

LIFESTYLES

Exchange student returns to Kings Mountain

by Beth Brock
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Many things have changed in Lisa Wetzel's life in the past ten years. But one thing that hasn't changed very much is Kings Mountain.

Lisa was a German exchange student in 2002-2003 at Kings Mountain High School. While attending KMHS, she was a member of the tennis team, the track team, and the swim team.

When asked for one of her most vivid memories of KMHS was, she was quick to respond with "the dress code." Lisa recounted several occasions when she was asked to return home to change her clothes. Being tall, and thin, she found it difficult to purchase suitable "American" clothes that fit her properly.

One of many other high school memories was that in Kings Mountain, she attended school much longer each day than in Germany. School in Germany normally was out by one or two o'clock in the afternoon. Lisa enjoyed visiting with sixth graders at Kings Mountain Intermediate School, where her American mother was a teacher.

Lisa is visiting her Kings Mountain family, Lynda and Randy Frye. It was a beautiful, sunny fall day, sitting out by the lake, listening to Lisa and Lynda reminisce about her year in Kings Mountain ten years ago. They talked about going to Lake Lure on the "Dirty Dancing" tour, and knocking on the door of the house where Patrick

Swayze had stayed. Unfortunately, no one came to the door, but they still seemed excited to be so close to movie fame. Lisa also enjoyed her other trips with the Frye family to Washington, DC, and to Myrtle Beach. She recounted her memories of driving everywhere she went with her Kings Mountain family. In Germany, she was more accustomed to cycling around, or taking a train.

It took her some time to get accustomed to the TV constantly being on, because she felt it was a waste of power. But it didn't take long before she began to enjoy watching many TV shows with the Fryes, and realizing why Americans leave their TVs on so much of the time. Lisa and Lynda discussed the different foods that she grew to love: Krispy Kreme doughnuts, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and marshmallow fluff. It took Lisa some time to get used to eating her biggest meal at night. In Germany, the biggest meal was eaten at midday. The down side of her eating experience was that she left Kings Mountain weighing thirty pounds more than when she arrived. She was soon able to lose the weight after returning to Germany.

Homesick? "No," Lisa was quick to reply. She said that as far as she could recall, she only felt homesick "one little time." And she was fortunate to have a visit from her family over spring break. She accompanied them on a vacation to Florida.

When asked the most difficult thing she had to adapt



Lisa Wetzel and Lynda Frye took time to carve pumpkins by the lake during Lisa's recent visit to Kings Mountain. photo by BETH BROCK

to, when returning to Germany, Lisa stated that it was the language. She had even started dreaming in English, and knew the words to all the popular American songs, even if she didn't know the meanings. Before coming to America, she had already memorized many of the American songs.

Lisa completed her last two years of high school in Germany, and then attended Leuphana Universitat Luneburg. She has a degree in Cultural Sciences and Urban Studies. After college, she was an events planner in Hamburg for two years. She is currently seeking employment in Berlin. Boxing is Lisa's new interest, and feels that it helps keep her fit. She hasn't been in any boxing competitions yet, but looks

forward to competitive boxing in the future.

Lynda and Lisa went on a walking tour of Kings Mountain, and she was amazed at the businesses that were closed on Wednesdays. She was given a Kings Mountain mug at City Hall, and expressed her appreciation for the gift. She enjoyed meeting some of the business people in downtown Kings Mountain. She thinks that, even though they Kings Mountain and Berlin—where she lives—are very different, she loves both. She said that most people living in the city in Berlin do not have the large homes and yards that she sees and loves here in Kings Mountain. But, she was quick to admit that she also loves living just outside the large city of Berlin.

Lynda and Lisa were busily carving jack-o-lanterns, discussing how they could make pie filling from the pulp, and bake the seeds. I asked Lisa if Halloween was celebrated in Germany, like it is here, and she stated that it is slowly catching on. People are beginning to carve pumpkins, and some children now trick or treat. Lynda jokingly said that Lisa had taken the tradition back with her in 2003.

Lisa came to Kings Mountain as a side trip while traveling across Canada. She took a course in Berlin, last year, sponsored by the University of Toronto, and met many new Canadian friends. She planned her Canada trip around visiting many of her new friends. Traveling is in her blood, she stated, and she

has traveled extensively across Europe and Asia.

Since her first visit to Kings Mountain, Lisa has visited twice, for various Frye family functions. She is now in the process of convincing Lynda to come visit her in Germany. Lynda is ready to go, when she can make arrangements. In the meantime, they will continue to stay in touch with each other via Facebook, and Lisa explained how easy it would be if they began communicating through Skype. It was heartwarming to see so much love shared between these two lovely ladies.

Note: Anyone interested in hosting an exchange student can contact Ginger Jeffcoat, with American Institute of Foreign Studies, at: 704-209-1714.



HALLOWEEN HOUSE

Cathy Hardin has continued a tradition at her home for years and this season is no different. Her Halloween house at 305 E. Parker Street is decorated with the signs of the season.

photo by BETH BROCK

Kellstrom wins 3rd straight state title



Sophia Kellstrom won her third straight state title in the International Junior Miss State Pageant, on Oct. 20. The pageant was held at the Citizen's Center Auditorium in Lincoln. Sophia excelled in all levels of the pageant: the on-stage introduction, judges' interview, and walk. Next July, Sophia will represent North Carolina, as Miss NC Junior Teen, at the national level.

Sophia, who will turn 13 on Nov. 10, is the daughter of Molara and Garry Kellstrom of Kings Mountain. She is home-schooled, and is a member of Cleveland County Home-School Association, and S.H.A.R.E. (Shaping Home-Schoolers for Accountability, Respect, and Excellence.)

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Madelynn Frye, daughter of Wesley and Elicia Frye of Claremont, won the Girls 12 Division of the Chitty Family Memorial tennis tournament this weekend in Shelby. Round one Madelynn won 6-0, 6-0; round two Madelynn won 6-0, 6-0. In the finals Madelynn won 6-0, 7-6 in a tie breaker. This is her first year playing tennis. She is the granddaughter of Randy and Lynda Frye of Kings Mountain.