I sent Flat Stanley to my aunt.
I am in Ostwald, 4 miles south of Strasbourg. Strasbourg is the seat of the European Parliament. 25 countries are now part of the European Union.

Checking the weather forecast on the computer. It is much colder than in Virginia Beach !!!

The very hot mint tea I am offered is more than welcome. Emma’s uncle was born in Morocco ... this is the way his family welcomes a visitor.
Visiting a kindergarten:

Emma's cousin painted the fox on the wall in 1999 when the students decorated the outside wall.

the class room
In French, my name is Clément aplati.
I'm reading in French.

Artwork produced by the students.
I also visited the middle school in Ostwald.

The outside decoration is mosaic,

put up by the students and their teachers.
I attended the mid-year teachers' meeting

for the class of Emma's cousin.

They were discussing report cards!
I was even invited to a concert in the local church on Saturday evening.

The concert was mentioned in the local newspaper on the following Monday.
On Monday, I helped a friend of Emma's aunt.

She delivers meals on wheels daily.
Tuesday mornings it's gym class at the recreation center.

It's easier as part of a group.
Emma's aunt takes me swimming at the local pool.
The forest in Ostwald is perfect for running, for exercising, and for climbing.
In a French Bakery there are several types of crusty bread to choose from ...  

... and so many cheeses to pair it with!

I tried three: camembert, reblochon and munster.

Here is another speciality from the Alsace region:

the fresh bretzel.
I met Nike, the boxer.

His owner is a truck driver; he took me for a drive to Brittany (West of France).
This is a neat truck!
We cycled for nearly 45 kilometers (more than 27 miles !) on the cycle track that runs alongside the canal of the Bruche river.

Cycling is a great way to discover an area.
I really deserved a rest and a snack
by the lock in the village of Avolsheim,
before heading back home.
We met wild animals during our ride: 

swans

a deer

some coypus.
We also met some domesticated animals: a horse and a cow.
The tourist trail in Strasbourg, overlooking the Dam built by Vauban, with the Cathedral in the background.

in the Cathedral square,

the astronomical clock inside the Cathedral.
Traditional houses with half-timbering, a well-known restaurant «la Maison Kammerzell », the very modern streetcar.
A barrel organ on the main square,
a roast chestnuts stand,
counting the days until the Tour de France passes through Strasbourg.
I made some new friends:

a doll in the traditional costume of the Alsace region

and a whole flock of (soft toy) storks!
I was able to visit the central police station too.
For my last day

I was invited for lunch at the Château de l'ill, in Ostwald.
A good night's sleep after my jam-packed holidays…

…and it's time to head back home to Virginia Beach,

via the post office.
Grateful thanks
to
Aline
Danièle
Emilie
Ghislaine
Marwane
Monique
Pauline
Philippe
et Nike

for their generous help and warm welcome

and of course to Emma (7 years old)
for sending me to her aunt, Nathalie.

"Awesome holidays !"

translators:
Emma's mum and dad !