



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



August, 2019

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Diana Slininger

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

August 3rd	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
August 3rd	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
August 7th	Special Board Meeting	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
August 12th	Regular 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 August schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Sat., August 3rd	Closed (a.m.)	Barb Michalek (p.m.)
Wed., August 7th	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Sat., August 10th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., August 14th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., August 17th	Center Closed	
Wed., August 21st	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Sat., August 24th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., August 28th	Bob Francione	Bob Francione
Sat., August 31st	Closed for Labor Day weekend observance	

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

## THE BELGIAN FLAG

Do you know what the colors of the Belgian flag represent?

**BLACK**  
Fighting for  
independence

**YELLOW**  
Grain waving  
in the field

**RED**  
Blood of the  
soldiers keeping  
the country free

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

Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month

## Invasion Cure



We've all heard of the invasion of the Asian Carp in some of Illinois' rivers. It seems Belgium also has an issue, but with evasive Chinese mitten crabs. So named because of its furry claws, the species is native to Korea and China, but managed to migrate to Europe – probably by commercial vessels – over 100 years ago. The crabs adapt easily to water conditions and multiply rapidly. They threaten the local crab population, as well as small fish species and river plants.

So far this year, the Flanders version of the EPA has netted 715,000 of these crabs. They are captured with a specially developed trap that runs along the width of the Kleine Nete river. When the crabs try to climb over the trap, they fall inside a narrow slit and then, looking for a way out, follow a tube that leads to a receptacle. That receptacle lets them in, but not out. The crabs are collected, anaesthetized, and delivered to a local company where they are ground up and disposed of, or turned into fish food and fertilizer.

The Chinese mitten crab is found in many waters of Flanders, but it's impossible to build snares in all of the waterways.

(Thanks to *FlandersToday*)

## AUGUST WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS

At press time, these people have stepped up to help at the August waffle breakfast: Kim Kochuyt, Mike DeBisschop, and Yvette Van Driessche. Mike Kerckhove will mix the batter as he has done for many years, and Steve Slininger will cashier. Hopefully a few more people will step in to help. Waffle breakfasts can only continue if we have volunteer help. If you can help, please contact Karen VandeKerckhove at (309)762-6725.



## Help Us, Please!!!

We are in drastic need of volunteers for waffle breakfasts and the upcoming Belgian Fest on September 15th. What is it going to take to convince you that the same people continually step up (thank you, all), but are truly getting burned out. If you can give a few hours for either waffles or helping at the Fest, please call Karen Vande Kerckhove at 762-6725.

## Beguine

Do you know what a Beguine is? Thanks to having a nun in my family, I do. And no, it's not a dance. A Beguine was a pious woman who belonged to a Christian sisterhood who lived an austere life, but took no vows. Beguines had no legal bond with Rome, yet they dressed in habits similar to nuns. Most of the Beguines ministered to the poor and sick or made their living through weaving or lace making. The women lived in beguinages, which were self-sufficient clusters of individual houses grouped around a church.

The sisterhood was established in Liege in the 12th century. The last beguinage in Flanders was closed in 2013. Yet if you have ever been to Bruges, you no doubt saw one of the more impressive beguinages, the Beguinage Ten Wijngaarde. Today, it is inhabited by nuns of the Order of St. Benedict, and several women from Bruges who adhere to the principles of a Beguine.



## Interesting Numbers

Over the past years, this newsletter has written about Belgian emigration to this area. While Rock Island County had the largest concentration, several other Illinois counties and even Scott County in Iowa could not be overlooked. Besides residing in an area with their relatives, the major draw to this area for many Belgians was its industry and land for farming.

While researching another subject, I came across some interesting facts compiled in 1919 by Dr. W.E. Taylor, a farmer and soil expert with Deere & Co. He noted the following information: In round numbers, there were 8000 Belgians in Moline; 3500 in East Moline; and 1500 in Rock Island. Of those, 75% owned their own homes. He also noted there were 2500 Belgian farmers in Henry County, with 60% owning their farms, and 1200 Belgian farmers in Bureau County, with 40% owning their farms. Those numbers were primarily first generation Belgians (persons born in Belgium) from Flanders.

Programs offering cheap land brought the farmers. Industries like the agricultural, lumber, automobile, and even the railroad brought the craftsmen and laborers to this area originally. By the end of the 1920s, auto manufacturing was centered in Michigan, and the lumber industry was moving to Wisconsin, Minnesota, and towards the west coast. However, agriculture was still “king” here.

Looking at the country as a whole, demographer Marie Bousfield noted that first generation Belgian emigration had peaked at 64,194. That same year, she found that second generation Belgians outnumbered first generation census counts (62,897 to 64,194). For the majority of second generation Belgians, both parents were Belgian born.

Between 1970 and 1980, the number of Belgian-Americans more than doubled because of new counting practices used by the Census Bureau. Since 1980, second generation Belgians have not been counted separately; instead, for each person up to two ancestries, e.g. Belgian and German, have been recorded.

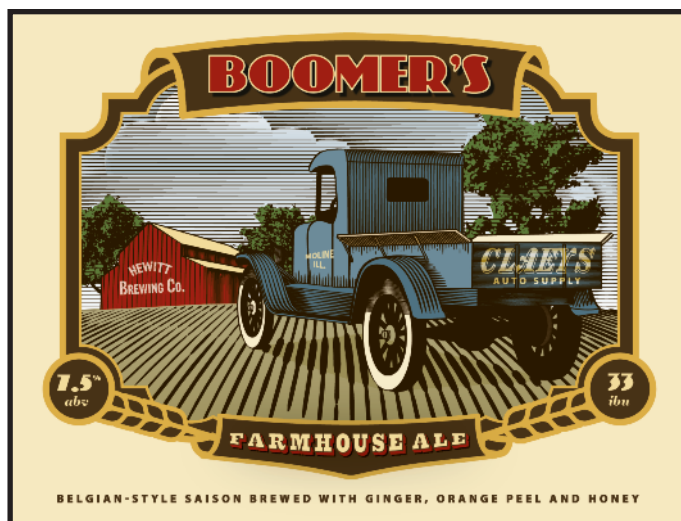
In Bousfield’s study *A Demographic Overview of Belgian American History*, using figures from the year 2000, she found that the Green Bay area had the largest number of Belgians, and the Detroit area had the second largest contingent. But her figures don’t tell the whole story.

Honorary Consul Patrick Van Nevel dug a little deeper comparing counted Belgian-American census numbers against total county population. Based on the 2000 census, the Green Bay area (three counties), indeed, has the largest number of Belgian-Americans – 11.96% of its population. But the Quad Cities area (three counties) is second, with 4.07% of its population. Detroit (two counties w/over four million in population) comes in a very distant third, with only 0.70% of its population.

Regardless, each community has some fascinating history and interesting people of Belgian extraction. And perhaps President Trump is right about wanting every person in the U.S. counted. The census can provide some interesting information.

## Thought You’d Like to See This

We’ve had two articles about Craig Hewitt’s new Belgian-style beer, Boomer’s Farmhouse Ale. The official tapping of the keg was held mid-July, and we thought you’d like to see the label for the new brew. Craig included a few subtle details that pay homage to his family’s Moline business, Claeys Auto Supply, which you’ll note on the farm truck.



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*August, 2019*

**Membership Renewal** (Please detach and return)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiting Member's Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2019

Would you like to volunteer? If yes, please let us know how below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Annual Fees Enclosed (check appropriately):

Single/Family (one per household)                      \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Senior (70+) Single/Family (one per household)      \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_



*Please note that complimentary memberships are automatically renewed.*