

Local resident to visit Austria in Bolton Rotary exchange program



Written By JASEN OBERMEYER

"I can't wait," is how local resident Chloe Kostynyk describes going to Austria this summer for a year to be an ambassador for Canada.

She will be doing this through the Rotary Club of Bolton, part of the Rotary District 7080. The club's Rotary Youth Exchange sees students who are involved with the community, and will be cultural ambassadors for themselves, their family, city, the Rotary, and Canada.

For outbound students, the purpose of the program is to provide high school students an opportunity to spend a year studying in another country, learn the language, discover a new culture, develop skills, and gain maturity. For inbound students, it is to bring various world cultures into the local community.

"I kind of grew up seeing the different exchange students come to Bolton and come to the club," said Kostynyk, who found out about the club through her father David, a member of the Rotary. "I got to talk to them as they were learning English and their experiences from when they came and I thought it was interesting."

She described to the Citizen that when she received the application through the club, she filled out a form, explaining why she would be a good candidate. She then did a club interview, and a district interview, before eventually being called for her acceptance.

Kostynyk, 15, explained she will be going sometime this summer, and will first go to a German language camp for two weeks to learn the language, and will then stay with her host family to get acquainted with the community, before going to school. She said school is not like here where there are different classmates for every class. "You're with these people all day, you do all of your classes together."

She added that on average, participants have two to four host families, and she will travel with them if they go outside the local area. "I do go to Austria, but I also get to travel and experience Europe and everything around me."

Learning German is something Kostynyk said she is very excited about. "I think that's amazing. When I'm back in one year, I'm going to be able to speak German, I'll be able to speak an entire other language, which I think is amazing."

?This is a once in a lifetime opportunity,? commented her mother Katherine.

Kostynyk said it's not overwhelming because this is an amazing opportunity.

?When you're overseas, and when you get to experience a whole other lifestyle, you come back a completely changed person,? she said. ?Who wouldn't want that opportunity??

She explained that, through the program, she will have a blazer to fill with pins of the different places she will visit, while exchanging her own pins to other students.

?When you come back it's just all of these memories of places you've been and people you've met. That is something I can't wait, because I'll always have that.?