

EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

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Last Week we heard from our last exchange rebound and inducted a new member.

The Rotary Club of Newberg Early Birds, chartered January 7, 1998, is one of District 5100's largest with over 80 members.



Christina Lynch is now our newest and one of over 1.2 million Rotarians.

Performing the induction was Casey Hostetler, challenging Christina to embrace the ideals of Rotary. To serve where she is needed, and as she is able, and to become acquainted with all our club's members. Attend club and Rotary events and gatherings. Casey also challenged all our members to support and encourage Christina in her role as Rotarian.

Welcome to Rotary, Christina.



Dakota Radcliffe is our last 2019-20 outbound to return home and the only one to stay her entire term in her host country amid the pandemic.

Czech Republic. Just its name is a place to start. When I published Dakota's destination country last year I identified it as it was known when I was in school, Czechoslovakia (since WWI). It hasn't been known as that since Czechia and Slovakia split in 1993, 4

years after the Velvet Revolution swept the Communist party from power.

Dakota stayed until her visa expired and lived in a village named Klatovy, a two hour train ride from Prague.



Dakota's host sister had been an outbound exchange the year before.

Her friend, Nat (below), is the only other Exchange in Klatovy. Dakota says she spent 90% of her time with Nat, joining each other on outings and activities.



The first thing she did on arrival from the airport was a hike to the castle. An interesting to do all tired from a plane ride, she says with a laugh.



Her host family, with only a week before school started, took her on hikes and a water park in Germany.

Her first school trip was to Croatia for a week with her host sister. Their trips weren't educational, they felt more touristy.

The Exchange orientation meeting was the week of her birthday. Most of her Rotary club members spoke no English. So she was a little alarmed when she heard her name from the club President calling her to the mic. "I didn't know what I did wrong so I was kind of scared. But it was just my birthday, so it was okay."

Her skills improved over her year, by the way, so she can probably say happy birthday in Czech now.

Her host family got her flowers, a cake ("super good"), and a bracelet with her initials on it.

Dakota attended a Rotaract meeting in Germany and met a Mexican Exchange student.

Also in October, her host family took her to Egypt for her host dad's work as a SCUBA diving instructor. She spent a week there and swam in the Red Sea for about 15 minutes then got out scared for fear of the ocean (she says with a chuckle).

November was a trip to Prague with her host sister. Dakota joined another US Exchange, about an hour away, and hosted a Thanksgiving dinner as the first major holiday away from their families. The girls spent all day cooking which, "I know sounds normal to you guys, because you do that every year, but to us ... definitely new."



The friend's host dad had bought a huge turkey, way too big for the sitting. So, to Dakota's amusement, he cut it in half, right down the middle.

December saw the District meeting in Prague where all the Exchange students donned "I ♥ JEŽÍŠEK" t-shirts (I heart Baby Jesus), since Czechs don't really do the Santa thing. And Czech prom was kinda like graduation.



host countries without getting them stuck in quarantine for two weeks.

So, we took a bus from Slovakia to the border of Poland, then



January was Exchange Winter meeting.

Her second host family spoke no English (first was fluent). This meant sink or swim in Czech and Dakota chose to not sink.

Ski Week, was in March, just before Europe shut down. Also was a Brazilian carnival one night where you either wear a costume

walked across the border to Poland, got into another bus for a twelve hour ride hoping to get to the Czech Republic before its borders closed.

We were supposed to have a EuroTour, but COVID killed that.

Her second host family didn't have as much free time as her first so couldn't do a lot of outings. But they never objected when Dakota asked to join her friends with theirs.

One outing was to the Pilsner brewery in Plzeň, Czech Republic, kind of like we do with Tillamook Cheese factory. "We didn't try anything, but we saw how it was made." Fun fact, Pilsner Urquell was the world's first pale lager in 1842.

The students threw their own farewell weekend not yet knowing if there would be a real one, each making food from their own countries.

When they did all get together officially we had a district ceremony. "We rode bikes, but it was after it had rained for a couple days. There was a place that wasn't safe for someone that doesn't ride their bike a lot. So I fell. Twice. In the span of 30 seconds. So I was covered by bruises and scrapes. I still have a scar on my leg from someone else's bike that fell on top of me. It was great."

Dakota is glad that Michelle talked her out of short term and in to long term exchange. She had a great time and would return in a heartbeat.



or wear cross gender clothes.

Went to an optical illusion museum (water park closed) with a house of mirrors. "You heard lots of thuds, which was great."

She sprained her wrist snowboarding in Slovakia. Got a picture with her friend making fun of her. Got up ... and did it again.

Slovakia closed its borders while we were there for ski week. So, about 60 Exchanges staying in Czechia, were stuck in Slovakia.

To solve that problem Rotary had to figure out how to get its students back to their

