

Translation of an article by Claudia Stehle published in our local newspaper "Darmstädter Echo" of February 16, 2022

## Alsbach-Hähnlein Invites Italian Friends

### Mayor Sebastian Bubenzer Plans Possible Signing of the Deed of Partnership with Sulmona for End of April

**Alsbach-Hähnlein.** Still before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Alsbach-Hähnlein had signed a deed of partnership with Hungarian Diósd. Now, finally, this spring the amicable relationship to Italian Sulmona which had also begun by joint participation in EC programmes, shall be contractually wrapped up.

"We have known our Italian friends for about ten years and the citizens of both communities have already become involved in this relationship" states Mr. Hans Hermann, chairman of the local partnership association. He points out that according to his opinion the official confirmation of the partnership has been long overdue.

"Already since 2018 a written declaration to sign such partnership has existed as 'Letter of Intent', signed by the respective former mayors" states Hans Hermann. The partnership association, continues its chairman, is contractually responsible for conception, maintenance and implementation of this relationship. He points out that already last year on July 13, the community parliament of Alsbach-Hähnlein had unanimously decided in favour of the partnership with Sulmona, the birth town of Ovid.

"The draft for the official signing, presented to mayor Sebastian Bubenzer already last summer, has, however, not yet been signed" he says. Presently, both communities participate again in a European project together with several further communities of European countries.

But now the matter of the official conclusion of the partnership between both communities have been activated. "In the person of mayor Gianfranco Di Perio I have gotten a new counterpart since his election in October last year, however, due to the present developments of Corona also in Italy there have been more urgent issues" explains Mr. Bubenzer who had already congratulated his new colleague to his election thus making first contact.

In the meantime he recently spoke with his Italian colleague in an online meeting in order to agree upon the next steps until the official signing of the deed of partnership. "Doing so I invited a delegation from Sulmona to come in early spring, in March, when our local almonds blossom. On this occasion we will also agree on signing the deed of partnership end of April, probably at Sulmona" he said commenting the video meeting where Mr. Harald Finger participated as chairman of the municipal council and Mr. Giuseppe Vacante as interpreter.

"In this relationship with Sulmona one of my intentions is to involve younger people actively, e.g. juniors at soccer or the fire brigade and, as already successfully done in the case of the partnership with Diósd, to integrate the support of children and young people" said the mayor.

Parallely, Mr. Bubenzer emphasized that he also intends to intensify the partnership with Obercrintz which has existed since the Fall of the Berlin Wall. "Regrettably, because of the pandemic, we could not celebrate 30 years of partnership with them" he said. He plans to catch up on this in the foreseeable future and preliminarily talk this over with his local colleagues.

Bildunterschrift: The antique poet Ovid who was born at Sulmona 43 before Christ, has been the most important citizen of the town until today and was honoured by a monument.