

Proudly the pupils of 3c present the letter from their American pen pals. Mayor Dr. Clemens Maier (right) and Susan Sauter (on his left) visited Sandra Heizmann's class. Photo: Markus Schmitz

New pen pals from the USA

The Peace School links up with the German American School of Portland

The contact with the American sister city Beaverton is rather loosely. But now there are new initiatives: The Peace School has started a pen pal friendship with the German American school Portland.

Trossingen. In stark contrast to the relationship with the French sister city Cluses is the exchange with Beaverton more sporadically. The distance with the city near the US west coast is just too big. But even so there is contact again and again. For example, Susan Sauter of Hohnerklang will travel in the last week of April to Oregon again, and she has made many contacts there over the years. In her luggage this year are also the letters from 3rd class school children of the Peace School. During her last stay in the USA she was asked to start such a project in Trossingen, and with success. Class 3b of the Peace School will be in contact with the pupils of the private school in the future.

Even though the Trossinger children get taught English as well, the American pen pals have a slight advantage when it comes to knowledge of foreign languages. In the school on the borders of Portland and Beaverton almost exclusively German is spoken – even in all subjects and from the first year on. In contrast, in the Peace School English is only on offer for two hours a week.

These differences should, however, not be a hindrance to such a partnership.

In the presence of Mayor Dr. Clemens Maier and Susan Sauter the 3rd years opened their letters from the American pupils on Thursday. The excitement in the classroom was high, as the letters traveled around 8500 kilometers. The letters were written in German, so that there would be no communication problems. Now the children have a good two months time to write their replies.

The harmonica-soloist Susan Sauter will also visit schools on her visit to Beaverton. She was asked to do so by Mayo Denny Boyle. There is also further contact with the Choir "I Sing" which also be visited by the soloist from Trossingen. In the letters the Trossinger children also learned that the school of their pen pals has a school mascot. "We want one too", thus the immediate request. Class teacher Sandra Heizmann promised to take care of it. The first suggestions as to what animal it could be were already made.

Sister city partnership with Beaverton is 22 years old

Since 1993 they have a sister city partnership with the American city of Beaverton, situated in the northwest of the United States in the state of Oregon, about 100 kilometers from the Pacific coast of the American northwest. With it's, nowadays, 70.000 inhabitants it has grown together with the science metropolis of Oregon, Portland, for a long time. Particularly companies in the IT sector and Software have made their homes here. The company that is worldwide most famous is however a company in a different sector: the sports articles company Nike is headquartered in the sister city of Trossingen.

Beaverton is growing as strongly as ever. Nevertheless it manages with only 6 city councils (by comparison Trossingen has 22). In contrast with most other American cities Beaverton also has a full-time Mayor: Denny Boyle is in charge of the city's fortunes.

The sister city partnership has emerged from a school exchange between Beaverton High School and Gymnasium Trossingen. As Mayor Dr. Clemens Maier said, there are still contacts between the two schools. The exchange program has by now also expanded to an exchange every two years between the Youth Music School in Trossingen and the Valley-Catholic-High-School in Beaverton with the joint development of musical pieces, but also the Business-Round-Table offered once a year to science representatives from the six sister cities of Beaverton in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Russia (Siberia), France and Germany.

Mayor Dr. Clemens Maier (right) with his counter part from Beaverton, Denny Boyle. Photo: NQ-Archives