Plastic art? Be a non-conformist!

Artist Otmar Alt used original ENSINGER plastic parts to create the sculpture The little lateral thinker

In many sectors of industry, hardly anything is produced without plastics. But what has plastic got to do with art? Quite a lot, if you look at the sculpture The little lateral thinker. Creator of The little lateral thinker is artist Otmar Alt – who used original ENSINGER plastic parts. The sculpture consists of a total of 42 high-tech plastic parts in different qualities of material that are specific to different sectors of industry, to illustrate the variety of areas of application. The idea of making a work of art from plastic emerged at ENSINGER just under a year ago. When the question arose of who should create the work of art, the choice of the German artist Otmar Alt was made very quickly. “We decided in favour of Otmar Alt because his colourful objects very much appealed to us. The other deciding factor was that he is very open to all kinds of materials, and his versatility is simply tremendous,” says Marketing and Sales Manager Baras. The internationally famous artist studied the ENSINGER company, its philosophy, products and innovative technologies very intensively before creating The little lateral thinker. The result shows that technical plastics can be used not only for high-tech products, but for genuine works of art.

“The little lateral thinker embodies our slogan: Ask. Think. Succeed.”

But what does The little lateral thinker symbolise? “For us, the sculpture is much more than a pure objet d’art,” the Marketing and Sales Manager explains. “The little lateral thinker embodies our slogan: Ask. Think. Succeed.”

The sculpture is called The little lateral thinker. The German Magazine “Ask. Think. Succeed.” was announced to customers and employees about a year ago. It is an essential part of the corporate philosophy, because asking, listening and thinking about the best solution are and always have been the secret of the company’s success. It is precisely this continuing dialogue, with customers as partners, that has led to significant innovations and has made ENSINGER a provider of complete systems.

“In using the optimum materials and the most suitable production processes, we implement technically perfect solutions for our customers. Our solutions are innovative, of high quality, functional and economical. They benefit our customers, and give them competitive edge,” says the Marketing and Sales Manager. In his opinion, this is possible mainly because ENSINGER employees might say, real non-conformists. That is the secret of our success,” says the Marketing and Sales Manager. And it is precisely this idea that Otmar Alt has interpreted artistically. The little lateral thinker has human features with pronounced sensory organs, an expression of intent listening and precise observation. The little lateral thinker – a sculpture about engineering expertise in compi-

The little lateral thinker was made at ENSINGER. The roughly 40 cm high sculpture was ready in time for the K Fair. The ENSINGER location at Cham and the training workshop at ENSINGER headquarters in Nürtingen milled the parts for The little lateral thinker. The trainees also assembled the sculpture. “I would like once again to thank all the employees who were involved in the completion of the sculpture for their tremendous effort. In spite of full-capacity production, we succeeded in producing the limited edition of 200 absolutely on time, and within the tightest of schedules,” says Baras with satisfaction.

Some of The little lateral thinker were presented to ENSINGER’s customers during the K Fair in Düsseldorf. An ENSINGER evening was held in an Italian restaurant, attended by customers and also by the artist, Otmar Alt, in person. The climax of the evening came when each of the customers was presented with a little lateral thinker individually signed by Otmar Alt together with a book about the artist. The customers were delighted – both with the sculpture itself and with the idea behind it.

“With his latest work, The little lateral thinker, Otmar Alt has demonstrated in a most impressive manner that masterpieces of art can be produced from ENSINGER plastics. Likewise, our specialists at ENSINGER will continue to create ‘masterpieces of technology’ for our customers,” said the Marketing and Sales Manager in his closing address.

Otmar Alt, Artist

Alt was born in Wernigerode in 1940, and commenced his studies at the College of Fine Art in Berlin in 1960. Today, he lives and works in Hamm-Nordtinker, where he has a studio in a former village smithy. Alt’s artistic roots are in the abstract art of the post-war period. However, his preference for intense colouring and clearly defined forms emerged early on. The artist’s name stands for an art that rejoices in colour, that uses the one hand bears features of living creatures, but on the other displays fantastic shapes. His versatility is characteristic of him. As well as paintings and graphics, he creates ceramics, bronzes, children’s books, designs for jewellery, etchings, wood carvings and much more. Since 1964, Otmar Alt has had over 300 exhibitions in Germany and abroad. Many of his works are to be found in public and private collections.
Dear Reader,

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Mr. Michael Koch will leave the Board of Management of our company. Mr. Koch had worked for ENSINGER since 1981, first managing the Cham plant before being appointed to the Board in 1997. I very much regret Mr. Koch’s decision to leave our company. For me, he was a competent partner, and I wish him personally all the best for his future. I will take over Mr. Koch’s responsibility until his successor is trained.

Ask. Think. Succeed. Mr. Alt insisted on gaining his own personal impression of our daily routine and of our company. The little lateral thinker was therefore no mere commissioned work of art. On the contrary, we will always associate the project with interesting conversations with an artist who is a true personality. A dialogue between contemporary art and industry that should take place in this form far more often.

New application opportunities for plastics demand innovative ideas and products. I would therefore, dear Reader, like to draw your attention to the ENSINGER services. The little lateral thinker expresses in a very unusual way to our company and our slogan, known artist Otmar Alt and made of original ENSINGER plastic parts. The little lateral thinker embodies the ENSINGER slogan, “Ask. Think. Succeed.” The ENSINGER’s customers who received a personal invitation before the fair, had the chance of winning Otmar Alt’s sculpture. A drawing of The little lateral thinker was also selected as the motif for the outside of the stand, along with the ENSINGER logo.

Managing Director Klaus Ensinger was very pleased with the outcome of the K Fair. “We have made many promising contacts, and expect good business as a result of the fair. The K is definitely the most important fair for us – it is an international market-place that generates a strong impulse for the whole sector.”

More than 230,000 guests visited the K 2001. More than half of the trade visitors to Düsseldorf came from abroad – which means that the proportion of foreign guests has risen by about five per cent compared with 1998. The visitors were from more than 100 countries on all continents. 64 per cent of the international experts came from Europe, most of them from the Netherlands, France, and Belgium. The UK, Switzerland and Austria. A good third of the international guests were non-European.

The date of the next K has already been fixed: the fair will take place from the 20th to 27th of October 2004 in Düsseldorf.

Klaus Ensinger
The new class of materials: anti-microbial plastics

Growth and migration of bacteria, yeasts, moulds and fungi will be prevented

The latest additions to the ENSINGER GmbH product range are anti-microbial plastics. The advantage of this class of materials for medical, laboratory and food technology is that anti-bacterial growth-inhibiting effect has been demonstrated for a whole series of micro-organisms. These include, for instance, coli bacteria, salmonella and staphylo-cocci. The compound has passed the ISO-10993-1:1999 biological tests, an important prerequisite for the certification of medical implants. Agon® anti-microbial is resistant to chemicals with pH factors from three to ten, and to temperatures of up to 800°C. The compound can be used almost anywhere in chemical manufacturing, processing and application conditions. It can thus be compounded into any plastic in addition to the usual additives such as fibre reinforcement, pigments or stabilisers, without the risk of thermal or toxic damage. The cleaning, disinfectant and sterilisation methods that are typical for the sector can still be used without causing any problems. Even the usual manufacturing and processing methods such as extrusion, die-casting and moulding do not impair the effectiveness of the anti-microbial plastics. The material characteristics of the various plastics are influenced only marginally. Typically thermal-mechanical parameters such as continuous operating temperature, creep resistance and thermal and electrical insulation are retained. All ENSINGER plastics that are suitable for medical and food technology can have the anti-microbial compound added to them. The agent is used primarily in semi-finished products such as TECAPEEK, TECASAN P (PSPU), TECAFORM AH (POM-C) or TECADUR PET, and in de-cast products, extruded profiles or calendered plates.

If you would like to know more about the anti-microbial plastics from ENSINGER, please get in touch with:

Peter Bongardt, Technical Marketing,
Tel.: +49 (0) 7032-819-9, Fax: +49 (0) 7032-819-100,
E-mail: p.bongardt@de.ensinger-online.com

ENSINGER GmbH has a new product – TECAST 12, a polyamide that is produced in a casting process. This construction plastic is manufactured using the Grilamid liquid matrix system of the Swiss company EMS-Grivory. Here, the monomer laurin-lactam is melted down in a casting system specially developed for the purpose, and processed with a special liquid activator. This completely new process was developed jointly by EMS-Grivory and ENSINGER. The advantage of the two-component system is that customer wishes can be taken into account much more specifically than in traditional processes. Firstly, the hardness of TECAST 12 can be varied at will, and exact dosage is possible. Secondly, very consistent characteristics are achieved within a wide process window. TECAST 12 can be used in many areas. Castors, spiral conveyors, calender bowls, sprocket wheels, components for pipe fittings, large sealing rings, screw nuts and toothed belt pulleys are only a few of the many examples of possible applications.

TECAST 12 is the lightest of the polyamides – the plastic is therefore characterised by high stiffness and stability that are at low density. The plastic has high impact resistance at low temperature and good dimensional stability at high temperature, is easy to recycle, and is weatherproof. The slide and abrasion characteristics of TECAST 12 are also excellent, as are its resistance to hydrolysis and chemicals, and its low water absorption. The material is also sound and shock-absorbing, has a long lifetime, and can be reworked by thermoplastic process.

The moulds for half-finished parts and blanks can be obtained from ENSINGER. Moulded parts, such as cans or buffer elements for railway wagons are also possible. Even the casting-in of inserts and steel cores (e.g. driving wheels, gear wheels, worms, bevel gears for gear boxes, and castors) presents no problems.

If you would like to know more about TECAST 12 from ENSINGER, please get in touch with:

Walter Wagner
Tel.: +49 (0) 9971-396-5 32
Fax: +49 (0) 9971-396 5 80
E-mail: w.wagner@de.ensinger-online.de

ENSINGER offers new brochures
Comprehensive information relating to process technologies and products

High Performance in Geometry and Material
Whether it’s a light diffuser for a BOEING 777, guide sleeves for surgical instruments, or an air-spring hose for DaimlerChrysler – sophisticated, high technology is that anti-microbial plastics. The great advantage of this class of materials for medical, laboratory and food technology is that anti-bacterial growth-inhibiting effect has been demonstrated for a whole series of micro-organisms. These include, for instance, coli bacteria, salmonella and staphylococci. The compound has passed the ISO-10993-1:1999 biological tests, an important prerequisite for the certification of medical implants. Agon® anti-microbial is resistant to chemicals with pH factors from three to ten, and to temperatures of up to 800°C. The compound can be used almost anywhere in chemical manufacturing, processing and application conditions. It can thus be compounded into any plastic in addition to the usual additives such as fibre reinforcement, pigments or stabilisers, without the risk of thermal or toxic damage. The cleaning, disinfectant and sterilisation methods that are typical for the sector can still be used without causing any problems. Even the usual manufacturing and processing methods such as extrusion, die-casting and moulding do not impair the effectiveness of the anti-microbial plastics. The material characteristics of the various plastics are influenced only marginally. Typically thermal-mechanical parameters such as continuous operating temperature, creep resistance and thermal and electrical insulation are retained. All ENSINGER plastics that are suitable for medical and food technology can have the anti-microbial compound added to them. The agent is used primarily in semi-finished products such as TECAPEEK, TECASAN P (PSPU), TECAFORM AH (POM-C) or TECADUR PET, and in de-cast products, extruded profiles or calendered plates.

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Tel.: +49 (0) 9971-396-5 32
Fax: +49 (0) 9971-396 5 80
E-mail: w.wagner@de.ensinger-online.de

High-performance plastics in semiconductor production
Many stages in the process of producing semiconductors demand handling components made of high-performance plastics. ENSINGER’s new brochure provides comprehensive information about the important role of plastics in semiconductor production. Specific characteristics, such as mechanical stability even at high temperatures, good electrical insulation, and resistance to chemicals make ENSINGER plastics the ideal materials for semiconductor production. The brochure gives a summary of the various high-performance plastics, their main characteristics, and their typical uses in semiconductor production. ENSINGER offers high-performance plastics with well defined electrical characteristics. The insulating effect, or the ability to discharge static electricity is achieved by the deliberate addition of electrically active substances. Innovative production processes, the performance profiles of the high-performance plastics, and ENSINGER’s engineering expertise are among the other topics in the brochure, which is available in German and English. And, last but not least, it also contains the material data of the numerous ENSINGER high-temperature plastics.

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In Peri on the Sea! A rather special fishing trip

Martin Baras, Marketing and Sales Manager, and Björn Uhlken, Export Manager, made a special customer visit in the course of their trip to Northern Europe from the 14th to the 18th of August. As a follow-up to the visit to Plast & Metall Compagniet (PMC) in Järfälla, Sweden, January Gefvert and Kent Akerdahl of PMC in São Paulo for six weeks. This branch, which only opened in 1996, lies in Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost of Brazil’s 26 federal states, which has an area as large as Germany. The south of Brazil is characterised by its strong economy. A large number of young companies have settled here, a surprising proportion of them German. There are, of course, historical reasons for this, over and above the favourable situation close to the borders with Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Since 1824, large numbers of German immigrants have settled in the region.

At present, ENSINGER do Brasil consists of 30 employees, 23 of them in production. The latter include processes for extrusion, die-casting (under development) and polycarbonate casting. Expansion of ENSINGER’s 40-million Euro production is planned. At present, the main focus of interest, apart from the increase in production, is quality assurance and ISO 9001 certification. The products are not marketed directly through ENSINGER do Brasil, but through a network of retailers scattered all over Brazil. Staffing a company-owned sales network would hardly be feasible in a country of 85.8 million square kilometres, a sales representative and annual holidays are 30 days, but seems to bother the employees too much, and even over lunch with them I have never heard any complaints – and that is not just because of my inadequate command of Portuguese. My departure from ENSINGER do Brasil came too soon, but my stay will remain a very special memory for me. My heartfelt thanks, or rather muito obrigada to all who made my stay possible!

Regine Zöller

Mayor of Cham visits the ENSINGER company’s branch works

Founder Wilfried Ensinger gave information about the company

It is 21 years since Wilfried Ensinger founded the first branch works of his Nüringen plastics company in Cham. It started off with five people – today there are 300. “The company is a bright star in our economic firmament,” is how the Mayor of Cham, Mr Leo Hackenspiel, praised the company at the two-hour tour of the plant on the 11th of November this year. He described founder Wilfried Ensinger as “a covert Swabian Foreign Minister here in the Bavarian Forest, with extraordinar- e expertise regarding economic questions and education policy.” The founder of the company, Wilfried Ensinger, presented the programme, products and materials of the Cham location, together with Andreas Alsfasser (general manager of the Cham branch), Fred Nass (manager division machined parts) and Walter Wagner (manager of the TECAST product group). The current “boom article” is a capillary revoler that ENSINGER manufactures for the LightCycler PCR analysis system made by Roche Diagnostics. With this innovative technology, DNA chains can be duplicated and at the same time inspected for genetic mutations. Another object of wide- spread examination is a plastic part on which the biggest crane in the world, 140 metres high and weighing 420 tonnes, is built up.

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Calendered sheets and coils

The ENSINGER Group has further enhanced its position in one of the high-tech regions of the USA. With the purchase of Penn Fibre, Inc., located in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, the ENSINGER Group has succeeded in acquiring a strong company with comprehensive skills in the manufacturing of composite materials.

This old-established American company, founded in 1937, is present in various product sectors with a large number of materials, and has made a name for itself as the largest American producer of thin, thermoplastic sheets, strips, coils and punched flat parts. Penn Fibre manufactures calendered sheets and coils in traditional thermoplastics such as polyethylene, polyamide, polycarbonate, polystyrene, polypropylene and high-temperature plastics and special composite materials. Production embraces standardised stock sizes with thicknesses of 0.25 mm to 4 mm and widths of up to 1200 mm, and sizes specially cut to customers’ orders. A large, varied range in stock, together with well developed production that employs about 100 people round the clock, allows prompt, customer specific delivery. With its development and manufacturing skills in the area of composite and high-temperature materials and the supply of calendered semi-finished products, Penn-Fibre rounds of the ENSINGER product portfolio.

The products are used in the sports equipment industry, for instance. But new applications are also being opened up in the areas of food, medical and laboratory technologies, in automotive technology and in electronics.

The high-performance plastic

New in the ENSINGER GmbH product range is the high-performance plastic TECABEK, based on Victrex(TM) PEK. This semi-crystalline, high-temperature thermoplastic offers a wide spectrum of excellent material characteristics. These make the plastic a real all-rounder – which means that it can be used in any sector of industry. Most of its material characteristics are comparable to those of TECABEK, which already offers very high performance. These include, for example, a maximum service temperature of 260 °C, high creep resistance and stiffness, good electrical insulation and its resistance to gamma rays. TECABEK tends to come off better in comparison with TECABEK when it comes to chemical and abrasion resistance. The glass transition temperature, melting point and heat distortion temperature are significantly higher.

In mechanical engineering and automotive technology, in particular, this opens up new paths for sliding applications that can withstand higher thermal/mechanical stress. TECABEK is an optimum plastic for medical and laboratory technology – it is stable and reliable, and can be repeatedly disinfected and sterilised in superheated steam without developing stress cracks. Further examples of possible applications are aerospace technology, nuclear and X-ray systems, or electronic and semiconductor technology.

ENSINGER uses TECABEK natural, glass fibre or carbon fibre reinforced compounds, and in other modifications, to make extruded semi-finished material and moulded and machined finished parts.

You’re doing a practical at ENSINGER do Brasil?

In Brazil, it is normal for students to do an internship during their university studies. This is considered an important part of their education. For some students, this may be the first time they work in a professional environment.

Some students may have previously worked in the industry, but this is not always the case. For others, this may be their first time working in a technological field.

In Brazil, it is also common for students to do an internship abroad. This can provide valuable experience and exposure to different cultural perspectives.

In summary, doing a practical at ENSINGER do Brasil can be a valuable experience for students, providing them with practical knowledge and exposure to a technological field.
Half a year of project work, the result of which significantly influences the marks in the school-leaving examinations. What motivates pupils to enter into cooperation with a company like ENSINGER? What does ENSINGER itself expect of this kind of public relations work? First, the rough framework of the project itself. Together with ENSINGER, class 12 of the Commercial Upper School in Calw has worked out various half-year projects, such as “Modern Concepts in Personnel Management”. Mirjam Hörtig and Karl-Josef Rebmann gave the pupils practical input through events on the company premises. The theoretical part was studied with the help of a seminar. The aim was to better integrate the people responsible for the company’s side of the project Mirjam Hörtig, Karl-Josef Rebmann and Detlef Gräser, the first year, both technical and commercial, attended one introductory seminar. The aim was to better integrate the new employees, to instill the ENSINGER principles into them, and to strengthen their esprit de corps. Under the guidance of psychologist Detlef Gräser, the first day was taken up with generally getting to know each other. The participants were also taught the general basics of communication. On the second day, the company was more to the fore. The ENSINGER principles and slogan were analysed in workshops and groups almost all day. The mood after the seminar was superb, and even the vaguest initial doubts had been dispelled. All agreed that events of this kind should be repeated in future.

As in past years, our trainees have again invested considerable effort in supporting a social project. Recent weeks have seen the trade/technical area diligently “filing” a small Christmas present. Trainees and instructors have also been busy baking biscuits, which were sold in the company along with the “technical innovation”. The proceeds are in aid of children from Chernobyl. We are looking forward to reporting on the handing over of the donation in our next issue.

Trainees’ Christmas Action

ENSINGER – Trainees at induction seminar

What does he do...

Christian Nachreiner

Just recently, Christian Nachreiner celebrated his 10th anniversary with the company. He completed his training as a machinist specializing in turning technology in 1994 with a very successful examination and a certificate from the Chamber of Trade and Industry in Regensburg. After that, Christian Nachreiner worked as a CNC fitter in our Finished Parts division. Here, he is responsible for the quality finished parts are manufactured to customer drawings and to close tolerances. “In his free time” – for 4 whole years – he went back to school for further training as a technician in mechanical engineering.

Since August 2001, the enthusiastic “motorcyclist, IT freak and dog-owner” has been working in the Production Estimating/Planning department of the Finished Parts division. He is responsible for quick, economical dispatch of tenders, on schedule processing of manufacturing orders, and external purchasing of tools and special materials.

Christian Nachreiner is thus in a position to contribute with his work, which he has learned from scratch, to his present task. And it is ENSINGER’S philosophy to develop and produce individual customer solutions of the highest quality.
Hearties congratulations to all who celebrate jubilees in the fourth quarter of 2001

Celebrating 10 years with the company:
- Marianne Bühler, Konrad Wiederer and Thomas Waiz.
- Mr. Willi Wörner celebrated his 25th anniversary.

The 30th of August 1976 was Mr. Wörner’s first working day with our company. Today, he looks back on 25 successful years and has a lot to tell from his own experience about the development of the company.

Mr. Willi Wörner leaves for a well-earned retirement.

It was no light farewell – not only for Fritz Hohl’s shift group, in which he was active for many years as shift foreman, but for all of us who had dealings with him at ENSINGER. “A father figure” is the phrase his colleagues use to characterize Fritz Hohl. And no wonder, because exemplary thinking and acting, together with a very human way of going about things, are uppermost for him.

Now that we, his colleagues at ENSINGER, must take leave of him as a “retiree”, we do hope that he will stop by now and again.

Provisionally final...!
– Another change in the editorial team –

Just in time for the last edition, Janette Seiz took over from Ellen Schellinger, and we are delighted to welcome her as the new member of our team. Kornelia Pfütze can now devote herself fully to her actual work. Thanks to her for her kind co-operation.

The decision had been made, the Chamers were coming! For us, this meant first of all, the planning and preparation necessary to make these two days successful and fun. After many suggestions had been considered, our “programme” was settled.

Friday, October 12, was the day! At 1 p.m. sharp, the bus from Cham arrived at the Ensinger headquarters. It brought the commercial and technical trainees and their two instructors. Mr. Lehmann gave them all a hearty welcome. Our “Programme” began in the Havant room with a presentation about the company, given by Mrs. Hörtig. After a little refreshment of buttered rolls and pretzels, the tour of the works began, guided by Mr. Rebmann and Mr. Lehmann, each with two trainees in attendance. Starting with the administrative offices, the tour led to the tool-making, injection moulding and extrusion departments, in which Mr. Holzberger explained the production process in detail. A look at the store rounded off the tour. At 5 p.m., when the guided tour was over, the people from Cham went to their hotel rooms in the “Kerzenstüble”. After a little refreshment, we had a lot of fun together.

At 2 p.m. we took our leave of the Cham party, having taken some photos to remember them by, and wished them a good journey home.

Mr. Holzberger explained the production process in detail. A look at the store rounded off the tour. At 5 p.m., when the guided tour was over, the people from Cham went to their hotel rooms in the “Kerzenstüble”. At 6:30 p.m. we met again there for an evening meal and a chat. Invigorated by the plentiful food, we then proceeded by bus and private car to the bowling centre in Biblingen, where we had booked five alleys. In the course of an enjoyable evening, we had a lot of fun together and had the opportunity to get to know the trainees from both Nufringen and Cham somewhat better. On Saturday morning at 9 o’clock we met again, rested and refreshed, at ENSINGER, and proceeded from there by private car to the car museum in Sindheim. The people from Cham left separately from the “Kerzenstüble”. After an interesting guided tour, each of us had the opportunity to eat something, or just to look round the inside and outside of the museum again.

At 2 p.m. we took our leave of the Cham party, having taken some photos to remember them by, and wished them a good journey home.

Mr. Hans-Eberhard Stehle leaves for his retirement.

It is with very mixed feelings that Mr. Stehle retires after more than 20 years of active work as a Purchasing Manager at ENSINGER. In her address, Mrs. S. Brodt (Chairperson of the Works Council) recalled the time when she personally worked together with Mr. Stehle. Many amusing recollection surfaced, but there were also thoughtful words about a time in which many things were different from today. In the retrospective of Mr. Wilfried Ensinger, he recalled the various duties that Mr. Stehle had carried out over the years, until he finally took over management of Purchasing in the expanding company. Qualities such as commitment, organisational talent and loyalty to the company are only a few of Mr. Stehle’s characteristics that Mr. Ensinger stressed. Mr. Stehle himself then spoke. In his short summary, he drew a positive, personal balance of his work in the company, and of the career opportunities that had allowed him to make a successful contribution. He gave the listeners the impression that he had enjoyed his work, especially at ENSINGER, and that his work in Purchasing had been fun. Mr. Stehle sees this as a good basis for a satisfying, peaceful retirement. Finally, his staff insisted on making him a personal farewell present on behalf of their colleagues. It was presented by Mr. F. Bühler. Mr. Winfried Schaper had the last word, and thanked Mr. Stehle for his work. He closed with a saying that he had learned from Mr. Stehle, “You can’t have more days in your life, but you can have more life in your days.” The celebration finally closed with an informal gathering.

Mr. Stehle may be retiring as a “retiree”, we do hope that he will have more life in your days. The celebration finally closed with an informal gathering.

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