



Sheboygan Area Chapter

Back to School

September Newsletter 2018

September 13th program will feature our exchange students

Our speakers for the September 13th PTP meeting will be our returning exchange students who spent time in Esslingen, Germany, this past year. Two of our returning high school students from North High, Amber Krause and Adam Domagalski, will tell us about the five months they spent with their host families from February through July, and following their presentation we will hear from the eight middle school students who returned from Esslingen on August 8. All of them are looking forward to sharing their experiences with PTP chapter members and friends.



Adam and Amber

The menu for the evening will be broasted chicken, ham, vegetables, salad bowl, rolls, and beverage. Dessert will be supplied by Ann and Jon Keckonen in recognition of their 54th anniversary. The social hour begins at 5:30; dinner at 6:30; program at 7:30.

The cost of the dinner is \$16.00 per person. Please mail your checks to **Char Gumm, N6222 Woodland Rd., Sheboygan, 53083**. The deadline for reservations is **September 1**.

The board will meet at 5:00 pm on Thursday, Sept. 13th at the Elks Club. Please call Bob Quasius at 451-8565 if you need to be excused from the meeting.

Coming Events



- Sept. 13** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Oct. 11** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Nov. 8** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Dec. 13** Chapter Christmas party at Elks Club
- Jan 10, '19** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Feb 14, '19** Chapter meeting at Elks Club
- Mar 14, '19** Chapter meeting at Elks Club

Middle School Exchange Program

We had 8 middle school students visit Esslingen, Germany, this summer, and they are currently in Sheboygan with their exchange partners. They are shown here with Mayor Vandersteen at a welcome party given by the Mayor's International Committee. In addition to outings with their host families, their activities in Sheboygan include a day in Chicago, a day at Wisconsin Dells, and a half day at an Alpaca Farm.



On top of the Willis Tower in Chicago

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

Esslingen boys return for visit

Jakob Sträter and Jörn Fischer were Esslingen students who participated in the high school exchange in 2016. They had such a good time that they have returned for another visit, but before coming to Sheboygan they asked Laura Liebl if they could return to Florida for another visit to her home on Tampa Bay. They are pictured here showing an amazing ride on inner tubes while Dolphins played nearby in the boat's wake.



Exchanges can be life-changing



Beth Hejl, PTP exchange student in 1985-86, has been writing a blog since she moved to Germany in 2012. Excerpts from a recent entry show the effects our PTP exchange program have had on her life.

This exchange program means the world to me. I am who I am because of it. It's funny how, nearing age 50, you can look back and see where your seemingly insignificant choices influenced the rest of your life. For me, the [exchange experience] was life-changing.

- If my brother had not done the exchange in 1983, I might not have decided to take German.
- If I had not taken German in school, I could not have applied for the exchange.
- If I had not applied for the exchange, I would not have been accepted.
- If I had not been accepted, I would not have met my wonderful host family, my now-*Schwiegermutter* or my husband.
- If I had not had such a fabulous host family, I would not have loved my experience so much.
- If I had not loved the experience so much, I would not have been motivated to study German in college.
- If I had not studied German in college, I would not have been able to teach German in the US.
- If I had not taught German in the US for 13 years, I would not have been hired to teach

Syrian and Eritrean refugees in Germany in 2016.

- If I had not been able to teach that group of Syrian and Eritrean refugees, I would have missed the most rewarding teaching experience of my life.



Part of the group I still refer to as "my dream team"

- If I had missed that opportunity, my passion for teaching would not have been renewed.
- If my passion for teaching had not been renewed, I wouldn't have met the rest of the students I have had here since then from Syria, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bulgaria, Scotland, Argentina, Chile, Japan, Tanzania, Ukraine, the Dominican Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, Denmark, Hungary, and Poland.

As it turns out, there have been very few decisions during my life that weren't in some way related to the exchange or stemming from it. I chose my daughter's name because it is my exchange partner's name, and I made sure my son's name was also easily pronounced in both English and German. I exposed my kids to German as they were growing up by reading German children's books to them and teaching them German children's songs. In 2008 the kids and I welcomed a girl from Esslingen into our home for the summer (she was my co-chaperone on our trip this year to Berlin!). Through art and décor, Esslingen has been in every room of every house I have ever owned.

I will always be grateful to the organizations and individuals that brought these two towns together and gave life to the exchange program. I owe my profession, many life choices, my marriage, and much of my happiness to this exchange.

