



Dear friend of the AGP,

I just returned from Huntsville where we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Dr. Wernher von Braun. There could not be a better subject for a discussion within the friends of the AGP than the contributions for Alabama by the famous German space and rocket engineer. Reflecting on the responsibility and common heritage of both Germany and North Alabama with respect to the development and use of rockets, Dr. John Horack said it best: for a better future together, in peace and prosperity. Following in the footsteps of Wernher von Braun, his students are already writing the next chapter of space exploration.

This is the last issue that I will sign as Chairman of the AGP. Starting in December, Gerhard Graf will welcome you in this role and he will keep you updated on relevant news.

Herzliche Gruesse,

Arndt Siepman, Chair
asiepman@auburnalabama.org

NEWS

Daimler To Expand Production at Vance Plant



Daimler announced it will expand its U.S. plant in the Vance section of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. As of 2015, an entirely new Mercedes-Benz model will roll off the production line as its fifth product. The plant has been the traditional production site of the brand's M-, GL-, and R-Class SUVs and will also build the C-Class for the North American market beginning 2014. For the production of the new model, Daimler will additionally invest US\$ 350 million, and will create some 400 further jobs at the plant.

Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Daimler Board of Management and Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars: "This new model from the Tuscaloosa plant is an important element of our growth strategy. It is one of the ten additional models which we will introduce within the next four years alone across all segments." Referring to the Tuscaloosa plant's role within the global production network of Mercedes-Benz Cars, Zetsche added: "At the same time, we are systematically broadening our manufacturing footprint in the NAFTA region."

"Since the time Mercedes-Benz chose Tuscaloosa County for its first US assembly plant 18 years ago, the company has proven to be an outstanding partner for the state," said Alabama Governor Robert Bentley. "We join MBUSI in celebrating this milestone, and welcome the hundreds of jobs this announcement brings to Alabama."

Just earlier this year, on the occasion of the Job #1 ceremony of the new Mercedes-Benz M-Class in July, Daimler had announced the decision to invest more than US\$2 billion in the Tuscaloosa plant (Mercedes-Benz U.S. International - MBUSI). In total, investment in the plant between 2010 and 2014 will thus amount to US\$2.4 billion, while the number of newly created jobs will add up to 1,400.

Markus Schaefer, President and CEO of MBUSI, commented on these decisions: "The entire MBUSI team is proud of its role in the success of the models made in Tuscaloosa. We are looking forward to making further important contributions to the product offensive of Mercedes-Benz."

FEATURE

AGP Meets North Alabama



AGP invited its members and leadership of Huntsville companies and organizations for a reception at The Space & Rocket Center (USSRC). The 100th birthday of space pioneer Wernher von Braun presented the perfect bridge to reiterate the relationship between Alabama and Germany. In honor of von Braun's achievements and life-time work, a special exhibition had been created by the USSRC featuring pictures, facts, personal notes and memorabilia of Wernher von Braun.

The event was made possible through the support of Western Union, The US Space & Rocket Center, the North Alabama Industrial Development Authority (NAIDA) and the two main sponsors The Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County and the University of Alabama Huntsville.

Ron Poteat, Vice President of Economic Development at the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County, John M. Horack, Vice President of Research at the University of Huntsville and Dr. Deborah Barnhart, Executive Director of USSRC personally welcomed the attendees. The event was attended by close to 100 guests who enjoyed the exhibition, great German food and an outstanding opportunity to mingle and network with organizations connected with Alabama and Germany.

The Wernher von Braun exhibition will be open until May 2012 and will then go on world tour with the first European stop in Madrid Spain.

BOARD NEWS

2012 AGP Board Sworn In

Following the AGP Board Meeting November 10th in Huntsville, Michael Johnson, Honorary Consul of Germany, oversaw the swearing-in ceremony of the 2012 AGP Slate of Officers and Directors.

As of November 11, Gerhard Graf will serve as Chairman of the AGP and the following officers will serve on the Executive Committee:

- Bryan Winter, Vice Chair/Chair Elect
- Mark Sheppard, Vice President Bus. Development
- Warren McCullars, Vice President Communications
- Tom Fox, Vice President Culture
- Anne Katrin Gramberg, Vice President Education
- Lamar Smith, Vice President Membership
- Judy Benson, Secretary
- Jim Robertson, Treasurer
- Arndt Siepman, Immediate Past Chairman
- Michael Johnson, Ex-Oficio, Hon. German Consul



Back Row-Left to Right: Jim Robertson, Warren McCullars, Lamar Smith, Bryan Winter

Front Row-Left to Right: Gerhard Graf, Judy Benson, Arndt Siepman

Supported and approved by the membership, the Class of 2014 were also sworn in by Michael Johnson. The following members were present:

- Billy Joe Camp
- Gerhard Graf
- Bryan Winter
- Brian Hilson
- Robert Weigel
- Bob Smith
- Lamar Smith
- Warren McCullars

Please visit our website www.alabamagermany.org under News to see the full list of all Board Members.

FEATURE

The Alabama-Bremen Connection



Greg Canfield of the Alabama Development Office and Andreas Heyer of the German Delegation

The States of Alabama and Bremen, Germany have signed a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to formalize their common objectives of promoting investment, trade, and continued economic development between them. The signing took place at the North River Yacht Club in Tuscaloosa, during a reception in honor of Senator Martin Guentner, Minister of Economics, Labor and Ports of the Federal State of Bremen and an accompanying delegation consisting of Members of the Board of BLG Logistics Group and Bremen Invest, the economic development agency for the State of Bremen. "We have 68 German companies who have invested more than \$5.8 billion in Alabama. Since 2000, these companies have been responsible for 10,305 announced jobs in our state," said Alabama Development Office Director Greg Canfield. "Some of our German neighbors are among the most respected companies in the world. We value their presence in Alabama and want to work diligently to increase German investment in our state as well as trade opportunities."

The MOU recognizes the many shared industries, including aerospace, automotive and logistics, between the two states, and outlines joint efforts to recruit and promote new and existing companies.

Senator Guentner said, "This Reception and this MOU are the reasons why we opened the Bremen Invest office in America. America, and especially Alabama, are our natural partners in economic development."

Both Bremen and Alabama are home to manufacturing operations of Mercedes-Benz. Bremen-based company with North American operations in Tuscaloosa is BLG Logistics, Inc. ("BLG"). From just-in-time parts to finished vehicle services, BLG plays a major role in Mercedes' global production network, and currently employs 95 Alabamians.

Other shared companies include:

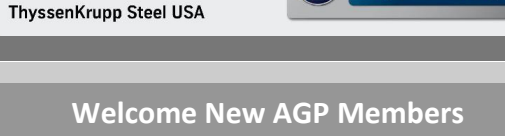
- EADS/Airbus engineering centers (Bremen and Mobile)
- ThyssenKrupp Systems Solutions (formally ThyssenKrupp Krause) (Bremen and Huntsville).
- Voith Engineering Services, which supplies many Bremen companies, as well as the Toyota Motor Manufacturing Plant in Huntsville, with varying degrees of engineering support.

Andreas Heyer, CEO of WFB Bremen (Bremen Invest locally) stated, "For Alabama Heyer, CEO of WFB Bremen, Germany is an obvious choice because it is one of the most stable and productive economies in the world."

Kirk Atkinson, U.S. Director of Bremen Invest said, "With this MOU, we hope to expound upon past recruiting successes between Germany and Alabama by exposing existing industries to new markets in order to create jobs at home."

Please visit www.keytogermany.com for more information.

Dankeschön to Our Sustaining & Patron Members



Welcome New AGP Members

- Balch & Bingham LLP
- Borbet Alabama, Inc.
- TTL, Inc.
- ThyssenKrupp Steel USA, LLC
- Steve Standridge

AGP Member News Ticker

- Latest News From BASF
- Latest News from Mercedes
- Latest News from Siemens
- Latest News from ThyssenKrupp Stainless USA
- Latest News from ThyssenKrupp Steel USA

German companies: please send us your news link to administrator@alabamagermany.org

German Quote

"Wie man in den Wald hineinruft, so schallt es heraus."

AlabamaGermany Partnership Executive Committee

AGP Chairman

Gerhard Graf

MetLife Financial Group of the South

Vice Chair/Chair Elect

Bryan Winter

Lewis, Smyth, & Winter, PC

VP, Business Development

Mark Sheppard

Alabama State Port Authority

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Dr. Thomas Fox

University of Alabama

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Auburn University

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Warren McCullars

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CRH North America

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Jim Robertson

Rodl Warren Averett LLC

Immediate Past President

Arndt Siepman

City of Auburn

Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany Atlanta

Marquis Two Tower, Suite 901

285 Peachtree Center Avenue, N.E.

Atlanta, Georgia, 30303-1221

Phone: (404) 659 4760

www.germany.info/atlanta

Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany for the State of Alabama

Jefferson Bruce Jones

Office at the AlabamaGermany Partnership,

Phone: (205) 943-4772

German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States, Inc.

1170 Howell Mill Road, Suite 300

Atlanta, GA 30318

Phone: (404) 586-6800

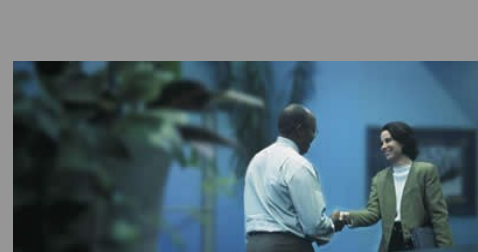
www.gaccsouth.com/en

Test Your Knowledge

Which "fifth season" started on November 11th in Germany?

Send your answer to administrator@alabamagermany.org

New AGP Program Now Available To Enhance Cultural Understanding



The AGP has developed a program to help employers foster improved cultural understanding and more efficient teamwork in the context of an international operation here in Alabama. We are looking for opportunities to hold such a workshop at your workplace. At this point, we are offering this to Corporate AGP members at no cost. For more information or to schedule such a session for your workplace, please call us at (205) 943-4772.