

eurAuPair GAZETTE

Intercultural Child Care Programs

A Publication for EurAuPair Program Participants and Friends Around the World!

Summer 2010 • Volume 46

AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

Welcome to America! This fascinating country is a multicultural nation, home to a wide variety of ethnic groups, traditions, and values. Aside from the now small Native American and Native Hawaiian populations, nearly all Americans or their ancestors immigrated within the past five centuries. As in every culture, holidays and celebrations are the reflection of customs and traditions that unites a nation.

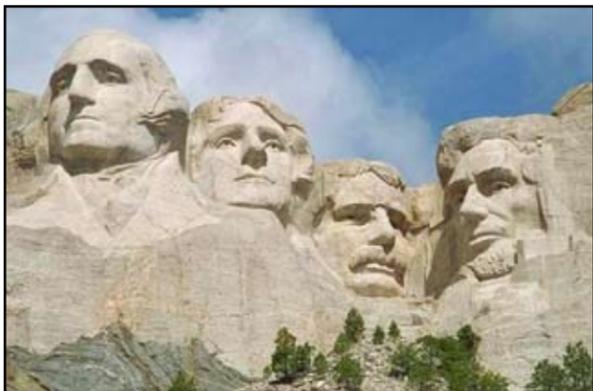
In the US, Federal holidays are designated by Congress. If a holiday falls on a Saturday it is celebrated the preceding Friday; and if it falls on a Sunday it will be celebrated the following Monday. The Congress can also designate federal observances - days, weeks, months, and other periods for the commemoration, or recognition of events, individuals, or other topics.



Martin Luther King Jr.

Every third Monday in January schools, federal offices, post offices and banks across America close as we celebrate the birth, the life and the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000. Martin Luther King Jr. was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. He became famous around the world after his speech "I have a dream" on August 28, 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC.

Washington's Birthday is the official name designated to what many of us know as Presidents Day. Every 3rd Monday of February the US honors two of our greatest Presidents - George Washington and



Mount Rushmore

Abraham Lincoln - with a federal holiday. Today, this holiday has become well known for being a day in which many stores, especially car dealers, hold sales. Until the late 1980s, corporate businesses generally closed on this day. With the late 1980s advertising push to rename the holiday, more and more businesses are staying open on the holiday each year.

Formerly known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day commemorates U.S. soldiers who died while in the military service. It is celebrated every last Monday in May. First enacted to honor Union soldiers of the American Civil War and was then extended after World War I to honor Americans who have died in all wars.

Many people observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries and memorials. A national moment of remembrance takes place at 3 p.m. local time. Another tradition is to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff from dawn until noon local time. The National Memorial Day Concert takes place every year on the west lawn of the United States Capitol. Music is performed, and respect is paid to the men and women who gave their lives for their country.

In the United States, Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776. Independence Day is marked by patriotic displays, often taking place outdoors. Many politicians make it a point on this day to appear at a public event to praise the nation's heritage, laws, history, society, and people. Families often celebrate by hosting or attending a picnic or barbecue and take advantage of the day off and, in some years, long weekend to gather with relatives. Decorations (e.g., streamers, balloons, and clothing) are generally colored red, white, and blue, the colors of the American flag. Parades often are in the morning, while fireworks displays occur in the evening at such places as parks, fairgrounds, or town squares.

The first Labor Day (every first Monday in September) in the United States was celebrated in 1882 in New York City. In the aftermath of the deaths of a number of workers at the hands of the US military and US Marshals during the 1894 Pullman Strike, President Cleveland put reconciliation with Labor as a top political priority. The form for the celebration was outlined in the first proposal of the holiday: A street parade to exhibit "the strength and esprit corps of the trade and labor organizations," followed by a festival for the workers and their families. Nowadays, speeches by prominent men and women were introduced later, as more emphasis was placed upon the economic and civil significance of the holiday.

Many countries in the New World and elsewhere celebrate the anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas, which occurred on October 21, 1492 in the modern Gregorian calendar, as an official holiday. Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October) became a federal holiday in 1934. However, people have celebrated Columbus' voyage since the colonial period. Actual observance varies in different parts of the United States,

ranging from large-scale parades and events to complete non-observance. It remains a celebration in New York State, and government offices and public schools are closed.

Veterans Day is an annual United States holiday honoring the 24.9 million American military veterans. A federal holiday is observed on November 11, which is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I. (Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 with the German signing of the Armistice). Many sites around the country will host parades, ceremonies, military exhibits, and tributes that will honor America's heroes.

Thanksgiving, celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, has been an annual tradition in the United States since

1863. Thanksgiving was historically a religious observance to give thanks to God. It is thought that the "first" Thanksgiving was celebrated to give thanks to God for helping the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony survive the brutal winter. Certain kinds of food are traditionally served at Thanksgiving meals. Firstly, baked or roasted turkey is usually the featured item

on any Thanksgiving feast table (so much so that Thanksgiving is sometimes referred to as "Turkey Day"). Stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, sweet corn, other fall vegetables, and pumpkin pie are commonly associated with Thanksgiving



U.S. Memorial

dinner. During Thanksgiving Day families and friends usually gather for a large meal or dinner. Consequently the Thanksgiving holiday weekend is one of the busiest travel periods of the year. Thanksgiving is a four-day or five-day weekend vacation for schools and colleges. Most business and government workers are given Thanksgiving and the day after as paid holidays. Thanksgiving is by far the holiday the most inherent to the North American culture, as it also is celebrated in Canada, but at a different date.

Now you know more about American holidays! You may also want to check out what other days are observed in your state. Au pairs can ask their host families how they celebrate those holidays, and families can share their own traditions with their au pairs, because family values are the core of the customs and traditions practiced here in the United States.



Veteran's Cemetery



Thanksgiving Dinner

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About Us...

EurAuPair Intercultural Child Care Programs is a non-profit, public benefit organization designated by the U.S. Department of State to conduct the Au Pair cultural exchange program under the Fulbright Hays Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 and is intended "to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges".

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Our Trip to the 21st Annual Renaissance Festival

By Community Counselor Nadine Reinders, Phoenix, AZ

When planning our monthly meetings, I try to give my au pairs an all-around American experience or something totally unique to our great state, Arizona. This month, we experienced the 21st Annual Renaissance Festival in southeast Phoenix. Picture 200 acres of medieval Renaissance architecture, knights on horseback, damsels in distress, Kings

and Queens parading the streets and the occasional animal of the wild kingdom then you will have an idea as to what it would have been like to have lived in England in the 14th Century. It was an incredible sight and unlike anything I have ever seen, we even got an occasional glimpse of Queen Elizabeth I.

What would a Renaissance Festival be with out a sword swallowing show, elephant

rides, turkey legs or jousting Knights of the Round Table? We asked ourselves the same question and lucky for us, we didn't have to find out.

After spending a full day enjoying all the festivities, eating the great food and

experiencing the 14th Century to the fullest, the 21st annual Renaissance Festival will forever be a fond memory for Sabrina Shankula, Kathrin Waldmann (both from Germany) and me.



Sabrina Schankula (Germany) riding the elephant!



From left to right: Kathrin Waldmann, Sabrina Schankula (both from Germany) and Community Counselor Nadine Reinders

EurAupair Builds Life-long Lasting Memories!

By Community Counselor Hilary Hogan and Andrea Milas Mikes, Columbus, OH

Hilary:

"My 7 years with EurAupair were full of fun, learning moments, helping families and au pairs. Learning about other cultures was very great experience. Our monthly meetings have always been fun, with Cedar Point, picnics, trips to Niagara Falls, haunted houses, holiday exchanges, an American Thanksgiving, bowling, high ropes, horseback riding, canoeing... Along with all the cultural events, The Underground Railroad Museum, carving pumpkins, an old town in Cincinnati, conservatory's, museums, baseball games I could go on and on... I will miss all of this.

I met great counselors throughout the years, one whom I will always be a friend with as our lives go on! Loved the all day counselor meetings too, a chance for us to talk all about EurAupair changes and such, the lunch was always great! The Area Coordinators have been such a great help. They have helped my through these years every time very quickly and have resolved everything.

I can always look back on my time with EurAupair and smile. Thank you EurAupair."

Andrea:

"When I first decided to be a EurAupair counselor four years ago, I wanted to 'give back' the good karma I received when I studied abroad in Sweden. The wonderful people I met there went out of their way to make my experience a fantastic and memorable one. I wanted to do the same for the au pair girls during their years here! I

hope I was able to positively influence their experience - let them know they weren't alone and that they had a friend.

I never expected to get so much back... these past years I have met so many incredible, outgoing people. I've enjoyed meeting families in my area, working with other community counselors who became good friends and meeting the coordinators who make it all run so smoothly with a smile. But most importantly I've met and befriended lovely young ladies. These girls amaze me with their strength, optimism, outgoing personalities, and genuine passion for life. I've envied their sense of adventure and willingness to try new things. Our girls are not only dedicated, responsible, loving caregivers, they are great friends, thoughtful volunteers, engaged students, and avid travelers. They embark on their years here with an open mind and heart... now that's a lesson for us all! I've learned so much from the girls in Columbus, OH, and am so thankful to have known them. I know that my life is richer and more complete by having been their counselor.

Although it was a tough decision, I taking a break from being a counselor to focus all of my time and energy on my new baby daughter - she is the greatest joy in my life. I wish all of the EurAupair girls a fun, memorable year full of wonderful experiences."

Thank you Hilary and Andrea, for all your work as Community Counselors for EurAupair over all these years and for making a difference in the lives of the young ladies in Columbus, OH!



From left to Right: Nicole Jakob (Germany), Hannah Kuhlmann (Germany), Laetita Rouis (France), LuLu Benedix (Germany), Community Counselor Hilary Hogan, Community Counselor Andrea Milas Mikes and Birgit Munzhuber (Germany)



The Movie night from left to right: Anissa Madani (France), Anissa's friend, Community Counselor Andrea Milas Mikes, Hannah Kuhlmann (Germany), Laetita Rouis (France), Birgit Munzhuber (Germany), Roberta Pinto (Brazil), new Community Counselor Rachel Walters, Community Counselor Hilary Hogan and Svenja Koj (Germany) at the front

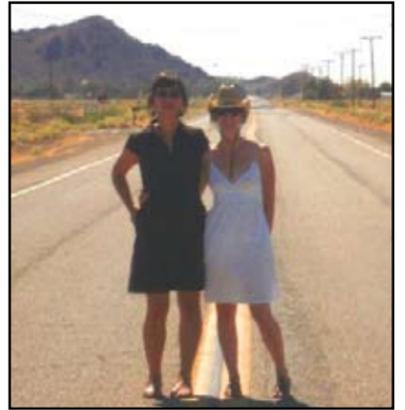
EurAupair Photos



On Saturday June 12th St. Louis hosted the Komen Race for the Cure for Breast Cancer. Maria Ploetz (Germany) ran in the race and shared these photos



Arizona au pair Sabrina Schankula (Germany) with the host children



Route 66 - California au pairs Lorraine Mitre and Solenne Frappeau (both from France)



Cultural Event at the Fort Lee Historic Park and Museum. Left to right: Gwladys Martineau (France), Nicole Rudolph (Germany) and Kerstin Kamm (Germany) pose from a scenic lookout just under the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, New Jersey. The Cultural Event included a visit to the Revolutionary War Museum and use of observation telescopes to view the New York City skyline from a northern perspective



Community Counselor Marita Falconer



EurAupair, represented by Executive Director Susan Hayes, receives a certificate for being an IAPA member for 10 years



Sailing on San Francisco Bay, a beautiful day with just the right amount of wind. Au pairs: Elisa Alisch (Germany), Corinna Rogg (Germany), Natalie Vance (South Africa) and Community Counselor Andrea Geisinger



Malika Berniard (pictured, France) and her Community Counselor Pat Vance visited the Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival in Wakarusa, Indiana in April. Wakarusa is a small rural community with many Amish people



Au pair group from Cincinnati, OH. Due to rain they had their meeting inside their favorite cafe. From left to right: Natalia Surdu (Moldova), Sarah Romanoff (France), Community Counselor Gema Bahns, Isabelle Hennig (Germany), Helena Nickels (Germany), and Maria-Sophie Paethke (Germany)



Basalt, CO: Au pair Maria Paula Roux Lertora (Argentina) with the Gerardi host family



Au pairs canoeing at Fort Ancient, Ohio. Thank you to au pair Mareike Gleitsmann (Germany) for submitting the picture!



Jana Jessen and Maïke Gross (both from Germany) pose with the President at the wax museum in Los Angeles



Ilona Kinnunen (Finland) and Jana Jessen (Germany) celebrate the Los Angeles Lakers championship in downtown LA



Community Counselor Matt Kreke submitted this photo from the June 13th meeting at Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio. From left to right: Milla Äikäs (Finland), Marina Soboleva (Moldova), Anja Schroeder (Germany) and visiting twin sister of Marina, Larisa Soboleva



Vista Point, Sausalito, CA, from left to right: Elisa Alisch (Germany) Community Counselor Andrea Geisinger, Ophelie Birrer (France) and Corinna Rogg (Germany)

Ride 'em Cowboy!!

By Community Counselor Nancy Szulga, Newport Beach, CA

The Southern California combined group of au pairs, led by Community Counselors LeeAnn Harvey and Nancy Szulga, had their Cultural Meeting at an authentic rodeo in Lakeside, California, San Diego County. Twenty girls, friends and family members ventured the one hour drive down from Newport Beach, California where the steers, bulls and horses tried to avoid being lassoed or hog-tied, while others tried their best to buck cowboy riders off their back. They all put on quite a show.

Jasmin Lorenz from Germany had her parents visiting and brought them with her to experience the Rodeo. Even an au pair from Riverside, Ina Rosca (Moldova), made the long drive down to attend our cultural event and meet the girls. In attendance were Ida Jefimoff and Ilona Kinnunen (both from Finland), Daniela Salazar (Mexico) and her friend Bahareh, Tiffany Murawka, Marine Meyer and Alice Groheux (from France), Jana Jessen, Maike Grosse, and Julia Schild (from Germany).

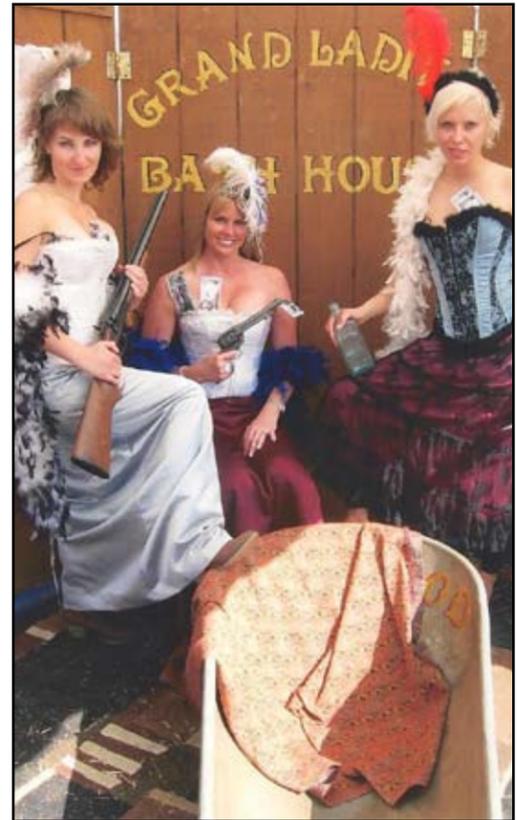
It was a beautiful sunny day in San

Diego and a wonderful experience for all of us to share. Our next cultural event, will be closer to home and will involve a different form of 'riding', but this time instead of a

bull, it will include a surfboard in Huntington Beach "Surf City" for the U.S. Open of Surfing!!!



Southern California au pairs enjoying the rodeo!



San Diego au pairs Mayya Mykulych (Ukraine), community counselor Lisa Dupre and Tora Lutzen (Faroe Islands, Denmark) had fun dressing up in style for the picture! Thank you Lisa!!



EurAupair Au Pairs visit the Montclair Art Museum

By Community Counselor Marita Falconer, Bergen County, NJ

The Montclair Art Museum was the perfect setting for a Cultural Event on a bright, windy day in April. The museum specializes in American art with a concentration on Native American as well as African American works. This month, a featured exhibition is A Force for Change. Julius Rosenwald, the founder of Sears, was a philanthropist who established a foundation to support outstanding African American artists. Rosenwald saw a

connection between the Jewish and African American struggles for equality and was inspired by the work of his friend, Booker T. Washington.

Gazette Info...

The EurAupair Gazette is published four times a year. It is provided free of charge to EurAupair Host Families, EurAupair Au Pairs, EurAupair Community Counselors and staff, and friends of the EurAupair program around the world. Any copyright material published with the written permission of the publisher and is so indicated. Any other material may be used for publication without permission of EurAupair.

From left to right: Lucie Muszynski, Charlotte Damecourt, Claire Galuzet (all from France) and Ana Rocha (Brazil) pose outside the Montclair Art Museum

EurAupair Au Pairs Visit the MOMA!

By Community Counselor Maureen McIntyre from Rockland County, New York

I became a Community Counselor after being a EurAupair host family for two years due to encouragement from my local Community Counselor. This is my third year as a counselor and I have been lucky to meet au pairs from all over the world! I have worked with au pairs from Germany, France, Japan, Turkey, Ukraine, Mexico and each of them has enriched my life by sharing their native cultures with me.

My group went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MOMA) in New York City as our Cultural Event in April. We loved exploring many of the exhibits and even went to the Journey to the Stars Space Show, Butterfly Conservatory and the Lizards and Snakes Live show.

I am glad that I have had this opportunity to meet these unique au pairs and offer them advice and guidance during their year working here in the USA.



From left to right: Community Counselor Maureen McIntyre, Lindsay Cavero (France), Mathilde Lejeune (France), Angelique Le Franc (France), and Viktoria Koske (Germany), but we were missing our friend Ann Christin Moritzer (Germany) as she was at the Jonas Brothers Concert with her host family!

Photos & Stories Wanted!

Pick out the best pictures you have taken and tell us...

- Who
- When
- What
- Where

and maybe even how or why! We'll take it from there!

Send them to:
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