

August 2009

Volume 1, Issue 1

## THE EXCHANGE



### Dates of Interest

11 September 6:30 pm  
Potluck Orientation Supper  
Time: 6:30 PM  
Place:  
Mr. And Mrs. Diegel's  
11 Trighton Ct.  
Reisterstown, MD 21136  
410-517-1090



A journey  
of a  
thousand  
miles must  
begin with  
a single  
step.

Lao Tzu

### From Jeanne'

Nine years ago August, I decided that I wanted to host an exchange student as I did not have the funds for international travel that year. As a child growing up in a rural area and attending a parochial school meeting people of other cultures, color and religion were limited. My father's sister had married an Indonesian diplomat and had two daughters. They lived in Tokyo. I recall my father reading her letters out loud and showing me snapshots of his sister and her multicultural family; so different and unique from ourselves. At the age of six, my aunt and family came to visit for a month. They brought us lovely gifts, my mother and I genuine pearl necklaces, a kimono for me, and a Geisha doll. For my father, always a crisp \$100 bill. We were not people of means, so these gifts from afar were even more special.

After my cousins return to Tokyo we began correspondence; I had a pen pal. We were the best of friends and cousins. Capri, my cousin, Once sent me a book of Haiku. I think knowing them and weaving of our cultures in this ongoing relationship to a people in a foreign land stirred my wanderlust and openness to people and lands different from my own.

My father found himself inviting foreign people home for dinner to experience the best Sicilian Spaghetti and Meatballs that my mother cooked for us each week, and to expose us to their culture. We would set out the fine china, silver and damask table cloth for these auspicious visits to our rural home. Those lovely things my mother only brought out for guests and holidays. I met people from Indonesia, Korea and Poland at these dinners.

So, coming full circle, it was time for me to open my home to the world. . . and in the ensuing nine years, I have hosted students from Brazil and Thailand, as well as placed students with host families from Germany, Italy, China, Korea, Vietnam, Columbia, Armenia, Poland, Kyrgyzstan and Kalmykia (Russia). I have been invited to stay with some of these families, and have visited with a student from Italy. A dream come true! I placed enough students to earn a trip to Brazil from one of the organizations to attend an International Meeting. I also visited Argentina while I was there.

Today, nine years later, I am pleased to be issuing our first NWSE MD Newsletter, and to be introducing our host, welcome families and students for this 2009-10 year. Each issue will show a feature host family, and include articles for your interest.

Welcome to Issue #1, and my best for our success!

Jeanne' Berger  
Local Academic Coordinator, NWSE

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# Creating the Global Village... One family, One student at a time

The Diegel family of Reisterstown, an experienced host family, will be hosting Maike Kansy from Germany



Travel is more than  
the seeing of sights;  
it is a change  
that goes on,  
deep and  
permanent,  
in the ideas of living.  
Miriam Beard



We would like to host a student because we enjoy young people and learning about other cultures. We think it best not to have expectations, but we do hope our student will develop a close relationship with us and want to stay in touch for years to come. We would also hope our student would be open-minded, polite and helpful. A sense of humor always helps, too!

17, two years ago in a traffic accident on his way to school. While we still have moments of great sadness and some tears, we are not typically depressed and we have been strong and positive since the experience.

We both have family in the area and all over the East Coast with whom we try to get together fairly frequently. Hopefully, our student would be able to meet some of our many teenage nieces and nephews.

We think it's important that you know that we did lose our only child, Charlie, aged



## The Smith family of Lutherville, a first time host family, will be hosting Tom Rummler from Germany

I would like my children to continue to learn about other cultures and continue to travel to other countries. Travis' best friend is now living in Germany. Hopefully, learn a few words in German.

Tom Rummler

## Ben Stump and Chris McKean family, new residents of Federal Hill, Baltimore City. "Welcome Student" to be selected soon...

*(Ben and Chris have hosted many exchange students over the years. They have just relocated from Buffalo, NY, and are unpacking their some 200 boxes this week. Let's welcome them!)*

We would like to host an exchange student because we are interested in travelling and meeting people from other places and cultures.

We believe that learning is a life-long activity, and we welcome the opportunity to gaining knowledge and wisdom from this experience. We also think it's fun to share our culture with other people and have

other peoples' culture shared with us.

We hope to gain a useful life experience and learn some things about a different place in the world. We also want to have an enjoyable experience.

As a host family, we can offer a stable friendly home to a student that is conducive to his studies. We are also young (relatively) and energetic, so we can offer an experience that is fun and entertaining, as well as educational.



**One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.**

**Henry Miller**

## The Ruckelshaus Family of Chestertown, a first time host family, hosting Maiko Nagamura from Japan

Each year we host a group of 10 students from the University of Central Florida and thoroughly enjoy the experience. I have thought of hosting an exchange student for many years, but realized the family dynamics would not have been what is needed to

ensure success. Our family dynamics are now far more conducive to hosting an exchange student.

We expect the experience will enrich our lives, as well as the life of our visiting friend. We hope that our student will become a

treasured member of our family and that they will enjoy the experience of living with us. We fully enjoy opening our home to friends and are looking forward to the opportunity to add another friend to our home life!



Maiko Nagamura



Kaukhar Asylbekova

***To whom much is given, much is required.***

The Campbell Family of Gambrills are rehosting a student through NWSE this year, Kaukhar Asylbekova of Kyrgyzstan

We feel that our home is unique in its location (right next to the high school) and that we have a lot to offer.

*"To whom much is given, much is required."*

We hope that the experience will be a positive one for our kids, exposing them to other cultures and hopefully to a positive role model of an older kid who is hard working and motivated.

## American Holidays – Something for Everyone!

By Denise Diegel  
Hosting Maike Kansy/Germany

Have you wondered what holidays Americans will be celebrating this fall during your stay in the USA? You've heard that America is a melting pot of cultures. Our holidays certainly reflect this diversity.

*September 7<sup>th</sup>: Labor Day.* This holiday, a creation of the labor movement, is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. First celebrated in 1882 in New York City, it was declared a legal holiday by Congress in 1894. Government and state offices, businesses and schools are closed on this day. Americans enjoy the last days of summer and often celebrate with a family or neighborhood cook-out and barbecue.

*19<sup>th</sup>: Rosh Hashanah.* One of the Jewish high holy days, the Jewish New Year celebration begins at sundown on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

*20<sup>th</sup>: Eid-al-Fitr* The Muslim feast day celebrating the end of the month-long Ramadan fast.

*28<sup>th</sup>: Yom Kippur:* Another Jewish high holy day, this Day of Atonement begins at sundown on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Some schools may be closed to allow students to observe the holiday.

*October 12<sup>th</sup>: Columbus Day.* Commemorating Columbus' voyage across the Atlantic in 1492, this holiday has been celebrated in the USA on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in October since 1971. Banks, bond markets, the Post Office, federal, state and some school districts are closed. However, most businesses and the stock exchange remain open. Italian-Americans in several U.S. cities often celebrate this day with parades and other cultural heritage festivities.

*31<sup>st</sup>: Hallowe'en.* With roots in the pagan Celtic culture and the religious celebration of All Saint's Day, this holiday was brought to the USA by Irish immigrants in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although it is secular (and increasingly commercial) in nature, some groups in the USA find offense at what they see to be its pagan origins. However, most Americans celebrate by throwing costume parties, and children wear costumes and go door to door "Trick or Treating" for candy. Hallowe'en is never a day for closing businesses or schools.

*November 3<sup>rd</sup>:* Election day. Always the first Tuesday in November, public schools are usually closed to allow their use as polling places for local, state and/or federal elections, depending on the year. As you know, our last federal election was held in 2008, when President Obama was elected.

*25<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving.* Held on the fourth Thursday of November, this is a day when Americans have traditionally gathered with friends and family to give thanks for the autumn harvest and express gratitude for the blessings of the past year. Children often reenact the "first Thanksgiving" between the Pilgrims and the Native Americans and adults tell them the story of the Pilgrims' arrival in Massachusetts in 1621. Americans traditionally enjoy turkey for their big family dinner on this day, along with many side dishes, and topped off with delicious pies and other desserts. For some Americans, Thanksgiving weekend is the time to put up lights and decorations for the Christmas season.

*December 12: Hannukah.* The eve of the 11<sup>th</sup> begins this Jewish celebration of the victory of the ancient Jews over Syrian Greeks almost 2,000 years ago. Jews light their menorah for 8 days, eat latkes (potato pancakes) and children play with their dreidels (tops) and receive Hannukah gelt, or chocolate coins. Like Christmas, this holiday has become quite commercial in the USA.

*25<sup>th</sup>: Christmas.* In the USA, many businesses close for the 24<sup>th</sup> (Christmas Eve) and most are closed on Christmas day. Families and friends gather for good food, to exchange gifts, sing carols and reminisce about Christmases past. U.S. schools are typically closed for at least a week around the Christmas holiday.

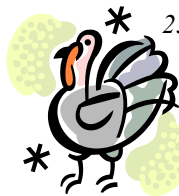
*26<sup>th</sup>: Kwanzaa.* This is a week long African-American cultural holiday founded in the USA in 1966. It is based on elements of first harvest festivities widely celebrated in Africa in the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the year.

*31<sup>st</sup>: New Year's Eve.* On this date, adults have parties, go out to nice restaurants, or watch fireworks in their local towns or cities. The drink of the night is champagne. Children enjoy staying up late to watch television as New Yorkers ring in the New Year in Times Square.

I hope this article gives you a taste of the holidays you will experience this fall. Take time to research them in more depth!

Sources:

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## Just a Reminder

Current host families, schools, churches, clubs, or organizations who refer other hosts to us will be entitled to a \$150.00 referral fee. Here's a great real life story from one of NWSE's Academic Coordinators that you simply must read.

Dolores Siik in New Hampshire, whose placement successes are legendary, recently sent this email below. You will note that she is taking advantage of our offer to provide composite lists of available students and of the referral incentive (\$150.00 per referral of a family that selects and hosts a student).

Those composites you made for me came in handy. We had a group dog walk today and I made a little talk before we started and passed out the flyer after. My point was if we can at least find 4 host families from the group or from their friends it would give us \$600 to donate to the Animal Rescue League of NH which is our group that does monthly dog walks and went thru basic training there. In September we have our fundraiser and if we could add that to what we donate maybe we could be "Top Dog" this year. We are the "Crazy Canines." Several of the group took flyers and some seemed interested for themselves and some thought they could find a family. Dolores.

With less than two weeks until the beginning of the school year, we have 23 remaining students needing good welcome or host families.



### Tom—Cat

Tom (cat) is a special member of our home. He waits for us to get up before going down for breakfast. When we go outside on the back porch he will come out with us on a leash and just loves it. When we travel to our river home, he will be with us too. Tom is like a dog.

It may be confusing at first for Tom (student) because we call our cat's name all of the time.

We are very excited for Tom (student) to join our family. We are very busy with sports, friends and family. Tom will be very busy with his school schedule and then our family schedule. We plan to visit Florida for a long weekend, DC and possibly NYC on a bus trip..

Tricia and Kevin Smith

