

Early Bird 15 – 21 September 2012

LEADERS/POLITICS

Bundeswehr sounds great tattoo in front of the Würzburg residence (Sept. 18)

In front of the historical Residence, the German Army known as the Bundeswehr will hold a military ceremony including a great tattoo (taps) on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the “Division Air Mobile Operations” and the 50th anniversary of the “Heeresmusikkorps 12”. The great tattoo is played on anniversaries and on farewells for high ranking politicians such as the Federal President. It has been a long tradition in German military history. The “Zapfenstreich” (great tattoo) is solemn evening music with a sequence of signals with drums and whistle pieces which remind of the play of the “Landsknecht” and the trumpets and drums of the cavalry. During the event on Wednesday the “Residenzplatz” parking area will be blocked off. From 7:30 p.m. until approximately 10 p.m. the “Rennweg” and the “Balthasar-Neumann-Promenade” in front of the residence will also be blocked. Rottendorfstrasse is also blocked direction “Rennweg” and downtown Würzburg.

Green light for long distance buses (Sept. 15)

Beginning in 2013, citizens in Germany will have an alternative to using the train. On Friday, the German government agreed to implement a long-distance bus system which is expected to begin in the spring of 2013. In the future there will be public transportation via long-distance buses available everywhere in Germany. The new long-distance bus companies will be able to compete against each other and against the railroad company. For 75 years there have been strict limitations to ensure that there is no competition for the railway company. Now, the German government has decided to end the monopoly in long-distant travel to provide the consumers more budget-priced alternatives. In order to protect the regional train service, which is subsidized by the federal states, it was agreed that short-distance travel less than 50 kilometers, or less than one hour travel time, will not be offered by the long-distance bus service. In addition, by 2016, each bus has to have at least 2 places for people in wheel chairs and by 2019 the busses have to be accessible for people with disabilities.

SAFETY/SECURITY

Parachutists missed landing zone and landed in trees (Sept. 18)

On Monday, during a NATO exercise in the area of Bad Kissingen, six Dutch parachutists landed in trees, according to a police report. While one of the soldiers was able to get himself into safety, the other five were rescued by a fire department and mountain rescue team – some of them were hanging 20 meters above the ground. The soldiers sustained minor injuries. Within the scope of the exercise Peregrine Sword, approximately 60 Soldiers jumped out of a helicopter at 3 p.m. Sixteen parachutists were not able to land in the landing zone because of turbulence – 8 of them landed in the forest.

Narcotics officers snatch 300 grams of cocaine on A3 (Sept. 15)

During a joint control of the Schweinfurt narcotics team and a traffic police inspection, Würzburg-Biebelried narcotics officers found 300 grams of cocaine in a parking area on A3 in a car with Albanian license plates last Tuesday. Three men ages ranging from 23 to 52 years old were arrested. During this routine control, 50 persons in 30 cars were checked by the police.

Bombs buried in Bavarian soil (Sept. 17)

According to experts, bombs from World War II remain a danger. Detonators are mechanical miracles, according to Andreas Heil, an expert in defusing of bombs. The company he works for works for the State of Bavaria with the only task to defuse or detonate bombs which are found during excavation work at construction sites. The company director assumes that there are still several thousand tons, or a five-digit number, of bombs buried in Bavarian soil. Just last Thursday a 250 kilo aerial bomb was found in Nürnberg and had to be defused. Live ammunition from World War I and sometimes even from the War of 1870 has been found during excavation work. Heil advises citizens, no matter where you want to build a house, have the ground probed because war was everywhere and bombs can be anywhere.

ECONOMY

Large numbers of trucks heading for the sugar factory in Ochsenfurt (Sept. 15)

Since Friday morning, trucks loaded with sugar beets are being transported to the sugar factory in Ochsenfurt—about 45 minutes south of Schweinfurt. Ernst Merz, manager at the sugar factory, expects a good profit for the farmers this year. Because of the hot weather in August, the sugar content of the beets is 10 percent above average. The delivery of sugar beets to the factory will last until January.