



# friendship force

## NEW MEXICO

### NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

#### *FROM THE DIRECTORS' DESK . . .*

We are delighted to have been selected your Co-Presidents for 2013 and are dedicated, along with our Vice-President Berta Wagstaff, to making this an exciting and memorable year for all of you. In large part, though, this depends on you. The more you participate, the better it gets. We need your creativity and ideas to shape and plan the program to make it as meaningful as possible for all members.

We have a great team and a strong board as shown below. Feel free to contact us with questions and suggestions.

Co-Presidents: John and Anne Heard

Vice-President: Berta Wagstaff

Treasurer: Nelle Conway

Secretary: Judith Mead

Social Chairs: Martha & David Meister

Membership: Evelyn Thole

SW Regional Conference: Ruth O'Keefe

Historian: Peggy Birmingham

Communications: Sue Bowersock

Items on our immediate agenda include implementing a new member orientation program and planning other informal gatherings so we can all get to know each other better. We would also like to take more advantage of what Friendship Force International in Atlanta has to offer and will be routinely circulating information from our headquarters including the constantly evolving catalogue of exciting exchange opportunities with other clubs. We are reaching out to other local organizations involved in international affairs so we can take advantage of what each has to offer and share opportunities for mutual benefit.

For example, we have agreed to partner with the Santa Fe World Affairs Forum for their upcoming Symposium on Living in Challenging Times, the United States and East Asia, on April 8-9, at St. John's College in Santa Fe. This will allow our members to attend at the member price, a substantial savings. We will get out a general notice on this

shortly. We are also cooperating with the Albuquerque Council for International Visitors and hope to become involved soon with the Sister Cities program which also conducts international exchanges, some of which involve home stays similar to ours. Finally, we plan to update and clarify our legal status as a non-profit corporation.

In closing, let us know how we can make Friendship Force membership better for all of you.

In Friendship, John and Anne

### ***NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION - MARCH 21, 2013***

Calling all new members!!! John and Anne Heard will host a new member orientation at their home, 2505 Griegos Place NW, on March 21 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. This is an opportunity for those new to the club (in the last two years) to discover what the Friendship Force is all about and the benefits of membership. Please let Ann or John know by March 19 if you can attend, 344-3255 or [johnheard2@msn.com](mailto:johnheard2@msn.com).

### ***UPCOMING LUNCHEONS . . .***

Our **March 9 luncheon** will feature David Steinberg, former Book and Arts Editor of the Albuquerque Journal, who will be telling us about his journalism experiences in Central and South America.

Our **April 13 speaker** will be "BG" Burr whose topic will be the "Baron of Arizona" and the Peralta Land Grant issues. BG is currently President of the Valencia County Historical Society, Secretary of the Historical Society of New Mexico, and Sheriff of Westerners International. Both speakers promise to be interesting and very entertaining.

Luncheons are on the second Saturday of the month at 11:30 am at the Hotel Elegante, University and Menaul. The cost for the luncheon is \$14.00.

### ***EXCHANGES***

September 2013: Inbound International Exchange - The Alajuela Club in Costa Rica will be visiting New Mexico and Ruth O'Keefe has graciously agreed to be Exchange Director for that visit. The Costa Ricans will also visit Colorado and are excited about the trip and it should be a fun and lively group to host.

May 2014: Inbound National Exchange from Sarasota, Florida.

September 2014: Outbound National Exchange to Sarasota, Florida

As a member of Friendship Force you are able to participate in any of the exchanges sponsored by other clubs as room is available. Check out [thefriendshipforce.org/catalog](http://thefriendshipforce.org/catalog) to see what trips are planned for in the coming months.

***FUTURE EVENTS:*** Mark your calendars for these future events:

Symposium for Living in Challenging Times, April 8-9, 2013 - Santa Fe  
International Meeting of Museum Directors, October 2013 - Larry Littlefield  
ACIV International Education Week - November 11-15, 2013  
World Conference in New Orleans - Friendship and All That Jazz -  
November 23 - 25, 2013  
Southwest Regional FF Conference - March 21-22, 2014  
World Conference in Auckland, New Zealand - October 2014

***MANY THANKS*** to Ruth O'Keefe for preparing our 2013 Membership Directory. They will be distributed at the March luncheon and mailed to those who are unable to attend in March.

### **FFNM MEMBERS CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR**

As the first of the gatherings we hope to sponsor outside of our monthly luncheons, 24 FF-NM members celebrated Chinese New Year in style at Ho Lo Ma Chinese Restaurant for a sold-out event. We were entertained for about 30 minutes with bright, colorful and beautiful music and the finale featured a Dragon Dance where you had the opportunity to donate \$1.00 to insure good luck. Food was plentiful with six courses and no one left hungry. For the 24 who attended, the best part was the camaraderie among the participants who all look forward to our next outing.

### **MUNDO MAYA EXCHANGE - February 16-24, 2013**

**Chiapas, Mexico**

**By John and Anne Heard, Exchange Directors**

Eighteen Ambassadors, six from FF-NM (John and Anne Heard, David Hsi, Jim and Doris Maxwell and Kate Palmo) and twelve from other states, including New York, Arizona, Florida, Wisconsin, California and Texas, participated in the Mundo Maya Exchange. Arriving in Tuxtla Gutierrez,



**Hosts and Ambassadors at the Farewell Luncheon**

the capitol of Chiapas, on Saturday, February 16, we were met by our enthusiastic and welcoming hosts. Our festive welcome and farewell lunches were in the beautiful tent-covered garden of our Exchange Director's sister, complete with sumptuous food, loosening libations and a lively marimba band for dancing.



**Market in San Cristobal**

known for its high quality artisan handicrafts and saw the extraordinary Cristo de Copoya - a 48 meter tall cross with Christ high above the town. The town's people take great pride in telling all visitors that their cross is taller than the Cristo Rey in Rio de Janeiro.

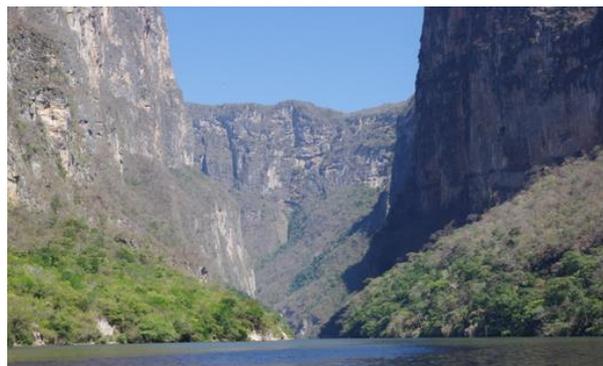
The visit included four full days in Tuxtla Gutierrez with our hosts and three days on the road for an excursion to the magnificent Mayan ruins at Toniná and Palenque and the beautiful colonial town of San Cristóbal. While in Tuxtla we visited the Museum of Anthropology, one of Mexico's best, took an incredible boat ride through the 3,000 foot high Canyon de Sumidero, visited the town of Chiapa de Corzo



**Mayan Ruins at Palenque**

Although we had hoped for more travelers from New Mexico, we were blessed to have the opportunity to get to know wonderful people from clubs around the US and establish inter-club connections that may serve us well in future trips to build interesting relationships.

The Chiapaqueños took elegant care of us in their lovely homes and demonstrated the typical warm and caring approach for which Friendship Force is known world-wide. Most of our group did not speak Spanish, and most of the Mundo Maya club had little English. This was not a problem, however, given the serious cross-cultural communication effort made on both side



**Canyon de Sumidero**

At our farewell party our group presented the Mundo Maya club with \$300 in cash to benefit a charity or cause of their choice. Many heartfelt speeches were made and hundreds of photos were taken of happy people from both sides. As is typical with Latin American exchanges, we were all hugged and kissed dozens of times and left knowing that we had established lasting relationships of good will and friendship. We all agreed that we should host the Mundo Maya club in the future, hopefully in 2014 or 2015. We think this would be a particularly delightful group to host here in New Mexico.

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