



Friendship Force of Long Island



www.ff-li.org

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Your Long Island Friendship Force Officers:

- President: Michael Macaluso
- Vice President for Programs: Brian Atkins
- Vice President for Membership: Frances Neyer
- Recording Secretary: Joel Weidenbaum
- Corresponding Secretary: Betty Schmitt
- Treasurer: Ivan Ziegler
- Public Relations: Betty Schmitt

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FFLI Hosts Azerbaijan Exchange!

What is your idea of an ideal summer extravaganza? Some may choose to sun themselves on a balmy beach in San Juan. Some may regale in the pleasures of the French Riviera, and still others may choose to work on getting those last few parts to finish off a cherished '57 Chevy. If you are a member of FFLI, you chose to host a small contingent of Ambassadors from Azerbaijan **WITH ONE WEEK'S NOTICE!** (*That has to break the record. Call Guinness!*)

FFLI was contacted by Vanda of the Wyoming club on Friday July 25th. She let us know that a group from Azerbaijan was on their way to Denver... and wanted to end their exchange in New York. "When are they leaving Denver?" I asked. They were to arrive in New York the following Friday, August 1st!

The telephone was our best friend, as I started calling members asking for help. I didn't have to worry... FFLI members quickly assembled as we started a plan. How many days? How many Ambassadors? A Long Island tour? A New York City Tour? How many Home Hosts will we need? By the following Monday, we already had a basic schedule and a list of volunteers. By that next Wednesday FFLI Home Hosts were accounted for and ready to serve.

Dave Bentzin of the Friendship Force of Denver became my primary contact. He graciously agreed to ensure that my schedules and lists were passed on to the ED of the Azerbaijan Club. As late as Thursday night Dave was taking my calls and relaying crucial last minute details to our Ambassadors from Azerbaijan.

Friday morning, August 1st, we were ready. Home Hosts check, Day Hosts,

check, Pickup, check. Our guests arrived, and then we found out some critical information of which we were previously unaware... three of the ambassadors, (two students and a teacher had arranged to stay in a room in Queens, NY so they could attend a school for the next several weeks. The only problem was, they didn't have the correct address and they didn't have complete contact information. Mabelle Lum to the rescue. She drove a couple of hours trying to locate the landlord who was providing the rooms. Upon discovery that the address was incorrect, Mabelle was not to be swayed from her task. She stopped a Postal Worker who was delivering the mail in the neighborhood. "Does this address look familiar?" Mabelle asked. After some deciphering and debating, the US Postal Service came to the rescue with directions to the correct location! Way to go Mabelle!



Hmm... The sudden departure means the Home Host – Ambassador list is awry, and awry it was. Special thanks to Carol and Bob Weston who in the spirit of Friendship Force, took the three remaining ambassadors into their home, so that no ambassador was left alone in a home

without a companion. (...and this was just Friday).

▲ Ziegler family barbecue on Saturday was fun and DELICIOUS. There was plenty of variety as Ivan toiled over a hot grill to provide his guests with hotdogs, burgers, chicken, grilled portabellas and more!

Brian Atkins hosted his now famous Manhattan tour on Sunday. The Azerbaijani Ambassadors were able to do a little trading with sidewalk vendors, take a ferry ride to the

Statue of Liberty, and more. Don David was our Day Host out east, and the Tuesday evening Grand Finale was an FFLI dinner (Combined Welcome and Farewell). In between main events, Sheila Ziegler took our guests shopping, and Carol and Bob Weston did their best to make our guests feel at home.



FFLI Exchange Awards Ceremony!



The Hostess with the Mostess Award goes to... Carol Weston (and Bob too! He's pictured to the left) for willingly casting their plans for the week aside and taking in three ambassadors at a minute's notice. Their effort started seconds after the Ambassadors arrived and finished only upon their departure. Most importantly, they did it in the spirit of friendship.



The Road Warrior Award goes to... Mabelle Lum for braving the streets of New York to find an incorrect address in a city of eight million people. (and she FOUND IT)! Lewis and Clark would be proud.



The Road Warrior Award (Honorable Mention) goes to... The friendly **New York Postal Worker** who took the time to assist Mabelle and her Ambassadors in their time of need. (Makes the cost of the stamps worth it!)



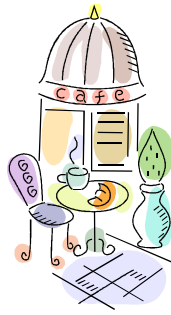
The Best City Tour at a Moment's Notice Award goes to... **Brian Atkins**, who canceled a day of much needed recuperation in the Hampton's to rush west and take our Ambassadors on a tour of New York City. Brian also revamped his schedule to make the FFLI dinner... Thanks Brian.



The Most Flexible Friendship Force Member Award goes to... **Genie and Don David**. "Your Home Hosting" then, "You're Not Home Hosting", then, "You're Day Hosting". ...and each time I called them, they replied, "Just tell me what you need." It's good to have a reliable back-up. Thanks.



The Friendship Force Fire Fighter Award goes to... **Frances Neyer**, who combined last minute Day Hosting duties with much needed assistance on the Ambassador's arrival day.



The Gourmet Dining Award goes to.... Emma and Eli Bluestone.

Imagine my surprise when I get a call suggesting a local Long Island Restaurant called... yep, you guessed it, Azerbaijan. Yikes! Holy Falafel, I think we found a place to have our Exchange Dinner! The food was delicious and the price was right. Thanks Emma.



The Friendship Force Paul Revere Award goes to...

Dave Bentzin of the Friendship Force of Denver. He made the late night updates easy, and was more than willing to pass on critical information to our Ambassadors. Thanks Dave.



The Lean Mean Grilling Machine Award goes to...

Ivan Ziegler, who along with Sheila, prepared food, set tables, and then... had to clean up after us. Oh the humanity!



Rookie of the Year Award goes to...

Barbara Gettinger, Who, when facing her first Exchange experience, decided to go big, and treat the Ambassadors, and Home Host members to a home cooked meal. Word is, it was an outstanding MVP performance.



The Friendship Force Teamwork Award, goes to...

FFLI and all of its members for a show of team spirit - and that FFLI CAN DO attitude. It is always a rewarding experience when FFLI members put their heads and hearts together to make it happen. Way to go FFLI!

There are never enough awards to go around, and if you think someone was overlooked, feel free to submit your nomination, (after all... these awards don't cost anything!). While this was not a planned part of the Azerbaijan Exchange to the United States, I am sure it was a memorable experience for all.

Our Next General Meeting is at the **The Greek Village Restaurant 44 Veterans Highway, Commack, NY**

(go to Tidbits section of this newsletter for directions, or click on the Calendar tab on www.ff-li.org and open the map on August 25th)

When?

Monday, August 25th at 7:00 PM

Club Business starts promptly at 7:30 PM.

For the very modest fee of \$2.00 you get a seat in the meeting area with refreshments at no additional charge.

Contact Brian Atkins (631) 979-2813 for a 5:30 PM Pre-Meeting Dinner in the restaurant! (He



can reserve seating so members can sit together)

The Monday August 25th General Meeting will include an FFLI feature presentation on Costa Rica. Genie and Don David will be sharing a wonderful show and commentary on their time in Costa Rica. Never been there? Good time to ask a veteran. Oh... so you've been there before. Then come and join the David's and share your experiences with your fellow FFLI members.

Don't Forget... you do NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER to attend a General Meeting or FFLI Presentation. Just ask for Mike Macaluso and the \$2.00 sit-down and refreshment fee is waived for all first time guests.

2008 Exchanges

November 5th - 12th, 2008

Outbound, San Antonio Texas.

ED Betty Schmitt: E-Mail bes642@aol.com
(631) 665-2098

This Exchange is in FULL SWING! Betty Schmitt should be close to finalizing the list of folk who will join her on the Outbound Exchange to visit our friends from San Antonio. We will be going to places rich in history, like the Alamo and the world famous River Walk, as well as many other places of interest. Initial fare hunting indicates that the roundtrip will be less than \$400 if we book early enough. Betty is researching flights out of Long Island's own MacArthur Airport, so even the trip to the airport will



be a breeze! Please let Betty know if you are interested in visiting our friends from San Antonio.

Hot News Flash from Betty Schmitt!

At the May 5th General Meeting, I forgot to mention that when I went to San Antonio I got to go to the SAS (San Antonio Shoes) shoe factory. What a great experience. Not only is there a tremendous savings - shoes that cost \$130 at Craft Shoes in Commack, cost me \$89 at the factory & that is a \$41 savings. But, if you're not interested in buying shoes or pocketbooks, they have great tourist attractions of many antique cars, a 5 cent cup of coffee, a 10 cent coke, 10 cent peanuts and popcorn, etc., many antiques on display, an area showing the technique of making the shoes, gift shop, and so on. Well worth a visit.

Those of you that are still interested in coming, **please forward your \$75 check** (the monies will be sent to the San Antonio Chapter for their expenses) **to me**, - **please make the check out to Friendship Force of Long Island** and note in the comment section that it is for the Nov. '08 San Antonio trip.

I am working on the info for the plane tickets and have been told by Southwest that the tickets won't be available online until June 26th. There doesn't seem to be a direct flight from Islip to SA. I will keep you posted on this.

October 21st – November 11th 2008

Outbound to Ra'anana, Israel.

ED Joel and Harriet Weidenbaum:
(631) 673-6116 E-Mail: eubios2@aol.com



Harriet Weidenbaum sent an email out with three attachments: A proposed trip extension, an itinerary and INSURANCE INFORMATION. If you had any problem getting this information or need to review an issue, please contact Harriet Weidenbaum. At this writing they should be back in NY. Forms and monies should be mailed to

Harriet Weidenbaum

11 Beech Place

Huntington, NY 11743-4136

This Exchange was dependant on a medium to large group. Anyone who wanted to join in on this Exchange should have let Harriet know. If you are waiting until the last minute, you may miss the adventure!

Recent note from Harriet indicates that there are still several folk who have shown interest but have not yet closed the deal. Some of those are traveling, so we are still optimistic.

2009 Exchanges

2009 July (date to be determined)

Inbound, Murray Bridge, Australia

ED: Open



2009 April 16th –April 30th

Outbound, Vietnam.

ED Ivan and Sheila Ziegler:

(631) 694-7261 E-Mail sheandi@optonline.net

FFLI started looking forward to scheduling an Exchange with our friends from Vietnam the day after they went home after visiting us two years ago. Friendship Force International has officially offered this Exchange to us as Friendship Force Exchange in partnership with the Vietnam-USA Society.

A note from Ivan and Sheila:

Please join us for our spring 2009 exchange with our friends from the Vietnam-USA Society. They are anxiously waiting to greet us and return the hospitality we gave them 2 years ago. Our dates have been



confirmed and we will be leaving April 16, 2009, returning April 30, 2009. In addition to being home hosted in Hanoi, our trip will include stops in Halong City and Bay, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City and will be capped with a 2-3 day visit to Angkor Wat. Approximate cost of the trip is in the \$4,000 to \$4,500 range with more specifics to be worked out when the itinerary and attendees are finalized.

We need to know your interest now before we open the trip up to members from other clubs. Please let Ivan or Sheila Ziegler, our Exchange Directors know of your interest (sheandi@optonline.net; 631-694-7261). An initial deposit will be required in the near future. More exciting details to come.

My Friendship Force Calendar

Friendship Force of Long Island



August 25th @ 7:00 PM

General Meeting

Greek Village Restaurant

Genie and Don David Present

COSTA RICA!

September 29th @ 7:00 PM

General Meeting

Greek Village Restaurant

Presentation TBA

October 27th @ 7:00 PM

General Meeting

Greek Village Restaurant

Presentation TBA

October 28th – November 10th

Long Island, USA to Ra'anana,

Israel

Co-EDs

Harriet and Joel Weidenbaum.

November 5th – 12th

Long Island to San Antonio

ED: Betty Schmitt

November 24th @ 7:00 PM

General Meeting

Greek Village Restaurant

Presentation TBA

Tidbits

Editors Note:

If you were expecting a report on the July Pool Party held at the Bluestone residence, do NOT despair. I have some revealing photos to show you, (*wink wink...*)

But you will have to wait until the September edition of the FFLI newsletter to view them. (I need to see how much Hush Money I can collect between now and then). I hope you all look forward to my report as much as I do.

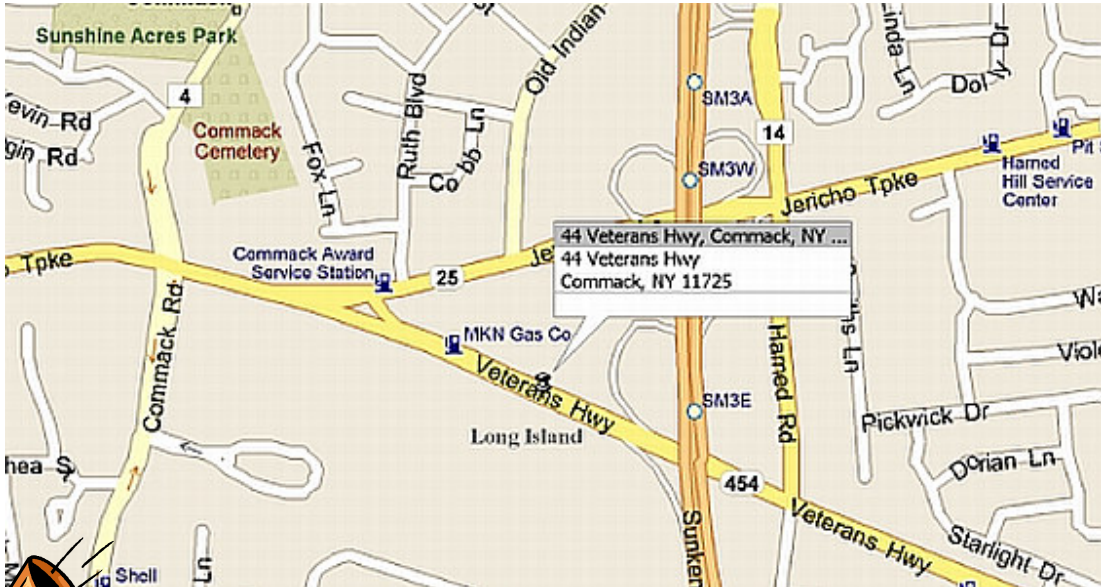


Where is the next General Meeting?

The Greek Village Restaurant 44 Veteran's Highway, Commack NY, 11725 (In the Macy's shopping center.)

Never been to an FFLI General Meeting?

Just show up and ask for Mike Macaluso. You will be my personal guest. FFLI will cover the \$2.00 sit down and refreshment fee.



Attention out there! Can you hear me?

OK... good. There are openings for upcoming General Meetings for Presentations on locations around the Globe that you have an interest in. The interest can be BUSINESS, PERSONAL TRAVEL, or HUMANITARIAN WORK. If you have experiences you can share in the form of a presentation, please let me know.

Does the excitement of sunny warm days exploring the treasures of the Southwest intrigue you?

The Friendship Force of Greater Binghamton will be engaging in an Inter-Club exchange with the San Diego Friendship Force Club.

When: leaving the Binghamton Airport on Tues., Dec. 2.

We will be home hosted for 3 glorious days, exploring on our own the many choices that come with our Go San Diego cards. After breakfast each day our host family will get us to whatever attractions we have chosen and retrieve us back for dinner and bed! With the Go San Diego card we can explore the San Diego Zoo, Natural History Museum,

In addition, we will be flying on Sat. morning, Dec. 10 for Tucson. Why Tucson? For starters Tucson was just rated #10 in the USA for fitness, healthy residents, parklands, and use of fresh ingredients in eateries. Plus we get to be part of their pre-season Christmas festivities with a definite Southwestern flair! And of course we get to extend our warm pre-winter getaway! See more at www.visittucson.org

You can reach me at cplace@stny.rr.com or by cell at 607-372-4019

if you should need more information. I hope to hear from you!

In friendship,
Mary Place