

AFS North Shore Newsletter

September, 2010

PO BOX 331686
TAKAPUNA
NORTH SHORE 0740

"From Wellsford to the Bridge"
<http://www.afsns.org.nz>



NEXT MEETING

Sunday, September 19th - 7:00 pm
2 Fred Thomas Drive, Takapuna



10 PIN BOWLING



Another informal meeting that will be lots of fun! A great opportunity for "new" and "old" hosted students, selected students and returnees to get together.

7pm – 9pm - Public lanes at the 10 Pin Bowling Alley,
2 Fred Thomas Drive, Takapuna. Ph. 4899199
\$14 for 2 games. Shoe hire included.

ALL WELCOME! - BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY

Please register your interest so we can book the correct number of lanes at
president@afsns.org.nz or phone/text Winston on 027 222 3296.

Nibbles supplied Bring some extra money to buy your own drink.



RECENT RETURNEE ORIENTATION

19 September - 7.00 pm - 10 Pin Bowling, 2 Fred Thomas Drive, Takapuna

We welcome home our recently returned students:

James Anderson from Belgium
Caleb Forlong from Japan
Maanihera Kepa from USA
Katherine Bolton from USA
Sylvia North from Denmark
Henry Upton-Birdsall from Sweden

Beatrice Taylor from the Netherlands
Ray Hu from France
Aimee McMillan from Spain
Janelle Rolls from Canada
Imogen Bell-Butler from Italy
Nadine Bergereau from Italy

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Just to repeat last month's

Travel safe to the 3 students about to depart, welcome back to the most recent returnees, and to those still away enjoy every moment. !!!!

To our 3 Intensive students that left last weekend - remember us.

Congratulations to the most recently selected students ... good luck as your journey of a life time commences.

Bowling is this month's theme, send me your "YES our family of ??? is coming" to president@afsns.org.nz so I can reserve your bowling balls !!!!

Something to think about when it seems that your hosted student may be taking a while to settle into our culture.

From our cultural detective training it was noted that New Zealanders' core values are Fairness, Ingenuity, Informality, Earthy, Restraint, and Modesty, but someone else from another culture with different values can view these in a negative light, and see us as righteous, close enough is good enough mentality, provincial, rough and ready, conservative and dispassionate.

Cheers

Winston



Thanks to Naturally Organic for providing the Freedom Farms Free Farmed Ham for our Spring Dinner (and beautifully cooked by Margaret Rolls) at a discounted price.

GERMAN STUDENTS - CHECK OUT THEIR MESTEMACHER BREAD!!
SPECIALISTS IN ORGANIC, GLUTEN FREE AND NATURAL FOODS

GENERAL NOTICES

CALENDAR DATES

Sept 19	AFS meeting – 10 Pin Bowling
Sep 27 - Oct 8	School holidays
Oct 17	AFS meeting
Nov 14	AFS meeting
Nov 28	Santa Parade
Dec 12	AFS meeting – BOAT TRIP
11 am – 3 pm	KEEP THIS DAY FREE! More details next newsletter.

WHAT'S ON

14-24 Sep	Cirque Mother Africa – "Circus of the Senses" Skycity Theatre
9 Oct	All Whites v Honduras, North Harbour Stadium, 7:30pm (soccer)
16 Oct	Kiwis v Samoa, Mt Smart Stadium, 7.30 pm (rugby league)

HOSTING

We have a fine looking bunch of students arriving in January for 6-12 months and we have been asked to find homes for 11 of them. If you are interested in hosting for 3-12 months, have a look at the AFS website www.afsnzl.org.nz and click on "Hosting with AFS" in the yellow column and then "Student Profiles". Short profiles and photos of all the students accepted to date will appear and additional profiles are being added daily. If any of the students appeal and you would like to read more about any, please contact Su or Heather on hosting@afsns.org.nz and we can request a more in depth profile.

We have had a request from our National Office to try and place a French Canadian girl. Maude, 17, was supposed to spend her AFS year in Australia but Australia has been unable to place her (through no fault of her own). If NZ can't place her urgently, her AFS dream will be cancelled altogether. Please let Su or Heather know if you might like to host Maude and would like more information on her.

Maude is a cheerful, sociable and dynamic person who loves learning new things. She comes from La Sarre, a city in the French speaking part of Quebec. She is passionate about dancing and reading. She is very interested in travelling and finding out about new cultures. In the future she would like to go to University and have a career in the health industry.

HOSTED STUDENTS' NEWS

Sander from Norway

Kia Ora. Hey mate. Sup bro. There are many ways of saying hi in New Zealand, but I think I'll go for this one: Hello. My name is Sander, I'm 18 years old from Norway, and I've been here for about 7 months. A lot has happened and changed since I came, and to write it all would take ages. But the main thing is it's been really great! One of the things I noticed when I first came was that it was really green here! The second thing, on my way with the bus from the Arrival Camp to the pick-up spot was that I could see no sheep! There were only cows, and when I finally saw a few sheep I was kinda relieved. Since then I've seen heaps of sheep, obviously. School was different, calling teachers Sir or Miss, in Norway we call them by their first names, and wearing uniform was also a new experience. The size of people is quite different as well; in History I sit between a 120kg Samoan and a 90kg Maori. Needless to say, my shoulders have been bruised a few times because of that.

People are generally so much more relaxed here, and way more accepting! They're used to so many ethnicities that they don't really care about where you're from as long as you're nice and cool to hang with. Not only through AFS but also through school I now have mates from literally every continent. Every culture has their differences, but they have one thing in common, they've got jokes about each others. It's funny how you develop new stereotypes, not going to write any here as it may offend people, but you know what I mean. Changing host family was sad, but also good, and it was interesting to see that I could pack all my stuff in 2 hours. It's been an awesome time, and hopefully it's gonna get even better in summer, I hear that's when living in Orewa is really good. Running out of space now, so I just wanna do Winston and my host mum Heather a favour. People. HOST! We need more host families. If you don't have a student, then you need one! Thank you! Sander

Amanda from Costa Rica

Ok I guess it's my turn now it's Amanda from the best country ever Costa Rica and I've been here for 7 months now.

I can say this exchange has been the best experience in my life so far. It is really weird to think that a year ago I was just starting to apply for AFS and looking for my destination on 2010 and 7 months after I can say I don't regret a minute about choosing New Zealand to do it because it's just so beautiful, super safe, quite so cold but I got used to, it's honestly just AMAZING!

Although it was a bit hard not to have my family and my friends, I totally got over quite a long time ago, I still miss the weather and the beaches from Costa Rica which are just amazing, but never mind every single different thing is part of the change and I guess by choosing to do an exchange you can't pretend you'll change everything just to make you feel a bit more at home, instead you can get adventurous and try all the different things you can, those are the things you'll never forget!

Anyway, that was just a deep moment writing haha.. It is really hard to just write a couple of paragraphs about 7 months here because there's quite a lot to say but oh well I'll share some of the things I've been doing..On April holidays my family took me to the Bay of Islands which was really pretty, we visited Ninety Mile beach and Cape Reinga, had a coffee in Whangarei and some other places up in Northland. I also went to Wellington and Wairarapa to visit my best friend who's an AFS'er as well, so it was really nice to catch up and hang around together. On this coming holidays I'll be doing the South Island tour and we'll be visiting Christchurch, Wanaka, Milford Sound, Queenstown...so it is quite exciting because I heard it's quite pretty down there, I'm aware of how cold it will be but at least it's not in winter. I can tell it is gonna be an unforgettable trip!

I have 4 more months left if that and lots of memories to go but so far I can say it's been an incredible life changing experience and I will definitely come back one day.

I have a friend in Costa Rica who got selected last month to come to NZ so I totally understand how she's feeling waiting for a family. She's amazing and super sweet so if you are interested about hosting I can tell you more about her, her name is Monica and she is so excited about coming to NZ next year!

I also need to thank my amazing family who hosted me this year I'm super lucky with the family I got and I love all the memories I have with them. I'm trying to convince my sister to go back with me but if she can't make it I'm sure she'll be visiting me soon. Thanks for being so nice and caring with me I can't find a way to thank you how nice you've been with me all my time here.

Thank you AFS as well for introducing me to all my friends I have a reason to go to Argentina, Norway, Switzerland, Paraguay, Brazil, Iceland, France, Sweden, Colombia, Peru, Germany, Mexico etc etc...apart of visiting the country I would love to just visit all the friends I've met so far. Without AFS this would simply not be possible.

Thank you so much to every person who's been involved in my amazing year here in Aotearoa...

Love, Amanda ;)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING HOSTED STUDENTS:

Sander from Norway on 1st September

Amanda from Costa Rica on 2nd September

Laila from Norway on 23rd September



Some of our hosted students' activities:



Left: New hosted students in the swim at the recent AFS gateway camp.

Right: Winston with his cheerful team of assistants at the latest AFSNS fundraising sausage sizzle.



MAIL IN-BOX

Phoebe Farrimond-Kelly (Costa Rica) 5 September 2010

Hi Everyone,

I'm Phoebe and I'm having a really great time here in Costa Rica I've travelled all around the country and even been to Nicaragua with my first family. Costa Rica is completely different from what I expected but in a good way. I imagined I would spend a a lot of time at the beach and that it would always be hot and sunny but in fact I almost never go to the beach and half the year it pours down with rain. The storms here in Costa Rica are amazing, the roads turn in to rivers and the strength of the rain and wind is enough to break down trees and rip the roofs of houses. The thunder is deafening and I saw fork lightning up really close for the first time - it was really beautiful but unfortunately I didn't get a picture. Although I don't go often I've visited quite a few of the beaches here some of them are really beautiful and others not so much but the heat at the beaches is close to unbearable and the water is really warm. I thought that the beaches would be one of my favourite parts of Costa Rica but I think NZ has definitely has the best beaches. My favourite part of Costa Rica is actually the mountains. It's a lot cooler in the mountains and you're up so high that you can look down and see all the clouds in the valleys below you.

The Food here in Costa Rica is really different. I expected that people would eat a lot of tropical fruits and seafood but mainly we eat pinto (rice and beans) and lots of platanos which is kinda like banana. At school I always buy guavas to eat in between classes, they're really good and you eat it just like an apple whereas in NZ I've only ever eaten canned ones in syrup. I also love tres leches which is like a type of cake and my family here have taught me how to make it so I can make it for my family and friends when I come back.

The culture isn't as different as I thought it would be. There are lots of differences but also so many similarities. My current host family is awesome. I live with my host mum Grace and my host sister Diana (who is my age) in an extended family complex with Aunts, Uncles & cousins in different houses around us. It's a really cool environment to live in. The most difficult thing for me to adjust to was waking up at 5.00 O'clock in the morning for school and cold showers which is especially awful if you happen to be living in the mountains like me and it can actually be really cold in the mornings. People here are mostly really accepting and friendly and it's not difficult to make friends. School is school you still have to do homework and attend the classes you hate except it's twice as long. Normally I leave the house for school at 6:20 and school starts at 7. Most days for me school finishes around 4:30 and there's an hour long break for lunch although classes can be boring some times all the other students are really cool and its fun hanging out with them. The teachers here are mostly also really nice and the schools are a lot less strict here than in NZ.

I really enjoy going on the AFS camps and trips. It's really fun hanging out with people from all over the world and really interesting to learn about their lives in their own countries. It's really funny when people comment on the accent you never thought you had but always wanted - apparently NZ accents are pretty awesome. Right now I'm looking forward to an upcoming trip in October at a national reserve where we will get to see baby turtles hatching. I've seen lots of amazing animals here; crocodiles, lots of brightly coloured frogs and birds, Komodo Dragons, lots of monkeys, scorpions and snakes. I even saw a boa constrictor up close, it was just sitting in a tree and we spotted it while on a bush walk. I wish I had taken a photo but I forgot to as I'm really terrible at remembering to take photos, my parents in NZ are even using bribes to try and motivate me.

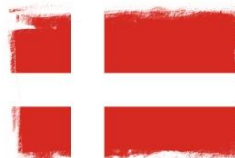
So that's all right now, I've got to go and take some photos :)

Thanks for reading my letter
Bye, Nos Vemos, Phoebe xx

Samantha Te Au (*Denmark*) 6 September 2010

Hej fra Denmark ☺

My name is Sam and I have been an exchange student in Denmark for 7 months now and time has just flown by. I feel like I've experienced so much in such a short period of time and found myself a second home in charming, little, tropical Denmark.



I came first in January from a lovely New Zealand summer straight in to the thick of Europe's most severe winter for 30 years. Little bit of a shock to the system. We had the welcome camp where we learned to eat strange open, dark bread sandwiches with knives and forks, then I was picked up by my host family. 3 hours in a slightly cramped car with a family of strangers. Communication was limited/impossible with the children and jet-lag was taking its toll. My first day of school was probably the most nerve-wracking for me but I have been extremely lucky to have made such incredible friends from Day 1.

The first few weeks were exhausting and overwhelming and exciting. I made my way up to the bus-stop in the pitch-black and through the snow every morning at 7.20 AM (the time I used to wake up in New Zealand). School was a blur of bizarre language and a lot of following people around without really knowing what we were doing. However, it soon became all very normal and just a part of every-day life.

At the beginning my host family and friends all spoke English to me because I didn't know a word of Danish, now I speak only Danish with them, more Dan-glish when things get technical. It's crazy how something can go from sounding like a cocktail of strange grunts and growls to something comprehensible. The language has definitely been one of the most challenging but fascinating things of this year. An unexpected challenge I have faced is the loss of my English. I'm forgetting everything!

Since those first few months I have experienced and seen so much and feel like I am now really a part of the Danish culture (which involves a lot of singing and cake). I have been to Berlin, Tuscany, Cannes, and all over Denmark. I have friends here that I can't imagine leaving and I have an amazing host family who have really opened their house, family and lives to me. I have been more than lucky!

I have learnt so much about Denmark, culture, myself and the world in this year. I could never imagine my life

without the people here or without this experience. It's also really helped me to appreciate my life and family in New Zealand and how lucky we are to have such a beautiful country and unique culture. Keep it Kiwi, bro.

To all future exchange students-choose Denmark! Ok no, but try and see every difference and crazy tradition with a positive attitude. You can experience and learn something from anything and anyone. Jump in to the culture and be a Yes Man!

Kieran Simmons (Peru) 7 September 2010

Hola a todos!

Wow 6 months already! I was just reading over the first AFS letter I sent and realised that I sent that 2 and a half months into my stay. It's only felt like I sent it the other day!

Anyway I'm currently living the Peruvian way of life and enjoying day to day life. My Spanish is always improving as I'm always learning new words.

I just got back from an AFS camp from Trujillo which is up north of Peru. It was a nice change from Puno which is 3800 metres above sea level and where sitting inside your house at night is cold and a nice change from the host brother of mine :p. On the camp in Trujillo we did lots of touristy things which was another nice change from sitting around in school being a student. In Peru at the moment there are 8 Thai students and 1 student from the USA (and the one Kiwi of course). It was nice speaking English again to the American girl and weird to find that the common language between the Thai students and I was Spanish! We went to some ancient ruins which were very impressive, went to malls (there isn't a mall in Puno), did some activities with AFS in the evenings, went out for dinners and most of all just chilled out. On the way to Trujillo I stayed in Lima for a day in a hostel and met some more interesting people and at the end of the camp I stayed one more night in Lima but I found out my family were in Lima so I went and stayed with them! Over all it was an awesome AFS camp and it just made it better I got to miss out on a week of school.

My family has taken me to Bolivia where I ate all the bacon at a breakfast buffet, a couple of times to Arequipa and to Lima so I'm getting a lot of travel in which I'm really grateful for. My school plans to go to either Argentina or Cuzco for the 5th grade travel which gives me even a greater opportunity to travel and I'm also going to do some independent travel next year after I finish the programme.

Also the other day (I can't remember what day because time flies so fast here) it was Peru national day so I got to go see the military parade. Since my host sister's boyfriend is in the army he gave us the chance for me, my sisters and my cousin to be a military hostage drill. My sisters, cousin and I got into a bus at the back of the parade and waited a long time for all the parade to go through. On the bus with us were some military guys dressed up in casual clothing. As the parade had finished the bus we were in drove along. Thousands of Peruvians had turned up for this parade so they were all watching. As we were driving past all these people, the "terrorists" inside the bus were shouting insults about the government and etc out the windows which was really intense. Then all of a sudden the bus sped up and zoomed about 25 meters forward along the street, then an explosion happened right in front of the bus and all this red smoke came up, then the bus came to a sudden stop throwing us a little forward. Then about 12-20 military men stormed the bus popping up at windows on the front of the bus and running through the door brandishing assault rifles and smaller compact weapons. They shouted as they came in (I have no idea what :p) and then fired their guns at the terrorists (which then the terrorists had bags of blood which the squeezed and went up on the windows. The army guys then ran to our seats and then slapped us real hard on the back and told us to stay low to the ground and get out. So in front of thousands of people we ran down the stairs of the bus, with our heads down and ran to safety. Even though you know the experience is fake you definitely get the adrenaline running through your veins and have a little of the shakes afterwards. It's definitely one of the more cooler things I've done here!

This is probably something I would not have got to experience if I was living in NZ at the moment! My AFS experience has been awesome so far and I have lots of stories to tell the friends and family when I return in about 5 or 6 months. I still have so much to look forward to like travelling more, making even more new friends, eating the food, seeing old friends and just enjoying every day Peruvian life. If you're reading this and are making up your decision whether or not to come on an exchange or not I highly recommend it! The people, the parties, the friends and just everything new is an experience you'll never forget and remember that everyone will be there in NZ when you get back!

That's all for now I think.

Kieran Simmons
Puno, Peru.

Katrina Rothwell (Chile) 8 September 2010

Hi my name's Katrina Rothwell, I'm 16 and I decided to take a year programme in Chile for the duration of 2010. Well, just as AFS promised, I certainly was shocked on arrival. The massive 8.8 earthquake hit Chile in the early hours during my second night in the country.

Over 100 students and about 20 volunteers experienced the huge shake together in the arrivals camp, 4 hours drive from the origin. It was a horrible experience, the whole world seemed to turn upside with all the suitcases flying across the dormitory and the noise was incredible! Power and running water didn't return while we were still in the camp. That night will certainly remain with all of us for a long time to come. We then spent the next 3 nights sleeping in the grass outside in case more parts of the roof or structure fell. The tremors never seemed to stop after that and today we still feel the occasional one, however they are becoming weaker and less frequent. It was amazing how the entire population acted immediately to help those who had been less fortunate than they had. There were for months collection points on all street corners for clothing, money, food, anything that could help.

Today in the less fortunate areas there are still buildings on the floor but the country is slowly rebuilding. I went with my host family for a weekend south to help build houses and later on to spend a day walking the streets collecting money for the organization that funds the building. Also the school I'm attending stays very active in the community side of things so we went to a place named Pichidegua to spend a day painting a preschool and play with the kids while others went to help in the public hospital or in the houses of the very residents that live there. All of these experiences were so enriching, even more so because of all the kinds of people you meet and learn about how they live.

The culture here is so colourful! The people are usually always so happy, so full of life and the readiness to party! They love dancing, singing, and many play instruments. The culture is a very affectionate one, a greeting is almost always a kiss on the cheek and the way the people act is a more loving way, they use a word in Spanish 'carinoso'. As well as the physical culture the language itself is more descriptive and affectionate, for example in Spanish you could say 'casa' (house), or 'casita' which comes out in a more caring form which also implies a littler version.

So far I've not had any problems with any aspect of my exchange, I love my school, I can't recall ever having any problems there other than at first I didn't understand much but that passed after only about two months. I'm involved in the school athletics and sometimes the voluntary work.

My family and I hit it off from the moment we met, we have so many laughs and we always have such a good time! We've travelled a bit as well, to the south and to the coast, later on in the year we'll travel north to see the desert which they say is spectacular! Many students will tell you that their family is the best, but mine really is! Sometimes I'll sit and paint nails and talk with my Mum and my sister or I'll go out with my brother and friends or talk to my Dad and watch the television. We never seem to get bored!

On the weekends I usually go out with friends on Friday and Saturday, and then we usually all spend the day together on Sunday so at least if we're all busy during the week we still spend some time as a family.

To be perfectly honest up to today I think I've only had one moment when I missed my family and friends, of course I think about them and we'll chat on the phone once every month or so but I've been so busy with school and friends I've barely had time to miss anything!! You just have to give everything your best shot, you have to say yes to everything and try everything! When you arrive you feel unbelievably exhausted and frustrated sometimes when you don't understand or can't make the words out right, but you have to just keep trying and learn to laugh at yourself, make the most of every single little thing so that when you look back on it you'll know you made the most of it or contributed to it in some way.

I believe I've been incredibly fortunate with my exchange, my AFS coordinator practically tells me off for NOT having problems!

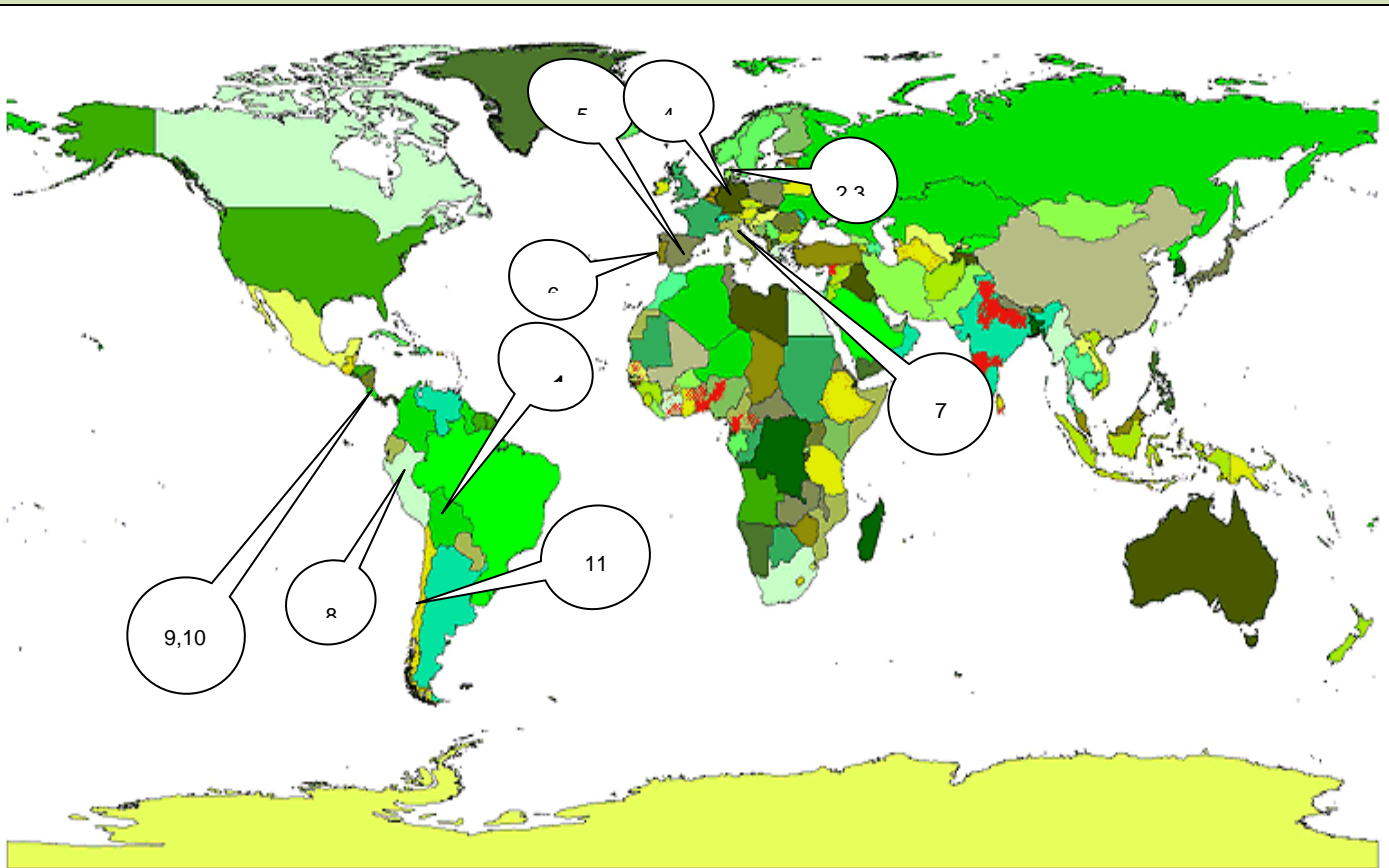
Although I still have 4 or so months to go I can't imagine leaving this place, my life is here now, this is the best experience I will ever live and I am living every second of it with gusto!

So that's my news to send back to you all and I hope it may be of some use to those following students who'll be off on their own adventures soon!

Good luck to all! Wish you all the best with your exchanges!

Katrina Rothwell (Chile)

WHERE OUR SELECTED STUDENTS ARE ABROAD



4

North Shore students currently overseas:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 John Allis, Bolivia | 5 Rachel Devonport, Spain | 8 Kieran Simmons, Peru |
| 2 Samantha Te Au, Denmark | 6 Olivia Ropata, Portugal | 9 Jess Meares, Costa Rica |
| 3 Bryan Wong, Denmark | 7 Gabriella Visini, Italy | 10 Phoebe Farrimond-Kelly, Costa Rica |
| 4 Elena Sutcliffe, Germany | | 11 Katrina Rothwell, Chile |



Sender: AFS North Shore, PO Box 331686, Takapuna

Reminder re Subscriptions

If you have not yet paid your subscription, please complete the form below and send it to our Treasurer, Margaret Rolls, with your payment.

Subscriptions

The annual subscription for the North Shore Chapter is \$50 for a Family and \$25 for an Associate Family (after 3 years' involvement). No fee for hosting families and committee members. Sending families are expected to join before the student leaves New Zealand. Part of the subscription is passed on as levies to the National Office and the remainder is used for our own Chapter's expenses, including paying the cost of this newsletter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please fill out this form and post with your cheque to:

Treasurer, AFS North Shore Chapter, PO Box 331686, Takapuna, North Shore City 0740

Thanks for your support.