



friendship force
NORTHERN COLORADO

FRIENDSHIP FLYER



Ed Brigden—Editor & Publisher

February
2016

Estes Park, Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, Windsor and Surrounding Areas

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT



I hope you are as excited as I am about 2016! FFNC has much to look forward to as we begin this new year; with inbound and outbound exchanges to Canada, a global inbound exchange that showcases our FF Region, and a fun time planned with the **rescheduled domestic exchange to San Diego**. It is my hope that everyone in FFNC will find an interesting and rewarding way to be a part!

A big **THANK YOU** goes out to our **2015 officers: Gary Cummins-President, Nita Kopllyay-Vice-President, Paulette Weaver-Secretary and Duane Sharp-Treasurer**. We had an exceptionally busy year with exchanges, conferences, and special activities. Thanks for the organization and delivery of these excellent events. You have set a “high bar” for our new team of officers, and we are up to the task! At our Feb. 12th meeting, Gary will honor the **“Volunteer of the Year”** for his/her outstanding contributions. Don’t miss this chance to appreciate one of our own.

The Board will be finalizing the 2016 budget and goals to share with FFNC. Goals have been based on continuing some of the emphasis from the past year and results from surveys. Quality Programs and more Social Interaction remain high in the feedback. A task force has already met to suggest topic areas and speakers for future programs. Nancy Brigden will facilitate these activities while Esther Johnsen takes a year break---and by the way, **thank you for the outstanding programs we’ve had over the years, Esther!**

Each member of our group has a responsibility to make folks feel welcome at our meetings and activities. Please don’t forget to **make** the effort to reach out to others before, during breaks, and after the meetings. Guests should be introduced to as many people as possible. New members always appreciate someone coming up to chat with them; as do the folks that have been away for a while. To welcome and acknowledge people will help our FFNC to grow in positive ways... a must for continued fulfillment of our cultural exchange through travel goals. I look forward to a great year serving YOU this year!

Barbara Miller

Next Meeting
February 12, 2016
7:00 PM
Botany of
Southern Spain

First Christian
Church
2000 N Lincoln Ave
Loveland, CO

February 12 Meeting—Wandering Botanist

Kathy Keeler is a self-described Wandering Botanist who writes and speaks about plants with a special emphasis on the travel and history that surrounds them. She is a retired professor of biology and now lives in Loveland. Kathy will be at our next meeting of The Friendship Force of Northern Colorado to address the **history and biology of southern Spain**, with special reference to the plants of the region.

Southern Spain, offers a different climate and a different history from the rest of Europe. Those differences are greatest along the southern coast, where temperatures are mildest and cultural ties to the Moorish culture are deepest.

With The Friendship Force International Conference being held September 16-19 in Marrakesh, Morocco, Dr. Keeler's program, on the landmass just across the Strait of Gibraltar from Morocco, will entice you to extend into Spain for more exploration. Marrakesh is listed as the number one spot of the most popular travel destination in the world by Trip Advisor.

Andalucia, this land in Southern Spain, is known as the bridge to Europe. Many cultures have come to the area from prehistoric periods onward. Dr. Keeler will tell us stories that the plants reveal about that history. She maintains, "Plants tell stories that enrich our planet and elicit poetry in humans. They mirror to us who we are and what kind of custodians we are to our homes, communities and land." She captures stories from the plants and in the process tells highlights of her own travels.

Please join us for this interesting presentation. Let's broaden our horizons together.

Nancy Brigden

Thank You Esther!!

A hearty and extended Thank You goes to Esther Johnsen for her many years as Program Chair. She consistently located presenters who produced fascinating monthly programs. The menu of speakers has repeatedly been rated in membership surveys as one of the best things about our club. Not only have the topics enticed our membership but also the varied topics brought many prospective members to attend our monthly meetings.

Esther and Dick joined shortly after our club began meetings and were charter members when FFNC officially formed in 1986. Since then, they have been ambassadors on numerous exchanges and have attended a number of International Conferences. In 1990 Esther also served as Vice President for our young club. Numerous potlucks, holiday parties, interclub picnics, World Friendship celebrations, and social events held at the Johnsen home and elsewhere bear her signature. Esther's contributions to our club also include Exchange Director for numerous inbound exchanges as well as an outbound exchange to New Zealand.



Esther, we thank you for all these activities. Your keen attention, as you were "on the watch" for special programs, has added insight to our views of the many different cultures and issues of life — a gift of friendship to us all.

Nancy Brigden

JANUARY 8—CUBA

Those members who were able to brave the snowy, cold conditions on January 8th were treated to a very interesting presentation by **Andrew and Lisa Haines**, a Loveland couple who participated in a cultural trip to Cuba in 2015 with the Grand Circle Foundation. Their tour premise was two-fold: to learn more about Cuba and the changes that are taking place there, and to work toward building positive relationships with the citizens of Cuba.

Through pictures and an interesting narrative, Andrew and Lisa provided an historical background of Cuba, including its realm as an independent republic in 1902 (with ties to the USA), through the coup by Batista in 1952, the take-over by Fidel Castro in 1959, the change-over to Raul Castro in 2008, and most recently the easement of travel restrictions under the Obama administration in 2011. They helped us to better understand the transformations that are beginning to take place in Cuba. Although not open to USA tourists, American citizens can now travel to Cuba for specific educational purposes.

Andrew and Lisa shared that Cubans are granted “free” medical treatment, education, and housing and that the working citizens are given ration cards for food. They are guaranteed a job, but they must work to receive government subsistence pay of \$40/month. The Haines’s view was that those freedoms still netted little income for individuals, and a greater percentage of salary and income went to the government. They said if a person is academically qualified, they can receive a free higher education, but the government determines the field of study, and there’s often not a job available in the country for that field. Consequently, as in the field of medicine, many trained doctors (up to 11,000 a year) are sent to other countries where they earn a modest salary of \$700/month, and the government makes about \$3300/month on those exported doctors. Although there is universal free medical care, many of the trained doctors are sent to Brazil, Venezuela and other countries, so the remaining doctors have huge caseloads, limited medications, and there are limited trained RNs available. Elective surgeries are not free.

They also described the housing in Cuba as “free” but normally in very run-down conditions, as many of the buildings and apartments are from the 1920s and haven’t had much updating, including that most have no air conditioning and limited electrical outlets. Multiple families often live in sub-divided apartments. Citizens are guaranteed a job, and they must work to get federal subsistence pay of \$40/month. Many citizens have secondary jobs, which are hidden from the government. Grocery items are very inexpensive, but limited in scope.

During their time in Cuba their group was not allowed to visit farmers’ fields (they were told they might be with the CIA and would poison the crops), they couldn’t visit public schools, but they did visit Adult and Child Day Care Centers, run by the Catholic Church. Those churches had been taken over by the government which then “loaned” them back to the Catholics as long as they were only used for day care. The Catholics had been highly persecuted by the government so only about 9% of the population still claims to be Catholic.

Andrew explained that visitors could only use Cuban currency; US dollars and credit cards weren’t allowed, and there weren’t ATMs available. He told us things are opening up very slowly, and the people there still have many restrictions, including that permission must be granted by the government for any travel outside Cuba, but most citizens don’t have the funds to travel abroad anyway. It was an enlightening presentation.



WORLD FRIENDSHIP FORCE DAY & FFNC ANNIVERSARY

DOUBLE THE PLEASURE! DOUBLE THE FUN!

**Happy 30th Anniversary FFNC
and
World Friendship Force Day**

**March 11, 2016 at 6:00pm
First Christian Church, 2000 N. Lincoln, Loveland CO**

FRIENDSHIP

Friends - new and old among our club members.
Friends - made and to be made during international and national exchanges.
Friends - **this is the time to invite your personal friends** to come and see what Friendship Force is all about.

FOOD

This will be a potluck dinner with an international bent. (**Note the time change.**) Members are asked to bring a main dish or side dish with an ethnic flare if possible. We will celebrate our 30th Anniversary with cake furnished by our club.

FUN

Surprises for guests and those who bring guests.
Show and Tell by Table Host who have engaged in International Travel
Sharing from a panel of international students (USA impressions as well as a glimpse of home)

Pat Sharp and Rosalie Summers
World Friendship Day Coordinators

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Grand Junction—May 13 & 14

Happy New Year Everyone----- the Rocky Mountain Regional Conference in 2016 is getting closer every month. We're 3 months away from the conference hosted by FF of Western Colorado in Grand Junction!!!

Here are the Deadlines for the conference and for hotel room reservations:

- * **Registration Forms should be received by MARCH 31, 2016**
- * **Hotel Rooms Special Price Deadline - APRIL 12, 2016**

Our Theme - "**New Directions**" is right in step at this pivotal moment for Friendship Force. Learn what is planned; and share your ideas.

Conference Agenda includes:

9:30 - 10:15 am	Key Note Speaker - Matthew Nidek, Director of Programs & Leadership Initiatives (pending)
10:30	"Vision of the Future"-- Dave Kalan, FF Milwaukee and FFI Board Member
11:50 - 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 - 2:45 pm	<u>"New Directions" Work Groups:</u> - New Exchange Structures - Themed/Learning Exchanges - Membership recruitment and retention

We've received registration forms from several of you. Keep 'em coming!!

Sue Palmer

FF Western Colorado Planning Committee

For more information, go to ffncoloro.com and select **Regional** for a registration form and hotel reservation options.



Regional Conference Application



friendship force
WESTERN COLORADO

"NEW DIRECTIONS"

2016 Rocky Mountain Regional Conference

~ EARLY REGISTRATION FORM ~

May 13 & 14, 2016 (Friday, Saturday)

Downtown Grand Junction:

Hampton Inn, Fairfield Inn & Suites, Spring Hill Suites by Marriott

Please complete this registration form. Include your check made payable to Western Colorado Friendship Force. Mail to Sue Palmer, Conference Coordinator, 2402 Applewood Circle, Grand Junction, CO 81506

x _____
Last Name First Name (s) (Couples may choose to register on the same form)

x _____
Street Mailing Address City State Zip

x _____
E-Mail Address Phone: Home Phone: Cell

x _____
Home Club Name

Hotels in downtown Grand Junction, 2nd Block of Main Street, are offering special room rates for the Conference at \$129.95 per night. To register, see the information attached to this registration form and tell the hotel you are with the Rocky Mountain Friendship Force Conference. (See attachment for lodging information)

Registration begins on Friday, May 13 from 12:30 pm until 4:00 pm in the Monument Board Room at Spring Hill Suites. There will also be registration at 8:30 am on Saturday morning in the Main Street Room.

Optional Friday Activities: (Please choose one of the following afternoon Activities :)

- ___ 2-4:30 pm Friday, May 13 - Downtown Walking Tour (Art on the Corner and interesting shops)
- ___ 1-4:30 pm Friday, May 13 - Wine Country Tour (Drive through vineyards/ orchards and wine tasting
(May be small charge for wine tasting)
- ___ 1-4:30 pm Friday, May 13 - Colorado National Monument Tour (Drive along Rim Rock Rd.)

Registration Fees:

- ___ Saturday, May 3rd - \$125 per person
(Includes: coffee, tea and refreshments, all conference sessions, box lunch, evening banquet and entertainment)

COST: \$125

Make checks payable to-- **Western Colorado Friendship Force** and mail to:
Sue Palmer; 2402 Applewood Circle, Grand Junction, CO 81506

For questions or conference registration information, call Sue Palmer, Conference Coordinator at 970-260-4653
alfshouse12@hotmail.com OR Carol DeAngelis, Conference Coordinator at 970-250-6282 cdeangel22@gmail.com

Inbound

Outbound

EXCHANGE CALENDAR

Rocky Mtn. Regional Conference

Grand Junction, CO

May 13 & 14

Get Registered ... and a place to stay!

Hamilton/Burlington, Canada

Inbound June 23-29

Alice Gibson 310-8848

Cathie McCallum 223-0436

Stratford-St. Marys, Canada July 18-25

Outbound

Christine Hall 402-0433

Peaks to Plains Global

Inbound Sept 12-15 w/ FFNC

Marilyn Garner 493-4137

Thelma Slocum 223-9855

FFI International Conference

Marrakech, Morocco **Sept 16-19**
(Revised dates)

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2016 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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FFNC Club Store: Debby Jones 686-0303 dsj55@aol.com

Historian: Cheryl Stevens 231-4392 cheryl2204@msn.com

World Friendship Day Potluck, Mar. 11, 2016 (Mbrs. Invite guests)

Pat & Duane Sharp 720-218-2299 m6sharp@aol.com

Rosalie Summers 303-887-2681 eisoro1@gmail.com

Nancy Lawton 303-907-1181 nanLawton@aol.com

Annual Picnic, Aug. 2016 in Cheyenne:

Judy Flatley 223-1037 flatleyjl@msn.com

Holiday Party, Dec. 9, 2016:

Suzi & Rick Gossard 412-0691 suzi.gossard@gmail.com

Esther & Dick Johnsen 484-2666 RNEJOHNSEN@aol.com

Greeters/Hospitality: Nita Kopylay 613-2066 kopylay@comcast.net

Greeters/Hospitality: Nita Kopylay 613-2066 kopylay@comcast.net

Willie Westdorp, greeter 6676525 willie.westdorp@gmail.com

Elle Barr, greeter 204-9722 shilohbelle@gmail.com

Rosemary Donovan, refreshments 669-8818 donovangcd@aol.com

Dennis Miller, set-up 667-7330 dmill5050@comcast.net

Ways & Means: Dick Johnsen 484-2666 RNEjohnsen@aol.com

Larry Clark 669-5426 clarksmail@msn.com

Photographers: Cindy Paulson 225-2252 cdp225@msn.com

Ed Brigden 381-5809 Brigden@comcast.net

Cathie McCallum 223-0436 cathiemc@mail.com

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Marcia Ross 377-0512 mross377@msn.com

Nancy Brigden 352-3829 brigden@comcast.net

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Dennis Miller 667-7330 dmill5050@comcast.net

Music: Larry Clark 669-5426 clarksmail@msn.com

Rosemary Donovan 669-8818 donovangcd@aol.com

Tablecloth Mgr: Kay Sheahan 667-4473 kay6568@peoplepc.com

2016 DUES ARE DUE

For those who have not already done so, please remit your \$35 per person/\$70 per family, 2016 dues to Thelma Slocum (5025 Blue Stem Ct. Fort Collins, CO 80525) A.S.A.P. For those members without email opting to receive a mailed paper copy of the monthly newsletter, please add an additional \$15. **We need all dues on or before Feb. 12th.** Affiliate members can contact Marcia Ross (mross377@msn.com) if you have questions about the amount of your dues. **Checks to: FFNC.**

If you have any revisions in your contact information (phone, address, email) please send all changes to Thelma Slocum at: (thelmaslocum@comcast.net), or call her at 223-9855.

We encourage all of our members to **invite guests/prospective new members** to our meetings and events. One especially fun upcoming event is coming soon. We encourage you to bring guests to the commemoration of FFNC's 30th Anniversary during our World Friendship Day Celebration Potluck at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 11th.

And don't forget to pick up new **FFNC business cards** at the hospitality desk before each meeting, and hand them out to those you feel would be good additions to our club. These are newly designed to be current from year to year. You can add your own personal information by writing it in or using an address label.

Thelma Slocum

PASSING OF THE GAVEL—TO BARBARA MILLER

As of the January meeting, FFNC has new officers and a new board. Outgoing President Gary Cummins passed the gavel to incoming President, Barbara Miller.

Other officers include (below) Kay Sheahan (Secretary), Ray Garcia (Treasurer). and Cathie McCallum (Vice President).



Congratulations and the best of 2016 to each of you in your respective positions. May the challenges be few and the delights and rewards be many.

Kudos to Gary and the 2015 board for their inspiring and dedicated leadership.



SAN DIEGO OUTBOUND EXCHANGE—"BACK ON"!!!

Were you disappointed when the San Diego Exchange was cancelled? Well...the Good Trolls have been working overtime for us. Dust off your applications and reapply with Exchange Director Barbara Miller for this reciprocal exchange **to San Diego, October 12-17.**

San Diego's Exchange to Costa Rica, which interfered with their planned Exchange from FFNC, has now been rescheduled to an earlier date. So...now FFNC is rescheduled also. **"Back on Again".**

Contact Barbara Miller for information or to apply. Your prior application does not automatically get or keep you on the new Ambassador list.