



Next week 34 pairs of CFP teens will fly to the U.S. to be hosted by families opening their hearts and homes to promote friendship and peace. On Saturday before their departure, Cassie Cleverly, CFP's executive director, the Cypriot coordinators, and the chaperons on the flights will meet with all of the teens and their parents to review the program's rules, to discuss expectations while traveling, and to answer questions. It is a time of excitement and expectation.

A lot of effort and expense has gone into making this trip possible for the teens. Those in Cyprus are familiar with many efforts by the coordinators and CFP participants from prior years to let people know about the program, to receive and screen applicants, to hold meetings and encourage pairing, to match pairs to hosts, and more. Those in the U.S. are familiar with their area coordinators recruiting and screening. Soon you will become more aware of many more individuals who help plan and support the summer's group activities. And, all are aware of the efforts across the program to raise the funds from the program's many generous supporters to pay for the travel of the teens and their chaperons and for their travel insurance.

There are many others, including the members of the CFP Parents and Friends Association, whom I'll discuss in a future perspective, and those who have been involved in developing CFP's website, our treasurer managing its finances and acknowledging the donations received, and those involved in helping the program to be better known. Thanks to all.

With the 2014 travel coming up, I would like to share with you the incredible behind the scenes efforts of CFP's travel coordinators: Kim Bell, Don Guzewicz, and Dianna Cook.

The travel coordinators work with a travel agent to identify options to get the teen pairs from Cyprus to their U.S. host families and back within the time constraints of the end of school for the teens, the desire to have the teens spend the 4th of July holiday in the U.S., and a return a month later. They look for reliable and economical

options that do not require an overnight stay en route. The executive director, in consultation with the U.S. and Cypriot coordinators, makes the final decisions.

But it isn't that simple. The airlines require deposits on group tickets early, with a guarantee that CFP will buy within 10% of the number of tickets reserved. So, the choices cannot be made before the numbers of tickets to each location are known with some certainty. Only after the all the teen pairs have been identified, have gotten visas, and have been assigned to their hosts can final purchases be made. The chaperones all are booked separately, as they have different dates of travel one way.

The program seeks to buy group tickets because they can be reserved before the program knows the names of the travelers, because groups can't be separated by over booking, and because any changes are less expensive than for individually purchased, non-changeable, non-refundable tickets. (Over the years changes have had to be made, for example, to have the spelling of a traveler's name match that on his or her passport.)

(Note: the costs of group tickets are often more expensive than for the lowest priced tickets advertised online. The larger the group the more expensive each ticket becomes because the airlines are seeking to sell as many of their seats as possible at a high cost to last minute business travelers. Nonetheless, CFP's travel agent and coordinators have done a great job in keeping the costs of the travel, which constitute 95% of CFP's annual budget, to a minimum.)

Then on the days of travel, the transportation coordinators are constantly checking the status of the flights, are in contact with the chaperons to make sure that all the teens and their baggage are on board, and are checking to make sure that there are no problems with connecting flights. If they can foresee any difficulties, they work with the travel agent to identify the best options for addressing them. They monitor the flights in shifts from before departure until all have cleared customs and immigration upon landing.

(Note: if anything does come up, they are in contact with the coordinators in Cyprus and the U.S., who will pass on the information to the relevant parents and hosts. They, the chaperones, and the executive director should not be contacted directly by others, as they are very busy. An example of the type of thing that has happened in the past occurred in 2011 when there was a sudden strike at the airport in Athens that resulted in the flight from Athens to New York being too late to connect to the flight to Portland, OR. When that happened they were in contact with the travel agent, who was arranging for an alternative flight, the chaperone, the executive director, and the coordinators in Cyprus, who, in turn, were keeping the teens' parents informed. The teens seemed to love the experience.)

Kim and Don carried out this same role for CFPNI for many years, which averaged over 60 pairs of teens per year across the U.S. This year they are joined by Dianna Cook, Don's daughter, as the third transportation coordinator. Don and Dianna were

also CFPNI hosts and Pat, Don's wife and Dianna's mother, was a CFPNI area coordinator. Kim has also been a CFPNI and 2011 CFP host, is an attorney and donated her services to incorporating CFP and applying for its tax-deductible status. She also is responsible for conducting the background checks on the host families. The transportation coordinators do an amazing job and deserve special thanks. THANK YOU KIM, DON, AND DIANNA!

This series of messages is intended to keep the Cyprus Friendship Program family around the world better informed about the activities of the program, to provide perspectives on its impacts, and to offer some reflections on its background and context. It is intended to supplement and not substitute for the semi-annual newsletter and other communications by the program.

Please share these messages with others. A compilation of the messages are archived on the CFP website (www.cyprusfriendship.org.)

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