



Mountain Friends

"A world of friends is a world of peace"

August 2011 Volume 11 Issue 8

Al & Betsy Gumpert, Editors

IN THIS ISSUE

- § 2 Items in the President's Corner
- § ED Training Report
- § Open World Update
- § Exchange Opportunities
- § Local Interests
- § 2011 Meeting Schedule

FFWNC OFFICERS 2011

President, Becky Elston
President-elect, Joe Robustelli
Secretary, Ro Metcalf
Treasurer, Jack Mullen
Club Website: www.ffwnc.or

From the Desk of the President

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING
FFWNC 30TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
SUNDAY, SEPT 18 - 5:30 PM
POTLUCK, (REMEMBER WE'VE GONE GREEN)
SKYLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Our club received its charter in October 1981 from Friendship Force International. We will celebrate 30 years of friendship and cultural exchanges at our September meeting. What's a party without cake and ice cream, so plan on a delicious dessert for all to share. There is no need to bring additional desserts, unless someone wants to bring some fruit.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER: REV. MICHAEL CARTER
DIVERSITY OFFICER AT MISSION HOSPITALS

According to Webster's dictionary diversity means the condition of being different. Diversity comes in many forms and today more than ever, diversity needs to be discussed and explored. Michael Carter writes:

The American workforce and culture are changing at a rapid rate. A unique blend of various cultures, ideas, and perspectives can now be found in our 21st century communities, workforce, and society in

general. One must also keep in mind the number of baby boomers reaching retirement age at this time in our nation's history. Yes, the times, "they are a changin." The new leaders of today must be able to work and live in an environment which requires them to not only be able to be competent when dealing with issues surrounding race and gender, but these new leaders must be able to deal with differences in culture, geography, and generational differences as well. Not to mention plurality of thought. Emotional intelligence and sensitivity are needed more now than ever.

How does one learn to do work well and survive in these challenging and exciting times? By becoming what I will label as culturally competent. It's a useful skill to have. How does this happen? By coming out of our comfort zones and learning about differences. Remember, in the 21st century, I am not different from you, I'm different like you. Life is a journey and we are all at different places on the road to cultural competency. This is not about being PC as in politically correct. This is about being PC, also known as being personally conscious. Besides, you'll also get to meet someone new and exciting along the way---- Yourself!

Join us for an enlightening and entertaining talk. You just might help find Yourself.

THIS 'N THAT

► Your board voted in 2008 to give a charitable/humanitarian donation each year through 2013 of up to \$1000.00 each year to a worthy recipient. This year we are giving Nina Landis \$500.00 to start a project which ultimately will be her senior thesis at Warren Wilson College where she is majoring in Global Studies with a concentration on Peace and Social Justice. Here are some excerpts from her presentation to the board.

Purpose:

- To bring education, awareness, and understanding of Armenian history, culture, and heritage to Western North Carolina by way of Warren Wilson College (WWC) and through the medium of music and/or dance.
- To promote accurate historical accounts of the Armenian Genocide as depicted through the cultural legacies of Armenian music and dance, and help the local community overcome cultural misunderstandings. (For example, it is often a common misunderstanding that Armenia is part of the Middle East and that it is predominantly Muslim, when, in fact, it was the first Christian nation. Its earliest music was developed through the church.)
- To explore the possibilities of music/dance as a means of reconciliation for the intractable conflicts among the countries of the Caucasus region.

Process:

- Gather information about how music and/or dance have been shared in the past between the unfriendly neighbors of Armenia and Turkey.

Upon Return:

- Through this learning opportunity I want to develop a program at WWC that will teach Armenian music (song) and dance, generate interest in learning about different cultural heritages through these art forms, and generate enough interest to be able to share this new cultural understanding at such Asheville venues/events as the LEAF Festival, the Greek Festival, the Odyssey Community, Art Without Borders, and more.

Nina has also agreed to present her thesis and findings at a general FF meeting. We wish her well in this interesting endeavor.

► The Nominating Committee was formed to recruit officers and directors for 2012 and the members are as follows: Betsy Gumpert, Joe Robustelli, Chuck Elston, Chair, Dauna Donata, and Roberta Newman. If anyone in the club has any suggestions and/or burning desire to join the board, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee.

► We had a wonderfully cool day for the FF picnic held on July 16. We played 20 questions with the names of various well known individuals affixed to our backs. The best was Margie Bradshaw as George W. Bush.

► Jim Burns passed away on July 20. Jim was a long time member of Friendship Force who participated in many FF and Open World exchanges. He will be missed.

► Doug Judkins led an ED Training workshop on July 19th. Twelve people attended. This was an excellent start to getting people ready to become ED's for future trips. Good show!

Becky Elston

Exchange Director Training

We recently completed a 2-hour exchange director training at the Hendersonville Community Foundation conference room. We had 6 members that went through the training, which was conducted by Bill Wilkes and me. It was a really good meeting with a lot of good questions. Thanks to Peggy Judkins, Becky Elston and Judy Wilkes for their input. We hope that we will have some of these people sign up to be ED on upcoming exchanges.

Judy Wilkes has been selected to be the ED for the Brazil exchange with Rudi Simko assisting.

Doug Judkins

Open World Update

One Tuesday, July 26, I received an e-mail from John O'Keefe, Executive Director of Open World. Sadly, he reports that Open World will receive only enough money in the current budget plan (I assume that would be the 2012 fiscal year) to shut down the operation. Given the current sentiment in Washington, this is not surprising news, but it is certainly disappointing.

On a more positive note, I recently spent most of the day with a delegation of agriculture specialists from the country of Moldova. Moldova is the poorest country in Europe, and they have supplied Open World delegations in the recent past. The agriculture workers were Cochrane Fellows, supported by a grant from the US Department of Agriculture.

When Judy and I were in Raleigh recently to receive an award for our work with Open World, we learned that North Carolina has had an ongoing cooperative relationship with Moldova since 1999, and I am hopeful that we can find a way for FFWNC to support this relationship. This might include home hosting for Cochrane fellows or an exchange to Moldova (There was an FFI club in Chisenu, but it is not currently active). At this point, there is nothing to report, but the

board has approved the idea of exploring ways to support the NC/Moldova program. I hope I will have more to report in the future.

Bill Wilkes

Exchange Opportunities

Three Weeks, Three Countries: an opportunity to make friends in Japan, Taiwan and Thailand from Oct. 26-Nov. 18, 2011

The trip starts in Saitama, Japan for a 4 day stopover where there was very little earthquake or tsunami damage. This part of the exchange gives us a chance to support and rekindle friendship with this special club. Then there's a week long homestay in Kaohsiung, Taiwan's second largest city. There are planned excursions to the Kenting National Park, the Lotus Pond, Cijin Island, Buddha Light Mountain, the Marine Biology Aquarium, Monkey Mountain and more. The last stop is the Asian Pacific Festival at Lam Phun, Thailand. The festival and home hosting will take place in the Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai areas with everything from elephants to temples. There's also a day in Bangkok before departure.

Land only price is \$1,872 USD inclusive of festival registration, hotels and most meals, club fees, FFI fees and hosting fees.

Call Ted Powell at 1.503.831.3755 for additional information.

New Zealand Oct. 29-Nov.22, 2011

If you didn't travel to NZ last fall with our own FFWNC (or would like to revisit and renew those friendships) here's another 3-week opportunity. The exchange is home hosted by the Howich (near Auckland) and Lake Taupo Clubs and then a 7-day visit to the Marlborough wine region with an option for additional touring days on the South Island.

Land only price is \$1420 USD for FFI Ambassador fees, club host fees, hotels in Auckland and Wellington and various transportation. Optional bus tour is \$1350.

Call Bobbi Hess 1 304.988.2876/ 1.304.268.7072

Nancy McGaughy

Local Interests

[Blue Ghost Fireflies](#)

This past Memorial Day weekend, Becky and I had the pleasure of witnessing the Blue Ghost fireflies at the DuPont Forest. The Blue Ghosts can be seen only in this part of the country.

Their mating season peaks during the Memorial Day weekend each year. You must be a “friend of the DuPont Forest” to hear the briefing and witness these amazing fireflies. The guide will walk you down an old logging trail about 9:00 p.m. and as the night grows dark, you will witness these blue ghosts as the males try to seduce the females who do not fly and are present in small numbers on the forest floor. It is like looking into the sky on a dark evening to see thousands of stars. The fireflies do not flicker but hover about three feet above the ground. Please look for the notice of the Blue Ghosts in our newsletter next spring. You do not want to miss this rare and beautiful event.

Southern Lights Round And Square Dancing

Last year, Becky and I joined the Southern Lights Round and Square Dancing club at the urging of the Partins and have enjoyed our year of learning very much.

I want to let you know that on Wednesday, Sept. 14th at 7:00 p.m. at the Stony Mountain Center, the first of two free classes will be taught by Stan Russell, one of the best teachers anywhere. Classes normally meet from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m every Wednesday. Square dancing burns 200 – 400 calories in 30 minutes. Studies show that people who are more physically and mentally active throughout their lives are three times less likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease. Believe me, square dancing is more mental than you may think. If you would like more information, please contact me or Becky at reidrobustelli@gmail.com. We have information from our class manager and a brochure from the Southern Lights Club.

Joe Robustelli

FFWNC 2011 General Meeting Schedule

September 18 – Potluck at Skyland
November 20 – Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

Club meetings are normally held on the third Sunday of alternate months through the year, except for the Club picnic, which is held on the Saturday immediately prior to the Sunday date in July.

Club Records

Copies of minutes of Board meetings and copies of financial statements are available upon request from the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Policies and Procedures for FFWNC Board of Directors

Any member wanting to have a copy of the **Policies and Procedures for FFWNC Board of Directors** (revised 10/13/10), please contact Becky Elston .