

To Ratzeburg's twin towns

Stadt Ratzeburg  
Der Bürgermeister

Rathaus | Unter den Linden 1  
23909 Ratzeburg  
Telefon (0 45 41) 80 00-0

Auskunft	Petra Römer
Durchwahl	(0 45 41) 80 00-884
Zimmer	1.02
Telefax	(0 45 41) 80 00-889
E-Mail	roemer@ratzeburg.de

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### Christmas greetings to Ratzeburg's twin towns

Dear friends in Europe,

This year has not been an easy one - the issues of war, inflation, energy crisis and still Corona have kept us all busy. Let us hope for a new, more carefree year 2023, above all the very great wish for peace.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the invitations from our Polish twin town **Sopot**. The mayoral election and the still ongoing "Corona issue" thwarted our plans. Our partnership this year was marked by the exchange about the reception of refugees from Ukraine and the aid deliveries for them to Poland. The Ratzeburg fire brigade was able to take part in the "Fireman's Day" celebrations in Sopot.

With our friends from France and Belgium, **Châtillon-sur-Seine**, **Esneux** and **Walcourt**, we experienced a moving reunion among friends after more than two years in **Châtillon-sur-Seine** in August this year. We would like to thank you once again for the organisation! Unfortunately, I could not be there personally. We are now looking forward to the fraternisation meetings in July 2023 in Walcourt and in August 2024 in Ratzeburg and will start with the preparations shortly.

Our German twin town **Schönberg** was the first twin town I was able to visit as mayor in office since May 2022. Many thanks for the invitation to the traditional reception of the "Lübeck Martensmann" on his passage from Lübeck to Schwerin.

This year, a delegation from Ratzeburg was once again able to visit our Danish twin town **Ribe** and enjoy the celebrations there together for "50 years of friendship between Ribe and Ratzeburg". This was a great pleasure for me and all those involved. The reunion of dear friends, the hospitable welcome, the great programme and the banquet. Many thanks for that!

Kind regards also to **Strängnäs**. We would be very happy to visit you on the occasion of Gustav Vasa's coronation anniversary in June 2023 and look forward to receiving details of the celebrations so that we can start our travel plans.



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It is good to see that our Youth Council is now very involved in town twinning. In the summer, it visited **Esneux, Walcourt** and **Châtillon-sur-Seine** on its own initiative and promoted a joint climate initiative there. The Ratzeburg Youth Sustainability Prize would be awarded to our Swedish twin town **Strängnäs**. This was followed in autumn by participation in the friendship meeting in **Ribe**. According to the young people's will, this contact with all our seven twin towns should be further intensified bit by bit in the coming years.

We wish **all our friends** health, peace and a peaceful Christmas season and look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Merry Christmas to Sopot, Châtillon-sur-Seine, Esneux, Walcourt, Schönberg, Ribe and Strängnäs from Ratzeburg!



**Eckhard Graf**  
*Bürgermeister*



**Petra Römer**  
*Tourismus, Stadtmarketing & Städtepartnerschaften*



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