



# friendship force

CENTRAL  
NORTH CAROLINA

## Focus On Friendship ~ November/December 2009

### **THE 2009 AICHI OUTBOUND EXCHANGE: RETURNING THE FAVOR**

*Fred Andresen*

First, some observations about Nagoya, our host city: people are careful about their diet, exercise, hygiene and self-control (practice relaxation techniques.) There is no graffiti, no public use of cell phones, and no eating in the street (indeed, public trash cans are a rarity.) In public people tend to be quiet and very careful of personal space—even on crowded subways. One of our group was inhibited from flicking a wood toothpick on the street. As it was mostly flattened during WWII, Nagoya has newer and broader streets—with accompanying higher traffic speeds and vehicular death rates (but no honking!)

One of the best parts of visiting Japan is the food. Breakfast is typically salad, miso soup, breads and fruit—and perhaps an egg. We all enjoyed traditional dishes like sukiyaki, tempura, sushi, udon and soba noodles...and shabu-shabu, like beef fondue but cooked in a pot of broth instead of oil. Rice with every meal (nice and sticky, works with chopsticks!) Persimmons were in season—different from ours but delicious. Nagoya is known for its eel restaurants—grilled fillets with teriyaki barbecue sauce. Yum! And everywhere along the streets are drink vending machines with perhaps 20 different varieties in cans—both hot and cold. Retail food courts have an amazing selection of take-home items: vegetables, desserts, all kinds of fish and seafood. We tried using chopsticks with every meal, to lift and shovel or slurp—and it was all fun and delicious!

Our hosts were very gracious to open their homes to us...where some in our group experienced sleeping on a futon atop tatami straw mats. Everyone encountered Japanese wash/toilet facilities. First a scrub stool and basin for soaping down, rinsing with a hand-held shower. Then perhaps soaking in a hot deep tub—typically used by multiple squeaky-clean family members (though guests always go first.) We were all blown away by the prevalent (more than 50% of homes and most restaurants, hotels and rest stops) “Japanese toilet seat” with heated seat and double bidet to cleanse fore and aft!! If you are curious, go to [http://bidetking.com/product\\_info\\_homotech-hi-3000-feel-fresh-bidet-seat.html](http://bidetking.com/product_info_homotech-hi-3000-feel-fresh-bidet-seat.html). Then there was changing from house slippers to toilet slippers...which never got easy!

At both our welcome picnic and farewell party, we were treated to live traditional Japanese music on stringed and percussion instruments—ancient and unique. Our day trips gave us exposure to the traditional—at Takayama, via a lovely bus ride up into the mountains behind Nagoya—and the contemporary at Kirin’s brewery (run 24/7 by 180 people.) As Nagoya is headquarters for Toyota (formerly Toyoda Textile Machinery) and Noritake, visits to both their facilities were included. We also saw a chrysanthemum show at the local castle—unbelievable!

Our group’s second week tour took us to Kyoto, the traditional home of Japanese emperors, with its Golden Pavillion, Nijo Castle (“nightingale floors”) and to Nara with its colossal Buddha. We then traveled to Hakone, again in the mountains, where our stay next to Mt. Fuji was rewarded on a cold crisp morning with breathtaking views of fresh snowfall atop Fuji-san. Our stay in a Japanese-style hotel was fun, walking around in our yukatas and soaking in the communal hot springs baths. Our guides, Toby in



*FFCNC Ambassadors and their hosts in front of Nagoya Castle.*

Kyoto and Rumi the rest of the week, were very knowledgeable and provided lots of background information/color.

Tokyo – very big and very modern. The building boom of the 1990s introduced major new high-rise clusters—like Shinagawa, where we stayed. Fantastic views from observation areas! Another bus trip to the mountains to see Nikko, a World Heritage Site, also revealed several beautiful lakes where people have “second homes” to retreat from the summer heat in Tokyo. Nikko is a 2.5 hours drive from Tokyo—a metro of 20+ million people!

The flight home (Tokyo to Washington D.C.) was only 12 hours—as opposed to 14 going to Nagoya—and we landed at Dulles earlier on the same day as we took off from Narita! Tired but happy, we again realized that the homestay was THE BEST part of the trip—the reason we continue to enjoy Friendship Force exchanges.

First-time ambassadors Laurie Guess and Robert Jones were charmed by the experience—and were a credit to our chapter. The two gentlemen from Harrisburg and the couple from California who joined us were good travelers and nice folks. Here are top-line favorites reported by our FFCNC contingent:

- Carol Andresen: reciprocal nature of Aichi exchange; the toilet seats!
- Fred Andresen: mountains with snow on top; high volume trains
- Laurie Guess: kimonos; traditional instruments
- Ophelia Jones: special thoughtfulness of our hostess; varied hotels
- Robert Jones: home hosting was different and added a lot
- Marcia Meis: courtesy level—to us and to each other; everything was so clean
- Paul Meis: warm hospitality of hosts; old city of Kyoto and shrine at Takayama
- Nancy Peiffer: density of population; attention to nature and things of beauty
- Peter Peiffer: a good group, on time and compatible—this was an ED’s dream!

1/16/10 ~~~ 1.16.10 ~~~ Jan. 16, 2010 ~~~ 1/16/2010 ~~~ 16-Jan  
16 Jan., 2010 ~~~ Jan-16 ~~~ 1-16-10 ~~~ 16-Jan-10 ~~~ 1/16

No matter how you write it, just write it on your calendar now....

**Saturday, January 16, 2010 - Noon**

Marcia Meis will begin the New Year by convening a membership meeting at noon on Saturday, January 16. The club will meet for fellowship, escape from the winter doldrums, and a report from our travelers about their adventures and successes in promoting peace and friendship with the people of Japan.

### **TASTE OF THAI RESTAURANT**

1500 MILL STREET, GREENSBORO

(exit Wendover to Westover Terrace. Turn left, and immediately turn right)

RSVP: Patti Gilmour, 852-6037, [gilmsyl@triad.rr.com](mailto:gilmsyl@triad.rr.com)

## **FFCNC ANNUAL MEETING 2009**

*Carol Andresen*

With George Brown, President of Friendship Force International, lending marquee value as our speaker, nearly 60 members gathered the day before Halloween for our traditional covered dish supper and election of officers for 2010. The meeting also served as a send-off for our ambassadors traveling to Aichi, Japan in November...and the occasion to announce our 2010 exchanges: inbound from Australia in May and outbound to New Zealand in the fall.

George Brown spoke eloquently about the “re-branding” of Friendship Force which has been accomplished over the past year or so—beginning with the new logo. Three words have been added which key into our mission: “Explore. Understand. Serve.” George also gave testimony about the effect that travel at a young age has had on his son—who, as an adult, is comfortable with diverse people and willing to get involved in helping those less fortunate. He praised Donna Lambeth, FFCNC member and immediate past chair of the FFI board, who guided the organization’s recent goal setting process.

After enjoying a refreshing punch served by Val Stokes, everyone savored the meal of many dishes—coordinated by Judy Greene and Doris Kiszely. The slate of officers nominated was accepted by acclaim:

President: Marcia Meis

Vice President (Membership): Ray Kiszely

Secretary: Barbara North

Treasurer: Arnold Sporleder

As Marcia has agreed to serve for two years—a recommendation of several past presidents and potential bylaw change—we did not elect a President-Elect.

## **FRIENDSHIP FAMILIES**

*Martha Brown*

You would probably guess that there are thousands and thousands of international students studying all over the United States, and you may even guess correctly that there are thousands studying right here in the Triad at our many universities, colleges and community colleges from Wake Forest to Guilford Tech. But did you realize that most of these students will spend their years in the U.S. never entering an American home?

On a beautiful fall afternoon I had the opportunity to drive our new Friendship Family student to our house for Sunday dinner and I soon learned that this was, indeed, the first time she had stepped into an American home. Earlier in the afternoon, she flattered me by watching this fifty-something year-old lady play soccer – at her request! (Even my own family shies away from this event.) She is an avid sports fan, especially of basketball, and she was excited to learn that at WFU she can play intramural basketball this winter. Her English, though not perfect, is very good and we have both enjoyed the opportunity to introduce her to new English words, such as “port-o-john” (there was one beside the soccer field) and the “lazy Susan” in my kitchen. I am learning more about China. I chose the scenic route home through the country along one of Forsyth county’s prettiest roads and she was enamored with the gorgeous autumn leaves. To my surprise I learned that she had never seen trees change colors before which prompted me to ask what kind of trees grew where she lived in China. Palm trees! I’d never given that any thought before, but when you live in Hainan province, the most southern part of China off the coast of Vietnam, you live in a tropical climate. How easily we overlook what a large world we live in and how different it is in every corner.



*The Scherls enjoy some Nepalese cooking prepared by their Friendship Family students.*

The Friendship Family Program is run by the Wake Forest University Center for International Studies. Its purpose is to assist international graduate students with their transition to living and studying in America. It partners with International Campus Ministries of the Triad, headed by FFCNC member, Scott Freese, who supports 2,400 international undergraduate and graduate students at eight universities and colleges in Winston-Salem, High Point, and Jamestown. Scott’s counterpart, Audrey Womack, Coordinator of the Piedmont International Fellowship, supports international students attending the six colleges in Greensboro.

Since students are at times extremely busy with their academic responsibilities, there are no firm time commitments required of Friendship Families. It is hoped that Friendship Families can meet with their students about once a month; however, flexibility is key. The list of things a family can do with their international student is endless: dinner in the home, shopping, concerts, hiking, sporting events, etc. More than anything, the best thing to do with these students is to include them in cultural and traditional family events that will help the students enjoy getting to know American families.

Most matching of families occurs in the fall as the school year kicks off; however, the need can arise at any time. Right now, a Korean couple at WFU would like to be matched with a Friendship Family and a Friendship Family previously matched with a Chinese student has unexpectedly had to withdraw from the program due to a family emergency. Also, special needs often arise during the holidays when some students may need a place to stay during breaks or a student may simply need a ride to the airport. So you can see that, depending on one’s interest and availability, involvement can range from large to small. If you are interested in learning more, both the Scherls and Prouts of FFCNC have served as Friendship Families for many years and would be glad to share their experiences with you.

If you have home hosted a Friendship Force guest and enjoyed it, you will enjoy serving as a Friendship Family. If you have wondered what it is like to home host, serving as a Friendship Family will whet your appetite. If you would like to be notified of Friendship Family opportunities and events, be sure to contact one of the individuals listed below. What better way to “change the way you see the world” than from your own hometown?



## Contact Information

### Forsyth County

Scott Freese, Campus Minister & Director of  
International Campus Ministries of the Triad, Inc.  
972-6237 and [scott@icmtriad.org](mailto:scott@icmtriad.org)

Sam Edwards, International Studies Advisor,  
Center for International Studies, Wake Forest University  
758-4978 and [edwardsr@wfu.edu](mailto:edwardsr@wfu.edu)

### Guilford County

Audrey Womack, Piedmont International Fellowship Coordinator  
707-3299 and [awomack2@triad.rr.com](mailto:awomack2@triad.rr.com)

## **KIT RAVENEL**

*Kit Ravel*



*Kit and her Russian guest, Aleksandr Terekhin*

Kit is a native of Greensboro, a Duke Blue Devil, who went off to NYC to make her fortune, married a banker and lived for 30 years in the N.Y. metropolitan area and in Europe (England and Switzerland). She returned to Greensboro in 1985, retired from the travel business several years thereafter and happily began to travel with Guilford Co. Citizens for International Understanding on their citizen exchanges. With CIU and then the Friendship Force she has been on exchanges to Japan, Belgium, Turkey, France, the Fiji Islands, Switzerland, New Zealand and Germany. In addition she has loved hosting folks from Japan, Turkey, the Netherlands and Russia as well as friends from her years living in Europe. Kit's hostess in Peine, Germany (2007), Margret Hauschildt, has promised to come for a visit when she is ready to make the trip. Those FFCNC members who also traveled to Peine will

remember Margret's husband, Kurt, who died in August after a long illness.

Kit's travel now is focused primarily on visits to her two daughters and their families who live in the Atlanta and Memphis suburbs. Kit is the proud grandmother of Katharine (14), Meredith (11), Matthew (10) and Virginia (8). For the last 3 years they have taken a week's family vacation at a ranch in the N.C. mountains. Because everyone has loved playing cowboys and cowgirls, the family plans to go to a ranch in Wyoming next summer. In Greensboro Kit volunteers as a docent at the Greensboro Historical Museum, as a tutor at the New Arrivals School for adult refugees, and she works at Mendenhall School with two seventh grade boys from Burma who basically grew up in a refugee camp in Thailand. For exercise Kit takes Tai Chi classes and rides horses a couple of times a week.

## **ROUNDTABLE DINNER INVITATION: Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**

We will host chapter presidents from the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast Regions of FFI April 8-10 for the biennial meeting to share best practices and consider common problems. Delegates will be offered an option of a two-night homestay (April 8 and 9) to enable them to meet all day on the 9<sup>th</sup> and conclude the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup>. Roundtable meetings will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn off Guilford College Road.

All FFCNC members are encouraged to join the Roundtable delegates for dinner on Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at the Embassy Suites Hotel (Airport). Cost of the meal is \$35 and reservations must be made **by April 1<sup>st</sup>** (no

foolin') with Fred Andresen: 336-294-0842 or [fandresen@triad.rr.com](mailto:fandresen@triad.rr.com) . After dinner Jim Kirkpatrick, Guilford Battleground Company, will give his signature talk about the Revolutionary War's southern campaign.

## **TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIPS**

If you have not already turned in your 2010 membership dues, please do so now. Annual dues, due Dec. 10, 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.



## **IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2010** (Mark these on your calendar)

Jan. 16	Let's Eat Out (LEO), Taste of Thai, Greensboro; noon. Come hear about experiences during the Japanese outbound exchange.
Feb. 4	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
Feb.	Let's Eat Out (LEO), Winston-Salem, time and location to be determined
March 1	World Friendship Day
April 1	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
April 8 – 10	Mid-Atlantic Presidents Conference hosted by FFCNC
April 9	All FFCNC members are invited to join the delegates for a no-host dinner. Embassy Suites; Greensboro, 7 PM. Jim Kirkpatrick, chair of Guilford Battlefield Company, will speak about the southern campaign of the Revolutionary War.
May 21 – 28	In-bound exchange from Brisbane, Australia
June 3	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
June	Let's Eat Out (LEO), location, date, and time to be determined
summer	Picnic at Lake Norman, date & time to be determined
Aug. 5	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
Oct. 7	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
Oct. 16 – 18	FF International Conference, Washington, DC
Oct. 21	Annual meeting
Nov.	Out-bound exchange to Dunedin and Auckland, New Zealand
Dec. 2	Board meeting, 11:45, Kernersville
Dec.	Let's Eat Out (LEO), location, date, and time to be determined

## **ELECTRONIC FFI CONNECTIONS**

Register for FFI's "E-Flyer" by e-mailing your name, postal address and e-mail address to [ffi@thefriendshipforce.org](mailto: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](http://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.ffnc.org](http://www.ffnc.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](mailto: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**

President	Marcia Meis	<a href="mailto:pmeis@triad.rr.com">pmeis@triad.rr.com</a>	724-9540
Vice President & Membership Chair	Ray Kiszely	<a href="mailto:raykiszely@hotmail.com">raykiszely@hotmail.com</a>	656-0945
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Treasurer	Arnold Sporleder	<a href="mailto:asporleder@triad.rr.com">asporleder@triad.rr.com</a>	993-3405
Activities Chair	Ralph Cauthen	<a href="mailto:rbcauthen@aol.com">rbcauthen@aol.com</a>	299-2089
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