

MEMORANDUM

To: FFI Club Presidents
From: George Brown, FFI President
Date: January 15, 2008

In March 2007, the FFI Board of Directors initiated a long range planning process. The board recognized that FFI is strong today, with a compelling mission, a proud 31-year history, a proven home-hosting format, and a global club network that spans six continents. However, we are also facing some serious challenges: our members are aging, many clubs report difficulty in attracting new and younger members, and FFI is not well known outside our membership.

The planning process is designed to build on these strengths while addressing the weaknesses. We conducted leadership surveys, reviewed past studies, engaged the expertise of planning consultants, and held planning workshops with key volunteers, staff and the board. Based on this research, we concluded that FFI can be strengthened by focusing our exchanges on issues that are relevant for today's world, and by introducing FFI as an organization that is active locally.

A long range plan has now been approved by the board that establishes four major objectives. We are now working on "action plans" for each objective, and will present a detailed implementation report to the board at its next meeting, March 9-11, 2008. I am providing a summary of the plan below. This summary is available in English, German, Portuguese, Spanish and will shortly be available in Japanese. A complete copy of the plan as adopted by the board in English is also available upon request.

As we move forward with implementing the various elements of the plan, FFI will provide opportunities for you to be actively involved. The next step is a survey that will be sent to you in a few weeks. I also welcome your comments at any time. We have created a special email address at FFI just for this purpose: plan@thefriendshipforce.org. I look forward to hearing from you as together we create a strong Friendship Force for the future.

A Long-Range Plan for Friendship Force International
Summary for Club Presidents, January 2008
(Copy of entire plan available upon request at: plan@thefriendshipforce.org)

Goal: To enable FFI to grow as a dynamic and relevant organization while carrying out its mission to promote international understanding by establishing friendships across the barriers that separate people.

Objective 1: FFI will gain new relevance by focusing on current global challenges.

Explanation: New participants will be attracted to the Friendship Force by linking each exchange with a theme of global importance. The themes will include the following, along with others that will be added: (a) *cultural understanding*: the basic theme for most current FF exchanges, which can be used for regular club-to-club exchanges; (b) *international education*: programs for students, teachers and adult learners; (c) *humanitarian assistance*: exchange opportunities in various parts of the developing world; (d) *global environment*: a new theme that enables participants to become engaged in the environmental challenges that we all face and to experience firsthand the

various solutions that are being developed; and (e) *interfaith dialogue*: using Friendship Force exchanges as a way to promote understanding between people of different religious traditions.

Implementation: During 2008 FFI will develop global themes along with guidelines on how they can be used effectively by the clubs to promote FF exchange activity in their communities. Clubs will be encouraged to begin using these themes with their 2009 exchanges. These themes will also be used in publicizing FF activities around the world and in generating new sources of revenue for the organization.

Objective 2: FFI will increase its recognition (local, regional and global) by presenting itself as a community-based organization.

Explanation: The key to gaining recognition locally as well as globally is for FF clubs to become more connected with their communities. The new focus on global themes will help accomplish this goal by enabling FF clubs to promote exchanges that have a greater impact on their local communities and that will attract the interest of the media as well as other organizations with missions similar to that of FFI.

Implementation: FFI will develop a renewed organizational identity with fresh and appealing written and graphic messages, including an updated mission statement. Once new materials are available, FFI will conduct a major public relations initiative to raise awareness of FFI in communities around the world and to support clubs in their local public relations efforts. Clubs will be encouraged to expand activities within their communities, including developing partnerships with other organizations.

Objective 3: FFI will create a sustainable club model that will result in greatly expanded club membership.

Explanation: FFI's future depends on a strong global club network with a new generation of participants joining current members. The new focus on global themes, combined with the reintroduction of FF clubs as community-based organizations, will provide the foundation for a new sustainable club model.

Implementation: FFI will develop a set of club growth strategies that are based on the actual experience of successful clubs around the world, including innovative ways to attract new members. In addition, FFI will provide a greatly enhanced leadership development program to identify, train and retain new leaders. From these efforts, the goal is to double world membership by 2012.

Objective 4: FFI will maximize its organizational effectiveness

Explanation: In order to maximize FFI's global impact and to support club revitalization FFI must improve the effectiveness of its internal organizational structure. This includes the need for better communication between FFI Atlanta and the clubs and identification of new financial resources.

Implementation: (a) the Board of Directors will work with FFI to evaluate and improve the corporate infrastructure, including updating of legal documentation for FFI and the clubs; (b) FFI will expand the use of Internet technology to foster stronger communication with the clubs; and (c) FFI and the board will implement a new fundraising strategy to support program development and to provide FFI with greater diversification of income sources.