



PASSPORT

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Azerbaijan delegates received honorary Nebraska certificates from Nebraska Secretary of State. From left to right Aylisha Afandiyeva, Ulviyya Aliyeva, Farida Asgarzade, Gunel Safarova, Malakkhanim Hjiyeva, Iaha Amiraslanova. Read the story on page 3.

**LINCOLN HOSTS OPEN WORLD DELEGATES
FROM AZERBAIJAN AND UKRAINE**

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



*by Julie Albrecht
President*

Since our last newsletter, we have hosted 2 Open World delegations. Check out the article in this newsletter for more info.

Every month we have a Breakfast and Conversation that provides an opportunity for FFL members to get to know each other and have fun with a challenging question for discussion.

LEO's (Let's Eat Out) are held every 3 months and provides FFL members to learn more about an ethnic restaurant in Lincoln and enjoy the company of members and your guests. Check the newsletter for the March LEO.

Our FFL Board meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at First Lutheran Church on South 70th Street. The board meetings are open to any member to attend. We will be posting our approved minutes on our website which will help members keep up

with FFL activities. Note that the board meeting is held at 6 PM.

We are encouraging all members to become INVOLVED! Find an activity or committee chair and find out what they are up to and how you can be involved!



Ukrainian delegates from l to r. Yana Chapailo, Asan Amietov, Viktoriia Petruk, Oryna Chylutain, Bohdan Melnykovich, Maksym Tymochko

Open World Delegations – Azerbaijan and Ukraine



Delegates visiting with Senator Adam Morfeld, Civic Nebraska

By Joanna Rogers

Friendship Force Lincoln has hosted two delegations for Open World since our last Passport. In November the group was from Azerbaijan and in February we hosted another delegation from Ukraine. The committee members want to thank all of the presenters and the host families. We felt that the club deserves to see what we include in these week-long visits from the young professionals of these countries, so we are including a synopsis of the two programs in this issue of the Passport.

The theme for the November Open World was “Women in Politics and Civil Society”. Since the group of 5 women were from Azer-

baijan, our hosts included the journey coordinators for our upcoming trip to that country, Wendy Horacek and Linda Kistler as well as Jan and Bob Sibal and De Tonack.

Our program included an arrival party at the home of Gayle & Milt Bayer with the assistance of Nancy & John Comer. We treated the delegates to the production of SPAMALOT at the Lied center and a Runza Welcome Party at the Holmes Lake Apt. Clubhouse. The educational program included a meeting with Leadership Lincoln, Barbara Bartels of the Lincoln Community Foundation, Senator Adam Morfeld of Civic Nebraska, a tour of the Capitol Bldg and a meeting with Senators Patty Pansing-Brooks and Senator Anna

Wishart as well as lunch with former Mayor Coleen Seng.

We included a visit to the Lancaster County Election Office with Dave Shively’s help, a meeting with Charlyne Behrens, former Assoc. Dean of the UNL College of Journalism & Mass Communications dealing with the 1st Amendment and the U.S. Constitution and Cheryl Alberts presenting a session on “Fake News” at NETV. The delegates attended the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues with speaker Nadine Strossen; and met with JoAnn Martin, CEO of Ameritas. They had an interesting trip to the County Court system led by Judge Holly Parsley and received Honorary Nebraska Citizenship from the Secretary of State. They also had the opportunity to have lunch with a Rotary club and a final breakfast with Friendship Force Lincoln.



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OPEN WORLD

continued from Page 3

Our November program was on “Legislation and Immigration” including displaced citizens of Ukraine. This time our hosts included Barbara & John MacKichan, Phyllis Arth, Bill Behmer & Gwen Meister, Mollie George and De Tonack. The arrival party was at the home of former Senator Vickie McDonald & Larry Harnisch. The delegates toured the Sheldon Art Museum and attended a production of THE KING & I at the Lied.

The Welcome Party was again at the Holmes Lake Clubhouse and the following program was presented during the week. A meeting with lobbyist Matt Schafer, a visit to Appleseed and Becky Gould, a discussion with Dr. Thomas Berg, UNL History Professor, a day at the UNL Law College hosted by Professors Kevin Ruser and Anna Shavers along with several students proficient in the Ukraine language, an Introduction to the Nebraska Legislature by former Assoc. Dean Charlyne Berens, a visit to the Lincoln Public Schools administration bldg. hosted by ELL leaders Laura Salem & Kate Damgaard and a tour of McPhee School given by their new Principal.

This trip included lunches with two Lincoln Rotary Clubs, one at which the delegates gave the program. We also had a breakfast at Billy’s Restaurant with many



Viktoriiia Petruk presenting at the South Lincoln Rotary meeting

of the Senators, a tour of the Capitol and an introduction on the Legislative floor. JoAnn Pepperal from the Bill Writing office talked with the delegates and they were treated to a reception at Barrymores from the Lincoln Council for International Visitors. Our last day was a visit to District Judge John Gerrard’s office including observing a court session followed by Senator Adam Morfeld’s presentation on Civic Nebraska.

There was time during both Open World sessions for the visitors to shop and enjoy sight seeing trips with their hosts. The Open World Committee of Joanna Rogers, Julie Albrecht, Maxine Moul, Pat King and Gloria Van Ackeren would like to

thank all of those who participated in these two sessions as well as in past sessions over the many years that we have been assisting with Open World. Please let Julie Albrecht know if you would be interested in helping with this mission.



Viktoriiia Petruk, Oryna Chylutai discuss politics with a law student at the UNL College of Law..

Outbound Journey to Azerbaijan and Georgia



by Wendy Horacek

Our 2019 out-bound journey is to Azerbaijan and Georgia. We will arrive in Tbilisi, Georgia on October 5. This is a great time to visit. It is cooler and pleasant to walk in the Old City and experience the unusual sights and great Georgian foods. Old Town is famous for the natural hot water baths located in convex domes rising over the streams. The Flea Market at Dry Bridge sells Soviet stuff only found in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Archaeologists have traced wine production dating 6,000 BC. Georgia has 521 original

varieties of grapes. We will become wine connoisseurs as we travel by bus through wine country to meet our Azerbaijan hosts at the border.

We will meet the Azerbaijan club at Lagodekhi, Georgia. Our first stop will be Sheki. It is set in a picturesque mountain area. It's a beautiful village inhabited for about 2500 years. We will be staying at the Issam Hotel. Sightseeing will include Kish Albanian church, 8th -9th century Fortress, Sheki Silk factory shop, caravanse-rais' (Silk Road motels), Juma Mosque and Gileilin Minaret (18th century). All meals, tea parties with Sheki sweets, picnic while traveling, museums. etc. are included in our fee. On our bus ride to Baku,

we will be treated with hot tendir bread with cottage cheese and qutabs.

Baku area has been occupied for 4,000 – 5,000 years. At the heart of the city is the Unesco-listed Old City. Other sites will be the ultra-modern Flame Towers, Maiden Tower/Palace of the Shirvanshahs, etc. All museum fees, teas, meals, and bus are included in our fees.

There are great travel guides and videos on the web. Check them out!! Call Wendy Horacek at 402-327-9656 or email at whoracek@yahoo.com for more information. There have been several requests from other clubs to join us so send your application and \$25 to Wendy to secure your place. Airline and motel reservations should be made soon.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By Mary Bryant

We expect to start the year 2019 with 130 members – 76 Individuals and 27 Families. We have added 16 members for 2019 - 10 Individuals and 3 Families. Any members who join in August or beyond pay the current membership fee and are counted for the remainder of 2018 and all of 2019.

Since our last newsletter we welcomed 5 new members. Mary Cassner who was referred by Julie Albrecht

and Pat Hust; Kathleen Hoffmann who was referred by Amy Birky; Larry and Mary Verschuur who was referred by Brian Ridenour. Last, but not least, Mollie George, who was referred by Judi Smith, FFI Field Rep for Pacific NW/Northern Rockies Region, who met Mollie at the Omaha Airport. They talked about travel, and usually that gets around to traveling with The Friendship Force. Judi told me about Mollie when she returned home to Washington State from a FFI Leadership Train-

ing she attended in Lincoln. WOW! We certainly get our members from all types of referrals. See Mollie's introduction and article about her hosting for Open World for visitors from Ukraine, elsewhere in this newsletter.

Let me know if you get to know a person or persons that you think might be interested in The Friendship Force of Lincoln. I will both email them and mail them a packet of information. Help make someone's day by exploring the world through Friendship Force; they won't regret it!

Friendship Force New Member Introductions Feb 2019



MOLLIE GEORGE

Mollie, originally from Lexington, Nebraska, is an only child and single. Mollie moved to Lincoln a year and a half ago for her full-time job with the Alzheimer's Association. Mollie is a gerontologist. Her role includes care consultations, community education, state-wide support group management and training as well as faith community outreach. In addition, Mollie will be a part-time PhD student this fall.

Mollie learned about The Friendship Force of Lincoln while traveling to Sri Lanka for a mission trip. She met Judi Smith FFI field representative, when Judi missed her plane after attending the Leadership Training in Lincoln, October 2018.

She enjoys travel, kayaking, museums, movies, dancing (ballet and jazz) as well as reading and running. Mollie has a nine year old,

twenty-pound cat named Biscuit.

Mollie's travel wish list includes, Poland, Ukraine, Croatia, and the Holy Land. She also would like to retrace her grandfather's WWII beach-landing steps in Morocco and southern Italy.

Mollie plans to be active with Friendship Force inbound hosting and small group dinners. She is also interested in international journeys. Welcome Mollie George!



KATHLEEN HOFFMANN

Kathleen (Kathy) moved to Chatelaine Residences in Lincoln from the Chicago area last year. Friendship Force member, Amy Birky (who also lives at Chatelaine Residences) invited her to a Friendship Force gathering. Kathy enjoyed meeting some of our members and guests.

Kathy, a retired teacher, grew up at Pierce, Nebraska before leaving Nebraska to

teach in Denver, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey and other places. She moved back to Nebraska to be near family – a sister and a brother.

Kathy participated in a program like our Olli one before moving here. She enjoys attending plays and concerts as well as traveling. She wants to explore Nebraska as well as visiting United States destinations. She previously traveled to European countries and New Zealand.

Kathy looks forward to supporting what The Friendship Force of Lincoln is doing. Welcome Kathleen Hoffmann!

One of the newest members of The Friendship Force of Lincoln Hosts for Open World



by Mollie George

It's amazing who you meet in an airport! About three months ago I was sitting in the Lincoln airport waiting for my flight that would eventually connect me with my destination of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

I love striking up conversations with fellow travelers and today was no different. A kind lady and I started visiting about our love for travel, but not for delayed flights. The conversation quickly merged into explaining why she was sitting in Lincoln, NE; as she was from Washington State. She explained to me that she had just attended a conference for Friendship Force in Lincoln. Of course, my next question was, "What is Friendship Force?" She went on to describe the

program and produced a business card from her wallet, explaining that someone would reach out to me.

Sure enough, three months later, I am in full swing of being an official member. I had the privilege of hosting Yana from Kyiv, Ukraine and of the group, Open World. It was an amazing experience! Yana and I proved to be kindred spirits: both young single ladies, a love for travel, higher education, and laughter. We had an instant connection and were fast friends.

Throughout the week I learned so much about the Ukrainian culture, the current political situation, and general geography education. The friendships I made will stay with me forever and have opened my mind to further research and advocacy towards the situation in Crimea.

I would encourage anyone to join Friendship Force and to especially host! It is a week that changed my life and opened areas of opportunity I might not have ever had a chance to experience.

Postscript from Joanna Rogers:.

The lady Mollie met was Judi Smith, FFI Field Rep for Pacific NW/Northern Rockies Regions. Judi attended our Training Session

in October and she missed her flight because Omalink had forgotten to pick her up and she had to take a later flight. If she had made the first flight, she would not have met Mollie.

Tico's

The March LEO will be held at Tico's Mexican Restaurant on Saturday March 16th at 12:30P.M. Tico's is located in downtown Lincoln at 317 S. 17th Street. Tico's has been serving Mexican food and margaritas for over 40 years. LEO or Lets Eat Out is a club activity that takes place at different ethnic restaurants allowing members to taste foods from other cultures. Everyone is welcome and we would like to see you at the first LEO event of 2019. Please e-mail Bruce and Carlene at bkeim@hamburgia.net by March 14 if you plan to attend. We'd love to have you join us. Bruce Keim, Carlene Keim and Sara Stephenson your LEO committee

2019 Upcoming Dates - Mark Your Calendar

MARCH

- 7 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church, 1551 S. 70th Street
- 9 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café, 5600 S. 48th Street
- 16 LEO 12:30 PM Tico's Mexican Restaurant

APRIL

- 2-9 Outbound Journey to Austin, Texas
- No Board Mtg
- 13 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

MAY

- 2 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church
- 11 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

JUNE

- 6 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church
- 8 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

JULY

- No board mtg
- 13 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café
- 23-27 FFI Meeting Boulder, Colorado

AUGUST

- 1 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church
- 10 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

SEPTEMBER

- 5 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church, 1551 S. 70th Street
- 14 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café, 5600 S. 48th Street

OCTOBER

- 3 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church
- 5 Outbound Journey to Azerbaijan and Georgia
- 12 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

NOVEMBER

- 7 Board Mtg 6 PM First Lutheran Church
- 9 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

DECEMBER

- 5 Board Mtg to be determined
- 14 Breakfast 8:30 AM Stauffer's Café

2019 FFL BOARD

President:	Julie Albrecht
Vice President:	Arlene Rae
Secretary:	Maxine Moul
Treasurer:	Milton Bayer
Past President:	Joanna Rogers
Journey/Hosting Coordinator:	Wendy Horacek
FFI Field Rep. Coordinator:	Laurie Ann Scott
Historian:	
International/Diversity:	Nancy Comer & Linda Kistler
Let's Eat Out:	Carlene & Bruce Keim, and Sara Stephenson
Membership:	Mary Bryant and Amy Birky
Monthly Breakfast:	Linda Kistler and Brian Ridenour
Newsletter:	Jim Ecklund
Publicity:	Pat King
Social:	Committee Members
Website:	Jim Ecklund