

Lucari Jordan's first post from our German sister city (9-27-15)



My German host family and I (2nd from the right). My 2015/16 school year exchange takes place within the framework of the Las Cruces-Nienburg Sister Cities Affiliation and its German counterpart, "Freundeskreis Las Cruces-Nienburg". I am attending Albert-Schweitzer-Schule/Nienburg, an academic high school.



A new home for the 2015/16 school year

My first month living in Germany has been colorful, energetic and has given me many insights into the cultural differences between this and my homeland.

On the drive from the airport to the house {on 8-25}, I was already stunned to see everything so green. It is truly amazing how much difference a

little water can make -- trees and plants growing out of every nook and cranny of the world around-- such a difference from the dusty and warm land to which I am accustomed. After settling into the room-- which I have now begun to call my room-- we went out for a wonderful dinner cooked on the grill and served in the garden, where I am, once again, astounded by the great variety of colorful and vibrant flora and fauna.

Following a few hours of non-airborne sleep, I hopped on a train with my host brother Simon and a mutual friend of ours, Melissa. We were headed toward Hamburg where we planned to meet a few more friends. The group, now fully consolidated, could not think of any specific activities and ended up milling around the streets. Though this was not how I had imagined the trip, I was happy to be listening to German being spoken all around and to just get a feel for German cities.

The Lesemanns from Estorf, about 9 km from Nienburg, are my host family: father Wolfgang, Oma (grandma) Liesel, sister Birte, brother Simon. While getting into the rhythm of my host family and the time zone, which I apparently haven't yet pinned down entirely, considering I'm writing this at 00:30 in the morning, I get acquainted with some of my non-human cohabitants on the little farm: a small herd of sheep, a brood of I don't know how many chickens, the wonderful not-so-little but ever so sweet and sad-eyed dog Toby, and of course a couple (4-5?) of more or less wild cats, the most cuddly and tame of which is the little hunter Majo.

School was a very... enlightening experience the first day, though I was much too nervous about getting lost and figuring out the rather complex class schedule (13 different subjects a week!) to pay attention to much of anything (guess one could say the same thing about American school but anyway...). The public transportation system here, which is used daily by a range of children from 5th grade to 12th grade as the primary way to get to school, was a very new thing to experience since I come from a place where there is very little. At this point I have learned enough from both friendly guidance and my fair share of mistakes (had to ride my bike rather hurriedly to school one Friday morning because I had missed the bus). I am now able to get around fairly easily.

Due to this new system and many other new things racing through my mind, I was rather silent and passive for the first couple of days, which, as anyone who knows me can testify, is quite the opposite of my normal attitude, if it is even possible to associate me with the word normal in any sense of the word (just a joke). Of course after a few days, as my insecurities and silence in the class wear away, the boundaries between my classmates and myself diminish to the point where I now confidently count myself among some of the friend circles around the school. Oddly enough for me, I find myself having the most fun in the "Sport" class, Rowing, (nothing like the excuse for PE I have experienced in N.M.) where we are actually pushed to improve our stamina and strength, two things that I am not the best at.

From September 24 through 26, the city of Nienburg had their annual "Altstadfest" a wonderful fair type of deal with numerous bands and DJs playing each of the 4 nights. I joined in on the party on 2 nights and had an immeasurable amount of fun each time (the 70's rock cover band was the best in my opinion, but all the music was good in any case!

Return in one lunar cycle for a new update on the wonderful German exchange experiences I'm gathering!

Till next time, Tschüs, Bye, and Adios! Lucari

P.S. I am missing the chili though... but I have German bread to make up for that, I guess. :)