

Field Report No. 2

My school decided to make the homecoming dance from 9 – 12 pm after the homecoming football game. I think that this was a pretty bad idea because the football game lasted until 10:30 pm and after that all the football players had to shower and change clothes and then drive to the location where the dance was. Because of this the homecoming was a short event for many people but still very enjoyable. I met a lot of people and a few of them are now very good friends. In school my math teacher changed me from Algebra II to Calculus, which is a big difference, but it is what I would do in Germany this year and because I already did a quick-course of this themes last year it is easy for me even in English.

I really started to enjoy playing and watching football. We had a few great games this season for example against Pulaski Academy, a top private school, where Bleacher Report streamed the game live, so more than 500,000 people watched it, although we lost with a close result. We made it in the playoffs this season but lost our first playoff game 35: 36 after we were up by 7 points with 2 seconds left. Up to this moment I never understood how important this was for our senior football players. I will never forget how our Captain and RB sat on the field and cried while our QB and I were comforting him and at the same time a few of his friends were praying over us. But all in all I think it was a great season where we learned a lot and I finished it with 6 games I played in and 15 points in 13 kicks for our JV team and 3 points in 3 kicks for Varsity. In the next week we started the off-season program and it is very hard. As soon as my muscles stop hurting I already have to lift again. My soccer season is also over but the High School soccer try-outs are shortly thereafter and I'm going to play with many of my team members again.

On my first report card I got all A's and this quarter my percentages are even better than in the last one. School started to feel like I am thinking in my native language and sometimes it is even easier to explain things in English than in German, for example I was not able to explain the American voting system to my parents in German and I had to do it in English. The American view on other countries is a little bit funny to me, for example in my history class everything sounds different from the German view because the US history program only teaches about the things the USA participated in. When we did World War One the spectator from America was positive to Britain and France and against Germany. It also only focused on the parts where US troops participated.

The next thing was Thanksgiving. We had the whole week off and we went to Nebraska because my host parents are both from there. It was a 10 hour drive and I was surprised that this is the closest they have ever lived to there since they have to move around because my host father works for the air-force. We did a few things together but most of the time we were watching football or other sports. On Thursday we went to the retirement home of my host father's grandparents and had the Thanksgiving lunch. After that we went to the house of my host mother's parents where we had Thanksgiving dinner, which consisted of leftovers from their lunch and watched football. We continued to eat leftovers for the next few days and on Saturday we went to an ALDI store and bought some German Christmas treats. On Sunday we drove back home. I had to explain my Thanksgiving experience to many of my friends and to my family in Germany.

After we came back from Nebraska the final three weeks of school started. A few teachers already started reviewing stuff while others were doing new stuff like “we still have enough time for this”. The Semester week was one of the easiest weeks in the whole school year because we only had two tests

over 1 ½ hours in the morning and after this we were allowed to go home. On Monday we had the last preparations and on Tuesday was the test in 1st and 2nd period. After this I got checked out so I had the whole day to study for the other tests. On the next two days we started the day with testing in 3rd and 4th period on Wednesday and 5th and 6th on Thursday. After this I went to football practice because our coach said if we come to practice after testing on Wednesday and Thursday we can stay home on Friday, where we would have Semester test in 7th Period (Athletics), but because we already did the workout, we were allowed to stay home. After the football practice I got checked out again.

Soon after Thanksgiving was over we already started with the Christmas preparation. Every few days we received packets with Christmas presents from a lot of people like family, friends and neighbors. Here in the US Christmas is celebrated differently from the way it is celebrated in Germany. I mostly missed the Christmas feelings with only very few light and Christmas songs while we open presents on Christmas Eve. On the other side it was very nice to sit on the couch at noon to watch my little host brothers opening their presents and open my own ones of course. I got more presents than I expected, although the packet from my parents did not arrive in time even though they sent it at the beginning of December via plane. The days after Christmas were very relaxing and we went out to eat a few times and watched a few movies together. I skyped with my family and my friends a few times but I was not homesick. A few days before Christmas we went to Fayetteville to have a little vacation and see some Christmas lights in the downtown area. On the first day we watched Rogue 1 in a cinema but when we got out it had started to snow and so it was too cold to watch the lights. Because of that we drove home in the evening instead of the next morning. On Christmas Eve we went to the trail of lights at my school where I met some of my friends from the baseball team that helped at the entrance and exit. The days after Christmas me and my host brothers stayed home, but my host parents had to work. The good thing was that my host brothers can look for themselves pretty well and that there were only about 2-3 hours every day with both host parents gone. A very surprising thing was that we did not celebrate New Year. My host mother told me that only very few Americans use fireworks and that what Germans do for New Year is mostly done during a special event in June. I still heard about some parties from my friends in school but we went to Dallas, Texas on January 2nd for 3 days where we met Benedikt, the last exchange student of my host family, who comes from Munich. There we visited the John F. Kennedy museum and I watched my first ever NBA game. When we arrived in Texas there were 75° F and we stayed in an apartment within the Uptown area but it was an enclosed neighborhood so it was not loud. In the evening Benedikt and a friend of him arrived and we went out to eat at In 'n Out. On the next day we visited the JFK museum and after that we met a family that are good friends with Benedikt and my host parents from when he stayed with them in Texas. We went out to eat again and in the evening we went to the Mavericks game. It was very nice to watch because the German Basketball player Dirk Nowitzki is like a living legend at this club. On the next day we drove back home into cold 25° F and had to go back to school the next day. There the girls soccer had already started and they were practicing, but the boys soccer did not start, so me and about 7 other boys that will play for the high school practiced with them even though it was very cold. In the following night we had snow for my first time in the USA. It was about 1-2 inches of snow but this was already enough for school to be canceled, because the school does not want their 16 year old students to drive through such bad weather.



