



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



December, 2019

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 7th	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
December 7th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
December 9th	No Board Meeting	5:00 to 6:30 p.m.
January 4th	No Waffle Breakfast	

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. 4th	tbd	tbd
Sat., Dec. 7th	Closed (a.m.)	Diana Slininger (p.m.)
Wed., Dec. 11th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., Dec. 14th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., Dec. 18th	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Sat., Dec. 21st	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., Dec. 25th	Closed	Closed
Sat., Dec. 28th	Closed	Closed
Wed., Jan. 1st	Closed	Closed

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



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

Scholarship Essay

We present this month’s CBC scholar Oyniso Bakhridinova, who graduated from Moline High School. Among her activities and awards while at Moline High, she was the editor-in-chief of both the newspaper and the yearbook, active in girls’ varsity tennis and track teams, National Honor Society member, treasurer of the Student Hunger Drive, an Illinois State Scholar, a Student Rotarian, and concertmaster of the QC Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. Oyniso’s class ranking was 5th and she is attending Tufts University majoring in Economics and International Relations.

THE ART OF TOUGH



by Oyniso Bakhridinova

As the Persian folk music reverberates against the cement walls of buildings in downtown Moline, my friends and family chant to the melodic tune as they dance in a circle on a sunny afternoon. Hot sizzling lamb chops embellished with herbs, vegetables, raisins, and white rice shift around long tables flooded with an assortment of baklava and fruits. We are celebrating Navrus: an Uzbek holiday signifying the Persian new year. I grew up in a traditional Uzbek household. Ramadan, Eid, and weekly visits to the Mosque helped define my Muslim heritage. My community of approximately one hundred Uzbek immigrants in the Quad Cities has kept the tradition alive for over a decade since migrating to America in the early 2000s.

In 2000, I was born in Uzbekistan. Scorched hot terrain and Middle Eastern traditions were all I knew for the first few years of my life. In 2004, my family of five (my parents and two older brothers) won the Green Card Lottery to begin our new lives in America. Since our migration, we never stopped working. The endless hours of labor soon grappled our lives, but built a strong character that helped to bolster our bond. As a child, my mother was always working late-night shifts alongside other Uzbek parents. They held positions cleaning

toilets, washing dishes, waiting tables, housekeeping in hotels, and much more. The strong work ethic is evident in our DNA, and I have never been more prideful of our success in response to troubling times when acclimating to a foreign land.

When I first discovered old photos of my mother as a teenage from the 1980s, picking cotton in the cotton fields located in the outskirts of the rural USSR, I could not imagine the restrictive nature of living under Soviet control. She would recount stories of my great grandparents surviving concentration camps during Stalin’s reign. Every thought, action and idea was under control.

The strict Soviet public standards led to the withdrawal of my rich cultural aspects of Uzbekistan. Islam and Uzbek literature diluted into inexistence. Nevertheless, Uzbekistan flourished back into a cultural hotspot after the USSR collapse in 1991. My family, amongst others, faced feelings of despair as our newly independent nation, Uzbekistan, mirrored the same corruption found in the previous Soviet government. For these reason, Uzbek families took a gamble and immigrated to the land of abundant opportunities: America.

At Tufts, I intend to study International Affairs with a focus on Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. After graduating, I plan to serve in the U.S. Navy as an Intelligence and Foreign Affairs Officer. I already speak, read, and write Uzek and Russian with my family at home. I have studied four years of the French language at school, and I intend to study another Slavic language at Tufts. My goal is to improve the livelihoods of disenfranchised villagers in Uzbekistan (and around the world).

“Katta rahmat” is a common Uzbek phrase often overheard in the halal meat markets and oriental food stores downtown. This phrase means “big thank you” and is a testament to the gratitude that my community of immigrants have for the opportunities they sought after in America. Besides facing many tough periods, my community does not break: we bend. I admire our response to trials and tribulations; we roll up our sleeves and keep moving forward.

Special Thank You

As another year comes to a close, we wish to thank all of our faithful volunteers who help with our weekly open house, or monthly waffle breakfasts, the annual Belgian Fest, our scholarship program, and the variety of other duties and activities of the Center. We could not continue without your constant assistance. Your editor would also like to again salute Chris Van Lancker for her donation of time for the layout work with this newsletter.

News of the Membership

Congratulations to **Fred Polich** who, along with several other local veterans, recently received a handmade patriotic quilt from the Quilts of Valor organization. This impressive ceremony is presented twice yearly at the Q.C. Botanical Center.

Sympathy is offered to the family of longtime member **Albert Raes**, 103, of Moline, who passed away on November 9th at the Clarissa Cook Hospice, Bettendorf, Iowa.

Birdies for Charity

Mary Lorensen reports that the John Deere Open Birdies for Charity program check to the CBC was \$2,148.45 this year. She thanks the members who again helped with their participation in funding the CBC scholarships.

And after 17 years, Mary is stepping down as chairperson of the Center's Scholarship Fund. The Board thanks both Mary and Larry Lorensen for their dedication in raising money for the fund. During their tenure, the Center helped 50 high school students with some of the costs associated with their freshman year at college.



Please Check Ahead

During these winter months, please check ahead before visiting the CBC.

We want everyone – visitors and volunteers – to be safe.

DECEMBER WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS

Your waffle volunteers for December are Kim Kochuyt, Mike DeBisschop, Millie Kale, Yvette VanDriessche, Colleen Reece, and Diana and Steve Slininger. Mike Kerckhove will mix the batter and get things started, and Tom 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.

Shopping Amazon? Remember CBC

The holidays are approaching quickly. Keep the Center for Belgian Culture in mind while shopping for gifts on Amazon. The Center is a participant of Amazon Smile. Simply go to smile.amazon.com. The program is easy to use. If you are already an Amazon user, log on to smile.amazon.com. Insert **The Center for Belgian Culture of Western Illinois** where asked, then shop normally. If you are new to Amazon, you can create an account on this site, insert our name where asked, and shop to your heart's content. Amazon donates one-half percent of qualifying purchased to the CBC. Call Diana Slininger if you have questions.

On the Pill

Brussels has started a trial project to control its pigeon population. It involves providing the pigeons with feed laced with a contraceptive. Other methods of control were considered, but contraception was considered more humane.



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Queen Wins Bambi



The German media firm Hubert Burda has announced that Belgium's Queen Mathilde has been bestowed this year's Bambi Award for charitable work. The Bambi Award is considered to be the most important award presented by a German media company.

The award organizers stated, "Her majesty Queen Mathilde of Belgium doesn't just represent a country, she is a role model for everyone in Europe. She fulfills her role as a mother far beyond the borders of our (Germany's) borders with the work she does for children and on issues concerning health."

Queen Mathilde is involved in a campaign against cyber-bullying and through UNICEF, does work for missing and sexually abused children across the globe.

Lukken

This recipe makes 4 dozen.

- 1/2 dozen large eggs
- 1 lb. melted butter
- 1-1/2 oz. Whisky or Brandy
- 3 tbsp. vanilla
- 1 dash salt
- 1 lb. light brown sugar, packed (2 cups)
- 1 lb. white sugar (2 cups)
- 2 lbs. all-purpose flour (6 cups)

Melt the butter and let cool. Add eggs, whiskey, and salt, blend together. Add both sugars and mix thoroughly. While blending, mix in flour a little at a time until well blended. Remove any hard chunks of brown sugar. Roll mix into a tube and wrap with plastic wrap and store overnight in refrigerator.

Heat cookie iron on stove (a drop of water will sizzle when it's hot enough). Spoon a lump of dough on iron and close tightly. Cook for 20-30 seconds – until just lightly brown – and flip to other side for an additional 20-30 seconds. Repeat for each dough piece.