

Corey Pajka back from British adventure

By ANN POEPPERLING
Post Correspondent

SHAVERTOWN - Corey Pajka, a 13-year-old student at the Dallas Middle School, recently returned from a 3-week tour of the British Isles as part of the People-To-People student ambassador organization.

The purpose of the trip, according to Corey's mother Bonnie, was to strengthen international friendships and to see how other cultures live. Started in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower during the Cold War period, the program gradually opened to college students in the 1960's and then high school and junior high students.

"You have to be recommended by someone who was a member," said Corey, of Shavertown, who was part of the Northeast PA delegation. "I was recommended by Joe Goryl, a 9th grader at Dallas who went to Europe last summer."

Corey's family came up with the \$4,000 needed for the trip, mostly from Bonnie's job as an aerobic instructor and an income tax refund, which Corey's father, Michael, put into an investment fund.

Corey, who left June 27, with two other area students, Paul Dugal of Shavertown and Tyler Morgan of Dallas, had a full agenda before returning home July 18, the day after the TWA flight 800 crash.

"When we got to London, we stayed in a hotel, and then I spent four days in a homestay with a family in Salisbury. We were right down the road from Stonehenge," said Corey. "We then traveled by way of an overnight ferry to Cork, Ireland where we stayed in cabins."

While in Ireland, the students were entertained by harpist Marina Buckley and told of folklore by Ireland's most famous storyteller, Seanochi Batt Burns.

"My favorite part of Ireland," said Corey, "was kissing the Blarney Stone." To accomplish this,



Corey Pajka, right, and Casey Sheehan tried out the stocks in Bunratty Folk Park in Dublin during their three-week tour of the British Isles.

Corey had to crawl on his back to reach the stone, part of an overhang some 120 ft. high.

"They believe you receive the gift of gab if you kiss the stone," explained Corey.

"It must have worked," laughed Bonnie, who said, "He called me at 5:20 a.m. and woke me out of a sound sleep to tell me he did it." She added, "I'm just glad he didn't tell me until after he did it."

While in Scotland, Corey stayed at the University of St. Andrews and saw the St. Andrews golf course where golf originated, the oldest golf course in the world. The students were also entertained by Scottish music and folk dancing while visiting a Scottish fishing village.

"The best part of Scotland was Edinboro Castle, where I saw part of the crown jewels, the sword and the sceptre. On either side of the main gate were statues of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, figures made popular from the recent movie, 'Braveheart,'" said Corey.

Before departing Corey had a chance to see a bit more of London, "which is like the British New York City," he said excitedly. "We saw Planet Hollywood, the Hard Rock Cafe, and Big Ben. We also met with Lord Anthony Boden, a member of Parliament, and lis-

"My favorite part of Ireland was kissing the Blarney Stone."

Corey Pajka
Shavertown

tened to him speak on international relations."

One of Corey's more memorable moments in London occurred while waiting in line at the Tower of London to see the Crown Jewels. "Legend has it that if the ravens leave the tower, this will lead to the fall of the British Empire. One was sitting on the park bench, so I touched it." He laughed, "Their wings are clipped for a little extra insurance."

Corey's mom was heartened by the hospitality of the homestay families. "The English homestay family welcomed Corey by having hotdogs to eat." She laughed, "However, it wasn't long before they realized they forgot the mustard."

The families included Corey in their everyday activities. "He went to school for the day with their son Tony, who attends the Upper Avon school." She laughed, "Although I must admit, my other two children were a bit worried that they were still attending

school in July."

While Corey has been away from home before, it's always been with family or friends. "This was the first time he ever went this far by himself," said Bonnie, who admits she was a little anxious about the flight home.

"For some reason I woke up around 3 a.m., which was about 8 a.m. in London. I knew he'd be departing about then and I just couldn't sleep very well that night. About 7:30 a.m. I gave up trying to sleep and turned on the TV only to hear there was an international flight down in the Atlantic Ocean."

"I lost it totally. I was madly flipping channels 'til I saw on CNN that it was an outgoing flight that crashed. Then I was worried that Corey had heard about the crash before he left and was scared." Fortunately, however, none of the students knew what happened. She continued, "Then I felt so bad for the other families who lost their children."

Corey has already received literature in the mail about future trips. "I'm sure he'd go again, but aside from the fact that maybe younger brother Adam, 10, or sister Holly, 7, may want a turn, nobody in this family is getting on a plane," said Bonnie. "At least, not for a while."

Lehman

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sand mound septic systems."

Heavy Media acquired the 32 acres last year in a land swap with Pennsylvania Gas and Water, in return for "a much larger parcel" in Duryea, he added.

Recent revisions to the zoning ordinance require landowners to obtain zoning hearing board approval before building a home on land zoned C-1. They also prohibit disturbance of any land and trees of more than six inches in diameter within 100 feet of a reservoir, development or on-site septic units within 150 feet of any stream feeding into a reservoir and any development within 50 feet of the edge of any body of water or wetland.

Supervisor David Sutton said the board of supervisors eventually plans to remove the requirement for permission to build a home on C-1 land from the ordinance.

"It was an oversight on our part," he said. "Larger lot sizes and setbacks are already required for building in the C-1 zone."

Nearly a third of the township - 4,853 acres - is watershed land zoned C-1, once completely owned by PG&W, whose water division included the Ceasetown (Cheney) and Huntsville reservoirs. The utility also owned a water filtration plant on Huntsville Creek at Hillside in Kingston Township and 30 acres around the Huntsville Reservoir in Dallas Borough, also zoned C-1.

The zoning hearing board also unanimously approved a request by Edwardsville residents Robert and Suzanne Conklin to build a single-family two-story home with

"These will be upscale homes of more than 4,000 square feet each."

Paul Freeman
Heavy Media representative

a detached garage, well and on-site septic system on an under-sized lot in Town and Country Manor on Jackson Road. The Conklins bought the lot in 1994.

Created in 1969, the lot conformed to the township's zoning ordinances until last year, when revisions required a minimum lot size of 21,780 square feet (1/2 acre) to build a home with its own well and septic unit.

Zoning officer Charles Bartlett had denied the Conklins an application to build on the lot because it was too small. The Conklins then asked the zoning hearing board for a variance.

Because the parcel has existed for 27 years as part of an approved subdivision, the board recognized it as a recorded previously existing nonconforming lot to enable the Conklin to build. No further variances or exceptions are necessary, board members said.

When PG&W sold its water division to the Hershey-based Pennsylvania American Water, it kept between 1,600 and 1,700 acres, which are now held by its gas division. PG&W has no plans for the land, according to director of corporate communications Juneann Greco.

Arts at Hayfield slated for Aug. 25

Arts at Hayfield will sponsor its 12th annual Summer Festival August 25, at Penn State Wilkes-Barre Campus, Lehman, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

More than 90 artisans and crafters will exhibit and sell their work. Throughout the day there will be live entertainment, featuring "Just Us" folk/rock group, RPM Old Stars Band and The Anzalone Brothers and Company.

Food of all kinds will be available. Children's activities will include a magic show, karate demonstration, fence painting and a Discovery Toy play area.

Donation is \$1.00.

The day will end at 9 p.m. with a free stargazing program in the Friedman Observatory.

For more information, call Arts at Hayfield at 675-2171.

Transportation to VA hospital now available

Area veterans need not worry about transportation to and from the Wilkes-Barre Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Center for treatment.

That VA medical facility recently received three vans from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a million-member-plus nonprofit organization.

The vans will be driven by a corps of local volunteers organized by DAV and its Auxiliary. Heading up the effort is Michael S. Galagotis, hospital service coordinator at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center.

Area veterans needing transportation assistance to the Wilkes-Barre Medical Center should call 824-3521, ext. 7925.

Red Cross seeks blood drive workers

The American Red Cross, Wyoming Valley Chapter needs volunteers to assist at the temperature/pulse station for local Red Cross blood collections. A self instructional module course to teach volunteers how to take pulse, temperature/respiration, vital body signs, will be held September 24, at 9 a.m. Certificates will be awarded. If interested, call the Chapter House at 823-7161, ext. 25 for more information.

Ice cream social Aug. 18 at Dallas UM Church

The Sister Circle of the Dallas United Methodist Church will hold its second annual Ice Cream social on Sunday, Aug. 18 at the Church in Dallas from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Cost will be \$3.00/adult; \$1.00/child. Tickets can be bought at the church or from any member of the Sister Circle. There will be live entertainment and face painting. Come one, come all.

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