

## It's a BIG WORLD out there

Written by elizabeth Barrett  
Friday, 13 July 2012 15:06 -

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### Rotary exchange student returns home from a six -week stay in Germany

Gothenburg High School junior Carlin Daharsh celebrated her 16th birthday on June 13 with friends.

German friends in the state of Bavaria, located in the southeast part of Germany.

They ate pizza, watched a movie and talked all night.

All the friends she made during a six-week trip to Germany, as a Rotary exchange student, was the highlight of her trip, Daharsh said.

“That and the places I traveled.”

While abroad, Daharsh traveled to Scotland and England with her host family—the Weichlein’s and their two daughters— and throughout Bavaria with friends and the Rotary president of the district she was in, and his wife.

She brought back her exchange sister—Sarah Weichlein of Thümgfeld, Bavaria—to Gothenburg.

Daharsh left Gothenburg on May 16 and returned July 2. Weichlein will return to Germany on Aug. 24.

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Both are short-term exchanges as compared to the long-term, year exchange Daharsh wants to experience after graduation from high school.



In Germany, she attended Scheinfeld Gymnasium for a few weeks, which is a school for grades five through 12.

Although she knew little German, which was spoken in her high school and at her host home, Daharsh said teachers, friends and her host family spoke English.

“They helped me so much,” she said.

Still, she learned that language barriers are only difficult if “you make it that way.”

“That’s why I tried to remember to be myself and be as outgoing as possible,” Daharsh said. “You can’t expect people to adjust to you.

“You need to be able to adjust to their ways and language.”

Daharsh said she was impressed that most of the students in the school she attended spoke at least three languages, other than German, that included French, English and Latin.

What surprised her the most, she said, is how the Germans seem to value learning different

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languages.

She also enjoyed learning about the culture of Germany and Scotland.

While visiting a World War II museum in Nürnberg, Germany, Daharsh said she learned something interesting from Sonja—the district Rotary president's wife.

"Her father was in the Hitler youth program because he was pressured to do it by his friends, even though his parents didn't want him to."



In Scotland, the country's history made an impression on Daharsh such as how the Scots started the trade of masonry and their ideas about war.

Castles, both in Scotland and Germany, were another highlight.

One important lesson Daharsh learned on her trip was finding out she wasn't as big as what she thought she was.

"I go there and see Sarah speaking three languages and I only know English and a little Spanish," she said.

What Daharsh missed the most was Chinese food.

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"We did go to a Chinese restaurant and it was awful," she said with a laugh.

Although she has only been home for a few days, Daharsh said she missed her friends in Germany.

"We talked about everything," she said. "They were the most comfortable people I've ever been with."

And Weichlein's first impression of Gothenburg?

"Everything's so different, the fields are so straight and flat and it's so hot," she said.

[ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com](mailto:ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com)

308-537-3636