



# friendship force

## HOUSTON

March  
2009

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

*Explore • Understand • Serve®*

### 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.

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## President's Corner

Dear Members of Friendship Force Houston,

It was great seeing so many of you at February's World Friendship Day celebration! The pot-luck luncheon consisting of foreign dishes prepared by our members was delicious, the native costumes everyone wore were beautiful, and the meeting's agenda consisting of a full briefing as to what The Friendship Force is all about, was great. We welcomed several new members and had a great day sharing some of our international experiences.

Now we're planning activities for our inbound exchange this month with The Friendship Force Kern County, California Club. They will be flying into Houston on Wednesday, March 25th and will be treated to a delicious, down-home Texas-style Welcome Dinner at The Potatoe Patch Restaurant in northwest Houston. We are very much looking forward to meeting these Californians, many of whom are long-time friends of PJ Missman's. From what we hear, this is a very active club. We will have a good time showing-off Houston to them with a full week's schedule of activities. The final planning meeting will be at the Missman's town house on Sunday, March 22nd at 2:30pm. Please attend this meeting if you would like to be a day-host or dinner-host. If you will be unable to host in any capacity, you are most welcome to attend the Welcome Dinner, the Farewell Dinner, and the Crawfish Boil. Of course, you may want to participate in any of the week's activities. A schedule of activities is in this newsletter. Let's have a good turn-out for the Kern County Club and help roll out the red carpet for them. I'm sure we all can make them feel very much at-home in our wonderful city.

I'm looking forward to seeing you the week of March 25th through April 1st along with the Kern County members who have already invited us to visit them next year in California! Let's pitch in and give them a good taste of true Houston hospitality!

In friendship, *Priscilla Bruyere*

## Kern County, California is coming this month

by Inbound Exchange Director, PJ Missman

To ensure a well-organized exchange, we would like everyone who can help with the Kern County Exchange (home hosts and day hosts) to attend a final planning session on Sunday March 22nd at 2:30pm at the Missmans. We will be putting together welcome bags and covering all the last minute details. **Please let Ray or PJ know if you are coming and call 713-529-4619 if you need directions.**

We would like as many members as possible to join us on one or more of the daily outings, and if you can help drive guests on these days, please let me know how many passengers your car can hold. Everyone is encouraged to join us for all three of the dinners, the WELCOME dinner, the FAREWELL dinner, and the CRAWFISH BOIL. We are going to have a wonderful time, and if you are new to FFI, this is a great opportunity to see FFI in action! To get a more accurate count for meals, **please fill out the form on the next page, then copy and email (or "snail mail") it to me.**

March 25, Wednesday	- Ambassadors met by Hosts at George Bush Intercontinental (arrival times vary). - 5:30 p.m. Welcome Dinner at The Potatoe Patch on FM 1960.	\$15 pp
March 26, Thursday	- George Ranch guided tour includes lunch. - Dinner with host family.	\$15 pp
March 27, Friday	- Tour of NASA Space Center w/ sack lunch provided by host. - 2:30 p.m. Ship Channel Cruise. - 6 p.m. Dinner with host family.	\$10 pp free
March 28, Saturday	- Day with host family or optional trip to Old Town Spring. - 3:30 p.m. Shrimp & Crawfish Boil at host home in the Woodlands.	Personal expenses free
March 29, Sunday	- All day with host family	
March 30, Monday	- 10 a.m. 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.  - 7 p.m. Dinner with host family.	\$10-MMP tour \$-lunch from menu \$15- Aquarium Shark tour &adventure
March 31, Tuesday	- 10 a.m. - Museum of Natural Science & Museum of Fine Arts.  - Lunch at Café Express in MFA.  - 6 p.m. - Farewell Dinner at River Oaks Baptist School	\$ entrance fees \$ lunch \$15 dinner
April 1 Wednesday	All Ambassadors depart by van. (General meeting spot to be determined.) They are driving to San Antonio for a 3-day stay.	

**PLEASE LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR AVAILABILITY TO JOIN US  
BY FILLING OUT THE FORM BELOW AND RETURNING IT TO P J MISSMAN**

<u>X</u>	<u>Check which events you will attend.</u>	<u>If you can drive, how many passengers can you take?</u>
	Sunday, 3/22, 2:30pm Planning Meeting	NA
	Wednesday, Welcome Dinner (\$15)	
	Thursday, George Ranch (\$15)	
	Friday, NASA & Ship Channel Cruise (\$10)	
	Saturday, Old Town Spring (personal costs)	
	Saturday, Crawfish Boil (donation please)	
	Monday, Downtown (\$25 and lunch money)	
	Tuesday, Museum Day (entrance fees and lunch money)	
	Wednesday, Farewell Dinner (\$15)	

## February Meeting

### World Friendship Day in Houston

In celebration of World Friendship Day, we came dressed in our favorite country's traditional dress and brought food items from other countries to share with the group. Some members also brought souvenirs from their trips to share during a sort of "Show 'n Tell/Get-to-Know-You" session. In attendance were several new members, several guests who joined at the meeting, and several prospective members. We were thrilled to have so many new faces. Examples of some of our outfits are pictured below, as "modeled" by Priscilla Bruyere, Joy Huntington, Mary and Tom Evans, and John Doolittle (2<sup>nd</sup> picture).



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## Membership News

by Membership Chairman, Betty Spooner

Good news and bad news! Bad news is that several of our members chose not to renew their memberships this year for various personal reasons. Among them was Rubik Alexander who is contemplating a move to California. The good news is that, as of this writing, we have added 13 new people to our roster this year: Jean Calhoun, Vivian Cromwell, Joanne Jackson, Linda Jones, Rita Campbell, Ana Hnat, Carolyn Lanier, Ann Ridgway, Jeanie Holbrook, Linda and Terry Marlin, Lydia McMullen (a long-time member from years back), and Jackie Zwayne. Shirley Hooks renewed in February and brought in her friends, Carolyn Lanier, Ann Ridgway, and Linda and Terry Marlin.

We are thrilled to welcome these folks who were all recruited by members. Even though we are stepping up the advertising of our club in various local publications, this still shows that our best recruitment tool is one-on-one invitations. So, spread the word to every person you meet and bring them into the fold. Also, watch for a spotlight on our newer members in upcoming newsletters.

Attached to the electronic version of this document is a new membership list in Excel format for members only which can be used to send emails easily and directly from the list. For those of you non-computer folks, we are sending a hardcopy in a "non-techie" format.

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## Member Highlight, by Lila Day

I was born in Ohio, raised in West Virginia, and moved to California which was home for many, many years. While working at Douglas Aircraft Co., I met my future husband, Lloyd Day, who was such a brave man marrying a divorced lady with three daughters and taking on the responsibility of raising them as his own. While still working, I returned to college studying accounting and then legal training. Once our daughters left home for life on their own, we moved to the suburbs of Los Angeles and became horse owners, both training and showing for ten years. Lloyd was transferred to the Washington D.C. office, working with NASA, and we moved to Northern Virginia. This is where we became involved with Friendship Force of the Capital Area.

We immediately became very involved, going to Veld Hoven, Amsterdam for the International Conference and had the honor of meeting President and Roslyn Carter, as well as the head of FFI at that time. Hosted a lady from England the first year; traveled to Russia; Asst. ED for incoming group of 37 Ambassadors from Japan; ED for an exchange to Chile; and Asst. ED for incoming group from Bolivia. Was newsletter editor for four years, and secretary for two years. While we were in the D.C. area, FFI was just beginning to bring Russian Ambassadors to the U.S. They spent two/three days in Washington, always in a hotel, and we had huge dinner parties for them in our homes. Lloyd and I hosted four of these dinner parties and were the first to say "no smoking in our home". There was no problem with telling them that although all other members were afraid that it would offend them. It worked just fine. The Russians really were a fun loving group, and we thoroughly enjoyed having them - 48 in our home for one party!! Opened the basement and had them playing ping pong, dancing, singing and playing games they'd brought along with them.

At this point Lloyd retired and we returned to California for three years and joined the San Diego Friendship Force. We did not get too involved as we decided to make our retirement home in Houston (Pearland). We joined FFHouston and became very involved once again. I was ED for outgoing exchanges to Colorado

Springs, Belize, and Belgium; traveled to Turkey and Sweden with FFH; hosted ambassadors from Germany, Scotland, and others I just can't recall at this time and was the Newsletter Editor for four years.

My family now consists of my three beautiful daughters, ten grandchildren, and sixteen great grandchildren who have given me lots of comfort since Lloyd passed away in 2007. My hobbies include golf, quilting, reading, needlepoint, and of course travel.

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## Personal Update

A note from Karen Shouse (member): Thank you for keeping me posted on events with FF. Dennis and I are unable to participate in the California exchange as I will have my FINAL breast cancer treatment at the hospital that week, followed by a minor surgery the following week. I look forward to seeing you at future FF events over the summer.

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## November Outbound Exchange to Tokyo, Japan

by Outbound Exchange Director, Joy Huntington

Interest is rising and time is flying!! We already have 15 people signed up for the exchange to Japan and that doesn't count the folks that are joining us from Connecticut (invited by Atlanta office). I have the following names, in order of signup, so please keep me apprised of your status: Jean Ellis (Rio Grande Valley), Priscilla Bruyere, Shirley Hooks, Ann Ridgway, Carolyn Lanier, Peggy Hayward (ED from CT), Ruby Reviere, Erma Fennema, Genevieve Pike, Elizabeth Spooner, Bernice Beckerman, Lucia and Karim Mera and their daughter. Make sure your passports are up to date and will not expire for at least six months after our trip.

In each newsletter, I will highlight some aspect of our trip so you can begin to learn about the things we will see and the people (and culture) we will visit. Following is a link to the FF Tokyo Club's published Profile:  
[http://clubresources.thefriendshipforce.org/images/Forms/clubprofiles/Tokyo\\_Profile1998.doc](http://clubresources.thefriendshipforce.org/images/Forms/clubprofiles/Tokyo_Profile1998.doc)



**Hamarikyu:** This urban oasis has origins stretching back 300 years, when it served as a retreat for a former feudal lord and as duck-hunting grounds for the Tokugawa shoguns. In 1871, possession of the garden passed to the Imperial family, who used it to entertain such visiting dignitaries as Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Considered one of Tokyo's most attractive landscape gardens, it is located alongside Tokyo Bay, near the mouth of the Sumida-gawa, a large river flowing through Tokyo. This garden is a typical Daimyo (Japanese feudal lord) garden in the Edo period with a tidal pond and two wild-duck hunting sites. This style was used in coastal gardens in the Edo period. The whole tidal pond had been reed fields and was used as a falconry site for Shogun families. Later, in 1654, land was reclaimed from the sea and a villa built there, providing accommodation for feudal lords during the 17th to 19th centuries when they stayed in Edo (present day Tokyo). It was from here that the shogun would go boating in nearby rivers. Being on the sea, the tidal pond's scenery varies with the ebb and flow of the tide. This tidal pool is spanned by three bridges draped with wisteria. There are also other ponds; a refuge for ducks, herons, and migratory birds; a promenade along the bay lined with pine trees; a 300-year-old pine; moon-viewing pavilions; and teahouses. The garden was the "then-suburban" palace of royal families and officially named Hamarikyu, which means "a detached palace on the coast". Now the garden is surrounded by high-rise buildings of the Shiodome business area, and the contrast between the old and the new is superb.

## 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.

<b>Houston FFI 2009 Calendar</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>
<i>March 25-April 1</i>	<i>Wed - Wed</i>	<i>Inbound Exchange, PJ Missman, ED</i>	<i>from Kern County, Calif.</i>	<i>See article on page 2</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	<b>TBD</b>	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	11:00am
August 4	Tue	Board Meeting	Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr.	7:00pm
August 29	Sat	<b>TBD</b>	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	<b>TBD</b>	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	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>

**TBD** = to be determined (your ideas are appreciated)