



# THE FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF GREATER ATLANTA



## NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • 2014

### THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:



My message in the last newsletter noted in jest that four or five people would be needed to fill all the roles Kent Vickers will be vacating at the end of 2014. But I jest not when I say we need to find those volunteers now. Communications are the vital glue that holds our club together. One element in this glue is the ability to reach all of our members within minutes via email. This job is not all that complex, but it will likely require an hour or so each month in coordination with the Membership Chair to make sure that the contact list for all of our club members is up-to-date. The other element is to provide Information to club members about all activities and opportunities involving the club, in a timely manner. Kent has accomplished this in the form of Newsletters and Newsflashes sent to each member by way of the internet. In this role one must have at least a basic familiarity with computer skills and graphics. He or she must also attend each meeting of the FFGA Board of Directors in order to stay abreast of current events and policies

affecting the club. As an appointed board member he or she will also have a vote in determining the course of events pursued by the club in the future. Kent has assured me that he is willing to assist any volunteers willing to accept these tasks with both his knowledge and resources.

Would this be a good way for you to contribute to the club's leadership? If not, can you think of someone else who can fill the bill? We also need to find someone with creativity to edit our newsletter. It doesn't have to be as polished as the newsletters Kent has put out, but I am sure the person who accepts this challenge will improve with each newsletter. If you are interested in either of these jobs or any others, please contact me. Your skills and enthusiasm are needed.

Two of our biggest gatherings of the year are coming up soon. Our annual membership meeting is Sunday, October 19th at Mimi's Café near Perimeter Mall. Our annual holiday party will be Saturday, December 6th at the Georgian Club, in the Galleria complex near the intersection of I-75 and I-285. Details regarding these events appear elsewhere in this newsletter. I particularly encourage you to attend the holiday party. We have committed to the Georgian Club that we will have at least 60 people in attendance. If we fall short of this, it will reduce the chance of our being able to hold other events at this lovely club in the future.

In friendship,

*Harvey*

(404) 351-2033

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU:



**Michael and Diane Sakmar:** Michael is originally from Pennsylvania and Diane is from New York, but Georgia has been their home for over thirty years. They first came to the Atlanta area for Mike's job in the nuclear power industry as a trainer providing insight and accreditation to nuclear power plants throughout the country. He later severed ties with that industry and moved to Cartersville from Atlanta where Diane had a teaching job. Mike - an avid fisherman – was pleased to be near Lake Altoona, but was too young to retire. Fortunately he was able to secure a position in the laboratories of the Anheuser Busch Brewery in Cartersville, where he remained until retirement. Michael graduated from Pennsylvania's Clarion State College and the University of Northern Colorado with both Bachelor and Master of Science degrees.

Diane is a retired high school and college English teacher who graduated from State University of New York at Buffalo, NY. She graduated with both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Arts degree. She taught English at Walton High School, in Cobb county for four years before moving to Cartersville to teach the same subject at Cartersville High School for twenty-four years, prior to retiring. She also served as an adjunct instructor at Georgia Highlands College for over fifteen years. Alexis, their married daughter is a guidance counselor at the same Cartersville high school from which Diane retired. Their daughter also presented them with their first grandchild just two months ago.

The Sakmars have many interests, including education and politics. Diane is the state co-president of the American Association of University Women of Georgia. She is a passionate supporter of women's equity, both at home and around the world. Mike is a lover of football and is an ardent supporter of the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers. They both enjoy restoring and showing antique autos and are the proud owners of a 1951 Chevrolet pickup truck with five windows – a rarity among collectors. They also love to travel and have an interest in learning about the cultures of other lands, which has been rewarded by their membership in the Friendship Force in addition to independent travel. They count Austria, Canada, The Czech Republic, Hungary, North Ireland and Slovakia among the countries they have visited independently. They intend to take their daughter Alexis, their granddaughter Avery and their son-in-law to Belize during the next spring break.



The Sakmars first became members of Friendship Force 25 years ago after hosting two doctors from Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan. A year later they made an outbound trip on a Georgia-to-Georgia exchange with their then six year old daughter. Mike and Diane hosted the incoming exchange from Kiev, Ukraine at about this same time last year and they were very much looking forward to participating in the reciprocal exchange to Kiev originally scheduled for this year. Unfortunately the current strife in that country caused that exchange to be canceled. Mike is a second generation American whose grandmother emigrated from Ukraine, so he was very interested in visiting there. He has said that he would seriously consider volunteering to be the Exchange Director for such an exchange if it is ever rescheduled.

## THE SOCIAL SCENE:



On the evening of September 30th, at the Village Corner Restaurant and Bakery in Stone Mountain, Georgia, fourteen stalwart members of the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta, plus one guest, gathered together to break bread and enjoy fine German cuisine in the spirit of Oktoberfest. Many traditional beverages were enjoyed as were the soft, giant pretzels and great cheese dip and mustard that were passed amongst the diners to sample. The pretzels were followed by selections of "Wursts", (German sausages), Roast Potatoes and tangy Sauerkraut. This German restaurant is well known for its good food but it excels with the fine cakes and European pastries it offers for dessert – a fact many in our party can attest to. A very tasty pecan flavored coffee was also offered to accompany the rich sweets. It was nice to see some old familiar faces that had been missing at recent social events in the persons of Richard James and Dal Hicks. New member Linda Foley was also welcomed by all.



**2014 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF GREATER ATLANTA**  
**SUNDAY OCTOBER 19th ~ FROM 3:30 PM TO 6:30 PM**  
**MIMI'S CAFÉ – 1221 ASHFORD CROSSING, ATLANTA, GA 30346**  
**PHONE: 770-351-8444**                      **WEBSITE: [www.mimiscafe.com](http://www.mimiscafe.com)**

This year's Annual FFGA Membership Meeting will be held at Mimi's Café in Dunwoody, and will consist of a "Meet & Greet" a social period from 3:30 to 4:00 PM followed by the business meeting and supper. The event should last until approximately 6:30 PM.

Mimi's Cafe is a chain restaurant but a very good one with mouth-watering choices for all tastes. Please see Mimi's Special FFGA Menu and directions to the restaurant which can be found in the attachments to this newsletter. After you have made your menu selections and added your check, mail both to Social Chairman Glenda Wilhelm at the address shown below. The price for each meal is a flat \$20.00 per person and includes the tax and gratuity. Alcoholic beverages from the full service bar will be billed separately. Running a tab is possible. Dress for this meeting is casual-nice. You are only required to make reservations if you are intend to dine with the club. This is necessary to allow the restaurant to properly prepare the meeting room and to insure adequate wait staff is available. Please follow the guidance below to secure you reservation:

**MAIL CHECKS & FORMS TO:**

Ms. Glenda Wilhelm  
6051 Millstone Run  
Mountain, GA 30087

**PLEASE NOTE:**

All reservation forms with your selections and your checks must arrive by no later than October 14th, Stone 2014. Sorry, no refunds can be made after the 16th of October.

Members are not required to attend the social period nor the luncheon, but are highly encouraged to attend the business meeting. Club officers for 2015 will be elected, exchange destinations for the year 2016 will be discussed and suggestions for improving the club will be entertained during this occasion.

This would also be an excellent occasion to pay your club dues for the year 2015, thereby eliminating the hassle of having to mail them in during the busy holiday season. Treasurer Anne Earle will be present to record your payment. Dues have increased for 2015 to \$30 for an Individual Membership and \$40 for a Family Membership.

**NOMINEES SELECTED TO SERVE ON THE 2015 FFGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Following is the slate of nominees who have been selected by the Nominating Committee and have agreed to serve as officers of the FFGA Board of Directors for the year 2014. If confirmed by popular vote of a quorum of members at the Annual Business Meeting to take place on the October 6, 2013, they will assume or continue in office effective January 1, 2014 for one year.

For the office of President:	Mr. Harvey Brickley	<i>(Incumbent)</i>
For the office of Vice President:	Ms. Susan (Sue) Mills	
For the office of Treasurer:	Mrs. Katherine (Bonnie) Evans	<i>(Incumbent)</i>
For the office of Secretary:	Mrs. Beverly McCray	<i>(Incumbent)</i>

Nominations may also be made from the floor, provided the consent of the nominee has been secured. If there is only one nominee for an office, voting for that office may be by voice vote; otherwise, voting must be by ballot. In the event of a tie vote, a ballot shall be issued and another vote will be taken immediately.



Just a reminder; The holiday season is fast approaching and your Social Planning Committee is pulling out all of the stops to present one of the best Annual Holiday Parties that the club has ever had. This year we will return to the beautiful Georgian Club. The view from the towering 17th floor is gorgeous, the cuisine is fabulous and the holiday cheer and friendliness is marvelous. As mentioned in the President's Corner at the beginning of this newsletter, the date is the Saturday, the 6th of December. The time is from noon until 2:30 PM and the cost is expected to be \$35.00 per person including tax, tip and facility fee. Alcoholic beverages will be available from a pay as you go bar. More details will appear in a newsflashes during the months of October and November.

## EXCHANGE INFORMATION:

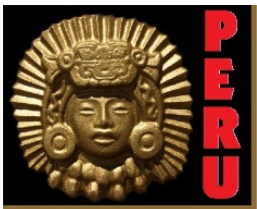


**PLEASE NOTE:** During the FFGA Annual meeting at Mimi's Café on Sunday, October 19th a survey of our members as to which countries they would like to conduct an exchange with in the 2016 and beyond will be taken. Please be considering your preferences prior to attending.



The Open World Leadership exchange from the country of Serbia consisted of five delegates and a facilitator who arrived on September 12th for an eight day stay. During this period they became familiar with how their American counterparts in the legal profession deal with financial crime. Exchange Director John Wilhelm arranged for them attend seminars presented by representatives from the Securities and Exchange Commission, the U.S. Attorney's office, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Georgia

Department of Revenue and the U.S. Veterans Administration. Although they had a busy schedule ample time was provided for seeing the prime Atlanta tourist venues and to do a great deal of shopping. Normally classes and discussions are provided instantaneously to the delegates in their native language via wireless headsets by an accompanying paid local translator. The home hosts are allowed to sit-in on these seminars, which are presented in English. Most of the hosts consider this to be one of the major benefits of hosting during Open World Exchanges and repeatedly volunteer to host during them.



The FFGA Board of Directors has accepted an exchange request from Trujillo, Peru to tentatively take place during a period sometime after Sunday, April 5th, 2015, which is Easter. President Brickley is seeking members of our club who will volunteer to be primary hosts, day hosts, or are willing to host a limited dinner party for some of the Peruvian Ambassadors and their hosts during this exchange. Please contact President Harvey Brickley at 404-351-2033 or by e-mail at: [mbrickley@bellsouth.net](mailto:mbrickley@bellsouth.net). As soon as possible so that planning can begin. Timing is the key to having a great Friendship Force exchange,

and given the lead time that we have with this group it should not be difficult to set-up and conduct an excellent visit for the Peruvians. Experienced mentors are willing to provide guidance and assistance to any member who volunteers.



Even though the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta does not have an Outbound Exchange on the schedule for the year 2015 that does not need to limit your possibilities for travel and cultural exploration. Try a Global or Discovery Exchange to an exotic location that our club is unlikely to visit anytime soon. You may also like to participate in an exchange that provides "Friendship in Action" by traveling and doing some meaningful work project part of the time in the country you visit. Perhaps you might enjoy improving your language skills by attending spoken language classes part time while the remainder is spent seeing the country and

experiencing its cultural aspects. All of this is available to Friendship Force members on the Friendship Force International's website under the tab "Travel for Good". Check it out at: [www.thefriendshipforce.org](http://www.thefriendshipforce.org). While you are on the FFI home page, scroll to the bottom and view the "Current Opportunities" section.

## ODDS & ENDS:



**Minutes of the FFGA Board of Directors Meeting:** Due to the Open World exchange and to the absence of several traveling board members there was no board meeting in September. To review the FFGA Board of Directors Minutes from the August 10th, 2014 board meeting. The next Board of

*(Continued)*

Director's meeting will take place at 2:00 PM, prior to the Annual Membership meeting on the 19th of October at Mimi's Café.

To view the minutes, please remember to depress and hold down the "Ctrl" key on your keyboard while clicking on this link: <http://1drv.ms/1v8WaiI>. If the link does not open the minutes for you, copy the link individually into the address bar of your internet browser to open it. Please allow time for the link to open.



### **Taps have sounded for another veteran:**



Mr. Dana (Dan) M. Hicks II, a long-time member of the Friendship Force, passed away on August 23rd. Dan and Dal, his wife of 58 years, loved to travel the world and particularly enjoyed doing so with the Friendship Force. Dan's wife Dal, served as the President of Friendship Force of Atlanta during 1996 and 1997 and as Director of the Exchange to Norway and Denmark in 2003. Dan was a mainstay of support for her in both of these leadership positions. Dan was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and had a deep affinity for the military. This was made clear by his volunteering to host many of the foreign military officers from Fort Benning, during the period 2008-2011 when FFGA was involved with that program. During this period the Hicks' hosted officers from Armenia, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Switzerland, Taiwan and Turkey. Unfortunately Dan and his wife Dal were unable to participate in FFGA activities after 2011 due to Dan's declining health.



**THE END**



In Friendship,

Kent G. Vickers  
FFGA News Editor



**HAVE A GREAT AUTUMN**