



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

712 - 18th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



May, 2012

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pvannevel@msn.com

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### Rolle Bolle Rep.

Bill Fisher - 764-8068

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Dave Coopman  
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### Chaplain

Rev. Jim DeBisschop

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 5th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
May 5th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
May 14th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
May 28th	Memorial Day Waffles	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
June 2nd	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
June 2nd	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
June 11th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
June 27th	Scholarship Dinner	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 2nd	Al Hoyt	Al Hoyt
Sat., May 5th	Kevin DeRoo (a.m.) Barb Michalek (p.m.)	Maurine Schweitzer
Wed., May 9th	Mary Lou Andrae	Clara Van DeVeire
Sat., May 12th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., May 16th	Celie Donohue	Gene Donohue
Sat., May 19th	Margaret Wadsworth	Bill Wadsworth
Wed., May 23rd	Georgia Slininger	Louis Slininger
Sat., May 30th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale

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

Remember  
the Fallen

May 28th



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

## News of the Membership

Thank You to Jean Bean of Moline for donating the Belgian street scene painting; and a special thank you to **Bob and Theresa Bailey, Mike Kerckhove, and Gene Donohue** for their work during Waffle Saturdays while Catherine VanHecke basked in the Hawaiian sun.

Get Well wishes are sent to **Mary Lou Andrae**.

Sympathy is offered to the family of Frances Bollaert, 75, of Moline, who died March 11th. Francis was a long-time CBC lace maker and lace making teacher.

## Birdies for Charity



It's Birdies for Charity time once again.

Many of you have already received a pledge form in the mail, sent by CBC Birdies chairpersons Mary and Larry Lorensen. They hope you will again pledge one or two cents per birdie made by the golf pros at this year's John Deere

Classic. The Birdies program supports the Center's Scholarship Program, and all monies raised are used exclusively for the scholarship awards. While it's fresh in your mind, why not fill out the form and return it. You may even win a new car by guessing the correct number of birdies.

## May Waffle Volunteers



Volunteer cooks and servers for the May 5th waffle breakfast will be Millie Kale, Louise Stritesky, Barb and Ray Coppens, and Theresa Bailey.

Volunteers for the Memorial Day waffle breakfast will be Pam Triebel, Don Lewis, Art Holevoet, Paul Holevoet, and Karen and Pat VandeKerckhove.

For both sessions, Mike Kerckhove will prepare the batter and brew the coffee, Joan DeCap and Marion Knock will take your money, and Catherine VanHecke will make sure everyone has a good time.

## Dollar Bills "Made" in West Flanders

The dollar bill, ultimate symbol of the United States, owes its look and feel to the Belgian flax industry. The flax fibers produced by the family business Vervaeke Fibre, in Kuurne, have been destined for the U.S. for the production of the dollar notes (and other denominations of paper notes) for the past fifty years. After 120 years in business, Vervaeke Fibre is the oldest flax business in the world. For fifty years, it has been commissioned by the Federal Reserve to turn cotton and flax fibers into paper for the famous greenbacks.

"We are not the only supplier, but we are the biggest," says Antoine Vervaeke, who admits that the paper is 75% cotton and 25% flax. "We are not talking about ordinary flax fibers from the field. This takes considerable treatment and expertise, but I'm not prepared to say anything else."

As a "dollar supplier," the business has carved a comfortable niche in a stable market. "The one-dollar note is our biggest customer," says Vervaeke. Its life span is two years on average. It is then taken off the market and destroyed. Attempts by U.S. authorities to replace it with a dollar coin have been futile, as nobody wants the coins. The fact that the price of flax has doubled in the past two years has led to a search for alternatives but, says Vervaeke, "Panels of trial respondents have all come up with the same results. Americans want nothing else." Flax fibers are strong and give the dollar note its special feel. Vervaeke says the dollar makes much less noise than the crackling euro notes.

The uses for flax continue to increase in view of the possibilities for recycling. Some new applications include insulation, bicycle frames and, of course, paper. The seeds, too, are edible and the oil is used for a variety of purposes.

(Thanks to VRT/*Flanders Today*/*Gazette van Detroit*)

## Can You Help Charlie?

Charlie VanOoteghem spent years researching his father's World War One exploits and compiled a binder of those deeds. Several months ago, he loaned that binder to someone, but now he can't remember who it was. **If you are the person he loaned it to, please give Charlie a call at 786-3057 and let him know you have it.**

## Bet You Didn't Know

Do you remember your geography class? How about that map of the world that looked like it was a globe that had been flattened out? **Gerardus Mercator** was a geographer, cartographer, mathematician, and maker of scientific instruments. His mapping technique, the Mercator projection, literally changed the way people saw the world. The quality of his maps was the envy of generations of mapmakers, and his legacy – a projection of the world globe onto a map – is still used today for navigation at sea, in the air, and for GPS applications. And we'll bet you didn't know he was born in Flanders!

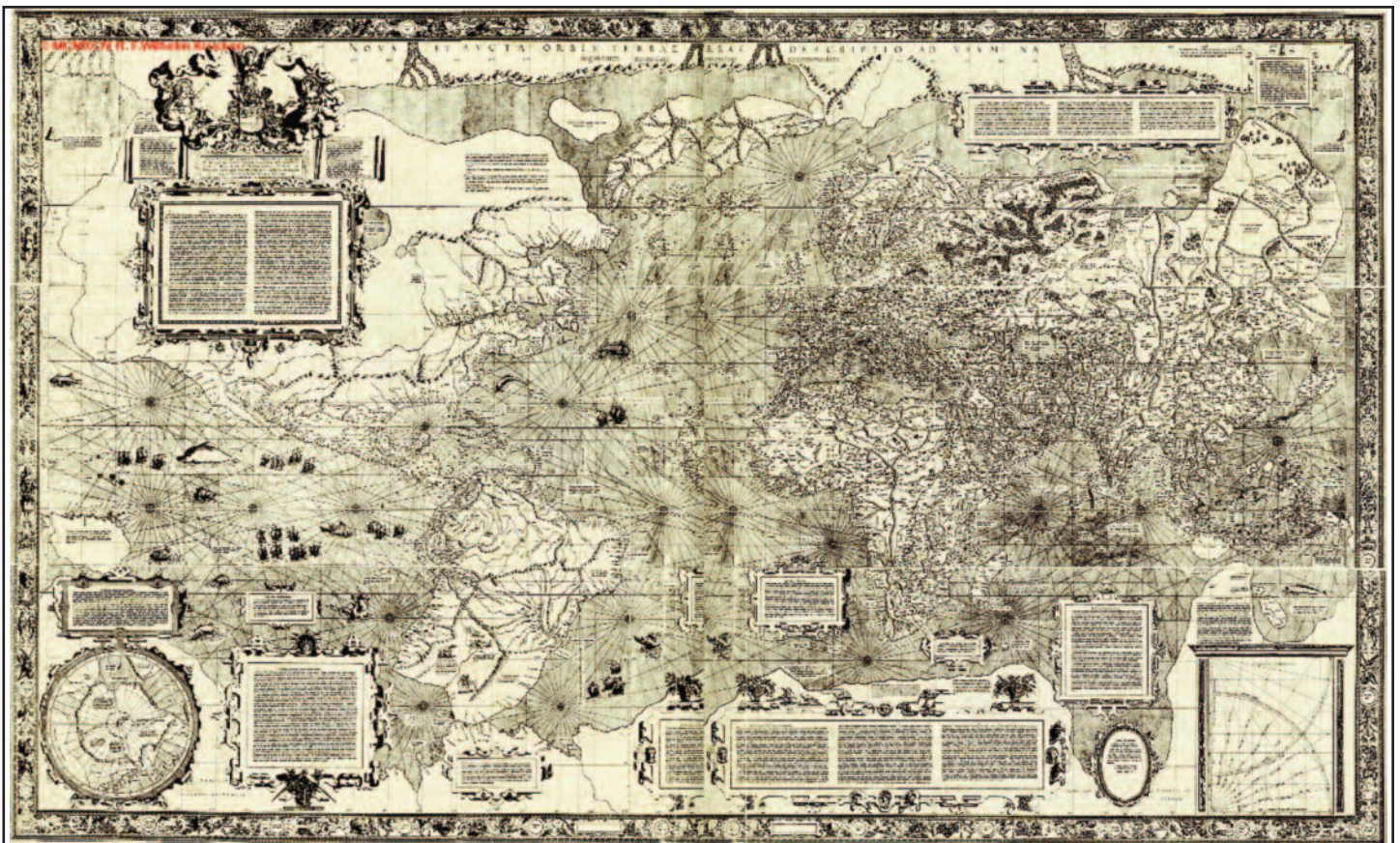


In the summer of 1540, Mercator began his most ambitious project to date: maps of the regions of the world that would then be combined to form a giant world map. One of the problems he faced was incorrect data from sailors, who assumed that if they followed a particular compass course, they would travel in a straight line. Mercator realized that a ship sailing towards the same point on the compass would follow a curve, called a rhumb line.

He first used the Mercator projection in 1569 for a wall map of the world on 18 separate sheets, which he called a “new, more complete representation of the terrestrial globe properly adapted for its use in navigation.” And after nearly 450 years, that representation is still used to navigate around the world.

Oh, one more thing, I'll bet you didn't know. Mercator was the first to use the term “atlas,” naming his map collection after the mythological figure who was said to hold up the world on his broad shoulders. Just one more reason to celebrate this native of Flanders.

(Thanks to *Flanders Today*)



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May, 2012

### The Traveling Ambassador

One might expect the U.S. Ambassador to Belgium to be lobbying ministers, hosting lavish receptions in the embassy, and channeling intelligence back to Washington. He does all that, but he also spends a lot of time in the field as part of a pledge made when he first arrived as ambassador in 2009 – to visit all 589 administrative districts, or municipalities, in Belgium.

This has made Ambassador Howard Gutman an extraordinary tourist. He spends a key chunk of his time on the road as he notches up the visits, all the while experiencing traditions, learning history, and meeting locals. So far, he has visited 410 of the 589 municipalities.

Gutman says there are two types of visits. “We’ve done perhaps 100 that are: meet the mayor, meet the city council, meet the governor of the province, to see a leading cultural thing, and sometimes visit an American business,” he explained. Those are full-day visits. Then there are the towns that are much smaller, where, if he is lucky, there is someone at the pub or maybe the local pharmacist. “To be an official visit, I want to have actually seen the town,” he says. “I walk a block or two, take a picture in



front of something recognizable, and have someone from the city who can meet me and say that the U.S. Ambassador visited. For these, the most I have done is 11 in a day, and 44 in a week.”

“I’ve been amazed at the reception I’ve gotten,” stated Ambassador Gutman. “It sort of validates the fact that most of the job is being there – actually saying to people that you are keen to see and learn more. And now that they know me, they’re not going to condemn the U.S. without thinking about it. We’re not some big bad wolf. We now have a connection.”

Ambassador Gutman’s outreach efforts include language. He takes both Dutch and French classes and can now just about hold a conversation in Dutch when he visits Flanders.

Whether Pres. Obama is re-elected or not, Gutman expects to be gone by summer of next year. But, he insists, he will complete his tour of Belgium. He stated, “There is beauty you can’t believe (in these towns), but what is most rewarding is the people.”

(Thanks to *Flanders Today*)