



friendship force
FLORIDA SUNCOAST
www.friendshipforcefloridasuncoast.org

Florida Suncoast Newsletter

March/April 2009

CHANGING THE
WAY YOU SEE
THE WORLD

The March 21st
general meeting will be at
10891 102nd Ave N,
Seminole, at 3:00 pm.
See page 3 for details.

From the President

My term as club president has been a year of “firsts” for me, and the latest one is being the ED (exchange director) for the incoming Lower Columbia, Washington club. There’s nothing like doing a job yourself to gain an understanding of and an appreciation for “just what it takes.” Luckily, it’s been a team effort with help from Jean Choong, Carol Heichel, Denise Seeber, and Bev and Roy Swanson for the upfront work. And I am pleased to say that three new member households will be hosting for the first time: Geri Espy, Denise and Jerry Seeber, and Jeannie Shimer. Jeannie will also hold the welcome party. Plus, several new members volunteered for day hosting, small dinner parties in their homes or airport transport: Joan Barrett, Barbara Cohen, John and Catherine Conover, Sue Guest, John Hayner, Bill and Jane Lee, Barbara McCall, and Pam Shofner. Add to this list all the other members who volunteered, and I actually think we might have more than we need! I thank all of you! **Well, we really could use one more place to have a small dinner party for six guests, especially in north county, for Monday evening, March 30.** See page four for the exchange itinerary and details of the welcome and farewell parties.

**The business meeting portion of our next general meeting on March 21
will focus on the specifics of the exchange
and the “who is taking whom where and when” aspects.**

If you volunteered to help with the exchange in any way, please be there.

Also, check your emails regularly, as schedules will go out by email.

Also at the March 21 meeting we will acknowledge World Friendship Day, the anniversary of the day when Friendship Force International was launched at a White House ceremony on March 1, 1977, with the endorsement and support of President Jimmy Carter. The tradition of World Friendship Day began in 2005 as a way for Friendship Force International, and its 360 clubs around the world, to have a specific day, March 1, to commemorate the organization’s birth.

Sincerely, Nancy Warner

President: Nancy Warner
Vice President Programs: Robert Lehner
Vice President Membership: Sandy Gourdine
Vice President At Large: Roy Swanson
Secretary: Ann Scott
Treasurer: Millie Jones
Past President: Vivian Grimm
Calling Committee: Bev Swanson
Domestic Exchanges: Carol Heichel

Function Presentation: Monika Boerger
Historian: Patricia McQuaid
International Exchanges: Nancy Warner
Membership Directory: Brenda & Jim Miller
Communications & Website: Jean Keir Choong
Newsletter: Jackie Kline
Publicity: Denise Seber
Sunshine: Vacant
Hospitality: Robert Lehner

PROGRAMS

by Bob Lehner

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warner0806@aol.com

March 21st General Meeting and Program, 3:00 pm

The program is "Florida Suncoast Meets Thailand." See page 3 for details. The business meeting, following the program, will focus on the logistics of the upcoming incoming exchange with Lower Columbia, Washington state. Light refreshments will be served. Location is 10891 102nd Ave N, Seminole, FL 33778, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Nancy Hamilton Social Hall, 3:00 pm.

April 18th Luncheon and Program, early afternoon

Since we are accepting the FFI assignment of outgoing exchange to Mispah, South Africa, for March 2010, there is no time like the present to get started on learning about the area. New member John Conover will provide a presentation of the trip he and his wife Catherine took to South Africa a few years ago. I am trying to find a restaurant where we could have a meal and then the presentation. So the location will be forthcoming. **If you know any restaurants (with a private room, of course) which would allow for a presentation, let me know (contact information in the box at top right).**

May 16th Annual Meeting and Program, 3:00 pm

This is our annual meeting where we will elect new officers for the year starting on September 1, 2009 through August 31, 2010 and possibly vote on a Bylaws change. But first we'll have a presentation on India by the Rev. Abhi Janamanchi followed by a delightful Indian dance performance by a young girl. Light refreshments will be served. Location is 10891 102nd Ave N, Seminole, FL 33778, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Nancy Hamilton Social Hall, 3:00 pm.

June 20th Annual Picnic, early afternoon

We are continuing the "tradition" of the annual "cook out" picnic, but this year switching the location to John S. Taylor Park, 1100 8th Ave SW, Largo. (west off Alt 19, south of West Bay Drive). The pavilion we've reserved, shelter #3, is located by the lake. Volunteers are needed to buy food and supplies, help cook, bring games, and organize activities!

Membership

by Sandy Gourdine

(727) 443-5950
slgourdine@aol.com

Just a reminder that you are encouraged to bring friends and prospective FF members to all our meetings. And also be sure to let me know if you want me to send our new information packet to anyone you think might be interested in Friendship Force.

Our Club now has 87 active members, and 10 of them have joined since January 1. We will have a Welcome Board at our next meeting listing their names so be sure to give them a Big Welcome. Most of them attended our New Member Orientation in February. Our next one is scheduled in May.

New name tags will be available for pick up at the March 21 meeting. If you have a membership directory, updates will also be ready for you. A new photo directory can be purchased for \$10 and will also be available at the March meeting.

I'd like to extend our Club's Special Thanks to Jim and Brenda Miller for producing the updates to the membership directory and to Ed Evan for his major role in recruiting and orienting new members to our club. Thanks a bunch!



[To join or renew your membership, and to find out more about what membership is all about, please go to our website, www.friendshipforcefloridasuncoast.org, and click on JOIN. Don't have internet access? Call Sandy and information and a form will be sent to you.]

Florida Suncoast Meets Thailand!

Local Club is Changing the Way We See the World



friendship force
FLORIDA SUNCOAST

Saturday, March 21, 2009, 3 pm

10891 102nd Avenue, Seminole

(at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd)

3:00 Guest Speaker

Chief Petty Officer John Heinz, U.S. Coast Guard (Retired)

Mr. Heinz will share some of the fun and challenges that he and his wife, Tah, experienced when dating and then building a family whose members live on different continents and speak different languages.

4:00 Refreshments & Guest Introductions

Guests will be greeted by Friendship Force members and have the opportunity to learn more about the Florida Suncoast Club and Friendship Force International as well as the numerous travel and hosting opportunities available.

4:30 Business Meeting

Guests are welcome to stay for the business meeting, if they like.

Friendship Force International

Since 1977 when Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter first promoted this new organization, **Friendship Force** has grown to over 375 chapters in over 70 countries. Our mission is to promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people. 'By connecting the world, one friend at a time, we will create a world of friends that becomes a world of peace.'

Friendship Force of the Florida Suncoast:

Our local club is celebrating its 21st anniversary this year with an influx of new members and a heightened sense of commitment to increase understanding between cultures. For more information about membership, please call Sandy Gourdine at 727 443-5950 or visit

www.friendshipforcefloridasuncoast.org

Exchange News

International Exchange Assignments for 2010

We have accepted FFI assignments of outgoing to Mispah, South Africa, for March 2010, and incoming Sydney, Australia, for May 2010. For South Africa, we are "sharing" with the East Central Florida and Central Florida clubs. There is still a possibility that the Mispah and Sydney clubs will not accept the assignments. So the next step is to hear back from FFI. Our April 18th luncheon meeting will include a presentation on South Africa.

Incoming Lower Columbia, Washington, March 28 to April 2

Sixteen ambassadors arrive Saturday evening, March 28 for a 5 night stay. Host assignments have been made and day hosting, airport transportation, and dinner party assignments will be finished shortly. Thanks to all those who volunteered already to participate. If you haven't responded yet, but still want to participate, don't hesitate to call Nancy Warner, the ED (exchange director). **We really could use one more member to host a dinner party Monday, March 30, for up to six persons (in addition to themselves) preferably in the north county area.** Please call Nancy at 791-8703 or 744-7975.

The Itinerary

Saturday, 3/28: Pick up ambassadors at Tampa Int'l Airport at 7:00 pm; go to hosts' homes
Sunday, 3/29: SPIFFS folk festival, Vinoy Park, St. Petersburg; welcome party in Largo
Monday, 3/30: Hike Honeymoon Island; lunch picnic; Clearwater Marine Aquarium; small dinner parties
Tuesday, 3/31: Ybor City Museum; lunch at Columbia restaurant; Tampa Bay History Museum;
ambassadors take hosts out to dinner
Wednesday, 4/1: Free day; farewell party in Seminole
Thursday, 4/2: Return ambassadors to Tampa Int'l Airport, various times



All members please come to the welcome and farewell parties!

If you cannot participate in other ways,
please come to these parties to meet the ambassadors.

The Welcome Party

When: Sunday, March 29 starting at 6:00 pm.
Where: The home of new member Jeannie Shimer, 14190 Valentine Trail in Largo
(West off Indian Rocks Rd, south of West Bay Dr. and North of Walsingham Rd)
Type: It is a potluck.
Bring: A large dish and drinks to share. The main course will be provided.
RSVP: To Nancy Warner by Friday, Thursday, March 26, at 791-8703 or cell 744-7975
or warner0806@aol.com.



The Farewell Party

When: Wednesday, April 1 starting at 6:00 pm.
Where: The home of Brenda and Jim Miller, 14444 Neptune Road, Seminole
(two streets south of 102nd Ave N between Hamlin Blvd and Commodore Dr),
Type: A pizza party.
Bring: Drinks for yourself and to share
RSVP: To the Millers by Monday, March 30, at 595-9121
or email Brenda at brenfm@tampabay.rr.com.



Outgoing to Lower Columbia Washington, July 2009

The **OTHER** Washington beckons! If you would like a pleasant **CHANGE** of scene this summer plan to join our outgoing domestic exchange from July 16–22, 2009 to the state of Washington. We will be guests of the Lower Columbia (Woodland, WA) club, the same friendly folks who will be visiting us in March of this year.

We will fly into the Portland, Oregon airport and be picked up by our hosts. Attractions of the area include the Mt. St. Helens national volcanic site and the Columbia River Gorge. The cost of this 6 night exchange will be approximately \$125 to \$150 per person plus airfare. No single supplement applies to the exchange! And, as is customary, you will treat your host to dinner one night.

Many attractive options are available for extending the trip and may be discussed and chosen by trip participants. Excellent, inexpensive train transportation is available to Seattle, a charming city famous for the Pike St. Market, the Boeing Aircraft factory and Museum of Flight, Chinatown and much more.

Ferries can whisk you to Vancouver, or to quaint Victoria on Vancouver Island. You don't even need a passport for these excursions. Mt. Rainier and the Olympic Peninsula are also popular destinations. Lastly, Seattle is the perfect place to embark on a cruise or flight to Alaska. These websites are good for more information about the area: www.ClipperVacations.com, www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries, www.victoriaclipper.com, www.visitseattle.org

But First We Need an ED!

Help Wanted: Need friendly, outgoing person to organize our exchange to the state of Washington in July. Most of the organizational work will be done for you by the hosting club.

Job Description: You publicize and sign ambassadors up for the trip, collect and review their applications, and create a list of the pertinent information to transmit to the hosting club for the assignment of hosts. Experienced exchange directors are ready to guide and assist you. An exchange treasurer will handle the money for you. Compared to organizing an incoming exchange, this is a "piece of cake"!

Compensation: You will make a priceless contribution to the vitality of our club, have a marvelous experience on the "other" coast, and win the gratitude and admiration of our membership. Call Carol Heichel at 738-8982.

Festival at Sea in December with Our Club Hosting Before the Cruise



FFI has arranged for a one week cruise out of Tampa which they are calling "Festival At Sea" aboard the Carnival Legend. Cost is \$1,300 per person double occupancy, balcony cabin, or \$1,150 outside cabin. The 50 or so ambassadors could come from anywhere in the world. Preceding the cruise, both our club and the Southwest Florida club have agreed to provide home hosting for five nights for ten to fifteen ambassadors, December 1 to 6. The cruise is from December 6 to 13. The ED (exchange director) for the entire package will be Mary Alice Rothweiler from the Eastern Washington – Northern Idaho club. Our club too will need to provide an ED to coordinate with Mary Alice. **Please contact Nancy Warner at 791-8703 if you are interested in being our ED.** Of course, we are invited to join in on the cruise part for a cost reduction of \$225. An initial deposit of \$250 is required along with your application and copy of your passport to Mary Alice Rothweiler, (509) 443-1476, maroth31@comcast.net.

Want More Exchange Opportunities?

There is no shortage of exchanges you can go on. Other clubs have openings and FFI designs several trips not allocated to any one club and to places where there are no or a limited number of clubs. The best way to find out about these opportunities is to go on the FFI website, www.thefriendshipforce.org. The left hand column of the home page is all about exchanges. Under "Find Out More" you can even sign up to have FFI email their "E-Flyer" to you which updates you on upcoming exchanges. We also highlight exchanges on our own website and through emails.

If you happen to go on an exchange with another club, or one sponsored directly by FFI, please let us know at info@friendshipforcefloridasuncoast.org so that we can feature it on our website or our newsletter. Our webmaster Jean would love to have some of your photos also!