



Newsletter of The Friendship Force of Huntsville Area, Alabama

NEXT MEETING - 2:00 PM SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2008

Trinity United Methodist Church, 607 Airport Road

2008 Officers

President	David & Judy Lambert
Vice-President	Gertrude Powell
Secretary	Mary Woodward
Asst. Secretary	Nell Roberts
Treasurer	Jean Evans
Past Pres.	John & Marjie McSwain
Membership	Pat Allen
Publicity	Ruth Rothe
Refreshments	Jim & June Quinn, Jim & Jane McWhorter
Historian	Gertrude Powell
Newsletter	Joyce Bagwell
Tea Towels	Vi Veitch
Game Night	Elizabeth Libby
Sponsors	Dot Pettigrew, Anna Lee
Phone	Betty Lawson, Frances Marshall, Nancy Weaver
Email	David Lambert

2008 Meeting Dates

February 10	August 10
April 13	October 12
June 8	December 14

2008 Exchanges

Outbound:

Saitama & Gifu Japan
Colin & Joyce Bagwell, EDs

Inbound:

Moscow, Russia
Betty Lawson, ED
November 2008
"Mystery Exchange"
????, ED

Newsletter Editor:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Greetings members: We are happy to report Jean Evans is back home and has a good prognosis for recovery from the automobile accident during the Japanese exchange. She is a special person because she has so many good friends that helped and prayed for her, both at home and in Japan. It is wonderful to have good friends. The accident was a sad event but it proves the value of Friendship Force in developing cross cultural understanding, friendship and love. We will have the privilege and honor of entertaining one of Jean's Japanese hosts at the next meeting. Please come and show your appreciation of Sachiko Kotoku on June 8. She will be here in Huntsville from June 4 to June 11.

Last month we promised that our article on Books for Ghana would be published soon in the *Friendship Force International Magazine* and it was in the first issue of 2008. We hope you saw it and if not we will have the magazine and copies of the article at the next meeting. By the way, the FFI magazine is greatly improved and we think you should consider it as a great value for the subscription price of \$10.

George Brown, FFI president, reports that "thanks to volunteer leaders around the world, 2007 was a banner year for our exchanges: 272 with 5,767 ambassadors, the highest number in eight years" Also, the FFI magazine has the 2007 Statement of Finance and the operating expenses and the net assets balances are positive and improving. This is a remarkable improvement and dramatic achievement.

Seven of us from FF Huntsville Area went to the Regional Meeting in Pigeon Forge, Tn., April 22-24. Our delegates were Larry Luke, John and Marjorie McSwain, Jim and June McWhorter, and the Lamberts. It certainly was one of the best regional conferences, because of training seminars, social events, accommodations and visiting.

In 2009 the Aussies are coming in June and we have an outbound to Cairo. Ambassadors from Moscow are coming this October and we need host sign ups at the next meeting - see Betty Lawson.

In Friendship,
David & Judith Lambert

REFRESHMENTS for JUNE
Last Names A - M

MINUTES OF APRIL MEETING

The Huntsville Area Friendship Force Club met April 20, 2008, at Trinity United Methodist Church with David and Judy Lambert presiding. David announced that Jean Evans and Jackie Pettitt were injured in a car accident during the recent Japanese Exchange. Jackie received whiplash and got a broken rib after returning home, which could have been precipitated by the accident in Japan. Jean's hip had a piece chipped off of it, and she remained in Japan to have it surgically repaired. She also had to have about 12 stitches on her head. She will remain in Japan for another 3-4 weeks to recuperate. The Japanese hosts are taking excellent care of her, and she will fly home in First Class with a Medical Assistant. Travel Guard Insurance has furnished her with interpreters, nursing attendants, and every sort of aid.

The Minutes of the February meeting were approved as printed in the Ambassador.

The March 10 Treasurer's Report shows \$3271.81 in the club account and \$601.15 in the Japanese Exchange Account. Jean Evans, Treasurer, is still in Japan, so an updated report was not available at this time. David and Judy Lambert will take care of financial business until Jean's return.

Richard and Sharri Roser, friends of the Pettigrews, and Renae Massey were introduced as guests from Huntsville. Ingrid Reck, a guest from Bavaria, was introduced by Aelwyn Thomas.

Vi Veitch has plenty of tea towels in both green and blue. Dot Pettigrew has not found any new sponsors, but will work on this more before we receive another Incoming Exchange.

We will be hosting the State Picnic on September 13. We have booked Camp Maranatha in Scottsboro for this, which will cost \$11.00 per person. This will be paid by the attendees and includes meals and the camp rental. Many places were investigated, but all were either booked, too expensive, or the contact person couldn't be reached. We will continue to pursue finding a place in Huntsville. Maranatha can be cancelled if a better place is found. It was suggested that we make a reservation now for 2011 at the Alabama Constitution Village.

There will be an Incoming Exchange from Moscow in November, and Betty Lawson has agreed to be

the Exchange Director. Central Coast of Australia will be coming in 2009, and we will possibly be going to Cairo, Egypt, in November, 2009. This one has not yet been approved.

The Southeast Regional Conference will be April 22-24, 2008, in Pigeon Forge, TN, and will be attended by the Lamberts, McSwains, McWhorters, and Larry Luke.

A program on the Japanese Exchange was given by the Ambassadors who went. Colin Bagwell was in charge. Everyone agreed that the people of Japan were extremely hospitable and showed everyone a good time. Colin suggested that next exchange we should get an Entertainment Chair. Frank Broyles was chosen to participate in a skit in Japan, which he performed for the club. It was hilarious. He clogged, juggled, and gave a very humorous performance. Other entertainment done in Japan was a piano duet performed by June Quinn and the Lambert's Japanese host. The club also sang "The Hokey-Pokey" which was danced by both Americans and the Japanese. This really went over with the Japanese. Joe Jones reported on his trip to the Toyota Museum. He told about the history of Toyota and the different types of vehicles he saw there. Ann Redus reported on the flowers and trees, which were in the full bloom of spring. The Cherry Blossom Festival was going on and the trees were gorgeous. April is the very best month to visit Japan. The Cedar trees were as tall as California Redwoods and are raised for timber.

Charlotte Miller stayed in a very religious home where the hostess prayed to a Shinto goddess every morning. She learned a lot about the Shinto and Buddhist religions. Both religions are very much alike, except that the Shintoists are in Japan, and the Buddhists are in other parts of Asia. She found most people in Japan, other than her host, are not particularly religious. Aelwyn Thomas told about her hosts' World War II experiences that they told her about. Aelwyn also told about other various experiences on this trip. Larry Luke reported on some of the things he did on this trip. He told about their fancy toilet seats and various ways Japan has changed since he worked there several years ago. John and Margie McSwain extended their trip a few days and visited their hosts from a Japanese Exchange 14 years ago. She told about ways Japan has changed since their former visit. More people are speaking English, and there is more crime. However, there is not a lot of it. The people are very proud of their culture,

and more Japanese meals were served this time. The women would spend all day in the kitchen cooking for them, and could not be talked out of it. The Japanese men shrugged and said that that was what Japanese women loved to do. The men are beginning to help the women in the home a little bit now, however.

Joyce Bagwell talked about the importance of relationships formed with the Japanese and how important this will be in Jean Evans' care and recuperation. Joyce announced plans to get the Japanese Exchange group together later. LaVerne Ramsey, an Ambassador from Birmingham, is a very talented photographer and is going to share her pictures with the group.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Woodward

JUNE PROGRAM

As mentioned in the President's Message, Jean Evans and Sachiko Kotoku from Gifu, Japan will tell us about Jean's experiences in the hospital for six weeks. Sachiko will be visiting in Huntsville for a few days – make her welcome. And, you don't want to miss the program!

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members and add their information to your booklets:

Barbara Tran, 3600 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, AL 35810-4354, phone 457-5564. And, a returning member, **Mary D. Terrell**, 2101 Scott Street, Guntersville, AL 35976, 256-582-5259, mdterrell@charter.net. Welcome!!

STATE PICNIC

This year is Huntsville's turn to host the Annual State Picnic. The date is **September 13** and plans are to meet at **Alabama Constitution Village** here in Huntsville. Save the date and please be ready to help us host a fun event. Details about time and cost will be finalized shortly and you will receive information then.



MOSCOW, RUSSIA EXCHANGE

The first week in November we are scheduled to host an exchange from Moscow, Russia. Betty Lawson will serve as Exchange Director. Pencil this on your calendars and be ready to agree to help. Watch for details to follow.

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The conference for our region was held April 22-24 in Pigeon Forge, TN, with representatives of 11 clubs attending including 7 members of the Huntsville club. The main objective was to facilitate interactions between clubs while providing unique workshops. We had workshops ranging from how to set up and maintain a club website to guidelines on serving as an inbound or outbound exchange director. A highlight of the conference was the attendance and participation of George Brown, president of Friendship Force International. George talked on the "Strategic Plan for FFI's Future" and hosted a question and answer session. FFI is basically moving dynamically to adapt to the inter-cultural needs of a changing world and difficulties in international travel. We were also treated to workshops on "Toys from Around the World" and "Travel Tips for Planning a Successful Exchange."

Among some of the more popular workshops held were "Strategic Planning", "Publicity" and "FFI Goals". Individual members are of prime importance in publicity and increasing our active membership. The emphasis comes again and again--NEW MEMBERS COME BY "WORD OF MOUTH", RECOMMENDATIONS BY FRIENDS. Members who emphasize the value of cultural exchanges, relating their experiences in terms of the interests of their friends, help them to recognize that this is not a "travel club", but a unique organization that includes travel as part of its mission. Including friends and neighbors in some of your activities while hosting is one way to "spread the word".

REMAINING 2008 GAME NIGHTS

June 20	Jean Evans
July 18	Claire Smith
August 15	John & Marjie McSwain
September 15	David & Judy Lambert
October 17	Walter & Joan Mendes
November 21	Claire Smith

CARE NOTES/MEMBER NEWS

Kathryn Neal is recuperating at home with an immune system problem. It's best to have no visitors, so please send cards or call.

Jean Montgomery has been in the hospital for extensive tests.

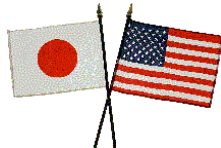
Jean Evans, of course, remains in our prayers for complete recovery from injuries in a car accident in Japan.

JAPANESE EXCHANGE

Evaluations from the Japan Ambassadors indicate that this was one of the three best exchanges ever. It was wonderful to see our Saitama friends again and to make totally new friends in Gifu. Clubs in both cities planned very outstanding parties, excursions, and entertainment. The areas are quite different, but people everywhere are the same. Of course, we came to rely especially on the Gifu club because of the accident and injuries of Jackie Pettitt and Jean Evans. Jackie was able to return home only a few days after our group, but Jean had to stay for many more weeks to recover enough to travel. She finally arrived back in Huntsville on May 24. She will have many stories for us about how wonderfully she was treated.

We were joined on the trip by LaVerne Ramsey and Mary Russell from B'ham and our friend Frances Brockway who now lives in Michigan. LaVerne shared with each ambassador a disk with her wonderful pictures. We will bring them to the meeting, or you can pick up at Joyce's office 8-4, Monday to Friday. Thanks, LaVerne!

Colin & Joyce Bagwell, EDs



Jean in Gifu hospital with Gifu host and Saitama host



Rehab on Parallel Bars



Home at Last – May 24

