

Pinneberg Delegation
Margrit Ziegler, Inge Heinrich

Nov. 2017

Honorable Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton,
RSSC Board of Directors with its President Drew Powell,
Council Members,
City Manager,
City Clerc,
City Staff Members,
and especially our wonderful
RSSC Host Families,

we want to say thanks to all of you, who made our visit to your town on the occasion of our 60th Anniversary celebration possible. We knew that you were planning an interesting program for us, but we did not expect such a tremendous week with such a big number of unforgettable highlights!!!!

Monday, Oct. 2

Arriving at Dulles Airport we felt very privileged to be picked up by Drew Powell, Bob Wright, Jack Rodgers and Wayne Savage with a big welcome sign. It was like walking on a red carpet for VIP's.

And then the traffic! But we made it, thanks to good planning. Our delegation arrived just on time and was proud to attend a Council Meeting. We got a warm welcome and impressive Certificates of Appreciation from the RSSC, the City of Rockville and the State Senator Cherryl C. Kagan. We will treasure and frame these unique documents.

The „3minutes public hearings“ were interesting for us, too.

All our hosts

Bonnie Grimm & Chris Malone
Tom & Sherri McKenna
Sue-Ann Norian
Jack & Pat Rogers
Wayne & Joan Savage

Gary & Betsy Thompson
Steve & Sue Van Grack
Liz von Kaenel
Bob & Stephanie Wright

were fabulous – pampering us from the first minute and making us feel at home. Thanks to Marika Brown and Gerri Checkon for putting us together.

Tuesday, Oct. 3

The next day Betsy Thompson did an excellent job as our tour guide in Washington D.C. She started telling us about Metro: no food, no drinks, always stay on the right side. How easy that works! Betsy, you should come to Germany and teach us, how to use the escalators properly. The Anderson House was an amazing castle. Though we were not able to see the world-famous Renoir painting „Luncheon on a Boating Party“ in the Phillips Collection, we instead had a superb lunch, arranged by Jerol Briggs. In the Renwick Gallery you could see excited Pinneberg guests and their hosts asking each other: „ Did you see the ghost clock?“ (made of bleached Mahogany) or „Find out, what secret is behind the quilt.“ (made of film threads)

Very comfortable, that our hosts accompanied us during the whole week.

Wednesday, Oct.4

Thanks to Kathleen Conway and Wayne for an outstanding day, which started in the Hazy Air and Space Museum. Look at the pictures, where we all pose as astronauts in a joint venture for friendship on earth and in space. Thanks to Joel Perlish for taking so many memorable pictures and teaching us to close buttons and to lift the glasses! After 30 years Jurgen Ziegler could stand in front of „Tante JU“, the old German Airplane, which he had been invited to fly with from National to Dulles Airport in order to bring the plane to Hazy as a present from Lufthansa.

The experience of outdoor living was another hit, when we had a delicious picnic next to the C&O Canal. Jerol, Pat, Brigitta and their team managed to serve us with cold drinks on a warm summer day in the park. A breathtaking walk to the Great Falls rewarded us with a spectacular view. The following boat ride took us back to the days of George Washington and gave us time to relax.

Another highlight of that day was the welcome party at Gordon Biersch. Again excellent food, lots of „flights“ and many hugs – another idea to bring back to Germany: flights.

Thursday, Oct.5

What a treat to visit the US Capitol and to meet Congressman Jamie Raskin. Thanks to Steve Van Grack, Ying Chen and our hosts and friends for the Capitol Building tour with the statue of President Eisenhower, who was quoted often for installing the People to People Program.

The warm summernight at the home of Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and her husband Fred was outstanding. Magnificent food with crab cakes, seafood and specialities from the region delighted eyes and palates. Live music, dancing and most important the warm conversations with old and new friends – an evening, which will be remembered forever by all 60 guests from Pinneberg.

Friday, Oct. 6

We loved to discover our Sister City on a leisure walk with Eileen McGuckian and admired her historical knowledge. We learned about Peerless, the Chestnut Lodge and Uncle Tom's Cabin – followed by a nice gathering for lunch.

Later the ceremonies in the beautiful Scott Fitzgerald Theater were another highlight with speeches, awards, bench ceremony and music. We hope, many people in Rockville and Pinneberg will sit on the anniversary benches thinking of peace and international understanding, of friendship and tolerance throughout this world. The cellist Karim Wasfi with his performance sure was reaching out for peace, too. Music as international language.

The Gala Reception in Glenview Mansion with live music was a festive get-together with intensive conversations and good meals. The 60 guests from Pinneberg felt we are not only friends, we are family!

Saturday, Oct.7

Let's give Jack and Wayne a big hand for making it possible for us to attend a College Football game at the Catholic University. Now, back home we pass on our interest in this typical American game to our grandchildren watching with them on German TV and explaining to them „touchdown“ and „interception“.

A special treat was the Rocktoberfest, where all citizens and guests of Rockville could celebrate, and then the Farewell Party in the RKV Fire Station with barbecue and music, with dancing, singing and a lot of talking to many, many people.

We were taking home unique memories and a pretty canvas bag filled with goodies. Our husbands now are thrilled to use the anniversary aprons and become potmen in our kitchens. Our weather this year gives many opportunities to use the nice umbrellas.

The filigran ornaments „Old Courthouse“ will decorate our Christmas trees. Thanks to Liz von Kaenel for this special selection. A lot of papers give us a chance to learn more about our sister city. Thanks to George Albrecht and Drew Powell and many more for the great booklet and newsletters. Thanks to Hagop Balekijan and Joel for the videos and pictures. We spent hours looking at them and are getting back to the mood of a superb week in Rockville.

However, the most important feeling for us was the friendly and heartwarming contact to all of you. Many of us already found friends, while the Rockville Delegation stayed in Pinneberg, and could strengthen the relationship. Others made new friends in Rockville. We all hope that these friendships will last for a long time and that they can motivate other and especially young people to take part in our sister city programs. We are interested in the new ideas Christian Jessen Klingenberg is developing to bring students into the „People to People Program“ and hope we can do similar things in Pinneberg. Thanks to dozens of volunteers and officials, who were hard working throughout the year, and to Steve Fisher for keeping track of it all.

Once Brigitta Mullican told me at the phone: I feel overloaded with volunteerwork. I really believed it and I assume, not only she felt that way. But after all, everyone can be proud and grateful to have been part of an extraordinary Anniversary event. We'll treasure the memories.

Inge, Margrit and Jurgen
in the name of

Sigrid and Klaus, Heide and Hans-Dietmar, Arno, Cornelia and Karsten, Ilse,
Dorothy and Kai