

FRIENDSHIP FORCE MEETING,
December 3, 2016
Colonial Country Club

Following the Christmas Brunch at Colonial Country Club, the December meeting was called to order by Sue Linehan. Twenty-nine members were in attendance.

African exchange

Most of the ambassadors did not get visas to come to the U.S. The situation is still fluid but as of now only one person will arrive, Doreen from Uganda. Judy and Joanne did a great deal of work to set the agenda and all venues were cooperative in canceling. The Burroughs House will still be visited on Wednesday followed by a walk and lunch in the old downtown of Fort Myers. On Thursday there will be two tours at ECCO and the Lake Fairways concert in the evening. On Friday there will be an opportunity for shopping at Fleamasters followed by a tour at Quality of Life. On Friday the ambassador will go to Sue's house in Punta Gorda for a parade in Rotunda on Saturday and the farewell dinner at Sue's house preceded by a visit to the Vietnam Memorial and boat ride in Charlotte harbor. Cheryle Phelps and Lou Rizk will have a dinner for hosts and the guest on Friday night. Judy asked that members attend the events even if there will be limited ambassadors so that it will still be a memorable visit.

Canadian outgoing exchange

A Sarasota member of FF went to Canada to Halliburton and said they had a fantastic experience and that it is a beautiful area. Cecelia Bridge also praised the area.

Election of officers for 2017

Nominations from the floor were solicited. All officers for 2016 have agreed to serve another year and were elected unanimously.

Dues

Cathy Cobb is collecting dues of \$35/pp. for 2017.

Other business

Joanne Collins thanked the board for service in 2016 and for accepting another year of service.

The meeting adjourned for a Yankee swap of gifts.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Berry, Secretary
Friendship Force Meeting, November 4, 2016
Punta Gorda Police Dept. Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Sue Linehan, with 22 attendees. Introductions were made. Jack Cooley and Kevin Janiak were congratulated for November birthdays.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Cathy Cobb:

Exchange fund \$5550

Regular club account \$3556.46

It was voted by the membership to raise dues beginning in 2017 to \$35 per person. Cathy requested that we fill out a new application each year to keep our information current.

25th Anniversary Party, November 18, 11:30 a.m. at 4280 SE 20th Place, Cape Coral

Susan has had 35 responses for reservations. The club has received a certificate for 25 years from the national organization. Jody Garmon has been contacting former members, 12 have accepted. Carla Harms will organize a history of the club. Our former member Jonnie Sprimont passed away recently and will be honored. She had been active for a number of years and was a past president of another FF club.

The lunch will be catered.

Annual Christmas Party

Once again the Christmas luncheon will be held at Colonial Country Club on December 4. Lou Rizk and Cheryle Phelps have made the arrangements. Payment must be in the form of a credit card. There will be a Yankee swap of gifts, no more than \$10 value, from each individual or couple.

The December meeting includes the election of officers for the next year. All current officers have agreed to serve another term. There will be an opportunity for nominations from the floor at the meeting.

Exchanges

The African exchange will take place December 5-12. Ambassadors will be coming to us from a visit to the Orlando group. When they arrive there Judy Carson, ED, will have a final number. Visas from other countries are sometimes difficult to get and glitches are not unusual so we need to be flexible. We are hoping for 15 or so ambassadors, likely 7 males and 8 females, from 28-52 years old. Smoking and dietary restrictions are not known at this time.

The itinerary and costs are still being finalized. The tentative schedule is as follows:

Tuesday. Welcome Party to be arranged.

Wednesday. Visit the Burroughs House and Gardens for a tour and lunch @ \$30 followed by a walking tour downtown with a fee of \$17.

Thursday is held open for visiting a volunteer facility. There will be an evening of Christmas music at Lake Fairways with the Calendar Girls, a handbell concert and the Lake Fairways Chorale, fee \$5.

Friday. Visit to ECCO for two tours, the farm tour and a technology tour, \$16. In the afternoon there will be a visit to the Muscle Car Museum in Punta Gorda, admission \$12.

Saturday. Trip to the Ringling Museum and House in Sarasota, \$40.

Sunday will be a free day.

Monday. The farewell dinner will be at Cape Coral at Susan Beaudry's condo complex.

Ambassadors will be from Ghana and Liberia. All will speak some English. Jody Garmon will organize the small dinner schedule. We will be needing day hosts in addition to housing hosts. Judy is assigning housing.

Cheryle will be finalizing details of the Japanese exchange later.

Lou is in charge of the outgoing Canadian exchange for June 7-14 (St Mary), 14-21 (Halliburton) and perhaps 4 days to North Bay. There is an opportunity to attend a play, either a Shakespearean play or a musical. Tickets will be \$100. Lou needs to send money by December 1 for the play. He will have more information at the Anniversary dinner.

Other Business

Sue and Rob Linehan, Joanne and Richard Collins, Michelle Kemps and new member Ginny Dooley attended the all Florida conference of FF in Clearwater.

In 2018 our priorities for travel are Peru, Sweden, Brazil and Indonesia. Cheryle and Lou met the Sweden FF president on a recent trip.

Joanne has investigated purchasing Tervis tumblers with our logo. They are made in Sarasota. They would cost \$20. She had a sample to show us and will investigate a quantity discount. They would make nice gifts for our guests and for members.

In the future we will consider doing a regional workshop day about some of our recurring tasks, i.e. what you need to do/know to be an ED.

The meeting was followed by a presentation by Joanne and Richard Collins of their southern African adventure and Michelle Kemps on her humanitarian African trip.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary

Friendship Force Meeting, October 7, 2016
Fort Myers Public Library

The meeting was called to order by Sue Linehan, President, with 18 members in attendance. Members introduced themselves and noted where they live, including new member Betty Botsaris who lives at Colonial and enjoys walking, swimming and table tennis.

Treasurer's Report: \$3554 in the general account and \$5000 in the exchange account, including funds for the Canadian trip.

October 22 the Florida Friendship Force Conference will be held in Clearwater. Sue and Michelle Kemps will be attending both days with a leadership conference on Friday. Rob

Linehan, Joanne and Richard Collins are going Saturday. Joanne offered car space and a room to stay Friday night for an early start. Jeremy Snook from the national organization will attend. There is still time to register.

Two spaces are available for the Canadian outbound exchange June 14-21 and 21-28 to Stratford-St. Mary and Haliburton Highlands, Ontario. Unfortunately the spaces are available due to the untimely passing of Jonnie Sprimont. There will be a tribute to Jonnie at the Anniversary Celebration. She was an active member of our club and a past president of another FF club.

Sue, Michelle and Joanne will be doing a presentation about our group at the travel club of Punta Gorda next week. Any groups who would like a program may book a presentation.

The Newsletter is managed by Joanne. You can obtain the meeting minutes from the Newsletter or the web site.

Carla Harms will be gathering some historical and pictorial materials for display at the Anniversary Celebration. Jody Garmon and others are contacting and inviting former members.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EXCHANGES

November 4. A program on African travels will be presented by Richard, Joanne and Michelle. It will be held at the Punta Gorda Police/Firestation at 1:00pm. The address will be in the Newsletter. Before the program members are urged to meet for lunch at 11 am at the Captain's Table at Fishermen's Village. If you are going to lunch, please let Sue know by phone or email beforehand for a count for the restaurant.

November 18. The 25th Anniversary of Southwest Florida Friendship Force Club will be celebrated at the condo complex at 4260 SE 20th Place, Cape Coral. The dinner will be catered. Former members will be invited and there will be a tribute to Jonnie. Jody suggested that a memorial gift of \$25 be sent to the communication fund of the national organization in her name. Jonnie's daughter will be invited to the dinner as well.

Cheryle Phelps, Sunshine chairperson, S has sent a sympathy card to the family.

December 4. The annual Christmas Party at Colonial Country Club is being organized by Cheryle and Lou Risk, from 11-2 with a Chinese swap of gifts (\$10 limit). The annual election of officers will take place. Sue noted that all members of The Board are willing to serve a second year.

December 5-12. The Africa exchange is progressing with a few bumps. Judy Carson and Joanne are continuing plans. Judy has created a list of possible day activities, many of them new to our group. The participants are likely to be from Uganda, Burundi and possibly Liberia. Judy will circulate a list at lunch for members to indicate willingness to host and accommodations. Corrine Larson suggested that we ask the guests to demonstrate how they do turbans, at either the welcome or farewell party. Judy cannot book the Lake Fairways facility for either of the parties and would welcome possible sites. Her only phone number is 313 300-5891 (please note on your membership list).

January 6. Jack Cooley will continue his China trip presentation.

February 3. Lou and Cheryle will talk about their Canadian gourmet food and wine FF trip.

March. Japanese exchange visit.

April 7. Maureen and Hank Butt will do a travel presentation.

May. Informal lunch, no formal meeting.

June. Canadian outbound exchange.

The members concluded with a song rehearsal of the Friendship Song (tune Auld Lang Syne), Let There Be Peace on Earth and It's A Small World, followed by an entertaining presentation about new clubs in Romania and Hungary by Dennis Yemma.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary

Friendship Force Board Meeting September 28, 2016

The upcoming meeting on October 7 will be held at the Fort Myers Library with Dennis Yemma speaking about forming new groups in Croatia. Lunch will be nearby. We will also practice our songs.

The Regional conference will be October 22 in Clearwater. Sue and Michelle will be staying over. There will be meetings with national and international leaders. It is possible for clubs to do themed regional events and funds may be available, an idea that we might want to explore in the future.

National dues will change. The family membership will be dropped and the individual membership will be \$15.

There are complications with the Africa visit. The Georgia FF group has withdrawn. The national organization is working on finding another group to host for a week in addition to our visit.

The membership has identified areas they would like to visit: 1. South America, especially Peru, 2. Sweden and 3. Asia.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 4. Punta Gorda Firestation. Lunch will be at the Captains Table at 11:15 with the meeting to follow.

November 18. 25th Anniversary Celebration. We are hoping to have the dinner catered. The site in Cape Coral should be large enough and we can use a covered area outside if necessary. Michelle will call Carla Harms to obtain some history and/or photographs. In December the election of officers will take place. Current officers are willing to serve for another year.

January 16 Jack Cooley will continue his presentation with slides of Taiwan.

Feb. 3 Lou and Cheryle will do a wine and food presentation. Tentative location FM Library.

Mar. 3 no meeting. We may need a second meeting in February about the Japanese exchange.

April 7 meeting at the Firehouse in Punta Gorda.

May 5 lunch and informal meeting

June no meeting. Canadian trip.

There will be a board meeting in the spring to plan fall programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Berry

Friendship Force Meeting, September 9, 2016
Fort Myers Library

The meeting was called to order by Sue Linehan, President. Attendees introduced themselves and welcomed new members Betty Botsaris and Ginny Dooley.

Sue thanked Michelle Kemps and Penni McDougal-Wiza for organizing and hosting the ice cream social in August. Nineteen attended and practiced clowning and balloon animal sculptures.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The next meeting will be at the Fort Myers Library on Oct. 7. Dennis Yemma will talk about building clubs in Croatia and neighboring areas.

The Florida Conference will be at Clearwater this year on October 22. It is a great opportunity for building relationships with other clubs and sharing ideas. A representative of the international organization will attend. If anyone would like a Friday night home stay, that is possible as well. The fee is \$25, including a meal. The Newsletter will have a link for the registration.

October 13 Joanne Collins, Michelle and Sue will do a membership presentation in Punta Gorda. If anyone has a contact with a group which would like a program on Friendship Force, the presentation is available.

The November 4 meeting will be in Punta Gorda at the Firehouse/Police station, with lunch first and a 1:30 meeting. The subject is travel in Africa.

November 18 we will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of our club in Cape Coral. Cheryle Phelps, Jody Garmon and Joanne Robbins will invite inactive members. Details will be in the Newsletter. Corrine Larson and Sue Beaudry will arrange the site.

On December 4 the Christmas party will be held at Colonial Country Club with Lou Risk and Cheryle Phelps in charge of arrangements.

EXCHANGES

December 5-12 the African group will arrive from the state of Georgia. There are currently 15 registered guests from Ghana, Liberia and Uganda. Travel from Africa is difficult so numbers are fluid. Judy Carson is the ED and she will be returning to Florida soon. Joanne is assisting and will take over for now.

March 1-7 the Japanese exchange group will arrive late on the 1st so only the welcome party is planned for the first full day, March 2. The welcome party will be held at Lakes Park and will be a covered dish meal. There are currently 21 attendees with 9 or 10 singles so a number of hosts will be needed. Lou and Cheryle are EDs.

June 10-24 are the dates for the Canadian outgoing exchange trip to Halliburton and St Mary. Arrangements are being made to attend the Shakespeare festival (extra cost \$100). There are 2 openings and interested members should contact Lou Risk for details.

NEW BUSINESS

Sue noted that there are always many people willing to provide back-up for any tasks so any travel or other plans are not a problem.

Michelle is going on a Bike and Barge trip to the Netherlands in April and was looking for additional participants.

Richard and Joanne Collins have discovered a mobile passport option. It expedites immigration procedures. Details will be in the Newsletter.

Jack Cooley did an amazing comprehensive presentation on his extended trip to China with Jo Cooley and others. A continuation of their trip to Taiwan will become a future program.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary

Friendship Force Meeting, May 6, 2016

Fort Myers Library

The meeting was called to order by First Vice President Michelle Kemps, with 20 members attending.

Michelle gave the treasurer's report - the balance is \$3,596.29 in the General Account and \$2,000 in the Exchange Account.

Exchange Information was communicated as follows:

All Africa

Judy Carson reported that Mary Mwamby, the Friendship Force Program Manager who was helping to coordinate our All Africa Exchange, recently resigned her job. Judy will request help from Atlanta with the new Program Manager (either Kristen Harrison or Matthew Nidek). Specifically, we need to ascertain the date the All Africa Exchange is coming. We do know that the Africans are also having a second exchange with Big Canoe, Georgia FF Club. The time frame proposed is between Nov. 11 and Dec. 11, 2016. Judy

detailed some of the ideas for the exchange including a possible trip to Sarasota to the Ringling Museum and more Naples attractions, e.g., the Naples Botanical Gardens and/or a walking tour of the historic downtown district. There will be no recruitment of hosts until the dates are finalized. [Judy is going up north for the summer and will continue to coordinate via phone (313) 300-5891 & email.] Joanne Collins is also helping her with this exchange.

Stratford-St Mary & Haliburton Highlands, Ontario, Canada

There is an outgoing exchange to Ontario, Canada locations scheduled for June 2017. Lou Rizk and Susan Beaudry are the EDs.

Hiroshima, Japan

Cheryle Phelps and Cathy Cobb are EDs for the incoming Japan visit with a spring 2017 exchange.

Joanne MacPeek announced that she will coordinate participation of our members with the Orlando Club's ED for the Denver Outbound scheduled for next year.

Membership

Joanne Collins announced that we are scheduled to present a talk at the Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association's Travel Club in October. Also, she asked for volunteers to help set up a table at one of the Farmer's Markets during the summer in Punta Gorda. She hopes to publicize our meetings in the local newspapers in the area (free ads).

Our current membership is 53 - she recognized our newest members, Munir and Nassab Fahreddine. Cheryle Phelps asked if the newsletter could be put onto our Face Book page. Joanne stated that she would look into it.

Calendar Upcoming Events

June 10, noon, there will be an informal lunch at Ichiban in Fort Myers with an abbreviated general meeting. Sue will be back to run it.

August 14 Ice Cream Social

Sept 16-19. 39th World Conference in Marrakech, Morocco.

October 21-22. All Florida Conference, two day event

Other Business

Club members sang the *Friendship Song* to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne*, *Let There Be Peace On Earth*, and *It's a Small World*.

Beverly Harmon and Kevin Janiak presented slides, and an entertaining narrative about their fantastic 5 Back-to-Back Exchange Trip to Australia and New Zealand.

Most club members enjoyed a delicious lunch at the historic Veranda Restaurant.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Collins, Acting Secretary for Carol Berry, who could not attend the meeting

Friendship Force Meeting, April 8, 2016
North Fort Myers Library

The meeting was called to order by First Vice President Michelle Kemps, with 28 members attending. Several guests were in attendance: Kurth Chin Fatt and Lynn Van Horne from the Orlando club and participants in the Costa Rica trip with our members, and Debbie Gilbert from the Educational Homestay Programs Education First organization.

The treasurer's report was presented and approved.

Exchanges.

Judy Carson is working on the proposed Africa exchange. She has been in touch with the national office and the African ED. Twenty countries are involved and a number of issues have to be resolved. So far our organization is the only hosting club; another club is being sought to host for a second week. The time frame proposed is sometime between Nov. 11 and Dec. 11, 2016. The African ambassadors have limited incomes so there is an attempt to keep expenses down.

There is an outgoing exchange to Ontario, Canada scheduled for late spring 2017.

Cheryle and Cathy are EDs for the incoming Japan visit with a spring 2017 exchange.

The outgoing trip to Denver and Lincoln is being dropped because we do not have enough interest to fill the exchange from our group. It is possible that members could join an Orlando exchange.

Membership.

During March, we added several new members: Jacqueline Engle, Corrine Larson, Munir and Nassab Fahreddine and returning member Luvvy Kovacik. Lapsed members continue to be sent the Newsletter but are not counted in our membership reported to the national office. Joanne has contacted each lapsed member and invited them to rejoin. Cheryle reported that we have many people from the US and around the world who look at the Facebook page.

Historian.

Carla reported that our club is now 25 years old and we received a certificate from the national organization in recognition of that landmark. Joanne Robbins is thought to be the only original member still active.

Calendar.

May 6. Bev and Kevin will be presenters at the May meeting at the Fort Myers Library, talking about their 5 week trip to Australia and New Zealand.

June 14 there will be an informal lunch at Ichiban Lunch in Fort Myers.

August 14. Ice Cream social.

Sept 16-19. 39th World Conference in Marrakech, Morocco.

October 21-22. All Florida Conference.

Other Business.

Michelle requested that we practice three songs to be sung at farewell dinners. We will practice at each meeting to improve our performance. The songs are the Friendship Song to the tune of Auld Lang Syne, Let There Be Peace On Earth, and It's a Small World. Michelle, Joanne, Jody and Ellen helped to lead the singers.

Debbie Gilbert gave a presentation about Education First, an international exchange program that brings student groups, ages 10-17 for short homestays and English language instruction. Host families are needed for homestays 11 days to 2 1/2 weeks during the summer. Most students are from Hong Kong, China, Russia and a variety of other countries. Interested families can contact Kim Muchmore at 239 340-5164.

Program.

Richard and Joanne Collins presented slides, videos and an entertaining narrative about the February trip to Costa Rica.

Twenty club members enjoyed lunch and a social hour at Sabal Springs.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary

Friendship Force Board Meeting
February 26, 2016

Attending: Sue Linehan, Michelle Kemp, Beverly Harmon, Cathy Cobb, Joanne Collins, Carol Berry.

Secretary's report. Minutes of the January 26 general meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Cathy reported that the President and Treasurer have debit and exchange account cards. There was a discussion about fund raising items and how to handle them. Cheryle has submitted an apron design; temporary tattoos and incoming gifts are also possible. We have enough pins for the incoming Belgium group. We no longer sponsor the garage sale but there is currently enough money to handle expenses for this year. It was voted to continue the current membership fee, for the time being. There are currently 46 paid members and 1 associate. Cathy sends renewal and new member information to Cheryle.

Membership. We need to try to find new ways to recruit new members. Cheryle maintains the directory. Joanne needs to be notified when new members are added in order to send the Newsletter. We need phone numbers when a potential member attends a general meeting so we can follow-up with a phone call. Joanne noted that some of the buttons on the webpage have been changed.

Belgium exchange. The plans seem to be pretty well in place. Members need to pay fees for events at the World Friendship Day dinner. We need a master list of contacts for events from Bev and Dennis.

Upcoming meetings.

March 6, World Friendship Day. Bring an ethnic dish, 3 pm. At Susan Beaudrys condo complex in Cape Coral. Fees for events during the Belgium exchange are due.

April 8 general meeting at North Fort Myers Public Library. 11 am. Joanne will check out the site in advance.

May 6 meeting at Bev Harmons development on Corkscrew, 11 am.

June. Lunch to be determined. A Japanese or African restaurant will be sought.

July. No meeting.

August. Ice Cream social. The club pays for refreshments. Possibly hosted by Penni McDonald-Wiza in Englewood, 3 pm..

Sept-Nov. Programs to be determined. Perhaps Conleys on their trip to Taiwan and China. October may be a program from Joanne and Michelle on trips to Africa.

Dec. Lou will schedule it for the Christmas Lunch at Colonial Country Club/.Possibly it will coincide with the Africa exchange. We still need an ED for the Africa exchange.

We need an ED for the Japan exchange from Hiroshima. It was suggested that Dennis might be willing to handle it.

Outgoing exchanges. The exchange to Canada will involve two clubs. It will be in May or June 2017. An outbound exchange to Denver/ Lincoln may happen in the fall of 2017.

Joanne created a list of hosting information to assist EDs for incoming exchanges in the future. It lists host names, interests, physical accommodations and requirements.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF SWFL
General Meeting, January 26, 2016

The general meeting was preceded by an informational session about the pending trip to Costa Rica, with ED Joanne Collins.

The general meeting opened at 10:40 with President Sue Linehan presiding and thirty-two people attending. Guests were introduced: Judy McGinnis originally from

Minnesota, Jean Sawyer from New England and Minnesota, and Paula Hornback from Michigan. Each guest described her previous travel experiences.

The minutes of the December board meeting and the treasurer's report were approved. The treasurer reported \$3551 in the general account and \$2000 in the exchange account. Sue and Richard showed the webpage for ordering shirts. Badges will be ordered when a new member joins the organization. Bev will handle meeting locations and asked for suggestions. There are currently 40 members.

EXCHANGES

There are 19 people going to Costa Rica, including two people from the Orlando group, departing in one week.

Dennis is the Ed for the incoming Belgium group. He described the itinerary and costs of their visit. All members are welcome to attend the activities.

The Africa exchange is still pending. Guests will come from several African countries so the arrangements are more complicated than most exchanges. The visit is likely to be the first week in December and may coincide with the Christmas lunch. A volunteer to handle the ED duties is needed.

In 2017 there may be an exchange from Hiroshima, probably in March.

On outbound exchange may be to Ontario in 2017, hopefully in May or June. The host group can only accommodate 15 people.

There is also an expected outbound domestic trip to Denver, Colorado and Lincoln, Nebraska in the fall of 2017.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sue and Joanne did a presentation to the retired teachers of Charlotte County, promoting the organization. There is a need for more recruiting opportunities.

Cheryle manages our Facebook page. She gets more hits from other countries than from our members. Cheryle also keeps track of memberships and keeps the directory up to date.

Joanne asked that interesting items and photos be forwarded to her to be included in the Newsletter.

CALENDAR

March 6, from 3 to 6, we will celebrate World Friendship Day with a pot luck dinner at Susan Beaudry's condo complex. Members are asked to bring an international dish to share.

On April 8 or 15 at 10:30 the general meeting will include a program on Costa Rica with member's photos and anecdotes, and organized by Joanne and Richard.

May 6 at 10:30 Bev and Kev will talk about their 5 week trip of Friendship Force exchanges in Australia and New Zealand.

June there will be no meeting but members will meet for lunch.

July there will be no meeting.

August will be the ice cream social, possibly in Englewood.

Other meetings will be scheduled later.

PROGRAM

The meeting concluded with an informational session on the responsibilities of an ED and a plea that members consider volunteering. An ED is responsible for making the arrangements for an exchange. There are Master Calendars for inbound and outbound exchanges, from the national organization to guide the ED. Cheryle and Lou are ED coordinators to assist with questions and provide guidance. A committee will help with housing, dinners and activities for inbound exchanges. Names of potential EDs are submitted to the Board, who makes the final choice.

The meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Berry, Secretary