



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

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



April, 2019

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 6th	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
April 6th	Open House	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
April 6th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
April 8th	Board Meeting	5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
April 23rd	History to Mystery (see story)	7:00 to 9:00 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>
Wed., April 3rd	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Sat., April 6th	Diana Slininger (a.m.)	Barb Michalek (p.m.)
Wed., April 10th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., April 13th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., April 17th	Barb Coppens	Linda Polich
Sat., April 20th	tbd	tbd
Wed., April 24th	Bob Francione	Bob Francione
Sat., April 27th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger

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

# Happy Easter

OPEN Wednesday & Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month

## History to Mystery

Award-winning, mystery writer Kathleen Ernst will present a local program about her latest novel, *The Lace Maker's Secret*, on April 23rd. *The Lace Maker's Secret* masterfully blends together two stories. The first is a saga of Belgian immigration to America in the 19th century. The second story is the mystery surrounding a modern-day murder in the Belgian-American region of northeast Wisconsin. A piece of Belgian lace ties the two stories together and holds the secret to the murder.

Ms. Ernst's presentation will take place on Tuesday, April 23rd, at 7:00 p.m. at the Hampton Grace Methodist Church, 400 - 2nd Avenue, Hampton, Illinois. Her talk will highlight the experiences of Belgian-



American immigrants. She will also discuss how she crafts her murder mysteries. *The Lace Maker's Secret* is the ninth book in Ms. Ernst's Chloe Ellefson mystery series. At the end of the presentation, she will be available to sign copies of the book.

Ms. Ernst's appearance is co-sponsored by the Hampton Historical Society, the Center for Belgian Culture, and the Midwest Writing Center. The program is free to the public. Refreshments will be served to conclude the meeting. Plan to attend and learn about *The Lace Maker's Secret*.

## Easter in Belgium

The word "Easter" in Belgium comes from the ancient German goddess, Eostre. The month of April used to be called "Eostremonat" (month of Easter). The festival of Eostre was celebrated around the spring Equinox. Easter is called "Pasen" in Dutch and "Paques" in French.

In folksy traditions in Western Europe, the fertility celebrations of old are combined with the Christian celebration of the resurrection. The resurrection of nature is combined with the resurrection of Christ as savior of humankind.

In Belgium, the church bells stop ringing on Good Friday at 3:00 p.m. when Jesus died on the cross, and they only start ringing again on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. to announce the opening of High Mass on Easter. During that time, the bells leave the church towers, fly all over to Rome, load up on chocolate eggs, and fly back to their church towers, after dropping the eggs into the gardens (and sometimes inside the homes on rainy days) of the good children of Belgium.

Thus every Easter morning, the children of Belgium are hunting chocolate eggs and chocolate statues of rabbits. Eggs and rabbits – two symbols of fertility in many cultures.



Courtesy of *Global Beer Network*

## News of the Membership

Sympathy is offered to wife **Barb** and the family of **Ray Coppens**, 82, of Moline, who died March 15th at Genesis Medical Center in Silvis. We also note the passing on February 18th of long-time former member Everett Manning, 83, of Rock Island.

## A Notable Anniversary

This December marks the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, the last major offensive by the Germans against the Allies, at Bastogne in the Ardennes. **The Center is wondering if there are any veterans of this campaign still living.** Are you, have a relative, or know anyone who might be such a person? Please let us know. You can call us at (309)762-0167.



## A Letter Home

As noted in earlier newsletters, the *Gazette van Moline* was founded in 1907 to allow Flemings the ability to keep in touch with their Flemish roots. The paper provided news about Flanders, news of area organizations, the names and towns of recent arrivals from Belgium, and news of upcoming social events.

During both world war years, the *Gazette* printed letters from relatives in Belgium regarding conditions in the homeland and the lives of those living in the battle-torn country. Patrick Van Nevel has been doing some translating of these letters and has provided a short and cryptic “early letter,” following the liberation. From the *Gazette van Moline* – December 19, 1918:



FLEMISH VILLAGES DESTROYED  
NEVELE, VOSSELAERE, MEIGHEM, LANDEGHEM  
LEVELED WITH THE GROUND

*Letter from Mr. Camiel De Vriese, our former correspondent from Kewanee, currently serving in the United States Armed Forces.*

November 15, 1918

Dear Mother, Sister and Brother,

Yesterday I was in Nevele and visited there with aunt Charlotte and uncle Gust, who were at Stiens (relative??). I had the lunch meal there and the evening meal at Felix Beryngiers. No one in the familie [sic] nor anyone else knew or recognized me until I told them who I was. I was the first American soldier they had seen in Nevele.

In this village, everyting [sic] has been shot to pieces. The church, the schools, the convent, the hospital and most all of the homes are in ruins. It is terrible. In Vosselaere, Meighem en Landeghem, it is just as bad.

I will write you more later.

Your dearly loved son and brother,

Pte. CAMIEL DE VRIESE,  
CO. E., 148TH INF., A.A.F., FRANCE

## Not Just Pom-Poms



A cheerleading team from Antwerp won gold at the UCA International All-Star Championship in Orlando, Florida. The team won its age division in Co-ed Group Stunt.

It was the first time that the five-member team, Elemco, had taken part in the competition. The team’s one-minute routine included impressive feats of tumbling, balance, and strength. Members of the team say that the skill required for top cheerleading competition is highly underestimated. You need a lot of strength and technique and, above all, to be in top physical condition.

Belgium scored a 91.5 out of a perfect 100, a very high score. Mexico was the second place team with a score of 86.3.

(Thanks to *FlandersToday*)

## APRIL WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS



Your volunteer staff for April’s breakfast is: LuAnn Haydon, Kym Kochuyt, Mike DeBisschop, Marilyn Vande Moortel, and Sandy & Bill Coopman. Mike Kerckhove will mix the batter and get things started, and Steve Slininger will cashier.

As always, we need volunteers!! Waffle breakfasts can only continue if we have volunteer help. If you can help, please contact Karen VandeKerckhove at (309) 762-6725.



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*April, 2019*

### Scholarship Reminder

The deadline is near, but there is still time to complete a scholarship application for either the CBC or the Ruth Lambrick VanTieghem Scholarships. The CBC is awarding three \$750 scholarships for any high school students continuing on to college. The VanTieghem Scholarship offers \$1200 to any college student who has completed two years of college and is continuing with his/her education.

Applications were sent to area schools/colleges earlier this year, and copies are available at the Center, or you may contact Steve Slininger at [s.slininger@mchsi.com](mailto:s.slininger@mchsi.com) for an emailed application.



### Scholarship Reminder

Armando, the prize-winning Flemish pigeon that sold for a record amount, is being guarded around the clock. A Chinese bidder paid \$1.36 million for the bird. The bird's seller in West Flanders is worried that thieves abscond with it, and has hired 24-hour guards until the bird is handed over to the new owner.

Flemish pigeons are much sought after. Two previous pigeons brought \$410,000 and \$456,000 at auction.

*(Thanks to FlandersToday)*

