

Rest Day 21/05/09 Ecological Fair Ascencion Day In Colmar

We packed the pink bag, with a black humoristic tale on it about Fessenheim nuclear power station, then comes the free entrance, and introduced by a friend of a friend, we finally found a (nice and small) but nice place to stick T-shirts and stickers on the wall.

We gave many fliers to the visitors and so to the other exhibitors.

And many beautiful things to see and taste in that big ecological business show.

Jerome

Fessenheim to Balzenheim 22nd May 2009

We woke up to threatening thunder storms and fast moving grey clouds. Our pastures soft and wet underfoot as we prepared eat a hurried breakfast with much laughter. Then a beautiful circle with wonderful messages for the day. We say goodbye to Boris our lovely host and welcomes to 5 new walkers.



Mariane and June leave

ahead of us in the car and organize our overnight stay. This is spontaneous as there is no community who will receive us.

Our route takes us on roads where we encounter interested bystanders, eager waves from cars and curious faces from windows upstairs. We enjoy some beautiful forest and green lands with shade.

The weather is cool and just perfect for the days walk.

June San and her drums add a special tone of celebrating as we walk. Each step a prayer the journey a ceremony of celebration.

There is much laughter as some of the group stop to savour the ripe cherries and perch high up in trees away from preying eyes.

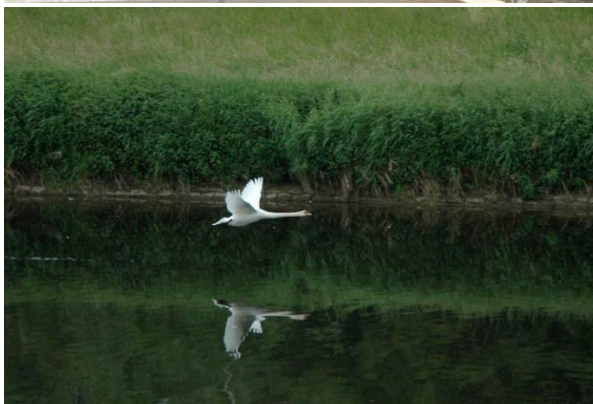
Glenda Loebell-Ryan South Africa living in Switzerland

A group of approximately 15 people are posing for a photo outdoors on a paved path. On the left, several individuals are dressed in military-style uniforms, including one in a full green uniform with a beret and another in a tan uniform. The group includes people of various ages and ethnicities. A large rainbow flag is held by a person in the center. To the left, a black banner with white and yellow text reads "WE CHOOSE A BRIGHTER FUTURE" and "VOTING FOR THE FUTURE". A German Shepherd dog is sitting on the path in the foreground. The background consists of dense green trees. A timestamp in the bottom right corner reads "05/23/2009 09:42".

served a delicious meal, and then some of us were taken to Wyell, just four km away, where a movie was shown about the effort to prevent the power plant in the seventies. The movie was attended by several of the activists who had been involved in that effort. After the movie was over, there was a discussion where several of the participants gave first hand accounts of their experiences. It was quite exciting to see how when a local population is informed and motivated amazing victories can be won. We were also told how much of the electricity in the area is now generated by solar and wind rather than nuclear power since the rejection of the nuclear power station in the seventies.



May 24, 2009 Weisweil to Gerstheim



We walk for a nuclear free future.

May 25 and 26 (rest day), 2009 Gerstheim to Strasbourg

For the last couple of days we have been busy folding paper cranes in preparation to deliver them to the European Union Parliament headquarters in Strasbourg. We have been able to finish making one thousand, so Albert has strung them all together in a nice display, ready for a presentation. We walked into Strasbourg, the largest city in the Alsace region. This region has a long history of conflict between Germany and France and after changing hands many times is now a part of France. Our accommodation is in a campground in the city paid for by the local Green Party. Our rest day is filled with activity, with a long circle to discuss the feelings of the walkers towards the Buddhist drumming, and then a visit from Alain Jund, the Adjoint to the Mayor of Strasbourg. He is a member of the Green Party and is working to develop more alternative forms of energy, wind and solar, for



the city. He and Christophe Zander who also works for the city and is a member of the Green Party, inform us that the EU Parliament is not in session, so there is no one to give the cranes to. So we decide to carry them on to Brussels and give them away there. In the evening we have a silk-screening session to put the "reclaim the future" image on the t-shirts, bags, and even Noe's sleeping pad.

Jon

May 27, 2009 Strasbourg to Rheinau, Germany

So today we pass between France and Germany for the last time and will stay in Germany for the next couple of weeks. I am struck by how nice the housing is, even the goats have a beautiful home. It is another beautiful day for walking, and we are presented with another one of those random events that happens on walks. When we set up camp in the park in Strasbourg, our tents surrounded a lonely tent where nobody was home at the time. Pretty soon after our camp



is set up, a young boy returns on his bike to find his tent surrounded by ours, and all of us dominating his once secluded space. Pretty soon his mother comes in on her bike too and is also astonished to see all of us. We greet them and invite them to join us for dinner and after a while everyone has become friends. So today after leaving Strasbourg and crossing the Rhine into Germany, we are taking a brake under a bridge when Christine and her son ride up and greet us. They had been riding along and heard the drumming, so they followed the sound to us. We are all happy to see them again and we clown around with her son. Jun-san even takes his bike for a little spin. They stay with us for a few more km's until they must say good-bye to continue on their tour.

Our accommodation for tonight is a sports arena with a sports bar and restaurant. They have opened the entire place for us, with showers, the restaurant (of course) and internet. They make us feel so welcome and offer to help us in any way they can, so we are grateful and many of us spend hours on the internet and watching soccer on their big screens along with their other patrons.

Jon

Thursday, May 28: Rheinau to Hügelsheim



We are now only 16 walkers and the least so far, but our enthusiasm makes up for the lack of numbers. We were up, had breakfast, and the van packed before 8:30 am – AMAZING! The club where we camped was very friendly and helpful, allowing us unlimited access to internet. The morning passed uneventfully until lunch when Jon was “christened” on his face by a passing bird. This

had everyone in stitches with laughter. Once again the afternoon passed with the usual laughter, talking and silliness, until we arrived at our campsite, set up tents and was ready to eat dinner. Then we had a visit from a gentleman, who said he was a representative from the community, and with a no-nonsense, no smiling stance told us we must pack up and leave, as we had no authority to be here.

The afternoon before Marion and I had driven into the town to find accommodation, as the arranged place had fallen through. We went to the council, it was closed, the church and the minister said it wasn't his job, and several locals until a young woman told us where her friends had camped for nine nights. The police had seen them and said it was OK. Marion and I drove one and a half km out of town and found a restaurant next to the grounds. The staff there said it would not be a problem.

But this gentleman was adamant. NO. He would not even take a walk pamphlet from me. If we didn't pack up immediately he would call the police. The people in the restaurant said we would be able to move our tents onto their land only as a last resort if the police made us move, so as a group we decided to eat dinner and go to bed and hope for the best. If necessary, if the police came very late (after midnight), we would just pack up and start walking through the night to the next place. The police



arrived one hour later, took Jon's passport details, said they would speak to their supervisor and ring us back. They rang a half hour later to say it was OK for us to stay as long as we left by 8 am the next morning. So we celebrated and went to bed.

June

May 29, 2009 Hugelshheim to Malsh

We are walking for a nuclear free future.



May 30, 2009 Malsh to Karlsruhe

After the lovely accommodation on the horse farm in Malsh, Karl Gorig and his family sent us off with a delicious breakfast. It was another beautiful day for walking. I am beginning to wonder if Germany is always sunny and pleasant. We walked into Karlsruhe where the Linksökologischer Arbeitskreis Bruhrain (LOB) organized a literature table in the center of the city. It



was a lively location, with an Andean band playing music and lots of sidewalk traffic, so we had many opportunities to hand out fliers and talk to people (not to mention the cakes and coffee!) We were then shown the way to our accommodation, a place called the Tempel on the top floor of an old brewery. Some places make us nostalgic for the simplicity of an empty field, but at least we are grateful to have a home for the night.

Jon



5-31-09 Karlsruhe to Graben-Neudorf

After not sleeping much last night because our room in the "Tempel" was above a disco that played loud music until 3:00 am or so, we faced a day in which we had no accommodation secured for the evening. We considered just walking to the next accommodation in Weisental which would only be 32 km, which seemed doable at the time. We decided to send June and Marion in to Graben-Neudorf to see if they could find something, and to see if any of our contacts from the past couple of days knew anyone in the area. It turns out that Renata was able to contact an organic farmer who has let us camp in his field. It was a beautiful day for walking. Crisp air, bright sunshine, and most of the day we walked on trails in the forest. We were all very content not having to walk the whole 32 km and glad to have a safe place to pitch our tents. That is if you can call sleeping under high tension wires safe. They are carrying electricity from the nuclear power station in Phillipsburg to which we are walking tomorrow for an action. We were also interested to learn that our spot is adjacent to a nuclear waste facility. Hmmmm..... maybe I don't feel so safe after all.

Jon

