



friendship force

CENTRAL
NORTH CAROLINA

Focus On Friendship ~ November 2008

THE 2008 TURKISH EXCHANGE: WELCOMING AMBASSADORS FROM CANKAYA

Ten delightful people from this suburb of Ankara spent a week with FFCNC members—after spending their first week in America with the Central Iowa club in Ames. So no jet lag...although there were flight delays getting to Greensboro. How to show them the best of the Triad...while making friends with them? Our EDs, Jim North and Ruth Jackson, made thoughtful and careful plans—which paid off handsomely.

The Cankaya group was not typical in that four of the ten were a family: mom, dad and two teenage boys! Five of the other six were women—three of them married but traveling without their husbands. There was one young man and one young woman, both in their mid-twenties. Only one person was over sixty. The diversity of the group was a plus—for us and for them—and challenged us to come up with ways to please everyone.

Seven FFCNC host families got acquainted with their guests the first night, and then the group convened at Old Salem the next morning for a tour (led by Pam Kahl) and lunch in the Salem Tavern. Friday



Roasting marshmallows at the Norths' cookout.

morning's tour at the Greensboro Historical Museum (led by Kit Ravenel) was followed by a picnic in Center City Park and informal visits to the Cultural Center.



Elif Aksu tries an Indian dress.

Both afternoons and evenings were unscheduled...but hosting families made their own plans to get together for shopping or a small group dinner, concert or football game. This flexibility worked well and took into account the Turks familiarity with both the US and each other.

The weekend also was left open and, again, we were able to give the individuals more leeway to pursue their interests—and to relax and enjoy the natural beauty of our area. Sunday night the Peiffers graciously hosted everyone for a chicken barbeque, with potluck sides, which was a highlight. Ahu's guitar prowess

added a delightful element.



Jim & the manager of Triad Park plant the dogwood tree.

Monday's all-day trip to Grandfather Mountain and ASU was also a highlight. It was quite a long day but was filled with nature, history, music and culture. And the Mast General Store! Then suddenly it was our last day...much final shopping...and the farewell dinner—which featured Native American dancing and banjo/guitar/fiddle music. As is the tradition, gifts were exchanged during this celebration – among them, a dogwood tree for our Turkish guests. Then on Tuesday, November 4th, with Jim North's help, the tree was planted in Triad Park. This tree will continue to grow as a symbol of our friendship with Turkey and in honor of visit of the Friendship Force from Cankaya to our country, state, and local area.

With this, our third inbound exchange (Japan, Russia, Turkey) we are beginning to decide what “works” and noting things that will keep us from re-inventing the wheel each year. Realizing that each group is different, we nonetheless should learn how to showcase the Triad and create the best possible environment for friendships to blossom between hosts and ambassadors.

Be certain to check our website, www.ffcnc.org, for more photos of the exchange.

ANNUAL MEETING CELEBRATES GOOD TIMES/MEMORIES

Nearly fifty members gathered the evening before Halloween for FFCNC's annual meeting. The camaraderie was palpable: it's clear that our club has come a long way in three years and that, despite the geographical spread, our members know and like each other! Officers for 2009 were duly elected:

President:	Peter Peiffer
Vice President/Membership Chair:	Fred Andresen
Secretary:	Barbara North
Treasurer:	Arnold Sporleder
President Elect:	Marcia Meis

President Ralph Cauthen asked three people to reflect on their Friendship Force experiences. Ophelia Jones spoke warmly about her first homestay experience last summer in Peru. Gloria Griffin had everyone laughing over transportation calamities she experienced on a trip to Thailand. Ruth Jackson declared that she enjoys hosting as much as traveling—especially return hosting for her foreign hosts, the full circle of FFI friendship.

Lundee Amos, our ED for the 2008 outbound exchange to Peru in July, provided music and a computer slide show of the trip for everyone's enjoyment during dinner. The ambassador group joined Ophelia at the end of her remarks as Lundee thanked those who helped prepare for the Peru exchange.

Ruth Jackson and Jim North, ED's for our Turkish inbound exchange last month, thanked the many FFCNC members who helped make the week so successful for the ten ambassadors from Cankaya. Jim related a couple of humorous incidents involving teenagers in the family he hosted.

Laura Lennon, Exchanges Chair, reported that the homestay for our 2009 outbound exchange to Aichi, Japan will be November 9—15 (see details below).

The fellowship hall at Main Street UMC in Kernersville, our venue for the third year, was festively decorated by Sue Schoch. After Marcia and Paul Meis served punch while people gathered, thanks before the meal was offered by Howard Hicks. The potluck dinner was, as always, varied and delicious. Judy Greene set up everything so that conversation was easy and animated throughout. The meeting ended with our traditional rendering of “Let There Be Peace On Earth”.

It was gratifying to see most members wearing their permanent magnetic nametags from FFI—many of them with the new logo and white background.**

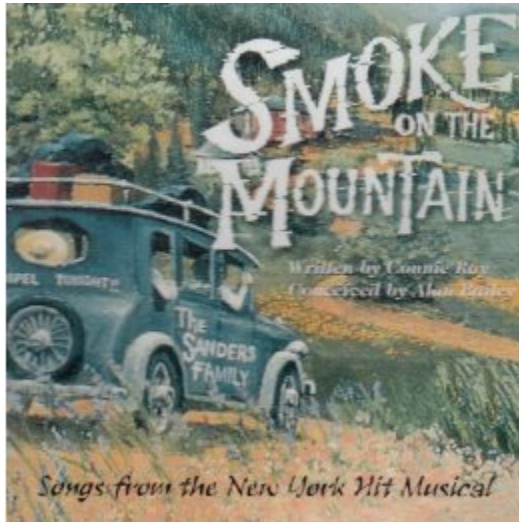
*** Orders for the new tag can be placed with Judy Greene (336-768-1732) and postage will be paid by FFCNC. Send Judy (155 Old Plantation Court, Winston-Salem, NC 27104) a check made out to FFI for \$8 per nametag. The next batch will be ordered when Judy has 10 names.*

2009 OUTBOUND EXCHANGE: AICHI, JAPAN

It's time to make plans for our 2009 outbound exchange to Aichi, Japan Nov. 9 – 15 where we will be “return hosted” by our 2007 guests along with the Harrisburg, Pa. FF club. There will probably be a group trip planned either before or after the home stay and the FFI International Conference in Okinawa the following week will be an option for continued travel. Firm cost estimates are yet to be made and will be announced as soon as possible. If you have an interest in participating in this exchange, please contact Laura Lennon at 336-282-5855 or e-mail pharmastat@mindspring.com. We need this information soon even if your plans are not definite at this time. Thank you for helping us to plan a successful exchange.

FFCNC needs you! Are you organized, enthusiastic, like planning events for friends and future friends, like to travel to exciting places? You could be the perfect person to lead our return exchange to Aichi, Japan November 9-15, 2009 which may be followed by the Okinawa FFI Conference November 19-22, 2009! Since this is a joint exchange with Harrisburg, PA, you would be sharing responsibilities and the price reduction of the Earned Seat benefit with their ED, Carolyn Hoffman. The joint exchange also means that FFCNC would need to recruit only 10-15 participants. If being an Exchange Director would be a new experience for you, we can assure you that it has many rewards and you will get help, both from written policies and procedures, as well as from experienced members of the club. **It is important that we fill this position as soon as possible.** If this is a position that interests and excites you, or if you have additional questions, please contact Laura Lennon at 336-282-5855 or e-mail pharmastat@mindspring.com.

DAY TRIP COMING UP: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH



We are going to the Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre in Wytheville, Virginia on February 28th. If sufficient members sign up, we can have our own FFCNC bus; otherwise we will be a subgroup within a scheduled Holiday Tours trip. Polly Caudle tells us this trip fills up quickly. We would like to know of your interest asap – by the end of November.

Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre is a state-of-the-art German-themed dinner theatre nestled in the mountains of southwest Virginia. While seated in comfortable lounge-style chairs, you will be served a delicious meal, then you can sit back, relax, and be entertained with **“Smoke on The Mountain: Homecoming.”**

It's October, 1945. The war is over, and America's years of prosperity are just beginning. But there's another kind of rite of passage at the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church where the Reverend Mervin Oglethorpe is giving his last service. Having been called to preach in Texas, he's already bought a 10-gallon hat, and is preparing to ride into the sunset with his wife, June (who is now eight months pregnant.) Join the Sander's Family as they send Mervin and June off in style, with hilarious and touching stories and twenty fabulous Bluegrass Gospel favorites.

The cost is **\$95.00 per person**. This amount should be mailed to: Polly Caudle; 2797 Harper Road; Clemmons, NC 27012 as soon as possible. The bus fills up quickly. Make your check out to Holiday Tours. There will be a pick up in Greensboro at 9:30 AM and in Winston-Salem at 10:00. We will return approximately 7:00 and 7:30 PM respectively. Price includes round trip motorcoach, lunch, and show. For additional information contact Polly at: pcaudle@bellsouth.net

SPEAKING OF GOOD MEMORIES.....

Peter and Nancy Peiffer's "Open World" guest from Russia sent us this nice note recently:

For all Central North Carolina Friendship Force Club participants:

November 2nd was a memorable day for me. Exactly one year ago I had the opportunity to become acquainted with Greensboro, its citizens, and the remarkable members of the Friendship Force.

I'm very glad to realize that I personally know openhearted Americans. Last year's experience is priceless for me. Thank you very, very much for your hospitality and your warm-hearted and wide-open vision of human international relationships.

*Sincerely Nikita Bekasov
November 02, 2008*



LEO SET FOR JANUARY 9TH

Celebrate early in the New Year by eating out with your FFCNC friends! Our popular “Let’s Eat Out” event will be a buffet at the High Point Country Club on January 9th at 6:00 p.m. Several young Nepalese women—among the many Salem College friends of Linda and Marvin Scherl—will present a program, including dancing. Ann Fulton has made the arrangements; look for full details in the December newsletter!!

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In January 2007, FFCNC had 53 memberships (82 people.) Today we have 72 memberships with 113 people. Many former members of the two legacy clubs (Friendship Force of Winston-Salem and Guilford County Citizens for International Understanding) have reactivated their memberships during 2008 as we concentrated on retention. Our club is approximately 25th in size out of 350 clubs worldwide! We currently have 47 prospective members, many without prior Friendship Force experience. We will be focusing on membership recruitment during 2009.

Our website is among the best in the US – do check out www.ffcnc.org frequently! The newsletters, “Fast Facts” and “Focus On Friendship”, are keeping people up to date. Our LEO’s are a success: 28 people attended in Winston-Salem and 42 in Greensboro. We expect even more will be at the High Point Country Club in January.

Early in 2008 four people each from High Point, Winston-Salem and Greensboro generated two strategies to activate members not involved in outbound travel: day trips and dinner speakers. We will be testing our second day trip on February 28th, going by bus to Wytheville, VA for dinner/show at the Wohlfahrt Theatre. Our mixer/dinner September 4th in Winston-Salem drew 78 people to hear a talk about Islam. This sort of meeting will be repeated in 2009 (probably in Guilford County.)

TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIPS

If you have not already turned in your 2009 membership dues, please do so now. Annual dues are \$25 for a single membership and \$30 for a family membership. Please write your check payable to FFCNC and mail it to Marvin Scherl, Membership Chair; 6740 S. Germanton Rd.; Germanton, NC 27019.



PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

The Friendship Force is changing. It began as an international peace mission sending large groups to unknown destinations. The motivation to participate was in building peace irrespective of the destination. Since then FFI has evolved into a large number of clubs that, at times, have become choosy regarding exchange destinations. Alternative travel opportunities have multiplied. Membership has aged and recruiting younger members has become a challenge. All these issues have been recognized by the FFI Board and addressed in the re-imagining and re-direction of Friendship Force International.

Friendship Force of Central North Carolina reflects these same trends. Some of our members are less interested in big international trips. This may be a result of the economy, the age of our members, or alternative involvements. Our decisions on trip destinations are often made on the basis of “Where do we want to go?” rather than “What good can I do there?”

The purpose of Friendship Force, to build world peace through international understanding, remains as important as ever. We each need a personal way to contribute positively to world peace. Sitting by and hoping problems will improve is not an option.

Recently FFCNC has been presented several opportunities that can potentially contribute to positive world understanding without the significant commitment of international travel.

- ❖ The Piedmont Triad Council for International Visitors, which brings 60 to 70 international visitors to the Triad each year, has invited FFCNC to partner with them. Your Board has agreed to explore such a relationship. At a minimum, we’ll have the opportunity to sponsor or participate in home hosting dinners and receptions with the visitors, which will be a wonderful venue for the active exchange of diverse viewpoints. We hope to identify an FFCNC member willing to help coordinate these events with the PTCIV.
- ❖ There are hundreds of international students in our area and opportunities exist to interact with them over an extended period of time. Our members, Linda and Marvin Scherl, have developed warm friendships with a number of students from Nepal, providing them a “home away from home.” Our member, Scott Freese, (945-2330) who directs the International Campus Ministries of the Triad, and his counterpart in Greensboro will match you with international students interested in learning more about American life.
- ❖ Permanent international residents of the area have formed a number of civic and ethnic associations. FFCNC became aware of the new Turkish Divan (community center) as we prepared for our recent Turkish exchange. The Divan is now inviting us to a cooking class and fellowship on Saturday afternoons. (email: tasteofturkiye@gmail.com)

If participation in these types of activities is of interest to you, please give me a call at 299-2089 and we can discuss these ideas further.

In Friendship, Ralph Cauthen

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2008 - 2009 (Mark these on your calendar)

Nov. 20, 2008	Board Meeting
Jan. 9, 2009	Let’s Eat Out: Buffet at High Point Country Club and presentation on Nepal
Feb. 28, 2009	Day trip to Wytheville, VA (lunch & matinee – see above)
Apr. 3 – 5, 2009	Mid-Atlantic Conference in NJ, followed by three-day homestay
Nov. 9 – 15, 2009	Out-bound exchange to Aichi (tentative dates)
Nov. 19 – 22, 2009	FF International Conference; Okinawa, Japan

ELECTRONIC FFI CONNECTIONS

Register for FFI’s “E-Flyer” by e-mailing your name, postal address and e-mail address to ffi@thefriendshipforce.org. The E-Flyers contain exchange updates and are sent every couple of months.

The official website of Friendship Force International is www.thefriendshipforce.org. Here you will find featured exchanges, lists of all confirmed exchanges worldwide for 2008, slideshows of past exchanges and international conferences, and press releases.

Also, check out our own website. Yes, Friendship Force of Central North Carolina has a website now: www.ffcnc.org. On our website you will find photos from recent exchanges, a calendar of our upcoming events, past newsletters and meeting minutes, and more. Please have a look and be sure to bookmark it for future reference.

Receive **FFCNC communications** by e-mail. If you are not already on our e-mail list, send your e-mail address to Martha Brown at brownfamily@triad.rr.com to receive newsletters, meeting minutes, invitations and other important information by e-mail.

PASS IT ON

This newsletter is e-mailed to all current members who have e-mail addresses and by U.S. mail to members who do not have e-mail addresses. Members should feel free to copy and share this information with their friends who may have an interest in FFCNC.

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA BOARD MEMBERS

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Activities Chair	to be decided		
Exchanges Chair	Laura Lennon	pharmastat@mindspring.com	282-5855
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ED Turkey	Jim North & Ruth Jackson	jnorth5700@yahoo.com jimruthj@triad.rr.com	643-0985 674-2745
Communications Chair	Martha Brown	brownfamily@triad.rr.com	946-0105
Past President & Publicity Chair	Carol Andresen	fhacsa@triad.rr.com	294-0842