



THE FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF GREATER ATLANTA NEWSLETTER



MARCH • APRIL • 2013

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



Greetings to all!

The past two months have been busy ones for the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta! We have extended our Southern hospitality to visitors from several lands, and we hope that we have made some new friends and helped them to understand our country better. Though these programs are not directly related to the Friendship Force, our collaboration with their sponsoring organizations definitely supports our ideals and goals.

In February we hosted a group of international teachers attending Clemson University for a semester. These young people are studying educational methods in several different teaching fields with the aim of taking new ideas back to their home countries of Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, the Philippines, and Senegal. Their weekend in Atlanta passed very quickly, but we were able to show them some interesting sites.

John Wilhelm organized an excellent Open World program for a group of lawyers and law professors from the Ukraine. From March 22 through March 30, our visitors and their hosts learned how the legal system operates in such areas as the State and Federal legislatures, city governments, public safety operations, Chambers of Commerce, and regional development organizations. They also had an opportunity to meet with fellow law educators at Georgia State University and Emory University. It was great to see several of our club members who were not involved in hosting the delegates come to the farewell dinner at the Greater Good Barbecue restaurant on March 30!

Now those of us who are going to Peru on May 12 are turning our attention to brushing up our Spanish and packing our bags for our exciting adventure! There will be 19 ambassadors, several of whom will be staying with people from Lima whom we hosted in 2010. Glenda and John Wilhelm have done a great job assembling the group and planning for the trip.

There is still room for those of you who would like to participate in the exchange to Sydney and the Gold Coast of Australia in September. Several of us met with a representative from the Gold Coast club, who has promised us a delightful stay there. Sue Mills is doing a great job of getting us terrific prices for airfare, etc. This will be an exchange you don't want to miss! Details and contact information can be found in this newsletter.

We still need hosts for two pairs of ladies who would like to share Thanksgiving with Atlanta families after the FFI conference in November. One pair is from Florida and the other from Canada. If you are able to host these ladies, please let me know as soon as possible. They need to make flight arrangements as soon as possible.

Don't forget to talk up the Friendship Force with your friends and neighbors! Tell them about our great web site website and invite them to a club activity. Remember that we also have speakers who will attend meetings of any organization that wishes to learn more about the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta.

As always, if you have any ideas for club activities or questions about the club, please feel free to contact me at madamew@hotmail.com or (404) 351-5352.

In Friendship,
Cynthia Williams
President

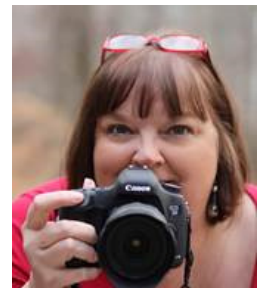
GETTING TO KNOW YOU ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

In keeping with this Newsletter's tradition of spotlighting members of our club, this issue will introduce you to our President Emeritus Dave Kelley and to Carla Kelley, his wife who is a talented photographer.



You will probably recognize Dave immediately as he was the FFGA VP in 2009, FFGA President in 2010-2011 and is currently President Emeritus. Raised in Knoxville, TN he has a BS in Accounting from the University of Tennessee and a MBA in Accounting from Georgia State University. He has two adult children from a previous marriage and three grandchildren. He currently works as an Accounting Manager with SunTrust Bank. He has been a member of FFGA since 1992 and with his previous wife he hosted incoming exchanges of Russians and Japanese and participated in an outbound "festival exchange" to New Zealand.

Carla Kelley is almost always seen with a camera in her hands and could probably have the title as our "official" photographer. She was raised near Mobile, AL and was a business major at Georgia State University. She has two adult children from a previous marriage and is employed as a retail branch manager for PNC Bank. She joined FFGA in 2000.



Dave and Carla have been married since 1999 and live in Roswell, where their four cats permit them to also reside. Since their marriage, they have done a lot of hosting: Including incoming exchanges from New Zealand and Ukraine where Dave was the ED for both; Australia, People's Republic of China and many of the Ft. Benning Officers. Carla was the outbound ED for the home stay on the Isle of Wight with a side trip to Norway.

News Flash: Dave and Carla just learned there is a 4th grandbaby on the way. This one will make its appearance in late October or early November. (Reported by Vicki Van Der Hoek)

FFGA HOSTS INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



Joining us for a wintery weekend in February were fourteen international teachers who are studying for one semester at Clemson University in South Carolina. Most of them are of the Islamic faith, meaning that few had ever resided in a total stranger's home and some had very strict dietary restrictions that their faith demanded they abide by. This being a first visit to America for most of them, they were a bit anxious but eager to know if all that they been told about us was true. Clemson faculty drove them to our city where they met their Atlanta hosts at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. After brief introductions and a shift of their luggage the entire group headed off to the Georgia Aquarium for the start of a weekend filled with activity. Of course they all wanted to see the reknowned World of Coca-Cola so while they went through that venue, their hosts awaited their return chatting amongst themselves in the attraction's gift shop. A trip up to the top of the Westin Peachtree Hotel's Sundial observation deck was in order before the sunset and proceeding to their host's homes.

Saturday brought forth temperatures in the mid-twenties with blustery winds. Most of the teachers hailed from climates much warmer than Georgia's and most had only light jackets or overcoats. Fortunately their hosts were able to supply warmer wear and we were to be indoors throughout the morning at the Booth Western Museum in Cartersville. Our delegates were treated to a guided tour of the museum and had many questions for our docent.

(Continued)



Although they learned a great deal about our country's western history, it seems that what mostly was enjoyed was the children's section of the museum. There they posed in the saddle of the mechanical horse, in the stagecoach and in the bunkhouse.

We next huddled together in balmy 34° weather for a group photo with the Cowboy & Bronco statue in front of the Booth Museum. By then all were ready for a nice bowl of chili or hot soup before venturing out to the Etowah Indian Mounds.

Upon reassembling at the historic site the ranger in charge gave us a detailed lecture on the life of the Indians who resided there in the years between 1000 and 1550. We next participated in what must have been the most rapidly conducted tour of the actual mounds in history, for the winds atop the tallest mound were brisk and the wind-chill factor must have made it feel like we were in Alaska. By 4:00 PM all of us were happily headed back to Atlanta with the car heaters running full blast.

On Sunday morning the FFGA hosts shared a leisurely breakfast with their guests and gave them a short sightseeing tour of their neighborhoods before arriving at the Martin Luther King Historic site's parking lot. There they returned their charges to the Clemson faculty members to conduct a tour of the site before they all returned to the university. (Reported by Kent Vickers)



OPEN WORLD
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Governor Nathan Deal displays a Certificate of Friendship presented by the Open World delegates from Ukraine. The delegates are pictured with their Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta hosts and Sandy Springs Representative Tom Taylor.

On Friday the 22nd of March a small band of hosts led by John Wilhelm assembled at the airport to collect five Ukrainian delegates and their English speaking facilitator, who were representing the Open World Leadership Program. After receiving a hearty welcome, they were soon on the way to their homes for the next week at the Nicklesen's, Vickers' and Wilhelm's abodes. In addition the group would also add FFGA President Cynthia Williams and the official Ukrainian translator from Chicago, who would not arrive until Sunday. The first evening began with a wonderful welcome supper prepared by master hostess Glenda Wilhelm which was served buffet style upon Easter bunny plates. (She actually has special plates for almost every holiday occasion.) In short order toasts were offered with a fiery Ukrainian version of pepper vodka and the five professors of law and their facilitator bonded with their new Amerikanski friends.

The weekend was filled with touristy type activities before the more formal program of events was to take place. On Saturday we went first to Roosevelt's Little White House in Warm Springs. The next stop was in Callaway Gardens where the Ukrainians were delighted to see flowers blooming, after departing their homes where there was 12 to 36 inches of snow. They also enjoyed the Birds of Prey Show and the Cecil B. Day Butterfly Center.



Delegates pose before the Little White House



They really enjoyed the Birds of Prey Show



It is nice and warm in the butterfly house

After a big breakfast on Sunday it was time to head downtown to tour some of Atlanta's premier attractions. We started by strolling through Centennial Olympic Park and entering the Georgia Aquarium. After lunch we drifted over to the World of Coca-Cola. We had planned on visiting the Sundial lounge atop the Westin Peachtree Hotel but on high but low clouds made it necessary to save that for another day.



Centennial Olympic Park with bronze artwork



Not all of the fish in the aquarium are big



Dr. Pemberton, is happy to share a coke

The Open World program requires delegates to attend roughly 36 hours of seminars and demonstrations relative to their own professions. In this case all are involved in teaching various functions of law to their own students in Ukrainian schools of law. During the week they visited the city of John's Creek administrative offices and learned how they had created a brand new city from scratch and all of the legal challenges it endured in doing so. The delegates then toured that city's Department of Public Safety, John's Creek High School, the Civic Arts Center and the Department of Parks and Recreation. The following day was spent at the Georgia capitol where they were able to sit in on sessions of the legislature and to meet with Governor Nathan Deal and various representatives and staff members. The remainder of the week was spent visiting Emory and Georgia State University's Schools of Law. There they discussed international law applications with several renowned lawyers and legal professors. They also met with two chambers of commerce and two non-government organizations devoted to developing regional districts within Atlanta and its surrounding metro counties. The final day was spent with a visit to CNN, a meeting with an international law associate at one of the Southeast's largest law firms and a round table discussion with U.S. Congressman, Representative Hank Johnson. After a short rest at the Wilhelm's home it was time for our farewell party at the Greater Good Barbecue Restaurant in Tucker. It was great to see several of our club members who were not involved in hosting and I believe all were pleased with the Ukrainian rendering of several native songs. Upon conclusion of the festivities, Open World Certificates of Achievement were awarded to all of the delegates by the FFGA Exchange Director, John Wilhelm.

A special word of thanks is extended to all of those who supported the exchange by sponsoring a dinner in their homes for both the FFGA hosts and their Ukrainian delegates during this extremely busy week. It provided a much needed respite for all.



Having a discussion of legal ethics with a senior lawyer at a prestigious Atlanta law firm.



Meeting with Hank Johnson, Georgia's Fourth District U.S. Congressional Representative.



Delegate Ruslan Lidovets receives his Open World Certificate of Achievement.

To learn more about Open World please see the following web site: <http://openworld.gov/about/overview.php>

(Story by Kent Vickers)

UPCOMING EXCHANGE REPORTS ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Outbound Exchange to Peru, South America: 12 – 25 May 2013



Glenda Wilhelm, Exchange Director for the exchange to Lima, Cuzco and Machu Picchu, Peru, reports that the exchange is now closed to any more participants. Nineteen Ambassadors will depart for Lima on Mother's Day, the 12th of May. The Peruvian hosts are already guaranteeing that this will be a enjoyable exchange and are looking forward to hosting old friends which they met during their exchange to Atlanta in October of 2011 and to making new ones.

Outbound Exchange to Sydney & Gold Coast, Australia: 02 – 17 September 2013



Exchange Director Susan Mills reports that she now has eight confirmed Ambassadors and three tentative ones for the September visit "down under". If the exchange does not add any more prospective travelers from FFGA by next month, the exchange will be listed in FFI's World Wide Catalog to solicit members from other FF Clubs to join our travelers. It is doubtful that FFGA will receive another exchange to Australia in the next few years. So if Australia is one of the places you have a yen to see – now is the time to join our club's exchange. You may find out more about exchange details by visiting the FFGA web site at: <http://www.friendshipforatlanta.com> or you may contact Susan Mills by e-mail at: delray316@gmail.com. She may also be contacted by cell phone at 386-848-6220. (Note: you may have to dial 1-386-848-6220 if calling from a land line instead of a cell phone.)

Inbound Exchange from Kyiv Region, Ukraine: 22 – 29 October 2013 (Tentative)



Lying amid rolling hills along the Dnieper River and filled with an abundance of parks and gardens, Kiev is a treasury of medieval art and architecture. In addition to being one of Europe's most beautiful cities it is also the capitol of Ukraine and its largest metropolitan region. Kiev is known to the Russians as the "Mother of Cities" because it is among the oldest cities of Northern Europe, tracing its history to the mid-nineteenth century, and is the cradle of Russian Christianity. With a population of over two and one half million people and Father Frost soon coming to embrace them it is easily understood why Kiev residents might enjoy spending a week embraced by the warm weather of Georgia and its renowned Southern Hospitality. To read more about Kiev see this web site <http://www.answers.com/topic/kiev#ixzz2Oixynue>

The following message is from Ken McKinney, the E.D. for the Kiev to Atlanta incoming exchange:

Dear FFGA Members,

October is a wonderful time of year for visitors coming to Atlanta, and the Kiev club is most enthusiastic. I am in the early stages of planning and have sent a proposed list of activities to their Outbound ED, Ms. Natalia Klymenko. She is expecting between 15-20 Ambassadors. That number, as we have experienced, will likely be lower as time goes by. Also, the dates may shift a day or two as they make their final travel plans. At this time I need to know:

- **who would like to participate as a home host**
- **who would like to be a back-up home host in case of adversity**
- **who can provide a dinner for two-three Ambassadors (host night off)**
- **who might have spare passes to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens and Georgia Aquarium to donate to the cause**

I look forward to ensuring a lively, educational and enjoyable time for all. If you can help, please contact me at your earliest convenience. I welcome your support and assistance. You may e-mail me at: kenmckinney11@gmail.com or telephone at: 360-914-2242. (Note: you may have to dial 1-360-914-2242 if calling from a land line instead of a cell phone.)

About this Exchange Director:



Ken has retired to Atlanta after a career in health care management, and lives in Ansley Park. He is a former U.S. Navy Reserve Commander and a veteran of the Gulf War. Ken enjoys hiking, off road biking, camping and traveling and has visited 14 countries. He and his wife (deceased) started the Friendship Force of Florence, SC in 1997-98. and he has served as Vice President of the Friendship Force of Seattle. Ken has experience as both and as an outbound and inbound Exchange Director. He joined the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta in November of 2012.

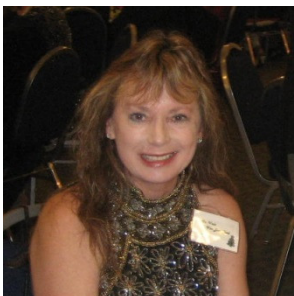
MAKING A DIFFERENCE ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Why does one volunteer? I am sure there are many reasons; self-fulfillment, personal enrichment, a sense of duty, recognition by our peers or to gain knowledge. Maybe it is just one of these reasons or maybe it is all of them. On the other hand it might just be something fun to do. That is what I wanted to explore with you and why I have included this personal journey into volunteering by one of our own members Ms. Vicki Van Der Hoek.

The following has been borrowed from another hosting organization here in Atlanta that is very much similar to our own and to which Ms. Van Der Hoek has belonged for several years. It is the Georgia Council for International Visitors, (GCIV). She has also been an FFGA member almost as long. This is her blog.

-Making a Difference-

One of GCIV's most active hosts shares why everyone should participate in home hospitality.



"When was the last time your dinner conversation was more than the boring, 'What did you do today?'

Would you like to travel to Egypt, Israel, China, Italy or anywhere else in the world just for dinner? Allow me to recommend the dinner home hosting program through the Georgia Council for International Visitors (GCIV).

The GCIV program brings the best and brightest professionals from around the world right here to Atlanta, people like former participants Nelson Mandela and Nicholas

Vicki Lynn Van Der Hoek

