



friendship force  
CENTRAL VIRGINIA  
Changing the Way You See the World

# The Ambassador

## October 2025

### President's Message

Well we did just finish a wonderful visit from the Friendship Force of Oklahoma. It has been a while since we have had a Club join us and this was a welcome event. We hope to set up more opportunities like this for next year. On the other side the club had a great exchange to Northern Ohio as you can see later in the newsletter. Some more wonderful exchanges are schedule in the near future.

Al Colville

### Up Coming Exchanges

Outbound 2026: We have 2 outbounds – one domestic and one international. Our domestic journey is to the San Franciso area which will take place probably in August. This is dependent on when Tarapoto, Peru will visit us. We were originally planning on a May Inbound but Tarapoto is hosting the South American FF Conference the end of May. Our international is to Montreal, Canada June 3-9 or 10 with an extention to Quebec City either before or after our journey.

Inbound 2026: We will be hosting Tarapoto, Peru. Our club journeyed there in 2024. A date has not been determined.

Please be on the lookout for surveys about interest in both our domestic and international outbound journeys.

Deb Winslow, Exchange Coordinator

## MEMBERSHIP

Just wanted to let you know what will be coming up for the rest of the year of 2025 –

October 18<sup>th</sup> from 1- 3 we will be having a Halloween Costume (optional) Membership meeting. You should bring a snack to share and your choice of beverage. Program will be a social event with reports from Deb Winslow on the NE Ohio Outbound Exchange and Willow Drinkwater will be speaking on the Oklahoma Inbound Exchange.

Also, the Board will be presenting the proposed BOD for the FFCV for the year 2026. They are --

President - Alan Drinkwater

V. President - Tom Baughn

II V. President - Nina Flynn

Secretary - Deana Winslow

Treasurer - David Lea

Additional nominations can be accepted before the membership at this meeting.

November 15<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 will be our annual Friendsgiving Luncheon. Willow Drinkwater and Peggy Colville will be providing the Turkeys, and we are asking all of you to bring a side dish. Be on the lookout from Deb Winslow asking what you will be bringing so we can make sure to have a good variety. This notice will be coming out a couple weeks before the event.

December 13<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 will be our Annual Christmas Celebration. This will be a catered event by one of our very own Deb Winslow. This will be our closing event for the year and we all know what that means – Membership sign ups for 2026. I will have plenty of applications available but when we get a little closer to this event, I will be sending out a reminder along with 2026 FFCV Application that you can fill out beforehand and have ready to give me when you arrive.

**ALL OF THESE EVENTS WILL BE HELD AT THE INDEPENDENT – 350 Portico Way, Charlottesville. It is VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU RSVP FOR THESE EVENTS WHEN YOU GET YOUR REMINDERS – THIS TRULY HELPS IN PLANNING FOR EACH EVENTS, FOOD WISE AND SETTING UP.**



These pictures are from the annual membership picnic that was held at Alan and Willows farm on August 16. As you can see everyone had a great time and probably ate too much.



## JAG School Activities

So much has happened since our last newsletter in July with our Friendship Force JAG program. We no sooner returned from our fabulous week with the NE Ohio Friendship Force in the Cleveland area when I heard from Larry Moore, in his last full year as UVA JAG coordinator for International Students, that the ten month students would be here earlier than planned and able to attend our Friendship Force picnic at our Cedar Hill Paradise Farm poolside on August 16th.. We also still had our three month Egyptian JAG student, Jamaladin who graduated four days later and returned to Cairo. It was great to have a big crowd with potluck for everyone. Alan and I are sponsoring LTC Chidinma Eve Ojukwu, and her three children from Nigeria for the full ten months. Other sponsors include Lewis Mitler for COL Oscar Paulino from Angola, Patricia Sclater for MAJ Inhye Jo from Korea, and Linda Gehle and Tom Baughn for MAJ Noya Kobayashi from Japan. A few weeks after the picnic, we met at Bing and Joyce Spittle's Lake Monticello home for the JAG student potluck picnic on Labor Day, a perfect day for going out on the Spittle's boat where everyone got to steer and play Captain! Recently we had a new three month, Basic Course JAG student come from Keelung, Taiwan. 1 LT Tsai Nien-Ting who goes by his nickname, Lewis is being sponsored by Susan Gross and Nina Flynn.

There is a form which all JAG students must sign that was new to me, but let it be known JAG students now have to sign a form saying they will not attend a shooting range while in the US, nor use anyone's fire arms and ammunition. They also are prohibited from purchasing guns. This stems from an incident in 2019 at Naval Air Station in Pensacola resulting in the deaths of three US Navy sailors by a Saudi Arabian military officer training at the base. Our JAG students are thoroughly briefed, wonderful human beings we are proud to know. It's sad there are a few bad apples out there. If you are interested in future JAG sponsorships, please let me know. Susan Gross has compiled a list of things we can do with them which she will present at our October 18th Halloween Gathering at the Independence, 1-3 pm.



Naoya Kobayashi, JAG student from Japan,  
Bing, standing guard behind them during the Labor Day Party!



Willow at the helm

Bing, standing guard behind them during the Labor Day Party!



What would a picnic be without good food and friends?

Willow Drinkwater  
434-249-6892

## Inbound from Oklahoma 9-9 to 9-16-2025

Seven members of the Friendship Force of Oklahoma arrived September 9th at the Charlottesville Airport. The next week was filled with activities from Montpelier, President Madison's home the first day to Monticello, President Jefferson's home with lunch afterwards at Michie Tavern, the last day.. It was well planned with two free days which we spent at the University of Virginia with our Ambassador, Ray Doonkeen from Oklahoma City. He was impressed with the campus and the memorial to the slaves where over 100 students from a Houston private school were gathered when we arrived. Nina made a delicious dinner for us Wednesday night where we actually got to participate in making a delightful chocolate confection.

Friday we did Richmond, and ironically the Friendship Force of Iowa had arrived earlier and they thought they were us, so when we arrived at our set time, they scrambled to find us a suitable guide, and as a former history teacher, he gave us a thorough history of the Capitol. Afterwards we had pizza and then boarded a canal boat for an experience I didn't even know existed. Seems President Washington authorized the digging of a 115 mile canal all the way to the western frontier from Richmond to facilitate goods being able to be transported from there to the world. The highlight was seeing all the turtles on floating logs, the Triple Railroad bridges overhead and being under Route 95. A perfect weather day, too.

Saturday we had a wonderful guide who took us through the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton. We saw Irish, African American, German, English and Native American cultures to where we are today. It was altogether a great week with delightful people. Thank you also for matching us all up with great Ambassadors, Deb.



The Group at Montpelier



The Group up on the Blue Ridge Parkway



A lovely day for a float on the canal and going under Route 95.

## NE Ohio Exchange:

We had a marvelous time in Ohio – making new friends, visiting cultural sites, cruising the Cuyahoga River, spending a day in Amish country. The pictures show some of the sites.

Welcome potluck at the Binnig Farm



Cleveland Art Museum and Cleveland Orchestra



Stan Hewet Hall – built by founder of Goodyear Tire Company



Cruising Cuyahoga River



Day in Amish Country

