

NEWSLETTER

President's Message



We have decided to initiate a quarterly newsletter to the FFNCA membership to better inform you about club activities. To make our club a success, we ask for your support for exchanges and events. Volunteers are needed in many areas.

In 2013, we had a very successful 2 week outbound exchange to Baku, Azerbaijan and to Moscow, Russia. Paul Gesalman did a great job as Exchange Director and has provided an article on the exchange in this newsletter. Chuck Goldfarb coordinated a journal for this exchange with input from all of the 12 ambassadors. Each ambassador was assigned 2 or 3 days to write an entry. This journal can be found on the FFNCA home page and will be available at meetings if you are interested in reading individual impressions of an exchange. We did not have an international inbound exchange in 2013 as our assigned ambassadors had to cancel. We did, however, have a successful domestic inbound exchange from Fort Worth, TX. I served as ED and have provided an article that was written by 2 Fort Worth ambassadors and appeared in the FFFW newsletter. I thought you might like to see how an exchange to FFNCA is described by ambassadors when they go back home. They were quite complementary. I also included 2 photos from the exchange. Some of us also attended the international FFI conference in New Orleans in Oct 2013.

Plans for our 2014 exchanges are moving along well. Mary Tobin is ED for the outbound exchange to Manchester, UK (Sept. 7-14). Chuck Goldfarb is ED for the inbound exchange from Brazil (Aug. 18-25). Details on these exchanges are in articles included herein and in the Board Meeting Minutes.

We are encouraging clubmembers to arrange special events for our membership. Margo and Allan Farber, members from Baltimore, coordinated a very successful day at Blobs Park for dancing and to have lunch with the Spice of Life Dance Club members (see photo below). We welcome suggestions from other members. One suggestion has been to

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have a monthly ethnic lunch (on Sat or Sun) at various locations suggested by members. Let a board member know if you have any ideas for special events.

We had a good turn out and a lot of fun at our winter meeting on Sunday March 2 with a Mardi Gras Party (see photo below).

We have received matching information for our 2015 exchanges. We have an inbound exchange from Australia in October 2015 and an outbound to Brazil in May 2015. We will need support and Exchange Directors for these exchanges. We are trying to arrange a session to provide more information to members on how exchanges work to encourage more participation. More information on this will be provided. We are also coordinating a potential domestic outbound exchange (long weekend) to return a visit to FF in Fort Worth. More information to come on this. Thanks to JoAnn Thacker for volunteering to edit and compile this newsletter. Your input will help to make this a success.

In Friendship,

Dorothy Wicker



Winter Mardi Gras Dinner



Dancers at Blob's Park

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Hope to see you at our annual Spring picnic!

Place: Rock Creek Park, Picnic Area 6.

Time: Sunday, May 18, 3:00 p.m. till Dark, food served around 3:30

Provided: Hamburgers and hot dogs with buns and fixings, soda, water

Bring: Side dishes or desserts

If you are coming, please respond by May 12th. Let us know what you plan to bring (side dish or dessert -- you don't have to commit to a specific item, just the category).

Dogs are welcome in the park. The creek is nearby, great for doggie splashing. And let's hope for good weather! However, there is a nice pavilion, so the party goes on rain or shine.

Please note that Beach Drive is closed to vehicles on weekends except from Military Road to picnic areas 6 through 10. Picnic area 6 is just north of the Park Police Station. You get off Military Road onto Joyce Road and take Beach north to the first left into Area 6. Click on <http://www.nps.gov/rocr/planyourvisit/upload/rocrmap1.pdf> for a map of the area.

## INBOUND EXCHANGE FROM BRAZIL, AUGUST 18-25

We have had a great response, but we still need more volunteers. Here's a status report:

HOME HOSTS: I am excited to introduce five home host households who are new to Friendship Force-JB Cox, Paula Leonardo, Laura Nakamoto, Mary Ann and Glennon Harrison, and Jay Murphy. In total, 11 households have volunteered to home host, BUT WE STILL NEED ADDITIONAL HOME HOSTS for the 20 Brazilian Ambassadors. It is expected that many

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of the Ambassadors will be single individuals, and many of our home hosts only have one bed in their spare bedrooms, so we cannot assume that 11 homes can house all 20 Ambassadors. Please let me know if you can be a home host. The host application that all home hosts must fill out is available on the website. Please send the completed application to me electronically or mail it to 1312 T Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Every effort will be made to help the new home hosts: (1) We will pair each new home host with an experienced home host located nearby, so the two hosting households can share meals, transportation, etc. (2) We plan to assign experienced Ambassadors to new home hosts so there will not be a situation where both the host and Ambassador are new to Friendship Force. (3) We will hold a "tutorial" on home hosting prior to the exchange. (4) During the exchange, both Paul Gesalman and I will be available 24/7 to answer any questions that may arise.

**ARRIVAL AT THE AIRPORT:** We know that the Brazilians plan to arrive from Brazil on Monday morning, August 18th, but we do not yet know when and where they will arrive. If they fly to the US directly from Belo Horizonte, they will arrive in Miami and then could take a flight to IAD, DCA, or BWI. The flight from Belo Horizonte departs at about 10 p.m. and arrives just past 5:00 a.m. Flights on to DC airports depart between 7 and 8 (time is needed to clear customs and immigrations) and arrive between 10:30 and 11:30. If the Brazilians first fly to Sao Paulo or Rio, they would then come in to IAD. The Belo Horizonte exchange director (ED) has requested that we have a quiet first day so the Ambassadors can rest. Depending on whether we have a welcome brunch or just have Ambassadors go directly to their home hosts, we will either need a small number of members (with large cars) meet the Ambassadors at the airport or have each home host come to the airport. (See next item.)

**WELCOME EVENT:** Susan Gartner and Howard Bender have generously volunteered to host a WELCOME BRUNCH in their Reston home if the flight comes into IAD. In my next note to the ED, I will encourage her to book a flight that arrives at IAD. (Of course, if the cost is much greater we cannot insist upon this.) If we do this, then we will ask home hosts to meet

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at Susan and Howard's home, with a subset with large cars meeting the Ambassadors at the airport. The rest of the day would be free time for the home hosts to get to know their Ambassadors. ALTERNATIVELY, if the Brazilian travel plans do not lend themselves to a welcome brunch, we will have to plan an evening welcome event.

**TRANSLATORS/INTERPRETERS:** Most of the Ambassadors do not speak English. We therefore will need translators/interpreters. It would be very helpful to me if one person could take the lead in recruiting interpreters for our major events and daily activities. (Home hosts should also seek out Portuguese speakers to join them for some meals.) **IS THERE A VOLUNTEER TO TAKE THE LEAD ON FINDING TRANSLATORS/INTERPRETERS?**

**FAREWELL DINNER:** Eddie and Rachel Eitches have once again volunteered their home in McLean for the farewell dinner Sunday late afternoon, August 24th.

**JOINT ACTIVITIES DAYS:** Tuesday through Friday we will have activities for the full group of Ambassadors. We still need to set up these days and **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO PLAN AND LEAD EACH OF THOSE DAYS AS WELL AS DAY HOSTS TO HELP OUT EACH OF THOSE DAYS.** Since many of the Ambassadors are librarians, at the request of the Brazilians, one day will be spent at the Library of Congress. Barbara Morland, who works at the Library, will coordinate that day. (We do not yet know which day that will be.) We will set a specific time to meet at the Capitol South Metro stop in the morning and an estimated time of when Ambassadors will head back to their hosts at the end of the day. Other possible day activities (I have sought information from the Brazilian ED on the interests of the Ambassadors) include one day and perhaps one evening visiting various places on the Mall; a day combining Old Town with a shopping trip (perhaps to Pentagon City, where there is both the Mall and Costco and of course Metro accessibility); an out-of-town activity either in Annapolis or in Front Royal, in both of which we have members. For each day, we must identify the meeting place in the morning (typically Metro stops with one

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exit or at least one easily identifiable meeting spot), the time to meet in the morning, the meeting time and place at the end of the activity, whether brown bag lunches are needed, etc. It will be very helpful if there are day hosts who could also travel with the Ambassadors on each of these days so the home hosts need not do so. Of course, in many cases the Ambassadors feel free traveling on the Metro by themselves after traveling on its once or twice. We will provide each Ambassador with a SmartTrip card with some amount of money on it (though likely not enough to cover the full week's transportation costs) but expect them to return the cards for future use.

#### SATURDAY FREE DAY FOR HOME HOSTS AND AMBASSADORS

SUNDAY EARLY AFTERNOON: I have a message in to the Howard Theatre about tickets for the Gospel Brunch. Normally the performance and buffet costs \$35, but there are group discounts. The current calendar only lists the brunch through June, so we will have to find out if it is held in the summer. This is a uniquely American experience.

DEPARTURE, MONDAY, AUGUST 25TH: We still do not have any information on the departure, other than that the Ambassadors will be heading to New York. I have asked the ED if they plan to travel by bus, train, or plane, and offered to help with logistics if they need it.

BUDGET: I will put together a draft budget ahead of our next planning session.

NEXT MEETING: I would like to hold off scheduling a meeting until I get more information from the Brazilians.

Chuck Goldfarb

OUTBOUND EXCHANGE TO MANCHESTER, ENGLAND:

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The 2014 outbound exchange to Manchester UK will take place Sept 7 to Sept 14. Currently we have eighteen Ambassadors who have signed up for the exchange. This is the limiting number that the Manchester group has agreed to host. Please let Mary Tobin, the Exchange Director know if you would like to be placed on the Wait list in case anyone has to drop out. Some of the group will do a pre-extension visiting London for several days. Following the week in Manchester, Barbara Williams is leading a six day hiking extension in the Lake District.

Mary Tobin

### Manchester Exchange—Extension to the Lake District

After the end of our exchange to Manchester on Sunday, September 14, a group of nine will enjoy a hiking excursion to the Lake District, northwest of Manchester. The Lake District is a popular holiday destination and it is famous not only for its lakes, forests and mountains (or fells), but also for its associations with the early 19<sup>th</sup> century poetry and writings of William Wordsworth and the other Lake Poets as well as other literary icons such as Beatrix Potter of Peter Rabbit fame.

After we say goodbye to our hosts on Sunday we will board a train bound for Windermere in the southern part of the Lake District. Windermere is the center of tourism in the southern Lake District and is a transportation hub, making train travel convenient. We will spend 3 nights in a small guest house enjoying plush accommodations and full English breakfasts. Lake Windermere, England's largest lake is just a 30 minute walk away and we can take boat rides on the lake, hike, visit historical sites, shop, or just relax.

On Wednesday, we will transfer by taxi or bus to Coniston, about 30 miles away. We have booked a typical English "walking holiday" there for 3 nights. The touring organization, HF Holidays, is highly recommended and

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offers accommodations in a charming country house, full board (including afternoon tea of course), and guided hikes around the area. Hikes of varying levels of difficulty are offered each day. And after our exertion, hopefully we will have the opportunity to experience refreshments in the local pubs, since that is a traditional way of ending a day of walking in the English countryside! In the evenings, we will mix with the other guests for dinner and entertainment. Since I expect most of them will be from Britain, this will provide another chance to make new friends and continue our roles as Friendship Force ambassadors.

Barbara Williams

### FFNCA visited Azerbaijan and Moscow in 2013

The 2013 FFNCA outbound exchange assignment we received from Atlanta was to visit Moscow, Russia. The exchange director, Paul Gesalman, had spent some time in Baku, Azerbaijan the previous summer and met the Friendship Force president there. She had invited us through Paul to visit, adding Baku as a second exchange for 2013, and based on many discussions and negotiations of dates, we were able to visit both Baku and Moscow.

Highlights of the trip to Baku included participating in a local, traditional reception that is part of the marriage process in Azerbaijan. It was a spectacular event, with more food than one could imagine, dancing, and having the chance to learn about a local custom.

We visited many small history museums, which offered special insight into the costumes, history, and culture of the country. Another highlight, among the museum visits, was the textile museum. Textiles, especially rugs, are an important and beautiful aspect of Azerbaijan's history.



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Each ambassador had a unique hosting experience. Some of the hosts lived quite far from the city center, so they got to learn the bus system and other transportation methods.

The Baku club was very hospitable. The club president hosted the farewell event in her home. Some of the hosts taught English, which helped with communication, though some of the hosts did not speak English.

After the week of home hosting, we took a trip to several additional areas of Azerbaijan. We visited several local industries, including a dairy plant (yummy treats at the end of the tour!), a tea processing plant (though it was not operating the day we were there, we were given some teapots and tea to bring home), a silk factory, where we saw the process from beginning to end, including the dyeing of silk cloth. A nice gift shop there provided souvenirs and some host gifts for Moscow.

We stayed for several days at a resort where we were able to hike, take advantage of the baths, and generally enjoy the countryside. In addition we spent a day with the club president's parents at their home in the countryside. We watched cooking of local specialties and bread-making and ate these delicious items.

In Moscow, we visited the Kremlin, where we saw many of the beautiful and historic items in the treasury there. Some of us went on boat trips on the river, visited the overlook near the Moscow University, and visited dachas. We also toured an art museum, took a trip out of Moscow to a famous monastery, and enjoyed a lovely farewell dinner with local entertainment.

One of the highlights of Moscow is the subway system. There are so many art and cultural examples to see throughout the system. It is a large and complex system, with no English to help the tourist, so we were dependent on our hosts to make it to our destinations. One of the features is the low cost -- only about \$1.00 to go anywhere you like.

Our group included several members of other Friendship Force clubs, including Denver, Cleveland and the Tweed Valley club from Australia.

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Travelers were able to participate in one or the other or both exchanges. We had 13 people for each homestay, with 10 people doing both, and three doing one or the other. Several participants also visited St. Petersburg while in Russia. In addition, two participants went to Georgia and others to Turkey.

Excerpts from Friendship Force Fort Worth Newsletter: Domestic Exchange October, 2013, Washington D.C.

Linda, Lynn, Dean, Taylor, and I took a flight to Washington. We were surprised to learn that the members of their club are dispersed even more than FF Fort Worth's. The hosts met us with cheers and a banner. The other three Ambassadors – Betty Kessler, her daughter, and Laura Wilson arrived later. The fact of the exchange, and its success, were due in large part to the diligent and persistent efforts of Linda Doyle and Dorothy Wicker. Dorothy was a member of FF Fort Worth for a long time even after she moved to the DC area. Taylor and I, and our hosts drove around the famous and less known sights of Washington, D.C. On October 18 we took a bus tour around DC. We stopped, very briefly, at the National American Indian Museum of the. We ate as a group in the largest food court area I had ever seen. I believe there were at least 24 separate vendors below ground plus quite a few full service restaurants on both the ground level and below!! After lunch, some of us went back to the Museum of the American Indian, and others went to others of the Smithsonian Museums. Linda, Lynn, Dean, Taylor, and I took a tour of the Library of Congress. After the tour, at my request, we went through a series of under- ground passageways to a small office in the basement of the James Madison building. One of my souvenirs from the exchange is my Library of Congress card. Saturday, we went to the Shenandoah Autumn Fest in Woodstock, VA. This fest had wine tasting from many VA wineries as well as food, music, BBQ tasting, craft vendors, etc. I took a video of part of a log chopping contest. One of the contestants had a long-handled ax that repeatedly bounced off a log. Later, we all went to the home of one of FFNCA's members in Front Royal, VA for a cookout and potluck. The fall foliage colors were brilliant. Sunday was a free day to work out special

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interests with our respective hosts. Some of us toured the National Gallery of Art. Later, Taylor and I, with our hosts, drove around the DC area at night and saw famous and not-so-well-known sights (submitted by Stan Parker).

My daughter, Kim Barber, Laura Wilson from San Antonio FF club and I joined our Long Island group in DC. Our visit there was amazing! Our hosts managed to squeeze the maximum opportunities to see as much as possible. We began with a 2- hr narrated bus tour of the area, then visited the Library of Congress, Museum of Natural History, Lincoln Memorial, Korean War Memorial and the Ford Theater. Of course, we rode the Metro and did a lot of walking. We also spent one day in the Shenandoah Valley area, with a visit to the Autumn Fest at Woodstock, VA . A member who lived in the area hosted a brunch and dinner party for everyone and we enjoyed driving and seeing beautiful fall colors along the way. The bonus was seeing and being with Dorothy Wicker, a former member who hosted some of us. Having moved to the city, she knew the city better than most who had lived there much longer. This trip was truly one we will always remember as a rare opportunity to experience. The Washington Monument had been damaged by earthquakes. Two years were required to build the scaffolding from which workers will repair the cracks. Some people think the scaffolding should be left up after the repairs. At night, the Monument looked like a futuristic Christmas tree with thousands of points of lights (submitted by Betty Kessler).



Dinner during inbound exchange  
from Fort Worth, Texas

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Minutes of Friendship Force Board Meeting, April 27, 2014

The February board meeting was held at the home of the president, Dorothy Wicker, in Rockville, MD on Sunday April 27 at 2 pm. Dorothy, David Fishman, Tom Williams, Barbara Williams, Barbara Macken and Paul Gesalman and Claire Gesalman were present. Dorothy called the meeting to order. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. Barbara Williams distributed a copy of the February minutes which had been previously sent out via email. Barbara Macken had one correction: Google Handout should be changed to Google Hangout. David moved to accept the minutes, Tom seconded and all agreed.

2. Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer, Mary Tobin, was out of town but she sent an email to the board saying she would reconcile with the May 1 statement and present it at the next meeting. Paul reported on the reconciliation for the Moscow/Azerbaijan exchange and the return of money to participants. He said he had decided that it was best to return the money and let members donate it to the FFI Legacy Fund on their own, since that way they would get a tax deduction. He will send an email to everyone involved and when Mary gets back she can write the checks. Dorothy reported that she had talked to JoAnn about including the minutes (which would include the Treasurer's Report) in the newsletter.

3. 2014 EXCHANGES:

Outgoing Exchange to Manchester--Mary Tobin, the ED, sent out an email saying 18 people had been approved for the exchange. Barbara Williams passed around a list of participants. She also gave a report on the extension, saying that 9 people were going and that reservations had been made in Windermere and with HF Holidays, a British walking organization, for staying in their country house in Coniston and hiking in the Lake District. Several members had recommended this organization.

Incoming Exchange from Brazil--Chuck does not have a list of the ambassadors yet. He received an email saying it is coming and that they

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would like to know more about the exchange program. They also requested information regarding a contact at the New York Public Library which they want to visit after our exchange. Chuck sent them a tentative day by day schedule, starting with their arrival (preferably at Dulles) on Monday, August 18 followed by a welcome brunch at a nearby location. The program will include one day at the Library of Congress, tours of monuments, museums, and the Capitol Building, a gospel brunch, and a possible day outside the city, e.g. Annapolis or Front Royal. Departure date is Monday, August 25. He copied Barbara Moreland who works at the Library of Congress and will be responsible for the LOC visit. She will also contact people at the New York Public Library. Barbara will contact the ED of the Brazilian group to get additional information about their interests and needs in order to better plan the library visits. Chuck also told the ED we were keeping some of the details of the program open until they provided additional input. In addition, he asked for information on language capabilities and who had prior experience with Friendship Force so we could more efficiently match them with hosts.

4. Spring Picnic: The picnic is scheduled at 3 pm on Sunday May 18 in Rock Creek Park. Barbara Macken said she would try to get additional morning time since she did not understand that the reservation was only for part of the day. (Note: Barbara called the next day and found that the space was already reserved for the morning). Kathryn has the supplies and she thinks she has everything we need. Paul will take additional supplies they have to Kathryn and Jack. Barbara Williams offered the loan of a Weber grill but since she and Tom will not be in town, there would be a problem transporting it unless someone has a van or a truck. (Note: Barbara Macken found out on Monday that there is no grill at the picnic location). Kathryn and Jack said they would bring the supplies but if the event was later in the afternoon, Jack had a conflict and could not do the cooking. We will also need someone to buy hamburgers and hot dogs and possibly veggie burgers.

5. Summer Pool Party: This event will be on July 26 at Kathryn and Jack's house in Alexandria, VA.

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6. Regional Meeting: Barbara Macken reported that we had a good meeting in Harrisburg, PA. Barbara did the home stay as well and said it was a lot of fun. Barbara and Tom Williams and Sara Lovinger also attended the meeting. Barbara Macken said that next year's Regional Conference will be held in New Hampshire, possibly in Dover rather than Portsmouth. The Harrisburg Conference included break-out meetings to plan exchanges, including short weekend exchanges and possible mystery exchanges where the group does not know the destination beforehand. These would all be exchanges in the US, so they might provide a good introduction to the home stay experience for new members. We also planned global exchanges in conjunction with other clubs. Our group discussed a Civil War themed exchange with two other clubs. We proposed visiting various locations important in the Civil War and ending up in Washington, DC. This would be in 2016 and the time of year was not established. Another group came up with a Seafarer's Exchange. The purpose of these exchanges would be to provide special interest exchanges where participants stay in multiple locations, sponsored by multiple clubs.

7. FFI International Conference: About 200 people have registered so far. Barbara Macken and Chuck Goldfarb are going. FFI will provide a rolling update of attendees from the US and Canada.

8. News from FFI: Pallie Savoie, the FFI planner who was at the Harrisburg Conference, is leaving FFI due to her husband's relocation. Her work for now will be divided between various people. They are going to initiate monthly calls between FFI and Brazil. So if we have issues with our exchange, that might provide an opportunity for assistance.

9. Other Special Events: Paul had considered having an English brunch. He will look up the information about the restaurant that was advertising it.

10. 2015 Exchanges: There will be an inbound exchange from Australia. They will be going to Canada and Connecticut before us, so we will need to coordinate with the other clubs. We considered asking for our visit to be in late October, but the time will have to be established.

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Our outbound exchange will be to Brazil to the same club we will be hosting in August on the Brazilian Librarians exchange. Chuck wants to see if other clubs in Brazil need an inbound exchange so we could possibly have 2 weeks of home stays in Brazil.

There was a discussion about attracting new exchange directors. We considered having a session where we explain to participants what is involved in being an exchange director. We could bring training materials from the FFI website and have former ED's describe the job. This could either be in someone's house or in a neutral location, possibly with a potluck. Sunday afternoon was mentioned as a good time to hold it. We will look at dates in June since that will be less than a year away from the 2015 outbound exchange.

There was also an inquiry about the outgoing Fort Worth domestic exchange. Dorothy will ask about the end of March. We would need to go by then if the Brazil exchange is in May.

11. Newsletter: JoAnn Thacker is putting together a newsletter and has asked for specific information. JoAnn wants to include a calendar of planned exchanges and programs for the rest of the year, a list of officers and board members along with photos, a president's message and articles about the 2013 exchange and activities. Claire said that she had a schedule of 2014 events ready. Barbara Williams said that she had sent JoAnn information about the Manchester Exchange extension. Dorothy will send a message to the board members asking them to send a photo to JoAnn. Dorothy will also work on a President's message. Claire and Paul will send JoAnn information about the 2013 exchange to Azerbaijan and Moscow. It was mentioned that when we have completed the final Azerbaijan/Moscow day by day journal, a link could be provided in the newsletter. Dorothy will also write up something on the Fort Worth inbound exchange. We might also want to include photos from events such as the Winter Mardi Gras theme meeting.

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12. Fall Brunch: There was discussion about the location of the fall brunch. We may try to have it in Virginia since the last one was in Maryland. Barbara Williams suggested a dim sum brunch. Paul said there were good places in Annandale for that and the last one had been successful. We have set a date of Sunday November 9 and we will explore possibilities of where to have it. It was agreed that we should find a place with a private room. Paul mentioned an Irish pub in Alexandria with a private room as a possibility. We will continue this discussion.

13. Other Topics: We discussed the issue of badges. Paul is doing them now and he says they aren't that hard to make and are about 50 cents each for materials, and the price would go up if they were made commercially. One problem is that some people haven't claimed their badges. It was decided that they would be mailed out to people without the magnets and they would be told they could pick up the magnets at a meeting.

Barbara Williams, Secretary

FFNCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dorothy Wicker (President)

Paul Gesalman (Vice President)

Barbara Williams (Secretary)

Mary Tobin (Treasurer)

Claire Gesalman (past president)

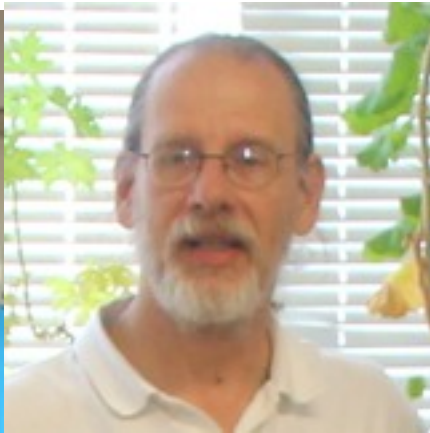
David Fishman, Chuck Goldfarb, Tom Williams (members at large).



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Dorothy Wicker



Paul Gesalman



Barbara Williams



Claire Gesalman



Chuck Goldfarb



Tom Williams

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FFNCA CALENDAR 2014

- May 18 -- Spring picnic
- June 8 -- Board meeting
- July 26 -- Pool party
- August 10 -- Board meeting
- August 18-25 -- inbound exchange (Brazil)
- September 7-14 -- outbound exchange (Manchester, England) (plus pre- and post-exchange extensions)
- October 12 -- Board meeting
- November 9 -- Annual meeting and brunch
- December 14 -- Board meeting