

CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE

Of Western Illinois

712 - 18th Avenue

Moline, Illinois

(309) 762-0167

December 1999

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St. Nicholas Day – December 4

Saturday, December 4 is St. Nicholas Day at the Center. Plan on attending and celebrate with us. We'll be serving waffles in the morning and St. Nick will be paying a visit. We'll have our St. Nicholas contest and the third graders from St. Mary's in East Moline will be participating in that.

It's going to be a busy day because we are also holding our annual bake sale. So, warm up your ovens and bring goodies to sell. Plan on purchasing our wonderful baked goods also.

While you're at the Center, get some Christmas shopping done at the Kleine Winkel. This month the gift counter is featuring the Lace pictures from Belgium. Those regularly priced \$12.95 are just \$9.95 and the lace pictures normally \$19.95 are just \$15.95. The gift counter also has new coffee mugs for sale for \$6.00.

Bill Wundrum will be visiting the Center on St. Nicholas Day from 9am to 11am. He will be signing his new book, "A Time We Remember" which is for sale at the gift counter for \$34.95.



In Belgium, the Christmas season gets underway early. On the night before Dec. 6, *St. Nicholas' Day*, children stuff their shoes with hay and carrots for St. Nick's white horse. They awaken to see that St. Nicholas has replaced the hay and carrots with small gifts, toys, and many other surprises.

St. Nicholas was born in Asia Minor and became a bishop while he was still a young man. He was the patron saint of boys, young men and sailors in Greece and Sicily and in many other places. His fame spread to Russia, Europe and to Lapland; Russian peasants especially loved him because he protected the weak and the poor. Many churches were named for him, and countless legends arose concerning his good deeds.



CENTER ACTIVITIES

November Waffle Report

Larry and Mary Lorensen were in charge of the November waffle breakfast. A big THANK YOU goes out to the following helpers: Mary Mortier, Bill Fisher, Stan & Bev Francque, John Vrombaut, Maurine Schweitzer, Louis & Georgia Slininger and Gene Fowler. It was a warm sunny day and receipts were over \$645.00. Thanks to everyone who helped.

*Thank you to Dorene Mummert
For the guest sign-in book she donated to the Center*

News in the Belgian Community

Happy Birthday



Henrietta Lotspeich of Davenport, was recently honored in observance of her 90th birthday. The former Henrietta Sevenandt was born November 3, 1909, in Ghistel, West, Flanders, Belgium.

**The following people donated to the Center
In Honor of Hilda Fleischman**

- Sally Chumbley
- Greg & Leah Boens
- Barb Michalek
- Cliff & Betty Wolkins
- Judy & Jul Lindner
- John & Marcia Wetzol
- Bob & Cleo Boens
- Jean & Arnold Buckmeyer
- Gilbert & Patty Koenigsaecker
- Jeff Coussens
- Mark Cosdon

Letter from Celie Donohue

I wish to thank everyone that sent cards and notes or called with kind words of congratulations at the time of my knighting. I wanted you all to be there and wanted a way to say thank you to all, as this was not a solo venture.

When the Consul General called and informed me of the award, I was shocked and happy, most happy that he had called me personally. I sort of felt like the Emmy and Oscar winners might feel, only I didn't have to act. The doing and being involved at the center just sort of happened and grew like Topsey. From the day I was born the Belgian influence was my life and every bit of it was special. Listening to my grandparents, VandenBossche speak Flemish, was special. Eating red cabbage, pickled herring, hotsuput, blood sausage were special. Because there were lots of grandchildren, my grandfather would call each child by their mother or fathers name and I was "Rosies kid" and that was special. I learned of my grandfather's pigeon flying, again special. I learned of Fr. Coleman and attended the Belgian church and school, Sacred heart and that was special. Very special, because a huge majority of my friends stemmed from there. So to my mom I say "thank you" and to my dad who always supported his "Belgian Rose" I say "thank you". In their memory the "Blooman vonVlaandren" plaque was founded. This has added to the funds of the center with my hopes and goal that we someday will have enough funds to purchase our own building. (We have a few plaques left)

I have been involved with the center for a number of years. When we moved back to Moline, from Naperville, I visited the center one afternoon and Lucy DeWaelche said to me, "Celie we only have about five items in the gift display, maybe we should close out". She then looked at the other end of the room, which appeared to look like a Salvation Army drop off zone, and said the stuff has been waiting for you to come back and display it or do something with it. I guess I took Lucy seriously. The digging into the boxes filled with Belgian treasures was a pure labor of love. Gene and I quickly took the few items that were on the walls off, put everything in the middle of the room and organized a "paint party". It was then that I got my first nervous jitters. What if no one comes to the "paint party"? I made a few calls, one to LeRoy DeBrabander and he said he would call some people. We had planned to start on Saturday morning and go into Sunday. Even though Gene had a new electric paint roller, I could just visualize "the party" going on into Monday, Tuesday, etc. Early Saturday morning there were many bright smiling faces ready to tackle the job. We broke at about one for Belgian Village Vande Reubens and the project was finished by five. Amazing!!! I will never forget that day.

The "gift counter" or "Kline Winkel" could not be ended. I just knew there were Belgian items out there and buyers to make happy. Even though we can not get the Val St. Lambert crystal; we do have some pieces of Belgian bobbin lace and always have good Belgian chocolates and many other items that are from Belgium or pertain to Belgium. The Kline Winkel is my baby, but one night after I decided that it was a go, I realized I had also created another set of jitters for myself. I could not be at the center every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon.... What to do. I than honed up some pleading skills and called members to be gift counter workers. It wasn't as hard as I thought and had many willing volunteers. That all was in 1990, so there have been many hands to help out.

I am most appreciative and thankful as all of you have made a huge difference in the centers banking account by your few hours a week. Hand in hand with the gift counter workers are the host and hostesses to greet the visitors. Norma Manning has done the calling for these people for many years.

The waffle breakfast being held every first Saturday of the month, just sort of happened. After I was elected president I would run into people, members and non-members and they would ask when the next breakfast would be. People just seemed to have Belgian waffle attacks. I then asked the board if they would consider having the breakfasts on a schedule so that people could just get used to the day. And for quite some time we all have been enjoying the delicious waffles. That was my only part to play in the waffle story, but we have had many wonderful waffle bakers, servers, money counters and clean up crew. At the present time, my brother, Gene, is waffle chairman and doing a fine job.

Gene and I have been to Belgium several times and this has added fire to my already proud heritage. Our heritage is a rich one and needs to be preserved and to grow. I received the medal but it belongs to many. We have been fortunate to have had a wonderful president, Al Loete, and a strong board. Many new ventures have been tackled. The tedious work of organizing the materials for the archives were also in those boxes and have been placed in books by Joan Loete and Evelyn VanPuyvelde. Many, many hours! We are in the computer age and our board meetings consist of remarks like "how and when" will we get our own computer. At present the board members donate theirs.

I thank, Mr. Vandemouldebroke, the Belgian Consul; King Leopold and the Belgian government for creating the medal; thank you, Dolores Bultinck for any part you played in my receiving the medal, thank you for being my friend; thank you Bonnie Newman and Harold Krause for planning a wonderful dinner party, even though it did not come to be.

And last of all but certainly not least of all I have another big thank you. There is someone who should have joint custody of the medal with me and it's my "forever working hard at the center" husband, Gene. He has painted, pounded in nails, pulled out nails, measured, moved, scrubbed, climbed ladders, helped with window displays, fetch sausage out of the oven, clean pots and pans, fill juice bottles and has even filled in as the "gift counter girl". The wind in my sails was given to me by my mother, but the continued drive is my best friend and Irish husband, Gene.

Celie



Belgium's Prince To Wed

The palace has announced that 39 year old Crown Prince Philippe will marry Mathilde d'Udeken d'Acoz on December 4. She could someday become the first Belgian-born queen in the nation's history. Phillippe is the eldest son of King Albert II and his Italian-born wife, Paola.

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK DINNER
RAFFLES, DOOR PRIZES, FOOD, FUN!!**

Space is limited to 80 so make your reservations today by returning the form below.
There is also a sign-up sheet at the Center.

Place: Butterworth Center

Date: December 7, 1999

Cocktail Hour: 6:00pm

Dinner: 7:00pm

Cost is \$5.00 per person and the meat will be provided. Please bring a dish to share.

Names: _____

Amount enclosed (\$5.00 per person): _____

Mail to: CBC Christmas Dinner

712 - 18th Avenue, Moline, IL 61265

Raffle Tickets for Christmas Drawing

Need not be present to win. .50 cents each or 3 for a dollar

Name: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Upcoming Events

The Center for Belgian Culture is open Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 1 - 4. It is staffed by volunteers. We thank all that are serving in December.

Saturday, December 4 **Waffle breakfast**
St. Nicholas Day
Bill Wundrum Book Signing

Tuesday, December 7 **Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner**

Saturday, December 25 Merry Christmas! The Center will be closed today

Saturday, January 1 Happy New Year! The Center will be closed today

March, 2000 Hutsepot Dinner

July, 2000 Flemish Festival

Other upcoming events include the Raisin Bread Bake-Off, and a beer & wine tasting party.

Peace On Earth

CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE
OF WESTERN ILLINOIS, INC.
712 - 18th Ave., Moline, IL 61265



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