

# Friendship Force of Baton Rouge

Friendship Force is an international cultural exchange and home hospitality program. Its goal is to promote international understanding, friendship, and world peace.

## WELCOME TO OUR CLUB!

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with information on Friendship Force, how our club operates and the many membership benefits available to you. As a new member, you obviously share our interest in exploring new cultures, countries and regions. Friendship Force provides the opportunity to meet new friends through travel and home hospitality, and those experiences lead to understanding and a greater desire to serve our global community. Whenever we host visitors from another international or domestic club, all our members are encouraged to participate, so we have included quite a bit of information about traveling with Friendship Force and how you can be involved when we host a journey group.

We are very glad you joined us, and we want your membership to be a rewarding experience!

## FRIENDSHIP FORCE PLEDGE

As a member of the Friendship Force, I recognize that I can make a difference. I recognize that I have a mission. That mission is to be a friend to the people of the world. As I embark upon this adventure, I know that others will be watching me. I know that through my example to my fellow citizens and the people of other countries, the cause of friendship and peace can be furthered.

## I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## **About Friendship Force**

Friendship Force International provides opportunities to explore new countries and cultures from the inside by bringing people together at the personal level. Through the signature program of home hospitality, local hosts welcome international visitors into their culture, sharing with them meals, conversation, and the best sights and experiences of their region. Staying in a private home and sharing the routines of daily life changes one from a tourist to a temporary resident as you gain an understanding of another culture and its people.

In a typical Friendship Force program, a local club (chapter) prepares an itinerary of cultural activities, inviting members from clubs in other countries or states to come and stay with them in their homes for up to a week.

## **History of Friendship Force**

The Friendship Force was founded by Wayne Smith and introduced by President Jimmy Carter at a White House gathering of state governors in 1977. Rosalyn Carter served as Honorary Chairperson until 2002.

Initially, FF involved groups of 150-400 U.S. citizens, known as friendship ambassadors, traveling via chartered aircraft to a partner city where a group of the same size boarded to return to the original city, hence the term “exchange”—the word previously used to refer to our travel programs. Over the years, Friendship Force changed from charters to one-way travels on regularly scheduled airlines, allowing greater flexibility and a reduction of group size. Today, most travel programs involve 18-22 Friendship Force members visiting another Friendship Force chapter somewhere in the world, and we use the term “journey.”

While the size and number of journeys have changed dramatically since 1977, the basic Friendship Force formula is the same, with visiting ambassadors spending a week in the home of a host family. While each journey is now in just one direction, the participating ambassadors and hosts develop a shared understanding of each other’s culture so that a true cultural exchange takes place. In many cases, the friendships established during a journey continue for many years, with follow-up visits through later Friendship Force journeys or through private visits.

In 1992 Friendship Force was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for its A.R.M.S. (American Russian Mutual Survival) program that arranged exchanges between citizens of the U.S.A. and Soviet Union. Since 1977 Friendship Force has been an effective means for promoting international understanding.

Friendship Force has brought together millions of people. Today there are over 350 Friendship Force chapters active in 60 countries and 6 continents in the world and over 300 journeys occur each year. Membership fees, journey fees, donations, and foundation grants support Friendship Force International. Currently, FFI is working on adding clubs in areas not yet well represented including China, India and Africa.

The Friendship Force of Baton Rouge club was formed May 1, 1984 and currently has about 80 members.

# Ten Reasons to Explore the World with the Friendship Force

## **1. Go where you've never been**

Take a journey into the heart of a country and its people. Friendship Force International conducts over 300 programs every year in 60 countries. Friendship Force hosts are eager to welcome you into their culture, sharing sights and experiences that are not available to tourists.

## **2. Get off the beaten track**

There's no better way to see a new place than with a friend who knows its "best kept secrets." You might dine in a palace in Indonesia, visit a remote village in Africa, or see a polo match in Argentina.

## **3. Cultural immersion**

Through the unique Friendship Force program of home hospitality, international travelers are hosted in the homes of local families. In this way, you can get to know a new culture from the inside. For example, you might learn local pastimes, such as calligraphy in Japan or snowshoeing in Canada, or you could learn family recipes in your host's kitchen. You might even be invited to a religious ceremony or a wedding.

## **4. Personal friendships**

When you travel or host with the Friendship Force, you get to know real people by sharing real life. Often, friendships are formed that last a lifetime.

## **5. Bring the world to your doorstep**

As a Friendship Force host you can explore the world without leaving home by extending the hand of friendship to international guests. It's a rewarding experience to give your guests an up-close, insider's view of life in your country, either through overnight home hospitality or daytime cultural activities.

## **6. Represent your country**

When you travel or host with the Friendship Force you have the opportunity to share knowledge of your country and culture with new friends from around the world. Through friendly conversation and everyday experiences, you become part of changing the way others see your culture and the world.

## **7. Make a difference**

There are many opportunities to make a difference in communities around the world. For example, you can help your new friends practice your language, bring supplies to a needy school, or host foreign teachers attending a professional development program in your city.

## **8. Pursue your passions around the world**

Themed programs allow participants to come together to explore a common interest in a unique region of the world. You could spend a week exploring the gardens of England, studying biodiversity in Costa Rica, touring vineyards in New Zealand, or cycling the Niagara Falls region, all with the company of international friends who share your enthusiasm.

### **9. Lifelong learning**

The Friendship Force promotes lifelong learning through a variety of travel and hosting programs. For example, programs especially for teachers and students promote education across borders. Language learning programs provide the opportunity to spend a week in a foreign country with a host family, in full language immersion.

### **10. Promote global goodwill**

Friendship Force participants greet the world with an open mind and respect for other cultures. In this way, each person makes an individual contribution toward global goodwill.



## **Slogan**

Experience Different Views.  
Discover Common Ground.

## **Values**

Mutual Respect • Cultural Diversity • Cultural Exploration • Service

## **Vision**

Each individual will make a contribution to global goodwill.  
The Friendship Force worldwide network of clubs and individuals  
will overcome differences among people and nations.  
By connecting the world, one friend at a time, we will create a world of friends that becomes a  
world of peace.

## **Mission**

To promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people

Explore . Understand . Serve

**Explore:** We explore new countries and regions. We explore new cultures and new ways to connect across the barriers that separate us.

**Understand:** By sharing a home, meals, conversation and everyday experiences, people become friends, seeing beyond governments and borders into the heart of a country and its people. By combining home hospitality with cultural exploration, we reach a new level of understanding.

**Serve:** Exploration leads to understanding. Understanding leads to an acceptance of our common humanity and the desire to serve our global village—with words and actions.

## Helpful Definitions & Explanations

### *FFBR*

Friendship Force of Baton Rouge

### *FFI*

Friendship Force International or International Home Base  
Friendship Force's headquarters is in Atlanta, GA

### *Inbound Journey*

Baton Rouge hosts another club, generally for one week for an international club, or five days for a USA club. Occasionally, there can be a "bridged journey" during which we host a club for two or three days when they are between journeys, or en route to their home.

### *Outbound Journey*

When Baton Rouge members are hosted by another club, either international or domestic. FFBR typically has one international outbound and one domestic outbound each year.

### *Why is travel with the Friendship Force sometimes called an Exchange?*

The word exchange comes from our organization's early history when communities would actually exchange large delegations of citizen ambassadors. While the programs are still cultural exchanges, they are rarely reciprocal trips as originally developed, where one group directly "exchanges" with another. Therefore, the term "journey" is now used, since it is better suited to the amazing programs members plan and experience.

### *Ambassador*

A club member who is participating in a journey to another country or state.

### *Ambassador Coordinator (formerly Exchange Director or ED)*

The club member who assumes responsibility for directing the planning of an outbound journey.

### *Host Coordinator (formerly Exchange Director or ED)*

The club member who assumes responsibility for directing the planning of an incoming club journey.

### *What is a home stay or home hospitality?*

A home host is the club member/s that provides hospitality for an ambassador including a bed, meals, and transportation during an exchange. Home hospitality is the signature program of Friendship Force. This means that, on most journeys, you will have the opportunity to be a guest for a few days in someone's home, where the real power of citizen diplomacy can be experienced. You will learn firsthand the difference between travel as a tourist and the experience of being a temporary citizen.

### *Who are the host families?*

Host families are members or friends of Friendship Force in the host community. They are not paid to provide hosting but do so because of their interest in getting to know “citizen ambassadors” from other places. Hosts provide bed, meals, and transportation to planned activities. Hosts and their family become inside guides to their country and its people for the visiting ambassador/s.

### *Day Host*

A club member who is not home hosting, but who chaperones a home host’s ambassador/s for a day’s activities. The day host provides vital assistance to home hosts who work during the day or are unable to participate in a particular day’s events.

### *Is there a typical itinerary?*

Each journey’s itinerary is unique, but most will combine a Friendship Force home stay with an active program of taking in the local sites while learning firsthand about the culture by establishing a personal relationship with your hosts/ambassadors.

### *Small Group Dinner*

A small, informal at-home dinner party for one or two ambassadors plus their home hosts. The dinner is hosted at his/her own expense by a club member who is not home hosting during the current exchange. An alternative of a potluck allows for a variety of foods, and the expense can then be shared. The ambassador and home hosts will be assigned to a specific home.

### *Must I belong to a Friendship Force club in order to participate in a journey?*

No. You may apply directly to the leader (ambassador coordinator) for any journey listed in the catalog. (In some cases, your exchange fee will include a one-year membership in the sponsoring club.) If you live in a community where a club exists, you may want to consider joining, so you can participate in the ongoing programs that promote global understanding through friendship.

### *What are Friendship Force clubs?*

Friendship Force journeys are organized through a volunteer network of 350 chapters (clubs) in 60 countries. The clubs are connected globally through Friendship Force International (FFI), a non-profit organization with offices in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

### *What do you mean by “apply” to go on a trip?*

Each journey is led by an experienced Friendship Force Ambassador Coordinator. They will ask you to fill out an application prior to accepting you as a journey participant. This application process ensures that travelers are physically healthy enough to make the journey and also that they are committed to the Friendship Force mission.

### *What does it mean to be committed to the FF mission?*

FFI has an over fifty year history of bringing people together in friendship across the barriers that separate people. We think of ourselves as ‘citizen ambassadors’, each of us having the power to promote good relations at a personal level.

## **About Friendship Force Baton Rouge**

### **Membership & Dues**

Membership is open to anyone who accepts Friendship Force principles and pays annual membership dues. The membership year is from January 1 – December 31, and dues are collected by the end of December for the following year. New members joining after Oct. 1st are paid up through the following year. As a member of our club and upon completion of orientation, you are eligible to apply for all the travel journeys organized by both our club and the Friendship Force International (FFI) office in Atlanta. In addition, other clubs often advertise for applications through the FFI website and email Communiqué from FFI. To stay connected with FFI, once you are a member be sure to contact FFI and ask to have your email added to their database to receive important news updates. FFI can be contacted by phone at (404) 522-9490 or email through their website under “Contact Us” link.

### **Board of Directors**

Board members serve from January – December. We elect our board members at the quarterly general meeting in August for the following year. Our elected positions that serve one-year terms are president and vice president. Positions that serve two-year terms are secretary, treasurer and three members-at-large. The outgoing president remains a board member for an additional year as past president.

All club business is conducted by members of our Board of Directors. All club members are invited to attend the board meetings. Voting members of our club’s business include all the elected Board of Directors. Reports of Board business are made available at the general meetings and newsletters. Minutes are always available upon request to the secretary.

### **Committees & Appointed Positions**

We are always looking for new members to join one of our committees or to work on special projects. When you become active you get to know other club members better and make your membership more interesting, enriching and rewarding. Opportunities include: Publicity, Historian, Membership, Friendship, Website, Social media, and committees needed throughout the year for special events such as public service projects, journeys, Christmas party, and other socials.

### **Newsletter**

The club president sends a newsletter by email monthly or more often if additional communication is necessary. The newsletter lists all upcoming events, information about journeys, committee reports, news from the FFI office and other alerts.



## **Meetings & Events**

The General Membership Meetings are once every quarter. It is typically a business meeting combined with a social event such as dinner at a restaurant, potluck dinner, Christmas party event, etc. Many of our gatherings are held at local churches or members' clubhouses.

The Board of Directors normally meet the second Monday of each month at an area library (selected by the President) from 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon.

We also schedule monthly "Meet-Greet-Eat" lunches at various local restaurants. Occasionally, a day trip may be organized to "explore Louisiana." Members celebrate events such as World Friendship Day, participate in joint community activities such as Women's Week, and host a Christmas in July party for veterans in Jackson, LA. All meetings and social events are listed in our newsletter, announced via group emails, and on our website.

The club usually hosts two "journeys" during the year: Incoming Domestic Journey and an Incoming International Journey. During those events, members participate by either hosting the other club's members in their homes, day hosting, dinner hosting, or at minimum, participating in the welcome and farewell events for the visitors. Additionally, members have the opportunity to join an outgoing domestic and/or international journey each year.

## **Important Websites**

Our club website: [www.friendshipforcebatonrouge.org](http://www.friendshipforcebatonrouge.org)

Our club has an informative website and we encourage you to visit it often. It contains information about incoming and outgoing journeys, travel opportunities, a schedule of events, photos from past exchanges, etc. The site includes documents that guide our club: FFI, Club and Journey Policies, and Club By-Laws. Also, you will find a link at the bottom to our club's **Facebook of Baton Rouge** page.

Friendship Force International website: [www.friendshipforce.org](http://www.friendshipforce.org)

The FFI website is a "must," especially if you are interested in participating in a journey or learning more about Friendship Force. The home page features a "Journeys" tab which lists all upcoming travel journeys, so you can explore and join journeys wherever you want to travel. Some journeys are designed with a humanitarian or environmental theme, usually involving a home stay with members from other Friendship Force clubs. The FFI site also has an online shopping store where you can purchase merchandise and gift items with the FFI brand.

## **Name Badges**

All members are asked to wear their name badges to meetings & events (we want to get to know you). The Official Name Badge Order Form with instructions is available on our Friendship Force of Baton Rouge website under "Forms."

# Traveling and Hosting

## How It Works

As a FF member, you have a number of options:

- You can apply for travel on international or domestic trips arranged by our club
- You can apply for travel on international or domestic trips arranged by other clubs
- You can apply for travel on international trips arranged by Friendship Force International.

## Our Club Travel - How It Works

Each fall, every Friendship Force club submits destinations to FFI that their members would like to travel to the year after next. (Example, in the fall of 2019 our club submitted preferred destinations to FFI for 2021.) Each club also identifies how many weeks they would be willing to host visitors from other clubs. This information is submitted to FFI in Atlanta where all the preliminary assignments are made. FFI does the initial coordinating, and then turns it over to the clubs to implement. Both host and ambassador clubs must sign that they agree with the matching. Details regarding how these requests are granted are available on the FFI web site. Two important considerations are:

- where the club has traveled recently (to avoid repeat visits to a region, nearby journeys will seldom be granted within a three year period)
- whether a club has a history of filling its journeys

The club that is traveling (ambassadors) and the club that is receiving guests (hosts) assign coordinators. The ambassador coordinator and host coordinator communicate closely about the date, home accommodations, sightseeing opportunities, and cultural activities that are coordinated by their committees. The two coordinators customize the trip, coordinate details and cost and prepare their members for either traveling or hosting.

## **What's Involved in Traveling as an Ambassador?**

Every member who wants to travel on a club journey will complete an application to become an ambassador. Typically, there are 18-22 ambassadors in a group. The ambassador coordinator will then select the ambassadors to go on the trip. The selections are based on the type of trip and the demands placed on the ambassadors and their ability to meet those demands. If there are more eligible applicants than spaces available, the ambassador coordinator will then select based on the priorities approved by the Board of Directors and detailed in the compendium. The Application and Agreement Form can be found on the FFBR website under "Forms."

When you travel as a Friendship Force ambassador, you are truly immersed in the new culture most journeys. You stay in the homes of other Friendship Force members and spend your days with hosts or day hosts who are always proud to introduce you to their family, friends, traditions, lifestyle and, of course, important sites in their region. Don't worry about language problems! There is always someone who can help translate, and you will be amazed how smiles, nods and assorted hand language are universally understood. It all makes for new friends and great stories! Learning a few foreign phrases like "hello", "thank you", "yes", "no", "it is delicious", etc. will help and impress. Of course, you will be spending many of your days with other travelers from our club/group, and you will know what to expect because your trip's itinerary has been planned in great detail to give you a rich and personal experience. Bottom line – relax and have a great time! Friendship is the golden thread that ties all hearts together.

### **Arrival and Meeting Your Hosts**

Upon arrival be sure your Friendship Force name tag is worn and visible. You will spend this evening getting to know your host family and your new surroundings. There may be a welcoming event planned for the entire group.

### **Activities**

As a visiting ambassador you are expected to participate in all the official Friendship Force events planned by the host club. These usually include a welcome evening, and a farewell party. The host club also will plan group activities such as visits to local sites the club is particularly proud of showing to visitors. It would be disrespectful to decline participation other than for medical reasons. At times there may be special events not covered by the exchange fee paid to the host club. These events are offered as an option for the visiting ambassadors.

### **Planned Time and Free Time**

Generally, most journeys involve a one week home-stay in the home of another Friendship Force member at the chosen destination. Often, the trip may include two journeys to two destinations, with two different host families. There is usually one free, unplanned day you will spend with your host. Frequently, there will be an optional extended trip in the same country, before, after, or between the journeys. Members may then travel independently to another destination before returning home.

## Tips on Being a Good Ambassador

It is important that you are a good ambassador and exhibit the qualities of a friend. Therefore:

**Keep an Open Mind:** This is the ability to keep one's opinions flexible and receptive to new stimuli. The fewer expectations, preconceptions and private agendas you have, the more successful your experience will be. After all, the joy of discovery is a surprise.

**Have a Sense of Humor:** The ability to laugh and find humor in things helps guard against disappointment and frustration. Be quick to overlook and slow to lose your sense of humor.

**Be Flexible and Adaptable:** The ability to cope with new situations as well as keeping options open, and judgmental behavior to a minimum, will enable you to enjoy new and different experiences. Your hosts have agreed to welcome you into their homes without reimbursement. Allow them to be hospitable. Be open to their attentiveness and the ways they express it. Let your host family take charge of your life for a week. You won't be disappointed.

**Have a Positive Regard for Others:** Remember the ability to express warmth, empathy, respect, and positive regard for others with a willingness to communicate is important. Keep in mind the duties of a good guest and don't take advantage of your host's hospitality. Be sensitive to hosts whose economic resources may be more limited than your own. It may or may not be appropriate to help with the extra expenses during your visit. Remember your hosts are proud people; feel your way with your heart in this matter.

**Show Your Appreciation:** You will want to bring along a **gift for your hosts** unique to your home state or country. This, in addition to a warm note of thanks left behind in the guest room, is a very personal way to show your gratitude for your host's attentiveness. It is customary for visiting ambassadors to take their host/s out to dinner one night during their stay in appreciation for their host's hospitality. This is normally done on the free day. It is, also, customary to give a small token gift to day host and dinner hosts.

### A few more "hints":

- Be open to new foods, a new daily schedule, and unfamiliar habits. Look forward to such differences.
- Share your hosts' lifestyle. Join in and help with home activities.
- Be sensitively aware of the feelings of other people (hosts and your fellow travelers). Feel free to ask questions, but at the same time, be sensitive to areas where your host seems to prefer privacy.
- Share your life with your hosts. Take along photographs of your home, family and community to share with your hosts so they have a better understanding of you. Show them on a map where you live and work.
- Punctuality is a must for all activities. One person's tardiness affects the entire group. Be prompt, but don't be surprised if others are not.

- Because Friendship Force stresses “faces, not places,” learn about the customs, history and world-view of the countries you will visit. Refresh your knowledge of history, demographics and geography—of your own community and to understand the country you are visiting.
- Tread lightly when talking politics or religion. If the conversation turns in that direction approach with curiosity, but don’t be confrontational. Always keep calm and remain civil. Be genuine and respect yourself, but respect the other person’s opinion EVEN WHEN it is different than yours. Ask questions, and then listen. Don’t argue. Strive for diplomacy in all your conversations. If the conversation gets difficult or uncomfortable, ask to end the conversation for peace’s sake. They have their views and beliefs. You have yours. Leave it there. Instead, focus on the values and common ground you share with your new friend.
- Be independent. Enjoy the activities your hosts have planned for you, but be able to amuse yourself as well. Explore the neighborhood, write postcards, read, play with the children, or go on sightseeing or shopping excursions when the family is busy.
- Be reasonable about your purchases of souvenirs. Don’t let shopping seem more important than making friends and learning the culture.
- Be considerate of limited resources. For example, your hosts’ hot water supply may not equal what you are accustomed to at home.
- Be considerate of your host’s privacy and purse. Offer to pay for an activity, meal, gasoline, or transportation cost if your host does not have a car.
- It is customary for visiting ambassadors to take their host/s out to dinner one night during their stay in appreciation for their host’s hospitality.
- Don’t be afraid to speak the language even if your hosts speak English. Your mistakes will make them feel better about their limitations in English. If neither you nor your hosts speak each other’s language well, you might try yet another language, translation, and, of course, gestures.
- If needed, ask for help from your hosts, from the host coordinator, or from anyone available.
- Ambassadors are expected to be able to handle their own luggage. (This is important if you have been accustomed to traveling on commercially organized tours where everything is done for you.)
- Be patient if lines are long and service is slow. Expect plans to get fouled up sometimes.
- Remember that many problems will work themselves out (it’s only for seven days). If a hosting situation poses a real problem, ambassadors are expected to exercise tact and diplomacy. First address the problem with your host. When necessary, contact the host coordinator. You are not expected to suffer through a week if there are major problems.
- Cultivate the habit of listening and sharing, rather than merely hearing and seeing. Instead of knowing all the answers, ask questions.

- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in an attempt to deepen your understanding. Concentrate on the experience of sharing a week in the lives of your hosts. Accept this time as a gift on this tiny planet we call home. You may never come this way again. Enjoy!

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BE FRIENDLY, BE COURTEOUS, BE FLEXIBLE, BE ADAPTABLE

## **Cost of Travel**

Currently (2017), the typical cost for a 5 to 7 day outgoing exchange is:

- \$170 to FFI for an international journey (per club journey)
- \$15 per night hosted to FFI for domestic journeys
- Up to \$25 to your local club contingency fund to cover non anticipated events or fluctuating journey rates
- Miscellaneous local club fees may also apply (usually under \$10)
- A minimum of \$150 to the host club. This is negotiated between the coordinators.
- Transportation cost to the hosting club (may include local air or ground to host city)
- Possible extra cost for meals, generally lunches when out.
- Possible extra costs for local transportation and entrance fees, though most of these are covered by the fee given to the host club.
- Small gifts to your host and others (dinner hosts, day hosts, children, etc.)
- Taking your host out to one dinner
- Visa and passport costs
- Travel insurance which is mandatory unless you sign an official Friendship Force waiver. A "Friendship Force Travel Protection Plan" is available for purchase online at the FFI website.
- Some programs have extra costs due to the specific activities or local costs. Generally, the budget for these is worked out in detail before your commitments are made for the exchange.

## Hosting Ambassadors From Another Club - How It Works

When our club receives ambassadors from other clubs, our ambassador coordinator (and incoming journey committee) plan their itinerary, assign their home hosts, coordinate their visit and identify opportunities for each of our members to participate. They also prepare us for understanding the culture, history and worldview of the visiting ambassadors who will become our new friends.

Every member of the club is strongly encouraged to participate in both incoming and outgoing journeys, to home host ambassadors from other clubs and to take advantage of forming friendships globally and locally. The club works as a team and each member is counted on. We assume that by joining the club you will want to become an active participant.

As a new member, we don't expect you to make a commitment. But we hope you will consider and volunteer to participate in a journey to assist one of our current coordinators. It's a great way to make friends and learn more about the journey operation. Just let us know that you are interested!

Generally, all of our club members will be asked to participate in one or more of these ways:

- Hosting ambassadors in your home
- Serving as a day host
- Providing transportation to the scheduled activities
- Hosting a small group dinner in your home or preparing a dish to contribute to dinner.
- Attending a welcome and farewell reception
- Help with planning entertainment for our visitors at receptions
- Welcome - make signs, goody bags and find items to fill them.

Our club usually has a week of activities planned for our visitors, all designed to acquaint them with our culture, geography, traditions, etc. The full week is not planned completely. There are usually one or more free days in the week when the home host or day host can plan an interesting experience, or the ambassadors may go out on their own if they wish. We always have a welcome and farewell reception and group activities during the week that may interest you.

## **Hosting Ambassadors in Your Home**

Hosting an incoming ambassador in your home for their 5-7 night visit can be a wonderful experience. Ambassador's departure may be the beginning of an enduring friendship that will grow through correspondence and visits.

As host, it is your responsibility to provide your ambassador/s with a secure environment and clean, comfortable accommodations. This does not mean that the accommodations need to be lavish. These folks should be treated and considered as members of your own family.

Our host coordinator is armed with information about the ages, gender and interests of the incoming ambassadors and will try to pair you up accordingly. Our club will have a full week of activities planned, so you don't need to worry about entertaining your guests around the clock. Group activities are planned in advance; the cost of the ambassador's portion will have been paid for by part of their program fee.

Hosts are responsible for providing suitable accommodations and any meals that are not part of the group activities. Be aware of any health problems and/or allergies. It is the host responsibility to provide or arrange transportation for their guests to the group activities. Hosts will need to pay for their own entrance fees or meals. Other members also serve as day hosts, so you don't have to be on the go all the time. Plus, other members who do not have extra bedrooms also assist by hosting dinners, offering transportation, etc.

The most important thing to remember is that you are hosting Friendship Force members who share the same interest in learning about different cultures. They will surely enjoy their trips to the plantations, swamps, museums and nearby attractions, but meeting your friends and family and understanding your lifestyle will enrich their travel experience. Hosts might consider taking them to their place of worship, the grocery store, the library or even the post office. Walks through your neighborhood, bike rides on one of our bike trails or a backyard barbecue with neighbors - these everyday experiences might be the best memories of their visit to Baton Rouge and Louisiana.

The role as a host to Friendship Force ambassadors carries with it a big responsibility. To a large extent, their opinion of our state and country may be formed on the basis of the experience they have while they are in your home and community.



## **Day Hosts**

Realizing that home hosts often have previous commitments, jobs, obligations and busy schedules, Friendship Force recommends use of day hosts to assist and complement home hosts. Sometimes the home hosts just needs a little break, and the day hosts can provide this. These day hosts are Friendship Force members who are not able to home host, but want to be involved in the exchange. Day hosts will be responsible for coordinating with home hosts to provide transportation to some of the planned activities and to take the ambassadors to places of interest.

## **Dinner Hosts**

Another way club members who are not home hosts can assist is to be a dinner host. Dinner hosts invite a few visiting ambassadors and their home hosts to their home for a meal. This gives the visitors an opportunity to meet other club members and see another American home.

## **Cost of Hosting**

Hosting ambassadors in your home is somewhat like inviting any guest. You will generally provide breakfast, sometimes a few packed lunches or snacks, evening meals when there are no other arrangements, transportation on the days not covered by a day host, your own meals, entrance and activity fees on days you accompany your ambassadors, and possibly some potluck items which you bring to the farewell or welcome dinners.

## **Ambassador Coordinator & Host Coordinator**

Very simply, we cannot receive ambassadors or travel as ambassadors if we do not have coordinators. FFI has a detailed manual for Ambassador and Host Coordinators and our members are willing and able to mentor any members interested in learning how to serve as a coordinator – either for an outgoing journey or an incoming journey – either international or domestic. Being a coordinator can be great fun, and our club and FFI can provide you all the support you need. Ambassador coordinators can have most of their club exchange fees paid if they organize a full journey.

DURING A JOURNEY (inbound or outbound), your coordinator will accompany your group and will be available throughout the journey experience to solve housing, communications, medical or other problems, except those relative to any extension that you may arrange. You will be given the name and telephone number of the host's home where he/she will be.

### **Questions???**

Contact any club officer. Names and email addresses are shown on the FFBR website under "Board of Directors."

*"If ordinary people get to know each other as friends, they discover that the values and experiences they share are more important than their differences."*

— *Wayne Smith, Founder*

*The Friendship Force*

Friendship Force song:

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to  
be.

With God as our father...family all are we.

Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony.  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.  
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace  
eternally.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.



# *Notes*