

Congratulations Tuscaloosa! For the past 15 years, Tuscaloosa has maintained a sister city relationship with the City of Schorndorf in Baden-Württemberg. Last week, 30 guests from Schorndorf participated in celebrations held in Tuscaloosa. Even Consul General Dr. Görgens from Atlanta attended the program. As part of the activities, high school students experienced an important first: either their first barbeque in the Deep South or their first Käsespätzle in Swabia.

It is support and involvement of communities like Tuscaloosa that makes a difference for the people of Alabama. Teenagers and adults involved in such programs increase their cultural awareness and are better prepared to handle challenging situations in future work environments.

The AGP applauds such partnerships and exchange programs. We encourage you to get active and participate. Explore and enjoy the friendships that you make along the way.

Arndt Siepmann, Chair

[asiepmann@auburnalabama.org](mailto:asiepmann@auburnalabama.org)

#### FEATURE

### Lauren Goodson Retires as AGP Executive Director



Lauren Goodson being recognized by AGP Chairman Arndt Siepmann at Board Meeting in August

For the last two years, Lauren Goodson has served as Executive Director of the AlabamaGermany Partnership. At the August board meeting, AGP Chairman Arndt Siepmann recognized her achievements stating: "Lauren made many good suggestions to improve our programs. The success of the last Annual Dinner and Business Forum stands as an example of her work. But mostly she will be missed for her positive spirit and camaraderie." Lauren promised to continue working with the AGP and the many friends she has made during her time in charge.



Mercedes-Benz

#### FEATURE

### Mercedes Benz Wins Supplier Award in Michigan

Mercedes-Benz U.S. International, Inc. was named a winner of the 2011 Automotive News Suppliers' Choice Awards recognizing outstanding work in bringing innovations to market. The announcement was made on August 1 at the Management Briefing Seminars in Traverse City, MI. The winners were chosen through a detailed survey of suppliers that J.D. Power and Associates conducts for Automotive News every two years. It ranks North American automakers on their ability to support, foster and commercialize the suppliers' innovations.

#### CELEBRATE

### Oktoberfest Is Here!

It's that time of the year again: college football, leaves falling, and, of course, Oktoberfest. We hope you will take the opportunity to participate in one of the most famous German festivities of the year. Alabama holds celebrations throughout the state. We were invited and plan to attend these:

**Birmingham Oktoberfest:** [www.bhamoktoberfest.org](http://www.bhamoktoberfest.org)

**Cullman Oktoberfest:** [www.cullmanoktoberfest.com](http://www.cullmanoktoberfest.com)

**Huntsville Oktoberfest:**  
[www.redstonemwr.com/news\\_&\\_events/oktoberfest.htm](http://www.redstonemwr.com/news_&_events/oktoberfest.htm)



Come and enjoy German music, special food and the famous Gerstensaft.

#### Did You Know...

...solar panels (photovoltaic) generated about 12 billion kilowatt hours of electrical energy in Germany in 2010?

In comparison to the Southeastern United States, Germany is certainly not known for its sunshine. Actually, Germany receives only as much sun as the State of Alaska!

Solar generated electrical energy, a great untapped potential for Alabama.

## Rödl Warren Averett, LLC

#### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Rödl Warren Averett, LLC is an Alabama-based accounting firm partly owned by Rödl & Partner, which is the largest accounting firm of German origin servicing its clients from 84 offices in 37 countries. Rödl Warren Averett specializes in servicing the US subsidiaries of foreign firms, with a particular understanding of the manufacturing and distribution sectors. Jim Robertson serves as managing partner of the Firm, which has German and Korean language capabilities. Henrik Ernst, from Herne in Westhalia, resides in Birmingham and serves the Firm's German-owned clients, supporting communication between the Firm and their clients' parent companies overseas.

Since the establishment of the AGP, the Firm has done the accounting work for the AGP on a pro bono basis. This commitment to the AGP is both significant and generous. It is also evidence of the Firm's great civic leadership.

The international practice of Rödl Warren Averett offers tax advice and accounting services not just to German firms. This summer, the fast growing Korean clientele in Alabama is now being served from a new Rödl Warren Averett office in Auburn.

#### BOARD NEWS

### New Board Members Sworn In

From Left to Right: Brian Hilson, Lamar Smith, Michael Lutter, Claudia Zimmermann, Ken Novak



At the AGP Board Meeting in August, four new Board Members were sworn in. In a long standing tradition, former AGP Chairman Brian Smith conducted the ceremony. The AGP welcomes the new Board: Brian Hilson (Birmingham Business Alliance), Michael Lutter (ThyssenKrupp Stainless USA), Ken Novak (Alabama Power Company), Claudia Zimmermann (Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce).

### Dankeschön to Our Sustaining & Patron Members



### Welcome New AGP Members

- Macon County Economic Development Authority
- Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce
- Tube Technology Systems Inc.

### Upcoming Events

#### September 22

Cultural Seminar:  
Understanding Business Etiquette "Sie or Du Peter?"  
Birmingham (tbc)

#### September 22-24

FDSK German Culture Club's  
Annual Oktoberfest, Birmingham

#### October 3

German Unity Day

#### German Quote

*Lügen haben kurze Beine.*

#### AGP Member News Ticker

[Latest News from ThyssenKrupp Stainless USA](#)

[Latest News from ThyssenKrupp Steel USA](#)

German companies: please send us your news link to [administrator@alabamagermany.org](mailto:administrator@alabamagermany.org)

### Test Your Knowledge

Who is the most famous son of the City of Schorndorf?

To be the possible winner selected from respondents of the right answer, please send in your answer by Sept. 20 to [administrator@alabamagermany.org](mailto:administrator@alabamagermany.org)

Last month's winner was [Jörg Wesche](#) who correctly knew the answer to "What just turned 125 years of age and is still running?" THE AUTOMOBILE INVENTED BY MERCEDES BENZ.

For answering correctly, Jörg will receive a meal and beverage of his choice at the **Original Birmingham Oktoberfest, Sept. 22-24**. Thanks to FDSK German Club for their generous donation of this prize!

## AlabamaGermany Partnership Executive Committee

#### AGP Chairman

Arndt Siepmann  
City of Auburn

#### Vice Chair/Chair Elect

Gerhard Graf  
MetLife Financial Group of the South

#### VP, Business Development

Mark Sheppard  
Alabama State Port Authority

#### VP, Culture

Dr. Thomas Fox  
University of Alabama

#### VP, Education

Dr. Anne-Katrin Gramberg  
Auburn University

#### VP, Communications

Warren McCullars  
Alagasco

#### VP, Membership

Bryan Winter  
Lewis, Smyth & Winter, PC

#### Secretary

Judy Benson  
CRNorth America

#### Treasurer

Jim Robertson  
Rödl Warren Averett LLC

#### Immediate Past Chair

Joachim Hofmann  
MBUSI

### AGP Affiliates

#### Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany Atlanta

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#### 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.

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