

Lions International Youth Exchange Report

Distinct 27-D1 Cabinet Meeting – October 14th, 2018

- **2018 Camp Summary**
 - We hosted 47 youth from 23 countries dispersed statewide. 7 youth were hosting in D1 and sent 8 youth aboard, 7 of whom received \$725 district scholarships. In addition, 2 of the 3 USA campers originated from our district.
- **Youth Exchange Scholarships.**
 - We are currently soliciting scholarship applicants from Leo Clubs, Lions/Lioness member's relations, Campus Lions Clubs and the community at large. Informational brochures and handbooks are available. ANY youth residing in D1 can apply for our District D1 scholarship, provided they have a sponsoring Lions Club.

Fundraising We are currently soliciting funds from our district Lions and Lioness clubs to finance this year's program. Funds collected are used to pay our districts' share of the Youth Exchange camp-related fees; youth exchange scholarships, host family stipends & other direct expenses. All the funds collected are used only for direct youth exchange related costs. There are no indirect fees; all individuals involved in this program are volunteers including camp counselor & all support staff. **To assess funds available for the December 15th scholarship deadline, please consider donating early.**

Finances/Budget

Total cost/meal - **\$1.60/meal** (\$2.08 in 2017)

Total cost/attendee/day - **\$27.77** (\$29.39 /2017)

Previous Balance \$4765.31

Donations - \$808 (5 clubs)

Expenses: \$367.76 Host Family Activity Support (flags for outgoing youth, postage)
 \$1700 annual district program contribution (\$1700 x 10 districts)

TOTAL ACCOUNT BALANCE – \$3505.55

Projected Expenses: ~\$4752

Camp fee - \$1700 (paid by each of the 10 state Lions Districts) ***NO INCREASE!***

Scholarships - \$500 x 5 = \$2500 (the scholarship amount is determined by # of applications & available funds)

Host family support \$500

Table at International Festival \$52.00

Attachments: Outgoing Youth Essays including photos. Please take some time to read these first hand reports from the youth that traveled abroad this past summer. Also included is an essay from on of our incoming youth.

There are currently 3 volunteers on the District 27-D1 youth exchange committee; **Terry Miller** – Pardeeville, **Dave Easley** – Marshall and **Ben August** – Token Creek.

It's a pleasure serving on this committee and participating in a program that satisfies the **third objective** of the Lions **"To create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world"**

Lion Ben August - Youth Exchange Committee Chair



I spent June 15th to July 7th at the Lions Youth Exchange Camp in Saarland, Germany, and it was hands-down the best experience of my life. One week of my time was spent with a host family and I learned so much about German culture from hanging out with them. I don't speak German, which sometimes was a bit difficult, but for the most part a lot of people I encountered spoke English really well. With my host family, I went swimming and boating at a lake, mini golfing, I went to a horse racing competition, and even went to a festival in town celebrating the World Cup. They happily answered all of my questions, which was good because there were so many!

After my week with my host family was over I went to the Youth Exchange Camp and met 19 other kids from around the world- ranging from Alaska, to Mexico, to Italy,

and even Taiwan. This was the best part of the whole trip - the people. I made so many amazing friends that I still talk to every single day. Together we did team building activities like dragon boating, ziplining, swimming, soccer, hiking, exploring museums, and touring lots of factories (Saarland is known for their steel production). We shared our stories about our homes and cultures, and had lots of fun trying new things together like food.



It is crazy how kids my age live such different lives around the world, whether it is the length of school days, to even times of eating dinner. One of the biggest culture shocks for me was the water- in so many places in Europe when you ask for a glass of water you will be given sparkling water rather than plain tap! We laughed every minute, and cried when we had to say goodbye to our new family. I miss everyone terribly, but I would not trade this experience for anything. Thank you Lions for giving me such a wonderful trip!

Cassidy Schnell sponsored by the Deforest Lions Club

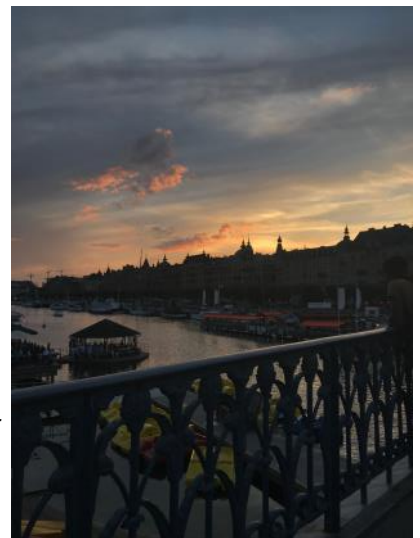


First of all, I would like to thank every Lion member reading or hearing this for helping to make my trip to Sweden possible. While I was there I met so many amazing people and saw so many amazing things. I experienced a wide variety of cultures which has opened my mind to the world beyond Wisconsin.

This year was the warmest summer Sweden has had in a very long time. Because of that, most of my time in Sweden was spent outside in the sun. We went boating, kayaking, hiking, swimming, and enjoyed each other's' company on the beach. My most memorable experience, however was when the other campers and I simply talked to each other. One

night we stayed up late and exchanged words of kindness. It was incredible to see how my words could impact the others in such a positive way. That night I thought about how lucky I was to be able to have the chance to meet the other campers. Twenty three other young minds that all wanted to make the world a better place by coming together to learn.

Exploring Sweden with my new friends was constantly exhilarating. From kilometers of woodland to bustling cities, we really saw it all. During my host family stay, Alp, the camper from Turkey, and I went on a hike in the woods. Eventually we decided to turn around because we thought we might never reach the end of that trail. In our last two days of camp, we were staying in a hostel in the middle of Stockholm. Exploring the city made us all feel free.



Isaac Erschen sponsored by the Hazel Green Lions Club

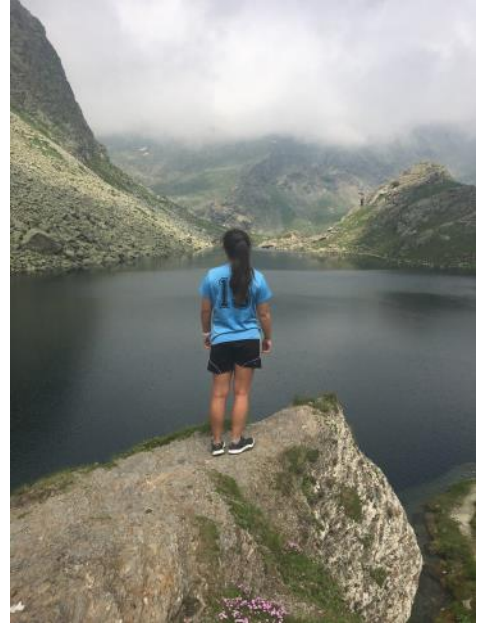


This summer I had the amazing opportunity to travel to Italy, through the Lions Club International Youth Exchange Program. Italy is a country that I have always wanted to visit, so I was ecstatic when I found out that I got the opportunity to go this past summer. My time in Italy was most definitely something I will never forget. I had the privilege of staying with two separate host families while I was there. My first host family lived right in the center of Torino, or as we call it, Turin. There are no words to describe the atmos-

phere that I was able to be in for that week. My host family was so welcoming and kind. I was able to go on an entire stadium tour of the stadium of the professional soccer team, Juventus. Being a soccer player myself, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me! My second host family lived at the base of the Italian alps. My favorite memory I made with them was hiking in the mountains to the start of a massive



river, the longest river in Italy, the Po. This is also the river that runs directly through Turin, so I thought it was amazing that I got to see the river in full force and the lake that is the supply for the river. Getting to spend these two weeks with host families is, in my opinion, a priceless treasure. There is no better way to be immersed into a culture than to be thrown right into a family from that culture. I specifically asked them to go about their lives as they normally would, so I could experience everything that they would do normally. There would be no way I could get that sort of experience by simply touring a country.



The next 10 days of my trip were

spent in a camp. My camp consisted of 15 people from 13 different countries. My camp was a touring camp, so we moved around quite a bit. We spent 4 nights in Savona, 1 night in Turin, 2 nights in Florence, and 2 nights in Rome. The way the lions club sets up its camps is also a once in a lifetime opportunity. I have never found another place where I could interact with so many people from different countries. Each person had a different story of where they were from and how they grew up, and listening to them all was extremely enlightening. My favorite memory from my camp was a night we spent in Rome. We had dinner at a small little restaurant right down the street from the Trevi Fountain, and after dinner we got to explore the city for about 3 hours. At the end of the night, we met back in front of the fountain and by then all of the lights were lit up. I thought the fountain was even more spectacular at night than it was in the daytime. Overall my experience from the exchange is one that I would not trade for the world. I am so thankful for the Lions Club for allowing me this amazing opportunity.



Maeve Kim sponsored by the Cottage Grove Lions Club



Day trip to Seville, Spain with Bea

My lions trip was special because I got to go to both Spain and Italy each for about two weeks. While I was in Spain, I stayed with a host family in Malaga. I got to stay with Beatriz Munoz Fernandez and her family. I had hosted Bea last summer in Wisconsin through the Lions Youth Exchange Program. Bea and her family planned a tour of the South of Spain while I was there. I had a great time getting to know her family and experiencing Spain culture with them.

For the next two weeks, I went to Italy. I first started my stay in Italy by staying with a host family in Lecce for a week. There I spent my days by the Adriatic Sea, visiting the center, and eating lots of pasta and pizza! For the next week, I attended Camp Apulia in Alberobello, Italy. During camp, we visited many cities in the South of Italy and toured caves, cathedrals, museums, and more.



Italian host family out for Pizza!

We met other lions at different gatherings, including a ceremony our last night where we had to give a speech in Italian. I know very little Italian so it was interesting, but something I will always remember. My favorite part of camp was making friends from all over the world. I have made lifelong friends and memories with others from camp that I will cherish forever.



Hawaiian night at camp at our hotel

This whole experience has been life changing for me and I couldn't thank the Lions club enough for granting me this opportunity. I continue to keep in touch with all my international friends and am already making plans to visit and be together with them again!

Alea Kloepping sponsored by the Marshall Lions Club



I had the opportunity of leaving the United States for the first time this summer to attend a Lions Club Youth Exchange Program. I will admit, I was optimistic that I would form genuine bonds with others; I am extremely shy and was a little scared to admit that I am from the United States (especially with everything going on). This experience changed my life. My host family were the most genuine and caring people I have ever met. They took me in, cared for me when I caught a cold, helped me understand the German language, translated, and made me feel at home. My host family, Johannes and Lisa, planned and prepared a full German-experience while I

was with them for the short week. I have formed a bond with Johannes and Lisa that I have never experienced before; they will also be visiting me in the near future.

Once I left my host family, the 'Kempten Crew' merged with the 'Munich Crew', what my team leader commonly called us in the beginning, and we started to really click. When I mean click- we really clicked. We were inseparable, crazy, full of life and happiness. It was shocking to me that these, nonetheless, strangers were making more of an impact on myself than the individuals I had went to school with for the last eight years with. My group even made staying in a roasting hot hostile enjoyable (how that is possible- I have no clue if that can ever be repeated). I have made life long friendships, and I mean ACTUAL friendship, while being given the opportunity to explore and experience Germany. Germany will always, always hold a special place in my heart. This trip will never, ever be forgotten. Thank you to everyone who made this trip possible; it will never be forgotten.

Julia Barnes sponsored by the Hazel Green Lions Club





This summer, I had the opportunity to participate in a Lions Youth Exchange and camp with Lions District 118Y in Istanbul, Turkey. Right from the moment I stepped off the plane, it was an absolutely incredible experience. First, I met my host family, which comprised of my host mother and father and my 21-year-old host sister Irmak. They were such a kind and lovely family, and I had a wonderful 8 days with them. My host mother was an excellent cook, and one of the highlights from my host family stay was waking up every morning to a delicious Turkish breakfast of bread, olives, homemade jams, eggs, cheese, cured meats, and fruits that she had prepared. My host family took me to see many famous sights in Istanbul such as the Ottoman Sultan's Palace and Harems, the Grand Bazaar, and the Ottoman fort on the Bosphorus. As I love history, seeing these sights were especially memorable! My host sister and I also spent a lot of time swimming, shopping, exploring the city, and enjoy-

ing the sunny weather.

After eight days with my host family, I packed up my things and headed to camp with my host sister, as she was a camp leader. My camp was comprised of 15 campers from 11 countries. Because our camp was based in Istanbul and focused on exploring the city and the role of the Lions in the city, the camp was actually held in a hotel. It was a very nice atmosphere! During the day, we would go throughout the city to meet other Lions camps, to meet local Lions clubs, to visit various non-profit organizations, and to see different sites around the city. Some of my favorite activities included a going on a day-long boat cruise and swimming trip on the beautiful Bosphorus Strait, visiting an archeological site of one of the oldest known human settlements, tasting my way through the market areas on an impromptu food tour, and working with a Lions-sponsored non-profit children's educational day center for underprivileged children and families. When at the hotel, we also participated in many discussions and workshops, such as leadership workshops. We also learned different Turkish songs and prepared for a talent show for our host families. As we were a very diverse group, during the discussions, it was very interesting to see how people had different beliefs and outlooks based on their personal and cultural upbringing. This element of discussion and cooperation is something that I really enjoyed, and I think it is what sets Lions camps apart from other study abroad or summer camp programs. I not only had a great time, but I learned so much about other people and culture and made so many great new friends!



Joelle Bohringer sponsored by the Boscobel Lions Club