



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



October, 2019

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

October 5th	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
October 5th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
October 14th	Board Meeting	5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
October 17th	Anniversary Dinner	see article
October 19th	Visitors' Reception	see article

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

Schedule for Volunteers

The October schedule is as follows:

Date	Gift Counter	Host/Hostess
Wed., Oct. 2nd	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Sat., Oct. 5th	Closed (a.m.)	Barb Michalek (p.m.)
Wed., Oct. 9th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., Oct. 12th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., Oct. 16th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Sat., Oct. 19th	tbd	tbd
Wed., Oct. 23rd	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Sat., Oct. 26th	Closed	Closed
Wed., Oct. 30th	Bob Francione	Bob Francione

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

Antwerp on TV

The Center is underwriting *Professor T*, a crime-drama series aired on local PBS station WQPT on Wednesday evenings at 10:00 p.m. In addition to his duties at Antwerp University, eccentric Professor Teerlinck assists the Antwerp police with some of its more difficult cases. The program dialog is in Dutch, but has English subtitles and is easy to follow.

This is the first time the Center has done something like this, and we're proud to support our local PBS affiliate, WQPT, to make this program available.



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

Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month

Scholarship Essay

Our first scholar is Jessica Elliott, who attended Davenport Central High. Jessica ranked first in her class; is an AP Scholar, State of Iowa Governor’s Scholar; member of the National Honor Society; HOBY service award winner; co-captain of the Iowa Mock Trial 2019 State Team; and a member of the MAC All-Academic Swim Team. Jessica is now a freshman at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and will major in marine science.

HERITAGE ESSAY



by Jessica Emilie Boussemaere Elliott

In 1924, Leon Alphons Prosper Marie Boussemaere was born in Bruges, Belgium. As he grew, he flew kites out over the North Sea and skated along the ice of the canals to get butter for his family during the war. Leon was my grandfather, and I never met him, but his stories were passed down to me through my grandmother Ruth and mother Laurie. I vividly remember sitting next to the fireplace in his home, listening in awe at the stories of my Belgian heritage. This heritage has played a huge part in my life and appreciation for different cultures.

When Bruges was overrun in World War II, my grandfather lived under the floorboards of his childhood home and translated message from German to English and French, working for the Canadian and U.S. underground. Through this time he suffered from and conquered illness and the constant threat of exposure. After the war ended, his skill for language led him to become a chauffeur, driving rich Americans around Europe to hotels, casinos, and famous tourist attractions. On a stop in Switzerland, Leon met Ruth Bumbach, a young Swiss girl visiting a friend. They exchanged letters in the following years and when Leon moved to America to work as a carpenter in 1956, he invited Ruth to come with him with the promise of marriage. With only \$5 in his pocket, Leon began to work. They saved for years

and eventually collected the money to buy property in Moline, Illinois. Leon used his carpentry skills to woodwork and build a home, digging the foundation himself when not at work. In 1979 Leon passed away due to lung cancer, leaving behind his handmade home, Ruth, and his daughter Laurie - my mother. Then, in 2001, I was born. I’ve always regretted never having the opportunity to meet my hard working grandfather, but I’ve seen the love he left by dancing along to the record-player with my grandmother, playing with wooden hoops in the yard with my older brother, learning how to play Rolle Bolle at Stephens Park, and visiting my close relatives along the North Sea in Belgium.

Just as strong as my Belgian heritage is my Swiss heritage. I have a great appreciation for both countries, as I had the opportunity to visit them and see the intricate history they hold. The impressive castles, beautiful mountains, and fast-moving trains give each country a serendipity that I never felt growing up in Davenport, Iowa. My first visit was when I was three, and I only experienced Switzerland. My relatives said I looked like a perfect little European girl, with white-blond hair and big doe eyes. We went to a paper lantern festival and I watched in awe, making friends with other Swiss girls despite the different language. Recently, I got to go back to Europe and see both Switzerland and Belgium. I met more relatives on each side of my family and fell even more in love with the welcoming presence of the Belgian community. In college I hope to find a study abroad program that will take me back to the North Sea.

Despite the many miles between me and my ancestral countries, I still feel tight connections with my relatives there and hold the experiences I had close. My family celebrates Belgian and Swiss holidays, deutching eggs and putting Swiss candles on our Christmas tree. Every once in a while we stock up on Swiss and Belgian foods from Katy’s in Moline, where my grandma spoke in Switzer-Deutch with the owners. I love the questions I get about the two flag stickers on my water bottle and always answer with pride, “That’s where my grandparents came from.” I try to live my life to make my grandparents Leon and Ruth, who built their lives here completely themselves (literally from the foundation up), proud, and honor my heritage and their memory.

Anniversary Dinner

One hundred years ago, Edward Coryn, a native of Lotenhulle (Aalter), Belgium, was appointed the first Belgian Consul in Moline. **On Thursday, October 17th, the Center for Belgian Culture will note this event.** Belgian Ambassador to the United States, the Honorable Dirk Wouters, Deputy Mayor of Aalter, Dirk De Smul, local dignitaries and several families from Belgium will **join us for a celebratory dinner at Oakwood Country Club.**

A social hour begins at 5:15 p.m. (cash bar), buffet dinner at 6:00 p.m. and a program at 7:00 p.m. The cost for this special evening is \$45.00/person and must be paid in advance (please make check out to Center for Belgian Culture). Reservations and payment should be mailed to: CBC Dinner, 205 - 31st Avenue, Moline, IL 61265 and must reach us no later than October 12th. We hope you will join us in celebrating this historical event!

Visitors' Reception

During the Center's usual open house on Saturday, October 19th, we will have a reception from 1:00-3:00 p.m. for our visiting families from Belgium. Come meet them and enjoy some light refreshments.

News of the Membership

Thank You to **Lizette Desseyn** for her sponsorship of October's waffle breakfast, and to **Chris VanLancker** for her continued donation of layout time for the newsletter.

Sympathy is offered to **Mike Kerckhove** and family on the death of his mother Alice, 91, of Moline, who died July 27th at Illini Restorative Care Center in Silvis.

OCTOBER WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS

The waffle volunteers for October are Kim Kochuyt, Mike DeBisschop, Yvonne Van Driessche, Jane Vershaw, and Karen VandeKerckhove. 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.

Consul Mission Held

On September 14th, Deputy Consul General Anna Hajdu and Consular Officer Magali Kelfkens held a Flying Consul Mission at Butterworth Center. The purpose was to assist with passport issuance or renewals of Belgian nationals living within easy driving distance to Moline. Twenty-six passports were finalized. On Sunday, Anna and Magali delayed their departure from Moline to attend the Fall Belgian Fest.

We thank them for their visit to Moline and being of service to area Belgians.



L-R: Deputy Consul General Anna Hajdu, Honorary Consul Patrick Van Nevel, and Consular Officer Magali Kelfkens.

Special Thanks

Another successful Belgian Fest is in the history book. The morning's rain left a beautiful afternoon for food, beverages, music, lacemaking, games, the pigeon display, a great rolle bolle tournament, and the Belgian horses. We thank our sponsors, all the volunteers who helped at the Fest and all who attended. Special thanks go to John Lartz, who made sure the waffle irons had plenty of electricity, and to the Moline Second Alarmers who helped with setup, teardown, canopies, and manpower wherever needed. Many very positive comments were heard throughout the afternoon, so we'll do it again next year.



Marlene Shattuck demonstrates her lacemaking prowess.

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October, 2019

And In Belgium . . .

The organization Family Heritage Flanders – Tielt Region recently organized a heritage fair. An exhibit was organized by Paul Callens, focusing on the Belgian community and the Belgian Catholic church here in Moline. Visitors had the opportunity to view exhibits for the event pertaining to Moline, its people, and Sacred Heart Church. A contest was also part of the exhibit with prizes awarded for correct answers to what viewers saw. The fair was officially opened in the presence of Honorary Consul Patrick Van Nevel.

Attendees view
some of the
exhibits about
Moline.



Coryn Memorial

As noted in previous newsletters, the man who did so much for Belgians in Moline, Edward Coryn, was a native of Lotenhulle (now a part of Aalter), Belgium. Years ago, its citizens had placed a memorial on the schoolhouse Coryn attended. Progress took over and the school was demolished, but the memorial was saved for later placement in an appropriate place. While recently in Aalter, Patrick Van Nevel was invited to see the relief image in stone of Coryn and the memorial to one of Aalter's famous natives.

Aalter Mayor
Pieter De Crem
and
Deputy Mayor
Dirk De Smul
display the
Coryn memorial.

