

eur Au Pair GAZETTE

Intercultural Child Care Programs

A Publication for EurAupair Program Participants and Friends Around the World!

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LOOKING BACK

By CC Pamela Porvaznik in Wichita, KS with Au Pair Simone Swanepoel

It's been 10 years now that I first volunteered as a Community Counselor for EurAupair. And at 79, I venture to say, I'm probably one of the oldest if not THE oldest CC now working—but then the Au Pairs keep me young! Besides, I was a camp counselor all through high school and college, and a youth counselor later with my Church. Working with young people is just a pleasure.



CC Pamela with Au Pair Simone from South Africa

The most rewarding thing for me is to see my Au Pairs blossom. Some have arrived speaking and writing English fluidly, others have enlisted their host children in teaching them better grammar. But watching these lovely, young women from foreign countries take our wonderful America by storm is so exhilarating.

Most of my Au Pairs are not afraid to drive. They just prop up their cell phones' GPS system and take to the streets. They love it when their host families attempt to make their favorite foods as a surprise. And they really relish having their host parents plan a vacation to show them sights they might never get to see.

My host families have taken their Au Pairs camping in a National Park in Utah, exploring the mountains of Colorado, getting a taste of the honky tonk

in Las Vegas, blowing into the windy city of Chicago, learning about our Founding Fathers in Washington, D.C., as well as visits to Mexico and Panama. One host family had to scrub a trip to Alaska because of Covid travel restrictions, but later made up for it with a trip to Florida. It was the first time one of my Au Pairs had ever seen the ocean!

I try to give my girls the "Wichita, Kansas experience." We explore my favorite haunts — local restaurants, university musicals, community theatre—that sort of thing. I have a current Au Pair who loves animals. In fact, her host parents bought her very own kitty, which she plans to take back with her when she returns to her home country this March. We've been to Tanganyika

Wildlife Park, and this Christmas to take in the glorious animal lanterns at the Sedgwick County Zoo. We've ridden the Merry-Go-Round at our Botanical Gardens, had horseback riding lessons in rural Kansas, and even a Pickle Ball lesson!

It's always bittersweet when an Au Pairs year or two are up and she returns home. Now a decade later, two of my Au Pairs have married, one has gone back to college, several are working and all are traveling to other countries.

Whenever I think it is time to "hang it up and retire," I get another Au Pair. So, for now, I will continue on!

Thanks for sharing your CC experience with us, Pam! We are grateful to have such a great team!

Recipe Corner

Shortbread Biscuits from German Au Pair Hanna Sophie Hagemeister currently in Fitchburg, WI

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups butter
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- Vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 4 egg yolks
- 8 cups flour
- 1/2 cup grated almonds
- White, dark or/and milk chocolate to melt and to dip the cookies

1. Melt coconut oil and let it cool down.
2. Beat the coconut oil with butter, sugar, vanilla extract, eggs and egg yolks and almonds until frothy.
3. Mix flour and baking powder and add it to the other ingredients.

4. Knead the mix to a good cookie dough.
5. Let it rest for at least 1 hour in the cold.
6. Cut out cookies.
7. Turn the oven on to 300 degrees. Leave cookies in the oven until brown (10 to 12 minutes).
8. Melt white, dark and/or milk chocolate and dip the cookies in it. Then let the chocolate get dry.



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About Us...

EurAupair Intercultural Child Care Programs is a non-profit, public benefit organization designated by the U.S. Department of State to conduct the Au Pair cultural exchange program under the Fulbright Hays Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 and is intended "to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges".

If you would like to contribute to the EurAupair Gazette, please email info@euraupair.com. We would love to hear from our Host Families, Au Pairs, Community Counselors, Area Coordinators and Partners.

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EurAupair Photos

Monthly Activities



CC Patricia Vance from South Bend, IN, met with her Au Pairs at a fun center to play mini golf.

From left to right: Au Pair Erika Amiri from Germany, CC Patricia Vance and Au Pair Laura Cruz Hernandez from Colombia.



Au Pair Laura from Colombia, lives with her host family on a farm in Wichita, KS and have many animals including goats, chickens and a baby alpaca.

From left to right: Evie, Laura, Theo and Aurelia. And of course, a baby alpaca.



CC Gila Peller from Northbrook, IL, held her October cultural event in her house and they did pumpkin carving.

From left to right: Au Pairs Karla from Mexico, Maria from Venezuela and Silvia from Mexico.



CC Nicole Richardson from Yulee, FL took her Au Pairs to a Jumbo Shrimp baseball game in Jacksonville.

From left to right: Au Pairs Anni from Finland, Maria from Colombia, Maria from Venezuela, Alejandra from Colombia, Johanna from Colombia, Tayla from South Africa and Abi from South Africa



CC Heidi Hunter from St. Charles, IL, got together with her Au Pairs at her house and they carved pumpkins together for their cultural event.

From left to right: Au Pair Menandi Smit from South Africa, her friend and CC Heidi Hunter.



CC Fabienne from Sherrills Ford, NC took her Au Pairs to a pumpkin patch in Mooresville, NC for their cultural meeting.

From left to right: Paola from Mexico, Maritza and Wendy both from Colombia.

EurAupair Photos

Monthly Activities



CC Anne from Atlanta, GA brought her Au Pairs to a Christmas market in Atlanta and they did Secret Santa together.



CC Michelle from Bridgeport, WV took a group of her Au Pairs out in Bridgeport.



CC Darcy from Noblesville, IN had a Christmas party with her Au Pairs at her house. They enjoyed sharing, eating and opening presents.

From left to right: Johana from Venezuela, Kwankao from Thailand, Bilgi from Turkey and Laura from Colombia



CC Nicole Richardson took a group of her Au Pairs to the Jacksonville Love Locks Bridge over the St. John's River in Florida. They personalized locks with metal stampings.

From left to right: Alejandra from Colombia, Cami from Argentina, Karol from Mexico, Johanna from Colombia, Tayla from South Africa, Maria from Venezuela, Daniela from Venezuela, Camilla from Mexico, Grecia from Mexico, Abi from South Africa and Anni from Finland.



CC Patricia from South Bend, IN and her Au Pairs rang bells for Salvation Army outside Walmart in Niles, MI.

From left to right: Au Pair's Laura from Colombia, Karen from Colombia, Nancy from Mexico and CC Patricia.

2022 EurAupair Au Pair of the Year Winner

By Au Pair Anika Michau from South Africa with the Simcoe Family in Erie, PA

I first want to start by saying thank you for this opportunity. I also want to thank my family back home for all their support and love during the year and for encouraging me to spread my wings and fly. I also want to thank my LCC, Mary Robinson and Carla's Au Pair for their support during this year. I can't thank everyone enough. If it wasn't for everyone I just mentioned, I wouldn't have been here and nominated.

It is a great privilege to be nominated as one of the four Au Pair finalists. When I received the phone call from EurAupair, saying that I was nominated by my host family, I started to cry. I did not know that they nominated me and to hear all the wonderful things they said about me was heart-warming and I was so grateful, because everything I hoped for my year as an Au Pair for the Simcoe family came true. After the phone call I've come to know that I'm the first Au Pair they have nominated, which made it even more special.



I'm just a farm girl who always had a dream of being an Au Pair, actually more than that, I wanted to be an older sister, a godly example and to share the love and kindness that I know. My family and I prayed a lot about me wanting to go on this amazing journey and praying to find the right family. God answered our prayers.

The first family that contacted me was the Simcoe's and I immediately knew that they were the right family. I was fortunate enough to come to the United States during the travel ban, which made everything even more scary, yet exciting. Noth-

ing can prepare you for what is waiting when you get off the airplane meeting your new family for a year. The moment I saw the kids, my heart was jumping out of my chest of excitement. I knew that these three kids were going to be a big part of my life. Never did I expect them to fill such a big space in my heart and life.



I have come to love each child in their own way. They're all three so different. Ella, the oldest, who is 8-years old, is the true big sister. She is incredibly smart and is amazing at sport. I always try to teach her about sport, but she has taught me so much more about American sports than I ever thought I would know. We have the best "dates", always wanting to go to the pet shop and play with the puppies, get ice cream and oh, maybe just pull a tooth while we're having fun. Might I add, she did not even cry. She is one of the bravest girls ever. Sometime we will talk in different accents and pretend that we're British or from the South.



Reese, the middle child, who is 5-years old, is the sweetest

girl you'll ever meet. She is kind and goofy. I just love her hugs; she is the most loving girl. She will always try and make everyone laugh and trust me, her laugh is contagious, you can't help but laugh with her. She loves learning Afrikaans. She even tells people that it's her second language

Then there is Rhett, the cutest little guy ever, who is 2-years old. He brings so much joy to my life and has an extra special place in my heart. His excitement makes me excited. He loves climbing, running and being outside. And boy, does he keep me on my toes.



The love I have for them is unconditional and I will never be able to describe it, but I can show it to them. The kids and I love to do crafts, go for walks and play outside. We go on "dates" too. I love taking them to Presque Isle, the zoo, Chuck E. Cheese or just to stay at home baking and having some fun in the kitchen. Every moment spent with the kids has been so special and each memory will stay with me forever.

My host parents are both in Medicine and they are very hardworking. Which is why I help and do whatever I can to make their lives easier. My host mom, Kaleigh, is always very supportive and I know I can always go to her for advice or just to have a great conversation like friends would. The family always includes me in everything they do. They take me on vacations, weekends away or just to spend some quality time

together as a family. I am very grateful that I got blessed with the best host family ever. They are more like my own family than a host family.

I always knew that the day would come where I had to choose if I'm extending with another year or go back home, I immediately started to pray about it after my first 6-months, when I realized how much I love the kids and the family. I told the family that I'm extending with another year and we were all excited, because now we have more time and more days to fill with love, laughter and lots of new memories.

I would encourage any young woman to become an Au Pair. The long-lasting relationship you build with the family and every experience with them is incredible. I have grown so much as a young woman and I am grateful that the Simcoe's have been a part of that. This year has exceeded my expectations in every way. I wanted to be a big sister and I was blessed with a second family. I wanted to be an example and yet they taught me so much.

Don't get me wrong, some days are tough, but when you get that hug before bedtime or an "I love you Anika" at the end of the day, it's all worth it. If I had to choose again, I would make the same decision over and over again.

Even if I don't win Au Pair of the year, I already won in every way possible. I have been blessed with the best host family and memories. I'm excited to be their Au Pair for another year and make more memories and an even stronger, lasting relationship. All my love, Anika

Congratulations Anika and thank you for sharing with us your Au Pair experience!