

Early Bird 28 July – 3 August 2012

SAFETY/SECURITY

Eight injured in six-vehicle A3 traffic accident (Aug. 1)

On Tuesday 8 people sustained injuries in a serious rear-end collision on A3. The driving error of a truck driver caused the chain reaction, according to the police. The truck driver wanted to exit A3 near Heidingsfeld. Shortly before the exit he got off the road for unknown reasons causing two truck drivers driving behind him to slow down. The truck following behind was not able to brake in time. A fourth truck swerved to the left, trying to avoid a collision and touched a car driving next to him on the fast lane. Three cars following behind also collided into each other. According to the police, 8 people were injured and admitted to hospitals. The A3 near Würzburg was blocked for several hours.

LEADERS/POLITICS

400 people in Würzburg peacefully protested against a NPD (Aug. 3)

Approximately 400 people demonstrated against a National Democratic Party Germany (NPD) rally on Thursday afternoon on the Würzburg market square. The 3 speakers of the right wing extremist party could hardly be heard during their one-hour long campaign. The NPD is rallying against the euro in a Germany-wide campaign. So far they have not been successful because of anti-NPD demonstrators who are disturbing their speeches.

Otto Wirth of Schweinfurt received municipal Medal for Merit (Aug. 3)

Otto Wirth, former Mayor of Schweinfurt, was presented the Medal for Merit by Joachim Herrmann, Bavarian Minister of the Interior during a ceremony held in Cadolzburg, district Fuerth. Wirt was a member of the city council for 27 years and as mayor for 15 years. His special focus was on the middle class and trade (small and medium size businesses). As a businessman, Wirth improved apprenticeship opportunities.

Public Utilities Company Schweinfurt planning to use wind power (Aug. 3)

The public utility company in Schweinfurt is already producing electricity with photovoltaic systems. With a decision made in the middle of the week to start using wind power, the public utility company is getting actively involved in the energy turn-around. This was the sentence with which Lord Mayor Remele started his thorough information in regard to the results of a special meeting of the board of directors. The city is planning to construct 3 additional wind turbines, with an output of 2.4 mega watts each on the hills of Waldsachsen, a part of the community Schonungen, where already 7 wind turbines have been erected. The proceeds from the electricity produced will be approximately 14 million kilowatt hours per year, according to Thomas Stepputat, Director of the public utility company. The investment is €9 million. Remele stated that the three wind turbines with a manageable electricity production are a “project” to test, to gain experience and competence, which we do not and cannot have yet. And in due course when it has been proven that the project is not economical – then it will remain a “project”.

U.S. Army is looking for houses for Soldiers (Aug. 2)

It seems ironic: For months the city council, district council, landlords of houses and apartments as well as the media have been busy with the drawdown of the U.S. Army in Schweinfurt in the fall of 2014 and as result also, among other topics, the number of vacant apartments and houses which had been filled by thousands of U.S. Soldiers and their families. On the other hand the U.S. housing office has been urgently looking for houses and apartments (3 – 6 bed rooms) in Schweinfurt and surrounding areas for quite a while. Two years before the lights will go out in the military community for good, the U.S. Army is looking for apartments and houses, on a larger scale? How much sense does that make and what is behind it? “Our garrison is still taking on new Soldiers even as we prepare for closure in the fall of 2014” stated Public Affairs Officer Nathan Van Schaik. Schweinfurt has become the new home of headquarters, 18th Engineer Brigade from Schwetzingen”, that will bring 150 Soldiers and 100 of them will need a house. They are moving to Schweinfurt this summer and the move should be completed by the end of summer 2012. The USAG Schweinfurt expects that the housing situation, which had been problematic due to the newly arriving Soldiers, will have eased by September 2012. What objects is the housing office looking for, preferably? Large apartments with 3 and 4 bed rooms, but mainly houses that are located near the school bus route for our Soldiers with school age children. The housing office is looking for private rental houses for 90 families who are authorized to live in private rentals. The houses should be located within a 30 km distance from Schweinfurt. Rent period: “Until the Soldier is reassigned or is eligible for government quarters; realistically no longer than 2 years.” The housing office receives 1 or 2 calls per week based on the ads. Could one of the reasons that the Army is looking for housing be that the construction of houses in Grafenwoehr for the Soldiers who have been relocating from Schweinfurt to Grafenwoehr since 2008, is not advancing as planned? No, according to the Schweinfurt Public Affairs Office, the Soldiers are either belonging to Schweinfurt or to Grafenwoehr and they are served by their responsible housing office. Is the drawdown of the USAG Schweinfurt within the timeline? The answer is: “We anticipate base closure by the fall of 2014. We are focusing on a target date of 1 Oct 2014.”

A racing car “made in Schweinfurt” (Aug. 1)

The racing cars will not roll off the line, but this is the fifth racing car constructed and built by students of the technical college (FHS) in Schweinfurt. After nine months of hard work the car of the association “Mainfranken-Racing e.V.” was introduced to invited guests in the casino of company Schäffler. Team members are students from the technical colleges in Würzburg and Schweinfurt who put theory into practice. Currently the association has 25 active members. Mainfranken-Racing is a very small association within the community “Formula Student” which points out the achievement of Schweinfurt even more. The goal is victories in three events of “Formula Student” at Hockenheim, Hungary and Spain. Teams from universities and technical colleges from all over the world participate in those races. A jury decides which team has the best concept, construction, cost and marketing strategy.

Four receive certificate “honorary citizens of the county of Schweinfurt” (July 30)

On Monday County Commissioner Harald Leitherer presented four men the certificate that makes them honorary citizens of the county of Schweinfurt. The four new recipients are: Udo Wachter, Ottmar Wolf, Manfred Schäflein and Karl Haus. Karl Haus, the well-known composer, received the certificate for being a representative of the local music culture. In 1993 Haus founded a foundation for talented and underprivileged students of the music and he is also co-

initiator of the music competition “Juveniles play music”. Manfred Schäflein received the award for heading the rescue operations center for 17 years. Leitherer emphasized on the long years of cooperation with Schäflein whose last professional challenge was setting up the new integrated rescue operations center, which went into operation just recently. Udo Wachter, former master craftsman in the county of Schweinfurt, was recognized for his merits on behalf of the county and his engagement in the board of directors in the energy agency. In his laudation Leitherer stated: He was mediator, supporter, and performed network and connection work. Ottmar Wolf was honored for his work in the cultural field. In 2011 he founded a culture foundation named after him. He dedicated himself to fostering Franconian folklore, art, literature and the preservation of historical buildings and sites as well as researching the history of his hometown Gerolzhofen. As an example Leitherer mentioned the revision of the city chronics and the construction of the model of Gerolzhofen how it looked in 1833.

Schweinfurt wants to become a fair-trade town (July 31)

Schweinfurt is on its way to become a fair-trade town. After the city’s finance committee had approved the request of the working group “sustainability in the regional economy” in the middle of July, the city council has also agreed anonymously. The goal is to motivate citizens to buy fair trade products. The working group is glad that the city council agreed. The city of Schweinfurt still does not have the title, though it is quite easy to fulfill the requirements. Based on its size, Schweinfurt needs proof that 11 stores and six restaurants are offering at least two products from fair-trade. In addition the city administration must (and will) also be actively involved, by serving fair-trade coffee and another product from fair-trade at their meetings. 20 years ago the non-profit organization “Trans Fair” began its work with the goal to further the underprivileged families with small farms in Africa, Asia and Latin America to improve their living and working conditions through fair trade. In order to market the fair produced products “Trans Fair” founded the campaign “Fair Trade Towns.” Worldwide more than 1,000 cities and communities are participating, 80 in Germany. Since the Fair Trade Campaign exists the public interest in fair products and market terms has increased steadily and so have the sales of products such as coffee, tea, chocolate, bananas but also flowers, soccer balls and orange juice. More than 1.2 million small farmers and plantation workers gained humane living and working conditions, are able to send their children to school, and can finance water wells, pharmacies, schools and community rooms. Next to the farmers in poor countries also the consumers benefit from the good quality of fair-trade products. With the purchase of products from fair trade everyone can contribute to the fight against poverty in poor countries. In Germany the more than 800 “Weltläden” one of them in Schweinfurt, Manggasse 15 have been working, through fair trade, for more than 40 years to make the structure of world trade more fair.

21,000 visitors at the family day at FAG ball bearing factory (Schaeffler Group) (July 30)

Proud employees showed friends and families their “place in the value chain” with bouncing castles and merry-go-rounds, and international culinary specialties instead of cafeteria food. On “Schaeffler family day” the entire area of the FAG plant was transformed into a recreational park. Last Sunday more than 21,000 people celebrated where normally 5,000 people are working. The last time the company hosted such a family day was 11 years ago. According to Schaeffler spokesman Martin Adelhardt, the family day was organized as a symbol of appreciation for the work force. Each employee was allowed to bring 7 people – family members but also friends who could enjoy an entertainment program at no cost and buy food and

beverages at low cost. But not only the entertainment program was well received but also the chance to show the work place in the factory or in the offices to families and friends.

Economy shall profit from the airport in Giebelstadt (July 29)

The airport Giebelstadt is an import location factor for the region and a symbol of a good public-private partnership as well as a great example for conversion, i.e. transformation of a military installation for civilian use. On Saturday Bavarian Finance Minister Söder came to Giebelstadt to celebrate the opening of the former military airfield as a civilian airport. It also marked the official end of a struggle that continued for several decades, for the civilian use of the airport. The airport serves mainly the economy in Main-Franconia. In his remarks the president of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce Würzburg-Schweinfurt, Dieter Pfister, reminded that the chamber had started its endeavors for civilian use of the airport in the early 1970s. Then the area belonged to the U.S. Air Force and, during the Cold War, they would not open the strategically important airfield for commercial flights. Only the hobby pilots with small planes and gliders were tolerated. This changed in the 1990s when the U.S. Army allowed civilian use to a limited extent. In 2006, after the U.S. Army departed Giebelstadt, the chance to turnover the airfield for civilian use arose. County Commissioner Eberhard Nuß stated that the determined actions of politicians in the region and the engagement of private businesses were the preconditions for further development. Thanks to the aviation club Giebelstadt the flight operations were continued in 2007, nearly uninterrupted. The surrounding counties, the community of Giebelstadt and the city of Würzburg founded a corporation with the goal to develop a civilian airport. Three companies from the region became partners of the communities and guaranteed financial support to cover the operations cost. The office of the county commissioner of Würzburg was in charge of further development. Construction Materiel Group Knauf from Iphofen and the community of Giebelstadt founded The Giebelstadt Holding GmbH and financed the purchase of the 1.25 square kilometers area from the Federal Agency for Real Property (BIMA) *who is responsible for the commercialization of former military installations*. The complex clearing of the area from WWII duds brought the development to a stop once more. Finally, in April 2012 the airport was completely released from military administration.

ECONOMY

Toyota calls back cars models RAV4, Avensis T27 and Auris D-CAT (Aug. 2)

About 70,000 cars will be affected in Germany where Toyota is conducting the call back with the support of Federal Motor Transport Authority. In the near future the Federal Motor Transport Authority will inform the owners of the cars in question to contact their car dealers.

In the repair shops two nuts have to be tightened on an adjusting sleeve on the rear bumper. Without this fix, slackness could occur while changing the alignment of the rear wheel. So far there have not been any accidents in this regard in Europe. In the USA, the largest foreign market for Toyota, approximately 778,000 cars are affected, mainly RAV4 make 2006 – 2011, but also 18,000 Lexus HS 250h make 2010. The owners will also be notified. Since the problems Toyota had two years ago with gas pedals that got stuck and defective breaks, they are very sensitive about flaws and since then have voluntarily called back cars several times.

The Roach Killer starts export business (July 28)

Mr. Schmitt is a friendly, distinguished 75-year old man who sells special vacuum cleaners from his Schweinfurt business. His namesake is not at all friendly. He is Roach Killer. When he lived in Iran, the roaches came in from his back yard when he got to his apartment at night. He killed as many as he could with a wooden Dutch clog, but they were so fast, he could not get them all. In the end they were everywhere in the kitchen, the bedroom, even under the covers. Based on this experience he made it his goal to get rid of roaches once and for all and invented “Mr. Schmitt” the roach killer. It’s a vacuum cleaner for roaches equipped with a 2.50 meter long telescope pipe – together with the hose 3.50 meter long and a suction capacity of 700 air watts. With this appliance one can suck the roaches out of cracks, out of the walls from the ceiling and everywhere. Inside the machine in a ceramic container that gets really hot: 1292 degrees Fahrenheit produced by induction. A spiral moves the roaches over four levels (at the same heat) slowly downwards where they fall out as “roach briquettes”. Mr. Schmitt said, “the machine has been built exactly as I sketched it five years ago on a plane ride from Madrid to Frankfurt.” He registered it with the European Patent Office. The equipment can help millions of people and it was a matter of the heart for Robert Schmitt. The roach killer is an export item and is mainly intended for countries with hot weather all year – the Iran is on top of Mr. Schmitt’s export list.

SPORT

Soccer: FY 05 Schweinfurt wins 3-1 against the FC Sand. (July 28)

With 7 points from three games the Schweinfurt soccer club FC 05 had an almost perfect start in the new season – for the FC Sand however; with one point after three games the beginning of the season was not very promising.