

news from around the world

District 9930-New Zealand

October 2016

Welcome to newsletter # 3 Newsletter

2016 Out-bounds

Hi Everyone, the common theme coming through loud and clear is the time factor, time already spent and not enough time left for all those things you still want to do and some of you already planning your return visits!! As the old clock ticks down, keep your heads up not down. Keep active, keep focussed and keep on with your planning. Check that bucket list and try and fit everything you want to do in. Keep having fun, lots of it. And most importantly remember your hosts and host clubs as without them you would not be enjoying this wonderful thing we call "Youth Exchange" You are our programs custodians and following you will be your replacement. TTFN.

Jerry and Karen and all the committee.

Sarah Bailey

Chile
Te Kuiti

I feel at home here now which I never thought I'd say. But also, the magic of exchange that I felt at the start of the year has disappeared.

I changed my host family which was kind of drastic, I went from a house full of life where the days went fast to a house where everyone works and I spend a lot of time alone. I missed my first host family, and then, to add to that, in school all that they we were doing was practice tests for huge exams at the end of the year. For a while I was unimpressed by everything, school was boring, no one had plans and I missed New Zealand. So I started putting more energy into

school, making the first move to make plans with people and visiting my first host family, just doing things to keep me busy.

The holidays for the 18th of September (Independence Day here in Chile) were supposed to be a weekend full of dancing, traditional food, everyone is together and having a really good time. So when my host family said that we were going to the country to a small beach I wondered if my 18th, my first 18th in Chile, was going to be boring. As well my host family is quieter and they talked of going away to catch up on their work.

But boy I was wrong, I loved the beach that we went to and I had a great time. It was spectacular with pyramid type rock structures, the never ending coast and perfect weather. We stayed in a cute farm house, ate great food and went hiking. I missed the farm and the beach because after living in rural nz all my life I honestly get sick of the city. I felt like it was just the right break I needed that gave me a renewed energy to give my last month's here in Chile everything I've got.

School is finishing in about a week and I'm so sad because I know that most of the people that I see in school every day I will never see again. I will also have a lot of free time in the next few months. But I have trips to look forward to, and I hope to catch up with everyone here and do everything I haven't done yet now that my time is limited. Hopefully remembering the enthusiasm I had at the start.

Sarah

Victoria Beck

Chile
Ahuriri

With only three months to go, I'm beginning to wonder which places I've already seen for the last time. Despite how dreary this thought is, it also comes with the eye-opening realization that I'll never live the same moment twice and so without a doubt I'll make these last months count.

Early August I changed into my second host family which was almost like starting all over again, minus the language barrier. I'm really thankful to only have two families this year because I now understand how difficult it can be to adjust. My new family is completely different from everything I'd experienced but that's definitely not a bad thing.

Summer is finally on its way with over 30 degrees daily and my bikini bod with +8kg's from exchange weight is NOT ready for it. Apart from this I'm super excited because it also means the end of my school year is close! 30 days (and counting) of school left and I'll be graduating for the second time.



The week from 18th of September marked the Chilean Independence Day, which basically meant a week of holidays, festivals, lots of dancing, empanadas and Chilean traditions with family and friends. I don't think another country could top how patriotic the people of Chile are. It's even a law to hang the Chilean flag outside your house during this week, and the entire city was covered in patriotic colours. It made me feel really proud to be part of such a special country. At school we

also had to perform folkloric dances in front of hundreds of people which was surprisingly really fun.

Over 70 new exchange students arrived last month which was exciting and nice getting to know some of them. It was really strange seeing how lost they were at the start with the language and culture and realizing that I was in their shoes and to see how far we've all come.

There's still so much to do and so little time! Hope everyone's having the time of their life and can't wait to catch up with you all soon!

Victoria

Rose Coppelmans

Brazil
Napier

So I only have just over three months left here, and honestly I don't want to leave. Brazil has treated me so well and taught me so much, and the thought of leaving everyone here behind breaks my heart. The Brazilian culture and people are so beautiful and vibrant and I just feel so at home.

My exchange has really changed me as a person, I have become a lot more confident in myself, more expressive, more open minded, and I am a lot more grateful for everything, including this opportunity to do an exchange. There is a phrase that a lot of people here say, 'It's the Brazilians that make Brazil', which is so true, the people here have been so vibrant and welcoming and have really made my exchange something special.

In these months since my last report I've had some of the hardest but also some of the best times of my exchange. The hardest part was saying goodbye to my oldies because I had grown so close to them, but because of that I had the chance to become a lot closer with my Brazilian friends whom I love so much and I got to welcome the newbies who are also super awesome people.

After the big trip I have settled back into normal life. Some of my favourite things to do are go to the sand dunes, listen to music at the sea side

with my best friend, Julia, walk in the downtown area, sing along to the radio with my host mum, go on picnics with my school friends, dance samba, eat tapioca, and go to school (yes, I actually enjoy school). Although these are all simple things, they still make me really happy. That's one of the things that I have learnt in Brazil, to be happy with what I have.

My school had its school Olympics recently, and my class won! So, I put my medal on my blazer. And of course, in Brazil we hosted the real 2016 Olympics which was super awesome. It was so special to watch the opening ceremony on TV, recognise the artists, and recognise what each scene was representing. I felt so proud seeing the cultures and colours of Brazil being represented so beautifully to the world.

Recently we had the orientation with the newbies, and the Rotarians surprised us with a capoeira circle. I think capoeira is so beautiful, and afterwards there was a samba circle and we were allowed to participate. My friend Julia had recently taught me how to dance samba, and so everyone was very impressed with me afterwards, which I was really proud of because in New Zealand I was known for being a horrible dancer.

In these next few months I'm going to make the most of the hot weather. I plan on going to all of the 42 beaches, eating A LOT of tasty Brazilian foods, and enjoying my time with my friends and family. To be honest, I'm not counting down the days until I go home, I'm counting down the days until I can come back to Brazil.

Rose

Lilly Devine

France

— Ahuriri Sunrise

This third quarter has been absolutely incredible. I've had the most amazing experiences, met lots of new people and my French has been getting better and better!

I had an incredible summer holidays with my host family in Brittany where I spent four days with

my host sister and dad going for walks in the supposedly magical forest, going to the beach and eating crêpes in their region of origin. After, I took the train to the Loire Valley to see my aunt, uncles and cousins who all happened to be in France at the same time!

There were beautiful chateaus that I had seen on TV series and it was so nice to see family. After that, I took the train down to the South of France to meet up with my friend's host family who had invited me on holiday with them for three weeks. The south is like nothing I've ever seen, with beautiful old architecture, lively villages and towns and beautiful scenery. It was a dream come true to go there.

After my unbelievable holidays, I came back to the north and changed host families. This is always daunting, especially as I will have changed five times this year! But my new host family was so welcoming and kind that it made the experience so much easier. They have four children, but the twins left in July to go on exchange. My host brother is in Australia and my host sister is on exchange in Hamilton! So I'll be able to see her in January which is great.

My French is getting better and better and I'm hoping to pass the B2 DELF French exam at the end of the year which will be hard but worth it!

I went back to school in the beginning of August after three months of school holidays which was definitely a change! I'm redoing première (year 12) which I thought would be hard as all my friends from the beginning of the year have moved on to year 13, but it's been great. There are lots of really nice people in my class and I can contribute in class more as I have already done parts of the subjects.

I just got back from a Rotary weekend at Mont Saint Michel with all the exchange students of France! It was the first time everyone was together so it was great to meet lots of new people. It was such an amazing weekend and Mont Saint Michel seemed almost magical.

I'd just like to finish by thanking Rotary and giving us this amazing opportunity to learn new things and have incredible new experiences.



Lilly

Emily Jiang

Denmark
Taradale

I have just recently moved into my final family, and it was a bittersweet transition. I left my second family who were so lovely, but I also moved in with my current family that have two 17 year old girls (one is also actually an exchange student doing a private exchange with the family). It's been really fun living with two girls of a similar age because it's pretty much living with your friends.

With my last family, we went to Portugal to escape the (extremely awful, even for Denmark) Danish "summer". I also experienced having a Danish birthday - in Portugal! A tradition in Denmark when it's someone's birthday is that the family burst into the bedroom of the lucky person and sing the birthday song while waving little Danish flags. It was very sweet.

I've also finally done some of the must do's in Denmark: Legoland (Lego is a Danish creation), visited Skagen (where you can stand with both

feet in two oceans), and visited Hans Christian Andersen's house (twice seeing as it's actually in my city). I've also bridge walked over one of the only two bridges you can (officially) bridge walk across in the world: it's a bridge connecting the island of Funen to Jutland in a town called Middelfart (the only other bridge in the world being the Sydney Harbour).

I also went to Pride for the first time! Although we completely missed the parade, it was amazing to see all the crazy outfits, freedom of self and love in one place.

And of course, the newbies have arrived! I've met those in our District and there are so many compared to us oldies. We haven't met all the newbies in Denmark yet, but a Get Together is planned for next month which is very exciting!

Before moving to my last family, I felt that if I had to, I was ready to go home. I think it was because I had been in the routine for so long it was just becoming normal life. But now that I've moved, I don't want to go back in 100 days to normal life in New Zealand. The Rotary Youth Exchange gives you the opportunity to experience multiple perspectives in another culture and another life. There's always something new you learn when you move, whether it's about yourself, the language or the culture.

Because this is the final report, I'll write about some things happening in the future: I'll be going to do the Night Colour Run in Copenhagen (a 5km run through zones of coloured powder being thrown at you); during the autumn break I'm going with my host family to Crete in Greece for a week to hopefully squeeze out the last of the sunshine in Europe; I'm also planning on visiting Nanna (who did her exchange to Napier,) as she is back in Denmark; and Christmas shopping in London is also planned for the first weekend of December!

So much to do, and so little time left.



Myself and two of my exchange friends from Australia at Copenhagen Pride

Emily

Imogen Jones

Switzerland
Cambridge

Last report! What an odd feeling.

I'm with my third and final host family, who are just great. We live in a small apartment close to town, very convenient for the school and shops. They are awesome at speaking high German to me! The Swiss German dialect is really another language, so I appreciate the effort they put into speaking this way when I'm in the room. It is very much appreciated. Autumn holidays are coming up, and we are planning to spend them exploring Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Germany. I'm very thankful for them and the opportunities they've provided me.

The travel opportunities have been insane. On my Eurotour, I visited the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Italy, Hungary and the Czech Republic. I also got to stay two weeks in Tessin, just five minutes from Italy- and eat my body weight in gelato in the process.

There has also been plenty of chances to check out Switzerland itself, which I grow more in love with everyday. The mountains are breathtaking, but it's the old towns that really hold my heart. It's impossible to pick a favourite- Luzern has

such a beautiful lake, Zurich fair buzzes with energy, Bern is rich with stately charm and Basel has such friendly people. Aarau, my city, really feels like home though. There is something so lovely and reassuring about really knowing my way around the place.

Rotary Switzerland is awesome at arranging weekends away- we've had a couple of really fun camps, and are going to the Matterhorn soon. Always a lot of fun.

Now that I understand enough German to participate in school, it really strikes me how much more difficult the subject matter is. Math, Chemistry and Biology are really something, although counter-intuitively German is actually the class I find easiest. Luckily I have supportive teachers and a great class.

Hope everyone is well.

Imogen

Samuel McPherson

Austria
Whakatane West

Gruss Dich!!!

Hallo Leute!

It's a strange feeling when you receive an email saying your last report is due. It feels like I only just wrote my first report last week...

Aside from that I've been having an amazing time over the past three-four months. Austrian summer is something that I will never forget that's for sure. From cliff jumping into lakes, cruising the lakes in electric hire boats with friends and a trip to Switzerland, these were the highlights of a good summer.

During my time in Switzerland I was greeted by fellow kiwi friends at Zurich Airport, and then surprised by one of my best friends who was also with them. I had no idea he was going to be there. We then drove to Singen, a small town by the border of Germany, and Switzerland. This was our base for the weekend as we were driving between

Switzerland and Germany both Saturday and Sunday for the World Motocross Series. After a busy weekend we drove to Einsiedeln to stay with Gina, the last exchange student I hosted back in New Zealand. The next week consisted of seeing different sights every day, and a road trip to the south of Switzerland/North Italy toward the end of my stay. There was definitely no shortage of fun during this trip.

The rest of my summer was based in Austria, spending long days in Vienna or travelling to a different location with friends each day. I think it's safe to say it was the busiest summer I have ever had. I'm definitely having mixed thoughts about the idea of coming home - part of me wants to stay here, and another part of me wants to be back on home soil - but for now I'm just cruising along making the most of each day that I have left in this beautiful new home of mine.

See you back in NZ, prepare for some long stories.

Peace out

Sam

Oceana Mikaere

Belgium 1630
Otumoetai

Well it's definitely true when they say time FLYS BY. I'll be home in 88 more days.

In the past month I have had the chance to visit a lot more new cities and countries. I was lucky enough for my parents to come and visit me here in Belgium. After they had done their own tour of countries here in Europe they picked me up in Belgium and we went to Germany, Spain and Portugal. We had spent four-five days in each.

We explored the cities the beaches, famous building and even went on a jeep tour to the most southern part of Europe in Portugal where they call it the end of the world. We also went to the Beyoncé concert in Barcelona where I cried to every song Beyoncé performed. After my breath taking experiences in Germany Spain and Portugal,

I returned back to Belgium and my parents returned to New Zealand.

Four days after arriving back, I then left by car for 12 hours with my host family to England and Wales for two weeks. First we stayed in London for a few nights where I got to see Big Ben, Buckingham palace and the crazy day life in London. We then spent a week canal boating where I had no Wi-Fi or reception at all. That was a VERY DIFFERENT experience for me. But it also gave me the chance to relax a lot. After canal boating we stayed in a lodge further up north of Manchester for one week in the Lake District. There we went to the beach a lot and went hiking over some mountains.

Now I am back in Belgium and soon I will be going to Germany with a Rotarian from my club, Amsterdam with another host family of my friends, Switzerland with my host family for skiing and then maybe Paris during Christmas. 88 more sleeps and I will be back in NZ.

Oceana

Madeleine Scott

Belgium 2170
Waikato Sunrise

Bonjour! It's absolutely crazy to think that I've only got 96 days left of this exchange. Since the last report I've got up to some very fun stuff!

I spent three weeks in the south of France with my third family, one week in Vienna with Sam and two weeks with my parents! In France we stayed in Montpellier, but travelled to Marseille also! It was extremely hot there, and I went to Vienna with a wonderful tan.

In Vienna I stayed with Sam and his host family but I also got to see some of the other exchange students there! Sam was a great tour guide and showed me to lots of cool places, including this giant palace and Beethoven's grave.

When my parents arrived, we spent a weekend in London, three days in Belgium and a weekend in Amsterdam. I absolutely loved London, we did a tour of Buckingham palace and I got to spend

Father's Day with my dad. In Belgium, I showed my dad and step mum around a lot and we got to have a dinner with my three host families which was really cool!

I've now started back at school because the holidays are over, and it's already starting to be very cold! My subjects this year are sport, history, French, math, science, religion, geography, health and English. You'll be surprised to hear, I'm not the top of the class in English!

I also have a wonderful group of Belgian friends, ysaure, Ariana, charlotte, Morgane, waël, François and many many more!

These last 267 days have been incredible and I can't wait to enjoy another 96 :)

Maddi

Gabrielle Stone

The Netherlands
Wairoa

Can't believe this is the last report! I have been really busy recently but I like that. I was never really the kind of person to have a lot of spare time and so I found that very difficult in the beginning. But, I am so thankful for every experience, even the not so great ones, because I think the times when I struggled were the times where I grew.

So, I have had a few great experiences since the last report. During the summer holidays I started volunteering at a café in a sort of small community for people with disabilities. At first it was just something to do during the six weeks of holidays. But, it quickly became something I loved to do. And when the holidays came to an end I was really sad to have to go. And then, my counsellor organized for me to stay on! SOOOO I only go three days to school and the other two days I work in the café. I love it there and it has added so much more to my exchange. It is such a rewarding job and I have met such amazing people. I have also learnt a lot about myself since working there.

My parents recently came and visited me. That was amazing! Being able to share my life with them and sharing their excitement over my life was incredible. We rode bikes, climbed up lighthouses and windmills and just did all the typical Holland experiences. I loved being able to share my new culture with them and show them how I live my life every day.

About a month ago, I went to Rotterdam (a city in the Netherlands). There was a lady living there who had been a Rotary exchange student in my town in New Zealand years ago. She invited me and one of my exchange friends to spend the weekend with her. It was so cool, she took us around to all the great spots and we got a real insight on what it is like to live in a big city in the Netherlands. I think this is a great example of the opportunities you get from being a part of Rotary.

With the language, I am at the point where I can have a full conversation in Dutch, sometimes it's a bit difficult and I have to really think about how to say complicated sentences, but I can do it. The language has always been a struggle for me. I had no idea what to expect from learning a new language and I was disappointed when I didn't pick it up straight away. But again, because of that I feel really proud of myself for not giving up and now I can say that I speak two languages. Something I have never before been able to say. I really can't thank my family, friends and the Rotary enough for supporting me with this experience. Hope everyone is going great back home.

Gabrielle

Konings Dag (Kings Day) in Amsterdam



Jade Wright

Canada 5080
Katikati

Where to start

My apologies for not writing a report for the last quarter of my exchange I was extremely busy with trips and it being the summer break here. I will do a little update from the past six months to update you.

So the summer was great here! A lot warmer than I expected, it turns out that it doesn't actually snow all year round here. I was lucky enough for one month in the summer to travel around the USA in a bus full of other Rotary exchange students.

We started in Colorado and saw amazing cities and places including; the grand canyon, Mesa Verde, Las Vegas, universal studios, San Diego, New Orleans, Texas, Disney world, Epcot, Washington DC, the Statue of Liberty, New York and Chicago. There were many other amazing places I was able to see. It really was an amazing trip that I will remember for a very long time.

I also got to travel around Alberta that summer - going far enough north to see the northern lights.

School has started again which for me was great because all of my classes are super easy and I get to see my friends more often. We recently just had the very first snowfall and I couldn't be more excited to start ripping down the ski hill again.

I have mixed emotions about coming home - I love it here so much and I really don't want to leave. Nine months in and I wouldn't want to be anywhere other than where I am right now.

Jade

Matthew Bailey

Germany
Tokoroa

The last three months have for me not been so exciting but more about embracing the German

culture and meeting a lot more people along the way and just embracing life and all its beauty.

I have begun a new German course to help further improve my German with refugees from countries all throughout the middle east such as Afghanistan, Syria and Turkey and listening to some of their stories and battles they have endured is something unbelievable. This is especially when most of these boys are the same age as me and have the exact same problems as me such as school grades, and girls on top of having their home countries turned into war zones. And yet they are so positive about life after all they have lost it is truly amazing.

I have stopped and talked to backpackers on the street to learn about their lives and all they have experienced travelling around the world with merely the minimum and that sense of freedom is something which I would like to experience for a moment in my life as well after my exchange year in Germany.

This exchange year has helped me a lot to work out the places I want to go in life and the things I want to do. As this year is coming to an end with my last three months before the plane back to New Zealand I definitely have a lot planned to make the most of my final months.

These include a trip to Denmark as well as a trip around Germany and I look forward to the people I meet and the things I experience on the way, I will end with my favourite picture taken so far on exchange of me taking in the world.

Peace Out

Matthew

