



**engagiert.  
tolerant.  
weltoffen.**

**Verein zur Förderung der Oberurseler  
Städtepartnerschaften e.V.**

## **Newsletter 1/2017**

Oberursel, 1th June 2017

Greetings to all our friends in Épinay, Rushmoor and Lomonossov,

It is really time for us to send you another newsletter with the latest news from Oberursel and details about our twinning activities. Our Annual Members' Meeting, which we held about two months' ago, was well attended with 45 participants. There was much of success to report in our review of the past year. Our association organised about 25 events in 2016, either on its own account or jointly with the town of Oberursel and other partners. Our contacts with our twinning partner towns have been strengthened and further exchanges arranged, and our finances are healthy. Election to our committee also took place during this meeting.

Birgit Röher was re-elected chairperson, with Helmlut Egler and Monika Seidenather-Gröber as her deputies. Sabine Lindert was elected as treasurer and Gabi Hofmann will be our new secretary. Michael Meiners and Günter Albrecht were re-elected to the committee, while Andrea Einig, Beate Kratsch and Lucia Zenker remain on the committee as their two year term of office had not expired. The "new – old" committee will continue to manage our affairs for the next two years with, we hope, continued support from our partner towns.

We would like to invite representatives from our "sister organisations" from Épinay, Rushmoor and Lomonossov, plus possibly representatives of their respective towns, to come to Oberursel for a working session to discuss ways of putting our partnership on a sustainable basis for the future. In practice, this means we report on our past experience, decide on what we should lay emphasis and decide how we can get younger people involved in our voluntary activities on an ongoing basis. We will announce a date and provide an agenda (over a weekend, Friday to Sunday) in good time. Naturally we will define points for discussion and the aims of this meeting in good time so that all concerned can make a constructive contribution. And, of course, there should be some fun in the evening. We hope that we can convince you of the need for such a meeting and persuade you to participate.

Naturally, we already have some events planned for the coming months, starting with our annual Brunnenfest from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> June. We will be organising our "Europadorf" as usual but unfortunately without any guests or a Rushmoor stall for the first time in years. We, from the VFOS, have tried to make the best use of our personnel and financial resources because preparation and running the Brunnenfest puts a heavy burden on our time and efforts. This is one of the things we should discuss and see how we can balance the time and effort involved with the benefits it brings. However, at present we are just looking forward to meeting visitors at this year's Brunnenfest.

After that there will be several group trips in July and August. A group from Oberursel will visit Lomonosov from 15<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July. This was the idea of one of our members who has organised it – naturally with support from us and KALINKA – and we think it is wonderful when members organise something like that on their own initiative. From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> July we and Oberursel's town hall will be supporting a short holiday for families from Épinay and hope to give them a good time by arranging such things as a barbecue at the start to let them get to know each other and an excursion to the Rhine. Our French speaking members will be involved in accompanying them and acting as interpreters.

A little later we will be welcoming 25 guests from Lomonossov who will be staying here from 30<sup>th</sup> July to 6<sup>th</sup> August. These regular exchanges have been a feature in our schedule for over fifteen years and have become a tradition which we could see being extended to Epinay and Rushmoor in future, perhaps with the option of taking some participants from the other twin towns. For example, a guest from England came to Lomonossov with us. Then at the end of August (25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>) a group will go to Rushmoor where the local twinning association is arranging the programme and helping us to find accommodation for the participants. These various trips and the Brunnenfest demand a lot from us and test the limits of our capabilities.

We have other things planned for this year too, as you will see from the "Aktivitätenplan" (Schedule of activities) which is attached, although it is only in German. Some of these have already taken place such as the "Europatag" (Day for Europe). We felt that it was important for us to participate in that because we wanted to underline our belief that there is no alternative to a united, tolerant Europe of citizens and that town twinning provides an important basis for promoting constructive, peaceful relationships. We are always looking for new ideas and, above all, more people who share this belief and are prepared to implement new ideas.

Our programme for this year will be rounded off by such things as regular get-togethers for our members, a short excursion, a summer party and the traditional winter barbecue at end of the year. By such activities we hope to promote a sense of team spirit in our members and acquire new members. In September we will be arranging a day trip for our members for the first time. Last year 13 new members joined our association, and up till now we have seven new members this year, which is a good result for us since we cannot compare ourselves with sports clubs, cultural associations or social projects, and the like. It is not easy to get new members. By the way you could become a member with an annual subscription of 25 Euro 😊

There are many good ideas on how to become more active and make us more up to date but often we lack the necessary financial resources and, above all, the personnel. However, we always need some fresh impulses in order to keep our town twinings alive and it is for that reason why we think that a joint meeting with you during the coming year is so important. At the beginning of July employees of the town administrations in Épinay and Oberursel will be meeting to report on their work and experience in their respective town halls, and get to know each other better. This is a wonderful idea and we hope that it will give a further boost to the town twinning.

This is the current state of affairs at the VFOS, and we promise that you will not have to wait five months for our next newsletter. If you have any time you might just take a glance at our home page – [www.vfos.de](http://www.vfos.de) – or at our Facebook page, where you will our news in brief (in German) plus photos of all our activities. And if you do have any questions or want to pass on any news to us, you can contact us at : [info@vfos.de](mailto:info@vfos.de)

The VFOS committee wishes you all a pleasant summer and we look forward to seeing you again soon either at the Brunnenfest or on some other occasion in the course of the year. More than ever, the world now needs committed citizens and contacts at every level.

With very best wishes on behalf of our committee and myself



Birgit Röher  
Chairperson VFOS