

19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450 ■ 707.847.3437 ■ info@fortross.org ■ www.fortross.org

Title: Fort Ross Interpretive Association / Fort Ross Conservancy Newsletter

Author(s): Fort Ross Interpretive Association / Fort Ross Conservancy

Published by: Fort Ross Conservancy Library

URL: www.fortross.org

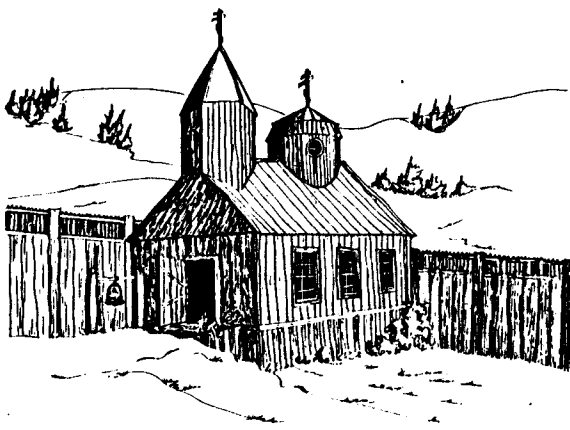
Fort Ross and Salt Point parks have benefited greatly from many dedicated volunteers and staff who have given generously to these parks. Board of directors from FRIA and FRC have fundraised, organized events, overseen volunteers, spearheaded interpretation and restoration projects, and offered substantial support to California State Parks across many decades.

These digitized newsletters capture the activities over the following historic periods:

- Fort Ross Interpretive Association (FRIA): 1976 - 2012
- Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC is the same legal entity as FRIA but the organization changed its name): 2012 - present

Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC) asks that you acknowledge FRC as the source of the content; if you use material from FRC online, we request that you link directly to the URL provided. If you use the content offline, we ask that you credit the source as follows: "Courtesy of Fort Ross Conservancy, www.fortross.org."

Fort Ross Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) and California State Park cooperating association, connects people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks. © Fort Ross Conservancy, 19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450, [707-847-3437](tel:707-847-3437) www.fortross.org



FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

1990

FRIA BOARD NOTES

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

FRIA has instituted a new internship program which will attract scholars to Fort Ross for the purpose of research and consultation for the Fort's various interpretive programs. Internships which will last for one month provide a stipend and interns will be hosted in the homes of FRIA members. Candidates for internship will be proposed by FRIA Board Members. The first intern will be Victor Mikolayevitch Malashev. He will arrive mid-December and begin his internship shortly thereafter. He is a graduate of Leningrad University and Leningrad Art Academy. He is a retired Captain of Artillery in the Soviet Army. He worked as Objects Conservator at the State Ethnographic Museum in Leningrad and is currently Objects Conservator at the State Artillery History Museum in Leningrad. Mr. Malashev can benefit Fort Ross with knowledge of domestic and urban architectural details, his expert knowledge in 19th Century military uniforms, and technical expertise in 19th Century artillery practices. As conservator and illustrator he consults with several of Leningrad's major museums for the purpose of setting up exhibitions and artifact displays. Mr. Malashev's knowledge of Russian traditional culture will be of great importance to the new interpretive program at Fort Ross.

CALL HOUSE HAS A SOLID START

At the October FRIA Board meeting it was announced by Bill Mennell that the Call House foundation has been stabilized using \$36,000 of State Funds. FRIA asked Bill to obtain bids on replacing floor boards where needed. FRIA is looking for volunteers to work with Bill on this leg of the project and on refitting doors and windows. The State will continue financially supporting the project. This is encouraging as the Call House is the anchor for the Ranch Era of Fort Ross. This Ranch Era will eventually show how important the Sonoma County Coast ranches were to the development of San Francisco.

KODIAK COMES TO FORT ROSS

FRIA has purchased a replica of a traditional Koniag bentwood hunting hat made by Jim Dillard of Kodiak, Alaska, and a throwing board and dart used for hunting sea mammals made by Joe Kelley, also of Kodiak. These are now on display in the Fort Ross Visitor Center in the North Pacific exhibit. FRIA has also approved the purchase of a larger display case for revolving exhibits, pending conceptual approval by District Superintendent Ronald L. Hanshaw.

RUSSIAN AMERICA THROUGH SOVIET EYES

Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov of the Institute of History, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow will be visiting Fort Ross on November 2nd and 3rd. He is the author of several books on early U.S. - Russian relations, including his new work on the sale of Alaska. He has also published documents on Ivan Kuskov's early explorations along the Sonoma Coast and on Kuskov's correspondence with Alexander Baranov, his superior in Alaska. The FRIA Board will be hosting a dinner in his honor on Friday evening and The Company will be treating him to breakfast after his overnight stay in the Fort. On Saturday, November 3, at 1:00, Dr. Bolkhovitinov will give a short presentation in the Visitor Center. The Sonoma State History Club will be hosting lunch for Dr. Bolkhovitinov on that day.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 3, Saturday, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. -- Presentation by Dr. Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov

December 8, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. -- FRIA BOARD MEETING, ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS and POTLUCK CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION. (A ham will be provided by Frieda Tomlin.)

December 15, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. -- CPR CLASS will be held at the Fort Ross Visitor Center for those needing to renew or for new certification. The cost of this class is \$15.00 and it will be taught by Dan DeKay. It is limited to 15 people. To register please contact Lyn at 847-3437, Robin at 847-3286 or Dan at 886-5306.

RUSSIAN COOKBOOK IS COOKING!

The Fort Ross Russian Cookbook is now on its way to becoming a reality. Elizabeth Siderov and Valentina Ammossow have generously donated some of their favorite and old family recipes to fill the bulk of the book. We would like to encourage anyone with Russian recipes that could have been made at Fort Ross to submit them. Unfortunately, not all recipes will be able to be included...but we hope that you will help us out.

The book will be illustrated by Stewart Munson, and judging from the initial sketches will be rich in design and creativity. Wendy Platt is acting as editor/layout/typesetter. Please make all your recipe submissions to Wendy by the December 8, 1990 Board of Directors meeting. Wendy is welcoming any input and she can be reached at:

Wendy Platt
P.O. Box 908
Gualala, CA 95445
(707) 884-4707

To get a flavor for the cookbook project, a copy of Wendy's column published in the 10/19/90 issue of the Independent Coast Observer is included.

For once I had come totally prepared for this meeting: several days of work had been collated into a professional presentation packet, copies for all the participants were stapled, ready for the discerning eye, but most importantly, I was starving. In all my years of sitting through meetings, corporate and otherwise, hunger status had never a key in preparation. But then, designing and editing a Russian cookbook about Fort Ross with Valentina and Elizabeth is not an everyday experience.

Stewart, the illustrator of the book, and I arrived simultaneously and were immediately ushered into the house like long lost grandchildren. As we waited for Valentina, Elizabeth gave us a tour of her beautifully decorated Russian Easter eggs in all shapes and sizes, and her treasure trove of Russian icons. Enthralled with the details, colors and designs, Stewart started sketching madly as a way of taking notes. Valentina appeared at the door carrying a large covered pan and the meeting got underway.

The next three hours were filled with magic. The presentation packet I had prepared contained the first set of recipes submitted by Valentina and Elizabeth. With each recipe, a new story would unfold about a winter spent in Mongolia, or Elizabeth's father who was a prince before the revolution, or the traditions and rituals that surrounded the Russian Orthodox Easter. Each story by one lady would spark a new story by the other, and the competition would

often get so fierce, that they would lapse into Russian to get the words out faster.

Finally, Valentina got up and asked us if we wanted some coffee. Stewart and I knowingly looked at each other and nodded. The time had come. "Coffee" was only a euphemism for what was to come... The competition to relate their stories was only a skirmish compared to the Russian Pillsbury Bake-off War. The two of us thirtysomething adults were no match for these two strong-willed Russian grandmothers determined to fill us beyond capacity with their culinary treasures. One helping was unacceptable...two or three of each of their dishes was expected. Valentina's piroshki was hearty and delicious, and I almost had thirds before I remembered that I would be obligated to eat three servings of Elizabeth's dessert. Made from her home-grown pears, Elizabeth's pear pie was equally delectable. Finishing two pieces was not a problem. As we left amidst hugs and kisses, they handed both of us filled plates, "in case we got hungry on the way home". Would I ever be hungry again? Of course!

As far as business meetings go, this one was more than successful.

PEAR PIE

Pastry:

- 3 C. flour
- 1 t. salt
- 1 egg
- 1 1/2 C. shortening (butter-flavored is best)
- 5 T. sugar
- 3 shots vodka (1/4 C.)

Mix flour, salt, and shortening. Add sugar, egg and vodka. Do not overmix. Place dough between 2 sheets of wax paper. Cut the wax paper to the size of a cookie sheet and roll to the size of the sheet. Place the dough on the sheet. Peel pears and slice onto dough. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes.

Topping:

- 1 C. butter
- 1 C. sugar
- 3 eggs
- 5 T. sour cream
- 1 t. vanilla
- 5 T. flour

Combine butter and sugar. Add eggs one at a time. Add sour cream and vanilla. Mix in flour. Spread over hot pie. Reduce oven temperature to 350°. Bake for about one hour. Serve hot or cold.

A FIELD TRIP TO THE CROSSROADS OF CONTINENTS EXHIBIT

A field trip. We felt like escapees from adulthood, breaking out from the daily work routine to attend the opening in Los Angeles of an exhibit celebrating the cultures of Siberia and Alaska called *Crossroads of Continents*. Included in this group of delinquents in their 30s and 40s from Fort Ross were park rangers, a ranger supervisor, interpretive specialists, the manager of the Book & Gift shop at the fort, and members of the board of directors for the Fort Ross Interpretive Association. We were babes in the woods, or rather babes out of the woods, heading from our safe havens on the coast into the foreign land south of the Russian River.

At the hotel, we transformed ourselves into cityfolk. We brushed the hayseeds out of our hair and emerged looking like well-groomed professionals. We arrived at the exhibit in time for the speeches and introductions of the officials from the Soviet Union and the Smithsonian. Our boisterous spirits turned to intellectual excitement as we became the ambassadors from Fort Ross. The exhibit was nothing short of breathtaking. Each member of our group had a different area of interest, and I was astounded at their level of expertise. Was this the same crew that had been throwing honey-roasted peanuts at each other in the airplane four hours earlier?

Amid protests, the museum closed its doors and we instantly recognized that we were starving. A Mexican restaurant was chosen and directions given. The lead car of the three car caravan vowed to keep us all in sight. Within two blocks of the museum, the other two cars had disappeared into black hole of LA. Our car contained two park rangers...eagle scout material who could easily be dropped blindfolded into a mountain wilderness and find their way back to civilization in no time. But there were no stars, no moon, no wildlife (that wasn't human), no moss on the trees, in fact no trees for them to get their bearings. We were lost, starving and irritable in East LA. I was beginning to feel like a member of a modern day Donner party, kept my fingers to myself, and was very relieved when we stumbled on the restaurant.

At this point, anything short of shoe leather would have tasted great, so I was ecstatic when I was served a truly wonderful tamale and chili relleno. Maybe LA isn't a total wasteland.

by Wendy Platt



THE FIRST AMERICAN IN TOTMA

Mr. John Middleton!
Сотем вырост американцем
это не спорю. Но в России
вырос, вырос, воспитан
18-20 октября 1990.
Заря 17 октября, путешествие
в советском союзе.
Отмечаясь в Ст. Зайцев
и в Коллеге вырост.
Totma

Three hundred eighty miles east of Leningrad in the Vologda Province lies a city with closer ties to Fort Ross than any other can claim in Russia. Totma, now a quiet little town on the River Sukhona, was the stepping stone to Siberia and the heart of trade operations with the colonies in America. Totma's famous churches, called "American Churches" by the town's historian Stanislav Zaitsev, were built with the profits from the American fur trade and were commemorated to the "promyshlenniki" (entrepreneurs) such as Kuskov and Baranov who were the main contributors. Kuskov's house, where he lived his last months, is a regional museum which has recently been restored to its original appearance complete with period furniture and much information on Fort Ross.

I arrived in Totma last July to find a dusty (soon muddy) little town of mostly 19th century wooden homes, unpaved streets shaded with birch and linden trees and the magnificent "American Churches" which brings tourists from all over Russia. I was met by the Regional Folklore Museum's Director who proudly gave me a private tour of the Museum's displays and workshops, which fortunately contained many examples of Vologda decorative art and furniture which could be very useful in our understanding of Russian culture in America. She also pointed out that Totma's heraldic shield contains an American black fox, symbolizing their town's involvement in the Colonies. By this time the rains had begun, changing the dusty streets to almost impassable rivers and the type of mud which sucks your shoes off if you are unlucky enough to get caught in it. The Director, assuming me to be a standard "Reebok type" American, gently suggested that I consider buying a pair of Russian boots if I planned to do any walking around the town, and I smilingly accepted her idea.

The next day I was met by Stanislav Zaitsev and Julia Meshkova. Meshkova had travelled from Leningrad to act as guide and interpreter. As a student of Russian American Company history and author of a biography on Khlebnikov, she was well versed in her knowledge of Totma's history. Zaitsev escorted us to his town house where he keeps his library and collection of ethnographic material, gathered over his many years of research on Totma. There he presented me with "The Key to the City of Totma", a large iron key said to be to the fortress gate, when Totma had an actual wall around the city in the 17th century. He thought it fitting that a Russian fortress in America should have it. I was also presented with a cross section of one of the original logs from Kuskov's house, salvaged from the recent reconstruction by Zaitsev. Having been the beneficiary of over two months of Russian hospitality by this time I took the presents to be another example of the innate kindness of the Russian soul, but I soon realized that it was not only that I was a foreigner, come to visit their town, but the first American ever to visit Totma, and the first ever as an official representative of Fort Ross. Later during my stay I would be given a champagne toast by the Director, "What a wonder that the first Totman to go to America should found Fort Ross and the first American to return should be from Fort Ross!". Only then did I realize that this visit was an especially important one for them, and represented a reopening of ties with us and hopefully future exchanges of research information badly needed by both sides.

Zaitsev took us on a walking tour of Totma's houses, buildings, churches and monasteries, ending at a huge dinner at his country home along the Sukhona River. Again the Russian hospitality was almost overwhelming, and definitely Russian. I was asked every conceivable question about America and California, and especially over and over again why I wasn't married and had no children. At one point a rather large woman relative of Zaitsev's pounded her fist on the table and demanded to know why I wasn't married, and said if American women weren't good enough they could surely find some good strong ones in Russia for me. After dinner when Zaitsev gave me a Russian axe that belonged to his father, saying it was a good symbol of the Russian frontiersman, I was a little relieved that I would be taking only this as a souvenir from Totma, and not a good strong wife.

The following day a news conference was arranged by the local newspaper editor, and with Julia Meshkova acting as interpreter, I told them about Fort Ross--its importance in California history and the importance of Totma's place in our Russian connection. With two photographers continually flashing bulbs and several people asking questions, it was my first introduction to Russian celebrity status. After the press conference the whole crowd went to the town's square where I was photographed with almost everyone in almost every location shaking hands, smiling, standing in group shot before landmark buildings and churches and even shopping in local stores and eating in the local restaurants. People of course would stop and stare and children would follow at a respectable distance. Pavel Filyov, a retired Soviet Navy sailor who served on Soviet-American convoys during World War II, and was the first Totman since Kuskov to visit San Francisco, presented me with a packet of photographs of my visit that he had stayed up all night developing.

In practical matters, the Director of the Museum and I drew up a letter of intent to be approved by our Boards which would provide a structure for furthering research between Totma and Fort Ross. Fort Ross would be represented by the Regional Folklore Museum in Vologda Province, and Totma's interests would be handled by a FRIA representative at Fort Ross. Thus research, exchanges of people and material would be benefited with each other's assistance.

Upon my return to Moscow, I found that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been trying to track me down to request that I prolong my stay in order that I attend Totma's City History Celebration as the Fort Ross Representative. That would have prolonged my stay in the U.S.S.R. by at least a month, and having been in the Soviet Union almost three months I declined the invitation, citing a business that could no longer be neglected and our own Living History Celebration that could not be missed. It was a very good lesson about Russian hospitality. Just when you think they have given you more presents that they could afford, more food than you could possibly eat, and more toasts than you could possibly drink, they invite you for more.

John Middleton

Club of UNESCO's assistance "Russian America" Totma, Vologda region, USSR. JKLH California, USA

Protocol of intention.

Club of UNESCO's assistance, "Russian America" intends to conclude a treaty with Historical Association of Fort Ross (JKLH), California, USA, for purpose of cultural co-operation between the two of the countries to develop Soviet-American relations, for common good of our peoples, in the spirit of new thinking in the nuclear age.

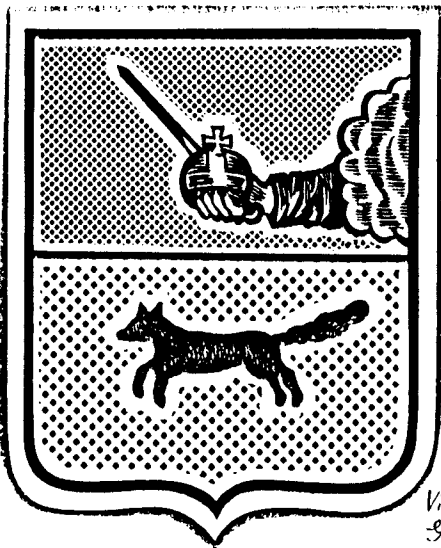
Vice-president of JKLH S. Middleton (John Middleton) President of the Club of UNESCO's assistance "Russian America" S.M. Zaitsev 16.07.90. Totma, USSR

Дом, в котором прожил последние месяцы жизни исследователь Америки и Северной Калифорнии И. А. Кусков

Kuskov's House



Володо-Иерусалимская церковь (1774-1784). Фрагмент Church of the "Gates of Jerusalem"



Julia Meshkova, John Middleton and Stanislav Zaitsev discussing architectural aspects of the Church of the "Gates of Jerusalem"

ANNUAL ELECTION

FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

GLORIA FROST, Membership Chairman	JOHN MIDDLETON, Vice President *
JAY HARRIS, President *	JEANNETTE ROSSON
VANA LAWSON *	FRIEDA TOMLIN, Corresponding Secretary
KENT LIGHTFOOT	DAVID WILLSON *
BETTY MACKENZIE, Recording Secretary	ELIZABETH SIDOROV
PAT MCADAM *	JOHN STAFFORD * (resigned)
JOHN MCKENZIE	

Board Members whose name is followed by an * have terms expiring this year. There are six seats to be filled in this year's election.

Please read the information about each candidate on this page and on the reverse of this page. The following slate of candidates for election to the Board of Directors of the Fort Ross Interpretive Association for 1991 has been approved by the present Board and is hereby submitted to the membership in advance of the election.

The annual election for the FRIA Board of Directors will be held at the December 8, 1990 Board Meeting.

STATEMENTS OF CANDIDATES FOR FRIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

INCUMBENTS

DAVID WILLSON -- As a long time Living History Day participant and member of the Fort Ross Militia and as a long time resident of this community with three children in the Fort Ross School, I have a lot of interest, concern and vitality to offer FRIA. I have a wide interest in local history and the diversity and richness of the different cultures that lived here before us. I have been involved with the local Kashaya Pomo community for ten years. I am interested in furthering research and inter-cultural exchange, expanding educational programs and encouraging community involvement in the Fort Ross programs. I work locally as a carpenter and volunteer with the Timber Cove Fire Department. I would like to continue serving FRIA, Fort Ross and the public as a Board Member.

JOHN MIDDLETON -- In the last year as Vice-President I have represented FRIA in my contacts with various museums, organizations and individuals in the U.S.S.R. who wish to benefit Fort Ross State Historic Park with their assistance. Negotiations have been conducted to further enhance interpretive efforts with research and individual exchange through programs I have initiated. My own volunteer efforts include membership in "The Company", assistance with the Environmental Living Program, assistance with the recent archaeology dig in the Russian Cemetery and chairmanship of the Russian Historical Committee for FRIA. I have conducted classes on Russian costume and dance and have provided Fort Ross with original examples of Russian ethnographic material for research purposes. I would like to continue in my position on the Board of Directors because I feel I can be an effective liason between the various volunteer organizations that support Fort Ross and between FRIA and the U.S.S.R.

PAT MCADAM -- This is a bit of a blurb about me. I graduated from Stanford in 1945. I went back to graduate school in Los Angeles and became a Reference Librarian after I raised four sons. A colleague and I wrote a book on Arcadia. I went to the Library of Congress and went through 10,000 prints and photographs.

NEW CANDIDATES

JULIE BISBEE -- As a resident of Sonoma County for the past 10 years and a frequent visitor to Fort Ross I would be honored to serve on the Board. Over the years I have watched the County grow and change, the State Parks along with it. Since 1987 I have worked with the Stewards of Slavianka, another Cooperative Association. This involvement has given me experience as well as insight with association operations.

DAN DEKAY -- I'm 43 years old, a native Californian and proud of it, a resident of Sonoma County for 15 years. I have a degree in Religious Studies from University of California and I am an RN. Professionally I work on REACLI helicopter and teach Emergency Medical Technicians for Santa Rosa Junior College. I also teach Wilderness classes at SRJC. I've been associated with the Fort Ross community for six years through teaching and personal contacts. I took part in LHD last year for the first time, though I've wanted to for years. My feeling is that Fort Ross can grow into an exceptional educational facility and serve as a strong connection between the Soviet Union and USA. The Fort ought to maintain its period qualities and not degenerate into a "tourist attraction". The educational potential of the Fort is one of its greatest assets--from the school age child through adult concerns, cultural and historical understanding can be fostered by programs at the Fort. I would like to see SRJC become involved in educational programs appropriate to the Fort's needs such as Russian language, California history and natural history. As an instructor at the College I can facilitate this. I would like to be a Board member in order to help give direction and impetus to the use of the Fort for the above mentioned concerns. It would be an honor to serve in this function.

NICHOLAS LEE -- I deeply appreciate the honor of being considered for nomination to FRIA Board of Directors. My wife and I have lived in the local area for the last seventeen years, where I am a Park Ranger for Sonoma County Regional Parks. Prior to that I was a Park Ranger Intermittent for the California Department of Parks and Recreation. I have also worked for the United States Geological Survey and before that I spent a number of years at sea. I am greatly interested in the natural history and cultural ethnography of this area and the many resulting interactions and interrelationships. I am also very interested in the field of interpretation and its many overlapping facets and the preservation, management and presentation of information and artifacts in the "museum" type format. I have participated in Living History programs, been associated with Fort Ross and its staff for a long time. I also served on the Redwood Coast Medical Services Advisory Committee when it was first initiated. I feel I could be an asset to FRIA.

JOHN SPERRY -- The following is a brief biography: Born in Rhode Island. B.S. in Chemical Engineering, URI. U.S. Navy WW II. Instructor of Engineering and Math at the University of Alaska. Archaeology Field Summer, Kotzebue and Kobuk River, University of Alaska Arctic Institute. Principal Teacher, Alaska Native School, King Island. M.A. in Anthropology, Columbia University. Ph.D. requirements excepting dissertation, Columbia (Eskimo Ethnology). Engineer for 20 years. Instructor of Engineering and Physics, Sierra College for 15 years. As a Board member I would hope to contribute an enthusiasm, energy and, perhaps, expertise to the continuing development of FRIA's goals.

NANCY WALTON -- As a Board member I would bring my knowledge and history of Fort Ross and the area, my organizational skills, interest and energy. I have had an interest in the progress and development of Fort Ross since moving to the area in 1975. I worked as a Parks and Recreation employee in both visitor service and maintenance from 1976-1979, and have volunteered in the last five Living History Days, in the bookstore, and have given tours of the Fort. I have worked with Boards before and am currently Recording Secretary of the Timber Cove County Water District and Administrative Assistant for Fort Ross School. The cultural and natural history of Fort Ross intrigues me. I have taken courses in the history of all three cultural periods, archeology/anthropology, geography, geology and forestry of the area.

BALLOT

Instructions: Vote for up to six (6)
Place ballot in envelope marked "BALLOT"
Put ballot envelope in envelope addressed to FRIA, stamp and mail
Or you may bring your ballot envelope to the Dec. 8, 1990 FRIA meeting

() DAVID WILLSON	() DAN DEKAY
() JOHN MIDDLETON	() NICHOLAS LEE
() PAT MCADAM	() JOHN SPERRY
() JULIE BISBEE	() NANCY WALTON