

PRESS INFORMATION

Neureichenau, April 2018

COMMUNITY OF NEUREICHENAU AND PARAT GROUP MOURN THE PASSING OF HEINZ SCHÖNENBACH

Heinz Schönenbach: a great entrepreneur, a strong character.

'Entrepreneurs are true heroes who bring new ideas and values to the world and give liberty and trust to their employees.' Surely there is no better description of businessman and PARAT founding father Heinz Schönenbach, who died on 28th March 2018, aged 94. 'With his entrepreneurial way of thinking, his courage and his incomparable vision, Heinz Schönenbach left his imprint on the community life of Neureichenau on the foothills of mount Dreisessel, when he decided to open a second PARAT location there in the 1960s,' said Walter Bermann, mayor of Neureichenau.

After Heinz Schönenbach had laid the foundation for the successful enterprise PARAT with establishment of the 'Lederwarenfabrik Schönenbach' in Remscheid-Lennep in 1945, his career path finally took him to Neureichenau in 1961. With just 10 to 20 staff members at that time, he started producing and processing leather goods and plastic materials in the former parish hall of Neureichenau – and just one year later, he and his staff moved to the company's first own factory hall, where the corporate headquarters of the global player PARAT is still located today.

In the years that followed, the company made significant investments both at its Neureichenau facility and also worldwide, which helped PARAT to see steady growth. To this day, PARAT is one of the most important enterprises and biggest employers in the region with a payroll of around 870 people at four production sites worldwide and a turnover of roughly 100 million euros. Heinz Schönenbach's highly positive attitude towards 'his company', 'his employees' and towards the cross-border region in the Bavarian Forest is particularly worth mentioning here – a mindset that, along with the municipality of Neureichenau itself, has also decisively shaped the entire structurally weak area of the county of Freyung-Grafenau.

By creating opportunities to work and earn money, Heinz Schönenbach boosted the economic process of the region around mount Dreisessel across national boundaries and contributed to making it an attractive place to live and work. At the same time, he kick-started regional development, from which also the neighbouring countries Austria and Czech Republic benefited. In addition, Heinz Schönenbach showed great social commitment – far beyond his entrepreneurial vision. He not only provided substantial financial support to community clubs, but even provided a suitable plot to the municipality of Neureichenau to build a public swimming pool. 'Seeing my employees happy makes me happy, too!', Heinz Schönenbach used to say during his lifetime. He always combined these words with action and this is reflected in a laundry list of 'good deeds' he'd done for the region and his employees, and the list certainly goes on. Add to this a vast number of accolades and honors he'd been awarded – including also the Federal Cross of Merit, the Bavarian State medal for the special services rendered to the Bavarian economy and the honorary citizenship of Neureichenau. It was only last year that the community paid a worthy tribute to the unique entrepreneur Heinz Schönenbach and named the local *Schönenbach Straße* after him, a road branching off from Schachtlau and passing directly through the PARAT premises.

The world is poorer for the passing of Heinz Schönenbach: we've not only lost a forward-thinking and fair-minded entrepreneur, but also a wonderful person in him. 'The entire PARAT staff deeply regrets the death of our founding father. We will never forget him and thank him from the bottom of our hearts for his exemplary actions, which were always aimed at entrepreneurial

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vision and human warmth. We owe him our deepest respect and gratitude – today and in the future.', Martin Kremsreiter and Frank Peters, the current Managing Directors of PARAT Group, unanimously stated.

Images:



PARAT's business founder Heinz Schönenbach will remain unforgotten.



The PARAT factory in those days

..... and today.



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About PARAT Group:

PARAT – the globally active partner for highly functional plastic trim parts and structural components focuses consistently on delivering the very highest quality with a maximum of customer value as a leading manufacturer of tool cases and bags, provider of innovative IT storage systems and specialist for certified safety lamps.

Manufacturer's Address:

PARAT GmbH + Co.KG
Schönenbach Straße 1
DE - 94089 Neureichenau
www.parat.eu

Contact:

Marketing & PR
Head of Marketing Florian Limmer
Phone: +49 (0) 8583 / 29-404
Mail: flimmer@parat.eu