



Newsletter

European IFYE Alumni Association

February 2012



Read more about:

Costa Rica exchange – adventure for a life time

News from Executive committee

Updates Conference Kungälv 2012

IFYE life in Wales

Exchange to Europe 2011

Agenda AGM 2012

Greetings from the President – Martyn Quayle

I do hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas with family and friends and that the New Year is proving to be a good one for you. I'm not too sure how many of you will have made New Year's Resolutions on New Year's Eve but I have no doubt there are many New Year's Resolutions which will not have stood the test of time! Better luck next year. (To you and to me!)

The European Executive Committee met in Vienna during the second weekend in January and we were kindly accommodated in apartments belonging to Gerhard Steinberger's sister and her family, and his mother – all of whom either voluntarily agreed to move out of their apartments whilst we took them over, or were evicted by Gerhard. Our grateful appreciation to Gerhard and his family for such kind hospitality and providing such comfortable accommodation.

My flight to Vienna from Birmingham should have included a short one hour stop in Zurich. However, in some of the stormiest conditions I have ever encountered, whilst our plane approached Zurich airport, the airport was immediately closed and we were diverted to Milan. We remained on the plane at the airport for a couple of hours before the plane was refuelled and headed back to Zurich where we landed safely. It was too late to catch my connecting flight to Vienna so the Airline arranged for me to stay in a hotel near the airport for the night. I was reunited with my luggage in the morning and thankfully reached Vienna. Luckily, I had arranged to travel a day earlier than needed so the Executive Committee was able to start its work on time. We had some very productive meetings in Vienna and look forward to giving further details at this year's IFYE Conference in Sweden from 21st – 28th July, 2012.

After the meetings in Vienna, I took the opportunity to visit my original host families from 1985 in Upper Austria. It was brilliant to catch up with them all, and they even facilitated me to speak to 2 English Classes at an Agricultural College where one of their family was studying. It was quite a challenge for me and they appeared to enjoy learning a little about the Isle of Man's history, geography, politics and agriculture, as well as learning about the IFYE organisation and the opportunities to travel via the Young Farmers' Clubs. They're now looking to send a student each year to the Isle of Man on a 14 week on-farm practical experience following completion of studies as they already send students to the UK and Ireland.

On returning to the Isle of Man, a few weeks elapsed before I went skiing to Zermatt with some friends who used to be in the Young Farmers' Clubs– my first skiing since the car accident in 2004. It was a fantastic experience skiing again after so long, and my friends thought I skied to the same standard as I achieved before the accident. Whilst taking it steady, I was pleased to negotiate some challenging black pistes.

As our thoughts turn to the Summer, I know that the Swedish IFYE Organisation has been working enormously hard to ensure that we have a memorable time with them in July, and look forward to seeing many of you there.

Kindest regards
Martyn Quayle (Isle of Man)



European IFYE Alumni Association

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Deadline next issue:
1. May 2012

Greetings from the Editor

Here you have the first newsletter of the year! From the front page you will see that Switzerland is one of the themes with the report from US Sarah Northup who has had her exchange in Estonia and Switzerland. Norwegian Maren Brekkvassmo Myrvold travelled to Costa Rica in 2010 and we also have a report from her exchange. The Welsh contact member Mary Roberts has supplied us with some news from IFYE life in Wales. And finally the Swedish committee have some more information on this summer's Conference. Thanks a lot to you all for your contributions! And to the rest of you; Read and enjoy!

You might as me have received the Conference Report from Finland and are recalling all the great memories. As an attendee you have definitely received it and as a lifetime member not attending you have received the report if you have requested to receive it (following the letter/information sent to all lifetime members in 2008). If you are a lifetime member not receiving the report anymore, but want to have it for the future you have to inform the Executive Committee by e-mail.

I would like to take the opportunity to challenge you all to contribute stories and news for the upcoming edition of the Newsletter. Please queue up before the end of April!

Hilde W. Riser (N)



Mid term meeting
in Vienna, first
weekend in January

From the left:
Hilde, Anette, Martyn,
Norbert, Gerhard and
Sally.

Executive committee: 2011-2012

President: Martyn Quayle, Isle of Man
First Vice President Gerhard Steinberger, Austria
Second Vice President Anette Nilsson, Sweden

Treasurer: Norbert Winkler, Austria
Secretary: Sally Young, Scotland
Newsletter editor: Hilde W. Riser, Norway

News from the Executive Committee

Following the mid term meeting we will focus on some of the annual formalities; the Agenda for the AGM in Kungälv in July is to be found here in this newsletter and the application date for the development fund is as always 1. May. For the Contact Members it's a date for returning the country reports to our secretary and for all; remember to sign on for the Conference in Kungälv and the next deadline for the newsletter.

Membership status 2011-2012

Membership category	Life time	Annual		Life time	Annual
Austria	5	4	The Netherlands	4	1
Belgium	2	1	Northern Ireland	13	1
Denmark	12	0	Norway	38	5
England	11	0	Luxembourg	21	0
Finland	25	20	Scotland	10	2
France	1	0	Sweden	48	5
Isle of Man	1	1	Switzerland	53	4
Germany	16	5	Wales	4	0

total

Life time members: 264	Annual members: 49
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Overseas members: Costa Rica, Australia and USA, 7 lifetime members

Development Fund

Does your national organisation have a development project that needs financial support? If so, consider applying for some funding to assist setting up the project, from the Development Fund. The application form and conditions are attached to this email. The closing date for applications is the 1st May 2012.

This information and application form has been sent directly to the contact members.

ALL LIFETIME MEMBERS!!!

**HAVE YOU MOVED LATELY AND REMEMBERED TO UPDATE US WITH YOUR NEW ADDRESS?
PLEASE UPDATE US ON E-MAIL**

ON OUR WEB SITE YOU WILL FIND MINUTES FROM AGM (JULY 2011 AND EARLIER YEARS) AND CONTACT MEMBERS MEETING, COUNTRY REPORTS AND NEWSLETTERS 10 YEARS BACK.

IFYE life in Wales

In Wales we are proud to be able to offer our Young Farmers Club members visits to The European Rally, Rural Youth Seminars, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Finland, Canada and the USA. All members who apply for a trip attend a selection and briefing day at Wales YFC Headquarters at the Royal Welsh Showground. Previous travellers and Wales YFC staff and officers hold briefing sessions during the day and are given an opportunity to have practice interviews. Selection is made following the interviews and those members look forward to representing Wales as ambassadors for agriculture and the countryside as well as an invitation to join Young Farmers Ambassadors (the UK branch of IFYE). Welsh members also have the opportunity to travel on the Discovery programme which is run by England and Wales YFC. This year, 5 Welsh members are amongst the 41 members travelling worldwide.

We look forward to welcoming incoming exchangees from these countries at a reception at the Royal Welsh Show in July which is one of the largest agricultural shows in Europe attracting almost 250,000 visitors every year. These members then go on to stay with their host families.



Photo: Gwilym Williams, IFYE to USA 1959, who spent a lot of time in Illinois. In the centre are Clint Davis and Erin Petersen, exchangees from Illinois, USA to Wales. At the back and on the right are Rhys Parry Williams and Anwen Price, exchangees to Illinois from Wales.

The Wales YFA committee hosts the UK reunion once every 4 years and invites all Welsh members along with those from England Scotland and Northern Ireland. In October 2011 we had a wonderful weekend in Ewloe, North Wales and welcomed 9 visitors from Europe.



The Wales Committee will extend a warm welcome to you all to the 55th European Conference in Monmouth – 25th July 2013

CROESO

The 2013 committee on their meeting in February 2012

A IFYE traveller of 2012

After attending Young Farmers Ambassadors' events with my parents as a child and hearing from my Young Farmers Club friends how brilliant an opportunity it is to be able to travel with YFC I thought IT'S MY TURN TO HAVE A GO !!!



Emma Young, Wales IFYE to Finland 2012 – getting ready for the Wales YFC Pantomime competition

At the interview in November, I was selected to visit Finland for 2 weeks in June to represent Wales and I can't wait !

I am looking forward to learning about the challenges facing agriculture in Finland in the short growing season and discovering how farmers have adapted to deal with their climatic conditions. I also hope to further my knowledge of agriculture and learn about their society and culture.

On my return to Wales, I plan to keep in touch with others who have shared this experience by joining YFA/IFYE and attending future reunions to meet old friends and make lots of new ones. Bring on the excitement!! See you in Monmouth next year!!

IFYE in the beautiful and wet Costa Rica

(First time published in the Norwegian 4H alumni Newsletter in December 2010)



Once I had a dream; to complete the 4H Programme and then having the possibility to become an IFYE. It became a reality following many recommendations from 4H friends. In November the application was sent of and in July I could leave the Gardermoen Airport in Oslo heading for 5 month in Costa Rica. This was a choice I will never regret; I had the biggest adventure of my life!

Costa Rica was my choice amongst many options. Because I wished to stay in a country with loads of food not possible to find in Norway, a country with a language I didn't know and finally a country with a different culture and climate than here in the north of Europe. And for that Costa Rica was a perfect choice!

The country is situated in Central America between Panama and Nicaragua and the country has 5 million inhabitants. It's a tropical country with only a summer season and rain-/winter season. The rain season lasts from May to October, but I found it quite refreshing with rain showers and a temperature of at least 20°C in the evenings. That's not cold for a 'Viking' like me. And yes, I have had so much rain you wouldn't believe it! The climate covers everything from very humid rain forest with monkeys and snakes to white sandy beaches with turtles and 'heat stroke'. Finally it's mountains where you have to wear woollen socks, woollen tights and woollen sweaters!





The language is Spanish and the daily cuisine is rice and beans, often served for breakfast, lunch and dinner. And there are loads of new and exciting fruits and to me unknown trees used for both food and drinks. And if you can't live without out Norwegian bread, learn how to make it before you leave, they loved it! and I still prefer it to their white bread. 4H in Costa Rica is called 4S and the S'es is equivalent to our H'es.

I wish that all of you could all get to know a Costa Rican or Ticos as they also are called. They are very hospitable and friendly, even if they don't have a lot themselves. They are grateful for what they have and have a very big heart. On the other hand they are extremely easy when it comes to appointments and times, so you will have to use your patience you will have to learn it anyway. I have had so many experiences: I have helped out slaughtering a bull for a 15 years birthday celebration (!) and given another bull an injection. I lived with a family in a house with no walls. I have been baking loads of home made bread and been helping out at the local newsagents. I have been swimming in the Pacific when the water was 32°C and a local volcano erupted while I was there (in Costa Rica, not in the water).

I have learned to be easy and take things as it comes, it doesn't have to be things going on all the time and I have been better to remember that things will not be better than you want it to be. For almost three months I had no internet connections and I learned to appreciate the few messages I received from Norway but also focusing on my stay and being on my own as an important aspect. I haven't had a boring minute during my stay and I have had a really good time with all my host families and now feel that I've got second homes and families. It has been an unforgettable journey with memories that will last for the rest of my life.



So if you consider applying to travel as an IFYE or simply wants to have an unforgettable experience; This is a fantastic way to explore a country from the inside and not only see the touristic part. You will get to know a lot of great people and some of them might be friends for life. You will experience and learn something new every day even if it's just a something minor, and if you don't know what is happening all the time it's a great and different way to learn!

Follow your dreams and you will never regret!

IFYE greetings from Maren Brekkvassmo Myrvold 21 years old, living in Oslo, from the county of Nord-Trøndelag, working as a chef

What do Viking ships, alpine barns, swamp soccer, and hitch-hiking have in common?

2011 IFYE exchange from USA to Estonia and Switzerland

Well actually not much, except that they have all been part of my IFYE experience! A university student, I left my native Colorado, USA in June to begin a 6 month, two country IFYE journey. What a ride it has been! The people I've met, the places I've been, and the experiences I've had, are almost unbelievable! Unless of course you've been an IFYE before, then you know that anything is possible!

My adventure began in Estonia, a tiny county just south across the Baltic Sea from Finland. Estonia may be small (there are only 1 million Estonians total) but it is a little country with a big heart. While in Estonia I had the opportunity to stay with seven different host families in different regions throughout the country. While in Estland (as the natives call it) I did everything from beach camping during the white nights of summer, to walking in a parade for the National Song Festival, and I even completed a 200km bike ride through the country with a local 4H club. Oh, and of course there was some work in there as well!

I have so many memories from Estonia that I treasure and I'd like to share a few of my favorites with you. One cannot spend much time in Estonia without participating in a Sauna party. Like their Baltic neighbours, Estonia has a strong and enduring sauna tradition. Sauna is a way to bring friends together for food, laughter and extreme heat! While native Estonians claim it is excellent for one's health, as a sauna newcomer I was concerned that I might spontaneously combust in the 100+ degree temperatures. Everyone had a good laugh when after only a few minutes I ran from the sauna and took refuge in a nearby lake. I eventually toughened up after a few months and by the time I left Estonia I could sauna like a native. Almost everyone in Estonia has a sauna built into their home or in an outdoor building close by. For a truly authentic sauna, all you need is freshly smoked fish, birch branches for purifying the skin, a few cans of quality beer or cider, and of course good friends to share in the event!



Wearing traditional clothing to walk in the parade at the 2011 National Song Festival in Tallinn, Estonia



One of my host fathers was a master builder in a local ship building organization. These boats are all built by hand using techniques that are hundreds of years old! This picture was taken at the launch of their most recent project.

Life in Estonia has not been easy and the country is still recovering from more than 50 years of occupation by the former Soviet Union. It was fascinating to hear peoples' stories about the "Russian Times," and I got a first-hand account of what life was like behind the Iron Curtain. That said I have never met people that treasure their freedom as much as the Estonians.



Digging potatoes by hand is a lot of work, but is a great opportunity for all the family to get together! in Parnu, Estonia

Their love of their traditions, language, and land was truly inspiring. Every two years in Tallinn (the capital city), Estonians celebrate their independence with a National Song Festival. Song festivals have long been a tradition in Estonia but since the collapse of the Soviet Union they have taken on an even more significant role in Estonian life. While many countries had to fight to gain their independence from the Soviet regime, the Estonians chose to use their voices instead of weapons. In what is now referred to as a "Singing Revolution" the Estonian people banded together and held illegal singing festivals to protest Russian occupation. At these festivals the people sang national

songs that had been banned by the Soviet Government; now, twenty years later, the country still joins together to sing these same songs in celebration of the freedom they went so long without. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to participate in the National Song Festival this year as an IFYE. To witness nearly one-third of the Estonian population gathered to sing and celebrate their country, was truly awe-inspiring and I am so grateful I was able to participate in the event.

After three wonderful months in Estonia, I am now halfway through my second country assignment in Switzerland. Another small country, but one with so much diversity it's like having multiple countries in one! The beginning of my Swiss journey was a grand adventure and that's putting it lightly. The first host family I had operates an eco-tourism business called the Wild Association, and wild it was! Their home is a renovated barn perched on an alpine field high in the Valais. In order to have a minimal impact on the environment, their home has no indoor plumbing, no major appliances, uses no chemical products, and uses only solar energy for lighting. Living at the Wild Association was like taking a step back in time, and during the two weeks I was there I was able to authentically experience mountain life. Despite lacking most modern conveniences, the natural beauty of the Valley, connection to wildlife and a charismatic, and adventure-loving host family more than made up for it! Have that said, I'm still not sure I'm entirely sold on rustic living . . . carrying your own bath water from a fountain is hard work!





One of the fighting cows that participated in the annual "Cow Combats" in Martigny, VS. I can honestly say I have never seen anything like this before, and if I didn't have photographs as proof, I don't think anyone at home would believe me!

After the Valais I moved to my second Swiss host family in the canton of Solothurn. I think I was the ninth IFYE this family has hosted and I hope future IFYEs are lucky enough to stay with them! As a veteran host family, they helped make my time with them three weeks to remember. Although they don't live on a farm, they breed Labrador Retrievers and there is plenty of work to be done training and working with the dogs. During my stay with them I was able to take several beautiful hikes through the nearby forests and foothills, celebrate Oktoberfest, and even have a traditional raclette! I must say though that my favorite place we visited was the Jura World of Coffee, as a coffee connoisseur the Jura factory was a little slice of paradise!

I find myself in the canton of Jura living on a farm about 3 meters from France. With all the cows, sheep, goats, pigs, etc. there is always work to be done on the farm. In addition to livestock, my current host family also participates in the farm tourism organization "Adventures in the Hay" which gives tourists the opportunity to experience farm life and even sleep in the straw!

I will be in Switzerland until late December and will move to my last host family in Thurgau next week. I look forward to making many more wonderful memories in Switzerland before my IFYE journey comes to an end. As part of the Colorado IFYE program, when I return home I will travel around my state and speak about my experiences here and in Estonia. I look forward to sharing my stories with my fellow Coloradoans and explaining to them what was like in my two host countries.



Raclette! Swiss dairy products are delicious!!

I cannot say thank you enough times to all my wonderful host families who took the time to teach and share their lives with me. And also, a big thank you to the countries of Switzerland and Estonia for their generous hospitality! Through IFYE I have been challenged, I have learned, and I will be forever changed; for all of this I am so grateful. Until next time, peace, love and IFYE!

p.s. If anyone would like more information about the IFYE program or help planning a trip to the wild west of Colorado, please don't hesitate to contact me!

Sarah Northup
 2011 IFYE to Estonia and Switzerland
 Colorado, USA
 northups@rams.colostate.edu

Welcome to Kungälv 2012

Hej kära IFYE vänner!

It's a pleasure to welcome you all to Kungälv on the Swedish west coast this summer, 21-28th of July. We are praying to the weather gods, but we will be happy for half of the sun hours and heat we had last year in Finland. So please bring your raincoat and woolen socks.

The conference week is in planning, we have tested some of the tours and they will be great! You will sense the salt water in the air and maybe try how wet and salty it is... Some of you will meet the king of the forest, the elk, and some of you will be the king in the bar! We will challenge your knowledge in map reading. You will have the chance to get to know the history of the area. Some will get lucky at the raffle tickets and some will be lucky in love.

One of the nights *IFYE will go royal*, it's just your imagination that stops you! How many kings and princesses will come? Will there be any frogs to kiss? Will Cinderella wake up? Are any jesters visiting?

If it sounds like something you will take part in don't forget to **send in the application no later than 1 of April**, see further down

Location / Accommodation

The conference is held at the Nordiska folkhögskolan (www.nordiska.fhsk.se) in Kungälv, located 20 min north of Gothenburg. There is a limited number of beds (156) available. We have single, double or triple rooms.

Travel advises

Train: Take the train to Gothenburg

Fly: Fly in to one of Gothenburg's 2 airports, Landvetter airport (GOT) or Gothenburg city airport, Säve (GSE)

Car: Drive E6 to Kungälv. GPS address: Olof Palmes väg 1, 44231 Kungälv

Ferry: Take the ferry to Gothenburg

We will meet you at the bus station Nils Ericson terminalen, the same building as the central train station in Gothenburg, and help you with the bus ticket to Kungälv.

Application

Applications should arrive by **April 1st 2012**. Application is valid when the full fee is transferred. First come - first served basis.



Online booking on our web site or fill in the form (to be found in the last European newsletter) and sent it to: sweifye@live.se or to Maria Mårdh, Framnäsvägen 12 A, S-352 39 VÄXJÖ, Sweden, She will also answer questions about payment or transportation.

How to pay?

After registration for the conference you have to pay the full fee of 5 000 SEK not later than April 15th 2012. After April 15th the conference fee will be 5 500 SEK. If you only can participate a day or just a few days the fee will be 1 000 SEK per day. Please transfer the money to our bank account (any charges made by the bank will have to be paid by you.) Enclose your name with the payment.

Account details are:

Bank: Sparbanken Enköping

Address: Box 912, S-745 25

Enköping, Sweden

Account holder: IFYE-KLUBBEN

SWIFT-Code (BIC): SWEDSESS

IBAN-Code: SE08 8000 0830 5500 4341 1586



Congratulations!



Marianne (USA 1996) and Andreas (USA 1998) Lehmann, Switzerland with a daughter, Livia, born 14. February.

AGENDA

54th Annual General Meeting of the European IFYE Alumni
Kungälv, Sweden, Thursday 26th July 2012

1. Welcome and Opening of the Meeting
2. Introduction of Office Bearers
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Apologies for Absence
5. Appointment of Counters and the Establishment of the number of Eligible Voters
6. Approval of the Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting, held in Metsäkartano, Finland
7. Matters arising from the Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting
8. Reports on Past IFYE Activities
 - 8.1 Report on the IFYE Conference in Finland in 2011
 - 8.2 Executive Committee Report
 - 8.3 Country Reports on Special or New Programmes
 - 8.4 Report on the European Rally held in Slovenia in 2011
9. Financial Matters
 - 9.1 Main Report 2011/2012
 - 9.2 Lifetime Member's Fund Report
 - 9.3 Development Fund Report
 - 9.4 Auditor's Report
10. Applications to the Development Fund
11. Budget 2012/2013
 - 11.1 Annual Budget
 - 11.2 Membership Fees
 - 11.3 Development Fund
12. Future IFYE Conferences
Wales: 25 July – 01 August 2013, Germany: 19 – 26 July 2014, Scotland 2015, Invitations for 2016 & beyond and World IFYE Conference in Thailand: 12 - 19 November 2013
13. IFYE 60th Anniversary 2018 - historical report
14. Election of Office Bearers
President: Martyn Quayle (IoM): Elected in 2011 for a two-year term
1st Vice President: Gerhard Steinberger (Aut): Elected in 2010 for a two-year term, election required
2nd Vice President: A representative from Wales to be elected for a one-year term, to be nominated by the Welsh IFYE's
Secretary: Sally Young (Sco): Elected in 2011 for a two-year term
Treasurer: Norbert Winkler (Aut): Elected in 2010 for a two-year term, election required
Newsletter Editor: Hilde Riser (Nor): Elected in 2010 for a two-year term, election required
Auditor: Two auditors are required, to be nominated by Wales for a one-year term.
15. Any Other Business

