

# FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF GREATER ATLANTA



FFGA

April 2018

## FFGA WITH AMBASSADORS FROM ENGLAND

Members of the Atlanta chapter of Friendship Force International spent a day in Cartersville recently, hosting a group of visiting Friendship Force ambassadors from County Durham, England.

The group began the day with a tour of the Anheuser Busch brewery, then gathered for lunch at Table 20. The group then toured the Rose Lawn Museum, where Master Gardener Phil Aplin provided information about the rose gardens. Rose Lawn director Jane Drew delighted the guests with "a spot of tea" in the formal dining room and a tour and history of the house.

The day ended with a visit to the Booth Museum, where the English visitors posed in front of their Atlanta area hosts. Cartersville members Janet Martin, Barbara Cousins, and Mike and Diane Sakmar organized the day's events.



## BONNIE EVANS RECEIVES WAYNE SMITH AWARD: CONGRATULATIONS!

The Wayne Smith medal is a tribute to Friendship Force founder Wayne Smith in recognition of his "boundless energy and optimism and untiring commitment to the cause of world friendship", as the nomination form states. In the Friendship Force of Greater Atlanta, we have someone who fits this description perfectly, and that is Bonnie Evans.

In the nine years since she joined our club, Bonnie has served as Treasurer for two years and two years as Webmaster and is now our Vice President. In the last three months alone, she has led an "epic journey" to Tanzania and was the Host Coordinator for the Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley Journey to Atlanta. Bonnie has traveled to several countries with our club and other clubs and has hosted ambassadors from around the globe. Bonnie's home has always been open for dinners and other club activities. We would like to thank her sincerely for her continued support of our club and the Friendship Force in general by presenting to her the Wayne Smith medal, of which she is so deserving.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I do believe that 'SPRING' has finally arrived in Georgia, as all around us nature is quickly awaking to it's renewed beauty and glory. And with this refreshing season, many of you have already started or are planning to explore new and old places and friends.

FFGA kicked off the season by welcoming a lovely group of ambassadors from County Durham, England. For the most part, the weather was enjoyable and everyone had a grand time making new friends and sharing the many interesting sites of our area. My thanks to everyone who planned, hosted, coordinated, cooked and transported our guests. For those of you who were not able to meet the group, they all were a charming group and one special lady was a real gem. Hilda, their spirited youngest at 98, was always ready to go and loved getting to dance at the Farewell Dinner. We had several new members join us that evening and we look forward to getting to know them better.

Now that our many April showers have passed, I look forward to May flowers and to welcoming an **Open World delegation from Ukraine. (See the next page for a short description of what the Open World program is all about.)**

**The group arrives Friday, May 11 and will be leaving on Saturday, May 19.** Joe and Anne Earle have been busy arranging meetings and discussions centered around the program theme of "Citizen Engagement in Legal Reform Rationale". Cynthia Williams has been arranging for hosts and transportation. **If you are available and would like to help with transporting or day hosting, please give Cynthia (404-351-5352) or Anne (404-378-3918) a call.**

**Saturday evening, the plans are to take the group to the Laser Show at Stone Mt. and we would like everyone to join in for a Fried Chicken Picnic, club treat. Please give Anne Earle or myself a call or send an email if you are planning to come. My # is 770-446-1733. I also believe, that plans are in the works to take the group to a seafood restaurant in Doraville; information will follow soon.**

Is everyone receiving the FFI monthly newsletter or following them on Facebook? If you are not, please let me know and we will help you sign up. There is a wealth of information available there and on the website, lots of great travel opportunities.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon and hope that you all will be able to attend one of the events in May.

In friendship, Robin Scott

## WHAT IS “OPEN WORLD”?

The **Open World Leadership Center** administers the Open World program, one of the most effective U.S. exchange programs for countries of the post-Soviet era. The [program](#) has enabled more than 27,000 current and future leaders from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan to meaningfully engage and interact with Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and thousands of other Americans.

The Open World Leadership Center administers the first and only international exchange agency in the U.S. Legislative Branch that is completely controlled by Congress. In 1999, Congress authorized the creation of Open World as a Legislative Branch agency that offers bipartisan support to Members of Congress in creating cultural exchanges for Eurasian leaders to witness democracy building in action. The founders of Open World were united in the belief that widespread, direct contact between American leaders and those of other nations would greatly benefit all involved. Since then, Open World has expanded its reach to over twenty countries. With Congressional vision and leadership, Open World continues to be one of the most important U.S. exchange programs with post-Soviet countries. The program is a long-term investment in U.S. relations with Eurasia and is a demonstrably a cost effective tool of public diplomacy and Congress.

### **THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED AND ALL WHO CAME**

Many thanks to the home hosts who showed our eleven guests the best of Southern Hospitality. The home hosts were John and Glenda Wilhelm, Tim and Carol Connell, Cynthia Williams, Pat Holt, Linda Foley, Lynda Anderson and Bonnie Evans.

Thank you also to dinner hosts Sue Mills, Wilma Kirchofer, Stan and Wanda Bokoski, Eunice Luke, Dr. William and Juanita Clarke, Aura Ruiz, Mark and Vicki Hagan. Our guests loved the intimate dinners at other members homes where they experienced more wonderful hospitality. John and Glenda Wilhelm hosted the welcome dinner at their home. Anne Earle organized the Farewell Dinner at Greater Good BBQ where we had Southern BBQ. We even were treated to the sounds of John Anderson’s blue grass band. We laughed hard and loud as we taught our guest some square dancing.

Thank you to our Cartersville members, Mike and Diane Sakmar who arranged a full day of activities in their historic town. Particularly outstanding to our guests and their hosts was a formal tea party at the Rose Lawn Garden Museum.

At the farewell dinner there five new members attending the event where the seasoned members welcomed and included them in the fun.

Special thanks to John Wilhelm and Bonnie Evans who were the Co-Coordinator for County Durham.

Impressive were the number of FFGA members that participated in making the County Durham a huge success. It is so true the more one participates, the more one gets out of the membership. Come join and volunteer in all the activities that FFGA sponsors.

Bonnie Evans, Vice President



## Great Response to 2019 Bogota, Quito, Galápagos Journey

FFGA has had a great response from members of Friendship Force for this journey that will begin on April 26, 2019. Please do not delay in adding your name as a prospect since there is a twenty person limit on this remarkable adventure. You should be in good health, good mobility, adaptable to high altitudes.

The journey will start with a seven night homestay with the lively Friendship Force of Bogota, Colombia. During the Bogota stay there will be the national holiday of Workers Day which we will celebrate together. Latin America sure knows how to throw a party and celebrate.

We would fly to Quito, Ecuador for a three night stay exploring the city, food and sights before flying to the Galápagos Islands for a six day, five night land based adventure which includes seeing exotic animals, unusual land formations, snorkeling, swimming and hiking. We will explore four islands of this archipelago.

Contact Bonnie Evans at [kbemje@bellsouth.net](mailto:kbemje@bellsouth.net) to be added to the prospect list. Details are being worked on everyday and will be announced to the prospects when completed.