



PASSPORT

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A Wide Variety of Summer Exchanges



Greetings from your President



by *Nancy Comer*

As I write this, we are leaving Bucharest after spending 19 days in Turkey and Romania as ambassadors of Friendship Force Lincoln. Less than 24 hours ago, the Brasov club in Romania was bidding us farewell with a party and evening we will long remember: hors d'oeuvres to rival the finest restaurants, musicians from the Brasov symphony orchestra, vocalists and dancers performing arias and routines from your favorite opera, and close enough to reach out and touch. When two violinists finished the evening with Romanian Enescu's composition, there was nothing to do but rise and applaud. As my husband told the Brasov club, "The bar for farewells has been raised to a new level!" The farewell was a fitting ending to a magnificent week.

Turkey was equally wonderful. There was the dynamics of vast marketplaces where customers and merchants con-

front each other in hopes of agreeing on a price, the imam's call to prayer piercing the quite of the predawn, and a walk through ruins - places like Ephesus - where the secrets and civilizations of ancient peoples are gradually being revealed stone by stone. The exchange also provided an opportunity to visit schools and universities and dialog with teachers and students, and see what the future of Turkey may have in store.

There are many contrasts between the old and new in both countries. I got a glimpse of the new on our return flight. I was sitting next to a young Romania woman traveling to Canada to join her fiance who is Italian. They will be married and begin their new life in Toronto.

The conversation drew me to the vision of the founders of Friendship Force over 35 years ago that people around the world can reach across the barriers that separate them.

The most important thing about an exchange is not the exotic and beauty of faraway places, it is the home stay. Sharing meals with new friends around the table in their home is where we begin building affection and understanding among the people of the world.

FFI Names New President

Joy DiBenedetto is FFI's new president and CEO and will be formally introduced at the World Conference in New Orleans. Joy brings a great deal of experience with her from her years at Atlanta-based international news agency CNN and CARE, the non-profit organization based in Atlanta that works to end poverty in the world.

She is the founder and former CEO of HUM: Human Unlimited Media, the world's first and only 'all-nation' content and information agency. An award-winning 20-year media veteran, she has covered every major global event serving in a number of different positions, from the television studio and the field; domestically and internationally and as a producer and manager.

She was the global vice president of network booking and research for the CNN News Group, where she oversaw guest coverage for domestic and international news networks, managing a worldwide staff.

With Turner Broadcasting, CNN and HUM she has made positive change towards "closing the Geographic Gap" in media coverage. She has also pursued various humanitarian efforts with CARE, the Fugee's Family and the United Nations.

An Exchange to Remember

By Ambassador Janet Kollesavich FF of Manitoba

Asked by Trail Boss Betty Starr, global exchange director for Taming a Harsh Land, to evaluate our visit to Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma, it is impossible to pick from a host of experiences one or two I enjoyed more than the others. I liked it all and would not change a thing. The exchange was well planned and executed. I know a lot of planning went into it and many people were involved. The idea of a global exchange involving four clubs was new to me but I would sign up for another, assuming someone has the courage to take on the task of organizing it.

An ambassador from Australia, one from Japan, six from Canada, and twenty from the US were welcomed in Omaha by Omaha ED Joy Schaal and Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle. In Omaha, there was a tour of First National Bank's Pioneer Courage Sculpture Park, a presentation on the history of the City at the downtown library, a wonderful lunch at the corporate offices of Union Pacific Railroad, and a visit to the Durham Railroad Museum. Following our brief stop in Omaha, it was on to Lincoln to meet our home hosts and begin the second leg of the eighteen-day exchange. On a rainy overcast day, am-

bassadors and home hosts traveled to the Spring Creek Prairie about fifteen miles from Lincoln. Between a presentation on the history of pioneer settlement in Nebraska and a one-person dramatic presentation *As Far As The Eye Can See* reflecting life on the Plains over the past 100 years, we had a catered brunch. Some braved the blustery cold wind and walked through the tall grass exactly as the pioneer families did 150 years earlier. The day also saw a visit to the Nebraska State Capitol where we were treated to the story of early life on the Plains as depicted in the mosaics featured on the interior corridor walls of the building. An added treat, the unique Nebraska nonpartisan, one-house legislature was in session.

Other highlights of our five days in Nebraska were a visit to the Homestead National Monument in Beatrice, NE, 50 minutes south of Lincoln, a tour of a working 1920s style



farm, and a stop at the Stuhr Museum in Grand Island, NE. At the Stuhr, we had a lunch of pulled-buffalo meat while we watched a fashion show featuring lady's undergarments typical of Plains' women in the late 1800s. None of the women in our group wanted to see those styles return, nor did the men. A gentleman in white shirt and tie in a one-room schoolhouse, potbelly stove in the center of the room, showed us how education was conducted in 1880. The Great Platte River Road Archway spanning Interstate 80 in Kearney, NE 150 miles west of Lincoln commemorates westward expansion from pioneer days to the present. A farewell potluck dinner and square dance ended our visit to Nebraska.

The next morning, like the pioneers of yesteryear, we got an early start, but rather than the bumpy ride of a horse-drawn wagon, we boarded a comfortable touring bus and headed for Wichita, Kansas. On the way, we stopped at the Pony Express Barn and Museum in Marysville, KS. The glorious history of the pony express depicted in many motion pictures only lasted 18 months. The invention of the telegraph ended it all.

In Manhattan, KS, about halfway between Lincoln and Wichita, we met Kansas ED Marie Riggs and several members of the Wichita club. We ate lunch, changed buses, and

Harsh Land continued



Ambassadors and Club Members Visit the Archway in Taming a Harsh Land Exchange.

headed south and west traveling through the Kansas Tall Grass Prairie. That evening, we had a welcome dinner and a talk introducing us to the City of Wichita.

Early the next morning we headed twenty miles north to Newton, KS and stopped at Warkentin House and the Kaufman Museum. We were introduced to the Mennonite migration to the prairie. The Mennonites were excellent farmers and brought Turkey Red Winter Wheat with them, a crop that would thrive on the Kansas plains. The meal that evening was prepared by an Amish family at their farm. Growing up on the Canadian plains, I was familiar with grain elevators that dotted the landscape. But they do not

compare in size or number to those we saw in Kansas. I now understand why they call the American plains the “the bread basket of the world.”

The Sedgwick County Historical Museum is in downtown Wichita. Even before going in we were impressed. Where else in the U.S. or Canada can you park on the street for two hours for 25 cents. The theme “Travelling Through Time” showed Kansas from the arrival of the settlers to the invention of the automobile. We lunched at the First Presbyterian Church, the oldest church in Wichita. From the church, we made our way to Cow Town, a reconstruction of an early Kansas settlement including a saloon where we paused for a sarsaparilla. For

you know-nothing greenhorns, that’s a root beer. You can learn a lot on an exchange.

Our last night was at the Flying W, an active cattle ranch that caters to guests. A wagon ride chilled you to the bones as the prairie wind came cutting across the plains. A few stories and a few songs by a warm fireplace chased the chill away, and another farewell dinner ended the third leg of our journey.

Again a bus provided transportation. This time to Enid, OK. Here we saw some historical re-enactments in period costumes and began learning something about the opening of Indian land. From Enid, it was on to Oklahoma City, where the local FF club treated us to a homemade ice

Harsh Land continued

cream and cake social. Before breaking for our hosts' homes, we played a round of musical chairs, a favorite on the early plains, with the homemade cakes as the prize.

Bright and early the next morning, we drove to Guthrie. We had an orientation to the 1889 land run and toured the Guthrie Territorial Museum. We viewed the annual parade of Land Rush Celebrations, with marching bands, floats, cars, fire trucks, and we took a trolley tour of Guthrie's Victorian homes. There were many homes of various architectural designs all very well maintained. After supper at the Blue Bell Saloon, we took in a rodeo.

Next day it was the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. My initial thought was just another museum, but boy was I surprised. If you are in Oklahoma City, this is a must.

Other stops included the Chickasaw Culture Centre near Sulphur, OK. Geneva Hancock, Oklahoma ED and part Chickasaw, shared some of her Indian heritage with us. She mentioned that visitors often ask "where are the Indians in Oklahoma." The answer "Everywhere." In Oklahoma, native peoples are well integrated into the community. From the Center, we traveled to Fort Sill, a U.S. military base in Lawton. We absorbed the storied history of the Fort

and stood next to the burial site of the legendary Geronimo.

The farewell was to be a chuck wagon cookout on the prairie but the weather did not cooperate. So we moved to the warm of the inside, had dinner, re-called some of the week's events, and bid our new friends good-by.

To our Trail Boss Betty Starr, a huge salute for taking us along for the ride. And to everyone else who made our exchange one to remember, a big thank you.



Inbound from Sherbrooke Canada

Have you ever wished you could host foreign visitors in your home, but seven nights was too long to fit into your schedule? Try this on for size.

Lincoln will be hosting members of the Sherbrooke, Quebec Friendship Force for a three night stay in November. Visitors will arrive on Thursday, November 14th around 7:00 PM, and depart Sunday, November 17th after breakfast. Because we will be trying to pack the usual week worth of activities into two days (Friday and Saturday), as host you would probably only need to provide a light meal when they arrive and three breakfasts for your guests.

Sherbrooke is a town of 180,000 people 92 miles southeast of Montreal. The Friendship Force members predominantly speak French, although most of them know some English. Lincoln members enjoyed an exchange with Sherbrooke in September, 2006.

In addition to home hosts, hosts are needed for small group dinners. These give our visitors an opportunity to have a typical Midwestern home-cooked meal. Hosts may also use these dinners to invite non-Friendship Force friends and neighbors to meet our guests.

Everyone is welcome to participate in all of the activities planned for our Sherbrooke visitors. More information about these activities will be available closer to the exchange.

If you would like to participate in the exchange with Sherbrooke as a home host or dinner host, please contact Barb Ridder, bridder@neb.rr.com, or Pat King, pking4@neb.rr.com.

FFL News

FFL Annual Meeting, August 11

Sunday, August 11th, St. Mark's Church, 8550 Pioneers Blvd. 5:30 PM
The theme "Travel the World With Food" will feature food items from Mexico, China, Costa Rica, Italy, and conclude with a French dessert petit gateau avec la cerise et l'amande.

There will be a short business meeting followed by a slide presentation of the FFL's recent exchanges to Turkey and Romania.

Cost is \$7.50 per person. Please send a check (payable to Friendship Force Lincoln) to Jeanne Zwiebel, 1025 Lamp-lighter Lane, Lincoln, Ne 68510, by August 1st. (jz82924@windstream.net - 402-489-1247)

Ready for New Zealand in Spring 2014?

Outbound exchanges to the Friendship Force clubs of Southland and Marlborough located on the south island of New Zealand. Exact dates to be determined.

If interested contact the Co-ED's Marilyn Watson mk-wats@windstream.net (402-423-9152) or Kathryn Neyens tomnka@yahoo.com (402-890-0077)

Membership News - July 2013

Please welcome the following new members: Carol Kearns, Catherine Lund, Margie Mertens, Penny Lyons, Marilyn & John Bernthal, Ehtibar Eziz and her husband, Dilmurat Ab-limit, Carolyn Harp, plus two returning members, Sharon Geisler, and JoEllen Polzien. Thanks to Kay Rockwell, Nancy Comer, and Kathryn Neyens for referring these new members to our organization. In fact, Kathryn has referred three new members. Great job Kathryn!

Our current membership stands at 51 family and 96 individuals for a total of 198 members. Outstanding! We'd love to see that number exceed 200. Tell your family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers about the adventures you have experienced through Friendship Force. Let them know how our organization has enriched your life and broadened your horizons. Think about what you would have missed were it not for Friendship Force!

Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee will move the following slate of officers for 2014 at the annual meeting:

President: Larry Kluck
VP: Kathryn Neyens
Treasurer: Wendy Horacek
Secretary: Joanna Rogers

John Comer, Chair
Marilue Becker
Mary Bryant
Richard Spencer

Participate in LEO and Your Favorite Fantasy

Come dressed from a favorite historical period or as character or personality you admire. Date: September, Friday the 13th, location to be determined. Diane Conley is torn between Little Orphan Annie or 50's style outfit, pillbox hat with veil, gloves, and heels, when airline travel was a real dress up occasion. See you there!

Membership Renewal

The last several years a number of members have paid their renewal 2 and sometimes 3 times for the same year. This creates book-keeping headaches. For that reason we ask that you wait until October 1 before mailing your membership renewal for 2014. Naturally, we accept new membership at any time of the year.

Avoiding Online Identity Theft

As the prevalence of identity theft continues to be in the news, here is some helpful information with respect to online identity theft and security reminders at work.

How Online Identity Theft Can Happen

Many identity thieves use malicious software programs to attack vulnerable computers of online users. These software programs can monitor your computer activity and send information back to the thief's computer. Sometimes, these programs will log your key strokes, which allows identity thieves to easily obtain username and password information for any of your online accounts.

Other identity thieves “phish” for your information. “Phishing” involves the use of fraudulent emails and copy-cat websites to trick you into revealing valuable information – such as your account number or the username and password information you use when accessing an account. Sometimes fraudsters will use phishing scams to try to get you to download keystroke-logging or other malicious software programs.

But not all identity thieves have gone “high tech.” Many still use less sophisticated ways of stealing your information, such as looking over your shoulder when you're typing sensitive information or

searching through your trash for confidential account information.

How to Protect Yourself Online

You need to protect yourself against identity thieves, whether hackers, phishers, or snoops, when you are online. The following are a few suggestions on ways to keep your information secure when you go online.

Don't Respond to Emails Requesting Personal Information

Any legitimate entity will not ask you to provide or verify sensitive information through a non-secure means, such as email. If you have reason to believe that a company actually does need information from you, pick up the phone and call the company yourself – using the number in your Rolodex, not the one the email provides!

How to Protect Yourself Online

Firewalls and security software packages (with anti-virus, anti-spam, and spyware detection features) are must-haves for those who engage in online activity. Make sure you are safe by:

- Checking that your computer has the latest security patches.
- Accessing your online accounts only on a secure web page using encryption

- Making sure the website address of a secure website connection starts with “https” instead of just “http.”
- Confirming the website has a key or closed padlock in the status bar (which typically appears in the lower right-hand corner of your screen).

Be Smart About Your Password

The best passwords are ones that are difficult to guess. These ideas can help:

- Use a password that consists of a combination of numbers, letters (both upper case and lower case), punctuation, and special characters.
- Change your password regularly.
- Use a different password for each of your accounts.
- Don't share your password with others.
- Never reply to phishing emails with your password or other sensitive information.
- Do not store your password on your computer.
- If you need to write down your password, store it in a secure, private place.

2013 Events

Saturday, July 20, at 7:30 PM

Diversity Dinner will be at 1145 Furnas Avenue
Lincoln

Sunday, July 28 at 5:00 PM

Pool Party 1460 Buckingham (Adults Only)

Sunday, August 11 at 5:30 PM

Annual meeting St. Mark's

Friday, September 13

LEO place TBA

Thursday, September 19 at 11:00-2:00 PM

World Day on the Mall Pershing Center

Thursday, October 10

FFL Membership Meeting: Program TBA

Sunday, October 20 at 7 PM

New and Prospective Members Dessert and
Coffee, 1901 South Knights Place

Thursday, November 14

Inbound Sherbrooke, Canada Exchange
arrives

Saturday, November 16

Open World - Russians arrive Welcome and
Farewell Party TBA

November 22-25

FFI World Conference in New Orleans

Sunday, December 8

Holiday Party Hi-Mark Golf Course



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