



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

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www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



March 2022

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 6th	Waffle Breakfast Culemans Hall (see article)	7:45 to 12:30 a.m.
March 14th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
March 14th	Board Meeting	5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

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

March Waffles

Instead of our usual spot on the first Saturday of March, we will be serving waffles on Sunday, March 6th at Sacred Heart Church's Culeman Hall cafeteria from 7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Church goes and the public are welcome anytime during those hours. The Culeman Hall cafeteria entrance is on the southwest side of the building.

You will note another change beginning that day. We don't really want to, but as you all know, prices on just about everything have escalated. So have our waffle ingredients. Now, a full meal (waffle, sausage, and beverage) will cost \$9.00. One waffle and beverage will cost \$7.00 and an extra waffle or sausage will cost \$3.00.

It's still a good deal, as a restaurant breakfast will cost that or more. And you will be continuing to support your Center for Belgian Culture.

News of the Membership

Thank You to **Debbie and Mark Schwiebert** and **James Kron** for their generous donations to the CBC, and to all who recently updated their memberships or added some extra in paying for their waffle breakfasts.

Condolences are offered to the family of **Robert Hendrickx**, 93, formerly of Moline, who died February 7th at Silvercross at Friendship Manor, Rock Island.

OPEN Wednesday and Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Waffle Breakfast 1st Saturday of the month.

First U.S. Ambassador to Belgium

Journalist, attorney, author of numerous books, and politician are traits that fairly well describe Brand Whitlock. He skipped college and began writing for newspapers in Toledo and Chicago.

While in Illinois, he held a position in the Illinois Secretary of State's office and also studied law. Whitlock was admitted to the bar in 1894.

Returning to Toledo in 1897, he entered politics and ran as an Independent for the position of city mayor. He was elected four times from 1906 to 1914. He declined a fifth nomination as mayor when he was appointed minister to Belgium by President Wilson. When the First World War broke out, Whitlock's responsibilities were increased, as he was given representation for seven additional countries in wartime.

The skillful performance of the duties of that office won Whitlock an international reputation for tact, zeal, and efficiency. He ensured food aid sent by the



Committee for Relief in Belgium went to the Belgian citizens and not the German occupation forces.

When the U.S. declared war against Germany in April 1917, Whitlock needed to leave Belgium. He insisted on ensuring he accompanied other Americans out of Belgium and into neutral Switzerland.

After the signing of armistice in November 1918 and the restoration of the Belgian government, Whitlock returned to Brussels as minister. In 1919 he returned to the U.S. for a visit. While he was in the States, the U.S. representation in Belgium was raised to rank of an embassy, and Whitlock became the first ambassador to Belgium.

For his service to Belgium, Brand Whitlock received numerous honors, including the Order of Leopold knighthood. A boulevard in Brussels was also named for him.

Meet Patrick

This mini-bio was recently posted on Facebook by the Consulate General in New York. I thought it a good idea to reprint it here for all to see. And many thanks to Patrick for all he does to promote Belgium, the CBC, and Belgian heritage.

Patrick Van Nevel was appointed honorary consul for Iowa and Western Illinois in 2003.

Born in Deinze and raised in Vinkt, Patrick first visited the U.S. Heartland in 1974 and officially immigrated in 1981. His language skills and farm background qualified him for a job handling large farm properties for European owners. In 1984, he started his career in banking, to ultimately become Market President for a regional bank, from which he retired in 2018.

As an active member of the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, he has introduced numerous public and private leaders from the Western Illinois-Iowa region to Belgian diplomats, bankers and businessmen.

“As honorary consul, I promote Belgium in my jurisdiction of Iowa and Western Illinois. I maintain close contacts with Belgian officials and since my retirement from banking I have expanded my activities with historical organizations in Belgium, particularly those regions from where most of my jurisdiction's ancestors came from.”

The Belgian honorary consulate for Iowa and Western Illinois goes back to 1919. Belgian immigrants started to flock to the region in the 1800s. With the Midwestern U.S. climate similar to that of Belgium, it was an attractive region for Belgian farmers and laborers. The establishment of the honorary consulate in Moline, Illinois, in 1919 brought official Belgian representation to the area. Today, the Belgian influence can still be found throughout the Quad Cities.



A Bit of Olde Towne

In the past, I've asked for any photos you might have of the Olde Towne area. I received very few responses. I'm still on the lookout, but I came across a newspaper photo that shows the corner of 7th Street and 19th Avenue around 1920. The main focus of the photo was the William Carr School at that location. But what I found interesting was what else one can see in that photo.

The first thing I noticed was the streetcar tracks. Those tracks headed south and ended near the Karstens brick yard. Heading north, the tracks intersected with the 10th Street tracks, then on to 16th Avenue and west towards Rock Island.

The second thing I noticed was the boulevard. Yes, 19th Avenue had a boulevard that ran down its center, from 1st Street to 16th Street. From the photo, that boulevard looked quite young (note the small tree) and pleasant. Did I say pleasant?

Over the years, those small trees became large trees that formed a canopy over sections of 19th Avenue. And for some reason, starlings loved to roost in the trees along certain sections of the boulevard. Those sections were easy to spot, as the pavement was purple in color thanks to the birds, their berry eating, and what usually followed after the birds dined.

To reduce the starling population that made the mess, policemen would walk the boulevard with shotguns and fire up into the trees. The police were followed by groups of kids, picking up the spent shotgun shells as souvenirs (this "young kid" as well). A lot of birds lost their lives on those nights, much-welcomed by many residents along 19th Avenue.

In the mid-1950s, 19th Avenue was widened, repaved, and the boulevard was removed.



Beatles' Belgium Connection

It's sometimes odd where I find information to include in the newsletter. In this case, it was a website I view everyday called "justacarguy.blogspot.com." Recently I learned there was a Belgian connection to the Beatles.

Back in 1968, to avoid paying some large taxes to the English government, the Beatles formed a corporation with a unique name and logo; Apple Corps LTD. The logo, a granny smith apple, was designed from an idea by Beatle Paul McCartney. It was based on a painting that he owned by Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte. "The Son of Man" was a 1964 self-portrait of Magritte the painter, perhaps his best-known artwork.

That apple appears on records, films, publications, and was even on a boutique. All thanks to an inspiration from a Belgian.



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March, 2022

A Different Music on 7th Street



Joe Anderson

Belgians enjoyed music. St. Cecilia celebrations and the longevity of Note's Band proved that. But here's an interesting story told to your editor by Joe Anderson, a former radio announcer.

WQUA Radio signed on the air in 1946 and was looking for local programming. Through a group of students at Augustana College, the station aired a program of Swedish music on Sunday mornings.

The program became extremely popular. When the students graduated, WQUA turned to announcer Joe Anderson, who could speak Swedish, and asked him to take the program over. He could make additional money by selling advertising on the program.

He approached Wally Lundholm, the owner of the drug store on the southeast corner of 7th Street and 18th Avenue to see if he would be interested in advertising his drug store on the program "Swedish Music." Wally told him it would be a waste, as most of his clientele was Belgian. Anderson convinced Wally to try some ads at a reduced rate and see how it would all work out.

Anderson returned to the drug store after the ads had finished, wondering if maybe Wally had been correct. Asking Wally if he had any response to the advertising, Anderson was astonished. Wally purchased another month's worth.

Wally stated, "The response was great. My Belgian customers would come into the store and say they had no idea what the announcer was saying or the singer was singing, but they sure loved the music!"

The station aired the show for another three years.