

FRIENDS FOREVER

World Peace...Grown Locally

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Trot! Trot! Trot!



Friends Forever is excited to announce that it has been named one of the beneficiaries of the Seacoast Rotary's 6th Annual Turkey Trot! The 5K Race through downtown Portsmouth is held Thanksgiving morning to benefit a local charity. Friends Forever is one of two local organizations that was selected to receive a portion of the proceeds from this year's event. Friends Forever has partnered with the Seacoast Rotary Club in the past, most recently this summer when a group from our Israel program joined a club meeting and presented to Seacoast Rotarians as part of their leadership development.



Join Friends Forever's Executive Director, Steve, as he races to the finish line! To sign up for the Turkey Trot, visit the Seacoast Rotary Club's website at www.seacoastrotary.org. If you would like to be a Friends Forever volunteer at the event, contact Chelsea at 603.397.5301 or cfitton@friendsforeverusa.org.

A friendly haven.



The group from our Israel program that was staying in New Hampshire this past August volunteered at Haven from Hunger, a food pantry and soup kitchen that distributes emergency foods to families throughout the Peabody, Salem and Lynnfield, MA communities. The students spent the day unloading delivery trucks, portioning and packaging food to distribute, and helping clean the kitchen and dining areas. While they were working, they were eager to learn from staff about poverty in the local neighborhoods. Moved by the community's involvement in solving the issue, multiple students chose working in a soup kitchen as their project to complete back home in Israel. "We'll help our community by serving their needs," said Lian, a youth participant.

Alumni welcome.



Friends Forever staff in Belfast, NI, with participants from our 2013-2014 Life Raft program.

Friends Forever staff would like to congratulate last year's participants for officially completing their year-long Life Raft program! After fulfilling their commitment to community service and leadership activities, these students are joining 1,300 other Life Raft graduates in an exclusive alumni network that remains dedicated to creating a more peaceful world. Despite having graduated from the Life Raft program, this is not the end of Friends Forever for our newest alumni. The delegations have taken on the responsibility to train the next generation of participants and remain connected through an alumni group on Facebook. Over the past few years, Friends Forever has used social media to reconnect with hundreds of its alumni around the globe. Some of these testimonies can be seen later in this issue!

Mid-East peace in the U.S. Midwest.

Last month, our volunteers in Bloomington-Normal, IL hosted their second delegation from our Israel program. The group stayed at the Timber Pointe Outdoor Center, a camp that is owned and operated by the Easter Seals of Central Illinois. Together they planted trees at the Children & Elder's Forest, sat in on classes at Illinois State University, collaborated with the community on multiple service projects, and attended prayer services at the Gill Street Islamic Center, Moses Montefiore Temple, and New Covenant Community Church.



As part of their leadership development, the students presented in pairs to local Rotary Clubs including the Normal Rotary Club and the Sunrise, Sunset, and Daybreak Rotary Clubs of Bloomington-Normal. They also had a chance to sit in on and present at a meeting of the Normal Town Council.

Green's peace.

This year's Annual Golf for Peace Tournament was a big success! The event was held at the exclusive Golf Club at Turner Hill in Ipswich, MA.



Thanks to this year's major sponsors including Cranney Companies, Hancock Associates, and Northbridge Companies, Friends Forever will be able to bring over two pair of youth leaders from Israel and Northern Ireland, to participate in a two week Life Raft. Thank you to all who joined us on the green and helped make peace possible! Contact Chelsea at (603)397-5301 to reserve your spot for next year's tournament!



Want to be more involved with Friends Forever? Attend an upcoming volunteer night to learn more!

Friends Forever Headquarters
6-7:00 pm

Tuesday, October 14th
Tuesday, November 18th
Tuesday, December 9th

To RSVP, please contact Chelsea at cfitton@friendsforeverusa.org

Visiting the Consulate.

A group from our Israel program visited the Israeli Consulate in Boston this summer, where they met with Consul General, Yehuda Yaakov. The group, comprised of five Arab and five Jewish participants, spoke with Mr. Yaakov about their experiences with Friends Forever and what it was like to be a teenager growing up in Israel. "We have a very difficult issue between Arabs and Jews. Being here together, in the same home, is the first step for resolving the conflict," said Yael, a youth participant. Mr. Yaakov agreed and encouraged the group to continue working to a brighter future for their generation.



Peace walk.

Organized by the volunteers in our Bloomington-Normal host community, dozens participated in a 5K Peace Walk and Fun Run. Symbolically linking the Muslim and Jewish members of the community, the walk route stretched from the Gill Street Islamic Center to the Montefiore Temple.

Sponsored by Fleet Feet Sports, the event began with a peace song sung in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, and ended with a snack of falafel, tahini, and hummus. Thank you to those who joined in the walk and helped bring Friends Forever to Illinois for the second year in a row!



Peace in all ages.

Drive for Peace.

Supporters in our Gulf Coast host community attended an exclusive party this summer at Henry Shane's private antique and classic car museum. Held each year at Cars of Yesteryear in Metairie, LA, attendees had the chance to view 100+ rare automobiles while enjoying food and drink from local restaurants.

The 30 x 90 Blues Women provided a live soundtrack to the cocktail hour and silent auction. Thank you to everyone who donated and continue to support Friends Forever programs in the Gulf Coast!



A group of Protestant and Catholic Youth from Belfast, NI, spent two weeks living among residents at the Carriage House at Lee Farm; a senior living facility owned and operated by the Northbridge Companies. Each day the youth had coffee with residents, joined them for afternoon card games, and participated in some of the Carriage House's activities, including an inter-generational painting class.



This is the second consecutive year that Friends Forever has partnered with Northbridge Companies to host a group at one of their facilities. Living among each other has proven to be a powerful and unique experience for not only the young people, but for the residents and staff of all ages.

A global campus.



While in Prague last month, Friends Forever volunteer, Jo Lamprey, met with an alumnus from our Northern Ireland program. Paul Cain participated in the 2008 Life Raft. Since graduating from Friends Forever, he went on to study at St. Mary's University College in Belfast. After participating in a European Union student exchange program in Slovakia, while at university, Paul moved to Prague to teach English as a foreign language. He is now TEFL certified and works full time teaching English in schools and local businesses. Paul told Friends Forever staff that he attributes his confidence to work internationally to his experience with the Life Raft program. *"Friends Forever gave me the motivation to do something different with my life, and if I didn't spend those two weeks in New Hampshire, who knows where I would be now,"* he said.



One of our alumni from Israel, Daniel Mordechay, spent five days in Germany speaking on behalf of his school about tolerance and coexistence in Israel. He spoke to a variety of audiences including synagogues, schools, and the Bundestag; the German Parliament. After his speech at the Bundestag, Daniel had a discussion with the Israeli Ambassador to Germany, Yakov Hadas-Handelsman. He shared his experience with Friends Forever and told the ambassador they could create coexistence in Israel easily if they used more programs like the Life Raft. Daniel was a participant in our 2012 Israel Program. He volunteered at the Friends Forever headquarters last year when he won an essay contest and a trip to attend school in the US. The essay topic was 'my hero' and Daniel wrote about how Friends Forever saved him from his former sectarian life style. The essay placed third in the nation.



In September, Friends Forever staff traveled to Northern Ireland to check in with our international partners, prepare participants of this month's programs, and congratulate our 2014 graduates. While they were in Belfast they got together for coffee with dozens of alumni from four decades. Siblings, cousins, and friends shared stories from their time with Friends Forever. *"Witnessing the legacy of our mission in person is extremely powerful. Seeing multiple generations in the same room, who all shared the same life changing experience, it's impossible not to feel excited about the impact all of our supporters are having,"* said Friends Forever Executive Director, Steve Martineau. Plans are under way for a 30 year reunion of our entire Northern Ireland program that will be held in Belfast in the fall of 2016.

From the conference table.

A group from the Friends Forever Israel program was hosted at the Ethan Allen world headquarters last month, by Ethan Allen president and CEO, Farooq Kathwari. After a personal tour of the design center, the delegation had the chance to sit in on an executive strategy meeting in which they witnessed *"million dollar decisions being made,"* said Mr. Kathwari. The group then had the opportunity to speak with employees about their experiences and why they joined Friends Forever. *"Especially these days, this program gives a very important meaning. It gives a hope for a better generation who prefer peace,"* said Natalie, a 16 year old participant from Haifa, Israel.



The conversation continued over lunch, at the conference table in the executive board room. Mr. Kathwari (sitting on the left) took the opportunity to share his own personal story, including the leadership principles to which he attributes his success. He encouraged the students to stay focused on their goals and to *"have a passion for excellence and innovation in all they do."*



A summer of peace.

This July, Friends Forever had two Life Raft delegations visit Friends Forever's new Global Headquarters for the first time EVER! Both groups, one from Israel and one from Northern Ireland, were in New England for the two week "life raft" portion of the year long program dedicated to inspiring their communities to work towards a peaceful future.

Beginning the conversation.

Over the course of the two weeks, the delegations came together a few times for leadership and team-building activities, communications workshops, and to learn about the history of each other's cultures. They even competed in a scavenger hunt around the town of Durham, NH.

Friends Forever staff joined a delegation of participants from our Northern Ireland program, to meet with the Irish and British Consul Generals, Breandán Ó Caollaí and Susie Kitchens, at the British Consulate in Cambridge, MA. After sharing a spread of homemade sandwiches, the group joined the Consuls for a Q & A session in the conference room of the British Consulate. After introductions, they took turns speaking about why it was important for youth to be involved in the peace process. *"We're the new generation so our voices should be heard,"* said Jamey, a participant from Belfast, Northern Ireland, referring to recent efforts to lower the voting age.



The group was not shy about sharing the rest of their political opinions, especially of the most recent protests regarding the 2012 decision to restrict the flying of the Union flag to 18 days a year. *"They're making things worse between Catholic and Protestants,"* said one of the students, speaking about the over-publicizing of the riots. *"Media needs to capture groups like this, not just the conflict."* Impressed with their candor, the Consuls encouraged each of the participants to change the narrative by writing to local papers about their experience, and spreading the word that those outside of the political arena can have an impact.



Bob Raiche Day
November 4th

"Co-existence for me is not accepting the other...because, there is no other."

-Oryanne,
Israel 2014

World Peace...Worn Locally

Puzzle pin: \$10
T-shirt: \$25
Sweatshirt: \$50
www.friendsforeverusa.org



In honor of our late founder, Bob Raiche, Friends Forever has declared a day in his name. On his birthday, November 4th, we are asking our supporters and alumni from around the world to wear their Friends Forever apparel and spread the word of Bob's mission to promote peace. Please visit our website for more details or to purchase your Friends Forever pin, t-shirt, sweatshirt or polo, in time to join us on November 4th!

www.friendsforeverusa.org

Looking ahead...

October:

10/14- Volunteer orientation
10/18-11/1- Northern Ireland program

November:

11/4- Bob Raiche Day
11/18- Volunteer orientation
11/27- Seacoast Turkey Trot

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