



The member newsletter for Friends of Friedrichshafen, official partner of the city of Peoria's Sister City Commission

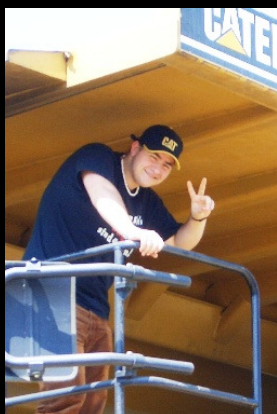
Partnerstadtfreunde



Lots of smiles and great fun await all who host a student in the 2007 youth exchange. All applications must be received by April 1. Go to our website for details.

“(FOF) can provide opportunities for you to become an active member of (the) international community.”

- FOF Pres., Karen Robb



A Friedrichshafen teen salutes from atop a huge Caterpillar truck. We need host families for 20 visiting students from July 25 to Aug. 16.

Host families now sought for 2007 youth exchange

Do you have or do you know a teenager who might like to make friends with a teen from Europe? Would your family like to share American culture with a friend from Friedrichshafen?

Our youth exchange is a perfect chance to energize your summer! Our coordinators are now accepting applications for host families. The exchange is scheduled to run July 25 to August 16.

“Nearly every student who takes part in our exchange is a different person ... a better person ... because of it,” said program coordinator Eric Hoadley. “This is a great experience that stays with them for a long time.”

The element that sets the Friends of Friedrichshafen program apart from most other youth exchanges is the personal connections made. Students become part of a family for the short time they visit. The seeds sown during those weeks often blossom into long-lasting friendships (related story on page 3).

To take part, submit an application (found on our website) before April 1. Or call coordinators Eric and Theresa Hoadley at 266-6820 for answers to any questions you might have.



Carnivale in Germany: A brief history of Fastnet

There are several words in the German language that mean the "mad days" before Lent. "Fastnet" is the Swabian word denoting the time when people were allowed to do all sorts of foolish things. It is a folk custom first mentioned in a manuscript from 1206 and is still going strong.

Ancient roots

This custom had its origin in the ancient Germanic and Celtic rites of alluring the sun after the winter solstice. It was also to protect the fertility of the fields and domestic animals, as well as the health of families, from all kinds of evil demons who were particularly active in winter. In many cases, these beings could be outwitted by man. Thus, if man changed his appearance, the demons might be confused. If the masks worn were gruesome enough, the demons might even be afraid themselves. For the same reasons, pillars of Romanesque churches bear fantastic and grotesque sculptures.

The early Christian Church accepted ancient pagan customs to make use of them for their own purposes. With the "weapons" the Church offered, people began to view these demons as less dangerous. They began to be regarded as stupid and laughable.

Of course, man's natural desires to play, to disguise himself, played a role in Fastnet's roots. Life in the Middle Ages was extremely hard. The hilarity of carnival, once a year, allowed people to forget their hardships for a while.

Documents from the 13th and 14th centuries report rough and uncouth amusements were the norm. Often, a city council had to prohibit certain practices that had degenerated. By the 16th century, more cultivated amusements developed. Sometimes plays were performed the marketplace or the town hall.

Church reformers, however, were against carnival festivities. Thus the Fastnet tradition became unimportant in Protestant territories of Germany. Patricians still gave great dinners, but the merrymaking lost its carnival at-

Fastnet 2007 in Friedrichshafen

Borrowed from the Suedkurier website, this photo shows a grand ball full of revelers who are having great fun "going mad" during this annual event.



mosphere. Roman Catholic states kept some medieval traditions well into the 18th century.

The age of so-called Enlightenment (late 18th century), with its cult of reason and its rejection of "superstitious" traditions, brought a decline in Fastnet customs. Well-meaning princes established ordinances to improve their subjects' mind by eradicating those "silly" ideas that brought about "idleness, extravagance and dissipation."

But the Romantic age (late 19th century) revitalized those traditions. The founding of Fastnet guilds

spread all over Swabia and other regions of Germany well into the 20th century. Folks from all walks of life take part in these guilds, showing that so-called "folk customs" are an important part of people's lives and should be taken seriously. Today, instead of immediately preceding Lent, Swabian Fastnet normally begins on January 6.

Fastnet in Friedrichshafen

Since Friedrichshafen was "recently" created in 1811 by King Frederick I of Wurttemberg, it does not have a very old Fastnet tradition. That being said, there must have been some

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Friedrichshafen teen to address FOF members

All Friends of Friedrichshafen members are invited to a presentation by Martha Dudzinski, 17, of Friedrichshafen. She will offer opinions and observations gathered during her current stay in the Peoria area. Miss Dudzinski is enrolled at Eureka High School for the 2006 - 2007 school year.

"When I came to Peoria on the 2005 youth exchange, I knew I wanted to return and attend a year of high school in the U.S.," she said recently. "This has been a great experience for me to live every day in this country for many months and understand the culture better."

While attending Eureka High School, Miss Dudzinski has been enrolled in senior level classes, although she will still have another two years of German school awaiting her when she returns home. Her extracurricular activities have included speech team, dance team and she plans to try out for softball in the spring.

The public is also welcome to attend her presentation, which will be held:

**ICC North Campus Auditorium
5407 North University, Peoria
March 14
7:00 p.m.**



FOF memberships are critical to our continued success

You are receiving this newsletter because you believe in the value of fostering good international relations on a personal level. That's what the Friends of Friedrichshafen is all about. We can do little to affect our governments' ability to support each other. But we CAN make a difference among the citizens of two of our cities.

We have made it easy to know if your membership is current. Just look at this newsletter's address label. The month and year noted in the top right-hand corner shows when your membership will, or did, expire. If you see "00/00," that means you are not a current member, but we cordially invite you to become one now.

Your membership dollars are our primary means of delivering benefits to you. This newsletter is but one example. This year, you will see an expanded slate of programs for your enjoyment. We also use member funds to support the youth exchange.

Please return the enclosed form with your support. We thank you!



Youth Exchange Reunion

Back in 1987, the Bill and Carolyn Kraft family hosted Udo Pross from Friedrichshafen. He returned the favor in 1988, then returned to Peoria again in 1989 and later in the 1990s. The families have stayed in touch, as shown in these photos from the Kraft family's trip to Germany in 2006. At left, Bill and Dave Kraft surround Udo; at right, Udo, Dave and Carolyn smile in a beer garden. "I have many fond memories of the 1988 trip," said Dave Kraft, who now resides in Urbana, Ill. Our thanks to Dave for sharing his photos!

Friends of Friedrichshafen

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**Promoting friendship
and understanding
between Peoria and
Friedrichshafen**

Directors elected

During the January membership meeting of the Friends of Friedrichshafen at the East Peoria Avanti's restaurant, officers and committee chairs were elected, creating a new board of directors.

The board for the 2007 - 2008 year are: Karen Robb, president; Matt Allen, first vice president, membership; Kathy Dougherty, second vice president, programs; Jim McGill, treasurer; Jo Ann Randolph, immediate past president; Ruth Martin, entertainment of guests; and Eric and Theresa Hoadley, publicity and youth exchange. Ex-officio members: Rex Linder, chairman of the Peoria Sister City Commission; Jim McGill, president of the German American Central Society.

Message from Karen Robb, FOF president

Is it just me, or do you hear the term "international community" a lot anymore, too? It seems the media thinks this is a new phenomenon. In reality, the sister cities movement, begun by President Eisenhower in 1956 as the National League of Cities, has known for a long time that this community exists.

The Friends of Friedrichshafen organization can provide opportunities for you to become an active member of that international community.

Start now. Get to know someone from another country. Make it a family project. Host a student or an adult in your home. Consider taking a trip to Friedrichshafen. Share with them what it's *really* like to live in the US, not just what they see on TV and in movies. You won't regret it!

If you'd like help pursuing any of these ideas, or if you have your own ideas of how to reach out to our sister city, let us know. We'd love to do what we can to help!

Fastnet continued from pg. 2

celebration among the area residents because in 1633, a councilor from Buchhorn - village predecessor to Friedrichshafen - doubted whether it was prudent to have Fastnet celebrations that year. They ultimately decided the city should provide a Fasnet drink to all the citizens to consume at home or in their guild-halls.

By 1852, several Fastnet corporations must have existed because local newspapers tell of special dances and plays in the casino on the lake. These Fastnet plays were specially written each year. Toward the end of the 19th century, papers tell of Fastnet processions in the town, with lavishly decorated pageant cars. Both World Wars brought short interruptions in Fastnet activities. But Friedrichshafen revived it in 1949 to bring some joy to a city that had been so heavily and extensively destroyed.

Fastnet in Friedrichshafen is popular in all classes of society. Students get a few holidays, businesses close. A great citizens ball is held, Fastnet plays are staged and the great procession attracts onlookers from many towns in the area.

Excerpted from "Fastnet in Friedrichshafen," copyright 1981. Text by Klaus Wendler.



The Witches of Buchhorn, is a popular Fastnet mask design, first created in 1949 and carved from a single piece of wood that covers the bearer's head entirely.

Trip to Germany being planned

If you missed out on last May's sister city anniversary trip to Friedrichshafen, you are still in luck! The Friends of Friedrichshafen is hard at work arranging another trip to our sister city!

This trip will help the Peoria Club — our sister organization — celebrate their own 25th anniversary. We expect the dates to allow holiday visits to German Christmas markets. Keep watching for more information!