



# The Friendship Force of Wisconsin-Madison

Changing the Way You See the World  
July 2016



## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Regional Conference was held April 28-May1, 2016 in the Quad Cities. It was a joint meeting of the Great Lakes regional clubs and the Midwest regional clubs. In addition to the usual workshops, there were two primary speakers, Jeremi Snook, President/CEO of the Friendship Force, and Bill Tubbs, editor of the North Scott Press.

I was quite impressed with Jeremy's commitment to the founding vision of the Friendship Force, as well as, his efforts to align Friendship Force International's structure to be responsive and supportive to clubs, his commitment to transparency, and his plan to address the current financial reality.

Over the years many clubs have expanded exchange activities to fill most of the available time. The original vision emphasized the opportunity to build friendships through day to day activities and home hospitality. We are being encouraged to allow at least two free days in each exchange to allow ambassadors opportunities to pursue individual interests and to share the common things in our lives--friends, neighbors, neighborhoods, markets, birthdays etc. The emphasis is on sharing who we are and what we do. Arranging many activities also comes with costs and with today's strong dollar as compared to other currencies it is important to consider the impact of exchange rates.

FFI does have a strong foundation of 360 clubs on 6 continents with 18,000 members. However, during the past several years there has been flat growth in the number of clubs, a slow decline in the number of exchanges and the number of ambassadors has declined. All of these affect FFI's income by the equivalent of one employee.

Jeremi is leading FFI to provide clarity, stability and efficiency in Atlanta. Staff is being aligned so it will be clear who clubs should go to with questions. The current data base and web site are being redesigned to provide more stability and also to allow visitors to the site to quickly see who we are and what we are about. The web site will also improve communication with clubs and be more regionally sensitive. The strategic plan announced two years ago will be operationalized and there will more emphasis on effective marketing.

The budget for the coming year will reflect the fact that 75% of Atlanta's revenue comes from exchange fees and recognize that on average 30% of exchanges are canceled and that there has been a 20% reduction in the number exchanges.

Both Jeremi and Bill Tubbs encouraged us not to dilute our mission. Our message of friendship and peace is needed now more than ever. I forwarded a link to the text of Bill's speech



## 2016 CLUB ACTIVITIES

**Monthly Board Meeting -Bridge Point Waunona Community Center, 1917 Lake Point Dr, third Wednesday of the month, 1:15 p.m.**

**July 8-15--Nashik Riverside Club India Inbound Exchange\***

**July 14—Annual Picnic☺ (June)**

**July 20—Board Meeting**

**July 27—Newsletter Deadline**

**August 14—Ice Cream Social\***

**September 13-20—Winnipeg, Canada/Santa Barbara CA Inbound Exchange✍**

**September 16-19—FFI World Conference☺ (Feb)**

### **2017—Dates to be Determined**

Outbound Exchange to Guadeloupe

Inbound Exchange from Noumea, New Caledonia

Inbound Exchange from San Diego, CA

Outbound Exchange to Vancouver & Medicine Hat, Canada (One week each)

\* Information in this newsletter

☺ Information previously announced (Month in ☺Newsletter)

✍ Information to be announced later

following the conference, so I will not repeat it here. However, I think Bill's closing statement is worth repeating. *"But in the end we know that world peace is too important to be left in the hands of our leaders. Groups like Friendship Force know that there is no substitute for people- to-people diplomacy. If it's to be, it's up to me. Our task then is to find our collective voices, to know the power of words and not be afraid to speak, to share our stories and reach out to others so we can grow."*

In peace and friendship,

**Sandi Wysock**

*Explore • Understand • Serve®*

## Stories of Friendship



Friendship Force International is asking you to share your stories. It is through our stories that Jeremi hopes to share our mission and vision with others. To share your story go to: [www.storiesoffriendship.org](http://www.storiesoffriendship.org). There are options to share online, via mail or you can mail your story to:

STORIES OF FRIENDSHIP  
% Friendship Force International  
260 Peachtree Street NW  
Suite 402  
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Sandi Wysock**  
President

## Strategic Planning



All of the clubs in the Midwest are being encouraged to develop a strategic plan. Our club at one time had a plan but we haven't had one in recent years. On June 22, 2016, the board met to review our local mission, our strengths, and opportunities for improvement. From this we identified our objectives for the next two years. Leaders will be identified for each of the objectives and then the real work of developing and implementing plans begins. That's where you will come in!!! We will be asking many of you to help us out so when the leaders of initiatives call, please consider giving them a helping hand. Watch for more details in the next newsletter!

**Sandi Wysock**  
President

## Exchange Coordinator's Report

The 12 ambassadors traveling on the Cleveland County, England exchange from **May 11-18, 2016** had a good time report Co-EDs Nancy Brown and Stephanie Sorensen. Cleveland County is a very old club in terms of member's ages. There was lots of free time so each host and ambassador could create an individualized exchange at their own pace, which was well received. The whole group had three to four meals together. After Stephanie fell and broke her left elbow in York, the eleven traveled on. Nine enjoyed the extended tour in Scotland. Judy Taylor was the treasurer.

ED Helen Ann Rugowski and Assistant ED Jerry Fuller report that the 22 ambassadors from Nashik-Riverside India will be hosted in 11 member homes from **July 8-15, 2016**. Three home hosts are first timers and several others have been away from hosting for some time. Please support their participation during this exchange. Half the group will be dinner hosted Monday, July 11, the other half on Tuesday, July 12. These arrangements were completed by Jane Kessenich. Again, we have two new dinner hosts who are also new members. The welcome dinner is at the Elks Lodge on Friday, July 8, and the farewell party is with our annual picnic on Thursday, July 14, at Burrows Park. As always, all activities on the itinerary are open to members, families and friends and the sign up was online and in the July newsletter. The first workshop on May 25 was well attended and all hosts have received the week's schedule. The second workshop/LEO at Amber Indian Restaurant was also well attended and featured Professor Joe Elder, formerly with the UW Center of South Asia, who spoke on the culture and customs of India. All the hosts have attended one or both workshops for this exchange. Janet Lonergan is the treasurer.

At Friendship Force International, there have been reassignments of support managers following the resignation of Mary Mwambay. Laura Romero is now the contact for the inbound exchange from Winnipeg, Canada and Santa Barbara, CA **September 13-20, 2016**. Co-EDs Patrick Fleming and George Wysock report 13 ambassadors are coming from Winnipeg and 12-13 from Santa Barbara. One more home host for a woman is still needed. The Planning Committee has met twice and arranged an interesting schedule of activities to offer ambassadors and hosts. Arrangements are being finalized. Lois Schulz is the treasurer.

I am also working on trying to get our **2017** exchanges to finalize their schedules. The outbound international exchange to Guadeloupe originally was listed on "It's A Match" for January. They requested we come April 8-15, which is our Holy Week. Co-EDs Lise Skofronik and Maureen Kind researched when Guadeloupe had school breaks since many of their hosts are teachers. They identified **February 23-March 2, 2017**, give or take a day based on airline flights, as an option. The Guadeloupe club will meet in mid-June to discuss this new timeframe. We have not yet been informed who will replace Mary Mwambay as our FFI contact.

The San Diego, CA inbound exchange is being held in abeyance for July 2017 until we finalize the outbound exchange to Metro Vancouver and Medicine Hat in Canada. The clubs originally

were scheduled to host us in September, but the Medicine Hat ED requested we come in July or August 2017. I've spoken with the ED and she was working on several scenarios but still needed to work out arrangements with Vancouver. I'm awaiting her email with suggested dates that hopefully will accommodate all three clubs. Our FFI contact is Kaitlyn Ranney.

In April, I emailed our contact for the Noumea, New Caledonia inbound international exchange. They are scheduled for May 2017, spending the first week in Chicago and then coming to Wisconsin. I inquired of the Chicago ED and our new FFI contact Maryam Jordan on June 8 if either have heard from New Caledonia but haven't received a response as yet.

**Gail L. Holmes**  
Exchange Coordinator

## Club Exchanges 2016

### Nashik Riverside India Inbound Exchange July 8-15, 2016



**Hindu pilgrims take a dip at the start of the holy Kumbh Mela in Nashik, India**

Our guests will be with us in another week and let's all show them a warm Midwestern welcome. We have a week of activity and opportunity to meet up and join the fun. If you have not already done so, sign up and come for the Annual Picnic on July 14 which is also the Farewell Party. Sign up deadline is Thursday, July 7.

**Helen Ann Rugowski, ED & Jerry Fuller, Assistant ED**

Friendship Force International Exchange Catalog has many opportunities to travel starting in July 2016 through June 2017. This link will take you to adventures in the United States and the world.  
[http://catalog.thefriendshipforce.org/index.php/catalog/all\\_list/](http://catalog.thefriendshipforce.org/index.php/catalog/all_list/)

### Cleveland County, England Outbound Exchange May 11-21, 2016



**Castle Howard**

Twelve ambassadors from our club participated in a wonderful exchange to Cleveland County, UK and nine of us continued on for a post-exchange tour of Scotland. We had expected to have ten ambassadors for the post-exchange tour; however, we lost one due to a fall and subsequent return to the states.

Our hosts for the week-long home-stay lived in Darlington, Yarm and Stockton-On-Tees. These towns, which are located in northeast England, are in close proximity to each other, but each has its own distinct history. Shipbuilding in Stockton, which began in the 15th century prospering in the 17th and 18th centuries and the region then turning to iron making and engineering during the Industrial Revolution. Darlington is known for its association with the birth of railways and later became an important center for railway manufacturing. And, Yarm is a much smaller, residential community.

While the area is widely known for manufacturing and industry, it is also charming and filled with incredibly beautiful historic buildings and picturesque seaside destinations. Activities during our homestay included a welcome dinner and the opportunity to discover some local dance steps; meeting the Mayor of Stockton-on-Tees where we learned about the city's history and government; a visit to the North York Moors and the ocean-side town of Whitby; a coach trip to the city of York where we toured York Minster and walked on the Roman Wall that surrounds the city; a day at Castle Howard; and a farewell dinner at the Staincliffe Hotel, which is situated on the seafront at Seaton Carew.

While this is an impressive list of activities, this exchange offered more free time with our hosts than our club normally plans and everyone seemed to enjoy that a lot. Our hosts had all been active members of this club for many years and were able to "customize" our experiences on the free days, which was very nice. Ambassadors could focus on sights and activities that they preferred and set the pace of their exchange.

At the conclusion of the home-stay, nine ambassadors met in Stockton-on-Tees to begin our journey to Edinburgh, Scotland for a few days. Our time in Scotland was a nice mix of guided tours, independent exploration of historic sites and free time. Enroute to Edinburgh we visited Melrose Abbey and Rosslyn Chapel, which are two unique and amazing historic sites. Using Edinburgh as a base, we had a day-trip to Stirling Castle and Loch Lomond, and an underground tour in Edinburgh. Our hotel was centrally

located, which allowed everyone to take full advantage of our free time in Edinburgh. Since the city is so easy to navigate – and the people are so friendly – everyone could explore their personal favorite attractions – Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Palace, Royal Yacht Britannia and countless museums, which are all free and open to the public.

If you haven't participated in an exchange, please do! It's a wonderful way to make new friends and visit places around the world.

### Ambassadors on the Exchange



**Nancy Brown and Stephanie Sorensen**  
Co-Exchange Directors

### My Unique York Adventure By Stephanie Sorensen

While the rest of the ambassadors explored York and its lovely Minster, I experienced England's socialized medical system. It was quite the adventure!

I do not know how or why I fell, but suddenly I was on the cobblestone street with a very painful left arm that I could not move. The British passers-by were amazing. A physical therapist and a doctor were there quickly. They found a chair from one of the stores and helped me up and into the chair. An ambulance was called and a paramedic on a bike was soon at the scene checking me until the ambulance arrived and took me to the York Accident and Emergency room at the hospital.

An x-ray found I had dislocated my elbow and injured the radial head bone. They took me in to reset the elbow using "gas and air" - our "laughing gas" which meant they did not really knock me out to do the reset and it went back into place easily. More x-rays and a temporary cast and then more x-rays. The bone was in the correct position. This care was all free to anyone.

At this point (several hours later) I could have been discharged. However, to make my adventure more interesting, the attending senior doctor was very concerned about my blood test which indicated severe liver disease. I did not recall anything other than a finger prick, but he was really worried that I could become gravely ill very soon and strongly advised that I be admitted to the hospital to see if the blood test readings stabilized. He would barely discuss my elbow, so I agreed.

I was in the medical ward of the hospital which is where many patients go until they are further diagnosed and sent to a different ward for longer care or treated there short term. There are six patients in a room. There was no TV or radio. Apparently you can purchase TV, but it was not clear to me where it would be in the room. The room was a bit dated and a bit worn around the edges, but there were lots of staff and people seemed to be well cared for. They brought tea, coffee or hot chocolate around in the evening.

About 10:00 p.m., one of the doctors came in, informed me that I did not have serious liver disease (not my blood). They took some more blood (not a finger prick) to double check again, and this was correct. I could go home on Sunday and visit the "bone clinic" the following week for follow up care.

The conclusion at the bone clinic was they would need to knock me out to see what was actually needed to repair my elbow. The doctor felt it was OK for me to travel with the temporary cast, so I decided to come home.

I was able to e-mail my doctors at UW Health and make an appointment for as soon as I returned and they also scheduled surgery - all before I even left England.

The physical contrast in the facilities was amazing (though the actual medical care is pretty similar). I had surgery at the brand new UW Hospital at the American Center on the east side. I had a private room with a TV playing beautiful nature scenes while they prepped me. Because they did the surgery by numbing my arm and using very light anesthetic, I was not even able to stay in that lovely room overnight!

I hope by sharing my special adventure, none of you will ever have a similar one in your travels. It did provide quite an insight into the way socialized medicine works in England. My host, Liz, was incredibly helpful with everything.

### SUMMER TIME IS ICE CREAM TIME

On Sunday, August 14, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., the Activities Committee invites everyone to come to Sandi and George Wysock's home, 102 Acadia Dr, Madison, for an old-fashioned ice cream social.



We will have ice cream and a variety of toppings available and hope to have a beautiful summer day to socialize and enjoy a seasonal treat.

We are asking for a small donation that day to cover costs. We NEED to know if you are coming so that we can make sure we have sufficient supplies. Please email me by **August 10** at: [stevils@charter.net](mailto:stevils@charter.net) or sign up on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ice-cream-social-tickets-26201040016>

**Stephanie Sorensen, Activities Co-Chair**

## Cultural Experiences to Enjoy



Unable to travel to other countries but still want to enjoy cultural experiences this summer? Here are a few that might interest you in the months of July, August, and September 2016.

### **La Fête de Marquette --July 14-July 17 Madison's Central Park**

Four days of fabulous world-class music, unparalleled local cuisine, cute boutiques, cold craft beer, wine for all tastes, an expanded Family Fête, and much more.

<http://www.wil-mar.org/lafete/>

### **Bastille Days--July 14-17 Cathedral Square Park 520 E Wells St, Milwaukee**

This free, four-day affair is one of the nation's largest French-themed celebrations. It boasts live music, an international marketplace, chef and wine demos, epicurean delights from local restaurants, a Storm the Bastille Run/Walk, Mardi Gras parades, roaming busker entertainment and a 43-ft. Eiffel Tower replica. Music on five stages includes French ballads, jazz, folk, world, Cajun, zydeco and rock. With over 90 merchant booths and nearly 30 restaurants, Bastille Days offers an international marché that is sure to please any palate.

[www.bastilledaysfestival.com](http://www.bastilledaysfestival.com)

### **Festa Italiana--July 22-24 Henry W. Maier Festival Park 200 N. Harbor Dr, Milwaukee**

Enjoy wine tastings, classic Italian fare and chef demonstrations to tempt your taste buds, play a game of bocce ball or take a spin at the carnival, and end your night with a gondola ride under a sky of fireworks. There is also a cannoli-eating contest, futsal tournament, a full lineup of entertainment, and for those who love opera, Florentine Opera will be doing a performance every day.

<http://festaitaliana.com/>

### **Pulaski Polka Days: July 21-24 Pulaski**

An annual polka festival lasting four days that brings thousands of visitors each year from all over the world to hear some of the best polka music in the world. This festival has grown into one of the largest celebrations of Polish heritage in a state with the highest percentage of people claiming Polish ancestry in the country. The bands play until 1 a.m.. <http://pulaskipolkadays.com>

### **German Fest: July 29-31 Henry W. Maier Festival Park 200 N. Harbor Dr, Milwaukee**

Wisconsin's largest ethnic group celebrates its heritage in the city where the largest population of German immigrants settled in the late 19th century. Dubbed "Milwaukee's Original Haus Party," the festival includes authentic German food - including brats and beer, of course - live music - including daily glockenspiel performances - family activities and more.

<http://germanfest.com/>

### **Irish Fest --August 18-21 Henry W. Maier Festival Park 200 N. Harbor Dr, Milwaukee**

The world's largest Irish cultural festival brings the Emerald Isle to the shore of Lake Michigan! Listen to traditional music, admire the dancers jigging to heart-pounding beats, enjoy roaming performers in traditional costumes and experience Ireland's folklore through cultural exhibits, theater and craft demonstrations.

<http://irishfest.com/Irishfest.htm>

### **Mexican Fest--August 26-28 Henry W. Maier Festival Park 200 N. Harbor Dr, Milwaukee**

This authentic south-of-the-border experience features mouth-watering food, rousing mariachi bands, foot-stomping rhythms and a swirl of traditional dancers. Walk through the cultural pavilion and learn about the history of Mexican and Latin cultures from ancient civilizations to the present.

<http://www.mexicanfiesta.org/home.php>

### **William Tell Festival--September 2-4 W5199 Hwy W New Glarus**

Play set near the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century tells the story of freeing Switzerland from Austrian rule.

<http://www.wilhelmtell.org/>

### **Indian Summer Festival--September 9-11 Henry W. Maier Festival Park 200 N. Harbor Dr, Milwaukee**

The largest Native American fest in the country, showcasing ethnic art, music, history and food. Browse handcrafted pieces of artwork at the "Circle of Art" exhibit, listen to native storytellers and entertainers, and experience the diversity of tribal dance styles and regalia at a traditional pow-wow.

<http://www.indiansummer.org/>

**WISCONSIN FRIENDSHIP**  
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July 2016  
Stories of Friendship  
Strategic Planning

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**Join Us**  
**Thursday, July 14, 2016**  
for  
**The Friendship Force of Wisconsin**  
*Annual Summer Club Picnic*



*Meet our guests from Nashik Riverside Club India and say farewell.*

**Burrows Park (Along Lake Mendota near Maple Bluff)**  
**25 Burrows Rd, Madison**

**Park reserved at 4:30 PM**  
**Dinner at 5:30 PM**

**Cost: \$15-** (Catered by Willy Street Co-op. Includes lentil loaf, roasted vegetable lasagna, sweet and sour chicken, grilled veggie platters, green salad, red curry tofu and quinoa pilaf salad. Dessert, lemonade and tableware will be provided. **Refer to May newsletter for the “Bring Your Plate details and the June newsletter for the registration form.)**

***Bring a friend!***

**DEADLINE for reservation and payment is Thursday, July 7.**

**Questions?** 608-819-6646 or [stevils@charter.net](mailto:stevils@charter.net)