



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

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December, 2020

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## Waffles are Back . . . sort of

There will be no “official” waffle breakfast in December, because of the State’s COVID guidelines. However, we will be **selling packages of frozen waffles** (four squares per package) at the Center **on December 5th**, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. The cost is \$4.00 per package. Please wear your mask when stopping by. The Center gift shop will also be open that day.

After December 5th, remaining waffle packages will be available at the Friends Circle.

## Birdies Thank You

The Center wishes to thank all who contributed to this year’s John Deere Classic Birdies for Charity program. While the golf tournament was cancelled this year due to COVID, the tournament went ahead with the Birdies program, recognizing it was important to a great number of not-for-profit organizations.

The CBC received \$2,230 in collected pledges and \$111.50 from the bonus program. This money is used only to fund the CBC’s scholarship program. Once again, THANK YOU!

## Tradition Continues

This year’s Armistice Day Last Post ceremony at Ypres’ Menin Gate (and all others) took a very different form thanks to COVID. Normally, up to 7,000 people would view the ceremony. This year, just six people were allowed to attend the service.

Wreaths were placed at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the bugler played the Last Post, and the traditional poem “For the Fallen” was recited. The ceremony was streamed live via Facebook.

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## Van Tieghem Scholarship

The Ruth Lambrick Van Tieghem Scholarship recognizes and encourages a deserving student who has completed at least two years of college and plans to continue with his/her education. This year's recipient is Kelli Kluever. She is a graduate of Annawan High School and attends St. Ambrose University. Her major is Nursing, with a minor in Biology. Kelli is an Illinois State Scholar and was the recipient of a CBC scholarship in 2017. She is active in the St. Ambrose Campus Ministry and Nurse's Christian Fellowship.

The Van Tieghem family is pleased to honor Kelli Kluever with its 2020 scholarship.

### **Ruth Lambrick Van Tieghem Scholarship Essay by Kelli Kluever**

In a time of various immigration crises, I can acknowledge how brave my ancestors were to be able to make the trip to America and create better lives for their families and those to come after them. It is incredible that the feat of traveling to America by a large, crowded boat was even possible. In my own family, both sets of my maternal VanDeVoorde great-great grandparents and my maternal great grandfather came over on a boat from Belgium sometime in the late 1800's to early 1900's to settle in my hometown of Annawan. Immigration has always been a huge risk, but a risk that my ancestors were willing to take to make a better life for their families and, soon after, for me. To honor the people that created such a wonderful and fulfilling life for me, I continue to value and learn more about Belgian culture.

Belgium is a small country with a lot of life placed right in the middle of France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Despite its small size, most of my hometown and maternal family are also of Belgian descent. Because most of us derived from the same place, my whole life has revolved around Belgian culture and I barely knew it. My hometown of Annawan, Illinois, is the site for the annual World Rolle Bolle tournament. It wasn't until I got to college that I realized not everyone knew about the sport from Belgium and thought I was nuts for talking about it. Part of carrying on culture is telling others about your customs that I myself am still learning.

In order to keep my family's culture alive, we must pass on our traditions and ideas to everyone we meet. This is especially easy at St. Ambrose University where one of the primary missions is spreading diversity and learning about other cultures. The university holds events constantly that share world cultures to educate other students. As I learn more and more

about my heritage, I found that Belgians also strongly respect family, pay close attention to appearance, and that punctuality is a sign of respect. I realized that these are all values that I myself take pride in and hadn't realized that I was living my heritage everyday. Punctuality is one of my best developed traits which I learned mostly from attending church.

Being Roman Catholic has become one of the most valued aspects of my cultural development. Without my heritage, who knows if I ever would have been as involved in the catholic faith as I am. This religion helps me to live out parts of my culture and positively change the course of my life. I learned to be punctual by going to church all the time as well as being clean and well dressed when attending mass. Spending time with my family and friends each Sunday at mass taught me the value of family and how important family truly is. My family has always made a point to remind the younger generations that our heritage is important and that we shouldn't forget where we came from. My grandmother used to tell me numbers in Belgian when she took care of me as a small child. She was born in America and was still able to pick up on some cultural pieces of Belgium from her dad who was born there. My great-uncle Hubert VanDeVoorde was in active member of the Belgian Culture Center for a long time and was a great example for my family. My great-aunt Diane, who is now a Catholic sister, has taught me about heritage as well and fueled my interest in the Catholic faith that many Belgians practice today.

I truly didn't spend much time thinking about my heritage until I got older and was able to look into it on my own. I have become more aware of how my morals and values that I was taught by my family are just reflections of my heritage that I care so much about. I am thankful that my ancestors were able to take the plunge to come to America and bring a little bit of home with them for me to learn and grow from.

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### **Tradition Continues**

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The Menin Gate arch bears the names of 54,395 Commonwealth soldiers who died in the Ypres Salient whose bodies have never been identified or found. The Last Post ceremony takes place every evening at 8:00 p.m. As the bugler says, "We don't do it for the audience; we do it above all for the names chiseled on the wall."

*(Thanks to FlandersToday)*

## Portrait Returns



A portrait of Francisco de Rojas has returned to Bruges. De Rojas was the descendant of a noble Spanish family and Ambassador of Spain to the Burgundian court. The portrait was painted by Hans Memling in the 15th century, and it provides important evidence of the Spanish presence in Bruges, when it was a trading center in the Middle Ages. The painting will be kept at St. John's Hospital, which is the Memling Museum.

Hans Memling was born in Germany about 1430 and was working in Brussels in 1465. He moved to Bruges and became one of the most influential artists in Northern Europe during his time. His religious works often incorporated portraits of his wealthy patrons.

The Memling work was donated through the King Baudouin Foundation U.S. by John William Middendorf. Middendorf studied naval science, served as an officer during WWII, then obtained BA and MBA degrees. He was an investment banker, but later served as U.S. Ambassador in the Netherlands (1969-73). Back in the states, he became Secretary of State for the U.S. Navy (1974-77) and represented the U.S. in the Organization of American States.

Middendorf's passion for art and especially the old masters led him to make the generous donation.

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## New Name, Same Taste

Many of you may know this product and enjoy it: Speculoos. You probably know it as Biscoff, a contraction of the words biscuit and coffee. The Lotus company that makes the cookie has raised the ire of Belgians, as the name Speculoos will soon disappear from its packaging there.

Lotus intends to make the cookies a global brand, which is why it has opted for the name Biscoff, with an international sound. The company's speculoos-based spread will also take the name. The announcement led to much criticism on social media, with most Belgians lamenting the loss of the traditional name – a reference to the flavor of the cookie itself.

In case you haven't tried it, locally Walgreens sells two packages of Biscoff cookies for \$5.00 and Aldi's sells the spread. I think you'll truly enjoy either product.



## The Weather Pays Off

Tom Pospisil, owner of Eriksen Chevrolet, presented a check for \$540 to the CBC for the dealership's Three Degree Guarantee program. Every month, a local nonprofit organization is selected to receive \$20 for each day of the month that the forecasted temperature per WQAD-TV is within the three-degree guarantee. The Center was the selected nonprofit for October 2020.



(l-r) Tom Pospisil (Eriksen Chevrolet), Barb and Patrick Van Nevel, Linda Polich, and James Zahara (WQAD).

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## **Virus Surges in Belgium**

The news tells us every night that COVID infections are surging in the U.S. The same is true in Belgium. There, runaway numbers of contamination give cause for the risk of the collapse of the hospital system. Medical staff that have tested positive, but don't show symptoms, are being asked to keep working because so many others are sick. Medical students are also being recruited to help. Belgium's infection rate is second only to the Czech Republic and is five times higher than in the United States. Regulations are being strengthened to help ease the pressure on the hospitals and staffs.

New measures to slow the infections now in place include: the closing of all non-essential retail outlets; the closing of contact-oriented non-essential services outside of medical services; restaurants and bars in hotels must close; higher education moves to 100% distance learning; teleworking is required where possible; parks are closed; and funerals are limited to 15 people. Households may only have one visitor at a time. All of the measures stay in place until at least December 13th.

Something everyone must do, whether in Belgium or the U.S., is mask up, wash hands frequently, and by all means, distance. Inconvenient? Yes. Does it work? Yes.

(Thanks to Walt Sonnevill and Werner Vols for providing information.)

## *News of the Membership*

*Thank You* to **Dick and Diane Van Bell**, and **Pami Triebel** for their monetary donations, and to **Maureen Simpson** for sponsoring Susan Rowland and Tom Olson for membership in the CBC. Your editor would especially like to thank **Chris Van Lancker** for her continued donation of work performing the layout of our monthly newsletter.

*Congratulations* to **Jim and Rosalie Van Speybroeck** on celebrating the 60th anniversary of their marriage.