



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265
(309) 762-0167
www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



December, 2015

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Jan Irwin
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Gift Shop
Diana Slininger

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 5th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
December 5th	Bake Sale at Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
December 5th	Belgian Lace Makers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
December 8th	NoBoard Meeting	
December 9th	CBC Christmas Party	see new item
Dec. 25-26th	Closed	

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

Schedule for Volunteers

The December schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Wed., Dec. 2nd	Bob Francione	Bob Francione
Fri., Dec. 4th	Rose VanAcker	Joan DeClerk
Sat., Dec. 5th	Grace Fisher (am)	Barb Michalek (pm)
Wed., Dec. 9th	Mary Lou Andrae	Bonnie Newman
Fri., Dec. 11th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale
Sat., Dec. 12th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., Dec. 16th	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Fri., Dec. 18th	Bev Fullmer	Georgia Slininger
Sat., Dec. 19th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., Dec. 23rd	Millie Kale	Millie Kale
Fri., Dec. 25th	CLOSED	
Sat., Dec. 26th	CLOSED	
Wed., Dec. 30th	Margaret Wadsworth	Bill Wadsworth

Contact Diana Slininger at (309) 792-2790
as soon as possible if there is a schedule conflict.



*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year!*



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

Looking for Xmas Goodies?

Our annual bake sale will be held during the December waffle breakfast on December 5th. Last year's sale was a tremendously successful fundraiser, and we'd like to repeat that again this year. The Center is looking for donations of breads, cakes, pies, candy, and your great "goodies!" You can bring them to the CBC on Friday, December 4th, between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m., or to the Friends Circle early on December 5th. Will you help us?



CBC Christmas Party

The Center's Christmas Party will be held December 9th at the Friends Circle Hall, 701 - 18th Avenue, Moline. A social hour begins at 5:00 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:00 p.m. with entertainment and raffles following dinner. Cost is \$15.00/person and there will be a sign-up sheet at December's waffle breakfast and at the Center. Raffle tickets will also be sold at the waffle breakfast and the Center. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00.

Treats @ Dec. Waffle Breakfast

In addition to our usual great waffle breakfast for December, we'll have several special features. St. Nicholas will be in attendance for picture-taking with your children or grandchildren. As noted, our annual fundraising bake sale will be ongoing. And, from 9:30 to 10:30, you can sample homemade Lukken cookies. And since we've mentioned Lukken, the Kleine Winkel has four special waffle irons for sale that will also bake Lukken cookies to your own recipe. Join us for a fun, tasty morning.



News of the Membership

Thank You to Emily Sevenandt for the apron embroidered with pigeons and Seton School Brownie Troop 8266 for its \$50 donation to the CBC. During the Girl Scout "Journey the World" program, **Kathy Bustos** and **Marlene Shattuck** demonstrated lacemaking and displayed lace for the girls. The troop's donation was how they wanted to thank Kathie and Marlene.

Get Well wishes to **Barb Coppens** following her surgery for a broken hip.

Sympathy is offered to **JoAnn DeTaeye Greko** on the death of her brother, Chuck DeTaeye, 78, of Moline, who died November 12th at Bickford Cottage, Moline. Many know Chuck from his days as a teacher/department head at United Township High School, director of the Moline Parks summer programs, or as a coach for many area sports teams.

Your Last Issue

If you haven't paid your dues for 2015-2016, this issue of the newsletter will be the last one you receive. Obviously we are still happy to take your renewal at any time.

The Kleine Winkel

Lots of great gift ideas for Christmas can be found in the gift shop. You can **save 10%** on aprons, ornaments, and CBC beer steins, and there are plenty of other great items to choose from. Stop by and shop for Belgian and Belgian-related Xmas gifts!

DECEMBER WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS



The volunteers for December's breakfast will be Bill and Sandy Coopman, John and Cheryl DeCap, Mary Lou Andrae, Jessica Mulder, and Rita VanRaes. Mike Kerckhove will make the mix and start the coffee, Angie Jenness will supervise the kitchen, Joan DeCap will cashier, and Catherine VanHecke will make sure everyone has a good time.

CBC Scholars

The final essay for this year is by Ryan Merideth. Ryan graduated from United Township High School with a GPA of 3.84 out of 4.0. He is a member of the National Honor Society, the Spanish National Honor Society, an Illinois State Scholar, was a Junior Rotarian, and a Homecoming Prince. Ryan captained the track team and played soccer and basketball. He is attending Drake University, studying Health Sciences for Pre-Med.

HERITAGE ESSAY by Ryan Merideth

My Belgian heritage has always been an interest to me. I am intrigued by the many customs and traditions that my family and many other Belgians take part in. My great grandpa, Rene VandeVoorde and his wife Irene, taught me much about my culture. Both of them were completely Belgian, so they knew everything there was to know about Belgian lifestyles. I remember going to his house on New Year's Day to play cribbage. He was the best cribbage player I have ever met. I remember his telling me that he got a 29-point hand, the highest and most difficult hand to get in the game. He usually beat me, but I still enjoyed playing with him and eating my grandma's famous olie bollen. Along with these, my family makes Belgian waffle cookies, also called bona or guillette. It has been several years since I've had them, but I can still remember how good they were. Another New Year's tradition was that my grandpa always made raisin bread from scratch and his own wine. Another activity he participated in was pigeon racing. He used to show me his pigeon coop, which I never enjoyed seeing. I just went because I knew how much he loved his pigeons and wanted to show them off. I never actually saw a race, but I would have enjoyed being able to see how it all happened.



The most intriguing part in learning about my Belgian culture is how my family made it to America. It is traced back to Maurice VandeVoorde, my great great grandpa. He came to America in the early 1900s looking for a job to support his family. He came with next to nothing and worked hard to provide. He faced difficulties, but in the end was able to raise Rene to be a hard worker as he had. I cannot imagine how difficult it was to leave everything he knew and loved behind, and take a risk as great as he did. I really admire him for his courage, because I don't know if I would be able to do as he did. I loved being able to talk with my grandma and learn more about how my ancestors survived and lived their lives. Although my great grandpa passed away, he was able to instill the Belgian culture in me, and I will do the same to my kids and grandkids when the time comes.

What is Molenbeek

Editor's note: The Center doesn't try to be political, but no doubt you have heard that perpetrators of the recent attacks in Paris have come from Belgium, specifically Molenbeek. I thought I'd give a little background to this neighborhood so you can see why it has placed Belgium in a somewhat negative light.

Just across the canal from the chic cafes, businesses and elegant buildings that define the heart of Belgium's capital is the neighborhood of Molenbeek, a largely Muslim area that has become one of the world's main breeding grounds of violent Islamist extremists. Belgian police conducted raids in the area immediately following the Paris attacks and arrested seven people suspected of knowledge of, or involvement with, the attacks. And it would not be the first time that people from Molenbeek have taken part in international terrorism. But for the casual stroller, there is nothing about Molenbeek that shouts extremism.

It has a busy commercial street, alluring pastry shops, and corner cafes where, on Sunday, men (and only men) watch soccer games on large-screen TVs while drinking tea and coffee. Many of the Moroccans and Turks who emigrated half a century ago have become comfortable middle class, if not wealthy. And thanks to low property values, gentrification has planted its feel along the canal, featuring art lofts, a trendy event space, and even a hotel.

However, Molenbeek also has unemployment of perhaps 30 or 40 percent and an average income that lags far behind Belgium overall. It has more than its share of seedy blocks, shabby homes, and bad schools. The neighborhood stands in sharp contrast with the nearby wealthier residents of Brussels. It is a world away from the formidable buildings that are home to the European Union, and a trip virtually no one from Molenbeek ever makes.

An unusual social clash has prevented Molenbeek from becoming a Belgian melting pot. Fifty years ago, a wave of immigrants came from Morocco and Turkey. Later, exiles from Libya and Egypt arrived. But in the 1970s, Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf countries sent funding for rigid religious schools, setting up tension between Wahabbi mosques and the more moderate and largely Moroccan tradition. In some cases, more hard-line Muslims took over the boards of existing mosques, and some mosques are still in a state of flux.

Moreover, many jobs in Brussels require knowledge of French, Flemish/Dutch, and sometimes English, too, while most immigrants speak mostly Arabic and some French. This has blocked integration. Flanders, by contrast, provides immigrants with language classes and courses on Belgian values.

The children of immigrants suffer an identity crisis. The Saudi's rigid religious message has played well, and now the Islamic State has stepped in and caught on in Molenbeek. Yet

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Belgian Teen Soldier, American Veteran



When Maurice Sperandieu turned 18 years old in June 1944, Belgium had been under Nazi occupation for more than four years. The Allies had just stormed the beaches of Normandy and were fighting their way across Europe. By September, the troops had reached Belgium and Luxembourg. That winter of 1944-45, the Battle of the Bulge would account for more than 89,000 U.S. casualties, including nearly 20,000 killed in action.

As the Allies battled, teenager Sperandieu saw a U.S. GI about his age shot and killed by a German sniper. It was then he decided to join the battle. To get into the U.S. Army as a Belgian volunteer, he needed parental consent. His father, a veteran who had fought alongside Americans in World War I, granted that permission. Sperandieu was trained and assigned to the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division.

As a boy surrounded by war, Sperandieu had taken refuge in schoolwork. He excelled in language studies, skills the Army later put to good use. He was attached to an MP unit that would be found near the front, translating to the Germans what was coming and what they needed to do about it... surrender.

Following the war, Sperandieu joined The American Legion. He is a Life Member of Belgium's Flanders Field Post BE02. For 32 years, he organized remembrance walks for the Battle of the Bulge. Those walks, retracing the steps of the Allies during that fateful Belgian winter, continue to this day and are organized by the City of Bastogne.

Sperandieu believes that the words that make up the meaning of his name proved both therapeutic and prophetic, as he and his fellow soldiers helped change the course of human history. What does his name mean? "Hope in God."

(Thanks to Art Holevoet and *The American Legion Magazine*)

WHAT IS MOLENBEEK

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overall, violent extremists don't represent Molenbeek. Many of its residents are sick of the association with extremism.

No doubt Belgium will have to do more to help assimilate the younger people and change their thinking. As Interior Minister Jan Jambon noted, "We will need to make an extra effort."

(Thanks to the *Washington Post*)