



Welcome to the March edition of the new and fresh YFU – PE newsletter!

This monthly newsletter is intended to serve the YFU volunteer network in Port Elizabeth and the surrounding regions of the Eastern Cape. Whether you are an exchange student, host family, volunteer or even if you are just interested in YFU and its activities, this newsletter will be of interest to you!

Read about international exchanges, experiences and past activities, keep up to date with the “YFU – PE Agenda” and get in touch with the YFU community. Do you want to contribute or comment? - drop us a line, you can find the contact details on the last page. Enjoy and greetings to all!

Did you know that...



YFU has exchanged nearly a quarter of a million people since it was founded in 1951 in the USA? Around 4 thousand students go global with YFU every year!

The YFU – PE Agenda:

1 March 2006 (wed): Application deadline for programmes with departure in August 2006. Exceptions apply, enquire for details.

31 March 2006 (fri): Application deadline for most short term programmes in July/August 2006. Exceptions apply, enquire for details.

22 April 2006 (sat): YFU-DAY. An information and training day for volunteers. Location: 17 Brighton Drive, Summerstrand, 9.30-13.00 am, please confirm attendance

1 June 2006 (thu): Application deadline for programmes with departure in January 2007. Exceptions apply, enquire for details.

WWW.YFU.ORG.ZA - Volunteering for YFU

On the website from YFU you can find not only information about the various exchange programmes that YFU offers but also about many other aspects of our international volunteer organisation. For example you can read more about becoming a volunteer: “There are many ways in which one can get involved with our amazing organization. YFU is a non-profit organization, and has a tradition of maintaining a strong ethos of volunteerism. We therefore welcome anybody to become a volunteer for us! Volunteering for YFU is not only restricted to our former exchange students, host families or natural parents of exchange students, but is open to anyone who wants to participate in an organization that is amazingly multi-cultural and a true demonstration of what we mean with the ‘Rainbow Nation!’ ” The website also lists some reasons why you should volunteer for Youth for Understanding such as learning and sharing new skills at trainings and workshops, meeting new people, help prepare the youth for their leadership roles in South Africa and to learn more about other cultures and countries. So why not join us on the YFU Day on April 22 and see what interests you?



Hosting issue

The next issue of the YFU PE Newsletter will be focussing on becoming a host family. Why should you host? What does it take to be a host family? And what is it actually like to be a host family? What makes hosting such a special and lifelong experience? All these issues will be discussed, so keep an eye out for the next issue! (or contact Remco Vrolijk for your copy)



Exchange Experience

Every month you can read about the experiences of one of our exchange students. This month: Q&A with Fanny Stromer from Germany who is on exchange in Port Elizabeth.

What made you decide to go on exchange?

I wanted to see something new, something different. I guess I wanted a change in my life and go and explore the world.

How did your parents react when you told them you wanted to go abroad?

They didn't really want to send or chase me away but they supported my decision. They said that if this is what I want then they will be behind me.

Did you have any fears or hesitations?

Well, you don't really have a good idea of what it will be like when you go on exchange so I didn't really know what to expect. Also you don't just wonder about how it will be there but also you don't know what will happen to your life back home. But I was actually very positive about it all so I didn't worry too much.

How has it been so far?

It is great. It is the best thing that ever happened to me. Going on exchange has really made me discover who I am. And I have met so many great people! Maybe not everything has been great but the bad things also contributed to the whole experience and that also helped to put me where I am. I don't regret anything that happened during my year so far. I would not have wanted it any other way, because although maybe it didn't go perfectly I wouldn't have gotten the same out of it if it would have gone perfectly.

What are some of the good and bad things that happened to you here in PE?

Well, there are plenty of good things like meeting and living with my host family. Apart from that doing new and different things and also the changes in my personality. I guess a bad thing was the weight I gained this year!

What about your friends and family in Germany. Do you miss them?

I do miss my friends and family sometime, but that makes you independent. Plus I have never felt homesick.

Any advice for other students that are thinking about going on exchange?

Yeah, just do it! If you ever have the opportunity to go on exchange, go for it!



Wish you were here! Greetings from ... the USA

YFU South Africa offers programmes to various countries worldwide. Every month you can read something about a different country you could be exchanging to. This month features the United States of America where YFU was founded in 1951. It is still one of the most popular countries among exchange students worldwide.



So who are these Americans? What makes them tick? Go to the USA with YFU and find out what lies behind "American nationality". Become part of their pulsing, energetic, technology conditioned lifestyles. Find out about their unique adaptability and ingenuity - for Americans pride themselves on being problem-solvers and solution-seekers. The USA is said to be a country full of evolutionary ideas and unbelievably swift social changes. The size and diversity of the land itself, more than three and a half million square miles of every kind of topography, and every climate under the sun will surely impress you, whether it's the hot south or the cooler north.

Native Americans, have populated the continent for over 35,000 years before Europeans arrived. But the USA has been called a "nation of immigrants because since the founding of the USA, more than 60 million immigrants have arrived in the country. Whether they were colonists who had been arriving since the 16th century, the African American population who were largely brought over in slavery, or immigrants who arrived in the late 18th century, they created a society that has often been called "the melting pot". Immigration contributed to the expansion of the USA while offering opportunities to people suffering political, economic or religious oppression in other lands. Immigrants have helped build railroads, cities, and industries. They have left their mark on the arts, sciences, religion, and political life of the USA. The USA has the largest foreign-born population in its history - 22.6 million people (8.7 % of the total population).

With only 4.7 % of the world's population, the USA makes, buys, and uses more than one-third of the world's goods and services - more than any other single nation. People believe in the value of work beyond earning a salary. The Puritan work ethic - "a life of pleasure is sinful; hard work is ennobling" - still influences life in the USA. Americans want money and goods, but they also are very generous, especially to the underprivileged, the less fortunate, and those whom disaster strikes.

Twenty-five years of social change has led to a very different set of expectations for family life in the nation. Nonetheless, in spite of the rising numbers of single and divorced people, 93 % of the US population says families are still important. The average US family size is small because people marry late in life, or postpone having children until they finish school or start a career. From the late 1940s to the 1970s, many Americans shared a vision of what they wanted for their lives, their families, and their country. Between 1950 and 1973, average family income doubled moving masses of Americans from the edge of poverty to modest material comfort.

The US educational system consists of approximately 23,000 secondary schools of which 11 % are private. More than 80 % of US citizens over the age of 25 have graduated from high school, and nearly 22 % have bachelor's degrees or higher. Most YFU learners are enrolled in public high schools. Extracurricular activities, such as sports, are a big part of high school student life in the USA. If you want to experience it all for yourself, get in touch with YFU and enjoy a year in this fascinating country!



Host family braai

Saturday the 25th of February there was a braai for all the host families and the exchange students in the Port Elizabeth region. The evening was hosted by Linda and Rob Judd who were so generous and hospitable to offer to organise the braai at their house. It was a nice evening that started at 6 pm. It was a good opportunity for the host families to share experiences and for the exchange students to see each other again and catch up on things.



After everyone arrived there were 27 people in total, a good turnout, and so the meat was put on the braai and while everyone was waiting for the food to get ready, some had a nice cool dip in the pool. There was plenty of food, delicious salads that Linda Judd and Sandra Moolman had made and a nice pudding afterwards. When everyone was full and some were dried up from their swim in the pool the evening slowly came to an end. We can look back on a successful activity. A big thanks to all the host families for their support this year and a special thanks to Linda and Rob Judd for putting in their time and effort to help organise the braai!

The YFU exchange students from Estonia, Germany and the Netherlands and the regional coordinator who are in PE this year:



Contact Details

Remco Vrolijk
Intern – PE Regional Coordinator

Tel.: 082 4644 197
Email: pe@yfu.org.za

YFU South Africa office in Cape Town:
15 Vlei Street, Bellville, 7530
PO BOX 334, Bellville, 7535
Phone: 021 946 3773
Fax: 021 946 3783
Email: info@yfu.org.za
Website: www.yfu.org.za