



# friendship force

CENTRAL  
NORTH CAROLINA

## Fast Facts ~ June 2009

### What Did We Learn?

Our Harrisburg ambassadors were only the second “domestic inbound exchange” FFCNC has hosted...and helped grow our base of experience—we will certainly be doing more with domestic exchanges in the future. In town from May 11—15, the nine Pennsylvanians gave glowing reports of both the agenda and their host families. Evaluations are still coming in...but here are a few things we can say:

- The exchange agenda may need to be adjusted to reflect location of our host families. This time all six were in Guilford County, so we changed the arrival and farewell party venues. We should plan activities that span the FFCNC area...but tweak them after hosts are selected.
- The wireless portable microphone (borrowed from Weatherspoon Art Museum) proved invaluable during the museum visits. The board is exploring purchase (est. \$400-500) as it would have multiple uses for FFCNC activities
- The Harrisburg chapter put on a very clever skit during the Tuesday potluck dinner. They wove facts about Pennsylvania and their area into excerpts—bound together with a sung refrain—and wore gear (shirts and hats) of various area athletic teams. We could easily work up something similar! << Anyone want to volunteer to lead this effort?! >>

There were, of course, other specific learnings...and all will be captured. Carol Andresen had a great committee...and would especially like to thank Ralph Cauthen for matching the host families; Barbara & Jim North for hosting an arrival reception; Pam Kahl and Kit Ravenel for respective museum docenting; Judy Greene for hosting the potluck dinner; Donna Lambeth, Patti Gilmour and Helen Lowry for hosting small group dinners; Margaret Griffin for assisting Helen—and gathering most of the “goodie bag” materials; Nancy Sherrill for providing Texas Pete and Leroy Stokes for donating GTCC coffee mugs for the bags; Val Stokes for arranging the Int’l Civil Rights Museum visit and providing bags to hold the goodies; Joyce Moser for developing table questions for the farewell breakfast; Carol & Skip Bryan for being part of all the Thursday and Friday activities; and Fred Andresen...who did most of the work!

Karen Smith of the Friendship Force of Greater Harrisburg has posted a lovely video of our exchange on You Tube. You may view it at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHnUJZ3ykCE>

## Language Learners In-Bound Exchange from Germany

We are sorry to report that this exchange has been cancelled due to lack of participation. "In this economic situation it's much harder to attract people to a 'new form of travel.' Advertising for this exchange was to non-Friendship Force members," said Allison Lindsey, Educational Project Coordinator for Friendship Force International. There are plans for another such exchange in 2010 and it is possible that FFCNC will be able to host it if we are interested.

## Baby Boomer Challenge

FFI President George Brown's presentation at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference in New Jersey the first weekend in April merits our further attention. The FFCNC Board will be discussing various parts of his five-page report...and would welcome your comments and suggestions. The document will be posted in our website archive, for your reference.

George begins by saying, "The baby boomer generation is a huge demographic in the USA and in other key Friendship Force countries around the world. It is also an affluent generation that expects to have a long and very active retirement, including a great deal of international travel. This makes baby boomers a key to the future of the Friendship Force. But they won't be easy to attract as the next generation of Friendship Force members and leaders. It will take more than just an invitation to draw baby boomers in as club leaders, ambassadors and hosts. One of our biggest tasks over the next few years, therefore, will be to develop and implement a baby boomer recruitment strategy."

Based on a 2005 Australian study plus FFI focus groups, the following are relevant:

### Baby Boomers Like:

- cultural exchange to get to know other countries and cultures
- traveling off the beaten track
- having the kind of experiences that are usually associated with student exchanges
- short-term experience with a small group
- the ability to explore the host community on their own
- the cost of an FF experience
- exchanges with a specific theme

### Baby Boomer Dislikes/Concerns:

- words such as club, meeting and group travel
- a one week homestay sounds too long, they would like fewer nights
- they are a little concerned about having to spend all their time with the hosts
- traveling just to make friends is not a high priority
- the word stranger is scary...so "changing strangers into friends" isn't appealing
- since they grew up after the post war era, peace and making friends of enemies doesn't mean much

In July we will share some of George's recommendations, ideas that FFCNC can implement right away to make our chapter attractive to folks coming into retirement.

## **Presidents' Roundtable: April 9-10, 2010**

While it is too early to dwell on specifics, please put this date on your calendar. FFCNC will host the biennial meeting for the presidents (and presidents-elect) of the 14 Mid-Atlantic Region FFI chapters. Our guests, and their spouses perhaps, will arrive Thursday evening and depart Saturday morning. We will offer two-night homestays for those who wish.

The meeting will be all day Friday, with a celebratory meal that evening. There may be a brief agenda for Saturday morning as well. Location has not been selected. If you would like to work with Fred Andresen (294-0842 or [fandresen@triad.rr.com](mailto:fandresen@triad.rr.com)) on plans for the Roundtable, please volunteer!

## **FFCNC Membership Directory**

You have recently received via USPS mail a membership directory in booklet form--to make communication among members easier and for your ready reference. The Board feels that sharing telephone numbers and addresses is somewhat sensitive: please be judicious using this information. No one wants to receive solicitations because they are a member of FFCNC!

If you find an error or omission, please let us know so that we can publish corrections. We have already received two. Please correct the spelling of Pam Kahl's last name and please add Pat Blankenship, 765-8337; 843 Chester Rd.; Winston-Salem, NC 27104.

Also enclosed is the latest FFI brochure--marked with FFCNC contact information--which we would like EVERYONE to put in the hand of a prospective member. If you do not have a friend in mind to give yours to, consider leaving it behind in the barbershop, hair salon or doctor's office.