



ILLINOIS

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2024-2026

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October 2025

IL IFYE Fall Meeting

The IL IFYE Fall Meeting will be held Saturday, **October 18, 2025** at the home of Larry Wachtel; **15048 North Haarmann Avenue; Effingham IL 62401**. The meeting will begin at 10 AM with coffee, juice, and snacks available at 9:30 AM.

Friday, October 17th: Meet at **The Cross** of Effingham at 4:30 pm. Although, the visitor's center closes at 4 pm, they will open for us if we have 12 or more there. We will view a video on the construction of The Cross. After that we can view the various exhibits around The Cross. The address is: 1604 W. Pike Avenue; Effingham IL 62401. www.crossusa.org

Friday, October 17th: We will have Supper at **Fujiyama Japanese Steak House**; 1302 Avenue of Mid America; Effingham IL 62401. Estimate time is 6 pm.

Following the meal we will adjourn to the basement of Larry's home. At 7:30 pm we will have a Whiskey Tasting event. You will be taught the proper way to taste whiskey. What is Bourbon? Are Bourbons whiskey? This will be conducted by a gentleman who is well versed in Whiskeys.

Saturday, October 18th: IL IFYE Fall Meeting 10 AM with coffee, juice and snacks at 9:30 AM. A report on European Conference will be given.

Saturday, 12 noon: Lunch at **Pinky's**, a dining place on the shore of Lake Sara. 8726 E. Marina Road; Effingham IL 62401.

Saturday, 18th 1:30 PM we will Tour the **Monastery Museum** in Teutopolis IL-3 miles East of Effingham on U.S. 40. The Museum opened in 1975 and thus this is their 50th Anniversary. 110 South Garrett Street; Teutopolis IL.

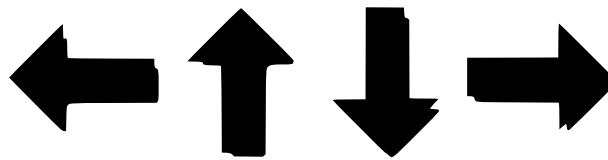
Saturday, 18th: The evening meal will be at the **Gabby Goat American Pub and Grill**; 303 East Fayette Avenue; Effingham IL. They moved into a new and bigger facility this fall as the original place is being torn down due to widening of Fayette Avenue.

Following the meal, we will return to **Larry's basement** for a social time. Larry has a refrigerator in the basement for keeping food cold from Friday night and a Microwave for heating snacks. Bring snacks and drinks for both Friday and Saturday night's social time.

Sunday, October 19th: Depart for home or attend the church of your choice in Effingham. For those who attend church in Effingham, we can have a group Dinner at **Niemerg's Steakhouse** Sunday noon.

Lodging Facilities: Quality Inn; 1304 West Evergreen Avenue; Effingham IL 62401. The price of the rooms is \$76.57 per night for single or double room. (Pet fee is \$15 per pet per night) Call **217-347-5050 for reservations** and our group name is: IFYE. **Reservations are due by October 10th.**

NOTE: Due to my physical limitations, I have asked Dale & Crystal Yonker, Paul Rice & Helen Obernagel to help me this weekend. My sincere thanks to them.



Directions to my house: **Take** exit 160 from I-57/I-70 and go West about 3 miles on IL 32/33 to Lake Sara Road/1000 Street. There is a Phillips 66 and Dollar General Store at this Intersection. Turn left, South and go 2 miles to North Shore/1500 Avenue. This is a T intersection. Turn left, East and go about ½ mile to Haarmann Avenue and turn left, North on Haarmann. My House is the third one on the right.

Host Family Report from Marty Orris

Maria Francisca Valenzuela was the inbound IFYE staying in Illinois this summer. She is 18 years old and hails from Linares, Chile. Her hometown is about 200 miles south of the capital of Santiago and is nestled in the foothills of the Andes Mountain range that divides Chile and Argentina. This 2-month experience was her very first trip away from family and friends.

Wayne & Katie Gehrke of Elgin were Maria's first hosts. While not IFYEs themselves Wayne is the son of Beth Gehrke (Switzerland 1979) and twin brother of Carolyn Gehrke (Germany 2010). In addition to showing Maria about life on the farm they were also able to take her to downtown Chicago for a day and up to southern Wisconsin to visit a large dairy farm. Maria enjoyed the 4th of July parades, fireworks and concerts while spending time with the Gehrkes.

On July 8 Maria transitioned to rural Tazewell County to spend a few weeks with Caroline Ahrends (IL-Japan 2017, IL-Costa Rica 2019) and Jason & Marty Orris (MO – Germany 1994). While there Maria enjoyed kayaking on the lake and conversing with Caroline in Spanish. Some of her excursions with Caroline & Marty included the Caterpillar Visitor's Center in Peoria, the American Giants Museum in Atlanta and a very hot trip to Busch Stadium to watch the St. Louis Cardinals get pounded by the San

Diego Padres. During these weeks Maria also spent many hours at the McLean County Fair with hosts Theresa Chambers, Carolyn Hansen and Anita & Eff Embree.

On July 27 Maria met her final host Helen Obernagel (IL to France 1978). Helen lined up a whole array experiences for Maria including helping at a Bible school, horseback riding, sweet corn processing, and visits to grain elevators, feed mills, veterinarians and the Amish market. Together they traveled to the World Shooting Sports Complex in Sparta, IL and to the top of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. Helen introduced Maria to a number of IFYEs from Southern Illinois and Paul Rice showed her some highlights in Springfield and transported her back to Normal IL for a farewell gathering at the home of Ray & Carol Ropp on August 22.

When many of us were IFYEs the primary communication vehicles were handwritten letters and/or very infrequent and very expensive phone calls. Now our inbounds can be connected with family back home throughout the day if WI-FI is available. All three hosts recognized that easy access to technology is often a distraction for our guests. While Google Translate was a great tool for Maria who had limited English and many of us who have limited Spanish it turned relationship building into a very transactional experience.

Our feedback to the Chilean embassy is that future IFYEs need to have prior experiences living away from home, well-developed English skills and demonstrate a natural curiosity to learn and experience new things.

IFYE Dinner



Some IL IFYE's gathered at the Mascoutah Steakhouse August 19th in Mascoutah IL for fellowship with inbound IFYE Maria Francisca Valenzuela Monsalve. Pictured above from left to right are Hope Heslop, Crystal Yonker, Helen Obernagel, Larry Wachtel (seated), Maria, Joel Hickman, Gwenne Hickman, and Dale Yonker. Helen was the host family for Maria.

IL IFYE's In Colorada



Pictured above are IL IFYE's who were at the National IFYE Conference in Loveland CO May 28 to June 1, 2025.

From left, Nancy Maxwell Rich (OR), Carolyn Hansen, Dale Yonker, Mary K , Munson (KS), Eff Embree, Mark Ramage, Crystal Yonker, Anita Ramage, Anita Embree, Toni Frank, Marty Tarter, Larry Wachtel, Paul Rice, and Hope Heslop. Marty Orris was absent from the Photo.

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Registration for Fall IFYE Meeting

Name(s): _____

Meeting at the Cross Friday, 17th _____ Number

Dinner at Fujiyama Steak House, 17th _____ Number

Annual Meeting Saturday, 18th _____ Number

Dinner at Gabby Goat Saturday, 18th _____ Number

I have reserved a room at Quality Inn; 17th _____ 18th _____

Copy the above and send email to me at: wachtell1945@gmail.com by October 12, 2025
Or mail to me at: 15048 North Haarmann Avenue; Effingham IL 62401

From Our National President

We are excited to announce that the 2026 IFYE program will consist of a 1:1 exchange, we will send 10 IFYEs and receive 10 IFYEs. We are confirming the various countries right now. Monday, October 6, the IFYE application will go live.

The program will begin on or about June 3rd or 4th with orientation in Washington, D.C., then go to the host states and countries around June 7th or 8th. IFYEs will return to their countries or Washington D.C. on or about August 15th or 16th for debriefing. The cost of the exchange is \$4,000.

How can you help?

1. I encourage you to be on the lookout for good candidates, 19 - 30 years of age, who will make wonderful IFYEs. I'm certain you, your family members, and friends know someone who might be interested in our premier experience. Feel free to give them my contact information, 309-261-1705, carolynsh7480@gmail.com, to discuss the program.
2. Consider serving as a host family or help recruit a family. Most of our families serve for three weeks.

Annual Giving Campaign

Information about the Annual Giving Campaign will be going out soon. We are deeply encouraged about the generosity of our membership and thank you for your continued support. We hope you will once again join us in our efforts to sustain this organization we all love so much.



Farm Bill Committee

We continue to communicate with members of the House and Senate Ag Committee and their staff. We are also beginning to work with members of the Appropriations Committees as that is the next step in the process. The House Sub Committee has passed their version of the Farm Bill, but the Senate has not yet produced one for consideration. We hope to see some movement by the end of the year, but we are unsure as to whether or not that will happen.

As always, if you have questions about what is going on or if you have thoughts for consideration, please feel comfortable in reaching out.

With the IFYE Spirit,

Carolyn S. Hansen

President

IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.

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