

How do you get to America ?

Hey, whats up folks? Welcome to my first ever blog, in this blog I am gonna tell you how my trip from home to America was like and I am gonna tell you about some moments that were really special to me. Spoiler: there are gonnacbe very many mixed feelings!

When I woke up in the morning, the first thing that came up to my mind was: I am going to fly to America today. This was the day I have waited for so long. So I got up, got ready and then drove to the trainstation. I was so excited and so happy and when I saw all the other students I was even more excited. Saying goodbye to my mother at the train was really hard because she was knew how much she would miss me. I knew I would miss her too and all of my friends so it was really hard for all of us. As soon as we got into the train there were suitcases standing everywhere in the aisle. It looked so strange but then a ticket inspector came and told us to move our luggage. When we finally entered our first plane I was shocked of how big it was. I have never seen such a big plane before. The first class looked so expensive, the seats were so big and it all just looked so fancy. The second class looked more simple of course but still so cool. And there we were, sitting in the plane on our way to our first stop in New York. At this moment I started to feel a little bit anxious about the flight, my host family, the school, all the new people just everything. The flight felt like forever. I was trying to sleep so hard but I couldn't, so I spent the flight watching movies and eating some stuff. The food on board was actually ok but still I didn't really like it. When we arrived in New York, I was so relieved to finally walk a little bit. So that was what we did, we walked through the whole airport until we had to take the next plane. When we got off that plane I was so nervous. My heart was beating so fast, it fealt like I was just about to write an important test. But it wasn't a test, it was meeting my new host family for the first time ever. I was so scared of doing anything wrong so that they wouldn't like me. I also thought about how I should greet them, if I should hug them or just say hello or just give them my hand. I had no idea what to do and additionally, I felt like remembering nothing of my english skills. But as soon as we walked to the families and heard them shouting all of our names, I stopped thinking and just had a huge smile on my face. Dan was there shouting our names and smiling so much. Judy also looked very happy. They both seemed so lovely I instantly forgot about all my fears and just hugged them. Then they were asking us a few questions about the flight but as we were pretty tired, because at that time we were 24 hours awake, we haven't talked that much. So that was how I got to my host families home in America, with many mixed feeling but especially much excitement!

~Amy Riek

Being in America for the first time?? The first week was very exciting! There were several special things, which I will never forget. One thing for example was the moment when I first saw my new family for the next 3 weeks. In this moment I had so many different kinds of feelings, one was excitement the other one was fear another one was happiness. I was excited about all the things we would do and about all the memories I will create. I was also scared because I didn't know how much I would miss my friends and family or if everything is how I imagined it, also if Judy and Dan wouldn't like me. But I of course were also happy to finally meet Judy and Dan and finally experience the period of time I have waited for so long. This is a once in a life time experience and I am so thankful for being able to be here and write that block. At the moment I saw Judy and Dan I could immediately see how welcoming and lovely they are. Dan stood there shouting out names and smiling so hard and when he saw us he looked so happy. Another moment I will never forget, is the moment when the people from the school kitchen told us what our school meal is gonna be like. They showed us the spot where we can pick up our food and then they said: "here are the burgers, here the nachos, here the fries, here the pizza,...." In that moment I was absolutely shocked! I couldn't imagine eating fast food as school lunch. We all stood there and looked at each other and didn't really know what to say. Also I experienced seeing the first American Football game ever in my whole life. It was amazing, just like in all the movies. There were cheerleaders cheering and sooo many people watching the game. Even I don't know a thing about American Football, it was still so good. We met Lily and Rylie there, which are two friends of mine. I met Rylie the first day in school in my first lesson at the high school. She was so nice and now everytime I see her she screams: "Amyyyyy" no matter where we are. I like her very much. At the weekend we went to a lake with some slides and diving boards and other cool stuff. We ate some chips there with a barbeque and honey taste. At first I wasn't sure if I should try them but when I did I recognized that they were so good. I've never ate any better chips before! But all the candies and chips are much more expensive here than they are in Germany. We paid like 5 \$ for one package of chips and more than half if it was just air. The moment we saw this, we were so angry because it was so expensive but so less product. After the lake we went to a restaurant, where they sell sundaes and milkshakes. But not just 10 types of each. They sell 100 types of sundaes and 100 types of milkshakes. When Judy told us, I couldn't believe it. Also the sizes were so extremely big. I had a sundae with vanilla ice, cookie dough, some kind of cookie and hot fudge in size mini. It was so delicious but so big, I could just finish half of it. Then there was the homecoming parade. I didn't expect it to be that nice. It was so much fun to decorate our trailer and throw candies from it and also seeing all the kids standing at the side of the road, looking at us and hoping for us throwing candy to them. They were so happy when we threw the candies but at the end we almost hadn't any left. It was really cool and fun! ~Amy Riek

August Burmeister

USA Blog

The longest day ever

Thursday, August 31st: Today the trip starts at 5:00 a.m. Of course it was raining this morning. We met at the train station in Oranienburg, where we took the RB32 to the BER. Of course I forgot to take off my belt at the security check, but the man who checked me was super friendly and apologised a lot because he almost kicked my glasses off by mistake, although it was my fault.

The flight was nice, we flew around 8.5 hours, we only had some rough air. The take-off and landing were great.

Once we arrived at JFK, we immigrated into the USA and then had to wait 5 hard, long hours for our connecting flight.

Although, the flight was nice, I think I could have seen America the whole day from the plane (maybe everything looked so nice because of the sunset).

When we came out of the plane, everything went super-fast. We went around a corner and then we saw our host family for the first time. We got my suitcase and drove home.

The first day of school

Friday, September 1st

Today was the first day of school and everything looked like it was right out of a movie. Blake showed me the school and we went outside and held the door open with a pencil, which was a masterpiece.

The school is very cool. You only have 15 or 30 minutes to listen to the teacher and then you have free time.

The food in the cafeteria is okay. I think the school is forced to offer healthy food, so they offer like 10 salads, and you must take a bunch of fruits or vegetables at the end before you "pay". Their cheeseburger is just bread with meat and cheese, no tomato or pickled cucumbers.

They have bleachers in their main gym that are over 50 years old and have collapsed before.

I think the school is very different to my school, especially the lessons.

Welcome to Chicago

Saturday, September 2nd

This morning, we took a 3-and-a-half-hour car ride to Chicago. It's a stunning city - everything looked straight out of a movie!

At lunchtime, we visited an extraordinary restaurant called Ed Debevic's. The waitress tosses the menu at you, never smiles, and dances around the tables. The DJ sang and rocked the place, making the atmosphere crazy!

August Burmeister

Afterwards, we strolled over to Navy Pier, which is located on the Big Lake. The Big Lake looks like the ocean. At the Navy Pier I tried Mini Melts. Though they were a bit strange, they tasted great.

We wanted to take a photo with the Bean, but it was unfortunately under construction. That day, we walked a total of about 7 miles.

For dinner we had a huge pizza with a lot of cheese and three layers of toppings.

Back in Alexandria

On Sunday, September 3rd, we had to leave Chicago, so we started the day at 6 am. I was a little sad because Chicago is such a wonderful city. We had breakfast at Wendy's. For breakfast, I had a biscuit with meat, cheese, and an egg on top, along with some fried potatoes. While it may not be the healthiest option, it certainly was delicious.

We arrived around noon, and I needed to finish some homework, so I worked for an hour until my host mom's grandparents visited us. They were very friendly and engaged to hear about my story's. They have a big garden with some fruits and vegetables.

In the evening we went in the Hot Tube, which was a little too warm, even though it was very nice.

The Parade

Today, on September 4th, the Labor Day,

I had the pleasure of meeting Blake's entire family. We gathered at his grandparents' house. His family is large. Each of us brought food to share.

Blake's grandparents have a pretty big property, and Blake and the other older children drove us around in a golf cart. They also have a horse and three dogs, they were super cute.

Later in the afternoon, we take part of the homecoming parade. We drove through the city center of Alexandria and it was really fun to throw candy to the kids, who acted like they never had any before.

After the game, we watched Powder Puff Football, where the girls play football, but it was a bit lame. The seniors played against the juniors. The juniors won 22 to 6.

Overall, it was a good beginning to the United States.

TRAVEL BLOG New in America

Hey guys,

I am with my school in America, to be more precise in Alexandria which is in the state of Indiana, for three weeks (August 31, 2023 - September 24, 2023) and experience here the everyday life of our host families.

I don't know how to start because so much happened in these five days so far!

Thursday: August 31

Today was the day where we were finally flying in the US!
I was so excited in the morning, I already woke up at 4 am.



When I got on the train that would take us to the airport, I realized that everything was starting now!
Because I have not flown so often I was very excited.
The flight from Berlin to New York (where we had to change planes) took nine hours.
The plane was HUGE. I have never flown on one where there was even a middle row.
Unfortunately for me, I was sitting right in the middle, so I couldn't sleep or look out the window.
Apart from that, the flight was very easy.

When we arrived in New York, we had about six hours at the airport.
I had imagined it to be bigger.
There were not so great opportunities to buy something and if you found something, it cost just incredibly much.
So we just sat around and watched the luggage of the others and listened to music, which was also very nice.

As we sat on a very small plane to Indianapolis, my feelings of nervousness increased.
I was nervous, excited, and tired.
A little bit of everything!

When we landed it didn't take long before we walked out and Kelly (our host mom) welcomed us (Olivia and me) with a hug!

On the way to Alexandria, we all talked and I was very relieved how nice everyone was and that they spoke very easy and clear English for us.

Friday: September 1

I got up very early, I think, because of the jetlag. But I was really surprised that I slept that well!
It was my first night in the US and I can still not believe I am here, because I've been preparing for this for so long.

I was so excited about High School that I forgot to put on my GAPP shirt, I got into our GAPP room and everyone was looking at us (because Olivia also forgot it), it was so embarrassing!
But Elisabeth was so nice and gave me her GAPP-hoodie so at least I had that one.



The High School is so different from our schools, at least I have to say that their rooms looked amazing, they decorated them so nicely. In Germany, we are not even allowed to decorate the walls and there the entrances were even designed as trees.

But my favorite room had blue LED lights everywhere and the whole room was lit up.

I've only seen High Schools in movies, and they were shown a little differently there.

In Alexandria, the school has almost no windows and they have every day always the same classes, that would be really boring for me.

I also have to say that they did not really learn something in class. They just sit around and talk with each other, I could not really say when the class started because they just talked so much.

But I talked with a teacher and she said that's only like this because next week is homecoming week and on Thursday everything would be a little bit different.

Today, the only classes I learned something in were English and math, well math also not really, because what they just learned in the ninth grade we have already learned in the seventh.

I ate lunch in school too, nachos with cheese and salad, it was quite good but also really unhealthy and I can't imagine eating this every day.

In the afternoon we drove around with the Golf card. Because you don't need a driver's license, I'll be able to drive it soon.

I've never been on one before, it was so funny! I loved it. It's very cool that almost everyone here has one and drives around with it.

In the evening we (Olivia and I) went with Marty to a football game, the first one I had ever been to! The Tigers, the Alexandria High School team played and also won. It was really fun and Mr. Jakobeit also explained the rules to us, so I understood almost everything.

It was an awesome day!!

Saturday: September 2

Today I slept very long, which I needed after the last two days,

In the evening, which was the best part of the day, we went with our host family to a lake where we met their son and his family.



They had a boat so we were on it and they also had a tube.
Tubing was such fun, but it was also hard to stay on it!
I did it together with Olivia and we both fell into the water.
I never have done it but I think everyone that do do it at least once!

It was a very nice day where I could relax a bit.

Sunday: September 3

On Sunday I went to church for the first time.
It was very different from what I imagined!
The church was actually very large from the inside, it had four rows of benches, not all of which were filled by people.
I thought it was very nice of the priest to even introduce us to the others, that we are the GAPP students and have flown halfway around the world and are now sitting in their church.

We sang a lot at the beginning, rather happy songs.
After that, we ate a very small piece of bread and drank something that was either wine or grape juice.
Then the little children had to leave and the priest talked about the godly women and told us to pray for the women in our lives.
It was nice to listen.

For lunch I ate for the first time Corn dog, It was a bit sweet and I didn't like it that much, but Olivia liked it a lot.
I would not recommend it.

It was already evening we went out for tacos.
That was the best part of the whole day!
The walls were all painted with abstract art which made the place look very alive.
It looked just incredibly colorful.
Olivia and I tasted tacos for only the second time in our lives, they were very delicious even if they were a bit spicy.
On the way back home Olivia and I showed Calvin some Snapchat filters and he even called it the funniest thing he's ever seen.

At home Olivia and I had a sleepover because the September 4th is my Birthday!

Monday: September 4

On Monday I was already awake at 0:00 clock because it was my birthday!
My parents wrote to me and that's when I got a little homesick.
But only a little bit.
After it, I fell asleep very quickly.
I was lucky because Monday was Labor Day and I had the day free.

When I got up in the morning host family sang together with Olivia.
It was very sweet of them and I was very happy!
I had no words!! Just so lovely!

Later the whole family of Kelly and Marty came because Nolan had a birthday a few days before and turned eight.



Kelly had gotten me a cake!
The cake tasted really good and looked spectacular!
It was so beautiful pink and also looked amazing from the inside.

We also went to the homecoming parade later where we had our own float as GAPP students.
Throwing candy to the little kids was great!
The smiles on their faces were priceless.

When I arrived everyone congratulated me and I was so happy that they all remembered my birthday!
They all sang too.
It was just awesome!

Later we went to the Powderpuff game which was very funny. For those who don't know, at the Powderpuff game the girls play football (Juniors vs. Seniors) and the boys are the cheerleaders.
What I found funniest were the two cheerleaders, they looked stunning.
In the end, the Juniors won which made me very happy.

In the evening Olivia and I both drove a golf cart which was actually quite easy and a lot of fun.

And that was my Birthday!

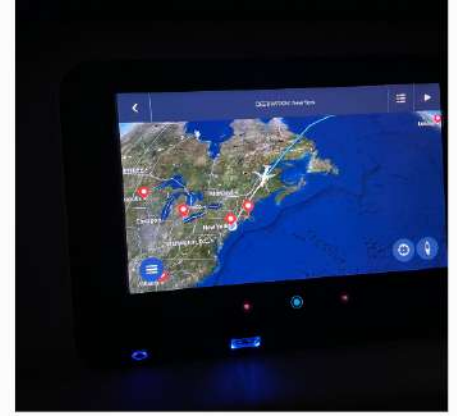
Bye!

-Charlotte Kaska

Saying goodbye is hard! 8/31/2023

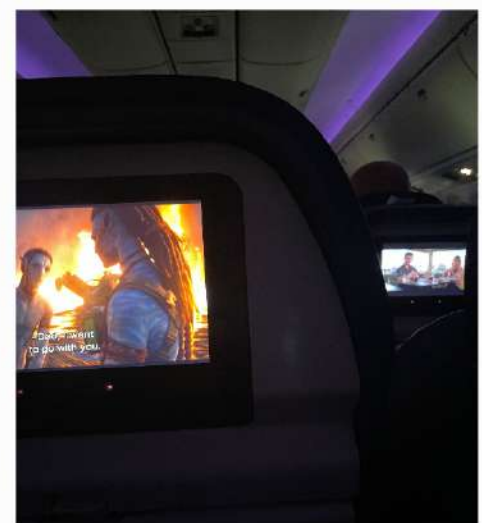
Hello guys!

What's up? My name is Lotti and for me traveling from Germany to America was very exciting for me. I will talk in this text about the flight and the arrival in Indianapolis. I hope you have fun and enjoy it!



When I said goodbye to my family, it was a little sad for me and I expected to miss them a lot on my birthday. We said goodbye and I got on the train. After we took the train to the airport, all I could think about was how my host family would be? Who would be my study partner? and if the people there would be nice and friendly along with a lot of other questions in my head. The flight was very comfortable. Besides, I slept a lot and watched a lot of movies, so the flight was not so boring. I also enjoyed watching the progress of how long the flight would take before we would arrive in New York City. It was unbelievable that GAPP started then. We went through so many security checks and I was a little bit nervous when we went through the passport control in New York because I was on my own there and we had to think about what we were going to say. But luckily everybody got through. I talked to a lot of people from our group and we were like a big family, so I felt very safe. When I got off the second plane from New York to Indianapolis, I was unable to realize it and it was like an American dream that I was unable to realize at that moment. When we went to our host family, they hugged us and took a picture. The first thing I felt when I met them was that they were really nice and friendly. I also thought that we would have a great time together. After we got our luggage and so on, we went to the car and drove home. We talked about many different things and Wendy told us about the moon. It was called the blue moon because it was really bright. When we got home, the little dog Sophie said hello to us and she loves to cuddle a lot. Then we took our stuff to our rooms and got the gift we bought in Germany for our host family. We gave it to them and they were really happy about it. Larry said he loves chocolate, so I surprised them with merci chocolate and a little merci bar. He was so grateful for that and then we unpacked our gifts from them. In the end we got a high school t-shirt and some soap. I hope you enjoyed this blog, bye until next time!

So my American dream came now true. I am really excited what happened in the next weeks. New more about my host family and of course for the homecoming dance!! Stay tuned for the next blog entry. Your Lotti



Paint and paint ! 2|9|2023

Hello guys!

What's up? My name is Lotti and welcome to my second blog entry. I hope you liked the last one. Today I will talk about the long weekend. What I did and how my experiences were. I hope you like and enjoy it.

Today was a very special day because we decided to do something creative, which was pottery painting.

From the outside it looked like a normal little shop, but the moment I stepped through the doors it was like entering another world full of colors and clay. To begin painting our pottery, the lady in the shop explained the process to us. Choosing something to paint was a really big challenge, but I finally chose a small plate. After choosing what I want to paint, I was given a piece of paper to write down what colors I wanted, and then the lady came to our table and bought us the colors we chose. Then I started sketching and painting on the plate. It took me almost 2 hours to paint, but the kids next to me only took about 20 minutes! After painting and much talking. We were ready to leave, we saw a street festival on the way to our car. We looked at it and Wendy asks us if we want to go to it, so we went to the pride street festival with lots of small vendors selling food and merchandise. But we didn't bought anything there. So we went back home and ate lunch.

In the end, it was a very fun day and I went home.

It was really exciting for me and I am looking forward to the next weeks in America. Stay tuned for the next blog entry! Your Lotti

from me - >



All good things come in threes

Hello and welcome, you're about to read the three things that were the most special to me this week.

Judy and Dan were waiting for us at the airport. When they saw us, they started yelling our names and welcomed us lovely. It felt really good to now know that I have a great family and am in safe hands for the time I'm so far away from home. I normally don't get homesick, but I think when I get back home I will miss this here so much, that I get homesick. Judy and Dan are also very funny and caring, as soon as we got to them, they provided food and drinks for us because they knew we were going to be thirsty and hungry. Their reaction to the guest gifts was the best and they really made us feel so comfortable right away. I think I'll have a great time here.

Lunch in school is also so different to the one in Germany. You've got two lines where you can get food. Every day you can get burgers, nachos or wraps with cheese, pizza and there is one meal that changes every day. But there aren't many options for me because I'm vegetarian so the only things I can eat are nachos, wraps and these yogurt things, which I think are ok but I don't want to eat that every day. You also have to take fruits or vegetables and milk for lunch which I think is stupid, because if you want people to eat healthier, give them water instead of milk and if you put apples in sugar and cinnamon it isn't healthy anymore also if people just don't want to eat healthy, they're going to throw

all of that away which I creates just so much unnecessary waste. All in all it doesn't taste as bad as I thought it would. Nevertheless, I don't think I can eat this every day but I guess we'll see.

The parade was also another highlight of mine. We were all wearing our GAPP shirts and had two German flags on our cheeks. Those were so unpracticle because everyone was wiping them away by accident. We also met some friends from school there, who were riding on a different trailer. It was so much fun to sit on the slowly moving trailer and throw candy at kids who were standing next to the street. It must feel like Halloween to them but without the walking part. We were too generous at the start so we almost ran out of candy half way through that wasn't too good because it makes more fun to throw more candy than less. The parade ended in the parking lot of the school, from were we went to another football game, which was also pretty fun to watch because the girls we've meet at the parade before were also playing. It was the powder puff game, were girls play football and the boys cheer, which I think is a great idea.

- Elisabeth G.

“Never back down never what?”

Dear Readers,

On Thursday we finally started our journey to Indiana. After an eight-hour flight, we had a six-hour layover at the John F. Kennedy Airport to stretch our legs. Afterwards, it was just a two-hour connection flight. On this flight we were able to see the New York City Skyline out of our windows.



We met our host families even before we got our luggage. The ride home was really long and consisted of us trying to somehow not fall asleep.

The next day we had a short school day and were off to three days of exciting. It was a long weekend so we had Monday off as well.

Saturday started with an American breakfast(chocolate waffles with scrambled eggs) and after a quick TV session, we drove to Target to get some stuff. Hannah and I found some pretty cool things that we wanted to try. This Target also had a Starbucks in it so we had to get some drinks as well. Afterwards, we went to Walmart which was even bigger. We spent hours there but didn't find anything new than in Target but it was so worth the experience. The snack aisle was longer than some houses here and had a larger variety than some supermarkets have altogether. Later we looked at the Ball State College. It was very pretty and definitely an American experience.

On Sunday we got up quite early to do a little road trip. We started at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, which is almost as popular as the Super Bowl. From there we drove to Addie's Grandparents who live in Brazil. We helped them clean their garden and ate lunch. We also wanted to meet Brayden, the oldest child, so we drove to the Purdue University. After walking around the Campus and the Dorms we ate some supper as an early birthday dinner.



Our day on Monday started with three hours of TV(that was definitely a funny experience) we then simply relaxed the day. At 4p.m. we started preparing the wagon for the parade which then started at six p.m.. It was cool and way more people than I thought it would be. At 7:30 the powder puff started, this was a football game between the senior and junior girls. The boys would be cheerleaders and Coaches. We ended the day with tacos with some friends and obviously TV.

So in the end you can say we got to experience a lot so to sum it up: it was great!

What do you think about the American lifestyle?

Elisabeth

Hey, how are you guys? Welcome to my Blog entry, I hope you enjoy it! Here are just a couple of things about how I got here.

Flying from Germany to America felt like a fever dream and not real at all. There were no miserable or any overwhelming feelings, but the moment I landed in New York it actually hit me like a truck that I was finally in America and the exchange would actually happen, but first of all we had to pass security and not just one, I am talking about like three and the people there seemed so intimidating. Then at the last security check we had to unpack our things again, but not only that, we had to take off our shoes and put them in the gray box for inspection, which felt very strange and different. I mean, yeah, they check your shoes. But it's not like you have to take them off and walk around without them, right? So that was quite an experience. The lunch and dinner on the plane was not the best though, so I went to the familiar Mc Donads, because the prices at the airport were HORRIBLE, \$5 for a small drink in a bottle?!?! Anyway, the walk there was quite fun and there were lots of cool shops, for example the Lego one, which had a huge statue! After about 4/5 hours of waiting we took a very small and older looking plane to Indianapolis, which was also a lot of fun! The moment we landed actually felt unreal and I was very excited to meet my host family and when I finally saw them, they seemed so sweet and we got along very well. With that, my first day in America was coming to an end and I was looking forward for the days to come. I hoped you guys enjoyed my blog, until next time, bye!

- Elisabeth Wolf



Huge statue



Our seats to New York

Welcome back guys! I hope you had a great day because mine was crazy. First of all, on Saturday I went to a pottery workshop with Lotti and my host mom. It was her recommendation and the moment I heard the idea I was so excited to go there. The trip was so much fun! From the outside it just seemed to be very small, but the moment you walked in, the colors and the variety of things were overwhelming. First, a very nice lady came to us and explained how to choose our pottery and colors, and I chose a plate, however I had no idea what to choose, so I ended up opening my trusty Pinterest and looking for inspiration. Afterwards I quickly found something. The only problem was that I had no idea what shade of blue to choose. Believe me, it took me about 10 minutes to find a combination that worked! Who of you understands the struggle? Because I refuse to be the only one. But that is not the whole story, because on Sunday we went to a huge and modern church and it was such a culture shock. It was as if I had stepped into a mini-concert with all the modern equipment and I am talking about two very big screens in the wall and a band in the middle. There was also a talk afterwards and it seemed like a TED talk to me, but I heard it was just because it was Labor Day. Also, because it was Labor Day, we had a longer weekend, which included Monday, and that was when we went to Paradise - WALMARKT. I wish that everyone could experience this at least once in their life, because every part of it that we went through was insane. The amount of food, groceries and all kinds of stuff for example animal food or gardening stuff and even FISHING RODS was immense. In the end it was still a great experience and I bought a ton of snacks to try out. In conclusion, I really hope that we could have something like this in Germany, because it is just sooooo easy to access. nevertheless, I was still not done, because we had to prepare for a parade. For those who do not know, there are a lot of people in the schools driving cars and throwing colourful sweets to the children on the way to our school in Alexandria, when it is time for a parade. It was a lot of fun, but we ran out of sweets too soon because we were too generous. But I could never believe that something like that could happen in Germany, so it was quite an experience and I think you can agree with that, right? In the end I think the weekend went great and I hope the next days will be fun as well, till next time, bye!

- Elisabeth Wolf



Our table



My plate

Awake for 28 hours

Florentine Maglóczki

The way to America:

On Thursday I had to wake up at 5am to get ready for the airport. The flight didn't leave until 10 am but we had to drive an hour with the train to get there. So, after my mom drove me to the train station, we said goodbye and we were finally on the way to the United States of America. I was very excited but also nervous. In Berlin we had to change trains. That was definitely no fun with the heavy luggage.

When we arrived at the airport we first had to hand in our luggage. I was glad that I was finally able to give it away because it was so heavy. We went through security and then we had to wait until we could board. The flight lasted 8 and a half hours. It was really long. I watched some movies and tried to sleep. You were able to see New York City from the plane window. That was cool. In New York at the airport we had to make fingerprints and a man who worked there asked a couple of questions like "Where are you going?" and "Where are you from?". After that, we got our luggage and had to hand it in again. We went through security on more time and had to wait five more hours for the plane. That time actually went by pretty fast as we were having a lot of fun. Eventually we were on our way to Indianapolis. I didn't like that flight at all. Everyone was just tired and wanted to arrive as fast as possible. When we were there, only a couple of minutes were left until we could meet our host family. When I first met my host mum Shannon, I was really happy to meet her for the first time. She had little signs with our names on it. They were sweet.

We grabbed our suitcases and loaded them into the car. But we still had a bit ahead of us as we spent the first weekend at the lake. The drive there took us another 4 hours. But we got to meet the family's dog Macey. She is really cute. When we got there, we quickly changed into pyamas and went to straight to bed.

Beautiful nature

Florentine Maglóczy

When I woke up on Friday, I was confused. For a second I thought I was at home and when I looked around I realized where I was. At a lake house in Kentucky in the USA. We didn't go to school the first day because the boat house is closer from the airport than from home.

It was only 8am. Considering that we went to bed very late, that was pretty early. So, after staying in bed for a little longer we walked downstairs and met Mike, Christy and Darcy. The parents and sister of our host dad Brad. They were all really kind and also had three dogs. There were Millie and Milo (from Darcy) Christy's and Mike's dog Fergus. Millie was a bit shy but very sweet. The other two were very excited and of course also really sweet.

For breakfast there were a lot of options but we chose to eat cinnamon rolls. It was kind of weird because it's not what we normally eat for breakfast. So that was special.

After breakfast we packed our things for the boat and left. The landscape there was mountainous and by the house was a big pond. It looked like a picture out of the Internet. It was absolutely beautiful. Sometimes even deer would drink out of the pond. And the lake was even more beautiful. It was between mountains and had little islands in it. The first thing I noticed when we got to the harbor were the house boats. They were huge!

So after we got to the boat and put our stuff in it we sat in the front and enjoyed the little ride.

After we drove to the spot our host family is usually at I went straight in the water as it was really hot. I was surprised because the water was pretty hot. In Germany the lakes were cold all summer. The jetlag was slowly becoming noticeable, so for the rest of the day we just chilled, talked and slept. Except for the way back to the Marina. Me and Rike (my host sister) rode on a tube. We basically just had to lay on it and hold onto it. But we both fell on time because of a wave. It was a lot of fun though. After the boat was settled in we drove back to the boat house and when I first looked in the mirror I noticed that I got sunburned (later it developed into tan so I was fine :)). In the evening we had tacos. I've never eaten tacos before but they were really good.

So even though I slept half of the day it was great and a lot of fun.

September 6th 2023

Homecoming parade

Hello again guys!

I hope you're doing good over there in Germany.

In my last blog entry I wrote about our flight to Indianapolis. Now I will tell you more about the homecoming parade on Monday (04.09.). I can tell you that this was a experience for my live.

So my first weekend with the host family was very exciting. We stayed with the hole family at a house at Dale Hollow Lake in Kentucky, where we had a very good time together. The hole family is very nice and everybody was helpful to us. I enjoyed this weekend a lot.

But everything has an end, so we had to left on Monday morning and went 6 hours with the car to Alexandria. I had the suitcase with the decoration for the trailer with me, so we had to get on time to Alexandria for decorating the trailer.

When we arrived, I just started to open my suitcase that we can start decorating. I had Krepppapier and balloons in the German and American colors and flags and Make-up in German colors with me. In addition to that I had 200 HARIBOS Pakets in my suitcase. Suddenly I heard somebody calling me so I turned of and saw my sister Tina right behind me. She told me that she also will come to Indiana when we are there and will visit her husband's family, so she helped us decorating the trailer. She also had the rest of the sweets in her luggage (500 Traubenzuckerlollis and 200 HARIBOS). So we made Ballon grapes, put the Make-up on our face and put the Krepppapier on the straw. We also prepared the candy for throwing it from the trailer for the children.

When the trailer was decorated and we wore our GAPP shirt, the parade started. A pickup pulled the trailer while we, 23 people, were sitting on the straw on it. The first kids were sitting at the first section. We throw candy to them and they were so excited. They grabbed everything of and put it into their backpacks. Hole families, grandparents, tall and short children, older teens and parents. You could see them just everywhere. And everybody wanted candy. So we throw our sweets until there was nothing left.

I would say that the parade was a good start into the life in Alexandria for me. The people were so funny, a lot of them were wearing funny clothes and everybody was happy. Such a Great experience!

Greetings from America!

Rike

September 6th 2023

Around the corner and into the adventure

Hey guys!

How are you right now?

Today I will tell you more about our flight to Indiana. So, enjoy and let's go to the beginnings.

We started in Berlin at BER, where I had my first experiences with Americans. The whole GAPP Group wore the green Runge shirt, so that you can identify us as a group. So we stood in line to check in our luggage. Right behind me (I was the last) was a guy who played with his little son. Suddenly he asked me if we are a student group from Berlin and I was like yes, we are traveling to Indianapolis. So he said: „What, you want to travel to Indy?!" So I explained him that we are part of an exchange and then we just talked a little bit. He was born at New York, lives in Berlin but wanted to travel to Miami... After that I was like, hey, that was my first experience with an American. Also here in the States I'm recognizing that everyone is so chilled. Life is easy, don't worry about everything, you can do that.

So after that we went to the security and after that to our gate. There we had like 20 minutes to have a break.

When I asked anybody about the flight to the US they were always like, oh, it takes so long and it's so exhausting! I just watched 3 films talked with the others and listened to music. The 9 hours were over so quickly. I was like, what we already are in New York?!

We knew that we'll have to stay at JFK for 5 hours, so we started already to think about what we can do with the whole time when we were waiting for our luggage. When we arrived at our gate, everybody wanted to go to the shops, to the restrooms or fill up their water bottles. So I said, guys I can stay here with the backpacks and you can go shopping but you have to bring me a pack of Reese's and fill up my water bottle. So I sat down between the backpacks, listened to music and observed people at one of New York's airports. In between I got some Reese's and something to drink. Wasn't a bad life. Slowly everybody came back to the gate but there were still 2 hours left. So we had the idea to make a „Krebstang-Competition" and a „Entengang-Competition". That was very funny!

Everybody at the gate was like: „What are they doing there?!" Yes, that's the other side of GAPP...

But at some point the time was over and we were able to get on the plain to Indianapolis. The flight took 3 hours but slowly we all got really excited again because we should meet our host family for the first time at the airport in Indy. So we got out of the plain and shortly before the exit Mrs. Rohde stopped and said: „So guys, we're going around this corner now and then you'll see them all!" I think that was the point when we all had a last Adrenaline-Kick (we were awake for more than 24 hours) and thought: Okay, let's go! So we walked around the corner and right into the adventure of GAPP 2023.

How my first meeting and the first weekend with my host family were you can find out in my next blog entry.

See you soon!

Rike



Travel blog

9/5/2023

Hey guys!

What's up?

My first weekend in America was very exciting. I got to know the culture and habits of the Americans much better and took part in the everyday life of my host family. In this blog, I am gonna talk about the arrival and what happened on my weekend in the US.

On Thursday, we met at 6:30 am at the train station and took the train to

the airport. At 10:20 am, the plane took off and you could watch many movies or play games on the little monitors. After 8 hours we arrived at the JFK airport in New York. We had to wait like 6 hours for our next flight to Indianapolis and over the time, I got very tired.

At the airport we walked around, bought some American snacks and the waiting time passed quickly. When the plane in New York took off, it was 6 pm in America, but midnight in Germany! During the flight, we flew over the stunning skyline of Manhattan and it was so beautiful to watch the sunset up in the sky. At 8 pm, we finally arrived in Indianapolis!

Our host family received my and Elisabeth (a GAPP student who will also stay with my host family) lovingly and we went to the house, which would be our home for the next three weeks! During the drive, we talked to them and got to know them better. When we arrived, they showed us the house and I got my own room for the time I stay in America.

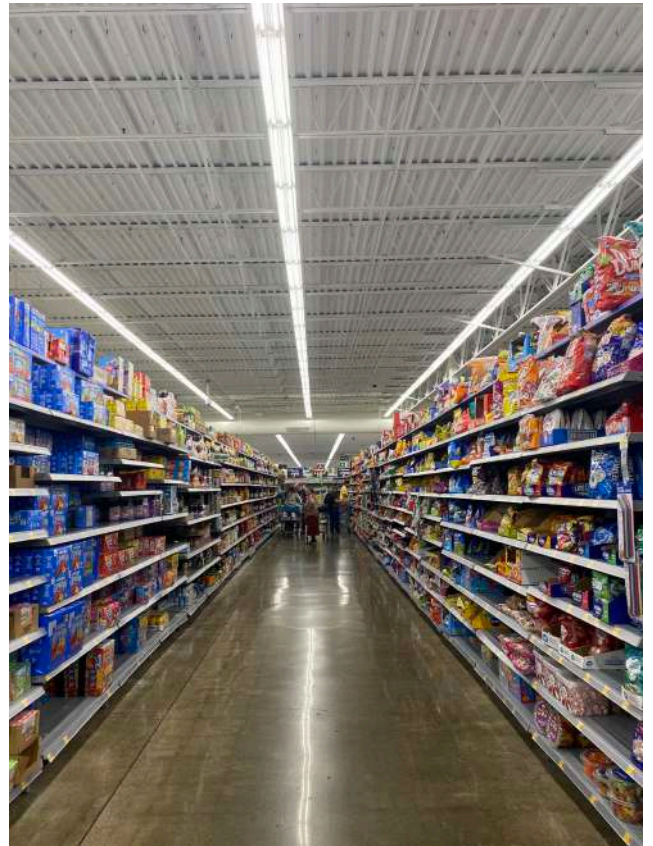
After my first day at school on Friday, I was really happy about sleeping longer on Saturday, because of the jet lag. I was so surprised about the the tv-habits of my host family, because it's always on- even during eating time.

Elisabeth and me really wanted to go to Target and Walmart, because they are typical supermarkets in America. We went shopping on Saturday and got really surprised! They are way different than our supermarkets in Germany, like much bigger and they have huge shelves with snacks and sweets.

There are also restrooms in the supermarkets you can use for free, in Germany you have to pay for them.

The next day, we went to the parents of my host mother, to help them with cutting the trees. They were so kind and also showed us their big garden.

After that, we went 2 hours to the college (called Produe) of my host brother. I was stunned at the large area that the university has and how noble it was. I am so jealous, because I really want to go to a college like that too!



The first Monday I spend in America was Labor Day, that means, you don't have to go to work or school that day. At 6 pm there was a big parade, where we could design our own GAPP vehicle. It's a typical event during the homecoming week, which is comparable to carnival. There were also many other beautiful vehicles, like one of the volleyball or the basketball team. I had much fun throwing candy to the children at the street, because they were really happy about it and I never did it before.

After the parade, we watched the powder puff, a football game between the juniors and the seniors girls (the juniors won). I never watched a football game live before, so it was very exciting and a new experience I have had. The spectators cheered on their teams very much and there were even two commentators!



A new thing I learned about their food habits is, that they eat chips to their meal. In Germany we eat them only as a snack and here it is eaten as a main dish. They also eat a lot of unhealthy things, such as burgers, pizzas or candies.

I was very shocked about the cleanliness of the pit stops in the US. They are also very big and it's a beautiful area to make a stop after a long drive (in Germany it's the exact opposite).

That was my arrival in America and my first and very exciting weekend here! What are the exciting things you have done over the weekend?

I hope you enjoyed reading his blog,
Your Hannah :)

By *Hannah Heinisch*

Wait.... I am in America 🐱🇺🇸

The flight on Thursday wasn't that exciting... we said bye to our parents, drove to the the airport, flew to New York 🇺🇸 and flew from New York to Indianapolis. Then after 21 HARD hours sitting and watching movies I finally saw my host mother 💖 JAN 💖. She had a very cute sign that said: Welcome in the USA Johanna, Leni and Gabi (Ms.Rohde). We hugged each other and had a huge photo session 📷 until we drove to Jan's house 🏠. My first impression of the house, was like... Oh my gosh the yard is so huge, the trees are so tall and a house out of MUCH wood which is from the inside very comfortable (especially the beds 🛏️👶).

Our first day at the ALEXANDRIA JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 🏫🏠 ... I was so incredibly excited, my legs were shaking and they felt like jello. I was kind of scared that Bethany Surface (my school partner) wouldn't like me but she was really nice and directly asked me if I'd like to go with her to the homecoming game 🏈 (I said of course "yes" and now I'm very excited to see what American football 🇺🇸🏈 is going to be like). On that day, I was impressed with all of the differences between an American 🇺🇸🏫 school and a German 🇩🇪🏫 school.

The lake-weekend 🌊... Jan has a house at 📍 Lake Chapman. We stayed there from Friday afternoon until Monday afternoon. One of the most fun things we did was the 💖TUBING💖. Have you ever felt like you could fly in the the sky? I have while tubing this weekend... As soon as Leni and I jumped on "BIG MABLE", the air filled seat 🌬️, which was attached to the boat 🚤. We started driving and it was very windy so we were like kangaroos jumping 📶📶🐨 in a lake as Big Mable was bouncing high in the air off the water. we fell off of "Big Mable" from like 6 feet in the air (that was the flying part) into the "wonderful" cold 🧊 water. As it has to be, my back hurt afterwards for some hours but going swimming in the lake it got MUCH better 👍.

I think my favorite thing was the ride on a jet ski with Leni and Sid (Jan's brother in law)... I started with driving the jetski and my legs felt again like jello. At first I had to drive out of the swimming zone. As soon as I drove out of that zone I sped up a bit and made some turns and then I made a sharp turn with speed and we all flipped of very fast. After that I drove once again with a little bit more softness and it was incredibly nice, amazing and fun and also relaxing to feel the wind in your face. When I drove back, I was sad that it was over, but also happy, that I could have that experience.

Labor Day, Homecoming parade and Powderpuff game 🏈🎉... in the morning I took a "bath" 🛁🌊 in the lake said goodbye to Jan's family and drove with Jan, Ms.Rohde and Leni back from the lake to the parade trailer to decorate it. It was kind of stressful because many people were talking, it was loud and we only had one pair of scissors ✂️. On the trailer it was much fun 😂 to throw the candy 🍬 to the cute children. We drove to the school and at the school you felt like you would literally die because of the heat 🧠🔥. I think in Germany 🇩🇪 it wasn't warm at all, maybe 70°F (21°C). At the school we watched the first quarter of the Powderpuff game 🏈. Now... one of the best things on that day was the Hot Tub 🛁. Leni and I soaked in the Hot Tub 💖

Written by ✨JOHANNA PETER✨

ps: I can really recommend the exchange so go for it, at first I was scared too but now I am so happy that I applied for the GAPP-program and can make the memories and experiences 😊. So... don't be scared

Bye bye, Germany.

On August 31st we started our journey at the train station in Oranienburg. After saying goodbye to our parents we got on the train and were on our way to the airport. When we arrived at the airport, we immediately started all the security checks. We checked in our suitcases and went through security and fortunately, everything went smoothly. I thought we had arrived at the airport early, but after the security we didn't have too much time left, so we just went to our gate. We didn't have to wait long for boarding and suddenly it was time to leave Germany.

We got on the plane and all of us found our seats. The plane was bigger than any plane I have ever been on, it had two seats on each side of the plane and then three seats in the middle row. And each seat had its own TV. This came in handy since our flight was 8 hours long and we had a lot of time to kill. During the flight, I watched a movie, slept a little and talked to my neighbors. We even got to eat twice, the first one being an early lunch. It was a dish called Dal Makhani and we also got some fruit and ice cream with it. We also got a little snack towards the end of our flight, it was a pastry with curry. On a not-so-positive note, we also had some turbulence during the flight. At one point we had a headwind of 120 kmh. But luckily we didn't feel it much inside the plane. We just had to keep our seatbelts on the whole time. Surprisingly the 8 hours went by much faster than expected and it was time for us to land in New York City!! We arrived at 1:15 pm local time. Shortly after our arrival, we had to go through immigration service. Mrs Rohde had told us what to say and what not to say beforehand but I was scared I was going to mess it up. It was quite frightening waiting in the line but in the end everything worked out fine. I had to give my passport to the person, they took a picture of me, scanned all my fingerprints and then I had to answer a few questions. It took less than 5 minutes.

Afterwards, we got our suitcases, checked them in again and went through a security check in New York. We had quite a lot of time until our following flight, but sadly we weren't allowed to leave the airport. We just went to our gate at the airport and then started exploring the airport a little bit. I ended up eating fries from this store called Shake Shack. We waited some more on our gate and at around 7 pm we boarded our flight to Indianapolis.

After take-off, we saw a beautiful sunset through the tiny windows of our plane and the rest of the flight felt like two seconds. I fell asleep and when I woke up again we were almost landing. Everything went smoothly and then the long-awaited moment was coming closer and closer. We were going to meet our host families in mere seconds! It was a joyful moment for me when we finally met them at the airport and were able to hug them for the first time. All of us couldn't believe that this moment was finally here. After getting our suitcases we went to the car and were on our way to the house that was going to be our home for the next three and a half weeks.

Welcome to Alexandria

After a very interesting first day of school, we had a relaxing Friday night. Our host mom cooked spaghetti with tomato sauce and after dinner we all sat in the living room playing Apples on Apples. It's a card game where you have to find words or situations that fit a certain description and it's a lot of fun!

On Saturday we drove to Muncie, a town close to Alexandria with our host mom and sister. They took us to Petsmart (a pet store where you can buy actual pets like fish, amphibians or cats), Five Below (a store where everything is \$5 or less), Target (you can literally get anything there), Spencer's (they sell funny and weird shirts and accessories), Ulta (a beauty store that sells makeup, skin care, and fragrances), and T-J-Maxx (a clothing store). All of the stores were huge and different from what we are used to in Germany. We looked around the stores and spent a lot of time in them. In between the stores we also visited Ball State University. One of our host mom's sons goes there and they showed us all the different buildings. For lunch we tried Chick-fil-A for the first time. I had a salad with avocado lime ranch dressing and their waffle potato fries with Chick-fil-A sauce. It was really good. Back home we tried lots of American candy. We had Fruit Roll-Ups, Cheetos, Gushers, Sour Patch Kids, Fun Dip, Nerds, Reeses and many more. I liked most of them but I underestimated all the sugar and sweetness and felt a little queasy afterwards.

Sunday was a slow day. For breakfast we had cereal with milk, we tried different kinds like Fruit Loops, Lucky Charms and Cinnamon Crunch Toast. Then we started making bread. We had bought the ingredients at a grocery store on Saturday and wanted to make bread for our host family. We mixed the ingredients and kneaded the dough. Then we let the dough sit for a while while we watched a movie with our host sister. The bread was a success, it didn't taste like German bread, but it was still good. We had an early dinner of frozen pizza and salad and then started playing Monopoly with our host brother. It was a lot of fun and we played for a long time.

Monday was very exciting. At 4:30 pm all of us Gapp students met up and we decorated our float. Because that evening we had the homecoming parade! We all sat on the float and drove through town in a big parade with many other cars. It is tradition to throw candy for all the people standing in the town and we participated in that too. After the parade there was another exciting event: Powder Puff. At Powder Puff the roles are reversed because girls play football and the guys are cheerleaders. That is quite unusual. Powder Puff was the very first football game we watched. It was seniors vs. juniors and in the end, the juniors won the game.

How I fell from the sky

So the story started on Thursday when we landed in America, Indiana 📍

After a nearly 24-hour journey, we finally were in Indianapolis, Indiana. I was so tired that I just wanted to go to bed. But I was ambitious to stay awake and see the gorgeous Skyline of Indianapolis 🗺️.

On the next day, Friday we had our first day of "High school".

We had a completely different school day than we ever had in Germany.

Everything was different. The breaks are just five minutes long 🕒! Five Minutes if you had such short breaks everyday would you still be alive? Just joking it isn't that terrible. What's also different from a German 🇩🇪 school? Yes everybody has their own schedule with their own lessons not like classes in Germany. And everyday they have the same lessons.

I mean isn't it boring after a couple of days? I have to ask that my school partner tomorrow...

Something that is also not the same in Germany are the lockers 🗄️.

The lockers are so tall and very narrow. You have to give them some food that isn't normal how „skinny” they are 😂😂.

And the school, the school's so huge.

if I think of our school 🏫 Alexandria is nearly three times bigger.

There are also many other things that are not like school at home.

Stay tuned for more information about the school in my next Blog.

After our first day of school we went to the Chapman- lake in Warsaw 🇵🇱. We had a long weekend because of Labor-day. So Monday was off. 😊

In the following days at the lake we experienced lots of new awesome things from new food and new activities to cool people ,we had everything.

Like for example, we were tubing. That's where a boat pulls a big seat blown-up with air 🚣. You sit in it and the boat drives so fasssst. You even fly up in the air. We did it four times over the weekend.

I fell off two times... One time I hurt my stomach a bit but it wasn't that bad 😞. We fell from hmmm I guess maybe seven feet in the air straight into the water 💧. It felt like I fell down from the sky.

Before we flew off the tube I thought:

„There comes a big wave, we will fall maybe, yes we will definitely fa..."splash!!!

I mean did you ever think that?? I don't think SO.

But tubing's very fun and if you ever get the chance to do it- just don't think about what I just wrote

and do it! It's soooo fun. I could do it all day 😁!

Another thing that I could do all day and what we did at the lake is we drove a Jet-ski! Yeah you heard it right, I drove a Jet-ski by myself. Yeah and everybody is still alive 🤔.

It was so cold because we got all the water straight in the face. It felt a bit like if you ride your bike in the rain 🌧️🚲.

But it was so exiting. I just want to do it again and again and again. I always wanted to do that and now I've had the chance. And it was just gorgeous. Like a dream come true. One time when Johanna drove and me and Sidney („My Hostgrandpa") sat in the back she did a crazy circle and then she pushed on full power. We got thrown off of Jet-ski and Sid said : „It was the worst fall I ever had.” ,And he's been doing it for 30 years. 🤔

We fell with a big wave in the water 🌊. Yeah and I skinned my knee.

But it felt good to drive the Jet-ski by myself.

On that day, it was very windy so there were many waves. And that made it much more fun.

Do you think I did the right thing with driving a Jet-ski in the wind or was it to dangerous??
So that guys was my weekend (1.9-4.9.-2023)

This was one of the best weekends in my life.

I experienced so many things and I'm so thankful for it 🙏

Xo Leni



Hello my name is Louisa Joelle Thöbes and I'm going to present you my arrival and my first weekend in America.

The arrival

Thursday 31st August 21:04,

that was the first time I met my exchange student Charity and her lovely Grabby Beverly. I felt so anxious going on a plane since I've never been on one before and I definitely haven't spent three weeks away from my family and never even dreamt of going to America. Meeting each other felt a bit awkward. I mean we hugged and everyone was really nice but we didn't talk that much. I had a lot of pressure on my ears from the flight and didn't understand a single thing. On our way out of the airport we took a few pictures with the so called „Indy sign“ and went to quickly grab my luggage. When we got outside we waited for Charity's aunt to pick us up and drove 75 minutes back home, well I thought it was home but we just switched cars and drove even further. The drive was intimidating since they didn't keep their hands at the steering wheel at all. When we were finally there I was just tired got ready and went to sleep.

The weekend

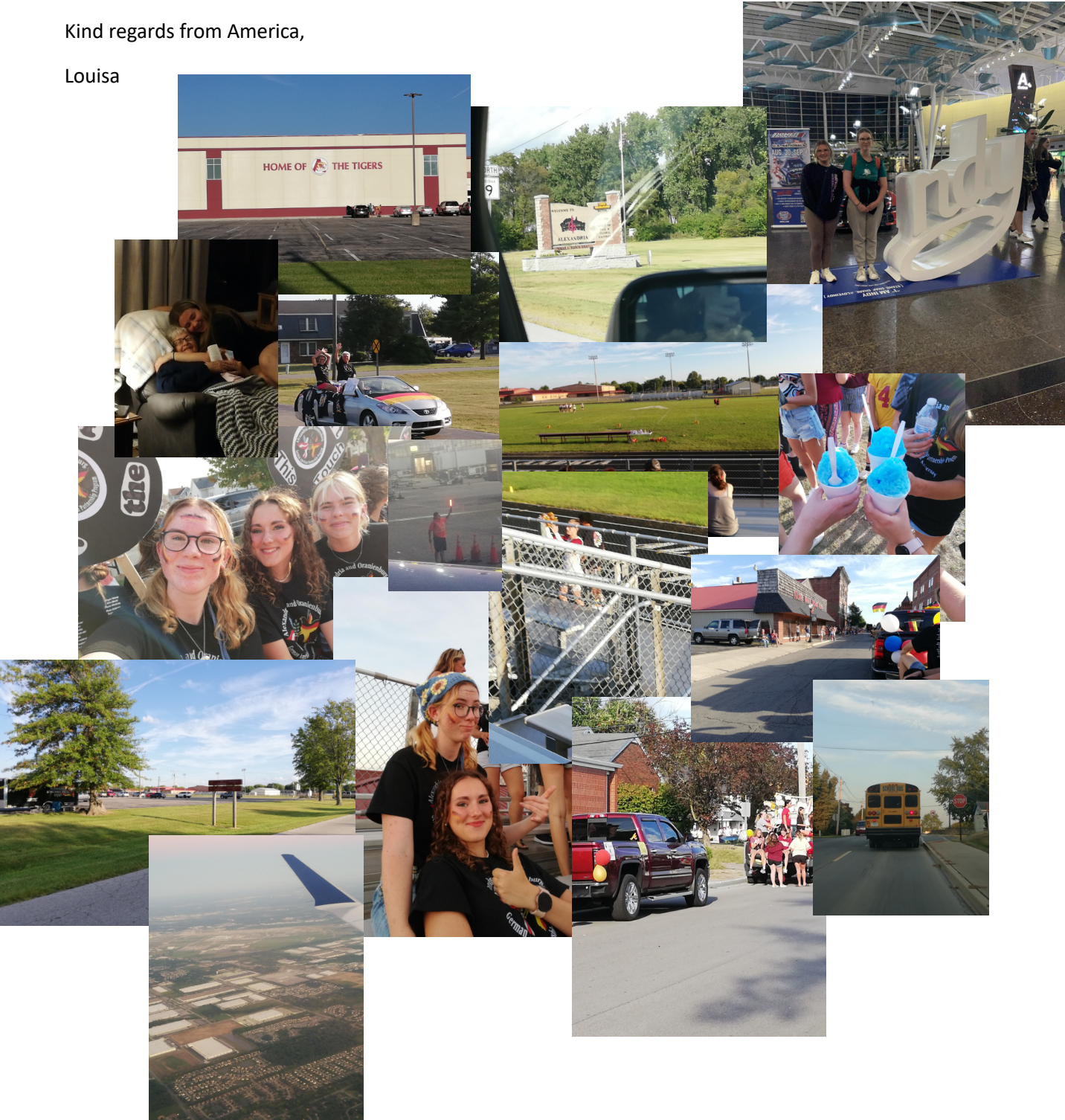
Saturday was quite a lot to take in. My host family and I went to Hamilton Town Center to go shopping. It was pretty cool. I really like going out instead of sitting around and doing nothing. On our way there we bought Starbucks, just because I never tried it and I think it's overrated (and overpriced). When we got to the center we first went to DSW shoes and I found the most breathtaking shoes ever. I even considered getting them but they were quite expensive.

When we got out we took a quick break and went to Chick-fil-A. It was so good. When we were finished we drove to „Dry Goods“ and I found the cutest little bow for homecoming. I didn't even know if it was gonna match my dress but shortly afterwards we went to „rue 21“ and I found a beautiful wrinkled, black dress which I'm going to wear this Saturday. I also found a lot of other accessories, but everything is so expensive and I think the cheapest and ugliest necklace was like 15 \$. We also went to Coldstones to buy some ice cream. The portions were really big but I just then noticed how much the Americans waste every day. On our way home we stopped at „Marshalls“ and at „Ross“ to go thrifting and I got a little sunflower bandana and a headband. Sunday we just relaxed and drove Makayla home, she's the sister of my host sibling Charity. On Monday we build a trail or for the Float Parade, which is a parade where you're driving through town and just throw sweets at everyone. It made me feel really famous. The parade ended at the school and the GAPP group went to see the Powderpuff Game afterwards. It's American Football but with a twist. The girls are playing and the boys are the cheerleaders. I think no one understood the rules but we still had a great time.

That was my first weekend I hope you enjoyed my first blog look out for updates.

Kind regards from America,

Louisa



Our way to Alexandria

The almost 24 hours from leaving my house until arriving at my home for the next weeks were quite exciting. Let's just start by saying that it seemed, as if the security people working at the BER didn't want me to leave. I got asked a lot of senseless questions nobody else got asked and they triple checked me at every station on my way to the gate.

After that the nine hour flight from Berlin to New York City, which by the way was the first one I ever was on, went by quite fast and relaxed. When we finally arrived at the JFK international airport, we had plenty of time to waste until our next flight was going to Indianapolis. We were just walking around in the airport for some hours getting food and looking at the people around us. At the time when the boarding was supposed to start all of us were just waiting for anything to happen but they were taking their time. The boarding finally started like five minutes before the plane was meant to take off. When we finally got inside I had to crouch because the ceiling was very low.

We took off almost an hour late but still managed it to arrive way earlier than we were meant to. We arrived at the Indianapolis airport at about 8:40 pm. When I finally met my host grandma right after we left the plane I felt a big relief because I knew that I was almost there. At this point I was not thinking that I would still be at the airport for quite a while. When we got my luggage and wanted to go to the parking lot we got confused where to go and asked for the way out. When we got where we were told to go we found ourselves at the Lovestory point of the parking area. In total it took us four elevator rides and two people to ask for help to finally get to the car, just to find out we were almost there right in the beginning.

The day ended with us arriving at their home and going to bed really quickly because it was such a long time without sleep.



pictures: l: sunset over Indianapolis
r: our cabin at Ohio River

My weekend family trip

When school was over on Friday and I was back at my host family's home they told me that I got five minutes to pack my backpack until we would start our weekend trip. We got on the road and headed to the south. After almost four hours we finally arrived at our cabin which was called "Castle Calucci" near Magnet right at the Ohio River. As it was really late we didn't do that much this evening but going to a bar across the street to get something to eat before we got to sleep.

The next morning I got up and made some scrambled eggs for everyone. As it was a family trip and we were 13 people at that time it took a lot of time and also eggs. Though I was only semi satisfied by how the food turned out everybody else loved it. After finishing breakfast and some other people joining we headed north for a canoe tour. We arrived at the location, got our paddles and life jackets and got into a school bus. That bus took us some miles upstream, we got our canoes and started going downstream. As the water level is really low that time of the year we got stuck on the rocks very often. I always had to get off the canoe to push or pull it over the rocks. I spent like a third of the whole trip walking around in the riverbed. The whole thing was supposed to take three to four hours but we needed five to finally get to the ramp at the end. After that we went back to our cabin really tired, had a very nice barbecue and ended the day in our house own Hot Tub.

Sunday morning I stepped out of the house just to see my host grandpa waving at me from a pontoon. He rented it so we could have tours up and down Ohio River all day. Suddenly he steered the pontoon over to the other side and told me to get off on the ramp he was going next to. When I did as he said he suddenly cheered: Yay, Mark's been to Kentucky. That's because Ohio River is the border between Indiana and Kentucky. So I could add another state on my list with the ones I've been in, even if it was just for a few seconds.

It got late afternoon so we decided to go back to Alexandria, where we arrived at about 9 pm. I wonder if I will ever come back to the city by daylight, because both times getting there (after the flight and the weekend trip) were already in the dark. As I still am not totally used to the time difference I just managed it to copy my diary entries into the GAPP folder before I fell asleep.

Monday started off pretty relaxed, as it was a holiday. I got up late and after a delicious breakfast my host grandma took me out to show me around the area. In the afternoon we prepared our GAPP float for the homecoming parade and got our candy together to throw off while driving. As our students were a little overmotivated it often ended up in crossfiring little kids. After the parade I stayed for watching the powder puff football game, which I really enjoyed. Overall it's been some really nice first day in the US and I'm sure many more will follow.

About skies and skylines

Maya Hewelt

The night before my departure for the exchange, my boyfriend and I had a conversation about the universe. He asked me if I'd like to live forever if I had the chance. I decided to think about it for a moment.

If you choose to live forever, one day you will find yourself floating in orbit. Maybe the sun has exploded and the Earth no longer exists. You will probably have met other civilizations and other people, and fallen in love a thousand times over.

"No," I replied. I don't want to live an infinite life. I have no desire for an infinite life, but for the enjoyment and embrace of every moment of my limited life. I want to remember all the little things and feelings. I want to have a memory when I ask myself: How did it feel when I fell in love for the first time? How nervous was I when I took my first driving lesson?

How did I feel when I saw the breathtaking skyline of New York City during a beautiful sunset?

I want to sit in an old rocking chair and tell my grandchildren about how I used to live. Remembering all the little things like the four-leaf clover I was always looking for or the big adventures like the one I am experiencing at the present. I would like to tell them how I left for GAPP and how I felt when I left my parents. On the one hand, I was nervous and afraid of being homesick. On the other hand, the excitement and belief that everything would work out made me think positively. It was only after the eight-hour flight to New York that it finally dawned on me that it was true. I was too stunned to talk. It wasn't believable that I had been given the opportunity to travel to the other side of the world. It made me very grateful because most people don't have this chance ever.

So here I am. In the United States of America. A country that is well known to us through the media, but still very distant. Somehow it never felt attainable. I'd like to remember how that felt when I get old.

It is a once in a lifetime adventure and I feel a lot of grace for everyone who made it possible.

We had an hour drive home after I landed in Indianapolis. That night, I was thinking about home as the blue supermoon looked huge. In the end we are all standing on the same little mound of dirt and rock, looking at the same sky.

Maybe I'll have bigger adventures in my life, like flying to the moon. Who knows? But I never want to forget the way I felt when I was on my way to Alexandria.

Living like a hummingbird

Maya Hewelt

Have you ever seen a hummingbird in the wild? I hadn't until last Saturday. It was a slow morning as I stood in the kitchen, casually looking out the window while drinking my oat milk. Suddenly something green caught my eye. I looked closer when it returned. It was still in the air before it sat down on the hummingbird feeder. I hadn't been able to identify it as a hummingbird feeder before because I didn't expect to see them this far north.

The tiny green bird drank its sugar water from the feeder while I drank my oat milk in the house. In that moment, I felt as free as that little bird. Even though you can be out there doing almost anything, people choose to come back and do things that are good for them. I am here in the United States, far from home, watching the hummingbird. I do what is good for me. Experiencing the world and learning a lot about myself and others. Meeting people and giving them my heart as they give me theirs. I am very grateful to have the opportunity, just like the little bird has the feeder. I have taken it and I am doing the absolute best I can out of it.

Later that day, I met my host sister, Josi, who studies at Purdue University in Fort Wayne. She is such a sweet person and we got to know each other with a great cookie and a tour of the campus. I'm meeting people I want to get to know better and who I'm going to miss when I'm back on the other side of the planet. I met Jack, Josie's brother, on Sunday. We had a great time at Mound State Park in Anderson. He brought his dog, Knox, who was always playing with my host parents' huskies. I enjoyed every moment of the trip out in nature. My host dad, Dennis, told me stories about how he used to run there to train for track. In addition, we were able to learn about the history of the area, where Native Americans lived and practiced rituals. I feel a lot of grace while I'm here. I'm having a wonderful time, enjoying the exchange like the little hummingbird enjoys the sugar water from the feeder.

Travel to the past

Hello guys, welcome to my blog. Here I am going to write about my travel journey in the US. It is my first time here so everything is new to me.

31st of August Today was the day, we're all waiting for almost a year now. We are going to start our exchange. I was up until 1am packing stuff, unpacking stuff, searching stuff and moving stuff from one suitcase into the other one. In the moment I heard my alarm ring I was immediately awake, because I knew what today is going to happen. I am going to fly for the first time in 10 years, I am going to be the first time on another continent than Europe, I am going to live in another time zone, I am going to speak another language. I was so nervous. There were so many different kinds of thoughts in my head. When we left at 6:10 am everything was still unreal. I could not believe what is going to happen in the next couple of hours. I had a lot of mixed feelings. I was happy, I was afraid, I was tired, I was nervous and I already missed my mom, my brother and my boyfriend. When we arrived at the train station I was feeling good and then it was time to say goodbye. When we arrived after around an hour at the airport at terminal 5 we needed to take a train to go to terminal 1 & 2, when we got there we needed to take an elevator and then we were in the middle of the airport. We had no clue where we had to go, but then we saw some other students in their green shirts. We checked in our luggage, went through security and then we were waiting at the gate. Rosa and I were walking around, because we knew that we aren't going to move that much in the next nine hours. The plane took off and we were finally in the air. The time flew by very fast because there were plenty of movies we could watch. The food was also ok we even got salted caramel mini ice cream, which was really good. After nine hours and round about 7000km we were over New York City, we saw the incredible skyline and the people at the windows took photos for us. We landed and then went through immigration and I felt like a criminal because of the questions I got asked. It was a very weird feeling because it was already 7:30pm in Germany but 1:30 pm in New York so we literally traveled 6 hours back in time. We got our luggage back and checked it in for the next flight. We went to the gate where we left our luggage and then explored the airport for 2 hours. After we ate something and bought a tshirt that says „i ❤️ ny“ we went back to gate A16. We boarded and the airplane to Indianapolis was so small. I wanted to get some sleep on this two hour flight, since I was already 24 hours awake, but I was too excited so I watched the breathtaking sunset out of the window. It looks completely different from above. We landed in Indianapolis and our host family welcomed us. We took some photos and then got our luggage back. We were all so tired that we weren't talking that much on the way to the house of our host family. When we arrived there we met their son Pat and his Italian girlfriend, she is a teacher in a school in the street my dad lives in. We ate cheese pizza and immediately went to bed and fell asleep.

From Native American Homes to target

1st of September Today was our first day at school. Dan dropped us off and then we entered the school. Everything was like in the movies and there were so many students. One of them recognized our GAPP shirts and brought us to our room. We got our diaries, the schedule of our partner and other stuff then we met the principal. We walked through the school and finally saw our lockers. It's very difficult to open them but we got it. Then I met Kara - my partner for school. She is very nice and our first period together was career info I think. But we missed almost the entire lesson because she and someone else were introducing me to a lot of teachers. They were all so nice. At lunch (I had a slice of pizza) it got a little awkwardly silent but after German period where we helped them a lot with their tasks, we started talking. The English period was amazing and then school was out and Dan picked us up with a cabrio. We made a quick stop at Dollar General (our first American supermarket) to buy a brick. In the evening Dan drove us to a football game in Hartford City. We were 20 minutes late and almost sat on the wrong side but then Lily and Rylie recognized us and we sat next to them. Our school team won (42:7).

2nd September Today we were at a kind of museum called Parks & Recreation Dept. and we saw a lot of cool stuff like snakes, frogs, turtles, things from the ice age and 3 different kinds of plants growing together in one field. It was pretty impressive. We were wondering what „mices“ are Judy and the guide explained us. Then she told us that there was a Chinese in a hotel who didn't know the English word for mouse so he asked the receptionist if she knows Tom and Jerry and that Jerry is in his room. Then we went to Conner Prairie where we got to see how the Indians lived back in 1836. The park was built up like a small village with shops, a doctor's office, a forge, a carpentry, the house of the mayor and his wife and a lot more. We got a pretty good idea of how they lived back then. It was very interesting because the Amish people still live like that (no electricity, no toilet flushing or even toilets inside the house, no anesthesia, no motor vehicles).

3rd of September Today we were at a waterpark. It was a little lake with a lot of different activities e.g. dark slides, long slides, slides with a mat, short slides, a zip line, a duck boat and a tower where you could jump off. On our way there we made a stop at a gas station where we bought chips and Dan introduced us to the American lottery. None of us won but it was a nice experience. When we arrived at the waterpark they asked us if we are good swimmers in deep water and depending on that we got a paper bracelet. Then we found a nice spot to sit down and we opened the bag of chips and were shocked because half of it was empty. It was just air. On our drive home we made a stop in Upland- the city where Jim Davis the writer of Garfield lives. We were at an ice cream store. They had 100 different sundaes and 100 different shakes and the sizes were unbelievably big. We all got a mini sized and Amy didn't eat it up because it was so much. When we arrived at home Judy made burgers for dinner and then we watched a movie called Don't Worry Darling. It was very psycho so I went to bed because I was tired.

4th of September. Today was Labor Day, an American holiday to celebrate the social and economic achievements of American workers. During the day we went to Kohls, Aldi and Target. And we were shocked when we went into all of them because they're huge. Target is kind of a small mall because they have literally everything you can think of. Groceries, clothes, cosmetics, cleaning stuff, home appliances, decorations and more. There is even a Starbucks in it. In the evening we were at the homecoming parade, we were decorating our GAPP trailer and it turned out wonderful. We had balloons on both sides and signs and of course the GAPP birds, German and American flags. But the best part was driving through the streets with hundreds of peoples sitting on the sidewalk and throwing candy. After that we went to Powder Puff Football. The junior girls were playing against seniors girls and the boys were cheering. Well, at least two of them did.

That was all about arrival and my three day weekend I hope you enjoyed reading it.

It's a Birthday in the USA...

Hey Guys,

Monday was Lotti's Birthday and we celebrated it in the USA. But how did we get there? Well everything started in November last year. We applied for the exchange and were excepted in March. Since then we prepared a lot of things to visit the USA.

Last Thursday it was finally time to get on the plane to America. In the morning I said goodbye to my parents and my sister. I was a little sad that I won't see them in the next three weeks but my excitement was a bit bigger. At the airport we went to drop off our luggage, I was so relieved that they took my suitcase even though it was 200g over the limit. As we got on the plane to New York I was surprised by the size of the airplane. It had seven seats side by side! Strangely, the flight didn't feel so long and the time at JFK didn't either even though the flight lasted eight and a half hours and the time at the airport about 6. On the flight from New York to Indianapolis, I slept because it was already late. It didn't take long after we left the airplane that we saw our host families. They welcomed us all with open arms.



Friday was my first real day in Alexandria. In the morning I got up and the first difference to home I noticed was that we didn't eat breakfast together. My host mom Kelly brought us a toast in our rooms. Immediately after, we went to school. I was so excited and forgot to put on my GAPP sweater. But Hannah was so nice to lend me hers because she had a T-shirt too. The principal showed us the High School and as we got back into our homeroom we were already expected by the American partner students. My partner student's name is Nikayla Dubree. She is very nice. The High school was so fun. They have so much more beautiful rooms than we do. Sometimes there were even chains of lights in the classrooms. Can you imagine that? Lunch was kind of crazy it was very full and loud and some people have even thrown food! You can eat burgers, pizza and also nachos in the cafeteria. Not long after we got back home Kelly and Marty, my host parents showed us Alexandria in their golf cart. We got to meet all their family members. Marty told us that we could try to drive the golf cart sometime. For dinner, we had a Tumb Stone which is a pizza with a kind of salami, it was very good and tasted different than ours. Right afterwards we drove to a football game. The Tigers (our team) won 35 to seven. Afterward, Marty showed us Ivanhoes. It is a very good ice cream place. This was when I realized that literally everything is bigger here not just the whole country, the school, and the supermarket but also the ice cream it was huge, so big that I couldn't finish it.



On Saturday we spent a lot of time with Vivien and Calvin, two of Kelly's and Marty's Grandkids. Together we also went into the pool and played basketball and "the chicken game". Later that afternoon, we went to a lake. As we arrived, we were already expected by Kelly's son and his family. Together we drove on a beautiful boat. Lotti and I even got to go on the tube. It was pretty hard to stay on but it was really fun too. They showed us their camping place too.

The first time we visited Church was on Sunday. I have never been to a church like this. Everyone got little cups. On the bottom was a tiny piece of bread. To get it, you had to pull a little plastic thing of.

And to get the sort of wine the plastic thing on the other side. The pastor talked about the godly woman and told us to pray for the godly women in our lives. I prayed for my mom, my sister, my grandmothers, and my host mom, Kelly. As we came back we ate lunch. We ate Corndogs. they are the best things I had until now. Kelly and her daughter in law said that they would ship me some to Germany. Subsequently, we went swimming with Calvin, Hasey and Vivien.

On Sunday we spend so much time with these three. Together we also went to the basketball game of Dekan (the oldest grandson of my host parents). He played really well and he's only 9 years old. It was a very tight game but Dekan's team won 21 to 20. Kelly and Marty took us to a taco place, right after the game. Lotti and I were trying tacos for the second time. They were kind of spicy but still very delicious. On the way back home, we showed Calvin "Snapchat" he thought one of the filter was very funny. He even called it the funniest thing he has ever seen!

At home, we played with Calvin and Hasey, basketball. Hasey and I have also drawn some things with Chuck. In the evening Lotti and I had a sleepover because her birthday would be on the next day...

Monday morning I got up with Lotti. As soon as we left our rooms, our host family sang "Happy Birthday" to Lotti. Right after this, I gave Lotti her present.

All of Kelly's family visited us at noon. They all were so nice. We celebrated Nolan's (one of my host parents grandson's) eighth Birthday. His Aunt, Malerie baked him a very delicious cake. Lotti got a cake too, which was made by Vanessa who's cakes are known to be very good. The parade was on Monday too! The whole GAPP group got on a homecoming wagon and threw some candy to the kids. Later, there was a powder puff game. The girls played football and some boys were cheerleaders. I think it was very funny and I enjoyed watching it. As we got back home, Marty showed us how to drive the golf cart. Lotti and I both drove it for a while. It wasn't that hard, that's why I loved it. To finish the day nicely we ate some of Charlotte's raspberry cake.



I liked my first weekend here. It was very exciting to get to know my host family and the American culture. The week was full of new experiences!

I hope you enjoyed reading me travel blog. For more visit the F. F. Runge website or their instagram account.

- Olivia Köpp (8.2)

A new world awaits by Paula Martinke

Waking up at 5 am was already a hard start but having to carry my 21 kg heavy suitcase made the beginning of this journey a challenge. After lots of stairs and trains, we finally arrived at the BER airport and dropped off our luggage, which made traveling way easier.

The security check followed and in my opinion, this is the most stressful part. Taking out all the liquids and electrical devices, then having to put them in your bag again very quickly and the staff may be taking some samples to see if you carry explosives is nerve-wracking.

However afterward we got to sit in our plane, finally. I had a pretty amazing window seat, even though I kept it closed for the majority of our flight. The joy of finally sitting after a long arrival faded within a few hours. Having to sit in a tiny space for 8 hours straight wasn't as pleasurable as I wanted it to be. Despite my lower body parts hurting they provided really good movie choices like the newest most popular cinemamovies for example Evil Dead Rise or Ariel, The Little Mermaid. I watched Scream 6 to make my flight more terrifying than it had to be, and afterward, I watched movies like Clueless to calm me down again.

Our food was so amazing. I ordered the vegetarian option and got some kind of Indian dish called Dal Makhani with fruit, it was the most delicious food I ever had on a plane. Later I got a pastry with curry which was just as enjoyable as the first meal.

After a few turbulences, we finally landed in New York. It was petrifying going through the immigration service at first but I soon realized the guy taking my fingerprints and asking questions was tired, at least that's what he looked like. We had a 5 hour stay in New York but we weren't allowed to leave the airport which was super sad. Instead, a few people and I had some fries and waited for the time to pass. Some of us got asked what sports we played since our matching group T-Shirt said 'Gymnasium'.

Our following flight went by super fast, I fell asleep for about 3 seconds and we landed already. This was the moment our teacher revealed that we were minutes away from meeting our host families. I suddenly got super nervous and felt anxiety rising in my stomach. Walking down the hallway, we could already hear lots of people cheering and we saw so many flashlights go on. It almost felt like being a superstar walking the red carpet and paparazzi waiting for you to take the best picture.

A few moments later Laura and I already saw our soon-to-be host mom and host sister holding up a sign saying 'Welcome Paula & Laura'. We walked towards them and got pulled into a tight hug. I completely lost control of my emotions and I started crying tears of joy. It was such a beautiful moment that I will hopefully remember forever. I immediately felt safe and welcome with them.

Luckily we got our suitcase quickly otherwise that would have been my worst nightmare. Everyone got in the car and while chatting about various things we finally got closer to our new home.

'Amerikanisch für Anfänger' by Paula Martinke

The entire Saturday all we did was visit popular American stores and there are a lot of them. We went to Pet Smart first. When walking in I was extremely shocked by the way the pets were kept. Fish were sold in tiny containers and some of them looked dead, cats were put in very small cages sometimes even three in one cage. It felt illegal watching them. In between visiting the stores, we got a little tour of Ball State University since one of our host mom's sons goes there. Our journey continued with FiveBelow. This store only sells items and candy that cost 5\$ or less. Probably the most famous place of all followed.... Target! You can basically buy everything there, from food to clothes and bikes. It was super overwhelming. Since we got hungry we drove to Chick-fil-A, a fast food restaurant which mostly sells chicken, as the name indicates. Later we got to go into Spencer's a weird alternative store, and Ulta, a beauty store followed. I could have spent hours in there, but we still had another store to get through. Next up we went to two different grocery stores, one of them being Aldi.

We bought so much stuff and the most obnoxious part about grocery shopping was that the cashier packs your bags. Laura and I even bought ingredients for German bread to share some of our culture with our host family. As soon as we got home Laura and I got to try some of the typical American candy like Fruit Roll-Ups, Cheetos, Gushers, Sour Patch Kids, and Fun Dip. All of them were super sweet and we couldn't eat as many. My favorites were Nerds Gummy Clusters and Reese's.

Sunday, Laura and I made German bread or at least tried to make it. It turned out fine but since the flour is different here it didn't taste very authentic. As we got our host family a German monopoly we played that with our host sister's brother.

Monday was Labor Day so our GAPP group prepared for the parade everyone had been talking about the past few days. As the parade with all the floats started, we got to sit on ours and throw candy at the children waiting along the sidewalk. It was an awkward feeling as the floats were moving slowly. We ended up at the school watching the Powder Puff Game which basically means girls play football, guys are cheerleaders. Sadly only three guys actually took part in cheerleading. However, it was a fun experience to watch football for the very first time and in such fun circumstances.

A dream coming true

Hey everybody! My name is Rosa and my wish of living the American life will come true in the next three weeks. To follow me and my journey and to see if the life in America is really like in the movies, I will always keep you updated on my blog.

So how it all started...

31st of August - THE DAY all of us had been waiting for so long. It was the day that our GAPP exchange finally started. When I got to the train station in Oranienburg at 6:30 a.m. it was raining. I guess Germany cried tears because it didn't want us to leave. But we still managed to. After getting to the airport, dropping our luggage and getting through security we only had about 20 minutes left until our 9 hour flight to New York City started. At this point I noticed that I had so many mixed emotions. I was really nervous and excited at the same time. We got on the plane and we were all ready to take off. The 9 hours went by pretty quickly because we could watch plenty of movies. Additionally, we got served food. We even got ice cream on the plane. Isn't that crazy?

When we flew over New York we could see the iconic skyline. That was so pretty. I'm really sorry for the people sitting at the window because they had about 2 to 3 different phones to take pictures of that breathtaking view.

After landing Mrs. Rohde told us to check if we had our passport. I checked and guess what... I couldn't find mine. Panic took over my whole body and I started unpacking my whole backpack. Everyone else around me was also freaking out and tried helping me find it. Thankfully, after a few minutes I found it in my laptop bag. That was so embarrassing and a huge relief at the same time.

After calming down from that shock we had 5 hours to spend at the JFK airport until our final flight would take off. And I can tell you five hours at an airport with your friends are passing quicker than you would think.

With getting into the second plane the countdown started and the excitement got bigger and bigger. The second plane was the smallest plane I've ever seen in my whole life. Our group took over about half of the plane. My plan to sleep didn't work out because I was so excited and just talked the whole time.

Two hours later I was shocked that we already landed in Indianapolis because the time flew by very fast. I could actually feel my heartbeat from that moment on.

After traveling for almost 24 hours, I got to meet Jimmy, my host dad. We took some pictures and then finally went to leave the airport. But leaving the airport turned into a hilarious adventure. It took us about three attempts and a lot of asking until we got to the car. And WOW what a car that was, an American truck straight out of the movies. The ride to Alexandria took us about an hour which went by so fast. Then I finally met my host mum, Treena. She greeted me with a hug, welcomed me into their house and showed me everything.

After that I directly went to bed, because of all the excitement I had experienced over the last 24 hours I was pretty tired. And that was just the beginning of this incredible journey. Stay tuned to hear more of my adventure.

Your Rosa.

Some pictures of my trip to the USA:



The second flight

At the JFK airport



The skyline of NYC

Weekend time in Alexandria

Hey, it's Rosa again. Welcome back to my blog. Today I want to tell you everything about my first weekend in Alexandria. Have fun!

After hearing the bell ring at 3 p.m. on Friday, September 1, I knew my first weekend in Alexandria was about to begin. That Friday after school I got to hang out with my host family. Later that night I had to pack my things because Saturday morning we were going to the Ohio River, which marks the border between Kentucky and Indiana.

After the three-hour drive, I got to meet the whole family of my host family. Later that day, we went canoeing. We paddled for five hours straight. And I can tell you why it took so long. The river we were canoeing in was so flat that we got stuck about a hundred times. One time we got stuck so badly that Corbin, a member of my host family, had to push us out. Suddenly he was pushing so hard that I fell off my seat and all my clothes were wet. Luckily, it was sunny and my clothes dried quickly. However, I soon forgot about my wet clothes when we saw a turtle sitting on a rock in the river, just enjoying its life.

After we finished canoeing we wanted to go back to the house where we were staying. But that wasn't possible because there weren't as many beds as people. That made me really sad, because the house was amazing and had an awesome view over the Ohio river. As sad as it was we decided to leave and go back to Alexandria.

The next day we went to a petting zoo. At the petting zoo there was a lama that followed me the whole time. I was afraid it would spit on me. But luckily nothing happened. Therefore, something else happened to the granddaughter of my host parents. She was shat on by a duck. Luckily, she had a bathing suit to change into because we went to a water park afterwards.

Then my host family took me to an Italian restaurant called "Olive Garden". You can get as many breadsticks as you want and as many salads as you want. Why don't we have an "Olive Garden" in Germany?

The best thing about Sunday was that we went to Target. My favorite American store ever! They have everything you could dream of. Especially a lot of Halloween stuff because that's the next holiday coming up. And I can tell you that Americans go crazy for Halloween. There were so many costumes and skeletons. Some of the skeletons were about 3 meters high.

Do you want to know the best about my first weekend? I will tell you. We didn't have school on Monday either because it was Labor day, which is a holiday.

In the afternoon the whole GAPP group met so we could decorate our trailer for the homecoming parade. We added all the American and German colors. That looked stunning. I never saw a trailer for a homecoming parade before but I bet ours was the best one ever existing. It was so much fun to wave to everyone and throw candies to the little children. They had the biggest smile ever while catching the candy.

After having so much fun at the parade we went to the powder puff football game. That's a football game where just the girls are playing. It was the first football game I had ever been to and it was really confusing to me. But still, me and my friend had a lot of fun while watching the American girls play. That was the perfect ending of my weekend and I'm really excited about what is coming up in the next couple of weeks.

Hear you next time on my blog! Your Rosa.

Some pictures of my weekend:



Homecoming parade



Powder puff football game



Petting zoo

The start of the greatest experience of my life

On the August 31 we started our trip, we met at the train station in Oranienburg at 5.30 am. After round about 1 and a half hour drive, we got to the Airport where the chaos began. One hour later we were all checked in and through security. Some minutes later it was time to board the plane. You were able to feel the tension while we boarded the plain. Multiple movies later (8.30 hours) we landed in New York where we needed to go through the immigration process. 1 Hour later we were all checked in again, but we still head 6 hours left until our second flight to Indianapolis. We spent most of the time with looking for food ant realizing the truth of the typical stereotypes. With 15 Minutes delay we started in New York. I decided to sleep through most of the flight so I would be that tiered when I met my host family. At the end of our 2 hours flight, you wear able to realize how excite everyone was. After we left the plain, everything went super-fast, we walked around one corner and wear able to see our host parents for the first time in real life. I got welcomed with a big sign with my name on it. 1.30 hours later I finally arrived at my home for the next three weeks. At 11.30pm I went to bed in my new room which I really like and tried to get some sleep for the upcoming school day and the Labor Day weekend.

On Friday evening we went camping with the camper. After setting up the camp I went to bed because I had a very exciting day upcoming.

On Saturday we took the boat out on the lake. At the lake we but two giants' tubes into the water where you are able to tube on. The goal is to try to hold on to the tube as long as possible while the boat is driving circles. It probably is not. my favorite activity because it hurts a bit. Multiple hours later we were back on land, and I took a good nap in the Hammock. In the Afternoon I gave my host family my presents from Germany. Which I Think they really liked. Later that they in the evening we went to another camp site and joined some people my host family knew. After I got asked a lot of questions about the live in Germany, I played a game of Cornhole. In which I was told I am surprisingly good at for my first time. After some more rounds of Cornhole and some roasted marshmallows we went back to our camper.

At Sunday morning we played some card games before we went back home in the Afternoon. On the 40 minutes' drive we started to count American flags. First our goal was to find 30 but, in the end, we found 205 flags.

On Monday was Labor Day so we had the day off. In the Afternoon I went to my first American football practice ever. After I was sad up with all the heavy gear, I was able to join the practice. The practice was a very cool experience but also very exhausting. After practice I went to the Homecoming parade where we had our one GAPP wagon. It was very funny to throw candy at strangers. At the end of the Parade, we stopped bag at the school and some other GAPP students went to the powderpuff football game where the senior girls played against the junior girls. (6 to 22 for the juniors)

It was a very exciting traveling day and first weekend, and I am ready for the upcoming weeks.

Tobi