



# Focus on Friendship Summer 2011

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## President's Message

As you can see from the articles in the newsletter, the club has been busy so far this year, and there is more to come, as we are hosting a group for the Open World program in September. We will need your help to make that a success, so please participate as much as you can, as a host or in other ways: planning, helping with activities, etc.

Thanks to everyone who made the Hobart exchange such a success. It takes a lot of work and many people, but it is worth it. We got a lot of compliments from the ambassadors.

Anyone who has ideas for activities is welcome to suggest them. Activities that are appropriate for small groups are fine, as well as activities for the whole club. In addition, we would like to encourage groups in local areas to get together occasionally, so if you are interested in being an organizer for your area, please get in touch.

We have a Facebook page now. We will be using that to communicate in addition to our email group and as a way to reach out to people who are not yet members. If you are a Facebook user, please "Like" our page, so you will receive our messages and to help us reach the level where we can request a custom URL for our page. Friendship Force International also has a Facebook page, and you may want to check that out as well.

In September, we are hosting five judges from Russia for an Open World "Rule of Law" session in Alexandria. This is an exciting opportunity for our club. We need hosts for the judges and a facilitator and additional members to help with other activities. Please respond to the requests to help with this effort. Our hosting will be from September 10-17.

FFNCA needs you as an active member. Come to the Board of Directors meetings. Come to activities. Sign up to help when someone asks for volunteers. Volunteer to join the board of directors; anyone can serve. The time commitment is small, but the rewards are large. ■

In friendship,

Claire Gesalman

## Regional Conference Report

The FFI of Central Virginia hosted the Mid Atlantic/Northeast Region Conference on March 25-27, 2011, in Charlottesville, VA. Sara Lovinger, one of the FFNCA members who attended, describes the event: “The Charlottetown Regional Friendship Force Conference was, like all other regional or national FFI conferences, an extraordinary experience. Aside from meeting other friends in the force, it was wonderful to see how well the local club organized and made this event so special. George Brown, the president of FFI was in attendance and it was good to hear from our president about his commitment to the organization. The final speaker, whose name escapes me, was one of the most eloquent people I have ever heard. He spoke about the events in the Arab countries and how he, as an Iranian, was totally surprised by these events. And lastly, he urged and supported Friendship Force to continue in its work to help make this world a better place.” ■

## Cyprus Outbound Exchange April 26 – May 3 2011

*By Barbara Williams*



**Host Preparing Greek Salad**

Our hosts were every bit as nice and fun to be with as we had remembered them when they visited us in 2007. After a group from the club met us at the Larnaca airport, they took us to a bus which transported us to a beautiful nearby salt lake. There we visited a mosque and took a walk around the lake before travelling to Nicosia. In Nicosia, we were greeted by our hosts and other club members at a welcome party. At the party, we got our first taste of Cyprus food, a delicious meze of grilled vegetables and meats with local wines. Our hosts then took us to their homes where we

rested and prepared for several days of adventure.

We were transported each day on the bus to a different part of Cyprus. The first day we toured the city of Nicosia and visited the graves of the Cypriot heroes, the Cyprus Museum, Saint John's Cathedral and a restored shopping street in an old section of the city. The following day was entirely different. We went to the Troodos Mountains and visited the beautiful Kykkoy monastery, and also stopped at some smaller old churches. Everywhere, the icons and old frescos were amazing. On the way back we stopped at a wonderful old village and took a walk through the winding stone streets filled with beautiful old houses and flowers. The third day we travelled to the area of Larnaca where we visited an old neolithic settlement and a small village known for its hand-made lace. The fourth and last day of touring took us to Paphos on the West coast, a beautiful beach area. We visited the ancient city of Kourion on the way and stopped at the birthplace of Aphrodite, a rock-strewn beach at Petra Tou Romiou. Highlights of the visit to Paphos were a tour of the amazing mosaics from Roman times. Each day included time to stop for a coffee or a beer at a café before heading home.

The next day was a free day and the hosts entertained us in various ways. We were lucky enough to visit the village in the mountains where our host was from. They now have a vacation cottage there and a big group of us had a fabulous meal after touring the countryside. That evening we went to the farewell party where we found that our hosts were very skilled in Greek dancing! In fact, they were much more skilled than us. They tried to teach us, with limited success, but it was great fun. The final day was very relaxed. We had time to visit a handicraft center, pack and then we all took our hosts to dinner. For us, it was a visit to a great seafood restaurant where a big group of us went through much wine and ouzo in addition to every kind of fish imaginable. It was a great end to a wonderful week.

We found that Cyprus is a very diverse island for its size. It has mountains and beaches, cities and country villages. And it has wonderful healthy food--lots of vegetables, including wild greens and other delicacies from the forests, great olives and lemons (our hosts had a lemon tree in their yard), lots of fish of various types, pork and lamb (but no beef), and of course that ever-present halloumi cheese. But best of all, it has friendly, energetic and fun-loving people! ■

## Hobart Inbound Exchange May 31 – June 7 2011



The group takes a walking tour of Annapolis, Maryland.

Fourteen ambassadors took part in the inbound exchange. Twelve were members of the Hobart, Tasmania club. Two were Americans from Tennessee who had visited the Hobart club and had such a good time with the club they wanted to have a chance to see them again. Besides the organized group activities, there were free days to spend time on individual interests.

Dorothy Wicker took her guests, Margot and Neil Gray, on a 'Civil War trail', with stops along the C&O Canal, Point of Rocks,

Aqueducts, and Clopper Rd. "Neil had read quite a bit on our Civil War", Dorothy said.

"When we got to Antietam and a ranger heard about Friendship Force and that we had Australians with us who were very interested in the Civil War, the ranger offered a personal tour of the exhibit area. Neil and Margo were delighted. I learned a lot about the area myself on this journey."

Nancy LeBow hosted Lewis and Anthea Hamnett from Hobart. Nancy said, "Lewis especially loved the Metro. It was great to put Lewis and Anthea on the Metro and pick them up in the afternoon so I could prepare the evening meal and do what I needed to do for the quilt show which was held the weekend of June 3-5. Carol Kearns was my day host on Thursday while I helped set up the quilt show. Anthea is a quilter also so we had many quilt related discussions. My hostess gift was a small wall hanging quilt that I made for the Hamnetts. On Saturday we spent the day at Monticello. Of course the car made an automatic stop at the quilt store in Manassas. On Sunday Anthea attended the quilt show with me and observed the take down and accounting of almost 700 quilts. Anthea will be

mailed a CD with all the quilts on it. Anthea is collecting pansy fabric for a quilt she is making and found some at the vendor booths at the show. My Monday quilt bee gave her yards and yards of fabric with pansies on it. There was so much Pansy fabric that Anthea had to return more than half because it was too heavy to mail it all back to Australia.”

The week’s activities included a day on Capitol Hill, a trip to Annapolis, visits to museums, a tour of Old Town Alexandria, and a tour of the Kennedy Center. Highlights of the Capitol Hill day included a chance to meet a Congressional staffer (Sara Lovinger’s daughter, Davora) who graciously answered many questions by our guests after telling them about how the Congressional offices and processes run. Most of the ambassadors then returned to the House gallery to observe the floor debate, which was quite interesting.

Our day in Annapolis included a walking tour, lunch, a trolley tour, and a wine and cheese tea at the home of Joanna Hanes-Lahr and Jack Lahr. The weather was beautiful, and the tours were interesting, but spending time with Joanna and Jack was the best part.

We also visited the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Gallery of Art, and other museums. There was something for everyone in this day’s activity. On Monday, we toured Old Town Alexandria, followed by a visit to the Kennedy Center for a tour there.

The farewell dinner for the exchange was a special treat. We met at the home of Rachel and Eddie Eitches and were well fed by a Bolivian group who made marinated meats and various side dishes and entertained by the singer accompanying the group.

Everyone was sad to say farewell to our friends from Hobart, whether we had known them from visiting in 2009 or just had met this year. We all certainly hope to meet again. ■

## Yonago Club Visits Washington DC

Several FFNCA ambassadors have been keeping in touch with their Yonago hosts from a 2008 exchange in Japan. Chuck Goldfarb’s Yonago host contacted him and asked if a group of ten could visit Washington DC for a few days after their exchange in Montreal, Canada. The Yonago club members were such gracious and generous hosts that the request could not be refused. Chuck contacted the FFNCA members who went on the Japan exchange. Four could host, three out-of-towners came in to day host, and others participated in activities. The Yonago group got to experience Washington – Beltway traffic, Metro, record high 102°F summer temperatures, and The Mall, in addition to renewing old friendships and making new friends. ■

## 2011 Calendar

September 10-17, 2011 – Home Hosting Attendees of Open World (Library of Congress) Program

September 11 – Picnic

September 11 – Board Meeting

November 13 – Fall Brunch

November 13 – Board Meeting

## FFI and FFNCA Information

**Web:**

Friendship Force International (FFI) web site: <http://www.thefriendshipforce.org>

Friendship Force National Capital Area (FFNCA) web site <http://www.ffnca.org>

**Facebook –New!** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Friendship-Force-of-the-National-Capital-Area/132809046793252> when we get 25 "likes" we can get a custom URL, so help us get there, please.

**Email:**

Contact FFNCA by email: [ffnca@yahoo.com](mailto:ffnca@yahoo.com)

FFNCA Email group: [ffnca-members@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ffnca-members@yahoogroups.com) (do not send email to this address unless you want to send a message to the entire FFNCA group)

**Phone:**

FFNCA Telephone: 202-898-9502 (message line)