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## Velau: Die „Kugel“ kommt bei den Menschen an

Stolberg-Velau. The response was great on Saturday at the opening of the cultural and generational house ("Kugel") on Breslauer Straße and besides representatives of city council, politicians and the founding members of the association Kugel, it was above all the residents of the Velau making the occasion exhilarated.

The catering school company of the Kogelshäuser school provided the guests with drinks and the international women's group of the Velau offered culinary delights. The "Kugel" proved itself at the official start as a social center and meeting place for generations and cultures.

In the official part of the inauguration, Mayor Ferdi Gatzweiler described the "Kugel" as a place where integration was truly lived. "The Velau is a special district with many opportunities. The gathering of social involvement creates a fundamental improvement in the district," praised Gatzweiler.

District manager Wolfgang Joußen thanked the administration, the city council and the Kogelshäuser school for the support and good cooperation. "Of course, I would like to thank the inhabitants of the Velau, who have planned and sustained the house," said Joußen.

After Andrea Müller introduced the Kugel, the many visitors explored the 150 square meters of the new cultural and generational house. Among them were Margarete and Georg Hipler who had come from the Donnerberg to get to know the Kugel.

"We were curious and wanted to know what the decoration was all about," Georg Hipler described, and his wife said the trip was worth it. "It is also a great location, where interesting events are planned. It was good to come here because now we can tell other people what this building is meant for," explained Margarete Hipler, who was very impressed.

The barrier-free "Kugel" has soundproofing and air conditioning as well as sanitary areas and a disabled toilet. Beamers have already been installed, and a mobile stage will complete the layout of the large main room so that it can be used for meetings and lectures, for example.

## Flexible splitting

The entire room can be divided by a wall for the purpose of two events taking place at the same time. A small office and a kitchenette are available as well as connections for electronic devices, because in the "Kugel" not only different events are offered, but the house will also be available to the residents in the Velau.

"Things that determine the lives of the inhabitants of the district should be here. So the premises can also be rented for private occasions, "explained Ralf Bruders, one of the chairmen of the association, who will be responsible for the house from January 2012 onwards.

## Der Frauentag wird zum Fest der Nationen

Learning from each other and exchanging themselves: The range of stalls in the old town hall is as diverse as the women themselves.

*By Louisa Houben*

Stolberg. Women are well organized and networked, which is evident on this international women's day. They offer self-made delicacies from Albania, Turkey and Morocco sell English books, work with the children and, above all, inform and advise each other. The ladies meet each other in the old town hall to get in touch: in German, Turkish, English, Russian ...

"We can learn a lot from each other," stresses Susanne Goldmann, Equality Commissioner of the City of Stolberg and refers to the "well organized" women's sections of the Stolberg mosques, which have decorated tables in the town hall with sweets and contribute to the fact that the event well is visited. "Flia" is one of the many hearty

pastries offered by the ladies of the Islamic Albanian Cultural Center. People have that with a cup of lemon tea.

At another table, a visitor can be decorated with henna, at another stand the girls' hair is braided to many small plaits and in the fashion show one or the other finds something nice to wear. The staircase at the town hall becomes the stage of Zumba dancers and the children of the figurative theater "Spiegelei" bring their dolls to life. The offer is as diverse as the participants of the Women's Day itself.

## Diversity in the foreground

Together with intern Liridona Gashi and Khairunnissa Mazeena Ismail, from "IG Frauen und Mädchen", Susanne Goldmann, Equality Officer of the city organized the events on the International Women's Day.

In addition to the offerings on Saturday, the International World Prayer Day of Women took place in the Ecumenical Community Center on Friday and the International Women's Day on Sunday in the DITIB Mosque. "We are celebrating a festival for three days - that's something one should copy," says Susanne Goldmann.

Regarding the equality, much has already been achieved in Stolberg and its urban community. But there is still work to be done. Especially where people do not experience this way of living, women were harassed and injured, physically as well as mentally.

Lawyer Seyda Berber knows about the suffering of the broken women. She is responsible for bullying, stalking and domestic violence. She had the experience that the German language is a major problem. "With my lecture, I would like to contribute to more information," explains the lawyer. In German and then in Turkish, she gives all of them the opportunity to gain more insights into women's rights and learn how victims of harassment can defend themselves.

In addition to other lectures on topics such as child care or maintenance payments, information desks from daymothers, the AWO, Caritas or the midwife practice "Lebenslinie" offer counseling. Beatrice Koll and Dorothee Bremen provide information about the miserable future of their colleagues. Because the costs of liability insurance for midwives are exploding. The Nuremberg insurance group, which has been known as one of the few providers to insure midwife liability insurance, wants to withdraw from business from summer 2015.

For midwives, this means that they are hardly able to take care of their own birthrates and provide pre- and aftercare. "This means, on the one hand, the job for freelancers and for the women, that they are no longer free to choose which midwife takes care of them during pregnancy. This makes women's self-determination extremely limited," explains Koll.

They eagerly collect signatures for the ongoing Internet petition and win supporters.

During the international women's day there is really something going on at old town hall in Stolberg. The ladies use the opportunity to exchange information, to get information or to give advice, to get in touch with each other and maybe to celebrate a little bit.

"Women need to become more active"

Mazeena Ismail joins the integration council election as a single applicant

Stolberg. There is no lack of alternatives for the integration council election next Sunday. Additionally, to the two newly formed lists of the "Migrantenstimme Stolberg" (MSS) and the "Vereinigte Stolberger Migranten" (VSM), K. Mazeena Ismail applies as a single applicant for a seat in the Stolberger Migrant representation for the first time.

The Sri Lankan-born, trained office worker has been living in Stolberg since 1992 and would like to strengthen especially the integration of women with migrant background in this town. Important concerns are the coordination of family and work and more social participation, says Mrs. Ismail. "Women with an immigration background simply need to become more active in Stolberg", the first ever single applicant of the Stolberg integration council highlights.

### **Ehrenamtlerin der „Kugel“**

As an unsalaried helping hand of the culture- und generation house "Kugel" in the Velau and homework supervisor of the Hermann school, Mrs. Ismail is already well-acquainted with the integration of the city.

"It is important for me to provide immigrant families with information concerning kindergarten, school and further education," writes the candidate on her own website. She also wants to provide children and young people with leisure activities and "bring women together so that they can make contacts".

No matter how the result on Sunday as a single applicant might be: At the next election she would like to participate again. Not as an individual applicant, but with an "international women's list,"(lkf)