

# The History and Purpose of Friendship Force

Welcome to the Friendship Force of Dallas. We are delighted to meet you and hope you find your time with us rewarding and enjoyable. This folder contains information intended to give you an understanding of who we are and what we do.

For more information on Friendship Force of Dallas (FFD), please visit our website at <http://www.friendshipForceDallas.org>

For more information on Friendship Force International (FFI), please visit their website at <http://www.friendshipforce.org>

The Friendship Force was founded by Wayne Smith and introduced on March 1, 1977, by President Jimmy Carter at a White House gathering of state governors. At that time, President Carter asked the governors to return to their states and identify a volunteer leader who would serve as State Director for the Friendship Force in their state. Rosalynn Carter served as Honorary Chairperson until 2002.

Our purpose is to promote world peace and goodwill by developing personal friendships through international home-stays. The organization facilitates exchanges of people where the visiting "citizen ambassadors" share the lives of their host families in another country or state for one or more weeks.

The Dallas club was founded in November 1993 and has been on outbound journeys to Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Thailand, and Turkey. We have hosted members from clubs in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Colombia, Costa Rica, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Peru, Romania, and Uzbekistan.

In November 2002, the Dallas and Ft. Worth clubs co-hosted the 26th annual Friendship Force International World Conference. After the conference, Dallas home hosted members from six countries and 12 states.

We have included a **Guest Information and New Member form** should you decide you want more information or want to join us. We will keep you informed about our upcoming events and programs so you can learn more about us and what we do. If you prefer for us not to send you information, just let us know and we will honor your request.

THANKS for visiting us. We hope to see you again!

See the other side for more history about FFI

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# Further history about FFI

FFI originally involved groups ranging from 150 to 400 private citizens, known as friendship ambassadors, traveling via chartered aircraft to the partner city where a group of the same size boarded to return to the original city, hence the terminology “Exchange,” the word we use still to refer to our travel programs. The visiting ambassadors were hosted in the homes of volunteer host families for a week, sharing everyday experiences and getting to know each other on a personal basis. The first FF experience involved 762 Ambassadors in a simultaneous exchange between Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England and Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

During its first five years, a few large two-way exchanges were conducted each year. In 1982, Friendship Force travel arrangements changed from charters to one-way “exchanges” on regularly scheduled airlines, allowing greater flexibility and a reduction of group size—first to 40-80 and later to 20-25. The change in format permitted a great expansion of the program worldwide. Instead of a few large exchanges each year, there are now 250-300 smaller exchanges.

As a result of its initiatives between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Friendship Force was nominated in 1992 for The Nobel Peace Prize.

While the size and number of exchanges has changed dramatically, the basic Friendship Force formula is the same, with visiting ambassadors spending a week in the home of a host family. While each exchange 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 an exchange continue for many years, with follow-up visits through later Friendship Force exchanges or through private visits.

Since its founding in 1977, The Friendship Force has brought together millions of people. Today we are active more than 60 countries, promoting friendship and goodwill through an extensive program of home hosting, or exchanges. We celebrate our 40th Anniversary in 2017, beginning on our founding day, March 1st - World Friendship Day.