



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

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



April, 2016

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Gift Shop
Diana Slininger

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 2nd	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
April 2nd	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
April 11th	Board Meeting	5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

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

Schedule for Volunteers

The April schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Fri., April 1st	Rose VanAcker	Joan DeClerk
Sat., April 2nd	Barb Michalek (am)	Grace Fisher (pm)
Wed., April 6th	Alan Hoyt	Alan Hoyt
Fri., April 8th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale
Sat., April 9th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., April 13th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Fri., April 15th	Georgia Slininger	Bev Fullmer
Sat., April 16th	tbd	tbd
Wed., April 20th	Barb Coppens	Linda Polich
Fri., April 22nd	Bob Francione	Bob Francione
Sat., April 23rd	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., April 27th	Margaret Wadsworth	Bill Wadsworth
Fri., April 29th	tbd	tbd
Sat., April 30th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger

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

Want to Join the Board?

The election of officers will be coming up later this spring. If you are interested in volunteering your time to serve on the Center's board, please let us know. All offices are open. Serving would be a great way to help your community and your Center for Belgian Culture. We'd love to have your expertise!

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

Older Generations Can Capture the Younger Generations:

A personal essay about friendship, regardless of age, and how that inspired me to become an active member in the Center for Belgian Culture

by Bonnie Tanamor

I was in my mid-twenties when I was drawn to the Center for Belgian Culture. Sure, I'd been there a few times when I was a kid. Once was with my Great-Grandma Romanie VandeVelde, and I think she was dropping something off, so we didn't stay long; and the second time was for a 7th Grade geography project. During that visit, I remember someone remarking, rather angrily might I add, "that this is the only time young people come!" The comment, honestly, scared me and made me feel like I did something wrong, and, perhaps, contributed to my 20+ year absence from the Center.

I can't remember what brought me back exactly. Perhaps it was the desire to connect to the family I'd lost; that longing to be able to ask those "where did I come from" questions, but now it was too late. Or maybe it was simply that I wanted to see what those waffle breakfasts were about!

My husband, Jason, and I attended our first waffle breakfast in 2007. I explained to a waffle worker that interest in my

heritage is what brought me in, and that I'd never been to a breakfast before. I was told to talk to Celie Donohue, president of the Center. After dining on scrumptious waffles, I approached Celie and introduced myself. I told her that I'd come from the VandeVelde and Dolleslager Belgian lines. Through the conversation, we'd discovered that Romanie had purchased Celie's dad's car when her father passed away. I was so excited, I REMEMBERED that car! I had a connection to my past! It was a great feeling.

Celie lured me back for another waffle breakfast for the following month by offering me a chance to see her high school yearbook. My Grandma, Janet Martin (VandeVelde), was a few years older than Celie was, and Celie thought Janet and my namesake were in the yearbook. I never knew much about the woman I was named after, other than her name was Bonnie, and she was Janet's best friend who had died of cancer, but Celie remembered her.

To Be Continued

APRIL

WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS



The volunteers for April's waffle breakfast will be Bonnie and Jason Tanamor, Ben and David Martin, Teresa Nelson, Pam Black, and Jan Irwin. Mike Kerckhove will make the mix and start the coffee, and Joan DeCap will cashier. Catherine VanHecke will make sure everyone enjoys their breakfast.

IMPORTANT - We Need Volunteers!

If you want to see the waffle breakfasts continue, waffle chairperson Catherine VanHecke needs volunteers to step up. These breakfasts provide the income to pay our rent and utilities, and we depend on waffle volunteers. It's not hard work . . . bake or serve and stay to clean up afterwards. If we don't start getting people to help, we'll have to cancel the breakfasts. And when that happens, the CBC will have to close its doors. It's that simple. Please, volunteer!!

Evidently Belgium Can

The U.S. likely pays the highest prices in the world for medicinal drugs. Politicians running for president are all promising to lower drug prices. Belgium seems to have already done something about that; a variety of prescription medication prices are being decreased there. Antibiotics are being reduced by 54% and essential drugs are receiving a 61% reduction. Generics are being reduced 17% in an effort to increase their usage.

Maybe our political candidates should consult with Belgium to find out how this is being accomplished.

Thank You

Thank You to Mary Gardner-Karcher for her book donation to our archives. The book is *In Flanders Fields* by Linda Granfield and Janet Wilson. And a Thank You to Andre Bollaert of Nevele, Belgium, for donating the periodical *Het Land Van Nevele: Emigration to America 1919-1920*. The two books can be viewed at the Center.

All About the Coop

Those of us who grew up or lived in a Belgian neighborhood are all too familiar with pigeon coops. Some were in garage attics, but a great many were free-standing structures. Recently, Millie Kale provided me with a photo of a pigeon coop for another project I'm working on. That photo, seen with this article, made me think about how little I really knew about pigeon keeping. So I decided to learn a little more and, therefore, so will you.

Pigeon keeping is the art and science of breeding domestic pigeons. People have been doing this for nearly 10,000 years in almost every part of the world. In that time, man has substantially altered the morphology and behavior of the domesticated descendants of the rock dove to suit his needs for food and entertainment. Breeders are commonly referred to as "pigeon fanciers," and the hobby is gaining popularity again in the U.S. after waning within the last 50 years. It is also thriving in other parts of the world.

Houses for pigeons are generally called lofts, many times referred to as "coops," although the word seems to have originally applied to the breeding pens inside the housing. There are as many different kinds of enclosures as there are pigeon fanciers. There are no real constraints on the design of the coop, but there are some things found that are desirable. Specially constructed openings give the fancier the ability to exercise his birds while allowing them to re-enter the coop without assistance from the keeper. The coops are constructed to keep the pigeons safe from predators and inclement weather, as well as give them nesting places to raise their young.

Coops generally have at least two pens allowing the separation of males from females and young, unmated pigeons from mated and settled pairs. Some coops contain multiple pens to allow for keeping spare pigeons to replace existing pigeons that might die or fall prey to predators.

For the fanciers who fly their pigeons, the birds need a means of ingress to the coop. A trap, or at least bobs and a landing board, allow the pigeon to get back into its home when ready to do so. Racing pigeons are commonly trapped home using a bob-wire trapping arrangement that the bird pushes against to gain access, but is restricted by the wire in trying to get back out. Another type of trap uses openings set on an angle that is just wide enough for one bird to gain access by dropping through into the coop.

Inside the coop, fanciers will often provide their mated pairs with nesting boxes and perches. As pigeons are quite territorial about their nest and perch, several nesting pairs are usually provided with two nesting boxes. Many more perches than pigeons are provided so each bird has plenty of places to perch.

If you thought raising pigeons was something done mostly by Belgians, think again. Famous pigeon fanciers include or included: French revolutionist Robespierre; Al-Muzaffar Hajji (who died in 1347), a sultan of Egypt; famous inventor Nikola Tesla; artist Pablo Picasso; actor Yul Brynner; boxer Mike Tyson; and surprise, England's Queen Elizabeth II.



This coop was located in the 1900 block of 10th Street in Moline in the 1930s.



Friends gather outside the Moline Pigeon Club to honor the winning of a recent homing contest, circa 1940.



Isabella Jones (left, with Diana Slininger) donated a model of the Atomium that she made as part of her school project on Belgium. Thank you, Bella!

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The Red Tape Blues

Bureaucracy runs rampant everywhere, and a Belgian radio host is trying to put an end to it – in Belgium anyway. Ads and a website are promoting his cause. Here's one man's story with his struggle to purchase a rail ticket.

Franz and his wife planned a trip to Metz, France. He purchased tickets online, because it was easy. But not so fast . . . tickets for travel abroad had to be picked up in person at the train station. Franz hopped on his bike and cycled to the Mechelen train station. Once there, he encountered a sign at the international counter that read, "Counter open from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m."

While some would have lost their cool, Franz did not. He went home and returned to the station at 3:00 p.m. The counter was still closed. While waiting at counter 1, the international counter, he was told he had to go to counter 7. Reaching counter 7, he asked about his tickets and was told they were ready.

"Why is the international ticket counter still closed?" he asked the ticket agent. He was told that the counter was closed because that part of the building was being remodeled.

"So why is the sign still hanging there?" Franz asked. "The person whose job it is to take the sign down is on sick leave," said the agent. Sounds a little familiar, doesn't it?

Spring is Near and so are Birdies

Each year the CBC participates in the John Deere Classic's Birdies for Charity program. Each Birdie made by the golf pros during the tournament count toward monies pledged to the program on behalf of local charities. In addition, the tournament matches pledges up to a certain point and adds bonus dollars to the program.

Pledges for the CBC fund our scholarship program. Pledge forms will be forthcoming during April and we hope you will again see fit to make a pledge for/to the CBC. Forms will also be available at the Center and at our waffle breakfasts. Pledges can be as small as one cent per Birdie, so it won't cost you a great deal, but it will mean a great deal for our program.

Scholarship Applications

Forms for both the CBC and VanTieghem scholarships are at area schools and are available at the Center. You may also contact Steve Slininger at s.slininger@mchsi.com and he will email the forms to you.