



PASSPORT

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Five investigative journalists from Georgia visit Lincoln

By Maxine Moul, FFL Media Chair

When young professionals from the country of Georgia were hosted by Friendship Force of Lincoln in October, they not only learned from their local hosts, but informed them of their own country and experiences. The journalists were sponsored by the Congressional Office of International Leadership (COIL), administered by the U.S. State Department. They studied various types of news media and met with traditional and digital media staff.

The delegates provided an unscheduled public presentation, where Lincolniters could learn of their award-winning investigations into corruption, graft and other issues that often resulted in threats. They also showed films of Georgia and its cities and also of accomplished artists.

The first activity was a symposium by the Oscher Lifelong Learning Institute's Winter Lecture Series --- Misinformation and Conspiracy Theories. They also attended the Nebraska High School Press Association conference, with keynote speaker Mathew Hansen, Flatwater Free Press. The delegates gave a presentation to the high school students.

A day at the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications included presentations on the First Amendment by Charlyne Beherns and by Max Kautsch, media attorney who represents the Nebraska Press Association and the Media of Nebraska organization (MON). The delegates also heard about Artificial Intelligence from Matt Waite.

A day at the Nebraska State Capitol included a tour and a meeting with Senator George Dungan of Lincoln and former State Senator Adam Morfeld at Civic Nebraska. A morning was spent with Nebraska investigative journalists, Chris Dunker of the Lincoln Journal-Star, Ryan Hoffman of Flatwater Free Press and Paul Hammel of the Nebraska Examiner. They were able to compare experiences and the results of their investigative work.

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Georgian delegates at Channel 8

From the FFL President November 2023

By Judy Keetle, President

My two years as President of FFL (Friendship Force of Lincoln) are coming to a close. What a pleasure it has been to be more involved in FFL and FFI. The motto of “a world of friends is a world of peace” is what this amazing organization has supported through citizen diplomacy for more than 46 years. Members are interested in learning more about people and cultures throughout the world by traveling, attending cultural events, and hosting visitors in their homes.



Judy Keetle, second left, with friends at the convention, Croatia, October 2023

During the past two years the COVID pandemic has lessened. At the annual meeting in 2022 we sat in chairs three feet apart. In 2023 we sat around tables. We have been able to get together in person, as well as at some board meetings and (TAC) Thursday Afternoon Club held via Zoom. Although FFL had no outbound journeys, several FFL members traveled with other Friendship Force clubs domestically and internationally.

FFL hosted inbound groups: ALEX (American Leadership Experience) students from Slovakia and Hungary, as well as Kyrgyzstan; a Special Journey “Farm to Table: Better Living Through Food and Agricultural Innovations”; and COIL (Open World) journalists from the country of Georgia. Second Saturday morning breakfasts at Stauffer’s were resumed, and LEOs (Let’s Eat Out) meals were enjoyed again at ethnic restaurants around Lincoln.

Special events included “Speed Traveling”, an afternoon playing Bunko, and a day trip to a Swedish town, Oakland, NE. Several Lincoln groups enjoyed programs about Friendship Force through the new FFL Speakers Bureau. The 2022 Holiday luncheon and concert was at Doane College in Crete where FFL members brought household items for the Afghan family we helped get settled. See the article about the 2023 Holiday party on December 2. (page 6)

An organization like FFL thrives because of the input of each and every member – paying dues, attending events, and taking on responsibilities. Thank you! The board members who served during my term have been amazing. They have each carried out their duties with aplomb. Personal thanks to vice-president Wendy Horacek for her two months’ leadership this year while I was traveling.

FFL is in the very capable hands of 2024 President Arlene Rea. I look forward to continue being an active member of FFL. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president.

Indonesian Clubs to Host Lincoln members in June, 2024

By Maxine Moul, Journey co-coordinator with Ann Quinlan

Please join the Friendship Force of Lincoln for an international Journey to two communities in Java, Indonesia in June 2024. Lincoln participants will stay in local homes and experience the cultures of their hosts.

The first community is Yogyakarta (English: /ˌjɔʊɡjəˈkɑːrtə/Jogjakarta), the capital city of the region in the south-central part of the island of Java. As the only Indonesian royal city still ruled by a monarchy, Yogyakarta is regarded as an important center for classical Javanese fine arts and culture such as ballet, batik textiles, drama, literature, music, poetry, silversmithing, visual arts, and wayang puppetry.

Yogyakarta will be visited June 1 to 7. The second community being visited June 8-14 is Bogor in the West Java province, Indonesia.

Located about 60 kilometers (37 mi) south of the national capital of Jakarta, Bogor is the sixth largest city in the Jakarta metropolitan area and the 14th overall nationwide. The city has a presidential palace and a botanical garden (Indonesian: Kebun Raya Bogor) – one of the oldest and largest in the world. It bears the nickname "Rainy City" (Kota Hujan), because of frequent rain showers, even during the dry season.



We will be limited to 15 Ambassadors. Eight have already indicated an interest in this Journey. We may add pre and post visits to Japan, Malaysia or South Korea. Our Indonesian hosts have also suggested Bali. They would like the suggestions of the Lincoln Ambassadors on the sights they would like to see and experiences they would like to have while at the two cities.

Watch for future information from FFL's emails and Passports. **Please indicate your interest to Journey coordinators Maxine Moul (mmoul1@allophone.com) and Ann Quinlan (amquinlan33@gmail.com).**

And join LLF's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FFLincoln.

Farm to Table: Better Living Through Food and Agricultural Innovations, a final report

By Arlene Rea, Journey Coordinator

Eight ambassadors from Wisconsin, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada gave high praise (an overall score of 4.679 out of a possible 5.0) for the August 24 through September 1 Journey hosted by members of Friendship Force Lincoln.

Twenty-four FFL members were directly involved in the journey implementation. Each acted in one or more roles of being a programmer, a home host, a day host, a dinner host, dinner co-host, planning potluck and farewell dinners, newspaper and FaceBook publicity, and attending many of the program events. Another six members attended some of the program events.

Thirty community members made the week-long journey exciting and educational. Community members included individuals from the University of Nebraska, Nebraska Innovation Campus, Open Harvest, VanderVeen Salmon Fish Farm, Nebraska City's The Keeping Room and Arbor Lodge, Keim Farm Equipment, Honey Bee World, Vetter Farms, Nebraska State Fair, Raising Nebraska, Governor Jim Pillen, Director of Agriculture Sherry Vinton, The Nebraska State Capitol, Shadowbrook Farm and Dutch Girl Creamery, Food Bank, Center for People and Capitol View Winery.

With the extra funds from the journey, FFL was able to purchase a sound system to be used for future journey programming and meetings.



Farm to Table attendees (front row) with their Lincoln Friendship Force hosts.

Friendship Force International Conference Report

By Judy Keetle, President



Jim Rea, Arlene Rea, Jeremi Snook, FFI CEO and Vice-President; Debbie Powell, Director of Special Events and Communication; Judy Keetle, Betty Starr gathered at the Dubrovnik conference.

More than 300 Friendship Force members from around the world attended the 2023 Friendship Force World Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Dubrovnik, Croatia October 2-5. Four FFI members attended – Judy Keetle, Arlene and Jim Rea, and Betty Starr. At the Welcome Reception on Monday evening, it was fun to spend time with friends from past journeys, as well as to meet new friends.

On Tuesday we enjoyed the Opening Plenary Session followed by “This is Croatia” which included presentations by storyteller Jelica Cucevic on “My Life and Country” and Dr. Marlena Cukteras on “Environmentally-Conscious Travel”. After a coffee break, we had Croatian Cultural Workshops on “Species and Habitats of the Dalmatian Coast” and “Traditional Croatian Costumes”.

There was time built into the program to explore Dubrovnik and the area. All four of us enjoyed historic Dubrovnik and walked around its wall. The sunset cruise along the coast was especially beautiful. FFI offered several excursions, as well as pre- and post-conference trips.

Wednesday afternoon featured four workshops sessions. Topics included “Expanding the FFI Vision”, “Diversity, Infusion: How to Bring Age, Culture, and Representation to Your Club”, “Technology Overview”, “Leadership Conundrum”, and “Social Media”, with opportunities to interact with the FFI staff and board.

The Conference Closing and Gala Banquet was held on Thursday evening which included the whole group singing “Let There Be Peace on Earth”.

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Celebrate Lunar New Year on December 2 with FFL

By Julie Splichal, Social Chair

Lunar New Year is the theme of this year's holiday party. The celebration will take place at noon on December 2 at the Bethany Enclosed Shelter at N. 65th and Vine Streets.

Asian dancers will kick off the event. The luncheon will be catered by Asian Fusion and you'll have a chance to be the winner of The Chopstick Challenge. Maxine Moul and Ann Quinlan will give an update on the Journey to Java, Indonesia.



Last LEO (Let's Eat Out) of 2023

By Bruce and Carlene Keim, LEO Chairs



The last LEO of 2023 was a luncheon Saturday, October 7. We had to make a last minute change as the Asian Taste restaurant was closed unexpectedly for two days. Sultan's Kite, with Mediterranean food from scratch, was chosen. Twelve Lincoln Friendship Force members attended and ordered from a large menu board. They had a large selection of foods

made fresh and everything was exceptionally good. The next LEO will be in March 2024. So, look for information then.

Friendship Force International Convention Report (continued from Page 5)

The next Friendship Force Festival at Sea will be a 2-night pre-cruise stay in central Athens followed by a seven day luxury cruise to Montenegro, Croatia, Corfu, and Italy on Holland America's stunning cruise ship Oosterdam - August 23-September 1, 2024. There will be enlightening workshops on "The Classical World", happy hour meet-ups, and games. The 2025 Friendship Force World Conference will be in Asia. The dates and location are still to be determined.

Calendar November 2023 to 2024

November 2023

- 6th – FFL Board Meeting, 1:00pm at Judy Keetle’s house
 11th – Breakfast and Conversation, 8:30 am, Stauffer’s Café, 5600 S 48th

December 2023

- 2nd – Holiday Party, noon, Bethany Park, N 65th St & Vine St
 4th – FFL Board Meeting, 1:00 pm, Gere Library
 9th – Breakfast and Conversation, 8:30 am, Stauffer’s Café, 5600 S 48th
 31st – 2024 dues are payable to FFL, PO Box 30334, Lincoln, NE 68503

January 2024

- 8th -FFL Board Meeting, 1:00 pm, TBD (2nd Monday because of Holiday)
 13th - Breakfast and Conversation, 8:30 am, Stauffer’s Café, 5600 S 48th
 25th – Deadline for articles and photos for February Passport

February 2024

- 5th -FFL Board Meeting, 1:00 pm, TBD (First Monday of the month)
 10th - Breakfast and Conversation, 8:30 am, Stauffer’s Café, 5600 S 48th

June 2024

- 1st-14th – Outbound Journey to Java, Indonesia

August 2024

- 23rd – Sept 1 – FFI Festival at Sea

September 2024

- 30th – October 5 – Inbound Journey, San Diego

October 2024

- 7th-10th – FF North American Conference in Milwaukee



Birthdays are special days to celebrate you! The FFL Virtual Birthday Greetings Chair, JoEllen Polzien, will be sending you an ecard for your birthday and other holidays. Please let her know at jwpolz1@gmail.com if you do not want to receive these emails.

Consider sending a birthday card or email to a friend. .

September

- 21st – Gary L. Heusel
 21st – Judy Keetle
 22nd – De Tonak

October

- 1st – Cherrie Beam Callaway
 17th – Bruce Keim
 23rd – Barrie Marchant
 27th – Julie Splichal
 29th – Laurie-Ann Scott
 31st – Milt Bayer

November

- 2nd – Brian Ridenour
 4th – Karen Heusel
 7th – Sandra Zieg
 16th – Loris Purtzer

December

- 7th – Pamela Freudenburg
 9th – Barbara Rothenay
 15th – Joanne Brown
 22nd – Barbara Ridder
 25th – Maryjo Shibata
 29th – Phyllis Arth
 30th – Jeanne Zwiebel

Georgian Delegates (continued from Page 1)

Rod Fowler and Kay Wunderlich hosted them at KLKN Channel 8 TV, and they attended a monthly meeting of the OLLI Political Interest Group.

The final day was spent at Nebraska Public Media and attending a lunch with Lincoln South Rotary Club. Delegates were Givi Mgeladze, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Georgia; Shorena Lagadze, iFact; Tamta Dolenjashvili, TV Pirveli; Tskrialia Shermadini, Studio Monitor (an NGO); and Joba Ananidze, Batumelebi newspaper. Hosting the delegates in their homes were Jan Stibal and Vickie McDonald and Larry Harnisch.

The Friendship Force of Lincoln Membership Application

\$50 per person

**Friendship Force International (\$30) and Friendship Force of Lincoln (\$20)
2024 Friendship Force dues are due by December 31, 2023**

Date _____ New Member ___ Renewing member ___

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Number _____ Mobile Number _____

Birthday: Month _____ Day _____

Email: _____

Friendship Force of Lincoln may use my photograph in brochures, media articles, website, Facebook, etc. to promote the Friendship Force organization. Check one. Yes ___ No ___

New Members receive a complimentary name badge:

Check your choice. I prefer Pin Closure _____ or Magnetic Closure _____

Name on the badge _____

If renewing members need a new name badge contact Treasurer, Milt Bayer at 531-207-6041

Ways I can help: (check as many as you like)

___ Activities Committee

___ Social Committee

___ Nominating Committee

___ Future Officer

Other _____

___ Future Board Member

___ Home Host

___ Day Host

___ Dinner Host

___ Journey Coordinator

___ Computer/Internet skills

Make check payable to: Friendship Force of Lincoln

Send to: Friendship Force, PO Box 30334, Lincoln, NE 68503