

Early Bird 8 – 14 September, 2012

## **SAFETY/SECURITY**

**Rear-end collision on A 3 (14 September, 2012)** On Thursday evening the driver of a Mercedes Sprinter sustained serious injuries during a rear-end collision. At approximately 11 p.m. the man was travelling on A 3, direction Frankfurt when for unknown reasons he drove into a truck driving in front of him. Due to the impact of the collision the driver was stuck in his car and had to be rescued by the fire department. The A 3 was blocked until 0:30 a.m. because of rescue operations.

## **LEADERS/POLITICS**

**Urban development cost 770,000 Euros – Annex building at the train station was inaugurated (11 September, 2012)** Klaus Rehberger, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mayor of Schweinfurt stated “with the new annex building we put emphasis on urban development”. The building which was officially opened for the public on Monday is “friendly, open and bright”. Mayor Rehberger criticized the railway company for choosing Schweinfurt as the last train station in Lower Franconia to receive improvements. He also reminded that another measure is urgently required: To make the gates accessible for people with disabilities. The railroad company invested 770,000 Euros for the barrier-free, glass building that replaces the old arcade building. The building has a bakery and a book store. The leisure and event center has been moved to the former luggage storage room in the main building where also the DB travel center is located. Altogether the railroad company has invested approximately 1.6 million Euros in Schweinfurt. Another problem which has to be solved yet is the rest rooms. There is a guest rest room in the bakery but the travelers still have to use the container rest rooms at gate 1. Klaus Rehberger stated: “The train station is the “business card” of a city. In Schweinfurt it still needs graphical corrections.”

**Survey shows there is a lot of frustration in the “Bundeswehr” (8 September, 2012)** Oberst (Colonel) Ulrich Kirsch speaks clearly: “The forces are threatened by burn-out.” Kirsch has been the President of the German Bundeswehr Association for three years. He stated that in October 2011 he already warned that the situation in the Bundeswehr is dramatic and that the Soldiers are barely able to meet all requirements of the deployments and the sixth structure reform since the reunification of Germany in 1989. Now the highest stake holder of the Bundeswehr, representing 220,000 Soldiers, has it black on white. The morale of the forces is low. Almost 90 per cent of the Command Sergeants’ Major, company commanders and commanders agree that the restructuring of the Bundeswehr by Defense Minister Thomas de Maiziere needs to be corrected. Two thirds of the leaders would not advise their children to choose a career in the Bundeswehr. 58 percent have been thinking about leaving the Bundeswehr and more than two-third are convinced that politicians are not interested in their work.

In principle the Soldiers do not question the necessity for considerably downsizing of the forces, massive reduction of bases and the transformation into a volunteer army; however, almost 50 percent of the Soldiers affected feel that the execution of the changes is bad or very bad. More than 75 percent criticize that they are not able to contribute ideas to the realignment. The restructuring will improve the readiness of the force but at the expense of all other areas. It causes additional burden for the Soldiers (81 percent) makes it hard to balance family and career (74 percent) and decreases the morale of the Soldiers (73 percent). Only 13 percent of the interviewed have the opinion that the reform is going to work.

**Protest tour of asylum seekers (8 September, 2012)** The protest tour of asylum seekers to Berlin stops also in Schweinfurt. The march begins on Saturday in Würzburg. On Sunday around 6 p.m. the protestors will arrive in Schweinfurt. They will have dinner at the Alevism Center near the train station, breakfast on Monday morning at the youth culture house "Stattbahnhof". At 10:30 a.m. they will be bid farewell on the market square. With their march to Berlin they protest against deportation, restriction to travel for asylum seekers whose applications are being processed and having to live in encampments in Germany. The citizens' campaign "Solidarity instead of Racism" has organized a train ride to the demonstration in Würzburg, Julius Promenade on Saturday at 2 p.m. The campaign is also supported by "die Linken" (leftwing party).

## **ECONOMY**

**Silvana outdoor/indoor swimming pool strikes a balance for this summer (14 September, 2012)** On Sunday, the outdoor swimming season will come to an end. 79,000 visitors this year is a record with 4,000 more visitors than last year.

**Worldwide highest unemployment in Southern Europe (11 September, 2012)** According to a study conducted by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva the unemployment rate in the southern European countries reached a record high with 24.5 percent in Spain and 22.3 percent in Greece - higher than in all 140 countries for which data is available. However; experts state that the economy structure and the job market in third world countries and industrial countries are not comparable. The study is based on a global employment report which was presented in January. Also in regards to youth unemployment the southern Europeans have the highest rate. The experts of the ILO expect that in 2015 the unemployment rate in Greece will be 20.3 percent and in Spain 23.4 percent. For the young people under age 24 today's unemployment rate is 55 percent in Greece and 53.2 percent in Spain. By 2015 it is expected to decrease to 50 percent.

**Inflation exceeds the warning threshold of the European Central Bank (EZB) (13 September, 2012)** The price increases for gasoline and heating oil has increased the inflation in Germany more than expected. In August the inflation in Germany increased from 1.7 to 2.1 percent according to the federal office of statistics. With a strong increase in prices the inflation has once more reached the warning threshold of the EZB. In the Euro zone prices went up by 2.6 percent in August. For Germany economists predict that in the coming months the inflation will remain above the 2 percent mark.

**No reduction of personnel at Commerz Bank (11 September, 2012)** Stephan Sebold, member of the management of Commerz Bank stated "all employees are still on board". After a fusion with the former Dresdner Bank in 2009 two branch offices located close to each other had to be combined. As of September all 35 employees have moved to renovated offices in the Spitalstrasse. The service was also improved. The bank will be open all day, additional automatic teller machines were installed and the quality of the consultations in all areas was improved.

## **EVENTS**

**This year's Oktoberfest in Munich runs from 22 September to 7 October.**

## **SPORT**

**The Schweinfurt Soccer Club FC 05 reached third place in the Bavarian Soccer League (10 September 2012)** The next game will take place, Sat. Sept. 15 at 3 p.m. at the Willy-Sachs-Stadium.