

The Last Word

A Traveler's Log

by Kathy Grasso

12-17-90

Tomorrow's the day! I'll go on my trip to Germany to see my folks again. Well, I should be all set. I've got all my things packed, and I even bought a new jacket to withstand the grizzly temperatures over there.

12-18-90

Sitting in the plane and enjoying the view. This trip is gonna be great! Only that I can't get rid of the feeling that I forgot something...

12-18-90, five minutes later.

I figured out what I forgot. My jacket! And the temperatures in Germany are around the freezing point. Well, what the heck; at least in here it's warm.

12-21-90

I've finally adjusted to the time change. But I'm still working on the culture change. I think Mom is convinced now that I am completely americanized. I only told her, at 8:30 pm, that I was going to run over to the store real quick to pick up a tooth brush. I forgot mine at home (another thing I forgot). All she said was: "Sure honey, you do that; may be you can get a glimpse of your new tooth brush through the window." Now I remember that in Germany, the stores don't stay open 24 hrs.

12-23-90

We went on a tour through Nürnberg today. They have a beautiful Christmas market downtown. I now also remember that the people here are really something else. It's because they're Bavarians. That's why they're so, uhm... well, hearty (nice way of saying that they're grumpy). We stopped at one of those little pretzel stands they have all over town, and this gentleman was in front of us to buy a pretzel. So when the lady is about to put the pretzel in a bag, he says, real nice-like, "Oh no, that's not necessary. I'll eat it right away. That way you can save a bag." You shoulda seen her. "What," she yells, "you're telling me about saving? I was already saving when you weren't even born yet. I don't need you to tell me how to save." The man almost dropped his pretzel and scurried off. So now my Mom buys two pretzels, and she says to the lady: "You know, some people mean to be nice but they don't know how to say it." And the lady replies: "Yeah, I'm tellin' ya, I've seen 'em all." And guess what my Mom says: "So true, but you know, I don't need a bag either." The lady almost jumps over her stand. Ouch Mom, wrong answer. I just kinda try to look like I don't belong to the group. We did end up with a bag for our pretzels.

12-24-90

It's Christmas Eve, and we're having dinner with all the people in Mom's apartment house. Everybody has brought a dish. Now that we've figured out who gets the white meat from the goose, we're all set. And it wasn't an easy thing to do either because we're eight people and there's only one little goose. I do think that I shouldn't have put all that much glitter on the table for decoration; everybody's got it stickin' to their knives and forks now.

12-26-90

I just met another of those hearty people today. I was on my way to a pharmacy to get some cold medicine (why did I have to forget that jacket?) and I got lost. Only three pharmacies are open in the whole city today because it's Second Christmas Day. Major holiday! Everything's closed. Anyway, there's this policeman, standing by a light post. I figure that he should know his way around, being a policeman and all. When I ask him if he can show me where the Obere Gasse is, he says that no he can't because he was told to stay put right there and wait for some food from Russia. (???) Strange, to say the least.

12-28-90

We almost got in trouble today. Mom and I went shopping downtown. In Nürnberg, there is a pretty good system of subways and cable cars, so you don't have to take your car and worry about parking space. Only, the cable car drivers drive like bats out of hell. You have to be quite fast to get in and out. Well, when we tried to get off at our destination, my Mom accidentally pushes a lady off the steps, which causes her to land on her behind. Of course, Mom is very apologetic. But the lady really doesn't care. "You Rierendvieh (which means dumb cow)," she yells, "I won't forget your face for the rest of my life." Not a very serious threat, considering that she's never seen my Mom before. Or ever will again, for that matter.

12-29-90

I went to feed the pigeons downtown. Actually, that's forbidden in Nürnberg because there are so many of them, and they're ruining all the historic buildings. But I wanted to pick up Mom from work and had to pass some time. So I'm just standing there, throwing bread to the pigeons, when this elderly man comes up to me. "Listen you," he says in German, "you darn well know you're not supposed to do that." I decide to act like I don't understand. "Oh yes," I say in English, "It's beautiful. Thank you very much." The old man changes his attitude. He says, again in German: "You not must little pigeons feed. Bad birdies. Make kaputt all churches." I nod, smile, and throw the

rest of my bread on the ground. "Bye bye," I say, and get out of there as fast as I can.

1-1-91

Today's New Year's Day. Another holiday. Last night was great. We went to see the fireworks everybody was shooting off by the castle of Nürnberg. Then, right after midnight, we all sat down and told ghost stories. We also made the New Year's resolution not to make any resolutions. That way we don't have to feel bad when we don't keep them.

1-7-91

On my way to the airport. My flight to the States leaves in two hours. I had so much fun, and it was great seeing my family again. Now, before I return to America, I have to do one more thing: buy a bag of these special gummy bears. They're gummy bears with a sort of marshmallow coating on one side, and they come in all shapes. Like little cars and alligators. I have not been able to get them in the States anywhere. Mom promised to send me a regular supply. Well ... good bye everybody. Hopefully, we'll see each other again soon.

Join The Small Talk Staff

Contact
Caroline Kearns
630-1133

Through The Grapevine

1. The New York Times food critic rates Methodist's cafeteria as one of the 10 best gourmet eating places in the world.
2. After a successful season, Methodist College football team has moved up to Division One football.
3. The Monarch women's soccer team won both games at Final Four.
4. Weekend campus life at Methodist attracts students from NC State and Carolina.
5. Academic standards at Methodist

KNOW THAT ONE?

Three Methodist College students are measuring a pole. Two of the students are holding up the pole, and the third has climbed to the top of it with a tape measure. Along comes Dr. Hendricks. "What are you doing, guys?" he asks. "Well, we're trying to find out how tall the pole is," they reply. "So why don't you just lay the pole down? That would simplify matters enormously!" "Oh thanks, Sir, but no," the MC students laugh, "you see, we don't wanna know how long the pole is, we wanna know how tall the pole is!"

BY THE WAY ...

Dr. Campbell, Department of Psychology, in response to a student's question about her score on the last test: "Let's see ... you really didn't do all that well on the test ... In fact, you failed it!!"

A student, after finding out that Good Friday is a holiday and will be a day off: "Oh really? Well, what day of the week is that?"

Top Ten Excuses For Failing The Writing Proficiency Exam

By Colleen Witt

1. All the English classes I got A's in was a dream
2. My mind got blank.
3. I ate a big meal before the exam and all the blood from my brain went into my stomach.
4. I didn't understand all the topic.
5. The lady sitting next to me wouldn't stop crying.
6. I had to go to the bathroom during the hole exam.
7. I was working on my thesis statement when I suddenly realized an hour and a half was past.
8. I guess the Bud I drank to help me relax during the exam worked to well.
9. I couldn't take Johnny off my mind.
10. I couldn't come up with the cash.

are far higher than those at Duke University.

6. Arnold Palmer will design our new 18 hole golf course.
7. Fayetteville recently was chosen one of the best places to live in the entire United States.
8. Recruiting is heavy for the new Swim-and-Dive team.
9. MIT recruits from Methodist for its graduate programs.
10. Methodist's tuition will be lowered next year.