



Sheboygan Area Chapter

Happy Halloween

October Newsletter 2017

Kris Hancock will give program on Nicaragua on Oct. 12

For eight years Kris Hancock has served on the International Board of Tesoros de dios (God's Treasures), traveling to Nicaragua, yearly, to work with the children at Tesoros de Dios –a school for children with special needs who live in the poorest sections of Managua – the capitol city of Nicaragua. More than 130 children ages two to 22 come to the school twice a week for physical therapy, speech therapy, and special education needs. One of Kris's former students from Oostburg Christian School started this school 12 years ago. The school also features equine therapy as a unique part of its program. Along with sharing the work at the school, she will share a little of the history and geography of the Managua area where these children live in homes with sod floors.



The menu for the evening will include beef stroganoff and noodles, broasted chicken, twice baked potatoes, vegetables, salad, rolls, and beverage. The dessert will be supplied by Dale & Mitzi Stoltzman. Social hour begins at 5:30; dinner at 6:30; program at 7:30.

The cost of the dinner is \$16.00 per person. Char Gumm has taken over the reservation responsibilities, so please mail your checks to her at **Char Gumm, N6222 Woodland Rd., Sheboygan, 53083**. The deadline for reservations is **October 2**.

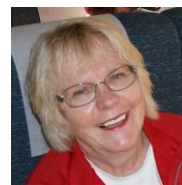
Coming Events



- Oct. 12** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Nov. 9** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Dec. 14** Chapter Christmas party at Elks Club
- Jan. 11, '18** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Feb. 8, '18** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Mar. 8, '18** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Mar. 11, '18** **Brat Fry at RCS Building**
- Apr. 12, '18** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- May 10, '18** Chapter meeting at Elks Club

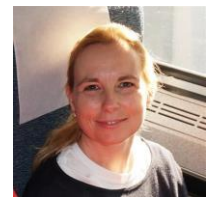
Thank you to our chaperones

Most of us have no idea how much time the chaperones put in before and during our summer exchange program for middle school students. Pictured above is a smiling



Carolyn Miesfeld on her return trip from Esslingen this summer. She will agree that the exchange was a big success again this year, but the chaperone has a lot of interesting situations to deal with throughout the six weeks in Esslingen and Sheboygan. Carolyn was in charge of planning all the preparation meetings for students and parents prior to their departure in July, and she was present for every event scheduled for the group in both Esslingen and Sheboygan. In addition to smaller local gatherings, the excursions involved day trips to Ulm and Tübingen in Germany, and to Chicago and Wisconsin Dells in the USA. These trips are interesting for the kids, but they can also be exhausting for the chaperones.

The German chaperone was Susanne Spieth, whose son took part in the high school exchange and daughter is currently attending Kohler High School. Susanne and Carolyn got along very well, and we as a chapter are grateful to both of them for taking such good care of our young exchange students.



PTP This newsletter is produced monthly for members of the Sheboygan, WI People to People Chapter, which is affiliated with People to People International. Newsletter items should be submitted by the **15th of the month** to Ann Keckonen, 1542 Golf View Dr. E., Sheboygan, WI 53083 or by Email to akeckonen@charter.net. Our website is www.ptpsheboygan.org

Changes to our Exchange Program

Because of the reduction of one year of schooling in Germany, our high school exchange program will now take place in one calendar year. Beginning in 2018, our Sheboygan area students will study in Esslingen from February through July, and they will return with their exchange partners who will stay in Sheboygan from July through mid-December. Applications for the German high school program are now due no later than October 15 for the next year, and sophomores are encouraged to apply. Home visits will be held in late October, and matches will be made in Esslingen in December.

If any chapter members know of a high school student who might be interested in studying in Germany for a semester, please have them call Jon Keckonen at 457-4318 or contact him at jkeckonen@charter.net.

Note: Deadlines for the Córdoba, Argentina program have not changed.

Picture is worth 1000 words...



Those who attended the September chapter meeting got a good taste of how enthusiastic the students were about their exchange experiences this year. The picture above of Amelia and her partner, Ada, shows us all how kids can have a good time wherever they are, and the bonds of friendship made during an exchange are so strong.



The board will meet at 5:00 pm on **Thursday, October 12th** at the Elks Club. Please call Bob Quasius at 451-8565 if you need to be excused from the meeting.

Making friends with Germans



Beth Hejl is a former PTP exchange student, now living in Germany with her husband, and when possible we include excerpts from her blog about comparisons between life in Germany and the U.S.

I have read often from other expats living in Germany that it is really hard making friends with Germans. A common stereotype English speakers have of Germans is that they are cold and distant. There's a bit of truth in most stereotypes, and the whole *du-Sie* thing (the *Sie* part, anyway) surely creates a distance that at least Americans aren't used to.

[*Sie* and *du* both mean "you," but *Sie* is formal - like "You, Sir" or "You, Ma'am - and is used for all adult strangers, service personnel, neighbors, and even colleagues until the older or higher-ranked person suggests the switch to *du* and first names. Until then it's "Mr. or Mrs. Dingsbums."]

So when there is such a wall between you and your neighbors and colleagues and an expected distance between strangers, (strangers sitting next to each other on the train in Germany generally do not chat with each other even if they commute on the same train every day), how can you make friends with Germans? I'm not going to address the pub and night life scene because I'm way too old for that and have never in my life made a friend that way. I'm also not going to address networking with other expats, because the point is to make friends with Germans.

Sometimes it is quite literally a wall or hedge that separates you from the Germans around you (this is our street). Some go a long way to avoid accidental interaction at their homes.



The first thing you need to accept is that Germans tend to be more reserved than Americans, and friendship doesn't happen quickly. For Americans, meeting someone at an event and talking with them for 30 minutes turns them into a friend if they generally agreed on the topics they discussed. For Germans the term "friend" is reserved for long-term relationships, and one goes through several stages between *Fremder* (stranger) and *Freund* (friend). You'll be a *Bekannte* (acquaintance) for years, most likely, before a German will begin to consider you a friend.

This is the Oberbürgermeister (Lord Mayor) of Esslingen. We look like friends, don't we? We're not. We are *Bekannten*. I spent a few hours with him as a translator the day this was taken.



My Syrian friends talk about the importance of *Kontakte knüpfen* - making contacts with Germans and interacting with them. Friendship may or may not develop, but if you're feeling lonely and want to get to know locals, look for ways to make contact rather than looking for friends. For example, volunteer at schools or community projects, join a *Verein* (club) - German towns have lots of them for whatever interest or talent you may have - offer to help a neighbor, take a class.

The main thing is, you cannot be passive if you want to make friends with Germans. They will likely not be the first to step forward; most likely you will need to go out in search of contacts and opportunities to meet people, and there are plenty in Germany!