



friendship force
WESTERN MICHIGAN

August - September 2015

Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As the summer begins to wind down and I'm about to leave on another Friendship Force adventure, I want to share three bits of news about what is down the road a bit. First, I am extremely proud to be able to tell you that Lyn Hargreave has just been elected to serve on the Board of Directors of Friendship Force International. Her four-year term will begin in January

It is a testament to the work she has put in both as President of the Friendship Force of Western Michigan and as the Great Lakes Field Representative for Friendship Force during the past few years. I know that she will be a strong voice for the central role clubs play within the organization. From a purely provincial perspective, however, her elevation to the ethereal realm of Friendship Force International means that she will have less time to devote to the everyday business of FFWM. I hope that all of the rest of us will step forward to pick up those bits and pieces that she will have to let go of.

Second, I want to inform you that the Taichung, Taiwan club that was scheduled to visit us next May has chosen not to do so for reasons that do not reflect on us or what we have to offer. The pairing of ourselves and the Southern Arizona club as the two host clubs for that exchange was probably doomed from the outset for reasons that I need not go into. However, in retrospect, their decision is probably a blessing in disguise. You may recall that when we polled the membership last fall concerning places they would most like the club to travel outbound to in 2016, Japan was the destination most favored. We were not given a 2016 exchange with a club in Japan by Atlanta, however, so we have been working behind the scenes directly with the Aichi club in Japan on a mutual exchange. They have agreed to host us in the fall of 2017, so that should smooth the way for Atlanta to grant us that match for 2017. The Aichi club was already scheduled to visit the Detroit Friendship Force club in 2016, so we extended an invitation for them to visit us after they visit Detroit. They have accepted the invitation and will be coming to us on 7 June of next year for a week. Had Taichung not canceled, we would have been faced with two inbound exchanges in less than a month. So, put away your Chinese for Beginners book and pull out the Japanese for Beginners instead. I will have more to share with you concerning the 2017 outbound portion of this mutual exchange in a future newsletter.

Finally, I wanted to give you a heads up that the Board has appointed a committee to look over our by-laws and recommend changes to them. Some changes are necessary just to bring things up to date, but the fact that we doubled the size of the Board at the end of last year, has brought to light the question of how we elect Board members and for what terms of office. I expect that the Board will recommend substantial changes in Board structure and selection procedures. Those changes will have to be voted on at our annual meeting in December and they will need to be in the hands of you for your consideration at least a month in advance. I will be sending out to you, either via email or snail mail, a detailed explanation for why we have proposed the changes that we have. I know that you don't exactly look forward with baited breath to long epistles from me, but I urge you to study carefully and reflect on whatever comes your way about by-laws changes. Our club is run as a representative democracy rather than a direct democracy so that you are not all subjected to boring monthly business meetings but instead can enjoy social functions with one another. However, representative democracies only work if folks feel that their representatives are accountable to them. For those of us who are carrying out the business of the club at Board meetings, I know that we would feel more comfortable knowing that you endorsed by-laws provisions concerning governance out of whole-hearted support rather than indifference.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 12, 1:00 Native American Pow Wow, Constock Riverside Park, Grand Rapids.

September 26-Oct. 3: Inbound Exchange with Braunschweig-Peine Germany. See itinerary.

October 6, 9:30 a.m.HASP presentation Holland, MI

November TBA: Diwali Celebration, Grand Rapids

December TBA: Annual Board Meeting with Election of officers and Christmas celebration

March 12-19, 2016: Outbound to Omaha.

June 7-13, 2016 Inbound from Aichi Japan

YOUR BOARD

President: Dave Hargreave

VP: Lyn Hargreave

Secretary: Debra Williamson

Treasurer: Roy Pearson

At Large Members:

Sue Bohlander

Jane Curtin

Laura Jane Colber

Cathy Dopp

EXCHANGES

The **World of Friends** Catalog has a variety of exchanges listed that currently have openings. The catalog usually comes out the 15th of the month, so be sure to check after that date for the most current listings: Here is a link to the site: http://catalog.thefriendshipforce.org/index.php/catalog/all_list/

INBOUNDS:

Braunschweig and Peine, Germany 9/26-10/3

Fifteen ambassadors will be arriving by bus to the Nichols farm about 5:00 on September 26. An itinerary for this exchange has been attached to the newsletter. All are encouraged to attend those events that they can. There are some charges for meals, and venues. The only two activities that are closed are the trip to Topeka, IN for an "Amish Day" and the tall ship sail. However if food is involved, do let us know if you are coming so we have sufficient.

We are happy that the first couple days of this exchange we will have with us Bob Weir who is one of the contributors to "Encore" magazine. He will be doing an article on Friendship Force of Western Michigan which will be featured in the January issue.

Also, this year is special because this is our 25th anniversary. We were chartered in 1990. We hope you will join in to help us celebrate.

Aichi, Japan, 6/7-6/13, 2016

We have been in contact with the Aichi exchange director who has been assigned for this exchange. We will need to coordinate the planning with the Detroit club where they will visit first. Except for dates, no other details have been worked out. Look for further details in the near future.

Inbound exchange for 2017

Yes, it is that time when we have to submit our desire, or not, for an assigned club exchange in 2017. Following numerous discussions with other regional clubs for themed exchange (Planes/Trains/Automobiles initiated by us, and an Underground Railroad following a particular family, initiated by Cincinnati, we decided to not tax our members more than this, and did not request a club inbound for this year.

OUTBOUNDS:

Omaha, Nebraska: March 12-19, 2016

From our last Newsletter:

We have arranged an exchange with the Omaha club for a home stay during the above time period. In the middle of this time we will travel to Kearney, NE to witness the sandhill crane migration phenomena that happens every year at this time. A block of hotel rooms (~\$70/night double occupancy) have been reserved for a two night stay there. This information has been sent to members in a previous email.

If you are interested in this exchange, need the hotel information or have questions, please let Deb Williamson <debwill_10@sbcglobal.net> or Dave Hargreave <hargreave@wmich.edu> know ASAP.



AUSTRALIA, Murray Bridge and Casterton ~ October 15-30, 2016

The dates are pretty well settled. We will begin in Casterton the middle of the October and then go to Murray Bridge. These two locations are between Melbourne and Adelaide in South Australia. Here is a bit of info given from our host clubs regarding their location and what we might expect. Always remember that FF is about faces, not places.

Our small town of Casterton has only 2500 people but our Glenelg Shire Council area is over 6,200 square kilometres and has population of 19,500 people which includes the city of Portland to the south on the coastline, about an hour's drive away. We have many ideas and suggestions that may be presented to you and your Club in making this an unique experience for you all, with outings and tours of our very picturesque rural surroundings. As a rural community where the main industry is Primary Production, we can offer working farm/station tours, wineries, local Art & Craft and give you an overview on our way of life here in Casterton.

Murray Bridge is a Rural City of some 21,000 people and is the hub of a rural community. We are just 80 Kms from Adelaide our South Australian Capital, close to the famous Barossa Valley, Hahndorf an old German settlement, and the South Coast area of Victor Harbour. I'm sure too that you could get other trips out of Adelaide, depending what your interests are. Many overseas visitors like to see Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Central Australia, Kangaroo Island is one of our beauty spots but a little more expensive to get to.

I will begin talking with travel agents after our German exchange. I hope to find options for you to go to places of your choice. This would mean that you will need to look at places that may be of interest should you want to extend beyond our two home stays. You would not have to do this, but since it is a long way to go, I thought perhaps you would appreciate this opportunity. Therefore, if you are possibly interested, and have not given it much thought, please do so and tell me where you would like to go. Sydney seems to be very popular, but also Ayers Rock, the Great Barrier Reef, Tasmania, Melbourne etc. If you look at this website, you will see a map and can find Melbourne and Adelaide giving you an idea of where we'll be, and by clicking on the various places it will give you a bit about them. <http://www.australia.com/en/explore.html>

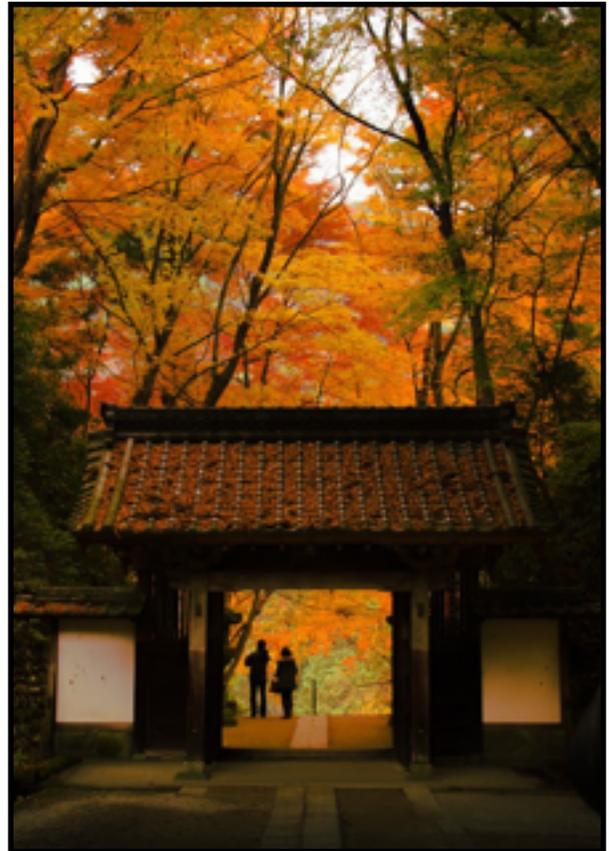
Cost is also an issue, and I know most of you would like to know this before committing. An agency I just contacted is listing a package which you can see at this site: <http://travelteam.com/sydney-cairns-package/> for a little over \$2000 which seems like a good price to me, considering it includes the price to get there from Los Angeles and the flights within Australia. The country is huge, so there is no way to see everything. But there are passes that include flights from the US and 2-3 flights within the country for a set price, thus giving you freedom if you are willing to travel independently. Remember they do speak English there, so this is not all that frightening. Bring a friend!

Aichi, Japan. Fall 2017

As President Dave indicated this would be a reciprocal exchange since we will host Aichi in June 2016. Aichi is a prefecture (state) in the middle of the country. From here we will be able to see a variety of terrain from sea to mountains. It is an area especially known for its fall foliage. Also it will allow us to get to Tokyo, Kyoto and a possible option of a further extension to Hiroshima. Bill Hoover, has agreed to help lead us through the country. He is a Japanese scholar familiar with the country and fluent in the language.

Below is a photo of these wonderful fall colors in a park in Aichi prefecture. But if you want to know more about the area, you might want to look at this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lqrn12F92Q4&feature=youtu.be>



A Pledge of Friendship:

As a member of The Friendship Force, I recognize that I can make a difference. I recognize that I have a mission. That mission is to be a friend to the people of the world. As I embark upon this adventure I know that others will be watching me. I know that through my example to my fellow citizens and the people of other nations, the cause of friendship, love and peace will be furthered. I CAN make a difference.