



The Friendly Echo

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF WINNIPEG NEWSLETTER



Volume 14, Issue 4

April, 2015



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write, Joe and I are in Amsterdam on our way home from the Dalmatian Coast and Greece Cruise which was a first for Friendship Force International in their new partnership with Grand Circle Cruise Line. It was a small ship cruise with only 45 passengers of which eight of us were Friendship Force members. What was remarkable was that four of the six others had connections to our FFW members! It is a small world when you travel with Friendship Force!

Beginning the trip inland at Zagreb, Croatia we travelled overland to the coast and had eight ports of call in Croatia, Montenegro, Albania and Greece. It was a wonderful 15 day trip and we will share more later. I was sorry to miss Nina's presentation on the Stephen Lewis Grandmothers' project at the March meeting. I'm sure it was inspiring to hear about the work being done by this organization to help grandmothers in Africa. Best wishes to everyone for a Happy Easter!

In Friendship
Val Keenan

Happy Birthday - April Celebrants

Val Keenan
Karen Wokes
Gladys Thomas
Linda Dart



Correction

The name of the slide show presenter at World Friendship Day was misspelled in some copies of the March Friendly Echo. Sorry! The correct spelling is Flora Schalla.

Meetings

Regular dinner meetings are planned for **April 8** and **May 13** starting at 6PM with dinner served at 6:30PM. These meetings will be at the Holiday Inn South.

A picnic is being planned for the **June meeting**.

The April 8 meeting will feature a slide show presentation by Jim and Diane Kubas on the Arts and Architecture Global Exchange held last August hosted by FF Northern Illinois, FF Milwaukee and FF Wisconsin (Madison).

2015 Exchanges

Inbound:

We will be hosting 20 ambassadors (10 couples) from Tarapoto, Peru from August 17 to August 24. FF Tarapoto hosted our club in October, 2013. Linda D. is the ED. The ambassadors will visit FF Calgary prior to coming to Winnipeg.

The planning committee has been hard at work planning a program of activities. All members are encouraged to participate. The proposed plan includes:

Monday, August 17 - Ambassadors arrive. A pot-luck Welcome Dinner will be at St. Andrew's Church.

Tuesday - tours of the Legislative Building and the Human Rights Museum.

Wednesday - a day at Assiniboine Park and evening dinner hosting.

Thursday - a tour of the Manitoba Museum, lunch at Neechi Commons followed by a tour of Fort Gibraltar. In the evening a fun time is planned at Johnny G's.

Friday - a bus tour to Neuberghthal, Morden and Winkler. The Morden Corn and Apple Festival will be on at this time. The day will be completed with dinner at the Triangle Oasis in Winkler and the bus ride back.

Saturday will be a free day.

Sunday, August 23 - Farewell Banquet at the Holiday Inn South. Ambassadors will depart on Monday.

The Tarapoto ambassadors are a fun loving group and sent us a video which demonstrates this. Home, day and dinner hosts as well as volunteers for the pot-luck welcome dinner are needed. Linda will circulate sign-up sheets at the April meeting. You can also contact Linda at lindadart_2000@yahoo.com. Get involved and have a great time as well.

Outbound:

A full update on the fall exchange will appear in the next issue of the Friendly Echo.

Exchange Reflections

On January 28, 2015, seven members of FF Winnipeg, the Franzs, the Grovers, the Havixbecks and Dolly T., joined FF Lethbridge's Exchanges to Taichung and Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Also joining the group of 20 were 2 from FF Calgary and 2 from FF Medicine Hat.

Taiwan was an unknown to all of us but it did not disappoint. It has a pleasant climate, a rich history, beautiful natural scenery, well-priced culinary delights and interesting night markets. It was truly a cultural experience!



The numbers of scooters is mind-boggling! For instance, the population of Kaohsiung, located in SW Taiwan, is 2.77 million and it has over 1 million scooters!



Karaoke seems to be the national pastime enjoyed by all! We listened to and participated in Karaoke at Welcome Parties, Farewell Parties, and on the bus in between. The use of chopsticks is, of course, the norm and we got more proficient as the weeks passed.

When eating as a group in most restaurants and in some homes, the table is round and features a turntable whereupon numerous dishes are placed mostly vegetables, rice and fish, concluding with soup and fresh fruit. The food in Taichung and Kaohsiung was different but the hospitality and friendliness of the host clubs was the same - outstanding. Some home hosts had limited English while others were able to communicate quite well.



The program in Taichung included an overnight visit to Sun Moon Lake staying at a lakeside hotel, a cruise of the lake, visits to an Art Center, an Aboriginal Center complete with traditional dance performances and a mini train ride around the beautiful gardens with trees in bloom, visits to 2 high schools, a private nursing



home, a Buddhist Temple and a Confucius Temple. In Kaohsiung, the activities included a Harbor Cruise, a visit to City Hall with a video presentation,

visits to a National Park, a Marine Biology Aquarium, the oldest city in Taiwan and the Buddha Memorial Hall. Even though we were kept busy with activities, there was ample host family time during both Exchanges. It was great to get to know some members of other Canadian Clubs and to make new friends in Taiwan, as well as to experience the beauty and customs of 2 different regions of Taiwan. Fourteen of us then enjoyed a 9 day bus tour of Vietnam, travelling from Ho Chi Minh City to Hanoi, which included a cruise along the Mekong Delta and an overnight cruise at Halong Bay. All in all, our Asian experience was a wonderful one!



Article and photos courtesy of Charlene H.



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