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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Annual picnic will celebrate welcoming, community, and inclusivity.

Global Friends Coalition, along with its honorary co-hosts the Germans from Russia Community will host the twelfth annual community picnic Sunday, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 7 p.m. in University Park. The goal of the picnic is to bolster relations between refugees and the broader community.

"The Community Picnic is a perfect opportunity to come out and show that Grand Forks is welcoming " said Cynthia Shabb, Executive Director of Global Friends. "Last year over 400 people came out for the picnic. This year, we're cooking for even more people. Somali and Nepali food will be served from the New Flavors Food Truck. French Taste, LLC will be preparing dessert crepes. Standard all-beef hot dogs will be served by the Salvation Army. There will be music and games. The Germans from Russia are planning on offering samples of kuchen. We hope for a wonderful turnout." This year's picnic is being sponsored by Retrax Retractable Bed Covers, Hugo's, Grand Forks Park District, New Flavors Food Truck, French Taste, LLC Crepes, Steers Somali Restaurant, The Salvation Army, and JLG Architects. There are also individual supporters who are helping with costs.

Grand Forks has become home to refugees mostly from Bhutan and Somalia in recent years. The picnic will allow both new and born Americans to get to know their fellow community members. New American "Ambassadors," students who attend Red River High School and speak Nepali and Somali, will be on hand to help support conversation.

Global Friends Coalition fosters refugee (New American) integration through work with New Americans and the Greater Grand Forks community.

The event is free and everyone is welcome. In case of rain, we will meet at Wesley United Methodist Church (1600 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North).

For more information, please call Global Friends Coalition at 701.746.8233 or visit our website at [www.gfcoalition.org](http://www.gfcoalition.org).