



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



March, 2020

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(309) 792-2790

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 7th	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
March 7th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
March 9th	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 March schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Wed., March 4th	Steve Slininger	Steve Slininger
Sat., March 7th	Closed (a.m.)	Barb Michalek (p.m.)
Wed., March 11th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., March 14th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., March 18th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Sat., March 21st	tbd	tbd
Wed., March 25th	Bob Francione	Bob Francione
Sat., March 28th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher

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

## Our Broken Record

Go back and look through each issue of the last few years' newsletters. You will note the same names over and over as volunteers. Our volunteers are happy to do it, and we definitely appreciate their time and efforts! But don't you think that maybe you could occasionally help, too? We need volunteers! It's that simple.

Along those same lines, at our upcoming April business meeting, the Center will be holding its election of officers. All offices are open. If you would like to be on the board, please let a current officer know. The same people can't be doing these jobs year after year. Please show some interest in your CBC, by volunteering or joining the Board.

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

**Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month**

## A Family Remembrance

*Following up on my request for stories on Belgian heritage, Margaret Wadsworth has provided this background on her family and heritage for this month's newsletter. Thank you, Margaret!*

My father, **Camiel Joseph Van Ooteghem** was born in Ingelmuster, West Flanders, Belgium in 1891. His mother died at the age of 55 when my Dad was just 11 years old. When Dad was 14, his father died. A year later, Dad's oldest brother wanted to come to America and see what it was really like, and Dad said he wanted to go with him. The two traveled on the Red Star Line and ended up in Lyon, Minnesota. For several years they worked as farmhands on various different farms. The two decided they wanted to become American citizens and live permanently in Minnesota. Dad's brother went back to Belgium to settle up some affairs prior to becoming a citizen. While there, he contracted pneumonia and died.

My father remained in Minnesota working on various farms until 1916, when he enlisted in the Army. He was sent overseas and at the conclusion of World War I, he was assigned to the Army of Occupation and was stationed in his hometown of Inglemunster. While serving in this capacity, he renewed an acquaintance with my mother Celina Pieters, whom he had known as a young child prior to his departure for America in 1906.

After my Dad was released from the service, he came to the Tri-Cities where he had heard so many Belgians had come. He corresponded with my Mom and persuaded her to come to America and marry him. She came, and 10 days after her arrival they were married on July 20, 1920, at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Rock Island.

My mother was a homemaker. Three years after their marriage, my brother Charlie was born and my parents managed to purchase a home in Rock Island. My mother worked hard at fixing up the inside of the house. I was born three years later and until I was 18, my Mom made all my clothes, including underslips and coats. Dad always planted a large garden each summer, and the neighbors would always comment on how straight the rows were and no weeds. My Mom canned everything he grew, so we had plenty to eat for the winter.

Dad had gotten a job as a millwright at the Republic Steel plant in Moline. He worked there for 41 years and at his retirement, the company congratulated him for



being the only employee who never missed a day of work. The only day he was ever late to work was the day my brother left from the Rock Island Depot to serve in the Navy during WWII. My brother Charlie had been drafted and we all went to see him off.

During the Depression, Dad was laid off from his job for four years. He got a job at Calvary Cemetery where he would dig ditches every day. He also laid bricks on Rock Island's 12th Street. Those bricks are still there. My parents never went on relief during those four long years; they managed to support themselves.

My Dad worked hard during the week, and he loved spending time with his Belgian friends playing *rolle bolle* on the weekends. On Saturdays, I would take the bus to town with my Mom, and on Sunday's we'd go visit one of the parents' friends from Belgium.

Through the example of my parents, my brother and I both have always had a hard drive for working. When we began working at a job, my Mom would tell us, "Remember, it's not how much you make, but what you do with what you make." As a result, we learned the value of saving.

I was blessed with great parents, and I value my Belgian heritage.

*Editor's note: Margaret is certainly proud of her parents, but here is more information on Camiel's army service that many of you may not know about.*

Camiel Van Ooteghem served with I Company, 54 Pioneer Infantry Regiment in the Meuse-Argonne Campaign. The Pioneer Infantry was comprised of soldiers experienced in construction-related trades, and served as reserve infantry units. On October 6, 1918, his company was ordered to assist the 32nd Division on a hill opposite the Division.

While on patrol, Van Ooteghem observed a German machine gun position manned by a German soldier and a watchdog. It was a stormy night and because of the weather, Van Ooteghem was able to slip behind that position single-handed. He observed infiltration of enemy forces and his report alerted the entire 32nd Division. The next day, 1600 enemy troops were captured. For his valor that night, Camiel Van Ooteghem was awarded the Silver Citation Star.

## Only In Belgium

We've all heard much about the coronavirus and how travelers from China have been quarantined at various medical facilities out of fear they may have contracted the virus. Johan Smets and his wife, from Flemish-Brabant, were recently discharged from one such facility in Brussels and allowed to go home. But where did the Smets go first? As true Belgians, their first stop was for a meal of pommes frites (french fries, to the uninformed).

(Thanks to *flandersnews.be*)

## Better Late Than Never

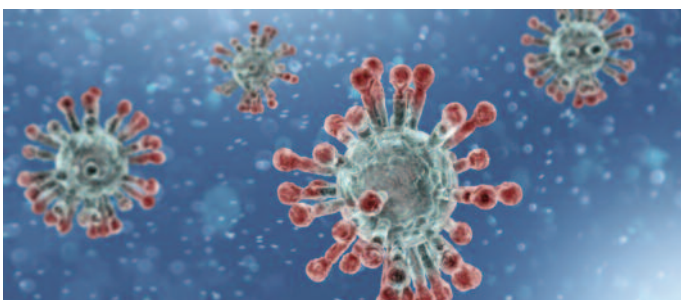
A discovery made by researchers at KU Leuven in 2004 is now helping combat the coronavirus in China. The antimalarial medication chloroquine is currently part of a drug trial and is greatly relieving the symptoms of the coronavirus and helping patients recover more quickly.

Virologists at KU Leuven carried out a study of chloroquine as an antiviral 15 years ago, in a study of the Sars virus. Chloroquine was shown to have an antiviral effect at concentrations that humans could safely use.

Experts from the Chinese ministry of science recently confirmed that the medication had a curative effect in clinical trials. Patients in 10 hospitals who received chloroquine for a week had lower fevers, regained lung function faster, and were clear of the Covid-19 strain sooner, than those who had not received the drug. And the drug is cheap and relatively easy to produce in large quantities.

If the clinical trials in China are confirmed by further research, chloroquine may have the impact on the treatment of patients infected with the coronavirus. And all because of a discovery in Belgium 15 years ago.

(From *FlandersToday*)



## Belgium in Vegas

Sixteen Walloon companies presented their products at this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. This is the third consecutive year that Wallonia has presented at the show, helping to make connections with U.S. and Asian markets. It also helps startup companies gain traction, by covering the otherwise prohibitive costs of participation. One such company, Linedock, received a "Best of CES 2020" award.

(Thanks to *BE Bulletin*)



## Scholarships

Forms for this year's CBC and Ruth Lambrick Van Tieghem scholarships are now available at the Center and through area high school and college counselors. The CBC will again offer three \$750 scholarships to graduating high school seniors to help with college costs. The Van Tieghem scholarship provides a \$1200 stipend to any student who has completed two years of college and will continue with his/her education.

### MARCH WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS

Your waffle volunteers for March are Bill and Sandy Coopman, Bill and Laurie Elliott, LuAnn Haydon, and Diana and Steve Slininger. Mike Kerckhove will create the batter and get things started for your enjoyable Saturday treat.



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) 235-4425.

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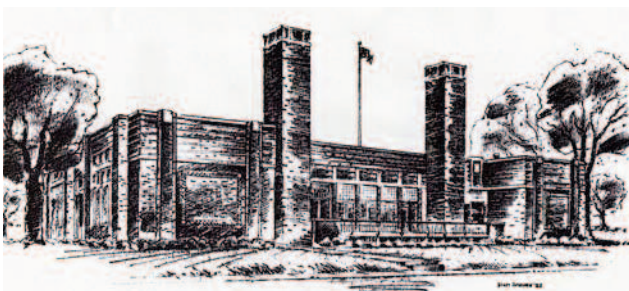
## CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE

*March, 2020*

### Of Possible Interest

Walt Sonnevill's recent remembrance of growing up in the Olde Town area drew the attention of Jill Seaholm. She asked if it might be shared on a Facebook page. I'm sure Walt wouldn't mind, and we certainly didn't.

For those of you who enjoy some of the history that Facebook pages supply, you might be interested in "liking" the William Carr Elementary School Alumni page. There are some interesting photos of the school's early days and comments by former students. Your editor (me) didn't personally go to that school, but I had friends who did, and I like anything pertaining to our local history. Especially the Olde Town area.



### Coming Back

Considered extinct in Flanders in the 1980s because their habitat had largely disappeared, otters have slowly been returning to the region thanks to environmental regeneration programs. But more needs to be done to secure the future for these cute little animals. A core of at least 10 otters is required for a stable population, as well as about 38 square miles of appropriate habitat.

Nature restoration increasing natural cover and water quality improvements will all help the otters' numbers increase even more. Corridors have already been built in some areas to help the otters negotiate roads and other natural barriers. But all of the efforts don't just help the otters. They are considered "umbrella species," because what is good for them is good for a wide range of other animals and plants.



(Thanks to *FlandersToday*)