

FORUM

The Stieglmeyer-Group's company magazine



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Our K?pno site celebrates its 30th anniversary

The 30th birthday is a wonderful moment – for people as well as for companies. You have already achieved a lot and at the same time you are still vibrant and full of curiosity about the future. Good reasons for our company in K?pno to celebrate its 30th anniversary with an unforgettable family party.

Sonia Nikolas, who manages the Stieglmeyer site in southwestern Poland together with her husband Marek Nikolas, is still reminiscing days after the celebration. "After the years of the pandemic, our employees had longed to get together again normally and be joyful," she says. The party lasted a whole Saturday in front of two stages on the factory premises, from noon until one o'clock in the morning.



Folklore, dance, singing and artistic sand painting provided the best entertainment.

Legendary rock band as guests

Almost all of the 211 staff members in K?pno had come and brought their families, a total of 480 guests. The team is increasingly international, with colleagues coming from Ukraine, Bolivia, Colombia, India and the Philippines. 90 children and teens were entertained with games, raffles, face painting, ice cream and cotton candy. There was also an exciting show programme for the adults. A sand painter traced the company's history live, and a highlight was the performance of the legendary band DE MONO. The rockers, who were especially celebrated in the 80s and 90s, provided the soundtrack for the new freedom and democracy, similar to the Scorpions in Germany. The staff sang, danced, enjoyed the delicious food and eagerly awaited a raffle with high-quality prizes. Many of them have been working in K?pno for a very long time, eight colleagues even since the establishment in 1992.



Rockers of freedom: The band DE MONO revived the legendary awakening of the 80s and 90s.

The freedom songs of DE MONO also reminded the audience that the political and economic situation in Europe is more tense today than it has been in decades. In their welcoming speech, Sonia and Marek Nikolas pointed to the war in Ukraine, which is particularly affecting the people of Poland. They prepared the employees for challenging times and encouraged them that the Stieglmeyer-Group would master the crisis through strong teamwork and foresighted planning.

Start as Wiki-Met

When the plant in K?pno started work in 1992, it was still called Wiki-Met. The company was founded by the German entrepreneurial couple Wilfried and Anke Knickmeier from Porta Westfalica. Mrs Nikolas explains that the name Wiki-Met was a play of letters made up of the words "Wilfried Knickmeier Metal". A large number of different products were assembled: Construction fittings, fire escapes, even go-karts. In 1998, there was a first meeting between Mr Knickmeier and the Stieglmeyer management, Mrs Nikolas recalls. Since then, Wiki-Met has already been manufacturing homecare beds for Burmeier. The business relationship was so successful that Stieglmeyer acquired a majority stake in Wiki-Met in 2006 and bought the plant in its entirety in 2010.



The plant in K?pno was founded in 1992 under the name Wiki-Met by the German entrepreneurial couple Wilfried and Anke Knickmeier.

"That was the best thing that could have happened to us," says Mrs Nikolas. The Kemmler family of shareholders has continuously developed the K?pno site. In the early years, the factory was repeatedly too small; at times, three halls had to be rented in three towns within a radius of 20 kilometres. In the beginning, there was also no machinery of its own. Today, state-of-the-art lasers and powder systems are available, the

office buildings have been refurbished, and the employees can eat and exchange ideas in comfortable common rooms. Everything is perfectly geared to the speedy production of care beds of the highest quality. Today's campus was originally an operating site of the Polish railway, where train engines were repaired. Today, nothing remains of the former nostalgia of the 1970s behind the modern facades.



Since 2010, the plant in K?pno has belonged 100 per cent to the Stieglmeyer-Group. The office building was recently refurbished.

The fact that space is nevertheless becoming scarce again at the moment is due to the political crisis. Actually, production in K?pno is "just in time", explains Mrs Nikolas: raw materials and components from suppliers are delivered as needed and processed immediately. But in times of pandemic and war, this is not possible in view of endangered supply chains, especially since Burmeier in particular has to meet homecare needs on a daily basis. In the meantime, K?pno has built up a large stock of the required materials in three tent halls, explains Mrs Nikolas. In addition, there are plans to expand the assembly hall by 500 square metres in 2023.

Sonia Nikolas is optimistic: "With Stieglmeyer we can look forward," she says. "After the first 30 years, we'll also manage the next 110 years here in K?pno!" Fortunately, however, the employees don't have to wait until 2132 for the next family party. These celebrations have long been a good tradition in K?pno and take place every few years.