



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

712 - 18th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



May, 2011

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 7th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
May 7th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
May 9th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
May 30th	Rolle Bolle Kick-off	1:00 p.m.
May 30th	Memorial Day Waffles	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
June 4th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
June 4th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
June 13th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
June 15th	Scholarship Dinner	details TBA

Visit the Center for more information and to stay updated on current events.

Schedule for Volunteers

The May schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Wed., May 4th	Evelyn VanPuyvelde	Al VanPuyvelde
Sat., May 7th	Celie Donohue (a.m.) Barb Michalek (p.m.)	Maureen Schweitzer
Wed., May 11th	Mary Lou Andrae	Clara Van DeVeire
Sat., May 14th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., May 18th	Celie Donohue	Gene Donohue
Sat., May 21st	Al Hoyt	Al Hoyt
Wed., May 25th	Georgia Slininger	Louis Slininger
Sat., May 28th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale

Contact Margaret Wadsworth (786-5791) as soon as possible if there is a conflict with your scheduled time.



Happy Mother's Day
Sunday, May 8th



Center OPEN Wednesday & Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month

Rolle Bolle

Just another reminder that the rolle bolle season for the Western League Games kicks off on May 30th, 1:00 p.m. at Stephens Park in Moline. It will be a double elimination event sponsored by the Belgian Village Inn. Men and women bolders who join the CBC rolle bolle team can receive a greatly reduced membership in the CBC at only \$5.00. What a deal! Support the CBC and all the bolders. For more information, contact Bill Fisher at (309) 764-8068.

From Your Waffle Chairperson

As many of you know, I again had the opportunity of spending the winter in Hawaii. I would like to give a special THANK YOU to three people, whose help allowed me to make that trip. First, to Mike Kerckhove, for mixing our waffle batter, starting the coffee, and placing our signs not only while I was gone, but each and every month! Without his assistance, the waffle breakfasts would be much tougher to present. Second, to my sister and brother-in-law, Theresa and Bob Bailey, for making sure waffles got served and everything cleaned up each month while I was gone. Without the help of these three people, I certainly couldn't have taken my extended vacation.

And thank you to all our regular volunteers who cook, serve, and collect the money. Without you all, there would be no Waffle Saturday!

Catherine VanHecke

May Waffle Volunteers



Volunteer cooks and servers for the May 7th waffle breakfast will be Sage Roberson, Angie Jennes, Jason Tanamor, Ryan Tanamor, and Steve and Tom Slininger. Volunteers for Memorial Day waffles will be Theresa and Bob Bailey, Linda and Art VanHecke, and Joan DeCap. Mike Kerckhove will prepare the batter, Gene Donohue will work the kitchen, Evelyn VanPuyvelde and Marian Knock will take your money, and Catherine VanHecke will make sure everyone has a good time.

News of the Membership

Congratulations to Mary Ann and Anthony Schwindt, grandchildren of **John and Barbara Mossa**, for honors in the Two Rivers Conference YMCA swim meet.

Thank You to **Mary Lorensen** for the decorative plate from Antwerp, and to Jeannie Beintema for the donation of old Belgian phonograph records.

Get Well wishes for a speedy recovery are offered to **Bea DeBrabander, Dr. Louis DePorter, and Diane VanBell**.

Sympathy is offered to: the family of **Frank Strobbe**, 84, of Silvis, who passed away November 26, 2010 (we apologize for the delay in this); and to the family of **Merlyn Boostrom**, 95, of Moline, who died April 20, 2011.



Raisin Bread Winners

Winners of this year's edition of the Raisin Bread Bakeoff (Jams and Jellies too) were Millie Kale, Louise Stritesky, Evelyn VanPuyvelde, Jane Vershaw, and Margaret Wadsworth. There weren't as many entries as previous years, but everyone who attended to "toast" the winners agreed that the winners' efforts were indeed goooooood!

Thanks to Millie and Evelyn for putting this year's competition together, and to Margaret for putting out a fine table of fixings for the tasting. Congratulations all!



Bakeoff winners were (l-r) Margaret Wadsworth, Louise Stritesky, Jane Vershaw, Millie Kale, and Evelyn VanPuyvelde.

Persistence Pays

In the December 2008 issue of this newsletter, we noted the efforts of CBC member Charlie VanOoteghem's search for a copy of a citation that detailed his father's exploits during World War I. The citation was read when Charlie's father, Camiel, received the Silver Star for bravery at a ceremony on Arsenal Island in June 1965, 47 years after personally receiving the original award from Gen. John Pershing. But somehow, that citation disappeared sometime after the ceremony on Arsenal Island.

Pvt. Camiel VanOoteghem had been on night patrol in 1918 when he observed a machine gun position manned by a German soldier and watchdog. VanOoteghem was able to slip past that position and observed enemy forces infiltrating the area. His report alerted an entire American division, and 1,600 enemy troops were captured the next day.

Charlie has spent years trying to get a copy of that citation. It hasn't been easy, as records of his father's military service, and that of thousands of other veterans, were lost in a fire at the St. Louis National Archives. But Charlie's determination has paid off.

Through family documents, various newspaper articles, and research by George Eaton, head of the Army Sustainment Command history office, Camiel VanOoteghem's exploits were re-documented. That story was passed on to Ken Moffett, the veterans affairs representative in Congressman Bobby Schilling's local office, who passed it along to Rep. Schilling. After reading Camiel's story and details of Charlie's efforts to get a copy of the citation, Schilling told Moffett, "Whatever needs to be done, make sure it gets done!"

Through the assistance of Richard Roa, congressional liaison at the Rock Island Arsenal, the Department of the Army has granted permission to recreate that citation. Congressman Schilling will make the presentation to Charlie VanOoteghem during Memorial Day ceremonies at National Cemetery on Arsenal Island, May 30th, beginning at 10:45 a.m.

The CBC invites you to attend this year's observance. The ceremony will be on the knoll on the southwest side of the cemetery. Attendees will need to show a driver's license or other government-issued ID at the gate to gain access to the cemetery. Please come to honor our fallen veterans, Pvt. Camiel VanOoteghem's bravery, and son Charlie's persistence.

Luc Tuymans, Artist

CBC Archivist has put a small display together about Belgian artist Luc Tuymans. Tuymans, born in Belgium in 1958, is considered one of the most significant European painters of his generation and has been an enduring influence on younger and emerging artists.

Tuymans explores issues of history and memory, as well as the relationships between photography and painting. His faded palette has become a hallmark of his work – pale blues, grays, greens, and browns allude to the ungraspable quality of memory, and underscore our inability to fully comprehend the complexity of historical and current events. His paintings hang around the world.

The rabbit is significant to Millie, as rabbits gave her family and neighbors food and fertilizer during the Depression. Stop by the Center and learn more about Luc Tuymans.



One-Ounce Belgian Idols

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chirp, making a chalk mark on a long stick for each one correctly sung.

Vinkensport is not without its critics. Some animal-rights activists accuse vinkeniers of "brainwashing" their finches by forcing them to listen to recordings of correct chirps played over and over. The activists claim the cages are like mini-prisons and the birds are not happy. Perhaps the birds are not happy since competition usually ends at a nearby pub.

Oh, one more thing. In June of each year, 2,000 birds compete in the televised national championships. Now that's "must see TV."

(Sources: *The New York Times* and the *Waregem Journal*)

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May, 2011

One-Ounce Belgian Idols

A timekeeper waves a large flag. A hush descends over the spectators. Trainers nervously stare at their combatants and the rivals, but we're not talking about boxers or wrestlers. The one-ounce contestants, with gray caps and blue beaks, will be judged on how many correct "tweets" they can chirp in an hour from inside a wooden box.

This is vinkensport, or finching, the 400-year old Flemish competition in which winning finches are treated like opera divas, and where one false note can spell disqualification or worse; disgrace. What is the "correct" tweet? The correct sound is susk-WEET!

Don't laugh. Your newsletter editor, and brother and sister-in-law were in attendance at one such competition. Our father's cousin George Coopman is a serious vinkenier. We joined him one Sunday morning outside of Wingene, Belgium, to witness the "action." In fact, we were almost kicked out of the venue because we were pretending to file a report for Wide World of Sports and laughing too much (yes, we're sick individuals).

"As with any star athlete, what separates a champion bird from a loser is natural talent," stated Filip Santens, a leading vinkenier. He always prepares his five-time champion finch for

matches by pumping heavy-metal music into its cage and feeding him high-protein birdseed.

Finches sing best when not distracted. The birds compete from special wooden cages that let in light and air, but block a bird's vision to the outside world.

Some of the 13,000 Belgian vinkeniers go to extremes in pursuit of bird-chirping glory. Allegations of doping still follow one finch that sang an unprecedented 1,278 susk-WEETs in an hour. Such endurance prompted accusations that his owner had injected the bird with testosterone. At another contest, participants became suspicious when one finch produced 725 correct chirps, the exact number it managed in its previous two matches. When a judge ordered the cage opened, he discovered it contained a mini CD player. The vinkenier has not been seen since.

How does the competition work? Vinkeniers gather on a quiet street and place the cages on the ground about one meter apart. The owners then move several cages away to count that bird's chirps. Perched on stools, they strain to hear the correct

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