

Germany: Students connect with, become explorers

Continued from Page 1

River Maritime Museum, and the Salt Cairn in Seaside. They lived with local families and attended classes at Astoria High School.

The headmaster's favorite things were the column and learning about the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

"The Americans are very proud of their short history," Albrecht said. His country's roots date to classical antiquity. "It's been very interesting to hear how the land was explored and the problems had by the young country. It's interesting because it is so short."

Their tour guide? Warrenton Police Sgt. Jim Pierce.

Pierce has organized the trips for 17 years, ever since his daughter went to Germany as an exchange student. When the former program director

To participate

The exchange program is open to students throughout the region at a cost of \$2,700 per person, which covers all expenses.

A German dinner and silent auction in February at Astoria High School will raise some funds.

To learn more, contact Astoria High's exchange program at 503-325-3911.

left, administration fell on his shoulders.

The shared trips – German students arrive here in the fall and Astoria students visit Germany in the spring – provide a worthwhile experience, Pierce said.

"The whole process is not so much for sightseeing; it's educational," Pierce said. "We want students from both sides

of the world to engage, and engage in a positive relationship between both countries. We want them to learn our culture, go to our school. Next it will be our turn to learn their culture and see how they live."

The annual trips are part of the second longest-running sister city student exchange program. The oldest one is in Freeport, Maine, and that city also has a relationship with Walldorf Realschule. Astor immigrated to the United States through Freeport.

Astor's American Fur Company founded Fort Astoria in 1811. Prior to that, Astor provided capital for exploration of the North American West – having a hand in both the 1792 Capt. Robert Gray exploration by sea and the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition by land, Pierce said.

Michelle Kurz, 14, especially liked the visit to South Jetty.

Her home is nowhere near the ocean. "It was really beautiful," she said.

Maria Volodina enjoyed the ocean as well, but also has loved the local cuisine.

Mia Kreso was intrigued by Astoria High School.

"It was big and very different from our own," she said. "The rooms are much bigger."

The headmaster also noted differences in the educational system.

"I have really enjoyed getting into the American school system, talking to all the teachers and taking part in some lessons and learning how teaching in America works," Albrecht said. "It's a little bit different. For the lessons, I've seen students work mostly on their own and the teacher hasn't talked very much. In our schools, there is more talking time for the teacher."



Oregon State Parks

Dane Osis, a ranger at Fort Stevens State Park, leads a wild mushroom walk along a park trail.

State recommends less shopping, more 'park' ing

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department invites Oregonians to ditch the shopping bags and lace up their hiking boots to celebrate Green Friday on the day after Thanksgiving.

The agency is waiving parking fees in 25 state parks across Oregon.

"Fall weather brings a different flavor to many state parks and we're encouraging folks to get outside and explore," said Lisa Sumption, OPRD director. "This is our

fifth year celebrating Green Friday and we're excited to continue the post-holiday tradition."

Parking is free year-round at almost all state parks; the waiver applies to the 25 parks that charge \$5 daily for parking, including Fort Stevens in Warrenton, Ecola in Cannon Beach, Nehalem Bay, Stub Stewart near Vernonia, and Cape Lookout near Tillamook.

The waiver applies from open to close on Nov. 29.



Above: Students listen to a ranger at Fort Clatsop.

Left: German students, L-R, Michelle Kurz, Maria Volodina, and Mia Kreso chat about the trip.

Cindy Yingst



Pierce

It's time to review your MEDICARE Coverage

Call us for a
FREE
review of your
current
Medicare Health Plan!

Darlene Warren

Farmer's Insurance



Roger Warren

1639 SE Ensign Lane, Warrenton
503-861-2672

www.Agents.Farmers.com/OR/Warrenton/Darlene-Warren