

THE GAZETTE

Published for members of the SHAPE/Chièvres, Brussels and Schinnen communities

Housing Services Closure

The Housing Services Office will be closed Dec. 22 through Jan. 2. For personnel residing in Army Family Housing or in the barracks, you can contact the MPs at DSN 361-5301 or civilian 068-27-5301 if you have maintenance issues with your quarters or require any assistance. This service is for emergencies only. If you are sponsoring someone who will arrive during this period, have your chain of command contact the Housing Office immediately. For people living in the local economy, review the Winter Prevention Tips on page 9.

For further information, contact the Housing Office at DSN 366-6387/6437 or civilian 065-32-6387/6437.

Holiday schedules

The holiday operating hours schedule have been included in this Gazette. To check the hours, go to page 13 through 15.

Road conditions

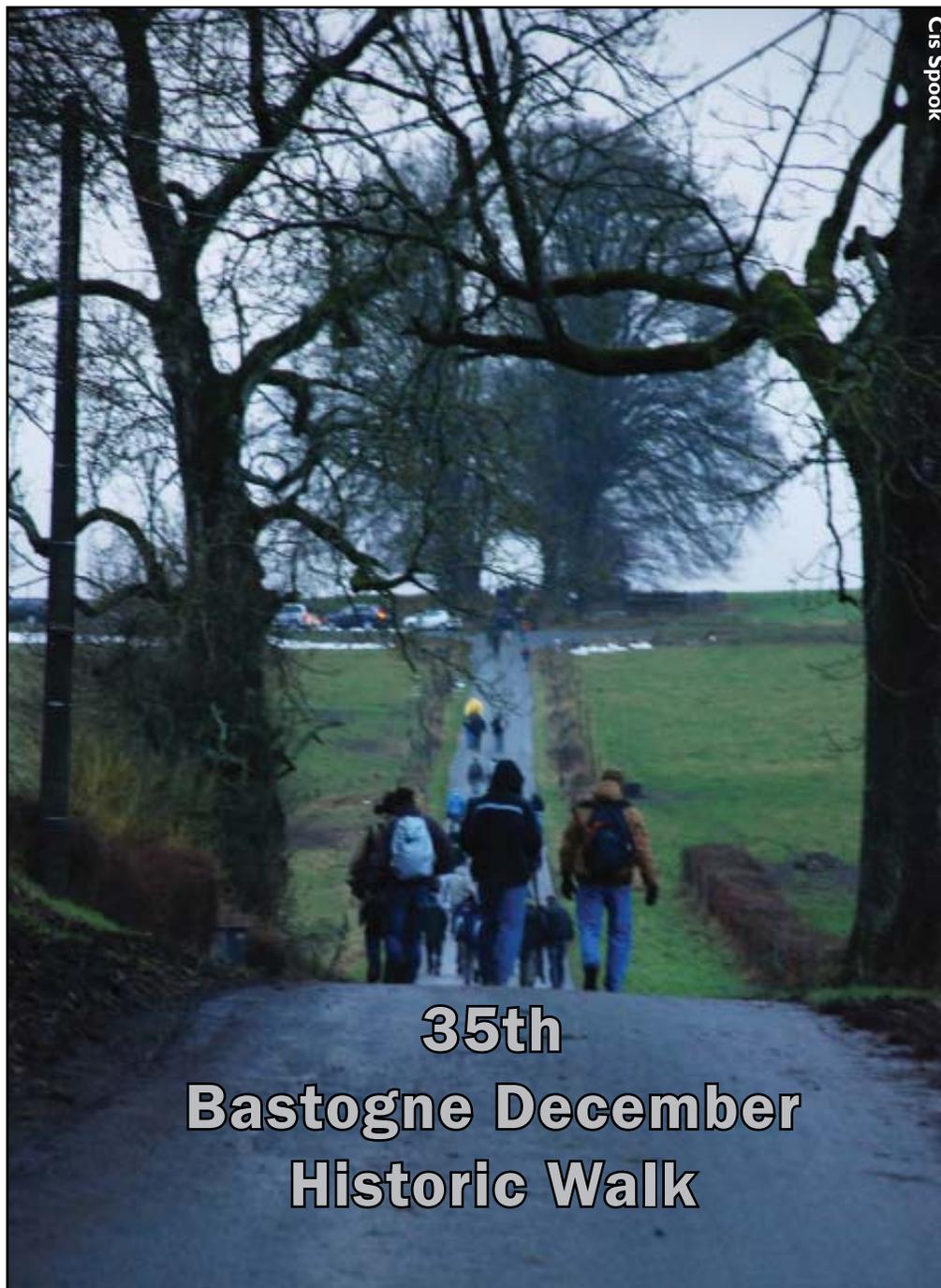
To check the road conditions in your area, go to www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil/ and click on the road condition link at the bottom left of the home page.

No Gazette until 2013

The Gazette will not be published for the remainder of 2012. The next edition will come out Jan. 7.

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Cis Spook

35th Bastogne December Historic Walk

Some 3,000 Service members, civilians and re-enactors from various nationalities, participated in the 35th Historic Walk highlighting this year the sector of Hemroulle and the 502nd Para Regiment.

See also page 4 and 5

Winter Fest in Brussels



Michelle Rothbauer



Keith Houin

(above) Santa leads the children in Christmas carols broadcast live on AFN radio at the 3-Star Community Club Thursday, December 13, 2012 during the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux-Brussels Winter Fest and tree lighting ceremony. The event had a soup and sandwich bar and arts and crafts activities for the children. (right) Children were coloring and creating decorations to take home for holiday decorating.

THE GAZETTE

To subscribe, email usarmy.benelux.imcom-europe.list.pao@mail.mil

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Holiday message from your garrison commander

by **Col. Sergio M. Dickerson**

Commander, U.S. Army Garrison Benelux

Our festive holiday season is a time for joyous celebrations and gathering with family and friends to share the joy of the season. But it can also be a time for tragic and costly accidents if we don't pay attention to simple safety rules. Suffering and heartaches are almost certainly involved for the accident victims and their loved ones. No one wants future holidays to be the anniversary of the loss of a loved one. Our number-one priority during this time will be ensuring the safety and welfare of our Soldiers and civilians to include Host Nation employees, and family members. Our goal is not a single death over the holiday period – from now through New Year's Day. To reach this goal, we must all be fully committed to safety for the entire period and pay particular attention to the hazards, which are present during this time of the year.

Increased travel and deteriorating weather conditions significantly increase the risk involved with driving during the holidays. The primary risk factors include speed, fatigue, failure to wear seatbelts, and alcohol. Remember, there are many more alcohol impaired drivers on the highways during the Holiday period, so defensive driving is a must. Approach the season as you would any mission: plan ahead, conduct risk management, and execute to standard. Leaders and supervisors, engage your soldiers with informal discussion or counseling to help them identify and mitigate the hazards associated with this time of year. Instill in them the sense of individual responsibility, and let them know that their choices not only affect themselves, but their family, friends, and coworkers.

Winter weather in Europe and Benelux is extremely dangerous with reduced hours of daylight, black ice, fog, and snow, combined with roads crowded with holiday travelers, which creates dangerous driving conditions. Preparation is one of the keys to reducing these hazards.

The holiday season is also accompanied by an increase in cold-weather recreation activities and sports, such as hiking, skiing, or skating, which create additional risks to Soldiers, civilians, and family members. You must take every precaution necessary, on both individual and group level, to avoid tragedies and to make sure you return to your home alive. I ask you to use your influence as leaders, family members and friends to keep everyone safe during this special time and as we move forward into 2013. The simple act of looking out for one another is key to ensuring a joyous holiday celebration for all. I ask you all to adhere to the following:

- Off-duty vehicular accidents remain the number-one killer in the Army, and most serious injuries are from sports and physical activities. If you plan to travel ensure your vehicle is in good condition for the winter season.

Likewise, if you intend to participate in winter sports, ensure that you are properly prepared for the sport and wear the proper attire. Overconfidence and lack of preparation are the leading causes of winter sports-related accidents.

- As winter approaches, the hours of daylight will decrease and fog will be more common. These factors, along with inclement weather – rain, sleet, and snow – lead to decreased visibility and slippery roads. Drivers must be prepared for a variety of dangerous, icy road conditions, including black ice, glare ice, and white ice. The best way to combat this increased risk is to slow down. Also keep an eye on the weather forecast. If the forecast indicates bad or worsening weather, postpone your travel until conditions improve. Check the road conditions before hitting the road.

- Fatigue affects reaction time. Recent studies indicate that fatigue may be as dangerous to drivers as the consumption of alcohol. A recent article published by the Belgian Institute for Road Safety states that fatigue is the primary cause in 10 to 20% of accidents. Make sure you get enough sleep before a long drive. Very often a 15 minute rest break is sufficient to recover. Also, avoid traveling alone; use the buddy system to increase the probability of a safe journey. The best approach to safe travel is plenty of rest before and frequent breaks during the trip, and never – never – drink and drive.

This time of the year also increases the risk of household fires. Decorations such as trees, candles, and electrical lights and devices all increase the risk of fire in the home during the holidays. Don't overload electrical circuits. When using a live Christmas tree, water it and keep it away from open fires (candles). Use only fuel recommended by manufacturer in stoves and ensure proper maintenance. Carbon-monoxide hazards should not be ignored. Children playing with lighters and matches are a significant risk. The cooking demands of the holidays are another area of concern that needs to be addressed. Other issues associated with holiday celebrations include food safety, decorations, responsible party hosting, "safe gift" giving, and plant safety, illegal use of fireworks and resultant injuries.

Taking above measures can save your life. We must all be engaged for safety – on- and off-duty.

If you witness an unsafe act, don't walk by; take action! We are all responsible for looking out for one other to eliminate crashes that kill our Soldiers and civilian employees. You must do your part. With everyone's awareness and participation, our goal of No Loss of Life and No Injury is absolutely achievable. Enjoy this Holiday Season, with the intention of coming back alive!

Thank you for what you do every day for our Soldiers, Families and civilians. I wish you and yours a happy, blessed and safe holiday season

Bastogne I continued



(From left to right) Sgt. Gregory Roberts, Sgt. Alexander Frye, Belgian Army Adjutant Chef Henri Plessiet and Sgt. Matthew Schroeder, the joint U.S. and Belgian Color Guard heads the parade to Gen. Patton's and Gen. McAuliffe's monuments for the traditional wreath laying ceremonies during the Battle of the Bulge commemorations in Bastogne, December 15, 2012.



The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Soldiers march behind the Belgian Soldiers in the official parade. (U.S. Army photos by Cis Spook)



Col. Sergio M. Dickerson, Commander, U.S. Army Garrison Benelux and Marcel D'Haese, Chairman of the 5th Fusiliers Battalion who fought alongside Soldiers of the 1st U.S. Army in the Battle of the Bulge, salute after laying a wreath at Gen. McAuliffe's monument during the official commemorations in Bastogne, December 15, 2012.



Re-enactors set up various camps along the route of the 35th Historic Walk held during the commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, December 15, 2012; this one was inside the Château Rolley where the 502nd Para Regiment settled its command post late December 1944.

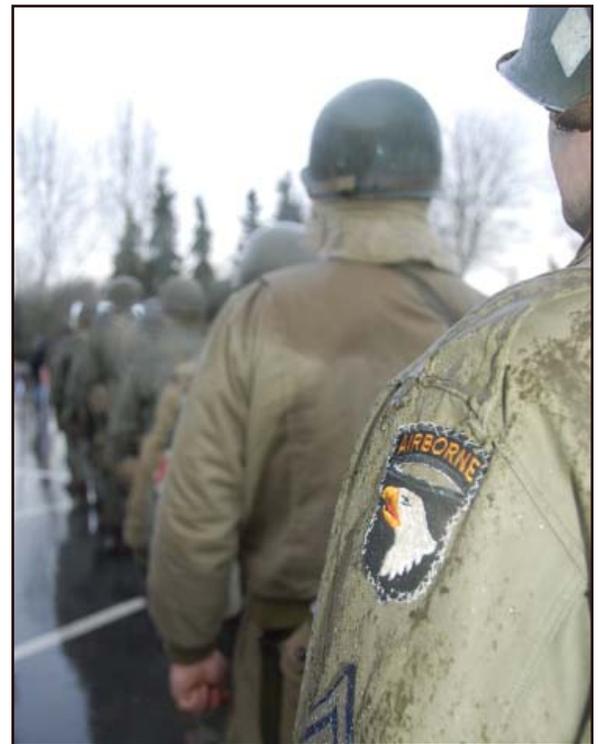
Bastogne I continued



U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Soldiers salute during the wreath laying ceremony at Gen. Patton's monument, honoring all those who served during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 – January 1945. (U.S. Army photos by Cis Spook)



Cristian Ramos, an American boy who attended the Battle of the Bulge commemorations with his dad stationed in Landstuhl, Germany, shows respect while saluting at McAuliffe's monument in Bastogne, December 15, 2012.



Re-enactors wear the uniform of Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division to pay tribute and honor those who served during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 – January 1945.

Jewish Army veteran recounts World War II

by Molly Hayden

It's been nearly 70 years since the end of World War II, but for 87-year-old U.S. Army veteran Gilbert Unger, some memories refuse to fade.

"I was so naïve then," said Unger of his 19-year-old self, admitting that at the time he didn't realize he was making history. "As a Jewish Soldier I was a needle in a haystack. There were very few of us."

His legacy, however, comes not from his ethnicity, but for his selfless service dedicated to refugees at the close of the war.

Unger was a machine gunner assigned with the 90th Infantry Division during World War II. First landing on the beach in Normandy shortly after D-Day, Unger and his unit continued to fight during the Battle of the Bulge, moving on to Germany and what was then Czechoslovakia. For more than a year, he was in daily contact with the enemy.

"Some units would disengage, but not us," said Unger.

As the war ended, he was reassigned to Headquarters Company as a clarinet player in the Army Band and sent to Weiden, a small German town 13 miles east of the Grafenwoehr Training Area. Unger, along with his son, Philip Unger, and daughter, Amy Ramer, visited the training area, Oct. 26, to relive history.

He reminisced fondly about his first arrival to Weiden in 1945.

"I remember it was a really nice, neat little town. It was not damaged, I saw no evidence of bombing," said Unger. But it was the ladies of the town that influenced his impression the most.

"They were all wearing lipstick," he said with one eyebrow raised. "It had been awhile since we had seen such a thing."

Unger was not immune to the destructions of the war. His division liberated the concentration camp at Flossenbürg, Germany, on April 28, 1945.

He received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat when a piece of shrapnel from an anti-personnel bomb lodged into his thigh -- although he claims that wasn't his worst injury; he witnessed death and saw his enemy up close. It wasn't until his arrival to Weiden, however, that the residual eventuality of war stared Unger in the face.

"Jewish refugees would pass through searching for family, searching for anyone," said Unger. "Since there weren't any particular duties for me to do, I spent the time trying to do what I could for them."

Weiden acted as a distribution point for refugees from the East trying to find their way west said Unger, adding that most would travel on to Palestine after passing through Weiden.

"We had big signs, kiosks, and on them were lists of names where people could see after their relatives -- where they went, what happened to them," explained Unger. "Most of them did not reconnect with family, but we still posted their information and gathered supplies for their journey. And we did this on our own. It was not part of our duty."

Unger said he felt a connection with the refugees, becoming quite friendly with many of the passersby, although, he recounted, he never pried into their personal lives.

"I never asked what their background was, if they were ever prisoners of war or in a concentration camp -- I never asked and the subject never came up," said Unger. "I just helped them focus on the recovery."

A reported 500,000 American Jews fought during World War II, making up roughly three percent of the U.S. Army, according to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. An obvious minority, Unger said he often felt discrimination, but kept his sights on the freedom and well-being of the persecuted minorities.

"All I can say is I was very, very proud of the way I handled myself in all situations to bring pride to both my outfit and myself."

"Some things you never forget," he added.



Gilbert Unger



KEEPING YOU CONNECTED

The Official Website of the American Forces Network Benelux

Brussels: 101.7 FM – Chièvres 107.9 FM – SHAPE 106.5 FM and 104.2 FM

Bucket list debuts on garrison website

Since the new Benelux website stood up we've gotten some great feedback and have made some changes based on what you had to say. The site is there for you and we will continue to add new features, such as the Bucket List. You can see the holiday edition now at www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil/community_life/bucketlist.html.

When you click on an item a panel will open up with information about the item as well as links for the weather, train schedule, local maps, similar activities and other links to make your travel planning easier.

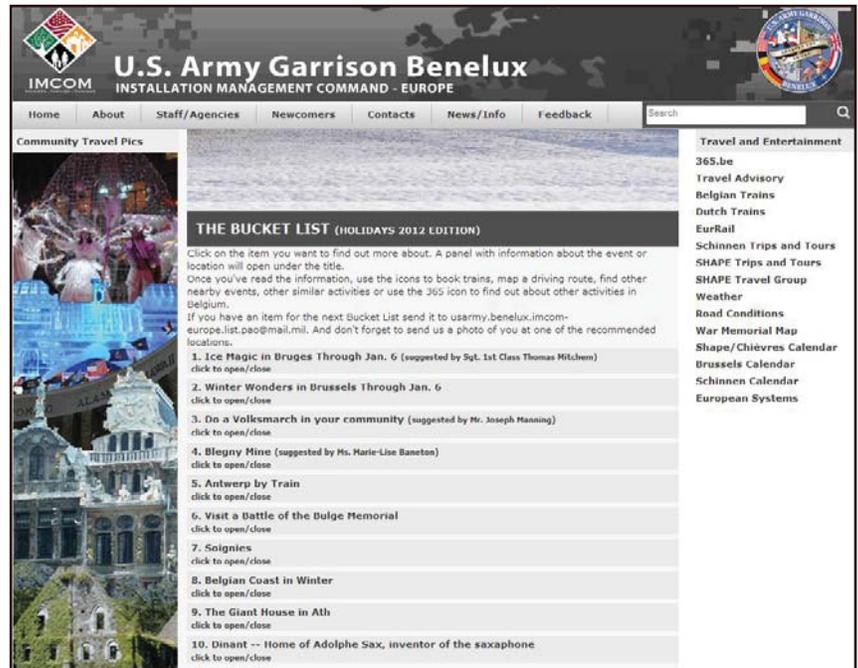
On the right side of the page you'll find even more links to help you plan out your time. All three community calendars, travel advisories, road conditions, other location or topic maps, trips and tour links, travel group links and more.

At the moment the left column is just a few list item photos, but if you send us a photo of you or a family member at a bucket list location, we'll put it on the page. A few of the current bucket list items will end with Holidays and be replaced with something else, so make sure to check regularly. If you have an idea to replace those holiday season only items, send them our way with a little bit of information about the location or event and we'll give you credit for the recommendation if we use it.

We'll keep every bucket list available on the site in case you can't make one during the release period.

More changes are coming as well. An all new Community Portal is in the works, but we need your help to put it together. What are the most important things you are looking for?

Send your suggestions to usarmy.benelux.imcom-europe.list.pao@mail.mil.



Crime Prevention Tips

- Never leave a spare key concealed anywhere near the front door - Burglars know all the hiding places
- Prevent letterbox burglaries by storing keys away from the front door
- Do not label your house keys in case you lose them and they fall into the wrong hands
- Remove temptation:
 - Where possible, keep valuables out of sight from windows
 - Make it look as though your house is occupied
 - Install timers that switch lights or radios on and off automatically
 - Have a neighbor or friend pop round to clear your letterbox or doorstep.
 - Encourage a neighbor to park in your driveway.
 - If going out after dark, draw the curtains, leave some lights on and a radio playing.
- If you are away for extended periods:
 - Don't forget to cancel the delivery of milk, mail

- and newspapers.
 - Disconnect the telephone answering machine, or re-word your greeting message to give the impression that you are only temporarily unavailable to answer.
 - Enlist the help of a trusted neighbor, friend or relative to keep a regular eye on your property and keep the front door clear of deliveries.
 - If you are prepared to leave a key with a neighbor/relative, ask for curtains to be drawn and lights to be put on at night. If snow is on the ground a few footprints will make the house appear occupied.
 - Check your insurance policy. Some insurance policies don't cover contents if you are away for more than 30 days.
 - Set your security alarm. (If it is activated, make sure that it can be checked and re-set.)
 - If you do not have a security alarm, consider investing a few Euros in a dummy alarm box. It may deter the opportunist burglar.

SHAPE anti drug campaign winners are awarded

The award ceremony of the SHAPE Anti-Drug Awareness and Prevention Campaign Poster Contest took place Friday, December 14, 2012, at the SHAPE International School. This year, 190 students from grades 7 to 12 participated in the contest sponsored by the Base Support Group. Wing Commander Mark Appleton, Security and Emergency Services Branch Head and Representing Col. Douglas Bentley, Base Support Group Commander congratulated all the participants (background). The posters on the podium this year were made by Erin Reich, 10th Grade American High School, who won first place (top), Katerina Zlatnikova, 9th Grade American High School, who won 2nd place (center) and Annelise Blanchard, 12th Grade American High School, who won third place (bottom). (U.S. Army photos by Donovan Abrassart)



Winter housing maintenance, prevention tips

Heating system

In winter time, you must maintain heat in your house even if you are away.

So do not turn off the furnace, gas or electricity. Just turn down the thermostat or/and the thermostatic valves. If the property is oil or propane heated, you need to check the gauge or measure the oil or gas level in the tank before running out of oil/gas. The companies might not be able to deliver the oil or propane because of bad weather or long waiting list for deliveries. Don't forget to turn off the furnace before the delivery and to wait at least one hour before restarting it. If the oil tank is above ground and outside the building, ask the oil company to add anti-freeze while delivering.

Away for the Christmas holidays?

Have your house checked by a friend, a neighbor, your landlord... The heating system could stop working; you could have a water leak inside the house or even on the roof... Don't forget to leave your landlord's information with whoever is looking after your house.

Maintenance of heating system

For oil systems, maintenance has to be performed once a year, for gas once every other year. Regular maintenance of heating systems helps to limit untimely repairs. Fireplaces, if used, have to be maintained at least once a year. Most leases states that the landlord is responsible for the maintenance of your heating system and cleaning of the chimney. If you are not sure when the last maintenance was performed, check with your landlord, or contact the

housing office for assistance

Utilities

Make sure that all your bills are paid on time to avoid the utilities companies from stopping the service. Reactivation after a cut can take up to a week and can be costly.

Plumbing

Protect water and heating pipes which are located in unheated areas. Some houses have water pipes located in the garage or in the basement. These pipes can easily freeze in extremely cold weather and will cut off water to the heating system. This will cause your heating system to fail, recommend all pipes be protected with some type of covering. Turn off the valve and drain all outside faucets, these can freeze also.

Mold

Even when the weather is a bit milder, leave the heat on to prevent mildew growing. Belgium is a wet country, so if you do not leave a minimum of heat in the house, even in the rooms that you don't use, and if you do not ventilate the house regularly, mildew may become an issue.

Gutters and drains

Clean up gutters and outside drains. Remove leaves and dirt that could clog the drainage.

Snow

The occupant is responsible for preventing accidents by removing snow and frost from the sidewalks in front of his/her property.

Ponds

Make sure that all necessary actions have been taken.

Important contacts

Mazout/ gas	Martens Energy	065/22.14.22
	Bavay	064/66.24.07
	Esso Mons	065/35.55.36
Gas propane	Gas Shell	081/40.81.40
	Esso gas	069/22.31.51
ORES	078/15.78.01	
Electrabel	078/35.33.33	
SWDE	087/87.87.87	
Septic Tank	Ribeaucourt	065/62.03.14
	Dour vidange	065/65.32.47
	Vidange Net	065/66.03.14 or 0485/57.25.51
	Renova bulex	081/22.43.41
Furnace/Plumbers	Paindavoine	067/44.48.24
	Marechal services	065/32.88.88
	Confort Ideal	065/72.81.36
Electricians	Framelec	065/67.28.11
	STE	065/31.70.20
Locksmiths	Merlin	0475/72.02.94
	Bonange	0477/24.46.99
Glass repairmen	Miroiterie Montoise	065/35.23.99
	Raes	065/76.09.09 or 065/32.12.83

Emergency numbers

Any emergency
112 from Belgium
or the Netherlands

Chièvres MP station
DSN 361-5301
Civilian 068-27-5301

SHAPE Police Desk
DSN 423-3333/4
Civilian 065-44-3333/4

Brussels MP station
DSN 368-9769
Civilian 02-717-9769

Schinnen MP station
DSN 360-7555
Civilian 046-443-7555

Shoplifting increases in U.S. Army Europe

by **Robert Szostek**

U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal Public Affairs Office

There has been a steep increase in the number of shoplifting incidents within the U.S. Army in Europe since the beginning of November, say officials with USAREUR's Office of the Provost Marshal. OPM officials report that USAREUR military police registered 32 shoplifting cases between November 1 and December 5, versus fewer than 20 for the previous three months.

Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Cieslewski, the OPM provost sergeant major, said would-be shoplifters should know they are likely to get caught and face hefty penalties.

"If you feel tempted to shoplift ... don't do it," Cieslewski said. "The consequences are serious and the risk of getting caught is just too great."

"If you see anybody in a store take something without paying, report it to a salesperson, security guard or cashier," he added.

OPM officials noted that during the holiday season retailers such as post exchange facilities increase their human, video and electronic surveillance and detection operations to prevent shoplifting.

Cieslewski warned that shoplifting can have lasting effects on an Army career and civilian life after leaving the Army. And because violators are not attempting to steal

big-ticket items – officials said that often the cost of the stolen items amounts to less than \$20 – it's a big risk for a small potential payoff.

"Regardless of the cost of the item, shoplifting is still a crime with all the attendant repercussions and the time-worn cliché that 'crime doesn't pay' applies, especially in these circumstances," Cieslewski continued.

OPM officials said that while their statistics show the recent spike in incidents has involved more junior enlisted Soldiers than any other group within the U.S. forces in Europe community, violators come from every group: family members; enlisted, NCO and officer servicemembers; and civilians.

Shoplifting is an expensive problem for which everybody pays the price, OPM officials said.

It hurts consumers because prices go up as retailers cover losses and fund security personnel, programs and equipment.

They recommended checking out the National Crime Prevention Council pamphlet available at www.npc.org/resources/files/pdf/theft/shoplifting.pdf for more information on shoplifting and its costs to individuals, families and communities.

Some electronics illegal in Belgium

Special to the Gazette

Not all wireless electronics from the US are legal in Belgium. The Frequency Management Department actively monitors for frequency disruptions and may come to your house if interference is detected

The following frequencies are banned for private use:

- 49-50 MHz Frequency (baby monitors)
- 900-960 and 1900 MHz Frequency (phones, speakers, etc)

Check your device for the following symbols.

Legal in Belgium:



Check operating frequency:



Restricted device (permit required):



Penalties under Belgian Law for disruption of frequencies:

- Confiscation of the wireless device(s)
- A fine ranging from 50-50,000 Euro
- Confinement penalty of up to 1 year.

Do not use illegal wireless devices in Belgium. If you are found to have them by the Belgium Government.

The Belgian Institute of Postal Services & Telecommunications (BIPT) will come to your door.

BIPT personnel will be in civilian clothes, and ask to confiscate your illegal wireless device(s).

Do not let them in. Politely explain that you would like to verify their status first.

Call the Military Police Desk 02-717-9769.

You are subject to Belgian Laws, follow instructions from MPs or local Belgian Police.



Visit us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/pages/USAG-Benelux

www.facebook.com/TriBorderCommunity

www.facebook.com/Benelux.Brussels.Community

community briefs - community briefs - community briefs

Wiesbaden and Heidelberg lodging

Wiesbaden and Heidelberg Lodging will be offering special weekend rates every Friday and Saturday in December. Special rates apply to Friday and Saturday nights only. Reservations will be accepted no earlier than the Wednesday before the weekend and must be guaranteed with a credit card at time of booking. Rooms available are limited and are on a firstcome, first-served basis.

- For Reservations in Wiesbaden Lodge call DSN 335-5504 or civilian 0611-723760 or email at reservations@wiesbadenlodge.com.
- For Reservations in Heidelberg Lodge call DSN 370-1700 or civilian 06221-795100 or email at usaghd.guesthouse@mail.mil.

Holiday Mailing Deadlines

To ensure your packages sent to the United States are delivered before Christmas, mail them no later than these dates:

18 December Express Mail

Valid for all three communities: SHAPE/
Chièvres, Brussels and Schinnen.

Postal Holiday hours

The postal holiday hours in the three communities are as follows:

SHAPE - Monday through Friday

Postal Finance, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Parcel Pick-up, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For mail by appointment (five or more parcels), call DSN 366-6311.

Chièvres - Monday through Friday

Postal Finance, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Parcel Pick-up, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Schinnen- Monday through Friday

Regular hours.
Also open for customer service and parcel pick up noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 15 and 22. Parcel pickup only 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dec. 24.
See also the holiday operating hours schedule by community in this Gazette..

Andrews Federal Credit Union

For those who want to learn the Ten Steps of getting a Federal Job and you don't have time to come to the class at ACS, you can now sign up for an Online version and do it

on your own time on your own computer. If interested, you'll need to be registered at ACS and sign a disclosure form. You will then be given a user name and password and the link to this training. It's easy and great information to get you started on a career in the federal government. If interested or want more information call DSN 360-7269 / 423-5324 or civilian 31(0)46-443-7269 / 32(0)65-44-5324, or stop by the employment readiness office at the ACS.

CYSS

Homeschool extras

As of Dec. 11, registration will open for session II of Home-school Extras running from Jan. 15 to May 28. Registration is at the Parent Central Services, SHAPE Bldg. 503 Mon-Fri from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (appointments only) and 1:30 to 5 p.m. (walk-ins welcome). You can also register at SAC Dec. 11 and 18. Classes will take place every tuesday from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Fee is \$96 for 16 sessions.

Brussels Volleyball Camp

Registration for the volleyball camp runs trough Jan. 7. For more information call DSN 368-9651 or civilian 02-717-9651.

SHAPE/Chièvres SKIES Unlimited

Enrollment for piano, French,swimming, dance, Tae Kwon Do, gymnastics and tennis for the Jan. 21 through March 19 session are as follows:

- Re-registration is through Dec 21.
- New-registration is Jan 2 through 11.

For registration times and additional information call DSN 423-5612 or civilian 065-44-5612.

Volunteers and hires wanted

The Northern Law Center is looking for military spouses or family members to assist as volunteers or hires during the upcoming tax season.

This is a great opportunity to gain technical and practical experience in tax preparation. The free training is conducted by an IRS representative. Space is limited. For more information, contact the Northern Law Center at DSN 423-3903 or civilian 065-44-3903.

My Army life in photos

Capture your best Army moments for a chance to win great prizes. This Family & MWR photography contest ends Dec. 19. Weekly winners will be awarded for submitting photos in the following categories:

- Theme 1: Army Strong Families
- Theme 2: HOOAH Homecomings
- Theme 3: Vacation Fun
- Theme 4: Patriotic Pets
- Theme 5: MWR Moments

Participants may enter at any time during the promotion. Submit your photos at www.armymwr.com/photocontest.aspx.

||| = BENELUX NEWS ||| = ||| = BENELUX NEWS ||| =

New famous resident in Belgium

French actor Gérard Depardieu has bought a house in Néchin, near Tournai and near the French border. Taking his residency in Belgium is a way for him to evade from the French tax for the rich and thus will have to live at Néchin at least 6 month a year.

Record amount on Belgian savings accounts

In October, the amount of cash parked on Belgian savings accounts totaled an unprecedented 230 billion euros. The amount is 1 billion up on the previous record set the month before. It shows that despite low interest rates given by the banks, many Belgians are putting money aside in times of crisis. Belgians have always had a strong reputation as savers. This new record is bad news for our economy as every penny that's being saved, is not being spent. Belgium is battling high number of bankruptcies among starting entrepreneurs and self-employed who have their own business.

35% of Dutch women don't have a paid job

The proportion of working women on the Dutch labor market remained unchanged at around 64% in 2010 and 2011. By contrast, 80% of men have a job. The economic crisis is partly to blame as many women have lost their jobs. But an increase in the cost of childcare may also have encouraged women to stop working.

Dutch retirement pay

Most Dutch workers will end up with a retirement pay worth around half their last-earned salary, not 70% as most people think. Retirement pay has been reduced by 15% to 35% over the past 15 years because of a mixture of new rules. The biggest change dates back to 2002 when retirement pay was no longer based on the final salary but rather on the average salary. Other changes include the increase in the state retirement age and the government's plans to reduce the amount workers set aside for their retirement.

Dutch men's hockey

The Dutch men's hockey team recently lost the final of the Champion's Trophy 1-2 to defending champions Australia. The Dutch men's team has not won a title since it took the European championship in 2007 but won silver in the 2012 Olympics.

Belgian Budget

The Belgian National Bank recently predicted that, whereas the Government had calculated its 2013 budget based on an expected growth of 0.7 percent, growth will in fact be at zero percent in 2013, which means that an additional 2.4 billion Euros will need to be found in order to maintain the deficit at 2.15 percent of the GDP. The Bank also predicted that unemployment will go up from 7.4 to 8.1 percent. The Bank also explained that a lower growth is not the only reason why the Government will need to

find additional money, the other reason being that the other levels of power – i.e. the regions and communities, the provinces, and the cities and communes – have not made the budget efforts they had to make.

Volvo Gent

Event when the other car factories in Belgium are struggling or shutting down, Volvo Gent is doing OK thanks to the XC60 gas efficient SUV that is produced in Gent. Sales in the U.S. of this car have risen by 47% this year. Demand in China for this SUV has also increased significantly.

Belgian Airline

The Belgian Government recently approved a package of measures to help the Belgian airline sector – and mainly Brussels Airlines – in the amount of 20 million Euros per year, the objective being to enable airlines based in Belgium to compete on an equal footing with low cost airlines operating in Belgium but based in countries where taxes are lower.

Westvleteren trappist beer in the U.S.

The world-renowned Trappist ale from the Abbey of Saint Sixtus in the West Flemish village of Westvleteren has proved a big success with beer-lovers in the United States. The beer sold out in the first day that it went on sale in specialized beer outlets across the US. A total of 15,000 packs containing six 33cl bottles of Westvleteren 12 and 2 glasses priced at \$85 were sold at 140 liquor stores in cities all over America. Despite the high price of more than 10 Euros per bottle, the beer sold like hot cakes. There were even queues outside some shops selling the beer. All supplies of the beer were sold out within 24 hours. Meanwhile several packs of Westvleteren have appeared on internet auction sites.

Westvleteren 12 is an internationally renowned Trappist beer. It has been awarded prizes for “the best beer in the world” on several occasions.

The American network ABC called the Westvleteren Trappist “one of the world's most elusive and praised beers. The profits made by the sale of the beer will go towards renovation work at the Abbey of Saint Sixtus where the beer is brewed.

Dutch agreement on new wind turbines

National and provincial government representatives have reached an agreement on the locations for hundreds of new wind turbines, ending years of dispute. The bulk of the new wind parks and turbines will be located in Flevoland province, where strong winds are most prevalent. Groningen and Zuid-Holland provinces will also take a large percentage of the new wind parks. Between 4% and 5% of the Netherlands' energy usage is currently derived from sustainable sources but the government wants to boost the total to 16% within the next seven years. Wind power is a central part of that policy.

SHAPE/Chièvres Official Holiday Schedules

SHAPE/Chièvres HOLIDAY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

	SHAPE Parcel Pick-up	SHAPE Postal Finance	Chièvres Parcel Pick-up	Chièvres Postal Finance	Fitness Center	ACS	Benelux Finance	Library	Gate 1 to Chièvres Air Base	Pers. Property Procs./ Drivers Trg & Testing, Motor Pool	SATO	CIF/ HazMat/ SSA/ Maintenance/ PBO
Dec. 23									closes at 23:59			
Dec. 24	0730-1900	closed	0730-1900	closed	0900-1700		1000-1400	closed	closed	closed	0800-1600	closed
Dec. 25	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Dec. 26					0900-1700		closed	0900-1700	closed	closed	0800-1600	closed
Dec. 27					0900-1700		1000-1400	0900-1700	closed	closed	0800-1600	closed
Dec. 28					0900-1700		closed	0900-1700	closed	closed	0800-1600	closed
Dec. 29					0900-1700		closed	0900-1700	closed	closed	closed	closed
Dec. 30					0900-1700		closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Dec. 31					0900-1700		closed	closed	closed	closed	0800-1600	closed
Jan. 1	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Jan. 2									closed		0800-1600	closed
Jan. 3									closed			
Jan. 4									closed			
Jan. 5									opens at 0000			

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

SHAPE/Chièvres HOLIDAY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

	PX	PXtra	Commis-sary	Anthony's	Burger King	Auto Skills	Kennel	Vehicle Processing	CYSS	Housing Office	Self Help (DPW)	Shuttle bus	Chièvres IACS	AFCU
Dec. 22										closed		no service		
Dec. 23						closed				closed		no service		
Dec. 24	1000-1800	1000-1800	1000-1600	closed	1100-1800	closed	0900-1200 1300-1500			closed	closed	no service	closed	closed
Dec. 25	closed	closed	closed			closed	0900-1200 1300-1500	closed	closed	closed	closed	no service	closed	closed
Dec. 26			closed			closed				closed	closed	no service	1300-1600	
Dec. 27						closed				closed	closed	no service	1300-1600	
Dec. 28						closed				closed	closed	no service	1300-1600	
Dec. 29						closed				closed	closed	no service	closed	
Dec. 30						closed				closed	closed	no service	closed	
Dec. 31	closed	1000-2000	1000-1800			closed	0900-1200 1300-1500			closed	closed	no service	closed	0900-1500
Jan. 1	1100-1800	1100-1800	closed	1100-1800	closed	closed	0900-1200 1300-1500	closed	closed	closed	closed	no service	closed	closed
Jan. 2											closed		1300-1600	
Jan. 3											closed		1300-1600	
Jan. 4											closed		1300-1600	

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

SHAPE/Chièvres Emergency numbers

Any emergency - Dial 112

Chièvres MP station, DSN 361-5301 or civilian 068-27-5301

SHAPE Police Desk, DSN 423-3333/4 or civilian 065-44-3333/4

Brussels Official Holiday Schedules

Brussels Holiday Community Calendar

	FMWR Admin	ACS	Fitness Center	CYSS	Library	Three-star Lounge	Auto Skills	Finance	Parcel Mailing	Parcel Pick-up	AFCU
Dec. 24	0800-1700	0800-1600	0700-1500	closed	closed	closed	closed	1000-1400			0900-1300
Dec. 25	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Dec. 26	0800-1500	0800-1600	0700-1700	0800-1500	1100-1600	closed	closed	closed			
Dec. 27	closed	0800-1600	closed	0800-1500	1100-1600	closed	closed	0900-1600			
Dec. 28	0800-1700	0800-1600	0700-1700	0800-1500	1100-1600	closed	closed	0900-1600			
Dec. 29	closed	closed	0900-1600	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed			
Dec. 30	closed	closed	0900-1500	closed	1100-1600	closed	closed	closed			
Dec. 31	0800-1700	0800-1600	0700-1500	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed			0900-1500
Jan. 1	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Jan. 2	0800-1500	0800-1700	0700-1700	0800-1800	1100-1600	closed	closed				
Jan. 3	closed	0800-1700	closed	0800-1800	1100-1600	closed	closed				
Jan. 4	0800-1700	0800-1700	0700-1700	0800-1800	1100-1600	closed	closed				

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

Brussels Holiday Community Calendar

	Gate 1&2	Gate 5	Pers. Property Procs./Drivers Trg & Testing, Motor Pool	Sato Travel	HazMat/Property Book	Brussels Army Health Clinic	Brussels NATO Dental Clinic
						During weekends or after hours, the on call Patient Liaison can be contacted through the MP desk at 02-7179769 for non medical advice.	Dec. 19,20,21: no provider, sick call available at SHAPE. Clinis is open for appointments
Dec. 24	0700-1900	0800-1600	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 25	0700-1900	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 26	0700-1900	0800-1600	Closed	0830-1600	Closed	0730-1200	Sick call p.m. only - Clinic open for Appointments
Dec. 27	0700-1900	0800-1600	Closed	0830-1600	Closed	0730-1200	Sick call p.m. only - Clinic open for Appointments
Dec. 28	0700-1900	0800-1600	Closed	0830-1600	Closed	0730-1200	
Dec. 29	0700-1900	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	
Dec. 30	0700-1900	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	
Dec. 31	0700-1900	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Jan. 1	0700-1900	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Jan. 2	0700-1900	Closed				On days the clinic is closed, contact the SHAPE Health Facility at civilian 065-44-5886. For urgent care, call the toll-free nurse advise line at 0800-80149 or the international SOS emergency line at 0800-80806. For medical emergencies which are life, limb or eyesight, call 100 or 112. The emergency room we use is UZ Leuven, Herestraat, 49, 3000 Leuven.	
Jan. 3	0700-1900	Closed					
Jan. 4	0700-1900	Closed					
Jan. 5	0700-1900	Closed					
Jan. 6	0700-1900	Closed					
							Note: Readiness Coordinator can be contacted at civilian 02-7179520

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

Emergency numbers in Brussels
Any emergency - Dial 112
Brussels MP station, DSN 368-9769 or civilian 02-717-9769

Schinnen Official Holiday Schedules

Schinnen Holiday Community Calendar

	Sato Travel	Main Exchange & PX	Shoppette	Car Care	Burger King	Commissary	HazMat	Drivers Trg & Testing	Transportation Motor Pool	Property Book	Car Crafts Shop	Vehicle Processing	AFCU
Dec. 21	0800-1630	1000-1900	0800-1900	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900							
Dec. 22	closed	1000-1800	1000-1800	0900-1900	0900-1800	1000-1800					0900-1300		
Dec. 23	closed	1000-1800	1000-1800	1000-1700	1100-1700	1000-1800					closed		
Dec. 24	0800-1200	closed	1100-1700	closed	closed	1000-1600	closed	0730-1600	closed	closed	closed		0900-1300
Dec. 25	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Dec. 26	closed	1000-1800	0800-1800	1000-1700	0900-1800	closed	closed	closed		closed	closed	closed	
Dec. 27	0800-1630	1000-1800	0800-1800	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900	closed	closed	closed	0730-1600	0900-1300		
Dec. 28	0800-1630	1000-1900	0800-1900	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900	closed	0730-1600	0730-1600	0730-1600	0900-1300		
Dec. 29	closed	1000-1800	1000-1800	0900-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900	closed	closed	0730-1600	closed	0900-1300		
Dec. 30	closed	1000-1800	1000-1800	1000-1700	1100-1700	1000-1900	closed	closed		closed	closed		
Dec. 31	0800-1200	closed	1100-1700	closed	closed	1000-1800	closed	0730-1600		0730-1600	closed		0900-1500
Jan. 1	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed		closed	closed	closed	closed
Jan. 2	0800-1630	1000-1800	0800-1800	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900					closed		
Jan. 3	0800-1630	1000-1800	0800-1800	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900							
Jan. 4	0800-1630	1000-1900	0800-1900	0800-1900	0900-1800	1000-1900							

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

Schinnen Holiday Community Calendar

	Personal Proterty	CIF	Finance	Bowling Center	Fitness Center	VAT office	ACS	PCS, SLO, Youth Sports	Youth Center	CDC/SAC	Library	Arts & Crafts
Dec. 21								Closed			1000-1400	Closed
Dec. 22				1100-1800	0900-1700	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 23				closed	0900-1700	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 24	0800-1630	0730-1600	0900-1300	closed	0900-1700	Closed		Closed	Services at CDC	0700-1500	Closed	Closed
Dec. 25	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 26	closed	closed	0900-1600	closed	0900-1700	Closed		Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	1000-1700
Dec. 27	0800-1630	0730-1600	0900-1600	1100-1800	0900-1700	Closed		Closed	Services at CDC		1000-1400	1000-1700
Dec. 28	0800-1630	0730-1600	0900-1500	1100-1800	0900-1700	Closed		Closed	Services at CDC		1000-1400	Closed
Dec. 29	closed	closed	closed	1100-1800	0900-1700	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 30	closed	closed	closed	closed	0900-1700	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Dec. 31	0800-1630	0730-1600	0900-1300	closed	0900-1700	Closed		Closed	Services at CDC		Closed	Closed
Jan. 1	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Jan. 2				closed	0900-1700	0800-1630		Closed	Services at CDC			Closed
Jan. 3								Closed	Services at CDC			1000-1700
Jan. 4								Closed	Services at CDC			Closed

NOTE: The empty cells represent regular opening hours - The ones listed in red are new or corrected hours

Emergency Numbers in the Netherlands

Any emergency - Dial 112

Schinnen MP station, DSN 360-7555 or Civilian 046-443-7555



This column includes events within close distance to Chièvres, SHAPE and Brussels.

Christmas Deal

Every weekend in December and every day during the school break (22 Dec – 6 Jan) you can travel by train for €9.90 per person, one day return ticket second class to any destination in Belgium. Buy your ticket online at <https://www.belgianrail.be/timetable-and-buy-tickets/Search/secure/buy-your-ticket-step-1.aspx> (website is in English). Also, for every paying passenger (aged 12 and over), up to four children under 12, travel free of charge if accompanying the paying passenger.

21 December

- **Christmas concert in Soignies** - 45 choir singers will join at the Church Saint-Vincent for a concert starting at 8 p.m. Entrance fee is €12, free under 12 years old.
- **Christmas concert in Ath** at the Salle Georges Roland. Entrance fee is €8.

22 December

- **Volksmarch in Namur** for 4, 7, 14, or 22 km. Departure is from the Institut Henri Maus on Rue Courtenay from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

23 December

- **Volksmarch in Namur** for 6, 12, 21 km. Departure is from the Foyer Communal on the Place Arthur Lacroix from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Volksmarch in Sart-Risbar/Incourt** for 5, 10, 15, 20 km. Departure is on Rue Alphonse Robert at the football club bar from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Ongoing Events & Happenings

Through 30 December

- **Roland Delcol exhibition in Ixelles** - Leading artist of the Hyperrealism. More information on www.museedixelles.be.

Through 1 January

- **Exhibition "Belgian Art, A Modern Century" in Ixelles** at the Museum of Ixelles. More information on www.museedixelles.irisnet.be/en.

Through 6 January

- **Christmas at the Modave Castle in Liège** - Christmas decoration in the castle from florist Dominique Rausin. The castle is situated on a rock in the middle of a nature reserve and has about twenty richly decorated and furnished rooms. Open every day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information go to www.modave-castle.be/infos_pratiques/langue_en.



This column includes events within close distance to Brunssum and Schinnen.

21-23 December

- **Christmas Market in Bad Münstereifel (GE)**. Market is held in the middle of the timber-framed houses in the center of town. Open Fridays from 2 to 7 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Ongoing Events & Happenings

Through 19 December

- **Christmas Market in Stolberg (GE)** at the castle and at Kaiserplatz. Open daily from noon to 8 p.m. The Christmas Market at the Castle is only on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 8 p.m.

Through 22 December

- **Medieval Christmas Market in Heinsberg (GE)**. Held at Burg- and Kirchberg. The market is illuminated by candles and oil lamps while on some days the old spirits and dark figures will dance and roam around the majestic St. Gangolf church. Open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- **The Christmas Market in the center of Düren (GE)** is beautifully illuminated and is open daily from 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Through 23 December

- **Christmas Show in Schimmert**, at Lupa Outdoors Vijvercentrum Limburg on Op de Bies 70. Open Mondays from 1 to 5:30 p.m., Tuesdays-Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays- Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Christmas Fair "Spirit of Christmas" in Spaubeek**, at Victorian House, Musschenberg 30. English antiques such as furniture, accessories and more. The fair is only open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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- **Christmas Market around the historic Town Hall in the center of Aachen (GE)**. Open daily 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., but on Nov. 25, 6 to 9 p.m.



This column includes events within close distance to Chièvres, SHAPE and Brussels.

Through 7 January

- **20th Festival of the European Circus in Liège** - Competition for the best attractions of the moment in traditional circus: the jury is the audience itself.

Through 13 January

- **Exhibition "Jules Wabbes-Furniture Designer" in Brussels**- An exhibition on one of the leading Belgian furniture designers of the postwar period. The exhibition includes original drawings and photographs, and unique pieces of furniture as well as prototypes that are going on public view for the first time. More information about prices and times on www.bozar.be/activity.php?id=11662&selectiondate=2012-09-24.

Through 15 January

- **Exhibition "European Ceramics and Glass Triennial in Mons** - Discover European jewellery, ceramics and glass creations showcased. Germany and Portugal are the guest countries at the fourth edition of this triennial expo. Their work will be exhibited along with a selection of Northern and Southern Belgian pieces.

Through 19 January

- **Exhibition Salvador Dali "Visages Cachés (Hidden Faces)"**- At the commercial center Médiacité on Boulevard Raymond Poincare. Entrance fee is €8. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and to 9 p.m. on Fridays.

Through 24 January

- **Chocol@t's exhibition in Stavelot** - The Abbey of Stavelot hosts an exhibition which retraces the history of cocoa and chocolate and the history of many of the region's firms, draws up an inventory of the status of chocolate at the present time and wonders about the chocolate of the future, where chocolate is heading, its development, its innovations, new ways of working. More information on www.abbayedestavelot.be/code/en/expo_detail.asp?pk_id_abbaye=1063.



- **Exhibition "The 19th century, jewelry and woman" in Seneffe** - An exhibition to discover many sides of the jewellery in 19th Century. Learn how the women wore them, which jewels for which event, party, wedding, travel. In a very intimate atmosphere, get into the Castle of Seneffe to discover this exhibition.

Through 17 February

- **Exhibition "Space oddity, design fiction" in Grand Hornu**- This is an exploration of some Science fiction themes found in the work of many contemporary designers: anticipation, cosmology, the supernatural.



This column includes events within close distance to Brunssum and Schinnen.

Through 23 December continued

- **The Christmas Market in Bonn (GE)**, Beethoven's birthplace, presents impressively illuminated storefronts and the festive scenery of the Münsterplatz, the Bottlerplatz, the Friedensplatz and connecting streets. Vendors offer traditional Christmas goods, arts and crafts. Open daily from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **A romantic Christmas Market is held on Market Square in the old historic center of Düsseldorf (GE)**. Also Christmas Markets at Stadtbrückchen (trendy); Schadowplatz (nostalgic); Heinrich-Heine-Platz; Flinger Strasse and Königsallee in the center of Düsseldorf. Open Sundays to Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Fridays to Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Through 30 December and 2-3 January

- **Christmas Express**. On Saturdays and Sundays in December as well as on January 2 and 3 you can travel to the Christmas Markets in Valkenburg and/or Maastricht in a nostalgic way. Park your car at the train station in Simpelveld the historic steam train will take you on a wondrous and relaxing journey through the beautiful Limburg scenery to the center of the Christmas City of Valkenburg. For tickets, reservations and more information go to www.zlsm.nl or call 045-5440018.

Through 6 January

- **Winter-Zoo at Zoo in Hannover (GE)** with stands also ice-skating rink; rides and other winter attractions. Entry: €22; children (6-17) €15; children (3-5) €12; 2 and younger have free entrance. Open Sundays, from 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Mondays-Thursdays, from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturdays, from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Through 8 January

- **Christmas & New Year Market in Speyer (GE)** vor der Alten Münze in the town center. Open daily 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Jan. 1, from 1 to 9 p.m.



Courtesy Photo



Christmas Markets

The below list of selected Christmas markets and activities includes the ones that start this week. The list will be updated on a weekly basis to include the markets starting the week of the Gazette's publication date. You can view a larger selection of Christmas markets in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany at the USAG Benelux homepage - www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil - and click on the appropriate country.

Selected Christmas markets in Belgium that have opened or will open this week.



21 December

- **Christmas Village in Wetteren** at Market Square in the center. Open: Dec. 21, 6 to 8 p.m.; Dec. 22, from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. and Dec. 23 from 2 to 8 p.m.

21-23 December

- **Christmas Village in Hotton** at Place du Village in the center of town.

22-23 December

- **Christmas Village in Genappe** at Place de l'Eglise with lots of seasonal products.



Courtesy photo

Through 24 December

- **Christmas Village & Market in Charleroi** at place Charles II. Open Mon-Thu from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fri-Sat from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sun from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

26-30 December and 2 January

- **Winter Evenings in Bokrijk** at the Open Air Museum in Bokrijk where you will find storytellers; lots of children's activities and more. This is an ideal family outing to an enchanting, magical and mysterious place. Open: 4 to 9 p.m. Entry: 6; children (6-12) €4.

Through 30 December

- **Christmas Village in Liège** at Place de Marché is the largest Belgian Christmas Market. "Village de Noël" has atmosphere, full of magic and glamorous Christmas sentiments in the town center. It is a festive Belgian mix of Alsatian and German Christmas ingredients. Open Mon-Thu from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Fri-Sun from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Selected Christmas markets in the Netherlands that have opened or will open this week.



Through 23 December

- **Christmas Market in Soest** with lots of activities at Tuinadviescentrum 't Vaarderhoogt on Dorresteinweg 72b. Open Sat-Thu from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fri from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., closed on Sun.
- **Christmas Fair "Spirit of Christmas" in Spaubeek** at Victorian House, Musschenberg 30 with English antiques such as furniture, accessories and more. The fair is only open on Fri, Sat and Sun from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Christmas Market Valkenburg** in Fluwelengrot (Velvet Cave) on Daalhemmerweg. A unique Christmas Market held in the caves under the castle ruins. Open Sun-Thu from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Fri-Sat from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entry is €5; children (5-11) €3.
- **Another Christmas Market in Valkenburg** in a cave is located in Gemeentegrot on Cauberg. Open on weekdays, noon to 9 p.m. and weekends, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.: Dec. 23, noon to 6 p.m. Entry: €5; children 5 to 11, €3.

Through 24 December

- **Authentic and attractive Christmas Show in Schimmert** at Lupa Outdoors Vijvercentrum Limburg on Op de Bies 70. Open Mon from 1 to 5:30 p.m.; Tue-Fri from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sat- Sun from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Through 31 December

- **Magical Maastricht.** The city of Maastricht can be called Christmas Town with reason this year. The Vrijthof is transformed into a large ice-skating rink. There are many traditional and nostalgic attractions and Christmas Markets at several locations in the center, new is the market on Kesselskade along the river. Maastricht with Christmas is fun for young and old. Open Mon-Thu from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fri-Sat from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sun from noon to 6 p.m., Dec. 24 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Dec. 25-26.



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Christmas Markets | Continued



Christmas Markets



Through 31 December

- **Christmas Village (Noëlleries) in Namur** with lots of activities at Place d'Armes and Rue de Fer is open daily 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Every Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m. Horse drawn carriage rides.

Through 31 December continued

- **The Christmas Village in Tournai** with Christmas Market, a large Christmas tree, rides, Nativity Scene and more on Grand' Place is open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and again from 2 to 7 p.m. and in weekends the Christmas Village is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Christmas in Antwerp.** Antwerp is one of the places to be in the month of December if you want great winter fun. There is an ice-skating rink at Grote Markt as well as a Winter Village with lots of stands with glühwein and other winter delicatessen and Christmas articles at Groenplaats. Open Sun-Thurs from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fri and Sat from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Dec. 24 & 25 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Through January 2

- **Christmas Market in the center of Bruges** on Market Square and Simon Stevinplein. Open Mon-Fri from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sat-Sun from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- **Christmas Village in Mouscron** at Grand' Place. Ice skating rink and weekend visits by Santa.

Through January 6

- **Brussels Christmas market** - The Brussels Winter European christmas market. There is an ice skating rink and much more await visitors in the warm and friendly atmosphere of downtown Brussels. More information on http://visitbrussels.be/bitc/BE_en/minisite_winterwonders/content/7565/the-attractions.do.
- **Winter Dream in Gent** with Christmas Market, ice-skating rink and lots more winter activities on Sint-Pietersplein. Open Mon-Fri from 1 to 9 p.m. and Sat-Sun from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Winterland in the center of Hasselt** with ice-skating rink and more attractions. A Christmas Market is held at Kolonel Dusartplein, Grote Markt and Molenpoort at the same time daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Through January 12

- **Indoor Christmas Market in Knokke-Heist** - Indoor Christmas Market with ice-skating rink, lots of stands and many activities on the Verweerplein. Entry is free. Open all days 3 to 10 p.m.



Through January 6

- **Christmas at the Train Station Utrecht** - This unique Christmas Market is held at the "Nederlandse Spoorwegmuseum" (Dutch Railway Museum) . The beautiful illuminated coaches and the festively decorated platforms are a perfect setting for this Christmas event. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entry: €14.50.
- **Magical Winterland Enkhuizen** - at Fairy Tale Park Enkhuizen on Kooizandweg 9. Visitors will encounter many fairy tale figures and winter surprises. Entry: €9. Open: 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Closed on Jan. 1.
- **Valkenburg - Christmas Town.** Visiting the town of Valkenburg during the winter months is like stepping into the story of Charles Dickens. Illuminated streets, decorated Christmas trees and beautiful Christmas songs bring this little town alive. Enjoy the only Dutch town in real Christmas settings: in one of the many cozy restaurants and pubs, in the decorated shops, at the hotels, the sights and of course the unique Christmas markets in the caves. Every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. and every Saturday evening at 7:30 p.m. a Christmas Parade with floats, dancers and animators will move through the center.
- **Winter Festival in Eindhoven** in the town center with ice skating rink, stands and lots of other entertainment in the center of Eindhoven. Open daily from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Through January 6

- **Christmas Village in Noordwijk** - various special activities daily including a January 1 New Year's swim. Go to www.kerstdorpaanzee.nl for a daily schedule.

Through February 3

- **Winter Efteling near Tilburg** at Efteling Amusement & Fairy Tale Park in Kaatsheuvel on Europalaan offers good old-fashion winter fun. Open on weekdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; weekends and Dec. 22-Jan. 6, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Dec. 31, 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. Entry: €35.



Donovan Abrassart

SHAPE Trips & Tours

For information on the trips below,
call DSN 423-3884 or civilian 065-44-3884



Courtesy Photo

- **Paris after Christmas, December 27** - A relaxing day in Paris. From culinary delights to cultural sights. Price is €50. Departs SHAPE at 8 a.m. and returns SHAPE at 11:30 p.m. Departs Brussels at 6:45 a.m. and returns at 00:30 a.m.
- **New Year's in London, December 30 - January 1** - London is one of the most popular places to spend New Year's Eve. There will be a New Year's Day Parade starting at Parliament Square at noon as well as the fabulous fireworks display at the London Eye that night. Prices: €468 Single, €298 Double, Twin or Triple, €198 Youth 3-12*, €98 Child 0-2* (*When sharing a room with two fully paid guests). Departs SHAPE at 7:15 a.m.(Sunday), returns SHAPE at midnight (Tuesday). Departs Brussels at 6 a.m. (Sunday), returns Brussels at 1:15 a.m. (Wednesday).

Schinnen Trips and Tours

For information on the trips below
call DSN 360-7561 or civilian 0031-(0)46-4437561

- **Spring Break getaway to Malgrat de Mar, Spain, March 29-April 7 (Register prior to Dec. 22 with down-payment)** - Included in Tour Price: round trip royal class motorcoach transportation (non-smoking); Seven overnights in a 4-star hotel; half board accommodation (seven Breakfasts & seven Dinners Included). Prices: \$489 per person in Double Room; \$639 per person in Single Room; \$389 per child (3-11 years) staying in the parents room, when sharing a room with two fully paid guests.

SHAPE Travel Group

For information on the trips below call civilian 065-336560
Travel Group members are available every Wednesday and Friday
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Foyer of the SHAPE Library, Bldg. 307.

- **Maasmechelen Outlets , January 15** - home to more than 100 boutiques selling leading local and international brands for example: Nike, Geox, Calvin Klein, Le Creuset, Barbour, Samsonite, Villery & Boch, and many more. In the January sale outlet prices are dropped even more. Shopping is a real pleasure in this 21st century village-style setting that lends itself to a relaxed and stress-free atmosphere. The Outlet Center offers a selection of cafes and restaurants with fine food and drink whether it is a light lunch or a three-course meal. Discover the Outlet Shopping Center to find leading designer labels at exceptional prices. Price is €25.

Have Something for the Gazette?

Email usarmy.benelux.incom-europe.list.pao@mail.mil

For recurring events check on www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil/sites/local/pages/gazette/GazetteExtra.pdf.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BRUNSSUM/SCHINNEN COMMUNITY

December 19

- **Sponsor Training** - At Schinnen ACS learn about becoming a sponsor for new arrivals to the Tri-Border community. Get the essential information newcomers will need for both before and after arrival. Training is 2 to 3:30 p.m. Class is by appointment only at 3046-443-7512.

December 21

- **Hearts Apart** - Held monthly at AFNORTH International School library, Schinnen ACS offers a support meeting for youth separated from a loved one, whether through a deployment or a Family situation. Meeting is from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. For details please call the ACS Deployment Readiness office at 046-443-7218.

January 2

- **Heinsberg Hospital Tours** - Touring the maternity/obstetrics ward of local hospitals is an important way for pregnant women to prepare for the big day. Tours address admitting procedures and your childbirth concerns. The meeting place is the Heinsberg Hospital lobby at 6 p.m. For more information contact the New Parent Support Program at ACS. Call 046-443-7335.

January 10

- **Dress for Success** - The do's and don'ts of getting dressed for any interview regardless of profession. For information on this 10 to 11:30 a.m. January 10 course in the ACS Conference Room, please call 046-443-7500.

SHAPE/CHIEVRES COMMUNITY

December 19

- **Orphans Christmas party** at the Chièvres Community Recreation center at 2 p.m.
- **CYSS Parent Education class** at the CDC from 4 to 5:30 p.m. This session will focus on CDC accreditation.

January 8

- **Lunch and Learn** in the ACS training room at SHAPE Bldg 318 from noon to 1 p.m. This session will focus on building your child's self esteem. To register call DSN 423-5324 or civilian 065-44-5324..

BRUSSELS COMMUNITY

January 8

- **The Bare Essentials** - High school students get prepared life beyond high school. College application assistance, interview preparation, alternatives to college, how to search for scholarship and more will be available. For more information call DSN 368-9651 or civilian: 02-717-9651.

Community Roundup



KEEPING YOU CONNECTED
 The Official Website of the American Forces Network Benelux
benelux.afneurope.net

Brussels: 101.7 FM – Chièvres 107.9 FM – SHAPE 106.5 FM and 104.2

AFN Benelux is conducting a survey to help them improve their services to the community .

Take a minute and go to

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RFFTRFX>

to provide your input.