

Early Bird 31 Dec 2011 – 5 Jan 2012

## **LEADERS AND POLITICS**

**City Hall is missing “eco-political expertise”. The group “responsible members of the city council” will remain persistent when it comes to the theme energy turnaround (2 Jan, 2012)**

The red-black Mayor alliance surprised many including some of the “responsible members of the city council”. It originally formed with the goal “energy turnaround in Schweinfurt”. During a press conference held at the end of the year the city council members Herbert Wiener (SPD), Ulrike Schneider and Adi Schön (Schweinfurt List), Frank Firsching (Left) and Roland Schwab (Green) agreed that the group will continue to act in concert in the matter of the energy turnaround in spite of the argument concerning the deal concerning the third Mayor. Because of Fukushima, but also because of Lord Mayor Remele’s new style there was great hope at first that the necessary energy turnaround would be taken seriously. But soon there was disappointment. According to the opinion of the 5 members of the city council no concrete decisions were made. Renewable energy had no priority under former Lord Mayor Grieser and it seems not to be a priority for Lord Mayor Remele either. According to the members of the city council Schweinfurt has lost 10 years in energy politics therefore it is so important to set the course now. The most important step would be to hire a person with eco-political know-how. The group pointed out that it had requested a future concept which the city utility works will develop, unfortunately without the demanded input, according to Wiener. The concept is expected to be completed by the end of March and should not only contain non-binding memorandums of understanding but should include real guiding principles.

### **Local Half-Year in Review – from July – December 2011, 31 Dec 2011.**

- Many Schweinfurt citizens donated for the Third World Children’s Association to build an orphanage in Bukalo in northern Namibia. The orphanage will receive the name “House Schweinfurt”.
- The city council agrees on a new alignment of the market booths.
- The city takes over the Ice Dome from the Ice Skating and Roller Skating Club. Since the roof structure is damaged by wetness, more than expected the Ice Dome has to be closed when it snows.
- The “Zeughaus” (former home of the local news paper offices) is turned into a house for families.
- The renovated building in Rückert-Strasse 28 (owned by the Plast company) receives an appreciation award from the Hypo Culture Foundation in Munich.
- The ambitious FSG Schweinfurt (soccer club) disappears in August due to lack of players.
- Campus II of the Technical College for 720 students opens – investments made 10 Million Euros.
- For the first time a Schweinfurt team participates in the mini-Olympic games “International Children Games” in Motherwell, Scotland.
- The Director of the Humboldt Gymnasium, Monika Zeyer-Müller leaves Schweinfurt for Würzburg.
- The first inline skate run through the city is very successful.

- In September Corny Arndt takes over the financially weak riding club and brings much hoped-for momentum.
- The Athlete's club moves into its new domicile at Bergl.
- A team of archaeologists dig up remains of the "Lebküchner Haus" and discovered remains of the old Kilian church and skeletons in the underground of the "Zeughaus" square.
- A citizens' marathon for the charity activity "Schweinfurt helps" was a success with 211 participants, one of them a winner at the Olympic games for the 800 meter run, Nils Schumann".
- A memorial and a path reminds of the more than 10,000 forced laborers in Schweinfurt.
- With the "Mainfranken" Schweinfurt once more has a river passenger ship.
- Members of the Green party and the council of the disabled point out handicapped-access shortcomings at the Hauptbahnhof.
- An argument arose between the city and the travelling vendors of the Christmas market concerning the illumination of the Christmas market.
- Since November the city council has new chairs.
- At the Wildpark Elk cow Lin dies from meningitis.
- The city council decides to open a "Knowledge Shop" at the Rückert-Bau.
- At the end of the month Mayor Otto Wirth announced his retirement.
- In Decembr CSU and SPD parties decide to have two Mayors – in spite of protests by all other fractions in the city council. Elected were Klaus Rehberger (CSU) and Kathi Petersen (SPD).
- Finally open again are the Youth meeting points "Scheibe" and "Morrison" at the Bergl.
- The Panorama Hotel has also re-opened.
- New leaders for the charity organizations "Lebenshilfe" and "Arbeiterwohlfahrt" were appointed.
- The city utility department began replacing old bus stop booths with new ones.

## ECONOMY

**In 2012, the debt crisis remains - this much is sure: Otherwise economists have a hard time with prognoses (2 Jan, 2012)** For 2012 the economists agree on one point: The debt crisis in Europe will continue and will affect the German economy. However; many economists admit that now is harder than ever to make any predictions. The expectations for the growth of the German economy range from 0.0 to 1.9 %. Presently there is a great insecurity concerning the economical development. Both Commerzbank and Dekabank agree that 2012 will be a crucial year for the Euro currency.

The most pessimistic forecast is the end of the Euro. However; it is not good to let those horror scenarios lead you, urges Michael Heise, Chief economist of the insurance giant Allianz. He stated: "An economic growth of 0.5 % might be all too skeptical - it is quite possible that the development will be much better than many are expecting now."

## **SECURITY AND SAFETY**

**Nuclear Power Plant Grafenrheinfeld runs at half of its capacity (3 Jan, 2012)** After a defect on the generator transformer, the system shut itself down automatically on Sunday evening. The generator transformer is the last link of the chain for electricity production at the nuclear power plant Grafenrheinfeld. There are two generator transformers at the nuclear power plant which feed the produced energy into 380 kilovolt lines. After a defect on one of the machines the nuclear power plant automatically shut itself down, which was confirmed by a spokesperson on Monday. The nuclear part of the plant was not affected. Since Monday morning the nuclear power plant is only running at half of its capacity until the defected part has been replaced.

**2012 also begins with calls for “shut down” (4 Jan, 2012) First silent vigil of 2012:** The coalition for action “Fukushima is everywhere – nuclear power phase out and energy turnaround now” continues its protests against the nuclear power plant in Grafenrheinfeld on the first Monday of each month at the Georg-Wichertmann-Platz. The latest incident at the nuclear power plant Grafenrheinfeld was just what they were waiting for. “The recent incident adds to the report of failures at the Nuclear Power Plant Grafenrheinfeld – for that reason we demand: An immediate shut down.” The spokeswoman reminded everyone about the date, 9 December 1981 when the Nuclear Power Plant in Grafenrheinfeld was activated. She said it is a date that makes one remember the dangers for the citizens and which elucidates the subject of the unsolved nuclear waste problems.

**Two trucks burnt causing 250,000 Euros damage. The cause of the fire is still unknown (3 Jan, 2012)** On New Year’s eve two trucks burnt down in the parking area of a food chain at Industriestrasse in Gochsheim. A third truck was severely damaged. First estimates of the damage resulted in 250,000 Euros. Shortly after 8 p.m. employees heard a loud bang. When they ran outside one of the trucks was already fully ablaze. The flames quickly caught the truck parked immediately next to it. Even the quick reaction of the fire departments of Gochsheim, Sennfeld and Schwebheim who sent almost 100 fire fighters, could not prevent the truck and semi-truck to burn out completely. The criminal police who investigated the incident have not found the cause of the fires so far. However; there is no evidence of arson at this point. Investigations continue once an expert’s opinion has been completed.

## **SPORTS/ATHLETICS**

**Bryce Hollweg, American player for the Mighty Dogs leaves team – American Soldier will deploy to Afghanistan – Mighty Dogs are looking for a replacement (5 Jan, 2012)** Bryce Hollweg’s last game for the Mighty Dogs will be against Königsbrunn on 13 January since he will have to deploy to Afghanistan sooner than expected. The next game for the club takes place on Friday, Jan. 6 at 6:30 p.m. - EHC 80 Nürnberg – Mighty Dogs at the Ice Dome. On Sunday, Jan. 8 at 6 p.m. the Mighty Dogs will play against the EA Schongau in Schongau.