

UPF Gießen, Germany's International Café hears *Life Stories*

Brigitte Makkonen
January 27, 2023



About 25 participants attended the International Café event on 27.01.2024 to hear the next in the ongoing series of 'life stories' hosted by UPF Giessen.

Uwe Schneider from Essen worked there as a miner before he, at the tender age of nineteen, went to Africa as a missionary along with two fellow pioneers, one Japanese and the other American.

He spent eighteen years in Africa; his first mission country was Kenya, but Zambia was where he spent the most time. There, he bred pigs and ran a sausage factory with other missionaries.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, he was called in 1993 as a missionary to Russia for two and a half years, where the focus of his work was to introduce the teaching of ethics in schools.

Already at the age of twelve, Uwe had discovered a passion for chess, but he had to put his hobby on the back burner for many years. It was only after he settled in Germany with his family after his stay in Russia that he could finally immerse himself in this passion and acquire a license as a coach. With this qualification, he resumed his missionary work and, since 2016, has traveled regularly to Zambia to teach chess to students and teachers.

Studies have long confirmed that chess not only improves basic skills such as attention and memory and complex cognitive ones such as association, analysis, comprehension, planning, and anticipatory thinking but also improves social and personal skills. It is close to Uwe's heart to impart this kind of education to young people in African countries, especially to socially disadvantaged groups.

Uwe Schneider has been married to Monique since 1982. They have five children, all of whom were born in Zambia. The Schneiders now live in the beautiful Rheingau area, but if you ask Uwe what or where his home is, his clear answer is 'Africa'!

Report Brigitte Makkonen. English Catriona Valenta