



friendship force

H O U S T O N

August
2012

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.

President's Corner

We did it again! Another great meeting due to the creativity and energy of our own members. Art Blevins and Sid and Don Formanek shared their pictures from their Peru Exchange, and it was so well prepared. They searched through their more than 2,000 pictures to gather the most significant, which were presented slide-like, but where one picture stayed up maybe 10 seconds [I did not time it] before the next one came on automatically, so the presentation was brilliantly and briskly paced. Then there was their charming accompanying narrative with many amusing anecdotes [the Formaneks got left behind in very literally the middle of nowhere and Art met all these lovely ladies....well, he's going back] which left all of us wanting to go back with Art. I know not going on that trip is going to be one of my big regrets in life [I may put it in my obituary "and she did not go to Peru in 2012 with the Friendship Force"]. Thank you, Art, Don, and Sid for that very entertaining afternoon and for all the hard work you obviously put into it to make it go so smoothly. They brought a variety of treasures to display for us, too.

The potluck our members provided was delicious, as usual. I do believe it's my best meal each month. We have many fine cooks, and so many really do cook. It's not all from Costco [upon which a few of our members, like your President, tend to rely]. Thank you all. Our newest member Nobuaki [Mark] Takayama attended, and it was great to see him.

Next month foreign students from Rice University will lead our meeting. Their object is to encourage us to "adopt" a foreign student in the sense of interacting with one on a monthly basis so that they don't return to their native land without ever being in an American home. They will "train" us, if you will, on how to have a successful relationship. I know most of us will not be able to commit to such a program, but the guidelines and suggestions should be of interest to all of us, since "friendship" is our mantra. Please come and see what these kids have to say.

Yours in friendship,

Linda Marlin

Upcoming Meeting Aug. 25th

Office of International Students & Scholars



At our August meeting, we will have several guests from the Rice University Office of International Students & Scholars, including Mingjie Liu (pictured here) to tell us about an organization on campus that gives international students the opportunity to connect with an average American family/person on a personal level and experience average "American" activities.



Friends of International Students & Scholars

Host friends and families needed



Orientation Sessions for Individuals interested in participating as Host Friends:

July 25, 2012 from 5:15 to 6:30 at Rice University

July 30, 2012 from 12:00 to 1:00 at Rice University

July 31, 2012 from 12:00 to 1:00 at Rice University

August 29, 2012 from 5:30 to 6:45 at IIE

September 19, 2012 Pot Luck/Matching Event at Rice University from 6:00 – 8:00.

RSVP to fiss@iie.org for further information.

Are you interested in learning about another culture and sharing your own?

Would you like to get to know Rice University international students and scholars?

Do you want to help an international student or scholar learn about life in Houston?

What is FISS?

- ✓ The Friends of International Students and Scholars Program (FISS) is a friendship program allowing international students a chance to learn about American lifestyles and to become better acquainted with the city of Houston, while providing the Student and the U.S. Host Friend an opportunity to gain new perspectives on the world through an exchange of ideas.
- ✓ FISS is a flexible program with few set activities or time commitments. Once a Host Friend and Student are matched, they can decide what they would like to do together - go to the movies, meet for dinner, attend a downtown concert, etc.
- ✓ All community members are encouraged to participate. Single individuals, couples, families, etc., are all invited to be Friends. If you are genuinely interested in international exchanges on a personal level, you are encouraged to participate in FISS.

Co-Sponsored by:



For more information contact: Christine Zumwalt, Institute of International Education, 1800 West Loop South, Suite 250, Houston, TX, 77027, fiss@iie.org, 832-369-3482

July Meeting & Review of Peru Exchange

by Joy Huntington

Since I was not able to attend the meeting on July 28th, I'm probably not the best person to be writing a review of it. However, I had a personal showing at the Formanek's home with all the wonderful details AND dinner, to boot. So if the slides and "show & tell" items that I saw were anything like what was shown at the meeting, then I can verify that it was a most interesting and informative presentation.



Our most recent Peruvian travelers, the Formaneks and Art, gave a presentation about their 3-week trip which included 2 exchanges and a week-long extension, with 8 other folks from other FF clubs and cities in the US. The first week's exchange in Tarapoto was an experience like no other. They were absolutely treated like royalty, not only by the club members themselves, but also by all the local citizenry in the various towns/villages they visited. Don, as ED, had to give several impromptu speeches when our group was welcomed by the various mayors and dignitaries, something which definitely isn't the "norm" for our exchanges. This area is at the headwaters of the Amazon River and they saw and crossed many different tributaries on their outings. One of my favorite pictures is the ferry boat ride below and the description by Ruby Kelly, one of the Ambassadors on the trip. Many of our modern conveniences were missing in this area, but it didn't dampen their spirits and in fact, made the experience all the more unique.



"The ferry consisted of three boats with separate engines (only one was in working condition) and a deck that spanned all three boats. Wooden planks were used to allow the vehicles to drive onto the barge. The passengers stood or sat in chairs. The crossing took about 10 minutes total from start to finish and we were on our way again."

The second week and second exchange was in Lima, where our group was treated to amazing museums, fabulous buildings and great food – as well as wonderful hosts. One of the highlights was watching the changing of the guard at the Royal Palace from inside the gates, up close and personal, when everyone else had to observe through the fence.



The third week was “our choice” and, boy, did we make the right choice!! Not only was our travel agent excellent, but she also went above and beyond the norm, even getting a doctor to make a “house call” for one of our Ambassadors. Everything was on time and provided with a friendly translator and driver. We also were lucky enough to have chosen the perfect time to be in Machu Picchu at the time of their annual celebration of Inti Raymi, the ancient Inca ceremony worshipping the Sun God. And again the group was up close and personal as you can see in the photos below (notice the thousands of spectators on the distant hills). So the experiences this week were breathtaking, awesome, spiritual, incredible, etc., etc. There are no words to describe all the fabulous things the group saw at Machu Picchu, the Sacred Valley, Lake Titicaca and the reed islands of the Uros people. Like nothing else!!



Then back to reality..... Here are some of the members who attended the meeting in July:



New Officers Needed

Please consider volunteering for an office in our club for next year. We have lots of Indians but no one wants to be among the chiefs. Please contact Ruby Reviere if you are willing to help our club keep moving forward.

Membership

If you would like an updated membership list, please contact Jean Porter, our Membership Chairman, found on our "contact" list below.

Contact Us

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www.thefriendshipforce.org

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www.ffhoustontx.org

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FF Houston 2012 Calendar

| Date | Day | Activity | Location | Time |
|-------------------|-----|---|---|-------|
| Aug 25 | Sat | Presentation by Rice Univ.'s VP for Int'l Education & her students with potluck luncheon followed by Board Mtg | Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr. * | 11 AM |
| Sep 15 | Sat | International Dining Night at Kublai Khan | 10001 Westheimer, #2520 713-532-2927 | 6 PM |
| Sep 29 | Sat | Presentation of slate of officers then presentation by the Ave Lallemands about their tour of "The Silk Road" with potluck luncheon followed by Board Mtg – | Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr. * | 11 AM |
| Oct 13 | Sat | International Dining Night at Erawan Restaurant (Thai cuisine) | San Felipe and Sage | 6 PM |
| Oct 25 – Nov 1 | | Inbound Exchange from North Bay, Canada | Ruby Reviere & Mary Adams, co-EDs | |
| Oct 25 | Thu | Welcome Dinner for Canadian exchange (potluck) | Tracy Gee Comm. Ctr. * | 11 AM |
| Oct. 30 | Tue | Farewell Dinner | Doolittle's Club House | 6 PM |
| Nov 10 | Sat | Potluck dinner & Election of Officers | Doolittle's Club House | 6 PM |
| Dec 8 | Sat | Holiday Party at Sam Houston Park (Heritage Society) | Behind 1100 Bagby St. in downtown | |

* Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Blvd., one block inside Beltway 8 off Richmond