



friendship force

NEW MEXICO

MAY 2014 NEWSLETTER

**Friendship Force
of New Mexico
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From the President ---

Our Club has recently hosted Ambassadors from Sarasota, Florida and will host Ambassadors from Blue Mountain, Australia in the next few weeks. A great big thank you to Larry Littlefield and Berta Wagstaff for accepting the position of Exchange Director for these Exchanges. We are all looking forward to making new friends and enjoying these visits. Another thank you for all of you who volunteered to be home hosts and/or day hosts. It is truly a rewarding experience to participate in these Exchanges.

I am now taking names for those who would like to participate in our outgoing Exchange to Sarasota, Florida, November 11 - 18 of this year. This is great chance to get away to Florida during our cold weather. I have been gathering information and will be scheduling a meeting for those who are interested in early June (after our incoming Exchanges). Please consider this opportunity and let me know if you would like to be on the list. Several have already signed up.

We are also in need of Exchange Directors for our Exchanges in 2015. We have an inbound Exchange from Hay River, Canada in April, an Outbound Exchange to New Zealand in early February and an inbound Exchange from Moscow, Russia in September. It is not too early to get started on the planning. Please contact me if you are interested in these important positions. Training will be provided. The New Zealand Exchange will be two weeks, one week on the North Island and one week on the South Island. Remember, there are funds available for the Exchange Directors to help cover their expenses. My e-mail is j.w.mead@centurylink.net.

Judith Mead, President

Upcoming Luncheon Dates and Speakers:

May 10 - Don Bullis speaking on "How Wild was the Wild West?" Mr. Bullis is an award winning fiction and non-fiction whose themes are New Mexico and The Wild West. He began his career in law enforcement and after retirement, returned to newspaper work as a columnist, book reviewer and political correspondent for the Rio Rancho Observer.

June 14 - Dick Ruddy will be speaking about "Edmond G. Ross, a Profile in Courage." Mr. Ruddy is a UNM graduate, Vietnam veteran, film producer and had a 30-year career as a commercial photographer in Albuquerque. We know Edmond Ross as the man who cast the important vote as a US Senator from Kansas that prevented the conviction of President Andrew Johnson of "high crimes and misdemeanors," allowing Johnson to stay in office, but Ross was also a significant abolitionist, journalist, Union officer, and eventually, New Mexico territorial governor.

Luncheons, as always, 11:30 am at the Hotel Elegante, 2020 Menaul NE, \$14.00 per person.

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Mark your calendars:

Inbound Exchange, Blue Mountains Australia, May 25-June 1, 2014

FFI World Conference, New Zealand, October 14 - 16, 2014

Outbound Exchange, Sarasota, Florida, November 11- 18, 2014

Outbound Exchange, New Plymouth and Christchurch, New Zealand,

February 2015

Inbound Exchange, Hay River, Canada, April 2015

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The Aussies are coming, the Aussies are coming . . .

Friendship Force New Mexico will host Ambassadors from the Blue Mountain Club in Australia from May 25 to June 1, 2014. Berta Wagstaff, ED, reports that home hosts and day hosts are in place, activities have been planned, and we are looking forward to this exchange.

Part of the exchange will be to attend the musical, *Les Miserables*, on May 30 at 7:30 pm at the Albuquerque Little Theater. NM Club members are encouraged to join the group and meet the Australians! Arrangements are being made for a social for our group before the performance or during intermission. We have a group discount of \$20 per person. If you would like to join us, please give me a call (home - 899-0236), and let me know the check is in the mail! Make check payable to Berta Wagstaff. It should be a great evening!

Deadline to reserve a seat for *Les Miserables* is Wednesday, May 21.

We will bid farewell to the Australians on Saturday, May 31 at Dana Davis' home - 3420 Vista Del Sur NW at 6:00 pm. Please RSVP to me (899-0236) by May 21, Wednesday if you wish to be part of the Farewell Party. The cost will be \$10/person. Again, checks may be made payable to me. Join us in making the Aussies feel welcomed!

Many thanks to those who participated in, contributed to, and/or hosted post-conference groups. The participants appeared to have a good time and your help promoted a successful and enjoyable Southwest Regional Conference.

About our members: Congratulations to David Hsi, a graduate of the University of Minnesota in plant genetics, who has won their Alumni Association's Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition by his peers for his decades of leadership in scientific, cultural and civic activities in the area of food, agriculture, natural resources and beyond.

From FFI President, Joy DiBenedetto,

I hope this note finds you all doing well: making good friends, experiencing fulfilling travel opportunities, and enjoying life wherever you are in the world today.

As I've said many times, I want FFI to be in service to our members and clubs, just like you have taken up our challenge of friendship-building with the world community. And now, I want all of you to have a say in where we are going next.

In order to accomplish this, we at FFI will be asking you to help us by completing a survey designed to gauge your own opinions as we formulate our next steps and strategic plan for the future and for the next generation. **You have a role to play and a voice to add.** Within the next few weeks we will be sharing two questionnaires - *one with our all of our members and one directly to club leaders.* These are both designed to ask you what you want out of FFI, what your individual interests are, how you like to travel with us, and when.

What I will ask of all of you beyond finishing the surveys is to complete them in a timely manner by our deadline of July 1, please. The current FFI Expansion Plan from 2012-2014 is about to be finished. After our July deadline, we will organize your responses and add it to our other work - and altogether this information will form FFI's next strategic plan to begin in 2015. We will present the plan for approval by the Board of Directors at their meeting in September 2014, and we will release the new plan at the October [World Conference in Auckland, New Zealand](#), as well as to you, our global members, online. Please, will you help us in shaping the next stage of our legacy and global future together?

ED's Report:Sarasota Exchange April 24-May 1, 2014

Eighteen very friendly ambassadors from Sarasota and two other Florida clubs, and our home and day hosts, participated in an exchange that gave the ambassadors a good overview of landscapes, culture and diversity of central New Mexico. Our activities included:

Day 1: Walking tour of Albuquerque Old Town led by Lenore Pardee and Larry Littlefield, lunch at Church Street Cafe, guided tour of the National Hispanic Cultural Center led by Chris and Ken Fenner, Welcome Dinner at Garduño's Restaurant, followed by visiting and more food and drinks at Ruth O'Keefe and Ed Studer's home.

Day 2: Trip to Acoma Pueblo, with a guided tour.

Day 3: Visit to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, including several Native dances and free time in the museum, galleries and gift shop. The afternoon's planned tram ride was cancelled because of high winds.

Day 4: An interesting and informative guided tour of the Intel Plant in Rio Rancho; lunch at the Range Cafe in Bernalillo; afternoon tour of the nearby Coronado State Monument, again limited by wind and temperature.

Day 5: All day Rail Runner trip to Santa Fe with a guided trolley tour upon arrival (thank goodness for warm blankets provided to all); followed by free time for lunch, museums, shopping, visiting galleries or just walking around.

Day 6: Free day for ambassadors to visit museums or other sights of interest not included in the planned itinerary. These activities included a tour of the Nuclear Museum of Science and History led by Docent Judith Mead, tram rides, visits to the Rio Grande Nature Center, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, the Turquoise Museum and the Balloon Museum, as well as much deserved rest. The Farewell Dinner was at St. Chad's Episcopal Church, with musical entertainment provided by Jo Margaret and John Farris. During the week various hosts and day hosts held group dinners in their homes for ambassadors and their hosts, and home hosts were treated to dinners out by their ambassadors.

Larry Littlefield, ED



***AMBASSADORS
EXCHANGE WITH SARASOTA,
FLORIDA
April 25-30, 2014***



