

SWFL Friendship Force Meeting
NW Library, Cape Coral
November 3, 2017

The meeting was opened by President Sue Linehan.

Treasurers report: \$3742.60 Regular Account, \$4000 exchange account.

A discussion was held about dues for 2018. Dues are currently \$25/year/person. It was voted to raise the dues to \$30/person. It was agreed that expenses for the upcoming inbound exchange welcome and/or farewell parties would be subsidized to keep costs reasonable for members.

There are currently 56 members in our club. Sue and Joanne Collins did a presentation recently at the Punta Gorda Civic Assoc. which resulted in 2 new couples becoming members. Presentations are available to other interested outside clubs.

EXCHANGES

There will be a domestic exchange with the Grand Rapids, MI Friendship Force club February 1-8. The Welcome Party will be Feb. 2, preceded by our regular meeting with a presentation on cross cultural relations. Other activities planned for the visit are: a tour at ECHO with a box lunch or picnic at the ECHO gazebo, a visit to Babcock Ranch, a tour at the Calusa Heritage Trail, and visits to the Peace River Wildlife Center, the Punta Gorda Botanical Garden, and sailing around Charlotte Harbor. The Farewell Party will be at Lake Fairways Clubhouse. Volunteers are needed to help with scheduling host assignments and the Small Dinners.

An outgoing exchange to Brazil will take place April 8-21. There will be two homestays and an additional week of sightseeing. Registrations are open to members and to other Florida clubs. Members should sign up now. Costs for the homestay weeks are \$1710 with and additional \$1475 for the extension..

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Party will be held at Punta Gorda Yacht Club on Dec 3. The election of officers for 2018-19 will be held. The dinner will be followed by a Yankee Swap. Gifts should not exceed \$10 or may be gently used items. Please send your check to Joanne Collins by Nov. 30 for \$20.26pp. The nominated slate of officers is: President Michelle Kemps, 1st VP Bev Harmon, 2nd VP Ginny Dooley, Secretary Linda Supakoff, Treasurers Jo and Jack Cooley.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sue asked members to paint and decorate sea shells to be used in various ways, during the Grand Rapids exchange. She has a wide supply of shells for "artists" to decorate.

There is a Friendship Force Rodeo at Lake Wales Ranch Mar. 6-11, cost \$900. Members have been invited by email. There may be a need for up to 4 days of hosting Mar. 2-6 as members from all clubs are invited.

In addition to the election of officers in December, there is a need for volunteers for committee assignments: membership and publicity, the social committee (Carol Berry has volunteered and is centrally located. Representatives from the northern and southern parts of our membership area are needed.), historian, and maintenance of the email roster/sunshine.

At the January meeting Michelle will tell us about her bike trip in Holland.

The outbound exchange choices for 2018-19 forwarded to the national office are:
South Africa
Thailand
Indonesia
India

A Friendship Force member from Uganda will be visiting the area. Sue will host him but others may also volunteer. Day hosts will be appreciated; notify Sue if you like to help.

State FF Conferences are no longer being held. A Regional FF Conference will be held in Charleston, SC in Nov. 2018. A few of our members may be interested in attending if they can arrange housing with family in the area. There was discussion about holding Florida club events, like a mini exchange with another Florida club to swap ideas.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Carol Nasby on a trip she and husband Chris and Jo and Jack Cooley took to New Zealand.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Berry, Sec.Friendship Force Meeting/Luncheon
Tarpon Lodge, May 5, 2017

A short business meeting was held at the May luncheon at Tarpon Lodge with 28 attending. President Sue Linehan welcomed three guests and new member Linda Supakoff. She also paid tribute to retiring members Jody and Russ Garmon who have held all of the offices of our club over the last 19 years and have been active, supportive and committed members.

Sue is looking for members to help organize social opportunities for the group. It was decided to have a casual lunch on June 2 at Bubbas Roadhouse in Cape Coral. Linda Supakoff offered to coordinate the lunch and to work on a social committee.

Sue encouraged members to consider being journey coordinators for outgoing exchanges and ambassador coordinators for incoming exchanges.

EXCHANGES

The next outgoing trip is to Canada. Lou and Cheryle will host a lunch for those going on the Canada exchange on May 28 to finalize arrangements.

Our club will be hosting 14 guests from Brazil in mid November. One event will be a Friends-giving dinner on Nov 16 with a full Thanksgiving dinner with all the fixings, to give our guests a sample of a unique American holiday. Joanne MacPeck, Lou Rizk and Carol Berry will coordinate other events of the exchange.

An outgoing exchange to Brazil will take place April 8-21, 2018, with 2 homestays. in Sao Paulo and Nova Lima. Additional side trips may be added as well.

It was voted to host a domestic exchange with a Grand Rapids, Michigan club during winter 2017-18.

The meeting was adjourned for a tour of the Calusa Heritage Trail.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Berry, Secretary
Friendship Force Meeting, April 7, 2017
Punta Gorda Police Dept. Meeting Room

The meeting was opened at 10:30 am by President Sue Linehan. The current membership is 48. Guests attending were: Shirley Shellborn, Linda Sue Croft, Margie Kang and Fred and Mary Giddings.

There is currently \$3604.89 in the general fund. For the Japanese exchange the Board authorized \$10/day (\$50) to subsidize the expenses of home hosts. Whether this will be continued in future exchanges will be determined at a later date.

Outgoing Canada Exchange

Lou Rizk reported that there are 20 and 18 who will be attending the trip to two Canadian clubs. Attendees were asked to get together during lunch for details.

Outgoing Brazil Exchange

Our club has been assigned an exchange to Sao Paolo and Maringa in Brazil with possible additional side trips, probably in May 2018. We will be seeking a coordinator to be selected by the Board. Interested members should notify the President. Some costs are covered for the coordinator if the trip is filled. There are coordinators from each club in Brazil.

Incoming Exchange

We have not been assigned an exchange by the national organization although Taiwan is a possibility.

Other possible ideas are:

1. A Global Exchange. The club would create a program with a theme. The national group would advertise for participants. Most subjects are ecology oriented and most participants are English speaking. The club had a global exchange in 2012 according to Cheryle Phelps. The national organization collects the fees and pays the hosting club.
2. An Open World Program in association with the State Department. The club is only given a 2 month notice if selected. Approximately 6 people attend from eastern European countries and there is a curriculum on a topic. One topic that seems possible for our club is city planning. The topic is assigned by the State Dept.
3. Invite a foreign club or a domestic club directly, There was interest in having Lou contact the Swedish club to visit us, possibly in early 2018.
4. There is also a possibility to explore Domestic clubs. We have a contact with Michigan and California. Also the possibility to visit other Florida clubs to compare our clubs.
5. The possibility of having a group of ambassadors who want to improve English language skills.

The club voted to invite a club from Sweden and Lou and Sue will extend the invitation. If they decline, we will try the city in Germany that our club visited a few years ago.

Future Meetings

There will be no formal meeting in May but the Board recommended an excursion to Pine Island. Members voted to have lunch at Tarpon Lodge, 13771 Waterfront Dr, Pineland, on May 5 with a guided tour of the Calusa Heritage Trail to follow. Carol Berry will make the arrangements and send directions.

No meeting in June or July

August 13 (Sunday) 2:30 pm. (Note new day and time.) Ice Cream Social at Bev Harmon/Kevin Janiaks development in Estero.

September 1. Slides on the Canada trip.

October 6. Michelle Kemps will talk about her Bike and Barge trip to Holland.

November 3. The Nasbys and Cooleys will talk about their trips to New Zealand.

December 3. Christmas brunch and gift swap at the Punta Gorda Boat Club.

Sue proposed a social idea for the club. Would anyone be interested in forming a committee to research places that we might visit in small groups as possible Journey activities? Or we could do fun things just to have fun! Example an outing to Solomon's Castle. Or having small fun Dinners for Eight (Six) but appointed by the planner so that we mix members of the club up to get to know each other better.

Maureen Butts entertained the members with slides and comments about her Grand European River Discovery trip with husband Hank.

The meeting adjourned and members were invited to the Linehan's for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Berry, Secretary

Feb 3, 2017
FF General Meeting

Before meeting:

Sign up sheets were in the back of the room to sign up for the Japanese Itinerary/
Checks could be written and given to Cathy Cobb, treasurer.

10:30 Meeting called to order by Sue Linehan. 33 in attendance.

FF has been given a new TAG LINE..."Experience Different Views. Discover the
Common Ground.

Cheryle brought in "The Meaning of Friendship Force"....and Sue read it to the club.
Some members not receiving FF news from Atlanta. Need to subscribe through
Friendshipforce.org.

Joanne: offered to formulate a group email of members.

Maureen Butt: looking for someone to share hotel etc bills in Manchester, England.
Maureen contacted Flo from the Belgium exchange. Flo is willing to host and guide for a
few days before or after the Manchester FF event.

Sue also described a 20 day trip with the Portland, OR club to Taipei.

Cathy Cobb: general Acct \$4089 Exchange Acct \$ 8177.

Luvvy proposed a motion to pay the Japan Home Host \$10/day for the 5 active days...
\$50. We are 'trying' this out this exchange only...we decide later if we want to continue.
Dennis second the motion, unanimous "yes" votes from club, Cathy will send \$50 to each
Home Host.

Beverly: needed head count for Lunch at the Edison restaurant...26 said yes, reservation
12:30, 24 showed. Sue expressed how appreciative she is of the present board members.

Cheryle: ED for Japan Inbound exchange. Suggestions included speak slowly, little gifts
are important to Japanese, but make sure they are NOT greater than the Japanese gifts to
us. Suggestions were post cards, Florida candy, dollar store items. Decided to NOT do
goody bags....seems these items get thrown out. Map will be provided at the Welcome
Lunch. Sue will present Club Pins. Richard has been asked to take a group picture with a
tripod and individual pictures of the Ambassador with Host. Japanese do not wear shoes
in their homes, so they may need slippers. They also use toilet shoes...you may want to
supply inexpensive rubber shower sandals. Be careful with Political and Religious
subjects. They might love fruit (expensive in Japan). They may come with their own
bathroom hand towel. They may bow. They will be exhausted from their flight from

Japan. Dennis and Casandra know 2 of the incoming ambassadors from a previous outbound exchange. Some only here one week, 12 going on to Key West. Information to Day Host will follow from Cheryle.

Judy Garmon: Organizing the Welcome Lunch. Club will supply 2 meats (ham and chicken). No charge. Everyone is to bring a cover dish...let Jody know what you are bringing. Maps available to fine B1 tables at Lakes Regional Park. Pay \$3 for 3 hours of parking. Nice Park, small botanical garden, boat rentals etc.

Joanne: Farewell Dinner is being catered. It will be \$30 per person, but well worth it, please come. Caterer is Wood St Grill that has won culinary awards. Membership...encouraged all to pass the word of FF to friends. By far it works for recruiting better than newspaper ads etc.

Lou: Canada: Getting from the airport to Stratford will be a 3-4 hour car trip. Discussed possibility of renting a van for about \$100/person or a shuttle for \$250/person. Many members are driving their own car. Need to have a meeting of all those going.

Sue: welcomed guest. Eleanor and Bob Hill brought a Canadian. She is president of the Ottawa FF club. She has many Halliburton friends.

Sue: showed slide of the painted shells being given to out ambassadors.

Sue: wrote a letter to FF describing what our club did for the Africans, and hopefully will persuade FF to get our first choice of outbound trips in 2018 to Sweden.

Sue: encouraged everyone to read Joanne's excellent Newsletter, and especially the thank you letters from Doreen and Terri.

Upcoming months:

April 7: Maureen: European River cruise. Sue will be on boat, Michelle will conduct meeting.

May 5: Lunch, Tarpon Lodge, Pine Island

June: Canadian Outbound Exchange

July: No meeting

August 6: Ice Cream Social in Estero at Bev and Kevin's community.

Sept 1: Report on Canadian outbound exchange

Oct 6: Michelle: Holland Bike and Barge FF exchange

Nov 3: Chris-Carol,,Jack-Jo program on New Zealand

Dec 3: Christmas Party, New location, PGI \$20.50. Election of officers.

Sue: Nominating committee needed..Joanne, Cathy and Cheryle volunteered.

Sue: offered help in guiding any new Home Host person. Truly the most rewarding volunteer job. Be prepared to sing at the Farewell Dinner.

Lou: Program. Canadian Wine tasting FF Outbound Exchange. Great pictures, Great time.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30

Minutes by Michelle, Carol not available.

**Friendship Force Board Meeting
January 23, 2017
At Bev Harmon's Home**

Attending the meeting were Sue Linehan, President, Michelle Kemps, First Vice President, Bev Harmon, Second Vice President, Carol Berry, Secretary and Joanne Collins, Membership.

Sue will be away for a few months beginning March 11.

Schedule of Meetings Through August

February 3

The meeting will be at the Fort Myers Library at 10:30 with Lou Rizk and Cheryle Phelps presenting a program on their wine and gourmet tour. Lunch at the Veranda. (Who is making reservation????)

March

In March there will be no meeting due to the Japanese exchange. Michelle is arranging hosts for the exchange; Carol is arranging small dinners. We will involve as many new people as possible in hosting and in providing small dinners.

April 7

Maureen and Hank Butt will do the program. The meeting, chaired by Michelle, will be at the Punta Gorda police station at 10:30 am.

May 5

There will be a lunch out but no program. Possible lunch venues are the Edison at Fort Myers Country Club or the Tarpon Inn on Pine Island. Carol will call Tarpon Inn for information.

June

No meeting due to the outgoing exchange to Canada.

July

No meeting.

August 6

The ice cream social will be held in Estero at Bev Harmon's neighborhood pool.

September 1

The meeting program will be on the Canadian trip.

October 6

Michelle will do a program on her trip to Holland at the Punta Gorda police station at 10:30 am.

November 3

Sue will contact Carol and Chris Naseby to do a program on travel to New Zealand at the Punta Gorda police station at 10:30 am.

December 3

Christmas Brunch and Yankee Swap. Possible venues are the Punta Gorda Isles Boat Club or Edison Restaurant. Joanne will check on the date and price at the Boat Club.

Membership

Joanne reported that Cheryle Phelps has distributed the membership list for 2017. There are currently 46 members, with 7 members not renewing for a variety of reasons. Joanne will place a free ad in the Punta Gorda Commentator and list meetings in the activities column. She is also planning to put a table in the Punta Gorda Farmers Market to distribute publicity. Our best source of new members continues to be word of mouth by current members.

Joanne will contact the Womens Club of Fort Myers to do a possible program. The Punta Gorda Just For Fun and Floridians might also be interested in a program.

The Hosting Information List created by Joanne is helpful in identifying interests of members and giving hosting details. It is important to keep it current.

Other Business

In late August or early September contacts will need to be made for possible new officers for 2018.

The subject of subsidizing hosts for expenses was discussed. For the Japanese exchange, the board voted to provide \$5/day, a total of \$50 to hosts.

A gift of \$100 in the name of the Japanese visitors will be given to ECCO at the conclusion of their visit.

Sue received thank you notes from Terri and Doreen for their December visit. Although there were only two Africans who made the trip it proved to be of great value to both the visitors and the club members who met with them.

Our club has not done a domestic exchange in several years. We should consider doing one next year.

Japanese Exchange

Michelle is arranging for hosts. She is also organizing notes to assist the next person to handle this task.

Cheryle has made the following arrangements:

March 1. The ambassadors arrive at the airport at 10:50 pm. Each host should make arrangements to pick up their guest(s).

March 2. Welcome Party. Reta Lanning is making arrangements at Lakes Park Shelter B1 at 1:30 pm, open to all members. Jody Garmon will organize covered dishes. Cheryle will bring a ham and rotisserie chickens. Sue will give a Welcome Greeting and hosts will present Florida pins to ambassadors. There will be games and park activities until 5pm.

March 3 Babcock Ranch tour followed by lunch at Sue and Rob's home in Punta Gorda. All members are welcome, there will be a small fee for lunch.

March 4 Edison/Ford visit followed by pizza and salads at Dennis and Jule Yemma's. Open to all, fee \$5.

March 5. Free day. Carol Berry will organize small dinners for the evening meal.

March 6. Visit to ECCO and Farewell Party at Michelle Kemps. Michelle will rent tables and arrange for caterer. Arrive by 5 for the sunset, dinner around 6. Carol will contact a DJ for possible karaoke and/or line dancing. Jackie Engle also has a possible entertainer. Other ideas; make balloon figures, games. Ruth Emmel will do the booklet for the exchange.

Friendship Force Meeting

Punta Gorda Police/Fire Station

January 6, 2017

The meeting was called to order by President Sue Linehan with 25 attending, a good turnout considering the foggy driving conditions. Recent new members and guests introduced themselves: Casandra Wooden and Mary Howard, Terri Martin, Jackie Engle, Betty Butsaris, Valsa George and Diane Schuan.

Joanne Collins thanked the current board for agreeing to serve a second year.

AFRICAN EXCHANGE

ED Judy Carson reported that the African exchange was a great success for the members and the two African ambassadors, Terri and Doreen. Terri arrived back home safely after an additional week in snowy Connecticut and sent a note of thanks. There was good support from the members despite the small number of African guests. Sue was pleased with the attendance at the farewell dinner and Richard Collins highlighted the visit to the Quality of Life School. Judy urged all to visit and support the school and discover its valuable work with inner city children.

JAPANESE EXCHANGE

Cheryle Phelps, assisted by Dennis, sent a report on current plans for the upcoming March visit. There are currently 18 people attending: 3 couples, 3 men and 9 women. Dennis was the ED for a trip to their club several years ago. Reta Lanning will arrange the welcome party. JoAnne Robbins will assign hosts, Ruth Emmel will do the booklet and Carol Berry will contact hosts for the small dinners. There will be a pizza party at Dennis and Jule Yemma's home and a trip to Babcock Ranch with additional events to be arranged. Some of the Japanese guests will go to Key West following the visit with our club.

OUTGOING EXCHANGE TO CANADA

Lou Rizk announced the final dates: St Mary June 14-21 and Halliburton June 21-28. All ambassadors will attend a performance of Guys and Dolls. Those wishing to attend a Shakespearean play may make arrangements with their host. North Bay will not be visited because the dates are too close to the 150 Anniversary of the Canadian Constitution celebration. Lou recommended that extending the trip to Ottawa and/or Toronto would be easy to arrange on your own.

Attendees will meet in Stratford on the 14th. It is possible to fly to Toronto and take a train to Stratford. Arrangements to Stratford are up to the individual.

NEWSLETTER/MEMBERSHIP

Joanne Collins will be calling unpaid members reminding them of dues and noted that a few have discontinued membership. A new membership/associate membership list will be coming out by the end of January. The Newsletter comes out monthly.

OTHER BUSINESS

Cathy Cobb sent a treasurers report to Sue. There is \$3859 in the general fund and \$5950 in the exchange account. The fees to FFI have been sent.

Minutes of the December meeting were approved.

Sue offered to do a shell crafting class. Anyone interested in attending should call her. There are many choices of items to make. It was suggested that the Japanese group might enjoy making an item as well; both Terri and Doreen created a souvenir while staying with Sue.

The next meeting will be February 3 at the Fort Myers Library with Lou and Cheryle doing a presentation on their gourmet food and wine trip to Canada. Lunch reservations will be at the Veranda, if possible.

The meeting adjourned for a presentation by Jack Cooley on his trip with Jo, and the Sarasota FF group to China and Taiwan. The presentation in the form of a very professional video tour (created by a member from Sarasota) and narration by Jack, was thoroughly enjoyed.

The meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary