, South Africa, Australia, Taiwan, Canada and the United Kingdom, including three members of the Wessex club who look forward to our June 2016 exchange. Domestic connections were made with: Dallas, TX; Denver, CO; Lancaster, PA; Whidbey Island, WA; Western KY; Sacramento, CA; E Washington/N Idaho; Long Island; Northern Colorado, Kansas and Portland, OR. We should have many wonderful exchange opportunities over the next few years.



Cheryl & Dale Moore, Mary Stull with Wessex Club reps

Speakers at several general and workshop sessions of the conference emphasized the social and fiscal importance of full exchanges. Every canceled or under-capacity exchange represents a loss in revenue for FFI and this affected our organization's balance sheet in the past year. While FFI is stable, the continuation of this trend is not sustainable. Strategic planning for the future will need to start now, as one speaker noted: "Some is not a number, and soon is not a time".

In order to work through this issue, clubs are encouraged to list club-to-club exchanges in the catalog, so applications from other FF members can be considered to fill exchanges. Themed exchanges, focusing on global participants with specific interests, are encouraged. And donations from clubs or individuals were requested to update the FFI website, in order to keep pace and grow with the on-line world.



Getting reacquainted with Keiko from Gifu, Japan



Connie visits with Aussie friend

Innovations such as NextGen for All, including family, friend and younger prospective members were discussed. Each club will need to move toward providing opportunities to promote and grow their clubs, whether it be recruiting students, families or those prospects 10 years younger than current members. There are always opportunities, especially when we include community and college volunteers with a common heritage to the visiting ambassadors.

Upon reflection, we are certainly happy with the rich history and promising future of our CR/IC FF Club. We are actively engaged with FF clubs in the region and worldwide. We also will co-host more exchanges in the future, such as the Nashika Riverside, India, exchange being planned with Madison, WI, in July 2016. Our World Friendship gathering each March brings in exchange students and their families, as well as Kirkwood students. Also, we are open to meeting, hosting and visiting a world full of new friends.

Soon you can see more photos and articles on www.thefriendshipforce.org Connie Williams, Exchange Coord

2015-2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 13, 2 pm	General Meeting	Shueyville United Methodist Church
October 5	Board Meeting	Dale/Cheryl Moore's home
October 7	Let's Eat Out (LEO)	Emil's Hideaway RSVP Steve/Nancy Miller 393-3580
October 23-25	Outgoing Exchange to Central Iowa (Ames)	ED—Taking Applications
November 15	Annual Meeting	Touch of Class, Cedar Rapids
Winter 2016	Open World—Small Town Mayors from Moldova	Vic Klopfenstein
April 28-May 1, 2016	Midwest Regional Conference	Quad Cities, Davenport, IA
June 7-14, 21016	Outgoing exchange to Wessex, England	Marian Wetjen, exchange director
July 2016	Incoming exchange from Nashika Riverside, India	ED—Taking Applications

BOARD MEMBERS 2015

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In friendship
Dale & Cheryl Moore
Mary Stull