



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

Partnerstadtfreunde



Peoria visitors from the 1980 trip to Friedrichshafen pause for a farewell portrait before returning home. This and many historic photos were shared by prior years' participants at the exchange anniversary dinner.

"Friedrichshafen isn't boring any time!"

- Adrian, a 15-year-old German teen who will host a Peoria-area student this summer



Hair and clothing styles may change, but friendships are a constant in the exchange program, as Nancy Olson's photo of herself and a friend from 1980 prove.

Youth exchange celebrates 30 years of friendships

It felt a lot like a family reunion.

And why not? The 90 who attended the Friends of Friedrichshafen Youth Exchange Reunion dinner in late March had a common bond. Nearly all of them either traveled to Germany as students, hosted a fellow German teenager, played the role of host parent – or are about to take on one of these roles during this summer's exchange.

Chaperones from each of the programs four decades attended the event, some regaling small groups with tales of their trips, other reuniting with adults who were their charges many years ago. Maria Lane, one of three chaperone on the very first trip to Germany (1978), told us of the program's beginnings and the exhaustive application process in use then. Elke Svoboda, chaperone through much of the 1980s, remembered many friends made over the years and that all of her students were well behaved! Current exchange chaperone, Theresa Hoadley, reminded the group of the valuable life lessons learned through the program, whether the students realize it or not! Peoria Sister City Chairman Rex Linder and FOF President Karen Robb told those students about to leave for Germany how fortunate they were

to be carrying on a proud tradition, of the wonderful hospitality that awaited them, and how much fun it truly is.

The highlight of the evening was a video greeting from our friends in Germany. Friedrichshafen's mayor, the Peoria Club president and both current and future chaperones sent their wishes for a wonderful anniversary celebration. Their tales were funny, their sentiments heartfelt, and their messages were met with loud ovations. Toward the end of the evening, several people — from veterans of the exchange to host families to future travelers — took advantage of a video camera set up to record reciprocal greetings, which will be carried to Germany with the exchange group this summer. In fact, while our group will be visiting, the city of Friedrichshafen will open an exhibit of photos and memorabilia commemorating the 30-year anniversary of our cities' exchanges.

The mood was summed up well by Nancy Olson (1979-1980), who said: "This was a wonderful evening to celebrate a meaningful event in my life. I've never forgotten it and I'm so happy to see it still going strong."

We couldn't have agreed more.

21 Tri-County teens eager to go to Germany; their host families are ready!

For some of the Peoria-area students taking part in the 2008 Friends of Friedrichshafen youth exchange, it's been more than a year in the making. Seven traveling students hosted German teens last summer, and have been planning this trip since then.

"It seems like a long time since last summer, but I'm really looking forward to seeing Nicole again and seeing how they live in Germany," said Leane. "It will be fun to compare their lives to ours, and hang out with the German students I met last year, plus the new friends I'll make."

That sentiment is echoed by those who are new to the program this year. "I'm really looking forward to meeting the people when I go to Germany," said Brigid. She said she loves to learn about other cultures and "I think it will be rewarding because in the process, I'll be making great friends."

For others, it's a link to their heritage. "I'm very glad to be going and learning about the country, since it's where my Oma is from," said Annamaria. "I've seen lots of pictures — now I get to experience it in person!"

Lest we forget, these are teenagers and, as Alyssa shows, they're always looking on the fun side of things. "I'm really looking forward to the trip!



Ali Burek (center) and her mother visited Christiane Knoblauch in Friedrichshafen in early June. Ali hosted Christiane in Peoria in 2007, but is unable to travel with the group this summer. Happily, she was able to visit on her own.

I'm hoping to learn some German while I'm over there and freak out all my friends when I come back saying stuff in another language!"

Their hosts are equally excited. Franziska is going "to show our guest all the interesting sights of Friedrichshafen and around the Lake of Constance. We hope our guest will have a very nice stay in Friedrichshafen."

Adrian expects to be busy as he "will do very much with the students from Friedrichshafen and Peoria. I'll show him the mountains around the lake and all the other things to do in the region." He wants the visiting U.S. students to understand "that Friedrichshafen isn't a real big city like New York, but it's not very little either. It isn't boring any time!"

That much is certain. Our group will land during the Seehasenfest, the carnival-like social event of the summer season. Nearly every day will hold a new event, from a daytrip to Munich, to visiting a climbing park to being guests of honor as the city opens an exhibit honoring the 30 years of exchanges between the sister cities.

Visit the Friends of Friedrichshafen website from July 10 - 31 to keep up on our group's activities. They'll be well cared for ... and very busy!



Peoria's Representatives

In mid-May, most of the Tri-County students who will travel to Germany in July attended an informational meeting at the Hult Health Education Center. Their excitement was fed by the presence of four visitors from Germany: three students from the Berufsakademie now conducting research at Bradley, as well as Christine Huster, daughter of the Peoria Club president. Their explanations of life in Germany helped our students better understand the fun that lies in store for them.

The 21 students who will visit Friedrichshafen are from Bartonville, Brimfield, Dunlap, East Peoria, Eureka, Morton, Pekin, Peoria and Washington.



Mainau from the air. Some say the most enchanting way to arrive is by boat at the palace (right). Mainau was bought in 1857 and an arboretum was begun. Count Lennart Bernadotte began turning the island into a "little garden of paradise" in 1932.

In and Around Friedrichshafen: Mainau

The parks and gardens of Mainau Island are open year round. Whoever does not arrive by boat at the harbor can take a bridge from the parking lot to the island, and in so doing, passes by the so-called "Schwedendreuz" or the Cross of the Swedes. Apparently, this bronze crucifixion group was stolen from the island by Swedeish mercenaries during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), but due to its weight, they threw it into the lake at the spot where it stands today.

Grand Duke Frederich I established an arboretum when he bought the island, creating a tree collection unparalleled in Germany. Today, the arboretum is the heart of the island, with more than 500 types of trees, including California redwoods and cedars from the Himalayas.

While home to many buildings of interest, Mainau's primary architectural focus is the Castle Church St. Marien. This unique baroque ensemble ranks among the most splendid historical places of interest on Lake Constance. Inside the church, you find a solemn yet cheerful world of frescos, statues and stucco. It is no wonder the castle church provides an atmospheric setting for church, weddings and concerts.

But the horticultural wonders to be found on Mainau are the main attraction. Mainau Island has flowers year round. The first outdoor highlights are thousands of tulips, hyacinths, and narcissi in the "Spring Avenue." From the end of May, all can admire not only the 300,000 summer flowers but also the splendor of the 30,000 roses in the "Italian Rose Garden" and the promenade of wild roses. The highlight of the fall is the spectacle of dahlias, which include around 12,000 plants.

The next time you visit friends in Friedrichshafen ... you must see Mainau!

Editor's note: Text excerpted from many books on the region. Photos from www.mainau.de.



Are those flowers or ducks? The answer is "Yes!" The stunning topiary talents of the island's experts are something to behold. The same is true of the Palm House, the citrus display, the Mediterranean terraces, the spice garden and much more.

Friends of Friedrichshafen

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

Complete exchange roster available

In preparation for this year's 30th anniversary celebration, FOF volunteers updated the complete roster of U.S. youth exchange participants. This was a multi-year effort, and we thank all who helped complete the list.

However, we're sure we've missed someone! We're also sure someone reading this newsletter would like a copy of this roster.

To request a roster, simply email a request to info@peoriasistercity.org or call either the phone number listed in the Contact Information area above, or 266-6820.

"Found" participants will be clearly marked. If you can help us find others, please call the phone numbers noted above. Thanks for your help!

Peoria Club makes donation to Peoria libraries

For several weeks this spring, Peoria played host to a well-known friend. Christine Huster, daughter of Peoria Club President Willi Huster, enjoyed a six-week visit to Peoria. This being her 9th trip to Peoria, she had many friends to stay with, and she made several more during her time here.

During her visit, and on behalf of the Peoria Club, she donated several books, videos and posters about Friedrichshafen and its region to the Peoria Public Library. The library's director pledged to return the favor, obtaining the FN library director's name for that purpose. Most of the materials may be checked out from the Peoria library system.



Christine Huster presents the Peoria Public Library Director Edward Szynaka with a poster of Friedrichshafen in late May.

Will you get involved? FOF can use your help

We have two events coming up later this year for which we could use some helping hands. The first is Worldfest, scheduled for September at the Peoria Civic Center. Our booth is geared to educate people about Peoria's German sister city as well as the youth exchange, and is easily manned in two-hour shifts.

The Peoria Park District's Oktoberfest, held on September 19 - 21 on the Peoria Riverfront, is a super fun event! Our table again promotes our relationship with Friedrichshafen.

Please come out, meet people, and help your organization get its message out. Call 693-1374 to put your name on the list of friends we can contact as these dates approach.

Thank you!



From left, Bruce, Krista and Alex Hoerr of Peoria tour Friedrichshafen's Zeppelin Museum this past spring. The Hoerr family planned a vacation that included our sister city. They were able to reunite with their German daughter/sister, Elena, who has already visited Peoria a second time since participating in the 2007 youth ex-

