

German students immersed in culture on recent trip

BY SAM WRIGHT

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

At the end of March, a select few students from Cottage Grove High School embarked on a very rare opportunity to explore the culture and history of central Europe. German teacher Angela Schafer took 16 adventurous students on a 10-day trip to Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The group spent about three days in each country, its members immersing themselves in the culture as much as possible.

"It was nice that we saw various places, but we weren't moving that much and it wasn't very overwhelming," Schafer said of the travel arrangements. According to her, the class was very mature and easy to handle.

Schafer took the students on the "Sound of Music tour" through Worldstrides, a company that Schafer says focuses heavily on education.

"The type of things you do are hands on and real immersion into the culture as much as possible," she said.

The German club made the trip successful by hosting fundraisers nearly a year in advance. The cost for each student to travel was nearly \$3,700, and Worldstrides offered scholarships to many students.

The group began its trip by flying into Vienna, Austria. They then moved to Salzburg, another Austrian city known for its salt mines. After Austria they stayed

in Munich, the culture capital of Bavaria in Germany, and then wrapped the trip up with a visit to Lucerne in Switzerland. Each city's main language was German, giving the German students plenty of opportunity to practice conversation with native speakers.

Schafer says that according to the feedback she received from students, Vienna was overall the most enjoyed city of the trip. One of the main reasons for that was a trip to the Prater, a public amusement park. But this wasn't any regular trip to Six Flags.

"It really combined older Vienna and older Europe with a lot of modern aspects," Schafer noted. The modernity came from the rides (which were cleverly on a pay-per-ride basis) and the historical aspects came from architecture. The amusement park was on the heel side of a tour of the Schonbrunn Palace, a former imperial residence and now famous tourist attraction.

"It was one of the kids' favorite palaces and the weather was great; you can't ask for more," Schafer noted.

When the group went on to Bavaria (a place where Schafer says is always her favorite to visit), students immersed themselves more by taking a Bavarian folk dancing class.

"We met a local Bavarian folk dancing group and they took us to their club house and taught us folk dancing," Schafer said. This was a major goal in immersing the students in the local cul-



courtesy photo

The students sit beneath the Lion Monument in Lucerne. The monument was constructed in memory of Swiss mercenaries in the late 18th Century.

ture. "You're not just being led around by a tour guide, you're creating art, writing poems and speaking the language."

The students were given tours of various Gothic Cathedrals and churches with an abundance of rich European history. They even were given a tour of Neuschwanstein Castle, which heavily influenced the design of the Disney Castle.

In Lucerne, the student-travelers toured Lake Lucerne, which has a more complicated name in German that means the Four Forest City Lake, as four different cities surround the lake. The students went on a lake cruise and walked through the town of Lucerne, which holds some of the oldest pedestrian bridges still in use. Lastly, the group did a very fitting tour of the Lion Monument. The monument is a carving of a Lion in a cliff that commemorates Swiss mercenaries in the 18th century that suffered huge losses during the French Revolution.

Outside of the history, the students enjoyed authentic German, Austrian and Swiss food, along with very comfortable ac-

commodations. Schafer noted the pleasant surprise the students found in the quality of the food everywhere they ate.

"Nothing was catered to American tourists; it was all very traditional," she added.

The trip marked the second journey to Europe that Schafer has hosted at Cottage Grove High School. Last year, she took 12 on a trip to Munich. This year, she expanded to 16 kids with the help of Geriann Walker, a chemistry teacher and valued colleague of Ms. Schafer. "She really understands how to facilitate and coordinate all these young people and ensure that they have a good time," she said of Walker.

All in all, the local Cottage Grove students approached the trip in a respectful, mature and academic manner. The experience enlightened students like Carly Sand, who enjoyed the various cathedrals. Others like Lucas Swearingin enjoyed visiting the various castles on the trip, and Celeste Pelham praised the dancing they learned.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SLSD plans kindergarten round-up

South Lane School District informs parents with children whose fifth birthday occurs on or before Sept. 1, 2016 that those children are eligible to enroll for kindergarten next fall, and parents can pre-register their kinder student anytime before then.

Kindergarten classroom visits will occur this year starting April 20 through May 11 at the various elementary schools. Dates and times are listed below. Those seeking additional information are asked to contact their area school directly.

Latham School — 942-0147
April 20 from 2:30-4 p.m.

Bohemia — 942-3313
April 21 from 3-4:30 p.m.

Dorena — 946-1506
April 21 from 3-4 p.m.

Harrison — 942-3389
May 11 from 2:30-4 p.m.

London — 942-0183
May 11 from 4-5:30 p.m.

BMD Planning

The Bohemia Mining Days board will be meeting on Thursday, April 14 at 7 p.m. in the Community Sharing Conference

Room. Input is needed to guide the planning for organizing this year's festival taking place July 14-17. More members are needed for the Festival Board of Directors and for the BMD Heritage Association. Those interested in signing up can call 541-942-5064.

Fun Fly

The South Lane RC Modelers and the YAC are hosting a fun fly for all ages (under 12 with a parent or guardian) on on Friday, April 15 from 4-6 p.m. Those interested can bring their small electric aircraft to fly in the Armory. For more information contact Marvin Goins at 541-942-0530.

Sears Cemetery Assn. to meet

The annual meeting of the Sears Cemetery Association will be held Tuesday, April 19 at 6:30 p.m. at Smith-Lund-Mills Funeral Chapel. Public presence is welcome. Those who didn't get a reminder card may send their dues to Secretary/Treasurer Millie Jones at 33138 Gibson Lane, Creswell, OR 97426 or call 541-895-4893.

Rocks and Minerals

A rock and mineral show will be held at the Goshen Grange on Saturday, April 16 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be food concessions, spinning wheel demonstrations, silent auction, local sellers with craft items, jewelry and more. Each child gets a rock and there is free parking. Admission is 50 cents and children under 12 are free. The grange is located off the Hwy 58 exit, take first right on Matthews Road, then the second right on Dillard Access Road, and the Grange is on right. The event is presented by Thunderegg Rock Club.

Dam historical program

The Cottage Grove Historical Society will be presenting a program on the history of the Cottage Grove Dam at the Cottage Grove Community Center on Saturday, April 16 at 10 a.m. This program is free and refreshments will be provided.

912 Project

The next meeting of the Cottage Grove 912 Project will be Monday, April 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Stacy's Covered Bridge Restaurant.

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