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German students get American experience



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KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley

Twenty students from Stuttgart, Germany spent three weeks at McNary High School, observing classes and exploring Oregon and Washington.

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the *Keizertimes*

A group of 20 German high school students only spent three weeks in Keizer but they saw and did more than some McNary students who have lived here their entire lives.

"I talked to a girl here who had been here her whole life and never been to Mt. Hood," said Sarah Horsch, a German student who had traveled to New York, Switzerland and England before coming to Oregon.

As a group, the German students went to Portland, which included going to a museum, Multnomah Falls and a Trail Blazers game.

They went whale watching in Lincoln City and toured Willamette University and the state capitol in Salem.

What else they were able to do depended on the host family.

"Some of us have the jackpot host family and some of us not," said Niklas Weise, who along with Isabel Zhou, got to take a weekend trip to Seattle.

"Seattle was something I really wanted to do so I asked my host family," Weise said. "I wanted to experience as much as I can. It was the America we expected."

In Seattle, they saw the

Space Needle, Gum Wall and Pike Place Market.

"It's pretty but I imagined it bigger," Zhou said of the Space Needle.

While most of the students were at the Trail Blazers game, Zhou went to a Camilla Cabello concert with her host family.

"It was really spectacular for me," she said.

Some students went to Silver Falls State Park.

While shopping at Cabela's and Walmart, they saw guns, which aren't so accessible in Germany.

"In Germany, it's illegal to have a gun," Paul Burger said. "You need a license and to get the license it's very difficult, so really nobody has it."

"They (Cabela's) had pink guns that you could give to their smaller children. They see it as more of a toy and a funny thing but for us in Germany it's a weapon, not something funny."

"It's so normal for everyone here to just take a gun out and for us it's very exciting to just touch it or just look at them," Weise said. "It made me a bit afraid."

The food was better than they expected.

"I've changed my opinion on American food," said Weise, whose favorite was Chipotle. "Before I came here, I thought it was just fast food and I will definitely get fat."

"We only had McDonalds and Burger King (in Germany), that's not the good fast food," said Horsch, who preferred Wendy's and Jack in the Box.

"The Mexican food is way better than we have it," Burger said.

The students also enjoyed

their meal at Cracker Barrel in Tualatin.

At McNary, they got to make their own food in culinary arts class, cooking shrimp and soup.

"That was so delicious," Weise said.

The students also read lines and learned sword fighting in a theatre class.

They watched lacrosse and baseball games.

"I really like baseball because it's different," Zhou said. "We don't really have it in Germany."

The German kids found

the entire American school experience more relaxed.

They don't have WiFi in their German school and aren't allowed to use cell phones.

"The school is very different, like in the *High School Musical* films," Weise said. "The teachers are friends with the children."

Burger even witnessed a teacher high five a student.

"You couldn't imagine that in Germany, he said. "You're not scared of your teachers but it's very respectful."

Since the German students go to a bilingual school, they take biology, history and geography in English, a language they begin learning in the first grade. The students also speak French and have the choice to learn Russian.

They left Keizer on Thursday, April 19.

Pucker up!



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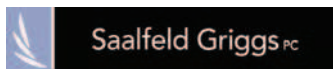
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