

April, 2017
 Editor: Ann Kimmel



**April's
 Gemütlichkeit**

April's Gemütlichkeit will be held at the Senior Citizens Center after the meeting. Kelly Blakesly will pick up pizza's for all to enjoy.

Gemütlichkeit is held immediately following the monthly membership meeting. All are welcome to attend.

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The Sister Cities Scoop

Lichtenfels

Vandalia

Prestwick



Our Lichtenfels Exchange Students

This year we have 4 students from Lichtenfels, 3 girls and 1 boy, visiting Vandalia for 3 weeks. Annika Vogel, Emily Schindler, Luise Birkner, and Jonas Hirle will arrive in Vandalia on Monday, April 10 to experience our culture through Tuesday, May 2. The 4 host students: Grace Cope, Lindsay Woodruff, Camryn Snapp, and Alex Dixon have recently been in contact with their visitors. Annika will be staying with Grace, Emily with Lindsay, Luise with Camryn, and Jonas with Alex.

The host families have been working hard to plan an unforgettable exchange. While the students are in Vandalia, they will be attending high school with their hosts. Annika, Emily, and Jonas will attend Butler High School with Grace, Lindsay, and Alex. Luise will attend Stivers with Camryn. The German students will also experience a show at the Victoria Theatre, a Dayton Dragons baseball game/stadium tour, the Air Force Museum, Carillon Park, and much more.

Join us Monday, April 10th at the Dayton Airport to help us wel-

come the students, from Lichtenfels. Their flight (American Airlines 5484) is due to land at 9:50pm. Mark your calendars for the exciting general membership meeting and Gemütlichkeit on April 12th. The professional beekeeper, Al Tuttle, and the youth exchange students will be giving presentations. The Gemütlichkeit will be at the Vandalia Senior Center immediately following the meeting.

I would also like to invite you to the Farewell Party on Sunday, April 30th. The Farewell Party will be at the Blakesly's home, 720 Bright Ave. Vandalia, at 5:00pm. Dinner will be provided. Please RSVP to Kelly Blakesly by April 26th – 937-689-3940 or Kelly.blakesly@gmail.com.

Keep checking the website (www.vandaliasistercities.org) for updates to the Youth Exchange schedule.



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Check out Vandalia Sister Cities online at www.Vandaliasistercities.org

President's Corner

The decision to cancel the Oktoberfest for this year was not an easy one. The Board and the Steering Committee met to see if a solution could be found to have the Oktoberfest but they were not able to come up with one. I wish to thank the members for their hard work in the previous years to showcase a great Oktoberfest.

We will still be busy for the next few months with the student exchange in about three weeks and the Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra will be here on July 4th. If you are able to host an adult couple from Scotland, please give me a call. We are looking for eight homes to host a couple and two homes to host a single adult person.

Bob Schaffner and Wayne Wright have volunteered to become board members. A vote will be taken at the next membership meeting.

Harvey

Buzz by for an exciting meeting....



Mark your calendars for the April general membership meeting!

Enjoy an un-**BEE**-lievable presentation by Mr. Al Tuttle, a professional bee keeper. **BEE** sure you're on time to hear what the **BUZZ** is all about.

Our 4 youth exchange students and their host families will **BEE** talking about their visit.

STICK around for the Gemtilllobbet and meet-and-greet with the exchange students.

Snacks and refreshments will **BEE** provided.

Oktoberfest 2017 – Canceled

By Mike Blakesly (Board Member & Oktoberfest Steering Committee member)

It has been said over many years “You don’t know what you got ‘til it’s gone!” How true this statement rings out when it comes to the Vandalia Sister Cities Oktoberfest for 2017. The Board and the Steering Committee met on March 15 for a thorough and painstaking discussion. After much dialogue, it became obvious we are no longer in a position to keep the Oktoberfest going because of a number of challenges. The biggest challenges are an aging segment among our ranks and the reduced number of members. The physical strain is just too much of a burden on our members without an adequate amount of younger membership to help, plan, organize, setup, and teardown the event. Therefore, the Board along with the Oktoberfest Steering Committee came to the conclusion the 2017 Oktoberfest will have to be canceled. If circumstances dramatically change, the Board will re-analyze and re-evaluate if the Oktoberfest could be sustainable in 2018 and beyond.

This decision came with much sadness and consternation. One board member stated, “We know as an organization this yearly event became a main stay of cultural and community celebration. To see this yearly tradition come to an end is just heart breaking.” Another Board member added, “This event brought thousands together to enjoy each others’ company similar to a family reunion gathering. It was like one big city block party to share good times with your neighbors.”

One of the original members of Sister Cities stated, “It has been a good run and a fun one at that! We got to celebrate our 40th Oktoberfest last year and that is something not too many other organizations can claim.”

Sister Cities of Vandalia wishes to thank the Vandalia city staff for their support over the past 40 years. Additionally, a huge thank you goes out to the Vandalia Community for supporting Sister Cities through sponsorships, volunteering to work, and attending the Oktoberfest throughout the many years.

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2017 Visit To Lichtenfels

The Quadrennial VISIT to Lichtenfels is beginning to shape up. We are hoping to have a good sized group to attend this year. As of March 10, 2017, there are 20 members who have expressed interest in going. Some are definite, some are possibilities at this time. If you have ANY INTEREST AT ALL in possibly going to Lichtenfels this September, please notify Wayne (waynesusie@earthlink.net) so you can be put on the contact list for upcoming information.

Currently the List includes: Bobbie Areen & Gary Eggleston, Jim & Elata Everhart, Don & Ellen Hazzle, Elaine Johnson, Harvey & Ann Kimmel, Lizz Kunz & Steve, Roger & Nancy Pratt, Skip & Jan Pratt, Bob & Tracy Schaffner, Dave Starline, Wayne & Susie Wright.

I just checked airfare between Dayton and Nürnberg and it is just below \$1400 for September. It would be slightly less into Frankfurt, but then you would need to rent a car. We think we can get a pickup from Lichtenfels if we use Nürnberg. BUT.... Rumor has it that transatlantic airfares may fall this summer. That is certainly not a sure thing, but worth waiting awhile before buying tickets. The rumor is that there are three new carriers vying for entry into the transatlantic market, and if they succeed, it should force the major carriers to lower fares to meet the competition. The other factor, not necessarily a good one, is that all the turmoil over refugees in Europe may spook enough Americans into not going to Europe this year, that they will lower fares to attract more flyers. Susie and I were there twice last year and saw NO PROBLEMS AT ALL in that respect, so as I have said for years, if we refuse to be terrorized, they lose! Although it makes sense to be aware and alert anywhere these days, we should not allow scare tactics to interrupt our

lives.

The Official VISIT this year in Lichtenfels begins on FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, and ends on FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 with the farewell banquet. The weekend of the 15th, 16th, & 17th, the BASKET FESTIVAL will be in full swing. That is a truly great experience to participate in. Also new for us this year is that the VISIT will be shared with Cournon, Lichtenfels Sister City in France, so we will have a chance to meet some neat French people too. They were represented at the 40th Anniversary Meeting that Susie and I attended in October, and we had a chance to meet some of them then. They like to party!!!!

OK, that is all for now. PLEASE LET ME (WAYNE) KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO THE LIST OF PROSPECTIVE TRAVELERS. If you have been there before, you know the VISIT is a fantastic experience and should not be missed. It is what Sister Cities is all about. If you have not been to Lichtenfels yet, this is an opportunity you should not pass up. There is something VERY SPECIAL THERE that cannot be conveyed in words....you have to experience it. Susie and I have experienced it 18 times, including 3 weddings of the Springer Kinder, and are looking forward to the next time as much as any before.

NEWSFLASH!!! We just found out that the Munich Oktoberfest will begin the same weekend as the VISIT TO LICHTENFELS, and will go on until October 3. If you have ever wanted to experience this world class event, this will be a great time. We will try to arrange some sort of excursion down to Munich, either during the VISIT, or just after it is over. Stay tuned!

In the future I will communicate on the VISIT only with those who are on the VISIT MAILING LIST, so SIGN UP IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!!

Wayne

Sister City Scholarships

Vandalia Sister Cities awards three scholarships to local college bound seniors every year. They include the Walter Lakin Scholarship in the amount of \$2000 and additional scholarships of \$1000 each.

Applications for the scholarships are now open to students who are residents of the Vandalia-Butler district, graduate from Butler High School or an accredited private high school, or are **dependent children of Sister**

Cities members. Eligible applicants should have a cumulative grade point average of at least **3.25** and have completed three or more years of a foreign language.

Interested students can contact either the Butler High School Guidance office or Ed Rapp, the Chairperson of our Scholarship Committee. Ed can be reached at elprapp@gmail.com.

Kroger Community Rewards Program

As neighbors in the community, Kroger's sees firsthand how the recent economic challenges have impacted local organizations. That's why they are assisting local charitable organizations of all sizes, through the 2017 Kroger Community Rewards Program.

Great news from Kroger's this year! As of April

1, 2017, we will **no longer** have to re-enroll our Kroger Plus Cards to earn dollars for Sister Cities.

The Sister Cities of Vandalia Organization number is 81273. If you are not enrolled, please help us out by enrolling your plus card.

2017 Membership

Last call for Sister City 2017 Membership Renewal. I want to thank everyone who has sent in their 2017 membership dues. For those of you who have not done so, if you do not send in your checks by April 15, you will be taken off the membership mailing list. Please contact Brenda Windel at 937-901-1510 or by email at bjwindel@aol.com with any questions or if you are not sure if you have sent in your dues.

Brenda

Save the Dates

**Board Meeting:
April 5 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Membership Meeting:
April 12 at 7:00 p.m.**

Meetings are held at the Vandalia Senior Citizens Center located at 21 Tionda Drive S.

Deadline for May's Scoop articles is April 22nd.

Happy April Birthdays!

Micha Lastoskie1
Ann Kimmel3
Susi Evanson4
Roger Pratt6
Samantha Dixon22
Tom Lastoskie23
Donna Shirley25
Stan Terebinski29
Stacy Pacifico-Flick29

Suzanne's Sunshine Report

Thanks to Suzanne Jordan, a little sunshine was sent to brighten someone's day:

Susie Wright has had knee replacement surgery. She is home and doing well.

Please report news on our membership to Suzanne at 898-2703.