



friendship force

HOUSTON

February
2009

A World Of Friends Is A World Of Peace.
A Non-Profit Organization Promoting Peace Through Citizen Exchanges

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WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP FORCE INTERNATIONAL?

The Friendship Force is a non-profit organization sponsoring **people-to-people** exchanges between people in over fifty nations of the world. It brings people together through home stay exchanges – creating unforgettable experiences that build lasting bonds of friendship.

As an Ambassador you share lifestyles in a private home in other countries for a week. In return, you may home host people from that nation or other nations to share your lifestyle. The ever-widening Friendship Force global network represents a powerful and growing force that can overcome differences between people and nations.

President's Corner

Greetings to all members of FFI-Houston Chapter!

As we continue on into the year 2009, we have a lot to look forward to as one of the most active clubs in Texas! We will be celebrating World Friendship Day on February 28th at our general meeting at the Tracy Gee Community Center. This is a very special occasion as we come together to dine on foods from around the world, prepared by all of you, at a pot-luck luncheon. So prepare your favorite foreign recipes and bring them with you. And be sure to wear one of your favorite foreign costumes. We are looking forward to hearing about where you've been and hearing some of your tales. We sincerely hope you will attend this memorable celebration. In conjunction with this, we will be hosting a membership drive, so talk about The Friendship Force with all of your family and friends and entice them into coming along with you.

Seven of us attended the Southwest Regional Conference in Dallas. We will be telling you about what the other clubs are doing, as well as about the many diverse exchanges which are available to all members this year. We will also be presenting you with a copy of our by-laws in order for you to get to know your club better. We hope you will take an active roll this year by participating in one of its committees. Remember, Friendship Force is your club. Tell us what you want to do in it, and what kind of exchanges you would like to go on. Let's help it continue to be one of the world's best!

Remember, our FFI-Houston Chapter will be traveling to Japan this November. We would love to have you go along. It's time to commit, so please be ready to let us know your plans. Also, in March, we will be hosting an in-bound exchange from Kern County, California. Please let us know if you would like to participate by being a home host, day host, or dinner host for this very active club.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 28th!

In friendship, *Priscilla Bruyere*

February Meeting

World Friendship Day in Houston
Saturday, February 28th
Tracy Gee Community Center, 11:30am-2pm
(3599 Westcenter Blvd. – one block inside Beltway 8 at Richmond)

Each year, Friendship Force International celebrates World Friendship Day. Please come in your favorite country's traditional dress and bring a friend and a covered dish for lunch. Do you have any souvenirs from some of your trips to share with the group? BRING THEM, as we do a sort of "Show 'n Tell/Get-to-Know-You" session. Especially for our newer members, our program will be an overview and orientation of FFI and what it is all about, presented by Ruby Reviere, a past President of the Houston Club. We would welcome input from all members as well as ideas as to what you would like to know more about. Feel free to let Ruby know your questions by emailing her at rubyreviere@earthlink.net.

This is a pot-luck – so *bring your favorite international dish*.

Dress code: "International" – wear something interesting!!

Surprise us!!

Here are pictures from Houston Chapter celebrating World Friendship Day March 2006



Please send the following information to your friends and family to invite them to this meeting or feel free to send the entire newsletter. Also please send this verbiage to your local suburban newspaper for inclusion:

The Friendship Force International-Houston Chapter cordially invites you to a grand celebration of World Friendship Day at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Blvd., Houston, TX, on Saturday, February 28th, 2009 at 11AM. We will be serving a delicious pot-luck luncheon consisting of foods from around the world prepared by our members who will be wearing native costumes from the countries they have visited. An entertaining program will follow during which time you will hear about the interesting and incredible experiences they have enjoyed as they've traveled around the world, and how you, too, can travel world-wide at a minimal expense while seeing the sites in each country, and also building friendships which will last a lifetime. So, come enjoy a delightful luncheon and afternoon as our guests and explore even further what this club has to offer. You, your friends and family are most welcome. Please RSVP to Genevieve 281-970-6751 or Ruby Reviere at 281-482-2464, email: rubyreviere@earthlink.net

January's Event to Museum of Fine Arts

“Art Unfolded: The Gift of Conservation from Japan”



To broaden our knowledge of Japan prior to our trip in November, our January outing was a trip to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts where we saw a small, exquisite exhibit about the preservation of two very large, very old Japanese silk screen prints (above). An enlargement of one of the dozen screens is to the right. We were able to see the utensils and the detailed process, which was done to match exactly the original equipment and technique used in making these screens in the 1600's

After viewing this exhibit, we browsed through the museum at our leisure seeing other exhibits of interest or visiting the gift shop until it was time to meet for lunch at the Nippon Japanese Restaurant on Montrose Blvd. The food was excellent and, again, it helped prepare us for our trip in the fall.



Unknown, Japanese, *Hue Sanno Sairei-Zu*, c. 1716
Gift of the estate of Mrs. Dudley C. Sharp, Sr.

Member Highlight

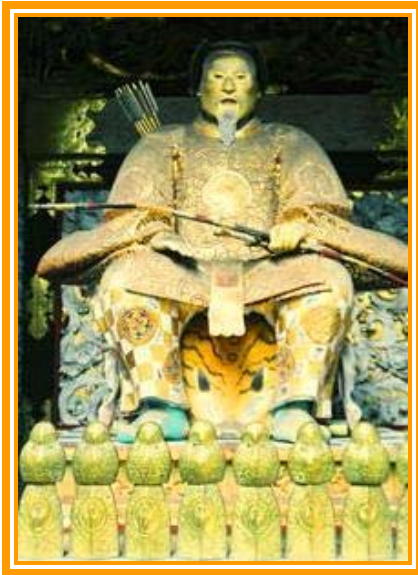
Shirley Hooks grew up in KY and lived in Ohio for most of her life after receiving a BS degree from the University of Dayton and a Masters of Education from Wright State University. She moved to Montgomery, Alabama after her husband, Arnold, retired from the Air Force in 1986 and they were active in the Friendship Force there. After he died in 2003, she came to Houston to be near her son.

Her first introduction to Friendship Force was in 1987 when Jeanne Comer (founder of Friendship Force in Dayton) invited her to go to Bournamouth, England and spend a week with hosts there and then on to Manchester for another week. Although she never traveled again with the Friendship Force, she and her husband hosted folks from England, Colombia, Russia and were the Directors for an Inbound Exchange from Brazil. She joined the Houston Friendship Force in 2005.

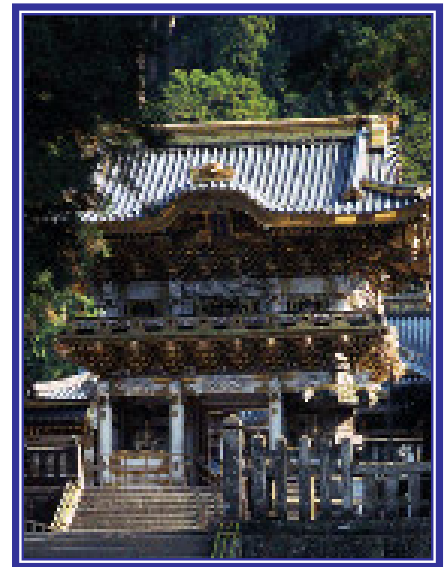
Shirley likes to golf, play Tournament Bridge, read, and travel. She is also a Master Gardener. Shirley and our newest members, Ann Ridgway and Carolyn Lanier, hope to travel with FFHouston on our upcoming trip to Japan.

2009 Outbound Exchange to Tokyo, Japan

by Outbound Exchange Director, Joy Huntington



During our Outbound Exchange to Japan in November, our hosts in Tokyo want to take us on an optional day trip to Nikko, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Sight. Nikko is one of the most popular daytrips from Tokyo and among Japan's best-known tourist attractions. The shrines and the temples in the city, and above all the splendid **Tosho-gu** complex are often considered some of the best sights in the country. Many Japanese and foreigners familiar with the country recommend including Nikko in any first-time visit to Japan. The main attraction is the Tosho-gu shrine, built in the early 17th century as a mausoleum piece for the founder of the shogunate, Tokugawa Ieyasu.



Toshogu is where Ieyasu Tokugawa (ruling from 1603 to 1605) is enshrined. He was the first shogun of the Edo Shogunate, which flourished between the 17th and 19th centuries. As many as 127,000 craftsmen were involved in constructing the shrine, using the highest level of technology available at the time. The two-story "Youmei-mon Gate", decorated with brilliant colors and over 500 sculptures, is particularly famous. It is also called "Higurashi-mon (sunset gate)", because people spend all day long gazing at its beauty.

Specifics of our Outbound Exchange:

- Thursday, November 12th – Friday, November 27th (return date to be decided by Ambassadors)
- Non-stop Round Trip from Houston - Tokyo – Houston with domestic flights from Tokyo – Okinawa - Tokyo
- Seven days in club members' homes in Tokyo followed by FFI International Conference in Okinawa, then five days touring Okinawa and the surrounding area on our own.
- Estimated cost known at this time is \$2,500.

We will be passing around a sign-up sheet at our meeting on Feb. 28th for those who are serious about going. At least six people from Connecticut will be joining us, so get your name in early.

Southwest Regional Conference

Seven members attended the Friendship Force’s annual Southwest Regional Conference from February 6 – 8 in Addison, TX (north of Dallas) where about 100 delegates gathered to learn and share ideas about FFI. There were several members of the International Staff and/or Board in attendance who spoke and made presentations. Much was learned in “break-out” sessions about such topics as Communications (Cultural Sensitivity), Exchange Management, Club Administration (Financial), Special Exchanges, Communications through better Newsletters and Websites, Club Administration (Recruiting/Training Members and Officers, Database Management). New friendships were started and old friendships, from previous Conferences or Domestic Exchanges, were renewed. A good time was had by all and we are already planning to attend next year’s conference in the Rio Grande Valley. Perhaps you can join us in sunny South Texas next February.

Priscilla and Joy register



Dolores & Priscilla w/ Rio Grande Valley



Ruby at Ethiopian Restaurant



Erma showing Russian/Ukrainian display



General Session



Chinese Banquet



Kern County, California is coming in March

by Inbound Exchange Director, PJ Missman

March 25, Wednesday	Arrival at George Bush Intercontinental 7pm - Welcome Dinner - The Potatoe Patch
March 26, Thursday	George Ranch, including lunch Evening - Dinner with host family
March 27, Friday	10am - NASA Space Center 2:30 pm - Ship Channel Cruise 6pm - Dinner with host family
March 28, Saturday	Optional trip to San Jacinto Monument, Battleship Texas, followed by a pizza party at Joy's house
March 29, Sunday	All Day -- with host family
March 30, Monday	10:00am Tour downtown area, including Minute Maid Park, Chase Tower, Theater District, lunch at the Downtown Aquarium, City Hall and Visitors' Gift Shop, Tunnel System, The Park Shops Mall, Discovery Green and finish at the Hilton Hotel top floor viewing city lights at dusk. Dinner with host family.
March 31, Tuesday	10am - Museum of Natural Science & Museum of Fine Arts Lunch at Café Express in MFA 6:00 pm - Farewell Dinner at River Oaks Baptist School
April 1, Wednesday	All Ambassadors depart

Please let PJ Missman know if you can help by being a home host or a day host by emailing psimms82@hotmail.com or by calling 713-529-4619.

2009 FF Houston Calendar

The dates for our 2009 meetings are noted below, including our Board Meetings, to which everyone is invited. Noted in **blue** is our Inbound Exchange and in **red** is our Outbound Exchange. Please note that we need a few remaining programming ideas (**tbd**), so your suggestions are welcomed. Ray Missman, our VP, is in charge of programming and would be happy to have your thoughts on this.

Houston FFI 2009 Calendar				
Date	Day	Activity	Location	Time
February 28	Sat	World Friendship Day and international potluck	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
March 3	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
<i>March 25-April 1</i>	<i>Wed - Wed</i>	<i>Inbound Exchange, PJ Missman, ED</i>	<i>from Kern County, Calif.</i>	
April 7	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
April 25	Sat	Japan-America Society guest speaker & lunch	Kubo's Restaurant	11:00am
May 5	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
May 30	Sat	Houston "Greeters" guest speaker and lunch TBD	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
June 2	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
June 27	Sat	Presentation on Japan, with guest speaker & potluck lunch	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
July 7	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
July 25	Sat	TBD	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
August 4	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
August 29	Sat	TBD	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
September 1	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
September 26	Sat	China presentation by Missmans & Doolittles	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
October 6	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
October 24	Sat	TBD	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
November 4	Wed	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
<i>Nov. 13 - 19</i>	<i>Fri - Thu</i>	<i>Outbound Exchange, Joy Huntington, ED</i>	<i>to Tokyo, Japan</i>	
<i>Nov. 19 - 22</i>	<i>Thu - Sun</i>	<i>International Conference</i>	<i>in Okinawa, Japan</i>	
<i>Nov. 23 - 27</i>	<i>Mon - Fri</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Okinawa area</i>	
December 1	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
December 12	Sat	Holiday Party and/or Activity	TBD	TBD

TBD = to be determined (your ideas are appreciated)

Contact us

Friendship Force International

www.thefriendshipforce.org

Friendship Force Houston, TX

www.friendshipforcehoustontx.com (under construction)

info@friendshipforcehoustontx.com

President

Priscilla Bruyere

2806 Quail Run Dr.
Humble, TX 77396-1864
281-441-4578 or 832-445-5315
PriscillaBruyere1@yahoo.com

Vice-President & Programming

Ray Missman

713-529-4619
ray@missman.org

Treasurer

Divya Matai

832-549-8497
divyamatai@yahoo.com

Secretary

Linda Doolittle

713-465-3120
ldoo15@aol.com

Newsletter Editor & Outbound Exchange Director

Joy Huntington

281-837-5151 or 281-380-8684
jhuntington001@comcast.net

Membership Chairman

Betty Spooner

281-589-7901
no email address

Inbound Exchange Director

P J Missman

713-529-4619
psimms82@hotmail.com

Publicity Chairman

Genevieve Pike

281-970-6751
geneviepike@sbcglobal.net

Past Pres & FFI Procedures Chairman

Ruby Reviere

281-482-2464
[rubyreviere@earthlink.net](mailto:rbyreviere@earthlink.net)

Past Pres, Advisor & Parliamentarian

Dolores Rieger

713-774-3488
drieger247@aol.com