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### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**October 21 6:00** Gathering at Music Barn, 1125 122nd Ave., Martin Michigan Presentation by guests from Pakistan. See details in the President's Message below.

**October 23, 12:00** Board Meeting, 215 Sabin, Kzoo, Bring a sack lunch.

**November 1**, Deadline to submit exchange requests for 2105 to FFI

**November 11**, Gathering: Allegan Wesleyan Church, 2469 118<sup>th</sup> Ave., Allegan, MI Germany recap. See details below.under Outbounds

**November 23-25** International Conference in New Orleans.

**May 30-31, 2014** Regional Meeting, Cincinnati

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### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT:

Our next FFWM meeting is scheduled for **October 21, at the Music Barn in Martin at 6 pm**. I want to make sure that you understand how important this meeting is. Six Pakistani Legislative Fellows being hosted by Colleagues International will be present to give us information about their program. Their CI hosts will also be present and other members of CI are invited, so this is another opportunity to develop a closer working relationship between the two organizations. Also, Lyn has been diligently working with the social media website "Meet Up" in an effort to reach out to potential new members. This meeting has been announced on Meet Up Grand Rapids (including Kalamazoo and Holland) and we have been getting a number of positive responses.

The bottom line is that this will be a major opportunity for us to grow our membership and we need to have the support (and presence) of our own club members to make this evening a success. Please make every effort to attend and to wear your name tag and club shirt if you have one. **The dinner will be potluck**, so also bring something to share. As we get a better fix on how many people to expect, we will let you folks know. For our Pakistani guests we will be ordering halal (the Muslim counterpart of kosher) meals, but they will probably also sample some of our dishes if they feel comfortable doing so. We will need to have a donation to cover the cost of those meals

and also the cost of the facility.

**After the 6 pm dinner, the program will begin at 7 pm and will be followed by a FFWM business meeting. The main order of business will be for club members to provide input into the places you would like to visit in 2015.** Our list **MUST** be in to FFI headquarters by November 1st. To assist you in providing us with your input, Lyn has developed a form which was attached to a previous email. **If you are not able to attend the October 21st meeting, please fill out the form and send it to me via snail mail (215 Sabin Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49006) prior to the 21st. Those who do plan to attend the meeting can bring their completed form or fill it out at the end of our discussion on the 21st.** We will collect those forms at the end of the meeting so that the Executive Board can tally the results and take action at their meeting on October 23rd.

*Dave Hargreave*

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### EXCHANGES, PAST & FUTURE

#### INBOUNDS

**September 2013** Our 4<sup>th</sup> Coast adventure trial with 6 ambassadors is over. We did receive feedback as we had hoped and though the overall experience was great, there are a few changes that will make it better for the future.



This trail was to “experiment” with a more physically active events as well as exploring the local brews of S. W. Michigan. It started with a welcome at the Eccentric Café and tour of Bells first brewery followed by a week that included biking 17 miles on the Kal-Haven trail,(and some also elected to ride part of the KVRT from D- Ave to the Nature Center and back). There was exploration of Warren Dunes and Warren Woods, accompanied with a stop at Tabor Hill for a wine tasting. A dune buggy ride at Saugatuck with lunch and tours at the New Holland Brewery. This day took us back to the lakeshore and we grilled our dinner and ate while watching a beautiful sunset at Holland State Park. The week would not have been complete without taking in ArtPrize, which we did after beginning at the G.R. Ford Museum and ending with a burger and brew at the HopCat. We continued with another day of ArtPrize at Meijer Gardens, and a paddle on the Grand with G.R. Paddling.

Unfortunately the “Friends Good Will” tall ship developed a mechanical problem while in Lake Erie and did not make it back to port in South Haven for our planned sail. However, due to the rough water on the day we were to sail it probably would not have happened anyway. We substituted a paddle-boat ride on the Kalamazoo River in Saugatuck, but still enjoyed a docent tour of the Maritime Museum in South Haven and a “farewell” dinner at the Thirsty Perch.

This exchange was successful due to the home hosting of Marci Ellis and Roy Pearson, Bill and Sheila Nichols, and Dave and Lyn Hargreave, the dinner hosting by Pat and Dick Grupp, Jennette and Curtis Parkhurst and Fred and Mary Giddings and day hosting by Pat Merchant. Also kudos to Jim Cousins and Sandra Schuitema for their help with the bicycling day and Deb Williamson and Connie Corriveau for canvassing places for a beach picnic in the Holland area. Sandra also provided us with bags for all our cards picked up at Art Prize and Linda Stewart supplied large maps for many. Peg Stanitzek was there participating in most events and it was also enjoyable to see so many of the rest of you come out and meet our guests at the Eccentric Café, and for the Star of Saugatuck ride and the farewell dinner at the Thirsty Perch.

A huge thank you to all!

**September of 2014** - Plans will continue to be pursued for a similar themed exchange but to include the international community as an inbound for 2014. Western North Carolina is planning a similar experience and we have contacted them about a pairing. Because applications are coming in for their exchange, we will need to move forward with this quickly if we hope to precede their exchange from October 9-16.

## **OUTBOUNDS**

**June 27 - July 15 2013 to Norderstedt and Braunschweig-Peine, Germany.**



This exchange was enjoyed by 8 members from our club. A presentation with photos will be shared at the November 11 gathering at the Allegan Wesleyan Church, 2469 118<sup>th</sup> Ave., Allegan, MI.

Please bring a German dish to pass.

## **November 2014 - Salvador, Bahia BRAZIL:**

**Good news!** This exchange will go forward. We have received confirmation that Salvador is looking forward to our coming. Araraquara is still uncertain, but we should have an answer shortly. IF they decide they do not have sufficient members to host us then FFI has assured us that we will be able to go to Florianopolis in the state of Santa Catarina. It is on an island just off the southern coast. This is scheduled to be a combined exchange with Memphis.

Would those who are interested in this exchange please let Lyn Hargreave know and if you would like to plan an extension to another area, please add that information too. Memphis has been asked to do the same. We would like to offer any extension as optional because it is anticipated the exchange will be fairly expensive due to airfares. The most likely option would be an extension to Iguazu Falls. An Amazon adventure would be a long way across the country, but could be investigated if there were a significant number of interested individuals.

## **OTHER OUTBOUND and TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES**

### **World of Friends Catalog**

As indicated in the last Newsletter, this publication has many exchanges listed with openings. You are able to find this catalog on the FFI website: <http://www.thefriendshipforce.org> or you may be receiving it in your email box. Unfortunately it is no longer sent snail mail. If you are not receiving it in your email box and wish to do so you may sign up for it through the web site, or let Lyn Hargreave know and she will sign you up to receive it.

## Other recently announced trips include:

**Garden enthusiasts: enjoy the spectacular gardens of southern England** in Cornwall, Essex and on the Isle of Wight. Dates are May 7-22, 2014. Contact Pallie Savoie at [psavoie@thefriendshipforce.org](mailto:psavoie@thefriendshipforce.org).

There is still space to join other Friendship Force members on an exciting **voyage through Northern Europe and Iceland! May 18 to June 15, 2014** This is a one month enrichment voyage that starts off in the beautiful city of Hamburg, Germany and disembarks in Southampton, England. The ports of call on the Iron and Ice voyage include stops in Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Iceland and the Isle of Man. Send questions to: [lromero@thefriendshpforce.org](mailto:lromero@thefriendshpforce.org)

### The 2014 World Conference:

Planning is already underway for next year's World Conference in Auckland, New Zealand. The conference will run from October 14 to 16, 2014, and it be held at the Rendezvous Grand Hotel Auckland. Registration will begin in early 2014.

### The 2015 World Conference:

This will be held in Vancouver, Canada. The conference will take place September 11 to 14, 2015. More details will be available as the time approaches.

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## OTHER INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES:

**It's that time again:** Jennette Parkhurst has been appointed as chair of the Nominating Committee for officers for this coming year. She would love to have volunteers who would like to serve in any capacity on the board.

Due to term limits we must minimally elect a new secretary. This should be someone who has access to a computer and can type and send out minutes of board meetings and our general gatherings.

There is also a desire to have a new person who would serve as communications officer who would attend board meetings and keep the web-page current. This could also include doing the Newsletter.

### August Field Rep meeting in Atlanta.

Lyn Hargreave, who is currently the FFI Field Representative for the Great Lakes Region, including the states of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana

attended the annual training session in Atlanta in August.

This was a wonderful opportunity to meet and have numerous conversations with our new CEO, Joy DiBenedetto. She shared her past expertise and her vision for our organization going forward. See her introduction near the end of this Newsletter.

A lot of networking with other Field Representatives across the US and Canada was probably one of the most valuable of the many experiences, as well as an opportunity to meet the staff members and learn of their various responsibilities..

There were presentations on the importance of growing a younger membership and how to do this, about how the matching process is carried out and about our new partnership with Language Exchange and how this can benefit our clubs. Presentations of most of these will be shared at the World Conference in November.

**MeetUp:** Friendship Force International has provided us with funds for 4 months of MeetUp fees. This is an on-line way to announce your events and encourage the community to join you. We are hoping we will find this a successful way to grow by announcing our meetings. To see what it is about go to [MeetUp.org](http://MeetUp.org) Write in your community and then list the number of miles out from there. we used Grand Rapids and 50 miles to list Friendship Force of Western Michigan. There have been 8 contacts so far who have "joined" our meet up group and 3 have indicated they will come to the October 21<sup>st</sup> gathering. This does not necessarily translate to new members, but is an experiment. Lyn will help Kathy Thomas from FFI present a summary of our outcome at the World Conference in Atlanta.

**Colleagues International (CI):**For several years we have tried to develop a relationship with this Kalamazoo based organization which works with the US government and other non-profits to bring in professionals from other countries to observe and hopefully learn from businesses here. These may be social NGO organizations or city or state or U S government funded projects.

They use volunteer hosts in the Kalamazoo area where these guests can experience our American culture while they are here. In some instances this means providing a bed and meals. Depending on the program the guests may only be here for a week, others for several months. Sometimes they stay at a local hotel and dinner hosts are requested. They are provided with a bus pass for in-town transportation. Their week days are planned by CI and even some weekend excursions.

Because the volunteers in their data base only

have the pleasure of hosting, and never going outside the USA to experience a home-stay this seems like a perfect partnership with the Friendship Force of Western Michigan. We can offer them the outward exchange they are currently missing. We are hoping this relationship can move forward.

Our speakers from Pakistan on October 21 are part of one of CI U.S. government sponsored programs.

It is a wonderful way to experience another culture, and develop long term relationships. While in Germany this summer Melanie Perry and Lyn and Dave Hargreave met up again with several women they had hosted in their homes here through one of the CI programs.

If any of our members have a desire in participating with this organization by providing a meal or a bed, they would be delighted to hear from you. Contact Susan Lerner: [sllarner@hotmail.com](mailto:sllarner@hotmail.com)

### FFI LOGO EMBROIDERED SHIRTS:

Are available. Primarily we have focused on your choice of shirt style (long sleeve button front at \$28.60 or polo/golf at \$21.20 including tax) with FF of WM logo embroidered on light blue. Catalog of apparel is available and will be at the October 21st gathering. You may have any shirt you already have embroidered for \$10.00. Caps are available for \$12.72 with the logo in the front.

If interested please inform and pay Dave or Lyn Hargreave who will place the order.



### INTRODUCING NEW MEMBERS:

Though not a new member to FF of W. MI it is still appropriate that we introduce all of you to Joy DiBenedetto who is new 'to the Friendship Force family as our organization's CEO.

Joy is founder and former CEO of HUM: Human Unlimited Media, working to build the world's first

and only 'all-nation' content and information agency. An award-winning 20-year media veteran, she has covered every major global event in successively senior positions, from the studio and in the field; domestically and internationally; as a producer and manager.



Until March of 2008, she was the global vice president of network booking and research for the CNN News Group, where she oversaw daily and long-term guest coverage for

CNN's domestic and international news networks and platforms, managing a worldwide editorial staff.

Prior to this, DiBenedetto served as director of network booking for CNN's domestic networks. While at CNN she developed and managed the Newsource affiliate guest booking service called "GuestSource," created the first internet interview programming for CNN.COM, and worked to build CNN's exclusive guest booking system. Before joining CNN, she worked in Turner Broadcasting's corporate finance division. She has also previously worked for CARE, the international humanitarian group, and as a caseworker handling senior citizens for New York City.

Her collective work throughout a professional career spans both the media industry and humanitarian interests, as reflected in a multitude of projects designed to bring both of these passions together.

Throughout her career she has strived to elevate the importance of global understanding and to unite the world's people. She pursued this goal with Turner Broadcasting, CNN and HUM by making positive change towards "closing the Geographic Gap" in media, as well as by serving at various humanitarian efforts with CARE, the Fugee's Family and the United Nations, among other partners.

DiBenedetto believes strongly in the Friendship Force mission and in the signature program of home hospitality, which encourages personal friendships among global citizens. "This is an authentic message and method of worldwide cooperation that, in our data-driven digital age is often overlooked; and one which I am eager to help elevate and represent on behalf of the incredible mission and purpose of

Friendship Force International,” DiBenedetto said

She is a graduate of Marymount Manhattan College with a bachelor’s degree in speech pathology/audiology. In addition to being a recipient of a George Foster Peabody award, an Alfred I-duPont Columbia Broadcast News award, and a Jack Myers Media award for Innovation, she is also a Marshall Memorial fellow and a UN Foundation Global Health Press fellow who sits on numerous advisory and directorial boards. She often speaks publicly about the media industry, international business strategy, and on what unites people across the world.

DiBenedetto is a world trekker who often roller skates and bicycles to work and who has survived Dengue Fever.

**And, new to FF of Western Michigan....**

We want to welcome the following members since June:

- Robin and Margaret Bowles, Grand Rapids
- Connie Corriveau, Holland
- Laura Ford, Kalamazoo
- Dennis Mahoney, Kalamazoo
- Linda Love Stewart, Grand Rapids
- Debra Williamson, Holland

A new membership list with these additions and some corrections will be sent to members along with this newsletter. Please discard your old one.

**An introduction to a couple of our new members:**



**Debra Williamson**  
Holland, MI

Debra grew up in the rural Benton Harbor area. After leaving West Michigan for college she lived and worked in and around Lansing “for decades.”

After what she considers too long she was able to move back west three years ago and now lives in Holland. Although semi-retired, she continues to teach sociology part-time for Lansing Community College.

Her passions include: gardening, cooking (the eating part), hiking, practicing yoga, and being outdoors, especially near Lake Michigan.

Past travels have included forty-five of the forty-eight contiguous States and eastern Canada, often camping. Additionally she has ventured into Brazil, Ghana, England, Ireland and Wales, Spain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. While living in the Lansing area Debra enjoyed meeting and hosting exchange students as well as MSU international students.

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**Connie Corriveau**  
Holland, MI

Raised on a farm in mid-Michigan, Connie Corriveau moved to Holland with her husband 40 years ago. She worked in healthcare administration for most of her career and recently retired from a non profit community mediation service. Her married daughter lives in Holland with a 2 year old daughter and son due to arrive soon.

Connie has traveled to various sites in the U.S. and Mexico. She lived in Korea in 1972 while her husband was in the service. Recent overseas travel includes Ireland and Italy.

Connie heard about Friendship Force from her friend, Debra Williamson. The concept of cultural exchanges to promote understanding resonated with lessons learned during family road trips. She recalls waiting patiently while her father chatted with farmers, gas station attendants, priests, and villagers because he believed you "see" so much more when you "listen".