



Sheboygan Area Chapter

Summer Newsletter 2020

Chapter dinners will resume when it is safe to gather

PTP chapter president Jon Keckonen has reluctantly made the difficult decision to cancel our PTP summer picnic and to cancel monthly dinner meetings until further notice. Because almost all of our members are in the “high risk” age category, he does not feel it is safe to plan a chapter gathering until it is safe to do so. Board meetings will be held via “Zoom” if and when it is necessary to discuss business of the chapter.



There will be no future newsletters until we have meetings to write about and news of members to report. We will continue to send messages to members via email when there is something important to send to the entire chapter.

In the meantime, stay safe and healthy, and be sure to let Gilda Becker know if you need a card or greeting from the “Sunshine Lady.” Her phone is 920-458-1253.

Coming events

To be determined.....

The unpredictable situation with the Coronavirus makes it difficult to determine if we can resume meetings this fall. Many other organizations have cancelled all events through the end of the year, but we are hoping that we will be able to meet again as a chapter sometime before Christmas. We will keep you posted via email.

March message about brat fry

Message from Henry Schoen

Thank you to all the volunteers for all your time and the generosity of making baskets (for our PTP brat fry). A special thank you to Char Gumm, Denise Quasius & Margaret Voorhans, Alan and Jen Redell for heading the



kitchen, baskets and bakery. I want to thank Ken Gumm for all the years he did the frying; it took 3 of us to fill his shoes. Now we need someone or 2 or

3 to fill Char’s shoes. Cyndi Crimmins was a big help in stepping in to run the kitchen this year. I also want to thank Bob Quasius for help in frying all day long! I need to thank Jon Keckonen for co-chairing the Brat fry and making my last year as chairman a great success.

Henry Schoen

P.S. Although we have not had a meeting since the brat fry, treasurer Rich Miesfeld reports that we had good success and the net results were considerably higher than previous years.

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.

Middle School Exchange

The middle school exchange program has been postponed until 2021, and the eight students who were selected to participate this year have all agreed to postpone their experience until next summer. They are pictured below with the chaperone, Paula Dick. In keeping with our policy to protect identity of minors, we are not disclosing the names at this time.



The students in the picture below are the partners and chaperone from Esslingen, and we are pleased that all 8 families in Germany have also agreed to take part in the exchange next year.

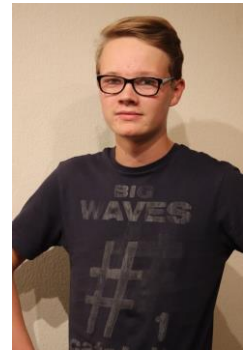


New Members joined PTP

As a result of inviting guests to our February meeting, we are happy to say that 4 people who attended that evening have now joined the chapter. **Beverly and Robert Davidson, Ruth Lopez, & Tammy Schaefer**

In addition, we welcome 3 new families who have students involved in the middle school exchange. They are **Scott and Amanda Rammer, Shane and Nicole**

Rosalez, Ben and Shannon Elliot, and Bridget Elliot. The other selected families were already members of the chapter. Also we welcome **Todd and Lynn Weinfurter** whose son, Jonah, is hoping to participate in the 5-month high school exchange. He has been matched with Felix Haug, but so far Felix has not been able to secure a visa to travel to the U.S. this summer. We send a [virtual] welcome to all these new chapter members. We wish we could greet you in person.



Exchange family memories

Anna Schoen sent this heartwarming message back in May and she wanted to share with chapter members:

“[This picture is] our 1998 exchange student Patrick Munk and his family. Had a lovely chat with them as they celebrated their 12th wedding anniversary. Pictured are 5 year old Anna, wife Claudia, and 7 year old Luis. Patrick made sure we’d be at his wedding, so he sent us plane tickets!”



Message from Esslingen:



With this great picture of the maple tree in Merckelpark we send warm greetings to our American partner city! The tree is a gift to the city of Esslingen (from Sheboygan) and reminds us of the deep

attachment of our two cities, even and especially in times of Corona.

Tribute to Ken Gumm

When Ken Gumm was in the hospital due to cancer and could not have visitors, the Town of Sheboygan Fire Department offered to take his friends and family up in the ladder truck to “visit” Ken through his hospital window. It was truly a touching sight, and it was covered by Milwaukee news stations. Ken, age 77, was fire chief for 24 years and has been with the Town of Sheboygan Fire Department for almost 60 years. Ken was instrumental in getting the town’s first ladder truck and has kept the department family-oriented throughout the years. Char said this was a tribute to Ken for all the work he has done for the fire department. Ed Biederwolf, the current fire chief, said, “We owed that to him. This was just our way of repaying him and his family.” Char said this was a big boost to Ken and the good news is that he improved enough to go back home.



Char is being interviewed by the T.V. station



Even the dog went up to say Hi to Ken.

Scholarships announced

PTP Sheboygan Chapter is happy to announce that **Amber Krause**, a North High graduate who took part in the 5-month 2018 exchange, is the 2020 recipient of our \$2500 scholarship. Amber plans to attend the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in the fall and she hopes to take part in their study abroad program. In her application, Amber wrote, “Reflecting back to almost 3 years ago, I would say I am an entirely different person. The exchange program taught me to be more independent, gain maturity, gain responsibility, and overall [made me] a better person and student. I gained another family who I am in contact with weekly, an exchange student who is now my best friend, and so many more relationships. I am thankful for the entire experience.”

The chapter grant for our study abroad program has been awarded to **August Rice**, son of Liesl Testwuide. Augie took part in the middle school exchange in 2013, is currently attending Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, and he has been accepted to study abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark. In his application for the grant, Augie wrote “Occasionally, I’m transported back to the time I spent in Germany through People to People—mentally, of course. I’ll be sitting in philosophy class, discussing a reading, and soon recall when I was standing in downtown Esslingen before the Altes Rathaus, learning about the depictions of Justice and Temperance on its clockface. Or, while helping cook a meal in my dorm for all 27 of us, I’ll feel as though I’m back with my German host family, learning to make Maultaschen...”



Beth Hejl, PTP exchange student in 1985-86, has been writing a blog comparing customs in the U.S. and Germany since she moved to Germany in 2012. This post (written in April) shows how things in Germany are similar to the U.S. during this pandemic.

Buy Local – shopping during the pandemic

Now more than ever it is so important to support small local family businesses in any way we can. The ones around us are doing what they can to make this "new normal" as manageable as possible for their customers, to keep us fed and to stay in business.

This is one of the things I have always loved about living here in southwestern Germany - the open air markets, the small butcher right in our village an 8-minute walk from home, the family bakery in the next village - also within walking distance though it's more of a commitment at 45 minutes, the *Hofläden* (farm shops), and our vegetable guy who parks his produce truck in front of our neighbors' house once a week.

I've written often about [walking](#) or [driving](#) to these little shops, some of them often enough that the proprietors and their employees knew me by name quite early on. Sometimes in the past, however, I've been lazy and just grabbed a pork tenderloin or bag of potatoes at the grocery store because I was there anyway. Not anymore. During this Covid-19 ordeal I have been avoiding the grocery store like the...uh...never mind. I will only go there for milk, juice, water and a few other minor items I can't get anywhere else.



Our butcher is open for regular hours despite Covid-19, but they have increased their delivery service and encourage customers to pre-order by phone. They offer a daily lunch deal as well, but now only to-go. There is a sign on the door asking customers to keep to only two in the store at one time, and they are enforcing it by politely asking the 3rd person who walks in to wait outside. They also have plexi-glass partitions now between the customers and the workers, as do most places.

If there's anything to get happy about during this pandemic, it's that *Spargelsaison* has started! This means several trips over the next few months to the [Spargelhof](#), which is also a *Hofladen* with fresh produce, noodles, homemade jams, candies, *Schnaps* and eggs. This is the place that supplies our local butcher with eggs, and that's where I usually buy them (why buy grocery store eggs when you can get farm fresh ones?!).

I went there on a Thursday morning in April, and I have never seen it so packed. In order to only allow a limited number of people in their shop at any given time, they had a traffic light at the entrance! I did expect it to be busy, and I'm glad for them. Pretty much everyone is being cautious, keeping their distance, many, and masks are required in all stores, but no Coronavirus is going to keep Germans from their *Spargel*!

To the left of the door in the photo above you might be able to just see the red light telling us all to sit tight and wait. It was kind of funny when the light turned green. Each person went to the door and hesitated, wondering if s/he would make it through before it turned red again.



Then there's the [Bäckerei](#) in the next village. This has been a family bakery since 1890, and it is the only one around that I know of where the bread is made fresh daily rather than delivered frozen on trucks to be baked. They're closed on the big holidays, but they sell half-baked baguettes, pretzels and rolls that one can finish baking on the day they're needed. Perfect for long weekends!



They have tables for guests to have a breakfast or coffee break, but due to Covid-19 that's currently a no-go. They sprang into action and have done everything they can think of to keep their customers supplied with bread, cakes and life-sustaining *Butterbrezeln*, despite not being able to allow customers to dine in. They've added an on-line shop where we can pre-order and pay online (no touching money - yay!), and then we can pick up our order there or they will deliver. The delivery service is new, as far as I know, and so important for the elderly who really need to stay indoors. They swing by sometime between 7:30-8:30 and leave your order on your front porch. You don't even have to get dressed! O.K, we're not elderly, but the delivery only costs €2, so I gave it a try.



(If you wish to read more of this blog post, go to <http://bhejl.blogspot.com/2020/04/buy-local.html>)