



# PASSPORT

A Publication of The Friendship Force of Lincoln  
[www.friendshipforcelincn.org](http://www.friendshipforcelincn.org)

NUMBER 130

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

APRIL 2013



*Russians pump iron at NU complex while learning about NU football*



*Mayor Beutler With Russian Delegates At World Friendship Day Celebration*

## A Message from Your President: Moving Ahead



by *Nancy Comer*

**H**ave you had trouble sleeping or staying awake after setting your clocks ahead? Change always takes some adjustment. Remember me telling you that FFL would be providing exciting new opportunities for you to get involved this year? You came through the first challenge with “flying colors” when so many were present at Hillcrest Country Club on February 17 to welcome Friendship Force International President George Brown and the young legislators from Russia participating in the Open World Program.

Before George Brown left he threw down another challenge. He asked us to participate in FFI’s new Expansion Plan. An example is Kay Rockwell’s exchange to Uganda June 12 - 25 to help establish two new clubs. While there, ambassadors will be involved in humanitarian projects in cooperation with BICE (Baja Initiative for Community Empowerment) that Kay told

us about at the annual meeting in August. We raised money at the silent auction to support BICE.

Another challenge that George Brown brought to us was the Lincoln Teacher Exchange Project based on discussions he had with our board. Teachers from Indonesia, or some other country, would join a specialized Friendship Force exchange. They would receive immersion in American culture during a two-week home stay, spend time receiving training in teaching English as a foreign language with certification from a local university, and shadow teachers in American schools to see how instruction is delivered and classroom management maintained. An ad hoc committee is being formed to look into such an exchange. If this is something that interests you, please let me know.

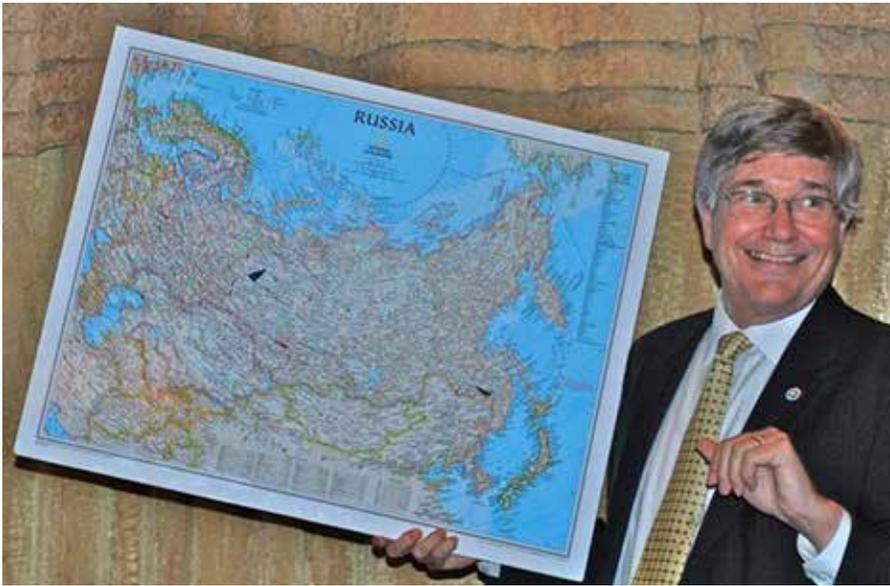
With less than a month before thirty ambassadors arrive to participate in Taming a Harsh Land, I hope you have registered to participate. The committee responsible for the exchange has been meeting monthly for over a year to organize the activities that are Nebraska’s part of the exchange, as well as coordinating travel and theme activities with three other FF clubs. Thank you to those who have volunteered to host ambassadors or small group dinners.

The rest of you won’t want to miss welcoming the ambassadors at Spring Creek Prairie Wednesday morning, April 10; an added benefit will be getting to see Pippa White’s dramatic presentation, *As Far As the Eye Can See* and David Wishart’s talk on *Settlement of the Plains*. Finally, join the fun at the farewell potluck April 13; there will be a square dance to top off the evening.

There’s still another event to mark on your calendar. Plan to attend Friendship Force Lincoln’s meeting Thursday, May 2, 7:00 p.m. at NET 1800 N. 33rd St. Laurie Ann Scott will present a program on Japan, and share information from the Friendship Force World Conference held there last fall. Current ED’s will share the latest on our inbound and outbound exchanges. Since May 2 is our regular board meeting date, we will also have a short meeting. We welcome your input on some ideas currently under consideration. There will be refreshments, and time to get better acquainted. We have also invited OLLI members to attend (that’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute)

Your participation in FFL events is important to moving ahead. See you soon.

## World Friendship Day



*FFI President George Brown identifies location of new Friendship Force clubs in Russia.*

### **George Brown, Mayor Beutler and the Russians Help FFI Celebrate World Friendship Day**

*by Diane Conley*

**O**n February 17, Hillcrest Country Club provided a festive setting for celebrating World Friendship Day and honoring President George Brown for his service to FFI (he will retire in June) and getting to know the Open World delegates from Russia. Mayor Beutler's participation made the evening extra special.

The Russian delegates, in Nebraska to learn about Nebraska government, spoke through a translator sharing a bit about themselves and their families, their jobs, where precisely they came from, pointing out locations on a large map of Russia, and how thankful they were to

have the opportunity to visit us. Mayor Beutler provided a warm welcome and presented each delegate with an honorary certificate of citizenship in the City of Lincoln. Tongue in check, he told them that they now could pay taxes. In a more serious vein, he encouraged them to thank their parents and grandparents upon their return for helping, at tremendous cost in Russian lives, to win World War II.

George Brown spoke of the need to cling to the old but also to be open to change in order to insure FFI a vibrant and relevant future. He identified plans for forty-five new clubs over the next several years.

### **Reserve May 2nd: Laurie Ann Scott Highlights Japan**

**Y**our Executive Board is inviting all Friendship Force of Lincoln members to attend a delightful evening learning about our 2013 Inbound and Outbound exchanges. Our Exchange Directors (EDs) will each take a brief time to tell us about the exchange trip they have planned.

Following their presentations, Laurie-Ann Scott, with the technical support of Jim Ecklund, will present her beautiful photos and tell of her experiences at the 2012 International Convention in Japan. If you were fortunate enough to see her presentation on Morocco a few years ago, then you know you are in for a treat. Laurie-Ann's enthusiasm bubbles until you wish you had been there, but this night you can live it vicariously.

Come! Experience Friendship Force at the NET Building, 1800 N 33, from 7:00 –9:00 p.m. on May 2nd. Coffee, tea and a light dessert will be provided. We want to be sure you have a place to sit, so please contact Jeanne Zwiebel Jz82924 if you are coming.

## A Cruise to Remember



*Machu Picchu is a beautiful place.*

*by Bridget Disney*

In December 2012, over twenty FFI members from Australia, The Netherlands, Russia, Florida, California, North Carolina and Colorado embarked on a two-week voyage that began in the Caribbean, passed through the Panama Canal, and made several stops in South and Central America. The cruise originated in Nassau with stops in Jamaica, Columbia, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Mexico.

My part of the voyage ended in Peru as my vacation days were exhausted and I wanted to get home for the Christmas holiday. While we visited some wonderful places, a major highlight was meeting and traveling with Friendship Force people.

Boarding the cruise ship was a lengthy process, but I managed to meet several FF members that I would get to know better over the two weeks. Once on board, Peggy Judkins (Western North Carolina) organized a Friendship Force gathering for all to get better acquainted. The following day I was invited to join Robyn George (Cairns, Australia) and FF members at the captain's table for dinner. Over the course of the voyage there was also ample opportunity to share information about FF to non-members. Many asked what is FF all about anyway.

In Jamaica, several others and I walked up a waterfall, a bit strenuous but also a lot of fun. In Columbia, we visited the city markets and ate at a restaurant that featured local fare. I tried squid, octopus, crustacean, mollusk – none of

which you can find in Nebraska.

Panama found us at an Indian village. Canoes carried us across a beautiful lake to get to the village where we had delicious lunch of fish served on a large plant leaf. Later we had an opportunity to purchase many lovely and exotic Indian crafts.

Going through the Panama Canal was an experience. Unlike the Caribbean, passage through the Canal was calm and a guide explained the entire process and the difficulty of navigating a cruise liner through the narrow passage way.

On the Pacific side, we followed the coastline south to Ecuador and Peru. The cruise offered a host of lectures on different topics every day. There was a group of minority students on board from Morehouse College, so the focus of several lectures was civil rights. We had lectures from civil rights activist Julian Bond, former director of the CIA and FBI William Webster, and former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. In one class I learned to make better use of my iPad and in another I learned of the different variety of drums used throughout the world. The photographer on board, Dean Jacobs from Fremont, Nebraska showed us some amazing photos he had taken of gorillas in Africa.

In Ecuador, a trip to a cacao

## Cruise continued

bean farm found us sampling a number of exotic delicacies - cacao bean juice, plantain chips, different varieties of mangoes, and other fruits I never heard of.

Machu Picchu in Peru is a very beautiful place. From Lima, we flew to Cusco, elevation 11,000 feet and then descended 5000 feet by bus to the base of Machu Picchu. My room for the evening looked out on a roaring river cascading down a nearby mountain. In the morning we boarded a bus for the 2000 feet climb to Machu Picchu Thirteen switchbacks along a narrow rode flanked by protective guardrails, which didn't seem like much protection at all carried us to the top. A guide shared the glories and magnificence of Inca civilization.

Back in Lima, I flew home while the rest of the group continued on to Central America. The trip was a great introduction to South America. Being able to share the experience with Friendship Force people made it even more special. Hopefully, I will return someday on another exchange.



### You Say Bunco, I Say Blinko! Bunco, Blinko, What Does It All Mean?

It means that these were the big winners, with the exception of Bob Reeves, in the dice game Bunco on St. Patrick's Day at FFL's spring social and activities event held at Tabitha's facilities at Randolph and 48th.

Diane Spomer threw the most buncos, all three dies with the same number. Jeanne Zwiebel won the most bunco games; Phyllis Conway won the 2nd most. I think someone should take these ladies to Vegas. OK Council Bluffs will do. Richard Spencer had the most blinkos, all three dies with the same number. Wait a minute; what's the difference between a bunco and a blinko? I am not going to tell. You should have come to find out. Winner of the evening's door prize was Alan Boon. The big loser: Bob Reeves. Sorry Bob.

## Travel to Japan with the Friendship Force of Greater Omaha

Be home hosted by the Friendship Force of Ehime and Mie and visit the cities of Hiroshima and Tokyo from October 1 through 19, 2013. The exchange begins with three days in Hiroshima City. Thousands of foreign travelers visit each year, drawn to the city's Peace Memorial Museum profiling the tragedy of WW II and celebrating and promoting world peace. From Hiroshima, the exchange moves to Ehime in Shikoku for five days of home hosting. Shikoku is a favorite of pilgrims from all over Japan who come to visit the 88 temples scattered throughout the region. From there, it is on to Mie by high-speed train for another five days of hosting. It is located in the center of the Japanese main island on the Pacific side, close to Nara and Kyoto, the old capitals of Japan, an area rich in Japanese history and culture. The exchange will end with two nights in Tokyo and a guided tour of the city's attractions. Estimated cost is \$2600.00 plus international and domestic airfare. For more information contact Joy Schaal, Friendship Force of Greater Omaha, at [Hhugs@cox.net](mailto:Hhugs@cox.net) or 402-496-2573.

## Russian Open World Program



Russian delegate shows off his certificate of citizenship.

*by Julie A. Albrecht*

**T**he Friendship Force of Lincoln hosted six Open World delegates, a facilitator, and translator from February 16th through the 23rd. Friday evening an arrival party was held at the home of Kay and Lee Rockwell. Saturday the group toured UNL Memorial Stadium, were introduced to American football, and got a chance to try out some of the athletic training facilities. The delegates helped FFL celebrate World Friendship Day at a dinner attended by FFI President George Brown and Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler.

The program theme Responsible Governance included visits with members of the legislature, lobbyists, Nebraska Secretary of State, and citizen

activists. The delegates were able to observe the legislature in action both on the floor of the chamber and in committee hearings. Speaker of the Legislature, Greg Adams described his job in making the legislature run smoothly. Secretary of State, John Gale made the delegates honorary Nebraska citizens

A visit to the county election office generated many questions. Chair of the Lincoln City Council, Carl Eskridge provided information on the inner workings of the city council. A stop at the Lincoln police revealed that aspect of the criminal justice system. An early morning session with the Lincoln Young Professionals gave the delegates an opportunity to network with business people their own age.

A workshop at the UNL EdMedia provided insight into “new media” and how it can be used. NETV introduced the delegates to public TV and radio.

A visit to Omaha was highlighted by a special dinner at the Omaha Zoo Aquarium with Walter Scott, Chair of the Open World Board and Michael Yanney, Open World Board member. The delegates felt honored to be hosted by these gentlemen.

Social activities included a visit to a dairy farm near Firth, NE, a dinner celebrating Russian thanksgiving, a pizza dinner at Vals and a farewell dinner at Lee’s Chicken. A snowstorm canceled Thursday activities – a visit to a Lincoln high school but a day off provided time to relax.

Gloria Van Ackeren and I would like to thank everyone for making the group welcome and helping to provide a memorable experience for them. We could not carry out a program like this without the help of so many FFL members. THANKS!

## Membership News

by Mary Bryant

**G**reat news, we have surpassed our membership from 2012! We currently have 185 members. Thanks to all who renewed. We appreciate your continued support. Your dues allow us to continue current programs and begin new ones.

We welcome the following new members: Alan Boon, Mary Sawicki, Le Etta Sprackling, Anoush Stoddart, De Tonack, and Doug and Jane Zatechka. We look forward to

getting to know each of you.

For the record, there are 6243 Friendship Force members in 98 FF clubs in the United States. All but ten states have Friendship Force clubs. There are only two FF clubs in the United States that have more members than Lincoln, Greater Atlanta with 186 and Madison, Wisconsin with 201 members. Indeed, FF of Lincoln has the third most members of all clubs in the WORLD! The nearest competitors outside the USA are: Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

with 181 members and South Taranaki, New Zealand with 144 members. In the US, California has the most clubs with eight. There are nine states that have only one club. Four states each have six: Florida, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington. Outside the US, Brazil has the most clubs with 27, followed by Australia and Japan with 25 each, New Zealand with 23, Canada with 21 and Germany with 20. Thought you might want to know what our Friendship Force world looks like.



### Why not Lead an Exchange in 2014!

**T**he FFL is recruiting members who would like to lead an exchange in 2014. FFL's international exchange is to the South Island of New Zealand tentatively scheduled for April. The club's international inbound is yet to be determined. Other possibilities include an incoming and outgoing domestic exchange. Applicants must have served on an exchange committee. If you are interested in any of these, please provide the following information and send to Larry Kluck, 6800 Rexford Drive, Lincoln, NE 68506 by May 28, 2013. Individuals selected will need to attend an exchange director workshop this summer, if they have not attended one in the last three years.

### Friendship Force Lincoln Exchange Director Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Member since \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Exchange/s You Are Interested In \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please share your recent involvement in committee work or leading an exchange including the exchange group and year.
2. Indicate in a paragraph or two why you think you would make a successful exchange director.
3. How would you recruit club members and members of the community to participate in the exchange?
4. What ideas do you have regarding leading workshops prior to the exchange to instruct hosts/ambassadors on how to make the exchange a success?



**The Friendship Force of Lincoln  
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