



## CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE

### Of Western Illinois

712 - 18th Avenue

Moline, Illinois

(309) 762-0167

[www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org](http://www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org)

May 2002

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Center for Belgian  
Culture

Open Wed. + Sat.

1:00 - 4:00 pm

### From the President's Corner

**Patrick Van Nevel** shared some thoughts and statistics with me after the Volunteer Dinner on April 17<sup>th</sup>. As Patrick states: "Without their (volunteer) efforts, cooperation, willingness to step up and creativity to get things done, often on short notice, we wouldn't be where we are today."

You will be amazed at the amount of hours that volunteers donate to the organization. Volunteers logged in 1771.5 hours during calendar year 2001 - some 40% more than the 1357.5 hours logged in the previous calendar year. It's important that all volunteers log their hours in the red folder by the telephone book. It's more than about getting individual "credit" for hours worked. Volunteer hours must be documented so that the organization can pursue government funding for program efforts. *So please ensure that you post your hours.*

In any case, Patrick recognized the following individual volunteer efforts at the Dinner:

Lucy De Waelsche, one of our many quiet volunteers, has put in countless hours over the years and registered 75 hours last calendar year. Lois DeCoster logged 169.5 hours in getting the newsletter out - an indication of the efforts involved in getting the monthly news to you. Patrick extended special thanks to the "champion couple", Gene and Celie Donohue who together logged 217.5 hours. Celie was enjoying the Sunshine State of Florida so couldn't attend the dinner, but Gene did represent the volunteer couple. And most importantly, Thanks to Gene and Norma Manning who organized the very successful Volunteer Dinner.

In closing, from Patrick: "**met een hartelijk dank voor Uw inspanningen**" (with a heartfelt thanks for your efforts).

The May schedule for gift counter and host/hostess volunteers is as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Gift Counter</b>	<b>Host/Hostess</b>
Wednesday, May 1	Gen Vrombaut	Doreen Mummert
Saturday, May 4	Mary Rose DeCoster (am)	Maurine Schweitzer (pm)
Wednesday, May 8	Mary Lou Andre	Clara Vandeviere
Saturday, May 11	Margaret Wadsworth	Bill Wadsworth
Wednesday, May 15	Bev Francque	Stan Francque
Saturday, May 18	Joanne Hoyt	Al Hoyt
Wednesday, May 22	Elaine Hendrickx	Bob Hendrickx
Saturday, May 25	Barb Van Nevel	Patrick Van Nevel
Wednesday, May 29	Georgia Slinger	Louie Slinger

**One more thing** about volunteerism. We all need to feel needed. And you definitely are needed – as a volunteer at the Center. Gen Vrombaut asks that you **sign up** using the volunteer work sheet in the folder located by the telephone at the CBC, call Gen at 762.6176 or e-mail her at GVROMBAUT@webtv.net. It's so easy to sign up and it's so rewarding. Try it.

**From the Editor's Keyboard ...**

As a newcomer to the organization, I'm still learning (names, faces, structure, and foundations). Shortly after assuming responsibility for writing the newsletter, I received a phone call from the Governor's Office that taught me a lot. Pat Michalski, Assistant to the Governor for Ethnic Affairs, called to congratulate me (after one month!) on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the successful CBC newsletter. A few days later I received a memorandum, under Governor Ryan's signature, from Pat's office. I feel that the following excerpt is worthwhile reading:

"Illinois is comprised of many ethnic communities that join to form a great state while also maintaining their rich cultural individualities. Your publication serves as a vital link to the Belgian American community. Not only are your readers educated by its contents, but they also benefit by affirming an invaluable connection to their heritage.

On behalf of the people of the State of Illinois, I commend your dedication to the Belgian American community. The hard work that goes in to each and every publication is appreciated."

This memorandum is for ALL OF YOU. It's a symbol of your cultural pride that should encourage everyone to participate in the meaningful celebration of a heritage. I congratulate you.

**Nominating Committee Report.** Bonnie Newman, Dolores Bultinck, Gabe Verstraete, Mary Kay Lorensen, and Art Holevoet met in March at the Center to determine officer candidates for the upcoming two-year term. These members of your Nominating Committee propose the following list of candidates:

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| President      | Patrick Van Nevel |
| Vice-President | Scott Raes        |

Treasurer  
Secretary  
Member at Large

Gabe Verstraete  
Kim Kochuyt  
Robert VandeWeile

*Oops.* Celie Donohue points out that I misspelled Dr. Ducey's name in last month's newsletter. Sorry, Doctor. But the "thank you for the shoveling" still applies.



**IN MEMORIAM**

Martha Madeline Meyer died March 31, 2002 in Marengo Memorial Hospital at the age of 89. The daughter of Julius and Urbanie Cornelis DeBrower, Martha was born March 29, 1913 in rural Tama County, near Belle Plaine, Iowa.

Martha married George J. Meyer on February 24, 1936 at St. Bridget Catholic Church in Victor. The couple farmed north of Victor for several years and later moved into town where they owned and operated Victor Implement and Seed. Martha was a member of the St. Bridget Catholic Church and its Altar and Rosary Society.

Survivors include three children and their spouses: Mary Jana and Ron Stanerson of Marengo, George W. and Vicki Meyer of Indianola, Kenneth J. and Janet Meyer of Columbia, Missouri; eight grandchildren and their spouses; one sister, Alice (Mrs. Louis) Wauters of Marengo; and 18 great-grandchildren.



**FYI...**

Al van Puyvelde reports that our friend in Belgium has again sent us genealogy information: more Vlaams Sten as well as four books with ancestor charts. Each book contains about 70 charts of West Flanders families and is a great addition to our genealogy library. Even those who are not doing Family History research will find these interesting. Again, many thanks to our friend in Belgium.

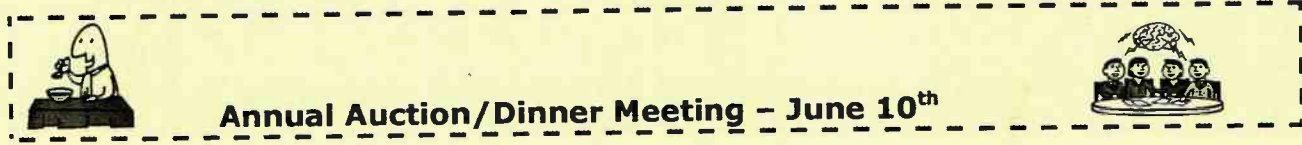
**Mary and Larry Lorensen** will chair the **Birdies for Charity** this year for the Center. The kickoff was April 23<sup>rd</sup>, so they are prepared and have forms available for you. Last year was the first year that the Center participated in this event. We found it a great way to raise funds for our scholarships, which we will be presenting again this year to two high school seniors at our Annual Meeting in June. Please watch for further information regarding this in future newsletters and at Center events.

**The April Waffle Breakfast** was held April 6<sup>th</sup>. Gene Fowler reports that the Spring weather contributed to a good turnout. Workers for the breakfast were: Gene Fowler, Werner Gonnissen, Rene and Wilma Gusse, Micky Kindhart, Marian Knock, Mary Mortier, Joel and Bonnie Newman, Scott Raes, Louis and Georgia Slininger, Pat Van Nevel, and two Girl Scouts: Marti Davenport and Lori Witte. Marti and Lori have helped us in the past, but this was their last time to provide us such great help. We'll miss their youthful vigor. Thanks to June O'Connell for being their mentor, and thanks to all workers. **The next Waffle breakfast is scheduled for Saturday morning, May 4<sup>th</sup> from 8-12.**

**Brugge .. A Cultural Capital**

Information abounds regarding the designation of Brugge as the Cultural Capital of Europe for the year 2002. Events got under way at 20:02 on 20.02.2002 at the Brugge

Concert Hall, Bruges' new temple of culture. The general public was afforded the opportunity to take in various cultural activities and exhibits over the next three days. The inauguration of Brugge was finalized with a fireworks display that rivaled any Fourth of July celebration in the U.S. More to follow in future newsletter issues.



**Annual Auction/Dinner Meeting – June 10<sup>th</sup>**

As the month of June approaches, it is time to turn thoughts to the CBC Annual Auction/Meeting. Bonnie Newman is in charge of the event this year, and provides us with the following information:

You can drop off donated items at the Center during regular open hours, or you can bring items the night of the auction/meeting. Now is the time to do that spring cleaning you have been talking about and bring in the leftovers to the Center. Be sure to attach a note that indicates the item is for the auction. Use your imagination – one man's trash is another man's treasure, so they say. Past donated items have run the gamut from Belgian beer to a purple umbrella. In case you don't have extra items in your household after that spring cleaning, new items are also accepted for auction.

The dinner will cost \$7.00 per person; menu yet to be determined. Additional details regarding the dinner will be published in the June newsletter. Tentative times are as follows: Social: 5:00 – 5:30 pm; Dinner: 5:30 pm and Auction following dinner.

Reservations are required and can be accomplished one of two ways. First, there is a sign up sheet at the Center. Second, you can send the following form (*with payment*) to the Center, Attention: Bonnie Newman. See you there?!

**Center for Belgium Culture Annual Auction/Dinner Meeting  
June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002**

Mail to: Center for Belgium Culture of Western Illinois; Attention: Bonnie Newman;  
712 – 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue; Moline, Illinois 61265

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Get To Know Our CBC Member: Stephanie Swanson**

**by Marlene Gelaude-Shattuck & Steph Swanson**

When I was first introduced to Stephanie Swanson, she smiled and shook my hand. I thought to myself: she has a face that seems familiar to me, as if I had known her before. It quickly came to my attention, Steph has a wonderful way with words. Simply by adding

one or two extra words, she can make them rich and colorful. I think the Center will enjoy and benefit from our newest editor and member of the CBC.

She became involved in the CBC after being introduced to the center by Gabe and Kay Verstraete. Kay knew of her interest in writing, so she asked Steph if she would be interested in writing the CBC newsletter. Steph exclaims, "I jumped at the chance of honing my writing skills in a new direction with a different focus. The business/professional and academic viewpoints were to be replaced with community and people. What fun for a writer!" Steph has grown up surrounded by Belgians in her community. I'd have to say she's Belgian just by way of association. Here's her story for those of you who'd like to know her better.

"I was born in Kewanee, Illinois to Carroll "Swede" and Cleo (Dyer) Carlson. I was welcomed by my sister who was excited to have her own live baby doll (she's 11 years older than I). My Dad was employed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and I spent my childhood literally living on the Hennepin Canal at Annawan and Geneseo, Illinois. We lived in a Government lockmaster's house on the canal bank, so fishing was of course one of our family hobbies.

I graduated from Geneseo High School in 1970 and immediately began my Federal Government career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Rock Island, Illinois. I worked in the data processing center (now Information Technology) and eventually transferred to the Human Resources Office. I resigned from my position as Human Resources Development Officer in 1996 to join my husband in retirement. But I've not exactly rested on my laurels since then. I began taking college courses in 1995 and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Western Illinois University in 2000.

My family heritage includes paternal grandparents who migrated from Sweden in the late 1800's and a "Heinz 57" mix of English/Irish maternal ancestors. Somewhere in my heritage a Blackfoot Indian is said to be included, but I've not found out how just yet. Yes, I've been bitten by the genealogy bug, and there appears to be no cure.

I met my husband, Lee, at the Corps in 1970. As is so often the case, we began our relationship as friends and have become so much more to each other. We married in 1987 at which time I became a part of the Swanson family that initially included 3 sons and now also includes 2 daughters-in-law, 7 grandchildren, and 2 granddogs. Lee and I are also pet owners - ChiChi is a Tibetan terrier (or is it terror?) who we saved from Doggie Heaven 13 years ago. The pet people among you will understand that "owners" is not exactly the correct phraseology, but we'll go with it.

When the Verstraete's gave Lee and me a tour of the CBC, we were amazed and impressed by the antiquities, memories and heritage that the group shares. I've not spent much time in Olde Towne Moline (the occasional Van De Reuben comes to mind), and I had no idea that such a museum/Center existed. And after meeting with Patrick Van Nevel, the level of Belgian enthusiasm and focus was even more apparent. I think that the members of the CBC should be proud of what they have accomplished. But I think, more importantly, that they should strive to introduce more and more individuals to what the CBC has to offer. Volunteers need to cultivate the surrounding community. All it takes is the seed of a Belgian waffle on an occasional Saturday. Soon there is a sprouting interest in lace-making or hutsepot. Ultimately, there is a deeper understanding of a people with a rich, proud tradition."



### WEB MUSINGS.

As many of you know, we're very lucky to have a talented "web master" for our CBC home page on the Internet. His talents do not go unrecognized by guests to that home page. Visitors (national and international) to the site express excitement, amazement, and gratitude to the organization for establishing a vehicle to exchange information and

memories of Belgium. One particular comment posted by a couple from Galesburg perhaps sums it up best:

"Congratulations on your wonderful new web site! It is very informative and well designed. We are not Belgians but have visited the Center and enjoyed the Waffle Breakfast on a couple of occasions. Your members have always been so friendly and we've learned much about your culture. Keep up the good work!"

So, besides being a clearinghouse for Belgians seeking out other Belgians, the CBC web site is the moniker for a community proud to share their heritage. One more way of reaching out to new communities. Great Job, Werner.



**A Belgian Recipe: "a sweet tale about Dragons and Apples"**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 6 oz. of desert rice | 1 t. grated orange peel                        |
| 3 oz. raisins        | 4 T. sugar                                     |
| 2 sweet apples       | 1 pint milk                                    |
| 4 T. butter          | 4 T. cream                                     |
| 2 t. vanilla sugar   | 1 bottle Gulden Draak Dark Triple Ale 11.2 oz. |

Put raisins in 2/3 of the beer; let them swell for 2 hours.

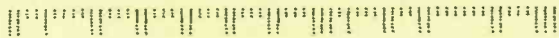
In cook pot (medium sauce pan?) add the rice, milk, vanilla sugar and orange peel. Cook over medium heat until rice is done (15-20 minutes), stirring occasionally.

Peel and core apples, and cut into round slices 1/3" thick.

Add beer and raisins to the rice mix. Stir with whisk. Cook over medium heat for another 10 minutes.

Melt half of the butter in frying pan (using medium heat); add apples. Brown apples on both sides. When brown, strew the sugar over apples and let it caramelize on the apples on low heat. Add remaining half of butter and cream in the rice mix and stir.

Serve with the apples on top of the rice on individual plates. Serves 4.



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**AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION**

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