



FRIENDSHIP LINKS

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF EDMONTON AND AREA NEWSLETTER

JANUARY, 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We welcome Barbara Olynyk as our new Newsletter editor.

The arrangements are well underway for the sharing of the DVD (several copies are in circulation) outlining the "New Direction of FF." Look for a DVD coming to a member near you for sharing.

So what have we to look forward to in 2009 besides the Festival on August 19-28? Well our Outbound Exchange leaves in February for 4 weeks of Homestays in New Zealand and Australia with Barbara Ashmore as E.D.

While they are away, those of us left behind will celebrate World Friendship Day a little early (established March 1st) on Saturday, February 28th as we lend a hand to Habitat for Humanity. In addition to offering a helping hand to our community, we hope it will raise the Friendship Force profile in our area and perhaps lead to an annual 'service' to the community on World Friendship Day. Depending on the wishes of the membership, we may see a more expanded 'service' component, as outlined in the new and expanded role of FFI around the world.

For the evening of April 24 or 25, Mike and Joyce Anhorn and their committee are in the process of planning a celebration for all our members and some former members, to toast our 10th year of operation, as a member of the FFI family of clubs.

The Northern Rockies Conference is in Calgary on May 1-3, and I hope many members take advantage of a Conference that is so close to home.

The Canadian Conference is in Niagara on October 14-17, with an additional Homestay option from October 17-19. Doug and Isabelle Southam are now arranging for a Pre-Conference Outbound which will see some members enjoying a Homestay in Western Michigan on October 7-14.

Early in the fall we were asked if we would be interested in an E-Flyer similar to that which is issued by FFI and Australia to advertise Outbound Exchanges that still have openings. The First Canadian edition has been issued. Watch your e-mail for this important document.

To all members, I wish you and your family members a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year, and I hope you are looking forward to the challenges and the excitement of 2009 as much as I am.

Marilyn Caskey

ARCHIVES

Now that I am getting more organized and have actually found the box with the FF "stuff" I am getting back to work on the albums, etc. Marilyn will be coming over next week so I will be getting her input as to changes she wants to implement. Please remember to send pictures from any FF activity such as the group that will be playing bridge or bowling. Also, when the group comes back from Australia, remind them I will need their photographs. Thanks!

Theresa Sarnecki
(780) 417 5388

New Zealand/Australia Exchange February 2009

Twenty-two members of the Friendship Force of Edmonton and Area will participate in this exchange from Feb. 15, 2009 to March 16, 2009.

After our first week in Whangarei, we will spend an interesting three days touring the north island of New Zealand before beginning our second home stay in Wellington.

From Wellington we fly to Sydney, Australia and by coach are taken to our third home stay in Newcastle. Three ambassadors will end their exchange here and either return home or continue on their own adventures.

Gold Coast graciously offered a fourth home stay with their club. Nineteen will enjoy the hospitality of this club where our exchange formally ends. Some will now return home; three will view the outback and rain forest at Cairns and others will be sight seeing, enjoying resorts or visiting with friends from down under.

Our entertainment includes a rousing rendition of the Canadian version of "This land is your land.." accompanied by a colorful and inspirational picture puzzle of the map of Canada. Hazel will introduce Lyle who will perform an outstanding oral rendition of "The Cremation of Sam McGee" by Robert Service. We will end with the singing of other songs familiar to and loved by Canadians. It is hoped that there will be a portable keyboard so that our talented Eryl Jones can accompany us in this extravaganza.

Barbara Ashmore

The Christmas Party at the Robin Hood Centre in Sherwood Park was attended by 76 people who enjoyed a meal catered by the Sherwood Park Elks Club. Eight bottles of wine were raffled and 3 door prizes were given out. The evening was spent socializing and ended with Eryl at the piano, and people gathered around singing Christmas carols. Members donated food items and toys that were given to the St. Albert Kinettes for their hamper program. Coffee for new members - 7 members have expressed an interest in hosting new members for coffee. Ruth Sheppard is coordinating this activity.

Bowling has been canceled due to lack of interest; however, a LEO is planned for Feb. 9.

**Lil Limberger
Social Convenor**

MEMBERSHIP

Our present membership count is 93. This past year we had 20 new members join, and 4 other new members are in the process of completing their membership documents.

Ten of our past members did not join this year. Two of them are moving to another city, and four past members are not joining because of health issues.

Regular club information meetings are frequently held to inform prospective members about our club. If you are talking to someone who is interested in learning more about Friendship Force, please inform the Membership Committee so they can be invited to the next information meeting.

**Clare Scott and Myra Avey,
Membership Committee**

FESTIVAL UPDATE

Social Club Report

The Festival Committee has been working hard this fall and winter, preparing for the festival next summer. We concentrated on several topics including:

1. Festival Focus - The committee decided to focus on Edmonton and Area's multiculturalism and history. We hope to include tours of the Ukrainian Village, China Town, Hutterite colonies as well as historical sites such as Drumheller, Alberta Museum's Aboriginal Gallery, and Fort Edmonton. There will also be an opportunity to take part in the Fringe Festival during the week.

2. Festival Itinerary – has been firmed up a little more.

a) A reservation for 200 guests and members has been made at the Jubilations Dinner Theatre for Sunday, Aug. 23rd. The show should be a lot of fun. ***“The 1970’s were a time of great music that seemed to inspire couples to get out on that floor and dance! Tonight, we remember many of those great songs along with a good old fashioned Detective story. We’ve got boogie fever and we know you will too as you join us for Strut & Jive the Night Away!”*** Tickets will be on sale for all events in early summer.

b) The Farewell Luncheon will be held in the banquet room at Platinum Place in St. Albert on August 27th. We are hoping to have an “Alberta buffet” highlighting local meats, produce, and desserts.

3. Budget and fund raising– the budget was set, and deposits have been made for the Dinner Theatre and Farewell. We are approaching various government members and agencies to try to get sponsorship for some of the events and gifts for guests.

4. Post-Tours – The expense and difficulty in arranging the post tours was discussed.

It was decided to provide information about available tours to applicants so they can arrange pre/post tours themselves. This seems to be working well and applicants are

arranging their own travels before and after the Festival.

5. Society status – Irene Moir applied for and received society status for the Edmonton and Area FF Club. As a result, we can now apply for government grants to help finance some of the festival's events.

To date, we have **44 applicants** and of these, 24 have completed their registrations and profiles. **The applicants come from Germany, Netherlands, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the USA.** There is also some interest from the Iringa FF club in Africa which is celebrating its 5th anniversary this year. We continue to get new applications each week, and a few cancellations as well.

The next Festival Committee meeting will be held on Jan. 22, 2009.

Don't forget to mark your calendars with the dates of the Festival – **August 19 to 28, 2009.** We hope that you are planning to be in town and take part in the Festival as a home host or day host for this exciting event. We will need everyone's support to make the Festival a success. Talk it up with your friends and family too – I'm sure we'll need extra beds for the home hosting week.

If you haven't signed up for home hosting, please email Brenda – bgkane@telus.net. Thanks so much for all your support.

Submitted by Brenda Kane and Marilyn Caskey

Global Youth Institute

Global Youth Institute will be held in Nashik, Japan from June 29 – July 17, 2009. If you know of students between 16 and 18 years, please suggest this program. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to combine a homestay experience with a program that brings approximately 40 students from other countries together to discuss issues facing the world today and in the future combined with a program of fun

activities that will make this an experience not-to-be-missed. Check the website at www.globalyouthinstitute. Call Diana McIntyre at 780 469 4140 for further information. The application deadline is being extended but the earliest applications will be assured approval.

Diana McIntyre

ELLA by Muriel Kuchison

As a member of ELLA, I thought it would be of interest to my friends in FFI Edmonton and Area, to know that there is a 3-week, 50+ learning experience happening at the U of A from Apr. 27 – May 15, 2009. ELLA operates in cooperation with the U of A Faculty of Extension. The association functions on the premise that the modern, up-to-date senior is a person with curiosity for life, a sense of adventure and an appetite for learning.

ELLA members meet every April/May for three weeks of learning at the U of A and they have fun. Lectures include: anthropology, astronomy, geology, art appreciation, painting, music and films, writing, computers, history, current issues, etc. It's an eclectic selection of about 30 subjects taught by experts, many of whom are retired professors who enjoy teaching adults. These are students who have CHOSEN TO LEARN. No credits, no pressure, no exams, no recorded attendance and no prerequisites!!

If such a stimulating learning environment and experience is of interest to you, please call me, Muriel Kuchison, at 780-437 0607 or e-mail me at: mkuchison@shaw.ca. I know I that many of you would enjoy joining the 275 – 300 ELLA members who participate each year in this venture. Early registration is desirable to get into the classes of your choice, but preregistration is required by the 20th of April, 2009. I look forward to meeting my FFI friends at ELLA.

Bujumbura Friendship School Project

Our wonderful three month teaching experience in Burundi came to an end on November 15, when we bid farewell to the children, staff and all the people affiliated with the school. We left with feelings of great sadness but with great satisfaction, seeing the school and programs in full operation and hearing the children beginning to speak English more confidently. We felt we had made a difference.

We hear that all is well at the Bujumbura Friendship English School. We keep in touch through Maurine as well as the Grade One teacher, the Play School teacher, Gideon, and Jean Marie. We enjoy hearing of how well the children are learning and of the growth in the programs. We have gained friendships that we hope will last a lifetime.

Here is an excerpt from an email sent from Esperance, the Play School teacher, just last Friday.

Hello. Mrs. Maurine has arrived safely. Thank you for the materials sent to us. She is in Kindergarten but she is available to my questions and needs. Yesterday we received the Ambassador of America and the team was proud of Play School. They are very smart these days and I am happy. Today Play School built sand castles. Next week we have new letter L. Words: lion, lamp, lamb, love, light, lemon, long, loud, lazy, late, leopard, look, laugh, etc. This is the month of opposites. The new teacher of Kindergarten Mrs. Spes will deal with the assembly next week.

To think that we began with P is for pup, pencil, papaya, pineapple, and popcorn. Not even the teachers had made sand castles. It is wonderful to hear the pride in this teacher's account and to realize how well the school is progressing. And then we hear of the challenges- the Kindergarten teacher left to travel, so a new teacher had to be hired.

We so appreciated the incredible opportunity to travel to a far off land, and to live and work with the fine people of Bujumbura. Your encouraging emails and news from home meant a lot.

Our work is not yet complete, as we must still repay the loan from the container. As a result, we are constantly trying to think of ways to fund raise. We are meeting with various school and church groups and are planning a garage sale in the spring. Do you have any gently used items that you'd like to contribute? If so, contact Carol Bahry @ 780 438 6445. We will also sell raffle tickets for a weekend at Diana's condo at Pigeon Lake. We'll keep you posted about those. As well, of course, any fund raising suggestions would be welcome!

**Attached is a photo we took at Canada Day , which was a celebration of the union of our two countries. It was taken on our last day there.

Carol Bahry, Barb Olynyk & Kevan Hanlen

Food Program for Street Children

As many of you already know, Maurine Maslen has taken to Burundi just over \$600CAD raised from book sales this fall. We will be getting a report from Jean Marie Bizimana in due course as to how this money is used. Funds were also sent in the fall, when Carol Bahry and Barbara Olynyk went there to teach. Jean Marie sent back a report saying that the street children attending the English school were being fed a bowl of rice, beans, cabbage and meat after class, at an approximate cost of \$1 each. The street children who are in the soccer program are given milk and bread after training twice a week. Jean Marie feels that using sports to bring children together, where they are taught rules and can play and still be friends at the end of the game, whether winning or losing, is an important way to establish positive relationships. There is sufficient money to last till the end

of December, and they have set aside enough for their usual Christmas dinner with about 150 street children.

Jessie Parker

FRIENDSHIP FORCE CALENDAR 2009

January

12 – Board Meeting
17 - General Meeting

February

9 – LEO – Let's eat out
28 – World Friendship Day – Habitat for Humanity Build

March

9 - Board Meeting

April

TBA – LEO
24 OR 25 – 10TH Anniversary Celebration

May

1-3 Northern Rockies Conference – Calgary
Visit to Hutterite Colony?
11 – Board Meeting
30 – General Meeting

June

TBA – Golf at Larsen's

July – nothing scheduled

August

19-28 – Festival

September

14 – Board Meeting
TBA - Racing at Northlands
22 – Annual General Meeting

October

14 - 17 FFI National Conference – Niagara

November

19 - 22 – FFI International Conference – Japan
TBA – Mayfield Dinner Theatre

December

3 – Christmas Party

