

**Speech to be given of the Michael Weinig AG's Chairman of the Board  
1982 – 2003**

Dear Rudi Walz,

My wife and myself would like to thank you for your invitation and give you our very best wishes on the occasion of your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Time for golden words – there would be much to tell. That is much more than you can place in a message of congratulations. As a former, close colleague, I would like to highlight and appreciate the homo oeconomicus Walz. We talk about a man, who spent 37 years or 8.700 days, that are 2/3 of his 60 years life in the company. When you deduct his younger days and the sleeping time, the following question occurs:

How and when did he manage all the things we are talking about?

Well, the homo oeconomicus Walz will celebrate his 40-years at Weinig anniversary and has now gained a preliminary result, which I would like to describe as follows:

The market and customers confirm, that Weinig-advertising is the best, most colourful, most informative and most imposing. She is also – how could it be different with Rudi Walz – often very emotional. We have also heard, that it would be cheeky or even importunately. Well Mr Walz, this is positive in the advertising business, because: [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=Constant"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=Constant) constant [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=dripping"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=dripping) dripping [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=wears"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=wears) wears [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=away"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=away) away [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=the"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=the) the [HYPERLINK "http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=stone"](http://dict.leo.org/se?lp=ende&p=/Mn4k.&search=stone) stone.

Rudi Walz, as a never tired propaganda expert has pushed the name, the performances and the face from Weinig all over the world – sometimes also with cosmetically talents, when crinkle-smoothing seemed necessary. Also the excellent cooperation with the financial- and the trade press. In this circle Rudi Walz is a real VIP – known all over the place, throughout the world. He has friendships with hundreds of journalists and is known as a competent partner. Often the Weinig press conferences have been more attended than those of conglomerates.

Rudi Walz is a public person and his figure shows everything else but no grey mouse. As a advertising-person he cannot be this – of course. Also because he is born in the sign of the lion! And a lion likes shouting loudly – indeed the loves also sleeping – but not Rudi Walz. He is extraordinary busy, always on the go and set his heart on his job. As a advertising expert with heart and soul, of course he has a affectation for glamorous events – on fairs, but not only. He was leadingly involved on celebrations and performances, which are admired in our business. And that is good. Due to this behaviour of Rudi Walz, we owe the birthday celebration today, we are enjoying.

Our cooperation during the last 20 years was always very pleasant, and I would like to thank you for your essential loyalty towards Weinig and myself. You are absolutely reliable. You are a person who always is active and has rolled upped arm sleeves, and you often be offended. This comes about everybody seems to know about advertising and wanted to convince you

of his opinion. But you managed all this easily, also with your advertising budgets. Here the morally swabian exposure with money occurs, which other people I wish to have.

Dear Rudi Walz, I would like to connect my congratulations on the occasion of your birthday with my respect for your achievements and success at your job. Manage your future also with your integrity and purposefulness. Your environment will honour this positive, as hitherto. My wife and I wish you and your family all the best and for your future projects good luck!

Wolfgang Wilmsen

## Open eye for religions and cultures

**Today Rudi Walz celebrates his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday / Has interests of Christian-Jewish relationship at heart**

**Tauberbischofsheim.** His hands gesticulate whilst he is talking, his eyes speak, his mouth changes at times from a thoughtful seriousness to as enjoying laughter. The man, that is for sure, lives with what he says. He can be brief and concise. "Three houses from the right of the barrel" he described the way to his house in Dittmar. Then again he speaks almost incessantly: of experiences, impressions and again and again of his hobby, the world religions. Rudi Walz is the name of this man who celebrates his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday today.

He doesn't consider his own chronology particularly important. Born in Schoenebeck near Magdeburg, sheltered childhood in Dittwar, the hometown of his father, commercial apprenticeship after school. Walz mechanically recites and means "I am really a self-made man, because I had to catch up on everything I missed learning earlier on". His life's motto fits the relaxed look upon the further-removed past, true to Mother Theresa: "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We only have today. Let us start".

Rudi Walz lives off meeting people, likes to be among people and takes care of friendships all over the world. At the same time he is not a jack of all trades, but rather a person knowing to look beyond his own nose and with it connecting a complex cosmopolitan way of thinking. What drives and pushes him is his untiring interest in religions and the culture, way of life and world of thoughts marked by them. Walz wants to discover and understand, marvel and comprehend. He himself is a professing Catholic and fan of the presently incumbent pope John Paul II.

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| <p><b>Rudi Walz in “Freitagstreff” SWR</b></p> <p><b>Region Franconia.</b> The Tauberbischofs-heimer Rudi Walz becomes involved in many social sectors: whether as a deputy commander in the Teutonic Order or as a member of the Lions Club Bad Mergent-heim. Rudi Walz is just as well known in Israel as in his homeland. The advertising manager and chief press officer of the Weinig AG over many years will be a guest tomorrow on Friday in SWR4 Baden-Württemberg from 10.05 to 11 h in the Franken Radio “Freitagstreff” and talk about his life. Ina Beck will be the presenter.</p> |  | <p>Apart from his family, his work and the world religions the relationship between Jews and Germans takes its place as the central theme in the life of Rudi Walz. On today’s Thursday the widely known Ditt-warer celebrates his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.</p> <p>Repro: FN</p> |
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The wealth of the religions on the one side and the gap between the poor and the rich, partly legitimated by religions on the other fascinate and bewilder Walz at the same time. He mentions India, rather well known to him by several journeys, as an example and attributes a terribly feudal character influenced by religion to the country’s society. The man celebrating his birthday established many contacts all over the world via the company Weinig where he has worked since 1967. “Already then,” Walz remembers, “although being a small company Weinig was a very interesting one.” He was advertising assistant and responsible for the house journal “Das Holzauge”.

He identified himself more and more strongly with the area of responsibility advertising and public relations work and in the early ‘80s was promoted to advertising manager and chief press officer of the Weinig Group. He calls his work at the Weinig AG his “professional hobby”; it made it possible for him to establish contacts with about 400 journalists all over the world. During the preparation and realisation of more than 100 trade fairs and conferences his pronounced talent for organisation was again and again put to the test.

Apart from his family, his work and the world religions the relationship between Jews and Germans takes its place as the central theme in the life of Rudi Walz. How could the destruction of six million people happen who had been good neighbours, honourable merchants, friendly owners of businesses, qualified doctors, decorated veterans of the First World War or renowned artists? – he already asked himself as a young man. Rudi Walz, member of the successor generation, did not want to be fobbed off with simple answers, but wanted to know more. He occupied himself with Judaism, with the constantly returning anti-Semitism in the Jewish history, with Israel.

Fates and political attendant circumstances are just as important to him as the present relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. Walz was in Jenin that had been flattened by members of the Israeli army. He will never forget the smell of decomposition. And he looked at

the hospital that according to official statements had not been damaged. "I walked around in it and as a hospital it could not be used any more at all", he is angry about the propaganda reporting also taken over by German media. About the destroyed mosque he can only think of one term "vandalism pure".

Walz has Israeli and Palestinian friends and is thus a commuter across the wall he thinks is simply horrible. He sees the fronts hardened and rather low chances for a peace in the Middle East. Walz makes it clear by means of a survey where 37 percent of the Palestinian children did not, for example, mention doctor or pilot as their dream career, but suicide assassin. He was also shocked by the fact how proud mothers of suicide assassins are of the supposedly heroic act of their sons. For Walz this is a really fatalistic trait of people who for 50 years have stood with their backs to the wall without any changes.

Walz sees the only chance for peace on the one hand in negotiating and on the other in the influential role of the USA that should be prepared to cut off the supply of money for Israel. In addition, there should neither be any humiliating checks nor senseless curfews for the Palestinian areas that make any normal life impossible. Rudi Walz, traveller between the worlds, is not a person permitting himself a quick opinion. He listens meticulously, looks for nuances and organises. Silence is what he hates. He cannot and will not understand that mouths are simply kept shut when injustice is clearly visible.

This conviction has made him known to many people in Israel. He gave lectures at the university in Tel Aviv and Bethlehem about the subject "The Generation after Auschwitz" and asked when the past would be history. Walz discussed with high-ranking military officers and Palestinian personalities but also counts shop owners among his friends. "Israel and Palestine," so Walz, "have become my second homeland." In addition, there is naturally his homeland Dittwar whose people he would not like to miss. Although he does "not describe himself as the great real clubman" he promotes the activities of clubs in town.

Walz is a member of the Teutonic Order where he is presently deputy master of the balley, deputy master of the Teutonic Order of Knights and deputy commander. In addition, he is a member of the Society for Christian-Jewish Co-operation, the Society for the Promotion of the Museum for Jewish History in Poland, the Christian-Islamic Society Franconia Country, the Teutonic Order Relief Work, the Teutonic Knights Society, the Lions Club Bad Mergentheim, the Fencing Club Tauberbischofsheim and the Society for the Promotion of the Fencing Club Tauberbischofsheim. His most recent child is the "Hammer Forum", an organisation wanting to relieve for children the need and misery by concrete medical help.

To practically tackle and see direct results enthruses the rather impatient Rudi Walz for whom everything is always moving a bit too slowly. In addition, he is involved in the SOS Children's Villages. "Children and old people are close to my heart", says the man celebrating his birthday. And something else is also waiting for its realisation. In a file with the label "Jews in TBB" Walz has collected the histories of former Jewish fellow citizens. He searched for and found in Israel, USA, Great Britain, Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina former Tauberbischofsheimer who were humiliated and persecuted only on account of their descent and were only able to escape the holocaust by fleeing. And he had their stories told to him which, although they possibly cast a shadow on the family history of some of the younger generation, are important historical documents against forgetting.

So far only a commemorative plaque in the town hall for which Rudi Walz did what he could together with the people willing to join him reminds of the fate of the Tauberbischofsheim Jews. To begin with Rudi Walz celebrates his today's birthday on a minor scale before the great festival will start on Saturday when he expects about 180 guests from twelve countries. Then once again he will have the benefit of his hobby, presenting and making speeches. In addition to his wife Hildegard and his daughter Simone a huge number of people will voice their congratulations and the Fränkische Nachrichten will join them.

