

PRESS RELEASE dated 10 September 2022  
Page 1 of 2

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## 75 years of GEGGUS

Anniversary celebration on 10 September, 2022 in Weingarten (Baden)

**Three cheers for small businesses – a touch of sophistication in the merry wine-growing village**

**We've been on your doorstep for 75 years – this summer, GEGGUS GmbH is celebrating a milestone that many companies don't manage to reach. For 75 years, the family-run company has been producing mats, for 75 years, production has been located in Weingarten, and for 75 years, the Geggus family has been running the business.**

What company founder Theodor Geggus began in 1947 was taken over by Gerhard Geggus in 1970. Since 2001, Kai Geggus has been managing the company in the third generation and is hosting the celebrations:

**75 years of GEGGUS – anniversary celebration on 10 September, 2022 in Weingarten (Baden)**

The celebration was held in an imposing marquee, where guests were greeted by friendly service staff. With a welcome drink in hand, they found their seats with the aid of clear and multilingual boards. Guests were seated at tables of 10, sumptuously laid for the occasion and decorated with flowers from florist Annika Schubert; an amuse-bouche provided a taste of the culinary delights to come.



PRESS RELEASE dated 10 September 2022  
Page 1 of 2

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The family of Kai Geggus was seated around one of the 26 large, round tables, and another table was reserved for relatives, including cousin Ralf Geggus, managing director of GEGGUS's largest customer, fuma Hauszubehör GmbH in Karlsbad.

The table with the biggest names boasted mayor Eric Bänziger, deputy mayor Gerhard Fritscher, IHK honorary president Bernd Bechtold, member of parliament Nicolas Zippelius and – as first-rate surprise guest – former minister for economic affairs, Peter Altmaier..

However, most of the guests – more than 260 all told – were customers, suppliers, employees and business friends and heeded Kai Geggus's express wish that they "Get to know one another."

GEGGUS GmbH pulled out all the stops: simultaneous interpreting was provided to present the event in English to the international audience.

Alexandra Philipps, a presenter at the "Die Neue Welle" radio station and "Rhein-Neckar Fernsehen" TV station, welcomed the guests, then it all went quiet for a moment. Kai Geggus made his way through the marquee accompanied by the song "Beautiful Day" by U2, four cameras and the applause of the guests, now the audience. The atmosphere was euphoric, the current managing director bounced onto the stage and opened with a quote from French writer André Malraux: "In order to read the future, one must leaf through the past". His speech discussed the difficulties of today and of 75 years ago, and that certainly no-one wants a return to that world. He thanked customers, employees, suppliers and business friends and, in particular his family, wife Iris and children Lea and Nick. He concluded by stressing his resolve to enter into new relationships and consolidate existing ones, the four Geggus virtues of trust and constancy, reliability and loyalty spelling a new era.

The next speech came from Eric Bänziger: "75 years of Geggus means 75 years of a company with an active sense of responsibility." The mayor (independent) of the municipality of Weingarten recalled the indestructible doormat his grandfather had in the 70s in Plankstadt: a GEGGUS mat.

This was followed by a speech by Bernd Bechtold, the IHK honorary president, in praise of small businesses: "Of course it's publicity, but we have a flagship company right here in our region." With these words, Bechtold handed the IHK's honorary award to Kai Geggus.

The excitement rose, with highlights coming thick and fast. All eyes were on the surprise guest, former minister for economic affairs, Peter Altmaier (CDU), who made an impressive speech, but the real high point was yet to come:

PRESS RELEASE dated 10 September 2022  
Page 1 of 2

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First, host Alexandra Philipps interviewed Kai Geggus on the stage. He revealed some interesting insights and shared a few anecdotes with the guests. A short film followed: four employees reported first-hand from administration, production and logistics and provided an insight into day-to-day life at the company. This was met by thunderous applause.

Kai Geggus then asked his father Gerhard to join him on the stage. After a serious cycling accident in the spring, it was unclear whether the celebrations would be able to go ahead as planned. For an 86-year-old his bearing on the stage was really remarkable. Kai addressed moving words to his father Gerhard Geggus: "I want to thank you for your life's work. You have built a healthy foundation." Peter Altmaier joined them and handed the senior partner a Golden Bambi. It was a moment that brought goosebumps and a standing ovation, underpinned by the Cat Stevens song "Father And Son".



*Picture: Peter Altmaier hands Gerhard Geggus a Golden Bambi for his life's work*



### What's on the horizon

The company has worked hard to ensure its stability. "Competition is tough, not just in Germany," stresses Kai Geggus, hinting at today's challenges. As a product, the doormat has long since become a premium-class entrance mat system, and the small family-run company has long been delivering to far-flung lands. But the challenge will be to bring youth into the workforce, because some of today's employees will be retiring in the next five years – and at some point, it will also be time for a new generation of the Geggus dynasty..



*Picture: Mother and daughter: For Lea Geggus (left), joining the company is a foregone conclusion.*

At 9 pm, dessert was on the table and the bar was open. The music started up, the band, "Grombacher", was on fire and the first guests headed to the bar or dance floor. At 1.30, DJ Barkeeper took over and kept the party rocking until the early hours, bringing an unforgettable celebration to an end.