



Greater Jackson Chamber of Commerce

A Member of The Enterprise Group

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2002

Jackson Celebrates Sister City Relationship with Varel, Germany

JACKSON, Michigan – It's now official: Jackson, Michigan has a sister city relationship with Varel, Germany. After more than 20 years of exchanges between educational institutions, the two cities are now prepared to launch a new era of friendship and economic partnership.

“For the City of Varel this decision is an extraordinarily important occasion because we are entering a new era of communal activities,” explained Varel Mayor Wolfgang Busch in a May 10 letter to Jackson Mayor Martin Griffin announcing that the Varel City Council officially endorsed the relationship at its April 25 meeting.

A delegation from Jackson visited Varel in November 2001 to extend the proposal to Mayor Busch and representatives of City Council. Due to pending elections, the final decision was postponed.

“We are very pleased that Varel accepted our proposal and we look forward to a long and mutually delightful relationship,” commented Sister City Chairman Kurt Koseck. “This is a first for both our cities and with more than 20 years of successful exchanges between Jackson High School and Lothar-Meyer-Gymnasium, this relationship with Varel is a natural fit.”

The committee was established in 2001 to explore potential sister city relationships and identified the following five objectives:

- To understand business, government and education methods and identify opportunities to enhance local practices

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- To explore opportunities for business alliances
- To provide a cultural experience that expands horizons and increases mutual understanding
- To establish and maintain contacts that are mutually beneficial to participating communities
- To establish a biannual exchange

Mike Ross, the German teacher at Jackson High School who helped spearhead the project, was specifically requested by Mayor Busch to remain involved in the program for his contacts in both Varel and Jackson. Mayor Griffin read this request to the Jackson City Council at a May meeting and it was unanimously approved.

The Sister City Committee is a function of the Greater Jackson Chamber of Commerce. A second visit is planned for early September. Interested individuals should contact the Chamber at 782-8221.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The letter from Varel Mayor (Burgermeister) Busch and a German newspaper clipping on the subject are both enclosed and translated for your information.