

**DAIRYLAND WALKERS BIMONTHLY MEETING  
MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
AUGUST 5, 2004**

**Officers Present:** Jerry and Pam Wilson (Co-Presidents); Tom and LaVonne McCrill (Co-Vice Presidents); Russ Crane (Treasurer); Karen Reger (Secretary)

**Germany/Austria Group Meeting**

**In Attendance:** 11

5:45 p.m. - After being held up in traffic, Elke from Ed-Ventures Tours greeted the people present who are going to Germany and Austria. Travel bags, straps, luggage tags, and airline tickets were handed out.

She also gave some travel tips:

Money, passports, and tickets are the most important things, and should be protected at all times.

Ten to 12 people are coming from out of state, and after arriving in Frankfurt, we will have to wait for them.

She would not recommend having travelers checks, but you could have a few hundred as a backup. She would suggest having two cards, a credit and a debit card, trying them out before leaving, and making sure ahead of time that they will be workable abroad. The credit card could be used for major purchases, not small amounts. ATMs are everywhere, and can be used for cash withdrawals. When doing so, the interest starts accruing immediately. Euro banknotes are similar to American money in their denominations, as are the coins.

We will be leaving from the international terminal, and we should be checking in, at a minimum, three hours before departure, no later than 11:30. She did not have much luck with trying to supply us with bus transportation to O'Hare. Tom Doyle said he knew someone who owned a bus company who would be willing to take us to O'Hare for a charge of \$750.00, which would be around \$50.00 per person, round trip. He will look into this further.

In case she needs to be reached on the trip, for whatever reason, Elke's cell phone number is 1-507-202-0011.

We can have one carry-on, plus a personal item like a purse or camera. Carry your camera and film and have it hand checked. Do not lock your luggage as it may be inspected. Ed-Ventures wants us to have only one large suitcase (50 pounds and 62 linear inches).

Think layers in the line of clothing – casual clothes, T-shirts, blouses, rain wear, shoes. Keep in mind that there are a lot of cobblestone streets.

Miscellaneous: The coach will have a WC but stops will be made along the way. There will be smoking in restaurants. The tap water is safe to drink. Be sure to bring along a good supply of any medications that you may be taking. Have medical insurance. It's good to have an alarm clock. The hotels we will be staying at are not chain hotels. A calculator may be helpful in figuring out what things cost. For electrical appliances, bring along a converter and an adapter plug. Elke will explain the VAT (Value Added Tax) to us later. If shipping items home, the VAT will be subtracted immediately. Tips will be paid by Elke as part of all included meals. Tipping the bus driver will be on your own. Breakfasts are included, but not lunches or any extra beverages. Food markets may be a good place to eat. Our dinners at night will typically be three-course meals. Since electricity is so expensive, ice cubes are not readily available.

(over)

We will get stamps for all of the IVV walks that we do. Six of the walks are being organized specifically for us. Postcards are expensive, about \$1.00 apiece, plus the postage. Occasionally you may see people swimming in the nude. We will be on United Airlines all the way to Frankfurt, and on Lufthansa from Munich to O'Hare. To avoid the effects of jet lag, the worst thing you can do is to take a nap. After the cruise and lunch, she would suggest, after getting to the hotel, freshening up and perhaps taking a stroll, having dinner, and then going to bed. There is a seven-hour time difference. All the hotels are centrally located and there is always something to do. The Mozart concert has been canceled, so we will be attending a "Sound of Music" concert instead. Jeans and tennis shoes should not be worn at night, and do not wear sweatpants at any time. Jeans and comfortable clothes are okay for the daytime. And, don't take their view on politics personally.

This meeting ended at 7:05.

### **Meeting Speakers (Bob and Jo Sparks)**

#### **In Attendance: 22**

At 7:15 p.m., Jerry Wilson presented the Sparks with a certificate for a lifetime membership in the Dairyland Walkers for all the work that they have put into the club over the past years, being there from the very beginning.

The Sparks showed a video put together by Angie, Bob and Jo's daughter, wherein they told about their next big adventure. They have acquired a boat which they named the AQ2 (African Queen 2). They plan to sail from Racine (where the boat is moored) to the Chicago River, and then, using a series of lakes and rivers, go to the southern U.S., cut through southern Florida, follow the Intracoastal Waterway along the East Coast, go through the upper Great Lakes, and then back to Racine. This will take about ten months.

They had a display of the charts and guidebooks which they will be using. They plan on doing some AVA walks along the way, as well as playing in bridge games. Bob had compiled a list of possible walks and the dates of various bridge tournaments. He will turn 70 before they get back.

They have taken a boating course and have talked to people. A lot of their traveling depends upon the weather, and they have a list of marinas which are along the way. They plan on staying in motels periodically. They had initially planned on taking bicycles along, but due to space limitations decided against it. They will have an inflatable dinghy with a motor which will be their transportation to shore when anchored. They are having a GPS unit installed. They have a small TV set, which plays CDs or DVDs. The boat has passed its safety check. They finally got a cell phone, which will come in handy to call marinas. They have sailed from Waukegan to Racine, which was good experience, and have gone up to Port Washington. They still need some practice in slowing down and backing up. They plan on leaving on August 18. They handed out some calling cards listing an email address so people can get in contact with them. Jo took a CPR course. She also has a list of books that she plans to take along. They plan on seeing friends along the way, as well as staying at an Elderhostel in Florida.

### **Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Jerry Wilson at 7:50 p.m.

#### Secretary's Report (Karen Reger)

Karen had several copies of the minutes of the June 23 membership meeting available. These were accepted with no discussion.

### Treasurer's Report (Russ Crane)

The balance at the last Board meeting on July 14 was \$2,033.19. Since that time, income has totaled \$498.00 and expenses have totaled \$235.67. The balance at the present time is \$2,295.52, which is an increase of \$262.33. This report was accepted with no discussion.

### Starting Point Losses (Jerry Wilson)

The club has had a problem with money being missing from some starting point boxes. Bonnie Johnson, our Regional Director, is one of those whose checks were taken, as well as a small cash amount. She sent a replacement check to replace the funds that were missing. It was mentioned that she was the first club member to finish a Clean Sweep book.

### Thank You (Tom Doyle)

Tom mentioned that he had received a thank you from St. Benedict for the donation that was given to them after the walk on their grounds.

### Events for 2005 (Don Suloff)

Janesville and Eau Claire will be two new seasonals for next year. The Middleton Hills walk will be dropped for 2005. A Ft. Atkinson walk is planned for May. One segment of the Sugar River Trail is planned for July. In September, a walk is planned for Waterloo. He wasn't sure if Osseo would have a walk or not. In October, there will be a walk in Mineral Point, as well as having a moonlight walk.

### Fond du Lac Club (Russ Crane)

Russ encouraged everyone to attend the new Fond du Lac club's initial walk on September 25. The flyer will be coming out in the next newsletter.

### Newcomers

Two people were attending a meeting for the first time (they are going on the European trip.)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by Karen Reger, Secretary