



IFYE NEWS

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IFYE National Program Update
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The 2016 IFYE program has seven (7) US outbound IFYEs living with multiple host families. Kelley Dickman (OH to Finland and Costa Rica); Alyssa Dye (NE to Estonia and India); Grace Garza (OH to South Korea and Thailand); Taylor Hannan (NE to Luxembourg and Costa Rica); Caitlyn Krueger (MN to Finland and India); Rachel Manning (MD to South Korea and Thailand); (6 month programs) and Erica Peterson, NE to Poland (three months).

Communications to Communities at home: Many of the outbound IFYEs are creating blogs of their experiences, enabling many of us to be part of their experiences from a distance. Check out ways that some of this year's IFYEs are communicating:

Alyssa Dye - <http://www.liveyourstory.co/> (and choose your method for following online) OR

<https://www.facebook.com/atgliveyourstory/> Alyssa's Instagram name is @alyssa_dye

Erica Peterson - Travels of a Farm Girl (FB group)

Kelley Dickman - <https://extraordinaryescapade.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/at-the-finnish-line/>

Taylor Hannan - <https://tshannan.wordpress.com/detour/diary> Taylor is also on Facebook.

Caitlyn Krueger - <https://mnifyetofinlandindia2016.shutterfly.com/>

2016 Orientation and host family stays – All outbound IFYEs participated in the National IFYE orientation in Washington, DC in mid-June, 2016, along with 22 inbound IFYEs from 12 countries: Australia (1), Austria (1), Devon Co. England (1), Finland (2), Germany (3), India (1), Luxembourg (1), Norway (1), Scotland (1), South Korea (2), Switzerland (4) and Taiwan (4).

Most IFYEs went to their host country or host state on June 20, 2016, with a few inbound IFYEs coming later. The majority of the inbounds spent approximately three months in the US with one host state, while six (6) of them have chosen the six-month inbound exchange program (two host states) and will depart from the US on December 9, 2016.

Eleven (11) US states hosted inbounds in 2016. They include: AK, FL, IL, KS, MI, MO, NE, OH, SD, VA and WY. A HUGE Thank You to all the state coordinators, helpers, and host families for making a variety of cultural experiences available to those inbound IFYEs.

Country Partners Rejoining the Program - 2016 marked the first time in many years that the outbound IFYEs experienced Costa Rica, India, Poland and South Korea. Costa Rica and India are each hosting 2 US IFYEs for three months this fall, while Poland and South Korea hosted US IFYEs for three months this summer.

It is exciting to renew exchanges with countries that participated years ago in the IFYE program with the US. Further conversations are under way with other countries to reestablish IFYE connections.

2017 and Forward - The IFYE program will continue to evolve: with an expanded list of participating countries, and possible other enhancements as we have conversations with potential applicants, universities, and industry to make the IFYE experiences increasingly valuable. The 2017 program anticipates working with 20 countries for inbound and outbound IFYEs.

Tentative 2017 dates include a national orientation June 16-19, 2017; arrival in host country / first host state June 20, 2017; early September for end of summer three month program (one host state/country); mid-September for beginning of fall three month program, and continuation for those on six month program; early December for IFYEs to return home.

Each of the 2016 participants are IFYEs because someone talked to them. Please help the 2017 IFYE program grow by sharing your story with a young adult or family, encouraging them to be part of an experience of a lifetime. Look for opportunities where IFYE can be promoted: media, conferences, local groups ... you never know the source of that next IFYE!



Mohit Singh (India 2016 to KS and VA) and Jim Ploger (KS to India 1967) Welcome back, India, as a country partner!

SOCIAL MEDIA - Keeping in Contact with IFYEs on Exchange!

As of September 01, 2016 – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are all active on our website (<http://ifyeusa.org>) – If you are already using one or more of these three social media communication methods, you may add this as a way to communicate with some of our 2016 IFYEs while they are on program (and afterward) and use our website to help you filter only to **#ifye** posts.

For those who may have used Facebook, but are less familiar with the other two media listed,

Twitter enables users to **send and read short 140-character messages** called “tweets”. Registered users can read and post tweets, but those who are unregistered can only read them.

Instagram is an online mobile photo/video-sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through other social networking platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter

Hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) and used to identify messages on a specific topic. (For example: **#ifye** placed on a post will allow our website to capture these postings.)

A short lesson about Twitter

IFYE Board Member Jeff Miller (@jeffmiller79) is willing to help those who want to experiment with Twitter. If interested in attempting this area of social media,

- Go to <http://twitter.com> and create an account. (They are free.)
- Go to the IFYE website and click on the Twitter icon in the footer. (This will take you to only items that have been hash-tagged with IFYE.)

- Suggested reading after this:
 - Twitter in Plain English <https://youtu.be/ddO9id-max0o>
 - About Hashtags <https://www.cleverism.com/lexicon/hashtag/>
 - Search on Twitter <https://youtu.be/jGbLWQYJ6iM>
- Then give it a try yourself! (NOTE: If you only want to read posts, you do not have to post or register.)

Information about Instagram

To read messages from these 2016 IFYEs with Instagram accounts, go to the IFYE homepage and click on the Instagram icon at the bottom right of the page. (NOTE: By clicking on the icon on the homepage, you already filtered all posts to only those posts with **#ifye**.)

Among those that are found, you will see
@alyssa_dye

Once finding Alyssa, click on her name and you will be able to go to the posts that she has there in Instagram.

Reminder about Facebook

If wishing to log onto our IFYEUSA Facebook page, just click on the Facebook icon in the same location as the other two on our homepage.

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REMEMBER – if wanting to write about IFYE, hashtag everything **#ifye** that you wish to have posted to the IFYEUSA page in Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram -

Happy Hash Tagging, reading about the adventures of some of our 2016 IFYEs, and posting back to them if you wish!

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2017 Change on Postal Mailings

Starting in 2017, any members who wish to receive postal mailings will be asked to pay \$20 annually to cover the printing and mailing costs of 2 NEWSLETTERS (i.e. IFYE NEWS) and 9 IFYE UPDATES. Each hard copy mailing costs approximately \$1500 - \$2000 per mailing depending on how many pages and the type of postal rate that is used.

If you currently receive newsletters (IFYE NEWS) and the IFYE updates by postal mail and don't wish to pay the \$20 fee as of 2017, you can receive these communications by email.

There are two ways to let us know that you wish to receive IFYE communications via email only:

- (1) Send an email directly to: Ginny Warner (IFYE Database Manager) ywarner@sbcglobal.net indicating that you wish further IFYE communications to be sent to the email you list.

OR

- (2) Please go to the IFYE website (<http://ifyeusa.org>) and click on “CONTACT US”. Send us a message using the email address that you want to use to receive all newsletters and the IFYE updates.

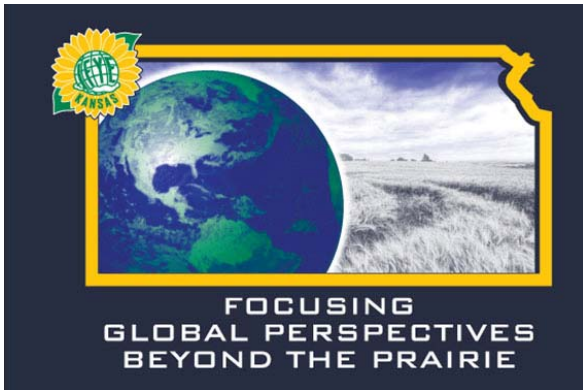
In the message space, type “use my email to send newsletters and the IFYE updates”

EITHER WAY, Ginny will confirm to you that she has received your request and update your contact information.

AFTER DECEMBER 15, 2016, a postal fee invoice for \$20 will be sent to individuals on our IFYE database who have not let us know of a change to email communication.

Individuals not electing to go to email communication will receive one postal newsletter each year at no cost.

Thank you for assisting IFYE in reducing our operation costs by using email.



Marj Loyd, Conference Chair

The 2016 IFYE Conference held in Manhattan, Kansas from August 10-14 was a great success.

- Members enjoyed the **Wednesday** evening opening ceremony, August 10, at the Flint Hills Discovery Center, a lovely museum that celebrates the Flint Hills, one of the most endangered ecosystems on earth.
- **Thursday** keynote speaker Jim Hoy entertained the group with an interesting talk celebrating the life of the cowboy and other Plains peoples.
 - Workshops on the grasslands, bread, genealogy, food safety, and the use of social media were informative and enjoyable.
 - The evening entertainment was radio shows by members of the Topeka Civic Theater's Radio Players.
 - The auction successfully raised more than \$4000 for IFYE programs.
- **Friday** was spent touring the area during the day. Groups visited the Eisenhower Center and other landmarks in Abilene, Cottonwood Falls and Council Grove in the Flint Hills, The Capitol, Brown V. Board National Historic Site, Tiffany windows at the Presbyterian Church, and the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, and sites at Kansas State University and the Oz Museum in Wamego.
 - Friday evening was filled with entertainment by a group of Filipino Dancers from Junction City and Rick Dykstra with lovely photos and good advice.
- **Saturday** included the annual business meeting and the international banquet. Banquet entertainment was provided by the Peterson Farm Brothers, YouTube stars who promote agriculture.
- The conference was concluded on **Sunday** with a memorial and ecumenical service.



Junction City Filipino Dancers perform - Friday evening



Jim Hoy - keynote on the life of the cowboy and the Plains People and Becky Reid, emcee



IFYE Quilt at the Thursday night's auction (displayed by Doreen Van Sickle -left- and Mary Buchele) - Quilt was made by Marj Loyd.



Peterson Farm Brothers - (left to right:) Kendal (20), Greg (25), and Nathan (22)

Willing to Share Culture Both Ways

Caitlyn Krueger, MN to Finland and India

Excerpts: <https://mnifyetofinlandindia2016.shutterfly.com/>

August 2, 2016

I will admit, it is hard and a bit nerve wracking to travel to another country, especially when you do not speak any of the main languages (Finnish and Swedish) and then meet and live with people you have never met before. I can gladly say that the anxiousness has gone away after spending the past six weeks with two of my four host families

I believe these farming regulations, specifically the environmental ones, have had a positive impact here in Finland. Because of the strict environmental regulation, the lakes I have gone swimming in are very clean. In fact, Heini (*Hakkarainen*) and Jussi (*Kinnunen*) filter and use their lake water for drinking and bathing. Sadly, I am not sure we could use the water found in some of the lakes in Minnesota or other parts of the U.S. like they do here. I have had quite the eye opening experience witnessing the many Finnish farming practices. Are they different? Yes. Are they wrong? No. Because just like my family, the farmers here care for their animals and strive to create a product for consumers that is safe and wholesome each and every day. (Well, except if they have holiday, but that is a whole nother story.)

I could go on all day about dairy farming in Finland. Perhaps another time though. I realize this “short” article has turned into a very long piece and therefore I should start to wrap it up. Apparently, I have not yet mastered the art of “not having much to say” as many Finns practice. (My families have informed me that many Finns do not participate in small talk. A two-minute conversation is actually a long conversation in Finnish terms.) So in conclusion, I have learned so much about the Finnish culture (stay tuned for more stories), farming practices, and **how a foreigner like me can easily fit in as long as one keeps an open mind**. I have learned that they are just as willing to share their culture with me as I am to share my culture with them. Together, we continue to fulfill IFYE’s goal to “creating peace through understanding”. Thanks for reading! *Jatkuu* (to be continued)!!



(Left to right) Alyssa Dye (NE) and Caitlyn Krueger (MN) Yacking in Shimla, India - India is their second host country in their six-month 2016 IFYE program

IFYE Bridges - England to Nebraska and Nebraska to Poland

On Being a Host Family - Tom & Paula Peterson

When Nebraska farmers Tom and Paula Peterson received the opportunity to host Alice Giles from Devon County, England for three weeks this summer, they learned that it was an experience to remember fondly.

Having the chance to host Alice was like a “grand slam out of the park” homerun, says Paula. “She was a delightful young woman ready to learn anything and everything about our small Nebraska farm. She drove the semi-truck and the sprayer, helped with cows and yard work, and explored the neighborhood with her nightly runs.” She was also their excuse to tour Prairieland Dairy¹, attend Ribfest, and check out the Boone IA Progress show².

Paula hopes that her family gave Alice a chance to see farm life in Nebraska from this family’s perspective. Unfortunately, her time with them was in the middle of summer when they weren’t on a dead run for calving, planting, spraying, or harvest but they did have the opportunity to share cutting corn silage and haylage.

“As a first time host family, this English IFYE set the bar very high and my expectations for other guests will be the same,” ends Paula.

¹<http://www.prairielanddairy.com/> (Firth, Nebraska)

²The 100-acre exhibit field offers visitors the chance to catch up on all types of new **farm** technologies. The show is held in even years near Boone, Iowa and in odd years near Decatur Iowa

On Being an Inbound IFYE to the USA - Alice Giles (UK)
Want to learn more about Alice Giles and her time with the Peterson family?

“I have had 3 of the most wonderful host families, and have loved sharing their lives, meeting their extended family and friends, as well as all of the others I have met along the way, thank you all so much for making my experience so memorable.” (Alice Giles – Facebook – Sept 14, 2016)

Check out the following article: http://www.wahoo-ashland-waverly.com/waverly/news/english-visitor-receives-agriculture-lessons-at-waverly-farm/article_b51d4774-6ec0-11e6-af48-232d06fe616c.html at the Waverly newspaper website OR by going to <http://ifyeusa.org> to the Exchange Program tab and clicking on Testimonials and News Articles.

On Being an Outbound IFYE to Poland - Erica Peterson

While Alice was here in the USA, Tom and Paula’s daughter Erica was in Poland experiencing the “Travels of a Farm Girl” in that country. Some of her photos and comments may be found on her Facebook page public page “Travels of a Farm Girl – Erica Peterson”.

Erica spent three months living with seven different host families. She says, “I liked interacting with the people and learning their ways and comparing their ways to ours in America.”



Erica - a Polish salt miner for a day

Digging Beyond the Superficial Level

Taylor Hannan, NE to Luxembourg & Costa Rica

Excerpt from Facebook: September 18 at 1:23pm · (after arrival in Costa Rica for 2nd half of IFYE program)



Picking cherries at the Feyder family in Luxembourg

Holy cow the past 3 months have been an absolute whirlwind. I arrived in Luxembourg in late June and spent my time there living with host families who showed me the ins and outs of their everyday lives. I had the chance to visit many tourist attractions in the country, but no bridge or castle could compare to the amazing parts of the country I saw living with

the locals. I met some pretty great people and made some amazing memories during my stay and can't wait to visit again soon! Luxembourg may be a little country, but it will always have a big place in my heart

Though I've learned a lot about other cultures, countries, and people on this trip, I think I've learned even more about myself. And, if I'm being completely honest, I've learned I'm absolutely horrible at blogging, journaling, and pretty much everything related to communication. I haven't kept up with my blog (or my journal) but hope to post some pictures soon when I get settled!

As for current happenings, I arrived in Costa Rica late last night and can't wait for the adventures that await me here!

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Excerpts - Luxembourg - <https://tshannan.wordpress.com>
You Always Meet Twice in a Lifetime

Living with the Feyders was such a fun experience! I'm so thankful that they opened up their home to me and let me experience life in their shoes for a few weeks. Saying goodbye was more difficult than I had planned because, in just three short weeks, they had become family. Jennifer¹, the IFYE from Luxembourg to Florida that I became friends with during orientation told me that there's a saying in Luxembourg: 'You always meet twice in a lifetime'. After



¹Jennifer Birchen (Luxembourg to Florida) preparing a typical breakfast from home for her host family.

being here for a month I realize that it's probably because the country is so small you're bound to run into someone you meet more than once, but it also helped me when leaving the Feyders. I hope to visit them again in the future or, who knows, maybe they'll make a trip to visit the good life²!

I'm learning that the beauty of the IFYE program is the opportunity it gives you to make connections that dig deeper than the superficial level you would get by simply traveling around a country as a tourist. You arrive in a country not knowing a single person and in a matter of weeks you have a community of family and friends supporting you. I couldn't be more thankful for this amazing opportunity and can't wait for the experiences I will have in the coming months!

² Refers to Nebraska state brand

Excerpts - Costa Rica (posted September 30, 2016)

Hola from the beautiful (and rainy) Costa Rica! During my first week here I think the jet lag--mixed with a little bout of homesickness brought about by setting foot in the US for one night but not getting to actually go home--put me in a little bit of a funk. Now, almost two weeks and multiple cups of coffee later, I've exited said funk and it couldn't have come at a better time--the past few days have been chalk [chock] full of new and exciting experiences.

I was worried when I got here that I would be bored during the day because my host parents both work--boy was I wrong. Last week, I got to tag along with Jeimmy to the elementary school at which she teaches ... Introducing myself to classes full of young students just beginning to learn English was a challenging but neat experience! I'm hoping to go back and actually do some activities with the students next time!



A snack break to eat some sugar cane cut fresh from the field we were working in.

... I've also been given the opportunity to volunteer with the ecology/agriculture department at a local technical high school during my time ... On Monday I had my first day and I can already tell I'm going to love spending time there working with the students--once I get used to the stares and whispers from students because I'm the only person walking around the school with blonde hair, light eyes, and no school uniform, that is.

... Here's to trying to soak up as much as this crazy beautiful country has to offer in the next 10 weeks!

IFYE and Host Family Applications are ONLINE

Applications for the 2017 IFYE program can be found on the IFYEUSA.ORG website under the Exchange Programs tab. Host family applications are also under the same tab.

Additional information can be found there concerning application and program dates, interview and selection criteria, program fees, orientation, etc.

At the Finnish Line --

Kelley Dickman, OH to Finland and Costa Rica

Excerpts from: <https://extraordinaryescapade.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/at-the-finnish-line/>

I am leaving Finland and it really is bittersweet. I have enjoyed my time here so much and have made friends and family for life. I can't thank my host families enough for giving me new opportunities, especially some of the ones I've had this week.



I loved enjoying a cup of coffee and tasting all the different kinds of pulla (a traditional Finnish bread tasting a little like a cinnamon roll)!

I've noticed a lot of people in Finland can knit some really nice things like sweaters and cozy socks. I mentioned that I wished I had learned to knit, so my host mom promptly sat me down and started me on my own knitting. It's not as hard as I thought it looked, but then I was doing the simplest version too. I think it would be nice to learn how to knit really well when I'm back in the U.S. as a hobby.



My host father shoes horses as a side job so I went along with him to watch him work. I've learned about shoeing and all the tools used in my equine classes at OSU so it was neat to see that the process is pretty much the same here.

My host father also works at the Ranua Zoo, which we visited last week, and this week I had the opportunity to be a zookeeper for a morning! I love all animals so this was like

a childhood dream come true and I really loved helping out. My favorite parts were giving the polar bears breakfast and seeing these giants up close, and holding baby beavers so they could get their medicine. I also helped clean the pens of the minks and weasel, and then feed the brown bear, beavers, cranes, dholes, otter, grey-sided vole, foxes, and wild boars. It was so exciting to have this once in a lifetime experience and be up close to these animals, and I have to thank my host family so much for giving me the opportunity. ... I didn't take any pictures because I wanted to be in the moment and actually help with the work instead of stand back and take pictures, but I have a lot of memories to keep with me in my mind.



My last evening we hooked up Roksu to a traditional carriage and drove him around for a bit with the pony in tow. My host dad even wore traditional clothes!



The Northern lights (Photo by my host mom)

Even though it's sad to leave Finland and all the awesome people I've met, I have to say I am so excited to be meeting up with my brothers in a few hours in Munich and then exploring Germany with them. And then (after a quick pit stop in Newark, New Jersey) it's off to Costa Rica!

We Would Like To Know

IFYEs are often asked if our IFYE experience had any influence on our lives. In the July 2016 issue of the IFYE NEWS, we asked alumni to share what made a "life-changing" experience for them. On pages 8-11 are some responses that have been received. Thanks, all, for sharing some thoughts and impacts. Although years vary since a person's program, many of us can see ourselves in some of these situations. (*The following articles are listed here in order of appearance in this newsletter.*)

1991 - Dennis O'Connell (NH to Taiwan)
1966/67 - Ron Eustice (MN to Uruguay)
1980 - Michael Martin (MA to Costa Rica)
1970 - Harlen Persinger (IA to Norway)
1971 - Janet Rodekohr (NE to Finland)

Ginny Warner - IFYE NEWS Editor

My Horizons - Past and Future

Dennis J. O'Connell

1991 IFYE New Hampshire to Taiwan



"Close" to what I looked like when an IFYE in 1991

Before IFYE, I had international experiences in Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Colombia. I figured my life was headed toward working in some Spanish-speaking country. When I applied to IFYE, I listed Spanish-speaking countries as my first choice.

When I received my assignment to Taiwan, I was a bit surprised, but was told that I already had experience in Spanish-speaking countries and the selection committee felt it would be nice to expand my horizons. *Little did anyone know, including myself, how expanded those horizons really would become!*

In addition to learning so much in Taiwan (adapting to an "Eastern culture" and ways of looking at the world, learning some Mandarin Chinese, and experiencing new foods), I also had three weeks of free time at the end of the program. I used part of that time to travel to Mainland China on my own.



Ghana - 2014

After surviving in China, completely on my own, I realized I could now travel anywhere in the world and actually thrive! I have taken that newfound confidence to 139 countries so far and hope to visit the remaining 69 countries before I turn 65 years of age! IFYE certainly gave me the skills and confidence to travel to far-flung parts of the world.

Career-wise, I have always had an international focus. I first worked with various agricultural organizations in Japan, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.

Later, my career changed to teaching in the inner-city of Los Angeles where about 70 percent of my students have parents who speak only Spanish (I have had two Chinese students).

More recently, I have been accepted to graduate school to pursue a Masters in Linguistics and Biblical Languages. When I retire from teaching, I expect to work internationally to help transcribe an oral language into a written language in order to preserve another culture.

Anyhow, I trust that you can see that IFYE did have an influence on my life!

Yours in travel and world understanding,

Dennis



Helping with the goats in Namibia



Visiting a school in Sri Lanka - 2015

Impact of IFYE on my life

Ronald F. Eustice, 1966/67 Minnesota to Uruguay

I am not sure where to start but, beyond a doubt, my IFYE experience was life changing. Here are a few thoughts:

IFYE and Forward Contact with Families/Country

- I was an IFYE from Minnesota to Uruguay in 1966/67. Minnesota and Uruguay are “partners” and both have cities named Montevideo.

Minnesota proudly promotes their Uruguay connection with “Fiesta Days” and a statue of Uruguay’s national hero Jose Artigas prominently standing in the central plaza on Main Street. The colors and design of Uruguay’s flag are incorporated into signs all over town. (<http://www.startribune.com/two-montevideos-share-more-than-just-a-name/124576423/> contains more details about these sister cities since 1965. Ed.)

- Since my IFYE experience, I have returned to Uruguay about 15 times and I am in close contact with five of the eight families with whom I lived. We communicate regularly by email and on Facebook. My most recent visit to Uruguay was two years ago and we plan to go again next year. Since then, I have located another host family member and plan to see her.



Lydia Gabriel (left) and daughter Carolina (right) are looking at a globe that was left as a gift for Lydia’s family in 1967. Lydia’s two daughters used the globe to study world geography. The globe was a keepsake for the Gabriel family and still survives nearly 50 years later

Career

- The first half of my career included about 20 years in international agriculture marketing US cattle genetics (semen) throughout the world.
- I have worked in or traveled to about 85 countries and lived in Mexico (two years) and Indonesia (three years).
- I now speak Indonesian, German, Italian, French and Spanish.
- For 22+ years, I was Executive Director of the Minnesota Beef Council, a position from which I retired in 2012. I am now semiretired but very active and in good health

My Family

My wife Margaret McAndrews (to whom I have been married for 41 years) was also an IFYE. She went to Uganda

in 1970/71, as well as being a Teen Caravan Group Leader to Denmark in 1973

- Margaret and I have two children: Kevin who is married and works at Google and AnnMarie who works in the Target headquarters in Minneapolis.
- We live eight months each year in Tucson, AZ and about four in Burnsville, MN.



Seated, February 1967 - I show members of the Costas de Rosario, Colonia Movimiento de la Juventud Agraria club photos of my home and farm in Minnesota



Mr. & Mrs. Rochon (host parents) and me on our way to Colonia Suiza in 1967



September 1966 - Helping Mrs. Ayala bake bread in Egana, Soriano

Pointing Me Forward

Dr. Michael J. Martin, 1980 Massachusetts to Costa Rica



In 1979, my 4-H Agent suggested I should apply to become an IFYE Representative. The timing was good; I was graduating from Berkshire Community College in Massachusetts and had not yet enrolled as a transfer student elsewhere.

I remember my first choice country was Australia; same language and far, far away.

I received a call asking if I would like to be an IFYE Representative to Costa Rica. I didn't know

where that was, so I looked it up in our encyclopedia and said, "Yes." The Massachusetts IFYEs and my hometown 4-H clubs helped me fundraise. My 4-H Agent, who went on to become a professional photographer, guided me in purchasing a 35mm SLR camera and 36 rolls of film.



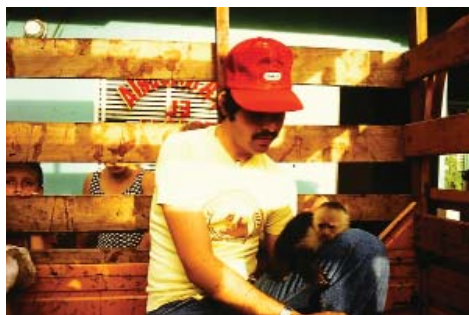
Me with IFYE sister - Janet (Heller) Smitelli (NY to Costa Rica 1980) in Washington DC

I made the longest trip of my life, to that time, arriving in San Jose, Costa Rica with great enthusiasm and minimal language skills and embarked upon an amazing life-changing experience.

It was during my time in Costa Rica that I realized I wanted to become a 4-H Educator. I wanted to guide others toward all of the opportunities I had experienced through 4-H.

I returned home after my six-month experience and spent the next six months on a very organized speaking tour across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I spoke and shared a high tech, *for the time*, media presentation with hundreds of school, church, 4-H, Grange and other community organizations.

I was also asked to assist with the 1981 National IFYE Conference as chairman of the hospitality committee. I went on to team up with great Extension colleagues and cohosted another National IFYE



Me, in the company of a friendly monkey

Conference. I also was on the planning team for the 50th Anniversary World IFYE Conference.

In the midst of all this, I started my career as a 4-H Agent.

Several decades and multiple 4-H roles later, I am still enthusiastically assisting volunteers and youth to gain all they can out of their 4-H opportunities.

Thank you, IFYE, for pointing me forward on my life's journey.

(Editor's note: 2016 IFYEs to Costa Rica are Taylor Hannan (NE) and Kelley Dickman (OH). They have recently arrived in this country for the 2nd part of their six-month IFYE experience (mid-September - December).

Vietnam to IFYE to PhotoJournalism

Harlen Persinger, 1970 Iowa to Norway

Harlen Persinger was recently awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Agricultural Editors' Association (AAEA).¹ "It was truly an overwhelming honor from a group I joined 41 years ago," he says. "I have been fortunate to work with so many outstanding editors and public relations individuals along with a host of blue chip agriculture clients."



Harlen - holding a snapshot from 1968 showing him when he managed an ordnance supply depot in Vietnam

During his stint in Vietnam while serving with the US Army (1968-69), Harlen applied for the IFYE program from his home state of Iowa. Six months later, he was working on a farm in Norway. "It seemed strange going from one extreme to another, but it provided a golden opportunity to see the world on a global scale, only this time not in a war zone," he adds. "Both experiences dramatically changed my perspective and I have had a different view ever since."

In Norway, Persinger lived and experienced daily life on five different farms, including one above the Arctic Circle. He meticulously chronicled each day in photographs and words for his IFYE reports. After returning to the states, he received a BS degree in Agricultural Journalism from Iowa State University. Since 2004, Persinger has been a freelance photo/journalist along with operating the family farm in Grundy Center, Iowa for the past 35 years.

Recently, he was selected as one of 20 ag journalists from the USA to travel to Cuba to learn about agricultural policy and the future prospects of opening trade relations and markets in that country. Upon return from that trip this past month, he says, "Cuba was an eye-opening trip and a wonderful opportunity to enhance my photo skills."

¹The AAEA Lifetime Achievement Award is designed to honor current and former members of the organization, ... for outstanding professional and personal achievements and leadership, ... (<http://www.ageditors.com/index.php/awards/lifetime-achievement>)

Oma maa mansikka, muu maa mustikka "My country strawberries, your country blueberries"

Janet Rodekohr, 1971 Nebraska IFYE to Finland



I was an IFYE to Finland in 1971 so I've had a few years to feel the impact. Sure, I've done some of the usual IFYE givebacks. I ...

- cohosted the national IFYE conference with Bob Ellis in Georgia in 1990;
- volunteered to orient the Georgia outbound IFYEs for many years;
- continue to judge the 4H international project here; and
- I donate to IFYE from time to time.

But the real impact comes in so many ways that I don't even realize it. As

with most IFYEs, I ...

- learned how to deal with loneliness and homesickness,
- found ways to overcome a language barrier and talk to strangers (a few remain lifelong friends),
- speak in public,
- eat whatever I'm served and say thank you,
- ask questions to learn a new culture, and
- share what I've learned with the folks back home.

In other words, think outside of myself and pay attention to what people are saying. That's a big challenge for most of us.

That "speaking in public" thing was a big one for me. I almost turned down the opportunity because I was terrified

of public speaking. In fact, when I returned home, the first time I spoke to a group of Nebraska county agents, I fainted dead away. In spite of that, many of them still invited me to speak to their 4-H gatherings. And I discovered I loved sharing my IFYE stories and pictures. In fact, I shared a few with friends just last night.



With my family in eastern Finland - (wearing my tie-dyed hip hugger bell bottom safari suit!)

But, the most profound impact IFYE had on me was expanding my world view. **The world is people, not governments, not armies, not ideologies, not borders.** Their love for their country and their culture is as real as mine. It's not a contest.

I used to end my IFYE talks with a translated Finnish saying: *Oma maa mansikka, muu maa mustikka* (meaning my country strawberries and your country blueberries*). Our countries may be different but I can love them both.

Thank you, IFYE.
Janet Rodekohr

* *Maa* means both land and country in Finnish

(Editor's Note: 2016 IFYEs to Finland were: Kelley Dickman (OH) and Caitlyn Krueger (MN) from June - midSeptember.

In Memoriam

We have received information concerning the passing of the following IFYE alumni and supporters of IFYE.

Suzanne (Davis) Bunn (NC Switzerland 1955)

July 19, 2016 LM

Richard E Bell (IL Ecuador 1955) March 13, 2015

Richard Berquist (ND Italy 1961) January 9, 2016

Mary Ann (Huflage) Campbell (KY Norway 1956)

February 27, 2014

J David Lapp (PA New Zealand 1962) March 10, 2015

Larry Mills (IL Thailand 1987 YDP) July 19, 2016

Charles Schreier (CT New Zealand 1966)

August 21, 2016

Charlotte (Webster) Wasnich (MI France 1963)

March 02, 2004

LM = Life Member



(Left to right: JoAnn Trail, Tom Trail, and Shirley Garrity - 2016 European Conference - Estonia - celebrating the 60th anniversary of their IFYE experience)

2017 IFYE Conference – Florida August 30 - September 3, 2017

The 2017 National IFYE Conference will be held at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The dates will be Wednesday, August 30 - Sunday, September 3, 2017.

Be watching <http://ifyeusa.org> for more details. Registration materials will be available in early 2017.

If you would like to help Florida IFYEs carry out a great conference, please volunteer to help by contacting co-chairs: Joyce Strollo jjstrollo@comcast.net and Debbie Nistler nistlerd@ufl.edu

Thank You!

Thanks to all the individuals who have shared photos with us for this issue of the IFYE NEWS:

Kelley Dickman
Ron Eustice
Taylor Hannan
Caitlyn Krueger
Michael Martin
Dottie Nelson
Dennis O'Connell
Harlen Persinger
Erica Peterson
Kim Reaman
Janet Rodekohr
Vicky Warren

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11th World IFYE Conference (Sept 9 – 15, 2018)

If you have been looking for a reason to take an Alaskan Cruise, this could be it! The 11th World IFYE Conference will be hosted aboard an Alaskan Cruise in 2018. In case you are wondering ...

- Family and other friends of IFYE are welcome to register for the conference and cruise along with us!
- The 7-day Inside Passage cruise will depart Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on September 9th, 2018. Ports of call stops in Alaska will include Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, and Seward (Anchorage) with a day of scenic cruising in Glacier Bay.
- An IFYE “meet and greet” will be planned prior to sailing so that, if you choose to arrive a day early in Vancouver, there will be a chance to mingle with your fellow IFYEs.
- There will be several options available following the cruise: fly home from Anchorage, cruise back to Vancouver or add a tour to further explore Alaska on land.
- Conference registration and cruise booking will be available in the summer of 2017.

Committees

There will be opportunities to help plan the World IFYE Conference activities both onboard and at the Ports of Call! We are currently recruiting volunteers who would be interested in joining one of the following World IFYE Conference committees:

- **Marketing** (create a theme/logo; market the World IFYE Conference through social media, IFYE newsletter, direct e-mail promos, and other methods as identified)

- **Registration/Information** (monitor conference registrations; reply to conference registration questions; order lanyards; print name tags; compile conference materials to distribute during registration; man registration area at “meet and greet” prior to sailing and on the ship’s pier)
- **Hospitality** (identify conference gift; organize and coordinate “meet and greet” prior to sailing; orchestrate organized mingling opportunities on board)
- **Special Events on the Ship** (Plan and conduct the opening and closing ceremonies; work with Cruise Specialists to offer special IFYE tours at ports of call)

How to Sign Up for Committees

- If you are interested in helping to plan and organize the World IFYE Conference, please send an e-mail to 2018-world-committees@ifyeusa.org with the following information:
 - **Please include your contact information (email and phone number(s)) through which to contact you.**
 - **Also, indicate the committee in which you are interested.**
 - **This information will be monitored and added to the database of volunteers for committees.**
- Those of you who have already expressed interest to Kim in emails will be added to this World Conference database interest list.

Thank You

Thanks to Toni Frank (1995 IL IFYE to Botswana) and Kim Reaman (1985 NE IFYE to Jamaica) for co-chairing the 11th World IFYE Conference.