

Our Sister City...Seligenstadt, Germany

Seligenstadt is a 1200 year old city on the outskirts of Frankfurt. It is in the State of Hessen which is a sister state of Wisconsin, and Offenbach County which is a sister county to our Waukesha County. It has a population of 20,000 residents who are very excited to have a partnership with Brookfield. It has an old world picture postcard city center. However, in the last few years, it has also seen more modern development on the outskirts of town. We also have to love a city where the biggest company is the local brewery, Glaabsbrau.

We have been very fortunate in the last six years to set up a number of exchanges between our cities. Both Elmbrook high schools now have partner schools in Seligenstadt and an adjoining community. On average, 25 to 30 students visit their partner school in Germany and then the following year their German classmates visit us. It has been a great way for the students to learn about a different culture and language but also to establish some great friendships that have lasted over many years. Also, because of our relationship with Seligenstadt, we send our students to an annual international youth camp with their peers from all over the world. In 2010, it was held in the Chinese city of Liaocheng and 6 of our students from Brookfield spent 2 weeks learning Chinese culture and lifestyles along with students from 5 other countries.

In addition, we have promoted government exchanges. Not only have we had regular visits between mayors and county executives, we have been able to implement innovative exchanges and education between police agencies. Brookfield officers have introduced DARE programs to German schools and German police officers have come here to learn about community policing approaches. Local officials on both sides have been able to compare emergency response approaches and learn from each other.

In July 2010, a group of Seligenstadt citizens visited Brookfield for a week to join us in our 4th of July festivities. They marched in our parade and took in the sights and activities of the metropolitan area including: a harbor cruise, a day at Summerfest, and the Big Bang Fireworks. Their stay also included visiting local businesses and picnicking at several of our resident's homes.

In October 2010, a group of Brookfield citizens travelled to Germany with a side trip to northern Italy. Our friends in Seligenstadt organized a wonderful tour for us to get to know them and the sister city in Germany; and visit wine regions in both Germany and Italy. We visited vineyards in each area along with exploring local interest areas and sites.

In June 2011, another group of Brookfield citizens visited Seligenstadt to experience Geleitsfest, a once every four year festival, which celebrates Seligenstadt's key role in history in the historic trade route along the Main River to Frankfurt.

For the future, we look forward to implementing more people to people exchanges.

We welcome your any of our programs. For information, contact Harry Farchmin, President of Brookfield Sister Cities Committee at hjfarchmin@earthlink.net or Patti Schimmel at Brookfield City Hall schimmel@ci.brookfield.wi.us.