



IFYE NEWS

An Official Publication
of the
IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.
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Spring/Summer 2019
Issue

COME TO KENTUCKY FOR THE 2019 IFYE CONFERENCE
August 7-11, 2019
Lexington, Kentucky

REGULAR FULLTIME REGISTRATION (\$295)
ENDS JULY 4, 2019 (midnight ET)
LATE FULLTIME REGISTRATION (\$310)
after JULY 4
PARTTIME Registration also available



We invite all IFYEs, families, and friends to the great Commonwealth of Kentucky for the 2019 National IFYE Conference. Please join us in the land of 'My Old Kentucky Home', Wildcat football and basketball mania, good bourbon, world-recognized horse racing, and Southern hospitality galore. We promise you a great convention and fun with your IFYE brothers & sisters.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE in brief

Wednesday, August 7

- Registration for conference opens
- 50th (1969-2019) Anniversary Luncheon
- Evening dinner and Opening Ceremony (including Story Teller and flag ceremony)

Thursday, August 8

- Workshops (*See details on page 5*)
- "Thursday Night Live in Lexington" - Afternoon and evening to explore historic Lexington

Friday, August 9

- Tours (*See details on page 5*)
- International Banquet

Saturday, August 10

- Association Meeting
- Afternoon on your own
- Evening program (*Wear your Kentucky Derby hat*)
- Silent and live auctions
 - Themed basket - by state, region, country, wines, regional foods, travel goodies, etc.
 - Individual items - new items from your area / country
 - Please include a written description of items, as well as who is donating the basket or item.
 - All proceeds from the auctions will support the 2019-2020 IFYE program.

Sunday, August 11

- Worship Session
- Onward Travels

Music is planned with our superb Kentucky 4-Hers in the Creative Arts programs. Story Telling, as a backbone of our history, will be explored with a well-known speaker who is part of the Kentucky Chautauqua.

Childcare

A response directly to Cathy Kunkel-Mains, Chairperson, is needed if anyone anticipates bringing children so that we can plan accordingly for their care and activities. She can be reached at email: cakuma50@gmail.com

1969 IFYE Reunion & Fundraising Project

The 50th reunion luncheon for the '69 IFYE alumni, friends, and partners will be held on August 7, 2019. This reunion is just prior to the beginning of the 2019 National IFYE Conference later that day. The '69 committee hopes that you can make it for the luncheon even if you are unable to stay for the entire conference. If not already registered for this reunion and planning to participate, please click on the button at the bottom of this page to register.

The '69 reunion committee is also asking alumni for support toward their 1969 Fundraising Project in support of IFYE International programs ... whether or not you can attend the luncheon or conference.

For more details on this fundraising project, please contact one of the following '69ers for more details:
Wesley Tschetter (Chair): wesleygtschetter@gmail.com
Carolyn Olson: colson3958@yahoo.com
Liz Carlson: ecretired308@yahoo.com
Connie Francis: cfrancis1@ymail.com

Click here to
REGISTER for the 2019 IFYE CONFERENCE



Victoria Warren
Association Board President

Dear Friends!

For the past few weeks, I have been thinking about my message to you for this newsletter. What would be the most interesting and useful things to share with you? What would you like to hear from me?

On Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 11:45 p.m. an event happened that rocked my world! A tornado hit my hometown of Jefferson City, Missouri. Praise God that it didn't hit my

home, but it did hit about half a mile as the crow flies. When my electricity came back on at 5:30 the next morning, I was devastated to watch the news and see the destruction to homes and businesses in a 32-mile long swath.

Why am I sharing this with you? Because I was humbled and honored at the outpouring of love and concern from our IFYE community!! Before I had a chance to communicate with anyone, I started getting texts and emails from IFYEs around the country. (In fact, I heard from one the night before when the weather service announced that tornadoes were spotted in Missouri!) After I posted "safe" on Facebook, I started hearing from IFYEs around the world! As far away as Australia, Taiwan, India, and Sweden. As close as Sedalia, Missouri (only 60 miles away), Ohio, North Carolina, Idaho. You get the picture!

Family, friendships, and caring around the world. Isn't this what IFYE is about? Our motto is "Peace Through Understanding." Understanding leads to caring about all the

people in the world who have much to contribute. Isn't this why we are still working so hard to keep the IFYE Program alive and well? In just a couple of weeks, we will be sending and receiving IFYEs to meet their new families and friends in multiple countries and states. Those relationships will last for decades and help to grow other relationships in still other countries.

Some say that we just don't have enough outbounds and inbounds to make the program worthwhile. I agree that we need more because our world still needs those personal relationships that come through IFYE. However, which of the (approximately) 200 young adults (outbound and inbound) who have been IFYEs over the past six years should not have had the experience because there just weren't enough? Which of the many host families they lived with should have been denied the experience because there weren't enough young people wanting to be IFYEs?

I agree that we need more applicants (including to be host families) to make the funds we spend more efficient. So, let's "each one, reach one".

- Keep trying. Keep sharing the value of the experience.
- Be willing to host.
- Have a recent or current IFYE over to your home for a meal or to tour your farm or your business, if you can't host.
- Invite inbounds and outbounds to speak to people in your community.
- Be willing to make financial contributions.
- Provide the Board or Ken with possibilities of groups, organizations, businesses, foundations, etc. that might contribute to our mission and vision.
- As the saying goes, "Be the solution you want to see in the world!"

I close with the quote from one of my favorite musicians, Stevie Wonder: *"What I'm not confused about is the world needing much more love, no hate, no prejudice, no bigotry and more unity, peace and understanding. Period."*

Congratulations, Cathy!

Cathy Kunkel-Mains (Kentucky to India 1965) was recently selected to membership in the Master Farm Homemakers Guild of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The Kentucky Master Farm Homemaker program is sponsored jointly by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Cooperative Extension Service and the Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association, Inc. The Kentucky Guild follows the format and guidelines of the national organization, and is composed of a select group of outstanding farm women from across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

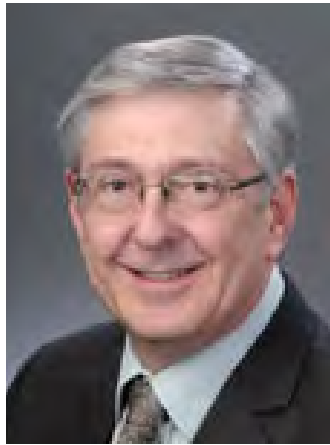
Although previously farming tobacco, sheep, and hogs, the current farm interests for Cathy and husband Milt are chickens and sheep. She also loves sharing the farm with children; there are such important lessons to be learned.

Cathy is also the Chair of our 2019 IFYE National Conference being held August 7-11.



A

**message from
IFYE Executive
Director Ken
Gordon**



It's an exciting time for IFYE. One of our IFYEs from the 2018 group was invited to be the keynote speaker for the annual women's meeting of Farm Credit Services of Mandan, North Dakota.

Hannah Nordby's presentation so impressed the 200 attendees, that the leadership of Farm Credit Services authorized a \$1,000 contribution to IFYE. Thank you, Hannah, for that presentation and to Farm Credit Services for the contribution.

Your notes / thoughts concerning your IFYE experience(s) and involvement / career(s) upon return.

In our last IFYE UPDATE, I mentioned being interviewed by RFDTV during their "Market Day Report". In talking with the producer, he mentioned he would like to hear more IFYE stories for possible interviews on upcoming shows. I challenged those reading the UPDATE to send me brief stories from their IFYE experiences and to relate how being an IFYE may have changed their future. Please take a few moments after reading this newsletter to write some notes, thoughts, and ideas for a short story. Please include how the IFYE experience has helped you in your career or with your community involvement, and how you may have inspired others or other organizations. Please send it to kgordon@ifyeusa.org by **Friday, June 21**.

In addition to the possibility of being interviewed about your experience as an IFYE by RFDTV, your stories will help me to raise funds for IFYE. In the discussions I've had with foundations and corporations, they asked how the IFYE experience helped those who have participated to become more active in local communities or how you have had a positive impact on the lives of others around the country or the world. Whether your story is of your experience abroad or as a host family here, the life-changing results are what they wish to read about.

We have stories that were gathered in a document I use, which is called our case statement, but I'm sure there are other

stories we can add from your experiences as IFYEs. Your stories may be shared with foundations and corporations. It helps them understand the impact their contributions will make in the lives of others. How have you leveraged your experience, whether that was last year or many years ago?

I look forward to reading about your adventures and how the IFYE experience made a difference.

Program Outreach

As I mentioned above, it's an exciting time for IFYE. We are making advancements in raising awareness of our program by utilizing news media, association newsletters, and campus organizations such as Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS).

Outreach and funding proposals continue to corporations including [Archer Daniels Midland \(ADM\)](#), [Syngenta](#), [BASF](#), [Tessenderlo Kerley, Inc. \(TKI\)](#), [Corteva](#), [Nationwide](#), [Ford](#) and others. Similar outreach to foundations continues as well. Although follow-up calls and emails to contacts at these organizations are being made to obtain contributions, it takes time and persistence to reach our funding goals.

We are also capitalizing on the depth of our programming by collaborating with universities. We met with academic leaders at Purdue University and Iowa State University who believe the IFYE program meets their criteria as a component within their international agriculture curriculum. The faculty members we met with are now working on the details to make this happen for 2020.

I have had meetings with USDA officials and was asked to apply to be a reviewer of grant proposals submitted to the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA). It was their opinion that, by having me on their review team, IFYE would be in a better position to deliver a proposal that would meet their expectations and be more likely to receive funding. NIFA is a primary source of funding for 4-H.

While this outreach is continuing, your contributions to IFYE should not wane. Your membership renewals and additional support help provide the stability the Association needs to be successful. Thank you to those who have contributed and to those who will contribute.

I look forward to sharing more details at our National Conference in Lexington, Kentucky. Please register soon for our Conference to hear more exciting news regarding your organization.

2020 IFYE National Conference Host(s)

We are currently looking for applications for a state or states to host the 2020 National IFYE Conference.

For more information, please contact kgordon@ifyeusa.org

**11th WORLD IFYE CONFERENCE
REPORT**

Available online as flipbook and other versions

Click for more information.

Continued from page 1



Y'all come, ya hear?

If you watched the 2019 Kentucky Derby a few weeks ago, it is probably still on your mind as to whether the racing stewards did the right thing in disqualifying the winner for interference. The truth is that most of us in Kentucky are also wondering. However, life goes on.

Such is the state of the world we live in. I know that many of you are most concerned about fulfilling your dreams of world peace in this very chaotic world. The IFYE Conference hopes to ease your mind, as well as to challenge and inspire you to help our IFYE program progress toward this goal.

Plan to attend the 2019 IFYE USA Annual Conference in Lexington from August 7-11, 2019. Enjoy the scenery, learn some history, and appreciate the finer things in life such as fast horses, bourbon, wine, Southern food, and beautiful bluegrass. See a land emerging from the economic loss of coal fields, walk the Appalachian Trails, and/or visit the [Moonbow at Lake Cumberland](#) (visible during August 13-17, 2019).

While coming to Kentucky, I hope you might allow a few extra days to explore on your own before and/or after conference. There is so much history to know as the 17th state to enter the United States is a land of broad changes. Many influences with new folks coming into the land developed it into a unique culture, including but not limited to:

- Brothers serving opposite sides in the Civil War while another might remain neutral.
- A geography and its terrain that kept us in the past too long.
- A state that has had to reinvent itself as coal is no longer a prime industry nor is tobacco any longer a crop that offers farmers a way to sustain their life.

If you are driving, there are many historical and tourist activities to make it an educational vacation as well as a challenge to see a culture that is embracing new diversity. Take the time to absorb the uniqueness of Kentucky's various areas:

- Northern Kentucky Area
- the Louisville area, home of the Kentucky Derby
- the historic Lexington area

Visit the Creation Museum (Petersburg), the Ark (Williamstown), a #1 Aquarium (Newport), and the Cincinnati Zoo (OH) which is across the Ohio River ([a river - historically - owned by Kentucky](#)). Our state is also the home of Simon Kenton (frontiersman and soldier), Daniel Boone, and Mary Todd Lincoln. In addition, it has many prime businesses and baseball, football, and soccer teams.

Your travels might take you into the western section of Kentucky where you can visit the world-known [National Quilt Museum](#) located in Paducah. If traveling to/through Owensboro, stop and taste the local barbeque. Drive the Cumberland Gap area that is still a very pristine Appalachian Trail area and community of special people. There is something in Kentucky that will leave you with your taste buds watering and your mind spinning.

Come to a conference that will share some of these events with you or allow you time to explore in your nearby conference area many historical firsts. Visit Mary Todd Lincoln's birthplace, see Abraham Lincoln's birth cabin and build an understanding of his travels to Indiana and Illinois. We share with those states in being very, very proud of this man. Learn about the influence that Henry Clay had on Lincoln's politics. Get to know Lincoln's friends: Cassius Clay and Dr. Ephraim McDowell (Father of "Ovariectomy" and Founder of Abdominal Surgery).

Please don't hesitate to email me or call and explore some side trips. While being together with your fellow IFYE brothers and sisters and supporting the program are paramount, add to your enjoyment by learning more about Kentucky.

Cathy Kunkel-Mains, Chair,
2019 Kentucky IFYE Conference
Email: cakuma50@gmail.com
Cell: 859-512-9882



WORKSHOPS - Thursday, August 8

SESSION ONE (9:00 - 10:00 AM)

A. Kentucky Foods: Northern & Eastern areas Kathy Byrnes, Kenton County Food & Consumer Science Agent

- German Goetta & Eastern Kentucky Cornbread
- The cultural transition from the Eastern Appalachia area to Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio and its influence on the economy of these areas
- Historical hog butchering
- Foods that have become our area's staples

B. The Unlimited Power of Unifying Purpose John Mark Hack, Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy (GOAP)

The struggles and cooperation that transformed Kentucky's Agriculture from a tobacco economy.

C. Cumberland Gap History Harold Jerrell, Photographer & Retired Agriculture Agent from Virginia

Travel the Cumberland Gap through the photography of Jerrell. Photography tips shared.

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### SESSION TWO (10:30 - 11:30 AM)

#### A. "Down Home Cooking" Julie Hook

- Foods of Western & Southern Kentucky that have proven to be staples for building health.
- How to prepare and enjoy to ensure energy for hard work.
- "Unique" dishes prepared with love that supports family life and how the "uniqueness" in preparation labels them "Down Home Cooking".

#### B. Empowering Women across the World with Partnerships

Design, materials, and sewing are promoted across the world as a cooperative enterprise between the USA and other countries. These projects empower women toward self-sufficiency, making an economic impact in their country, as well as assisting their children to attend schools. Both programs to be discussed are supported by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE).

- Ghana, Africa project
- Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association project in the Philippines

#### C. Linking Hands Around the World

Learn how the Minorities in Agriculture, National Resources and Related Sciences organization (MANNRS) works with members of ethnic and cultural groups to expand connections in the world. Participant discussion will be included.



2019 National IFYE Conference  
Lexington, Kentucky  
August 7-11, 2019

### TOURS - Friday, August 9

(Approximately 9 AM to 4 or 5 PM)

#### #01 - The "Horse" Tour

[Claiborne Farm](#), home of Secretariat, unique gift shopping and Bluegrass Boutique Stockyards & Education Center of Kentucky Cattlemen's Association. End this tour with a trip to the world-famous race track, [Keeneland](#).

#### #02 - The "Bourbon, Frankfort, Capitol of Kentucky & pawpaws" Tour

Tour bourbon-making at Buffalo Trace Brewery, observe the Kentucky state capitol as well as other Frankfort scenery, and visit Kentucky State University, a land-grant university. Visit the university's research and demonstration farm to learn about the oldest fruit of the Appalachian region, [the pawpaw](#).

#### #03 - The "Foodie" Tour

Visit one of Kentucky's oldest farms that is now one of the largest organic farms in Kentucky, [Elmwood Stock Farm](#). This regional farm is established as an organic meat, vegetable and egg farm that offers on-farm sales and supplies many regional restaurants, farm markets, and has a CSA subscription service.

The tour will continue to the Food Chain, which supplies fish and some salads to the Smithtown Restaurant where the group will eat; enjoy cuisine from Chef Quita Michel, the region's most famous chef. The final stop will be at the Food Connection which connects farm to food for the general public.

#### #04 - The "History" Tour: [Shakertown & Fort Harrod, Kentucky](#)

Explore two Kentucky settlements that helped grow the state. Historic Shakertown was a religious settlement and Fort Harrod was established by Daniel Boone.

## 2019 Outbound IFYEs



*Elizabeth Otte - Missouri  
Germany & Uruguay*



*Nick Birsa - Illinois  
Taiwan & Thailand*



*Amaris Daniels - Florida  
Taiwan & Thailand*



*Emily Witmer - Pennsylvania  
Luxembourg*



*Vi Nguyen - Nebraska  
Switzerland*



*Mikhala Martin - Ohio  
Norway*



*Silvadnie Quainnoo - Alabama  
Uruguay*

### **IFYE Program Update for 2019**

*Alan Lambert, National IFYE Program Director*

Seven (7) U.S. IFYE representatives have successfully met all the requirements and have been selected for the 2019 IFYE program. All will be attending the IFYE National Orientation in Washington, D.C. from June 13-16, 2019 before departing for their host countries.

- Elizabeth Otte, Nick Birsa, and Amaris Daniels are on the six-month IFYE program (mid-June to early December 2019) where they will live in two countries for approximately 90 days in each.
- Emily Witmer, Vi Nguyen, and Mikhala Martin are on the three-month program.
- Silvadnie Quainnoo will be departing in mid-September and returning in early December.

*Continued on next page*

Orientation presenters include:

- Erin Anthony, Editor, *Farm Bureau News*, American Farm Bureau Federation
- Clay Hamilton, Associate Administrator USDA Foreign Ag Service
- IFYE alumnus Kyle von Kamp (social media) - Ohio to Denmark 1994 and to Botswana 2002
- IFYE alumnae Caitlyn Krueger (Minnesota to Finland/India 2016) and Hannah Nordby (North Dakota to Taiwan/Thailand 2018) (cultural sensitivity, “what to know”, etc.)

All 2019 IFYEs will come together again in Washington, D.C. for a December 2019 national debriefing.

In the most recent IFYE UPDATE, we noted that 10 individuals were in the 2019 IFYE application process. We are saddened that not all completed the entire process due to various reasons. We continue to recruit additional applicants for the mid-September to early December IFYE program.

We will be hosting 13 inbound IFYEs from England (1), Germany (2), S. Korea (1), Switzerland (2), Taiwan (3), Thailand (2), and Wales (2). Host states include: Alaska, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wyoming. Most of the inbound IFYEs will be on the summer three-month program, living in one state. Two inbounds have applied to be on the six-month program where they will be hosted by two states.

The IFYE Executive Director Ken Gordon and I have been developing additional IFYE recruiting opportunities so that IFYE can build its program numbers through new relationships. In his Executive Director article on page 3, Ken noted the opportunities with Purdue University and Iowa State University. Additionally, Ken and I will be meeting with the University of Maryland immediately after the IFYE National Orientation to discuss how IFYE can be integrated into their curriculum.

#### Job-Shadowing in 2<sup>nd</sup> year

2019 marks the second year of a job shadowing program with Syngenta. This is one component we are developing to further enhance the IFYE program. Currently, this job shadowing program is conducted in the Minneapolis, MN Syngenta offices with an inbound IFYE for three weeks out of their approximately three-month IFYE program.

The IFYE will live with host families for this time period and job shadow their host and other employees in a variety of Syngenta corporate jobs. We believe successful job shadowing experiences in the U.S. will prompt Syngenta and other companies to make a similar opportunity available to U.S. IFYEs when they are abroad. The German Country Coordinator will be pursuing job shadowing opportunities in Germany for 2020.

#### Meeting with European IFYE Coordinators

I will be attending the European IFYE Conference in Norway this summer. Following the conference, I will be travelling to meet some of the European IFYE Coordinators. Being able to meet face-to-face will further cement the relationships we have been developing since 2014 when the IFYE Association took the lead on revitalizing the IFYE program. Many IFYE country coordinators have not

been IFYEs themselves, and many country coordinators change every couple of years. Additionally, we are working to schedule a meeting with the leadership at the Syngenta headquarters in Basel, Switzerland where the Swiss IFYE coordinator and I can pursue the job shadowing opportunity in person.

#### Ongoing Work

Ongoing work, conducted by Ken Gordon, me, the IFYE Program Development Committee, and the IFYE Association National Board is building the IFYE program through collaborative efforts with industry, commodity groups, government (USDA Foreign Ag Service), universities and university student organizations. In doing so, we are creating a “feeder network” that should increase the number of future outbound applicants.

## **Aspirations of the Outbound IFYEs for 2019**

Aspirations vary in today’s world of IFYEs as well as when we went on our program, no matter the year. Below are some of the hopes of this year’s outbound representatives.

**Nick Birsa** believes being a part of the IFYE program can bring greater understanding of the vast cultural differences, lifestyles, and ideas of people around the world, yet also show the innumerable similarities among all people.

**Amaris Daniels** states that her lifelong vision of developing a business of supplying biofuel and fresh produce will be enhanced by the cultural immersion, awareness of different agricultural processes, and the opportunity to experience life as a woman outside the U.S.

**Mikhala Martin** recognizes that experiencing different cultures and agriculture practices will be invaluable as she pursues her career goal of becoming a USDA veterinarian specializing in exotic and large animals.

**Vi Nguyen** has a goal of becoming a USDA Foreign Ag Service officer. She believes the understanding that comes through first-hand experiences with host families will increase her passion for connecting with people and understanding different perspectives.

**Elizabeth Otte** knows that IFYE will help her personally grow by becoming a more informed, well-rounded young adult. These confidence skills will help in sharing with others where food comes from, while continuing her family’s legacy as a fourth generation Missouri farmer.

**Silvadnie Quainoo** understands that solving global problems needs extensive global perspectives, helping to specifically address food science, as well as safety and security issues.

**Emily Witmer** wants to meet new people and make a difference in their lives, just as they will make in hers. As a cattle and breeding goat producer, Emily hopes to learn their skills, share her knowledge, and positively advocate for all agriculture.

## A Look Back at my Time in Finland!

Katherine Knight - Virginia

Finland (June – September 2018)

What a summer last summer was! I made memories for a lifetime and have begun to share about my stay in Finland. The hardest part of being an IFYE was saying goodbye to my current family to move on to the next.

Before leaving for Finland in June, all the outbound U.S. IFYEs and the inbound IFYEs met in Washington, D.C. in preparation for our adventures! It was great to finally meet the other IFYEs with whom I had been having orientation calls for the past few months, as well as to meet all the incoming IFYEs. My roommate was from Taiwan and coming to Virginia; so, it was fun to tell her a little about my home state before she headed to her first host family. Sarah Lanier, author of the book, *Foreign to Familiar - A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold- Climate Cultures*, spoke and gave us great advice to help us adapt to and adjust to culture shock when we got to our host countries.

From the orientation, I flew to Helsinki and my adventure truly began! I participated in a two-day orientation in Helsinki with the Finnish IFYE coordinator and two other IFYEs from Germany and Switzerland. We learned about the Finnish 4-H program and also had time to be tourists. The Finnish 4-H organization prides itself on being the first work experience that many young people in Finland have. In Finland, 4-H clubs are mainly for younger kids. As an older 4-Her, you may have a 4-H enterprise which can be pretty much any business you can imagine.

My first host family lives in Teuva, a small town in the western part of Finland. They have a sixty-cow dairy farm. They were particularly proud that they were one of the first dairies in their area to have a robotic milking system. While I was with them, we took many day trips to see different towns and parts of Finland. They took me to the zoo where I was able to see *Poro* (reindeer) up close; we also visited the coast where I could put my feet in the Baltic sea and saw some cool old wooden villages. I found it very interesting that some of the towns on the western coast of Finland are more like visiting Sweden than Finland, with more Swedish architecture and over 80% of the population speaking Swedish as their primary language.

While with my first family, I saw some very neat old churches with unique features. For example, one church had more than 100 old barns surrounding the church from when families would travel such long distances to attend church on Sunday mornings that they would travel the day before, and a *vaivaisukko*, a “poor box” where villagers would place donations.



I celebrated the Fourth of July with this family and made an apple pie. We also talked about how our Independence Day (July 4) and Finland’s Independence Day (December 6) compare. While we (in the USA) have lots of local festivals and parades, most Finns watch the President’s celebration on TV, but they also have fireworks to celebrate!

While with my first family, my host mom had also arranged

for me to tour a salad greenhouse, where I met a girl who had been an *au pair* in Delaplane, Virginia; what a small world! With how dark and cold it can be for much of the year, it is no surprise that there are many greenhouses in Finland. However, it seems that just about everyone in Finland has a garden in their yard where they grow lots of berries and vegetables.

One of the hardest things to adjust to in the first month in this country was how light it is, even in the middle of the night! When I first arrived, there were just four hours between sunset and sunrise; it was never actually dark!

Following a bittersweet goodbye with my first family, I boarded another train and went to meet my second host family. From the train station, we went straight to their *mökki*, or summer cottage. In Finland, almost everyone either has a summer cottage or has family with a summer cottage they can visit. The cottage is a place to go to relax and enjoy nature. Most cottages are on a lake with time spent swimming, taking a sauna, and enjoying each other’s company. In Finland, most people get four weeks of vacation from work in the summer and spend much of that time out of the city at the summer cottage. We spent a week back at my host family’s home in Tampere for different activities that their children had. I was busy being a tourist all week with my host sister and a former IFYE (from Finland to Korea) as my guides. And then, back to the *mökki*. The Finns really know how to have a great summer vacation!

Then, I headed slightly further to the northeast in the Lake Region, where my third and fourth families lived. My third host mother was an IFYE to Scotland when she was younger but is now the mother of three young children under six! They live in the countryside (near a lake!) on my host dad’s old family farm (although he is an engineer in a nearby town now). My final host family have five children and lots of animals! When I came to their home, school was just starting, so I spent a day in classes with my 16-year-old host sister. My 18-year-old host sister was an IFYE to Canada in 2017; we bonded over the IFYE experience and went on a few adventures and a fun weekend trip to the Arctic Circle and Santa Claus Village. In Finland, it is very difficult to get into university right after high school. So, many people take a “gap year” and take additional courses and work while applying and waiting to be accepted.

With my last two families, I had the chance to learn more about their 4-H and IFYE experiences and, also, a chance to share more about mine. I had fun making 4-H clover cut-out cookies at a 4-H cooking club and visiting a 4-H camp. It was great to experience the different foods – baking traditional sweet breads, eating lots of rye bread, and even trying reindeer! – which leads me to one of my favorite things while I was there – picking and eating fresh berries!

### Two Finnish Customs

- One Finnish custom is what is known as “Everyman’s Rights”. “Everyman’s Rights” mean that the forests of Finland are open to everyone. Anyone can walk in and pick berries or gather mushrooms in any forest so long as they are not causing damage or intruding upon the owner’s privacy. With my families, I went into the forest and gathered berries on several occasions. The first berries to ripen are the cloudberries, which are rare



and found in rather swampy areas. Because of the dry summer, they were especially difficult to find! Next to ripen were the blueberries and raspberries, with the lingonberries starting to ripen in August. It was lovely to hike in the cool woods picking berries along the trail for a little snack. The Finnish way of life really focuses on appreciating the simple joys, like picking fresh berries and mushrooms from the forest.



*Here I am picking raspberries!*

- Another signature of Finnish life is the Finnish Sauna. The sauna is an integral part of life in Finland and is considered to contribute to good health. Even apartments often have their own small sauna or at least a sauna for the building. Some people take sauna once a week and some take it every day. Typically, you take several rounds in the sauna with a break to jump in the lake if you're lucky enough to be by the water or to cool off in the shower if you don't happen to be so lucky. Breaktime was also time to eat a snack. Especially interesting was to eat sausages cooked on the sauna stones!

Wood-burning saunas are considered the best but electric saunas are also common. A special kind of sauna that I experienced is the smoke sauna. The smoke sauna is an older more traditional type of sauna where there is no chimney so the sauna itself fills with the smoke. The smoke sauna takes much longer to heat and must be constantly tended while being heated making it an all-day event. Inside the sauna, you must be careful not to touch the walls to avoid getting soot on yourself, a sure sign of a smoke sauna rookie. My host mom described the smoke sauna as feeling like a warm hug or blanket and I couldn't agree more. In the sauna, you always throw water on the hot rocks to make steam, no dry saunas here!



*Vihta for sale for sauna use*

You can also use a bunch of leafy, fragrant silver birch called a *vihta* or *vasta* that has been soaked in water with which to gently hit yourself and increase your blood circulation. This has a relaxing effect on the muscles and also helps to soothe the irritation from mosquito bites! If you don't happen to have a birch tree available in your yard, there is a whole section of sauna items in every grocery store.

From my experience, I don't think the sauna is just about the health benefits. It's a mainstay of Finnish culture because of the emotions attached to it and the opportunity it offers to slow down and enjoy life for a bit. The sauna is a shared part of everyone's life here.

For me, these two activities sum up much of what Finnish life is like. The families I met weren't in a hurry to "do this or that" or to "get here or there" but they lived an easy-going life centered around the family and home. I'm so grateful for the families who opened their homes and lives to me.

As I have begun my first job after college, I hope I can keep this attitude of being open and welcoming and enjoying life as it comes in my own life!

## IN MEMORIAM

*The passing of the following individuals has come to our attention since our last IFYE NEWS (December 2018).*

- C Donald Bunn** (SPIFYE to Suzanne Bunn – NC Switzerland 1955) 08/29/2018 **LM**  
**Josephine (Daines) Clark** (UT Netherlands 1949) 08/04/2018 **LM**  
**Maurice E Core** (IA Austria 1950) 08/29/2018  
**Foy Jean Crookham** (TX India 1976) 05/18/2019  
**Allen N Croone** (MN Greece 1956) 05/23/2019  
**Frank A Fender** (OH Taiwan 1952) 10/14/2018  
**Henrietta T (Vereyken) Hensler** (MI Luxembourg 1956) 02/26/2019 **LM**  
**James A Hess** (PA Peru 1959) 10/31/2018 **LM**  
**Arden Hoffman** (WI Chile 1959) 05/23/2018  
**Franklin W Kapp** (OH Pakistan 1958) 09/08/2018 **LM**  
**Betty L (Bowen) Krause** (WA Norway 1954) 12/30/2017 **LM**  
**Harold R Krause** (SPIFYE- to Betty (Bowen) Krause – WA Norway 1954) 01/15/2008 **LM**  
**Melba J (Larson) Langseth** (SPIFYE – to Rod Langseth MN to Norway 1948) 11/24/2018  
**David L Osborne** (NH Australia 1957) 03/02/2019  
**Louise (Foster) Osborne** (NH Sweden 1958) 06/02/2019  
**Earl G Peterson** (WA India 1955) 10/30/2018  
**John R Revell Jr** (IL New Zealand 1959) 02/10/2019  
**Betty J (Bernsen) Schlottman** (TX Sweden 1949) 04/11/2018  
**Patricia A Scott** (KY Austria 1954) 10/19/2016  
**Dean Seppa** (CA Zambia 1978) 12/02/2011  
**Donald D Siffring** (NE Germany 1961) 05/25/2019  
**Nadine (Costner) Smith** (CA Ireland/N Ireland 1952) 06/09/2016  
**Jean (Penrose) Sundborg** (OR Israel 1961) 06/22/2018 **LM**  
**Dr Wendel B Swanson** (IL Luxembourg 1950) 03/23/2016  
**R Eugene VanPelt** (IA Denmark 1952) 02/08/2019  
**Donald (Donn) Walls** (OR Honduras 1962) 11/16/2018  
**Shirley E (Miller) White** (CO Norway 1951) 02/07/2018

**LM = Life Member**  
**SPIFYE = Spouse of IFYE**



**IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.**  
*Peace Through Understanding*

Please check the appropriate box(es) for the support you wish to provide to the IFYE Association. Return the form and completed action(s) that you have selected to: **Don DeWerff, 29 Arrowhead Drive, Lyons, KS 67554**

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I wish to support IFYE in 2019 with the following:  \$5,000  \$2,500

\$1,000  \$750  \$500  \$250  Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to support IFYE with an annual Membership fee. \$30 for 2019 annual membership

- If you are a **life member**, you will always be a life member and do not need to pay the \$30 annual Membership.
- **ALL life and annual members** have access to the Member area on the website.
- You can be a member with your \$30 annual membership only, but all contributions (by non-life members) above \$30 membership will count as a general donation.

I wish to become a **Life member** \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 paid in one sum \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 paid over each of the next five years

Enclosed is \$20 for the postal mailing of two IFYE NEWS and eight issues of the IFYE UPDATE published during 2019.

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<http://ifyeusa.org>