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Friendship group hosts Brazilian visitors to Kern

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A group of 29 Brazilians this week will explore Kern County and surrounding areas as part of an international-travel exchange program, Friendship Force International.

Members of the local chapter, Friendship Force of Kern County, will host the visitors, whose mission together is to promote peace by connecting across borders.

"You cannot be at war with people who have stayed in your

home," recalled Caroline West, a 15-year member, of a saying in the group.

"In all my traveling, every single place I've ever stayed I've stayed friends."

The organization was established 30 years ago with the support of President Carter.

Friendship Force International's some 360 chapters boast more than 22,000 members who travel throughout the world staying in each spot for about a week.

Jose Roberto Bonatto and his wife, Tania De Goio Bonatto,

GET INVOLVED

Anyone can join. Contact Ben Goossen, president at 746-4789 or bgoossen@bak.rr.com.

Local chapter Web site:
www.ffkern.org

International Web site:
www.thefriendshipforce.org

Membership costs: \$45 for a single; \$60 for a family.

traveled with their 4- and 6-year-old daughters from Curitiba in the state of Parana, Brazil, and said they are looking forward to seeing "new things and new friends, to see the life and economics."

Planned activities include a wel-

coming by the Kern County Board of Supervisors and a trip to Sequoia National Park.

"Certainly we're going to see some sights and have some fun," said organizer Chuck Switzer. "But it's making friends which is our primary goal."