

TEV EDELWEISS DENVER'S JUGEND-AUSTAUSCH & 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Back in 2016, eighteen of TEV Edelweiss Denver's youth traveled to Bavaria to spend a couple of weeks as part of an ongoing Jugend-Austausch (youth exchange) between Edelweiss Denver and our Huosigau Patenverein, Heimat- und Trachtenverein D'Ammertaler Diessen-St. Georgen. This year, on August 3, we began yet another installment of the Double "D" Trachtenvereine Jugend-Austausch Plus. I add "Plus" as not only did the participants include youth from Denver and twelve youth from our Patenverein in Diessen, it included twenty-six additional Trachtler from Diessen who came to Denver to help celebrate Edelweiss Denver's 60th anniversary as well as local Denver Trachtler making each day a bit more of an adventure as the headcount doubled or tripled! One day we had 50 people to shepherd.

Edelweiss Denver is privileged to not only be a member of Gauverband Nordamerika, we are also long-time members of the Huosigau and we are honored to be Patenkind of D'Ammertaler Diessen. Our Jugend-Austausch began decades ago in order to facilitate lasting relationships between the two clubs even though we are on opposite sides of the world. The biennial youth exchange between D'Ammertaler Diessen and TEV Edelweiss Denver has become a highlight for the youth in both clubs with hosting duties alternating between the two groups. The event typically takes place in August as both groups try to work around the school years in Bavaria and Denver. This is not always easy, but we try to make it work. To be sure, the favorite parts of exchanges on either side of the pond are the times where both groups schuhplattl together. Whether it's a dance both groups know or one group is teaching the other, those moments are savored by all.

Here's the Austausch scoop...

Day One: Gold Mine and Hütte Hangout — The exchange began with a long drive through the mountains to Idaho Springs and the Phoenix Gold Mine. We were greeted by the owner of the mine, who gave us a brief history of the mine. The group then divided, one group went on a tour of the mine while the other panned for gold in the river. Most of us got more dirt than gold, but it was sure fun to try! After that, we all attempted to see some buffalo on an overlook but mostly just

ended up getting lost. From there, we ventured down to our Hütte in Morrison where we ate sloppy joes and pulled pork sandwiches and then the Austausch youth jumped right into a three-legged race! From the three-legged race we line danced, ate barf flavored jelly beans, and then ended all



the activities with the vanilla wafer game. We then turned the dance floor into the sleeping quarters for the night—slumber party!!—splattering all over the Hütte with sleeping bags, pillows and blankets galore!

Day Two: Bear Creek Lake Park — After the boys woke everyone up with tennis balls flying everywhere and a pillow fight at 6 am (who needs an alarm clock?), we all packed up and piled in vehicles for a day at the lake! While we thought the weather was a little cool, the Diesseners walked around in sweats, wrapped in blankets, hugging cups of coffee and wouldn't even consider getting wet until things warmed up considerably. Even though the day began with the sun behind a bank of clouds which kept everyone out of the water, we spent a few hours playing volleyball on the beach until the sun finally came out and warmed everyone up. Some swam while others rode paddle boards and kayaks in the chilly lake all afternoon.

Day Three: Capitol, Broncos Stadium, Elitch's — We all met on the Capitol steps bright and early for an official Austausch photo and then headed inside to take tours of the Capitol. We all made it through the single metal detector they had working that day and the tours were awesome. On the tour I was on, the tour guide spoke slowly enough so that most of the Diesseners could understand. The tour led us to the top of the Capitol—a first for Diesseners who have been on the tour before! What a beautiful view we experienced from the top of the dome. From there we all packed in cars (and I mean PACKED as some cars had more butts than they had seats) and we headed for a tailgate party at Broncos Stadium. Thanks to Lis and Rex for their camper and walking tacos! The Broncos Stadium tour was incredible, we got to see the view of the field from a suite, got to be on the bottom level and see the field up close, and even go in the visitor locker room! After the tour, we all made our way to Elitch's! We managed to ride every roller coaster once, and poor Adam didn't do so well on the Brain Drain, a ride that takes you in loops

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and lets you dangle from the top. He was very green after that one! We ate dinner and were about to jump back on some rides when it started pouring! TJ and Juliana got on a ride when it started to pour, but unfortunately, they got on a ride that only loads people on one car at a time... they were the very LAST people to get off and by the time they unloaded it had been hailing for five minutes! The Diesseners who'd been patiently watching this from under an umbrella, laughed themselves to tears at the sight of the soggy pair exiting the ride.

Day Four: Grand Lake — We all drove up on our own and met at the most gorgeous house in Grand Lake! After spending a few hours unloading food, setting up tents, and eating lunch, we all drove down for an afternoon on the lake. Thank you, Ron, for allowing us to use your boat and tube and thank you Andreas for making sure everything went smoothly! After boating our hearts out, we were in for a treat with Ray's ribs! Thank you, Debbie, Ray, Ron and Renate, for offering your clubhouse for our enjoyment! After eating the best ribs ever, we drove back up to the house where a good portion of the group sat out on the deck for happy hour. Some of the older ones stayed up later playing rounds of bus driver and laughing until our sides hurt.

Day Five: Trail Ridge Road — After enjoying a wonderful breakfast with a view, we packed up and took off for the scenic route home. We all had to strategically put Diesseners in cars so that they could purchase their park passes for their road trip to the Grand Canyon and Mesa Verde. What a sight to see Jürgen (the tallest man from Diessen) get into the smallest car. After buying the passes, we met up at the top of the mountain where we all got out and hiked a TON of stairs to get the most breathtaking view of Colorado. After some speedy souvenir shopping, we got in the cars and made our way down to meet for lunch, picnic style. Because the day had slipped away from us a bit, some went on to see Estes Park and others did not and were able to do their own thing. Those who stayed with the Jenssens (plus Nadja's family and Paulina) all went to the Flatirons mall and shopped for a few hours before finally heading home!

Day Six: Water World — Last day! We met at Water World right at 10 when it opened so we could get as many rides in as possible. Everyone scattered to assorted rides but still managed to meet up for lunch together and then returned to some pretty long lines to ride some more. The weather was great; the rides were amazing! Everyone headed out around three so we could re-assemble at the Hütte for an evening of visiting and a little danc-

ing. We were able to say hello to another group of Diesseners who flew in that afternoon and came out in spite of the fact that they'd been on the go over 24 hours! We traded Plattler dances and then combined Volkstänze for a few hours and visited a lot!



Days Seven, Eight and Nine—Edelweiss Denver's 60th Jubiläum — This weekend, Edelweiss Denver celebrated its 60th anniversary. We had additional guests join us for the weekend including many from other Gauverband Nordamerika Vereine. Our guests included Plattlers from

SVEV D'Oberlander Milwaukee, WI, our Gauverband Nordamerika Patenverein. They joined our Double "D" group allowing us to toast once again as Triple "D" for the weekend! Plattlers from our Patenkind, GTEV Edelweiss, Garland, TX, were also in attendance as well as our friends from Schlierachtaler Stamm, BHTV Golden Gate, San Francisco, and Enzian Volkstanzgruppe, Newark, DE. They joined us for a wonderful performance of the "Gauplattler," which was a little

tricky since the dance floor at the Hütte isn't very large.

Our Huosigau Patenverein, D'Ammertaler Diessen, joined us for the Huosigau's "Gauschlag" and then performed an honor dance of their own for us. We received wonderful gifts of congratulations from these groups and will be placing our new Patrona Bavaria in a special place of honor for all to enjoy. If all this wasn't enough to bring a smile to everyone's faces, Diessen brought with them their Spielmannszug! This was a first for us. The Spielmannszug began our festivities Friday and Saturday parading inside, filling the dance floor, while playing awesome music. We had to rent some of the instruments for them but you'd never know they were playing unfamiliar instruments, the music was perfect! Additionally, they brought with them three amazing alphorn players. They played outside near one of the ponds outside the Hütte. The echo from the surrounding mountains was awe-inspiring. All in all, this was the perfect weekend—great friends, great music, great food and great fun. Wish we could have celebrations like this all the time!

Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate our 60th. We hope everyone had an awesome time in spite of the heat and hope that when you're in the Denver area you'll stop by to say "hello" and have a beer. We are looking forward to 2020 when we head to Diessen to help them celebrate their 100th Jubiläum and we participate in the next installment of our Jugend-Austausch! See you there!

—Terry & Juliana Jensse