



Benelux Meteor

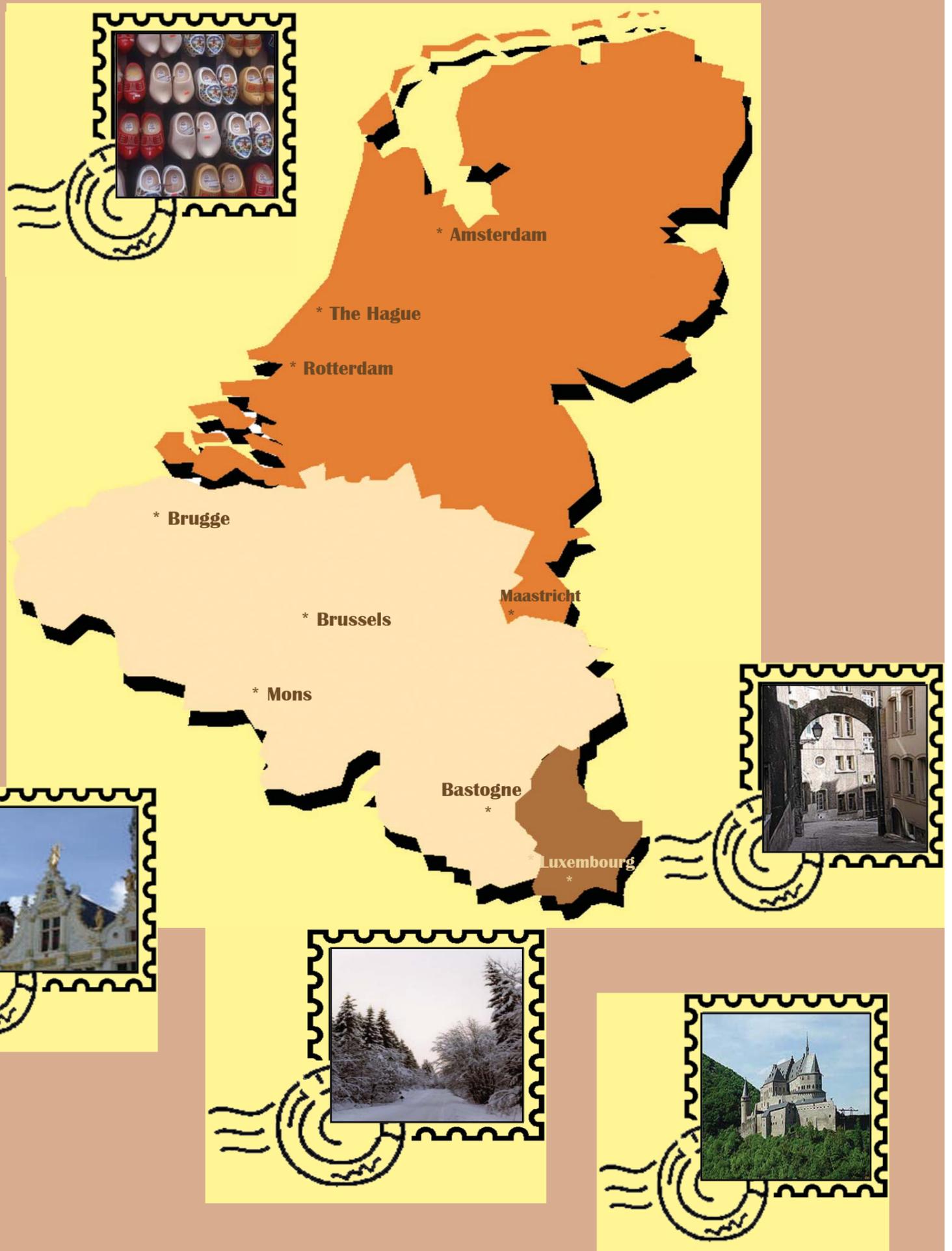
Volume 22, Number 18

Published by the 80th Area Support Group

October 8, 2004

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Nowowiejski Notes



Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski, 80th ASG Commander

When you read this note, I hope you have the satisfaction of having cast your ballot in your home state for the 2 November national election. Jan and I have put our ballots in the mail for our home state of Texas. You may read this and have a sense of regret about having let all of the reminders about voting become so much background noise, and really be wishing you hadn't waited to get your registration or ballot request in the mail. If you want to vote, and haven't acted, check with your voting assistance officer. You still might be able to register by postal card or fax, and vote in the election using the Federal Write-in Ballot. If you have received your ballot, please read it carefully and follow the specific directions, vote, and get your ballot in the mail so that it will count. We will then all sit back and enjoy the fruits of the democratic process which we defend every day. No matter the outcome of the election, when you have cast your own ballot, you have done what you can to honor those who are deployed right now defending your right to vote. Absentee ballots may well decide this election, and determine our next President, Congress, and local officials. State by state,

the voting majorities are razor thin and each and every vote does make a significant difference.

Let's talk about travel. I would like to take a larger perspective on living and working in the Benelux. We are entirely unique in this opportunity. First, the chance to live and work in Europe is a privilege, and a chance to make lifetime memories. Our partnership with allies as personal ambassadors of our nations is what enables the North Atlantic alliance and a winning effort in the global war on terror. Everywhere you go if you are a United States citizen, your actions may be the only ones people ever see from an American. How do you want the United States to be remembered? Will it be the ugly American or the unselfish and giving international friend?

Living in Belgium or the Netherlands, and supporting NATO's efforts throughout the world sets you apart from your service contemporaries elsewhere in Europe. For that reason, while you are busy planning your personal travel, I would encourage you to see what beauty and memorable experience are right on your doorstep. Our host countries are full of history, natural beauty and architecture; cities in Belgium or the Netherlands are great places to visit and relax in. Learn about what is around you in this issue of *The Meteor*. Remember that some of the greatest battles of all time have been fought over the soil that you live on. Whether Waterloo, Ypres, the German offensive of 1940, Market Garden, or the Battle of the Bulge, you are surrounded by professional development and historical opportunities. Veterans' groups pay a small fortune to visit places that you can go see on a Saturday afternoon. You have more famous battlefields to visit than elsewhere in Europe.

Keep safe travel and personal force protection in mind as you travel. Don't make a long trip when you are fatigued. It's better to pay the hotel bill than the funeral bill. Don't stick out like a sore thumb as an American tourist. Dress European and keep a low profile. We are in fact surrounded by terrorist organizations. Keep track of your ID card and installation pass. Please see the article below about this problem. We don't need to make it any easier for unauthorized persons to gain access to our installations, and thus make it easier for them to harm us, if that is their intent.

When your tour in the Benelux is over, I hope that you can look back on several safe trips that have given unique memories that you will treasure for a lifetime, and share with your family and friends. You are already unique in the opportunities provided by where you live and work.

Drive safely Know road rules

The number one rule that most Americans are not used to when they first arrive to the Benelux is the "right of way" rule.

You may be driving down the road and suddenly, a car coming from your right, pulls in front of you. To find out whether you are on a right of way priority road, watch for the traffic signs. If you come across a white triangle with a



If you see this sign, give right of way

red border and a black cross, you know you will have to yield to any car coming from your right.

On the other hand, if you are on a priority road on which the

right of way rule doesn't apply, you'll see the yellow and white diamond sign as you approach intersections. Also, the roads coming from your right that don't get the right of way will be marked with white triangles painted on the road and as close as possible to the intersection.

It may take some time to get used to this rule but soon you will notice that this rule is effective in slowing down traffic.

When traveling in cities, be aware of buses and pay attention. Buses may pull off to the side to allow passengers on and off. Usually buses park on a designated parking areas but sometimes, due to illegal parking, have to stop on the road to pick up or drop off passengers. Once the bus signals its intent to pull back on the road, it has priority over any other traffic. Also, in most cities, your speed is limited to 30 kilometers an hour.

The Benelux countries are getting more strict about speeding and fines are not cheap. Depending on how many kilometers an hour you are driving above the speed limit, the police may withdraw your driving license. They may also withdraw your license if you are a recurring "speeder".

Unlike France, the Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg highways are all toll-free and well lit at night.

Hang on to it!

Lost ID cards are serious business for all

by Carlos Avilan

During this calendar year up to Sept. 29, a total of 170 identity cards have been reported lost or stolen within the 80th Area Support Group.

The loss of a federal ID card can potentially compromise the installation's security plan. A federal ID card in the wrong hands can spell trouble.

The loss of a federal ID card wastes time and tax dollars because a police officer must come off their patrol to initiate a police report. It also costs money to replace the card. Most importantly, it takes the service member, employee, contractor, or visitor away from their mission.

Furthermore, a lost or stolen military ID card can quickly escalate into a very serious problem if your personal information falls into the wrong hands. There is not much the police can do for you so you must make the effort to prevent becoming an identity theft victim.

Military and civilian Common Access Cards (CAC cards, also referred to as federal ID cards): Supervisors may consider taking administrative action against those who are negligent in losing a CAC Card. Some tips to safeguard your federal ID card or key access card:

-Treat your card like you would your driver's license. You need your license to drive. You need your federal ID card to get to work.

-Do not use your federal ID card as a form of identification outside the installation.

-When you're not at work, leave your federal ID card home in a safe place. There is no need to take it with you when you go out.

-Do not lock your federal ID card in your ve-

hicle. Cars can be stolen or broken into.

-When on temporary duty (TDY) visiting other military installations, take only your CAC Card with you. Leave your security identification badge and key access card at home. When you're not showing your ID card, safeguard it in your wallet or pocketbook.

-When traveling TDY by air, do not put your ID card in your luggage. Luggage sometimes gets lost or stolen. Keep the ID card on you.

-When at work and your activity requires you to wear a security badge, do just that. Clip it on your shirt or wear it around your neck.

-If you take it off at your desk, place the card in a drawer. They've have been known to be knocked into a garbage can, stolen or misplaced.

For military family members, use your best judgment. Young children tend to lose or misplace things. Educate your children about the importance of their ID card and the serious consequences of a lost or stolen card. Keep the ID card on you.

If you lose your ID card, don't panic. Try to retrace your steps first. Look in common places that you've recently frequented. Look under automobile seats, under furniture at your home or office, and in your wallet or purse. If you don't find your ID card, you must report it to your security manager and supervisor first, then go to the Military Police on Chièvres and file a police report.

ID card issuing procedures for lost and stolen ID Cards:

1. ID Card issuing authorities will not issue a replacement for an ID card reported as lost or stolen until the sponsor reports the lost or stolen ID card to the local MP station. Upon re-

porting the lost or stolen ID card, the MPs will provide a memorandum acknowledging the report. The sponsor or the family member will bring the memorandum from the MPs and the appropriate documentation as indicated below to their local ID card issuing authorities:

(a) For military sponsors (and their family members) there is no additional required documentation beyond the MP memorandum.

(b) For a DoD APF or NAF civilian employee (and their family members), a DD Form 1172 or a DD Form 1172-2 signed by the servicing Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) or the employee's services, Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS).

(c) For an AAFES-Eur employee (and their family members), a DD Form 1172 signed by their servicing administration office.

(d) For other civilian employees (and their family members), a DD Form 1172 signed by the sponsoring agency.

(e) For a contractor (and their family members), a DD Form 1172 or DD Form 1172-2 signed by the contracting officer representative (COR).

(f) For a retiree (and their family members), there is no additional required documentation beyond the MP memorandum.

Note that the requirement for counseling is no longer needed.

2. ID card issuing authorities stationed in Germany and Italy will not issue a replacement for an AE Form 600-700A reported as lost or stolen until the sponsor reports the lost or stolen AE Form 600-700A to the local MP station. Upon reporting the lost or stolen AE Form 600-700A to the local MP Station, the MPs will

provide a memorandum acknowledging the report of the lost or stolen AE 600-700A. The sponsor will bring the memorandum from the MPs and the appropriate documentation as indicated below:

For sponsors (and their family members) who are issued an AE 600-700A stationed in Germany and Italy, an AE 600-700B signed by the sponsoring agency.

3. ID card issuing authorities stationed outside Germany and Italy will not issue a replacement for a 600-700A reported as lost or stolen until the sponsoring agency has sent a memorandum to commander, 1st PERSCOM, ATTN: AEUPE-PSSD-PSD-PSB, Unit 29058, APO AE 09081-9058 reporting the lost or stolen AE Form 600-700A. The sponsor will bring a copy of memorandum that was forwarded to 1st PERSCOM and the appropriate documentation as indicated below:

For sponsors (and their family member) who are issued an AE 600-700A stationed outside Germany and Italy, an AE 600-700B signed by the sponsoring agency.

4. The ID card issuing authorities may disapprove a request for a replacement AE Form 600-700A when there is reason to believe misuse or abuse has occurred.

5. The ID card issuing authorities will return the MP's form to the sponsor once the replacement ID card is issued.

6. Commander 1st PERSCOM, upon receipt of reported lost of stolen memorandum from ID card issuing authorities outside Germany and Italy, will forward the memorandum to the local MP station to be recorded as a lost or stolen AE Form 600-700A.

◆ The Netherlands H e r a u t ◆

The Dutch way to get around

In the Netherlands cycling is part and parcel of daily life. Sixteen million Dutch people own approximately 13 million bicycles.

The Dutch use their bicycles as a mean of transportation rather than just a recreational sport. The bike is used for grocery shopping and to commute to work. The Netherlands' moderate climate, the short distances and flat roads all serve to make the bicycle a logical means of transportation. Add to this the beautiful scenery and about 9,300 miles of specially designated bicycle paths and routes and you will understand why cycling in the Netherlands is not only practical, but also very enjoyable!

The Netherlands' excellent bicycle path network is clearly marked with the ANWB's (Royal Dutch Touring Club) red and white signs and mushroom-shaped posts, indicating the quickest route from A to B. Obligatory separate bicycle lanes for cyclists are indicated by round blue signs with a white bicycle. Bicycles are available for rent in practically every city, town and village in the Netherlands at bike dealers, repair shops and rental agencies.

The Netherlands' network of buses and trams serves both urban and regional districts. Most services start at around 6 a.m. and end at around midnight. A wide range of tickets are available.

The 'Strippen Card' is valid throughout the country for travel on buses, trams and subways. It is also valid on trains

travelling within the city boundaries of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague/Zoetermeer. The Netherlands is divided into transportation zones with set tariffs. To travel one zone you have to pay two 'strips'. You pay an extra 'strip' for each subsequent zone. Within the same zone you may change within a time limit mentioned on the back of the card.

and modern railway network. Each day, about 4,200 passenger trains run on the 1,900 miles of tracks. The trains of the Netherlands Railways (NS) are among the most modern in Europe. Some important aspects about traveling by train in the Netherlands are that they arrive and depart on time, they are comfortable and clean, services are fast and frequent and most of the staff speak English. Most

routes have departures at least every half hour, busy stretches often as many as four to six departures per hour.

There is a direct express train connection between Amsterdam Airport Schiphol and the main cities in the Netherlands and some cities in Belgium. Even at night, a train runs every hour between

Utrecht, Amsterdam, Schiphol, The Hague and Rotterdam. The Netherlands Railways operate an Intercity IC network connecting the big cities. IC trains only stop at the major stations. Local trains provide transportation to smaller cities.

Departure and arrival times of intercity trains and local trains are shown on the website of the NS, the Netherlands Railways: <http://www.ns.nl>.

The cities of The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam offer transportation by tram. Amsterdam and Rotterdam also have a subway system. Most tram and subway services start at 6 a.m. and run until about midnight.



A bicycle parking area at a Dutch school

You can buy a 'Strippen Card' with 15 strips for 6.40 Euros or with 45 strips for 18.90 Euros. For children 4 - 11 and persons older than 65, you can buy a reduced fare card for 4.20 Euros. You can buy 'Strippen Cards' at railway stations, in post offices, department stores and tobacconists. You can also buy them on the tram or bus, but the price is quite a bit higher.

For relatively short distances, and if you travel to areas without railway lines, the bus is an excellent means of transportation. Most bus services run from 6 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

The Netherlands has a very compact

Local business hours

Most shops are open from Tuesdays to Fridays, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. On Saturdays, business hours differ between 8:30/9 a.m. and 4/5 p.m. On Mondays shops are open 11 a.m./1 p.m. and close at 6 p.m.

Most cities have late-night shopping (until 9 p.m.) on Thursdays or Fridays. In holiday and tourist resorts, many shops are open at night and on Sundays. For business hours on Sundays or late night shopping, please call a local tourist information office.

Business hours differ between banks. Most banks are open from Tuesday to Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. On Mondays business hours start mainly at 1 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays banks are closed.

Regular post offices are open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Bigger ones are also open on Saturdays, 9 a.m. - noon.

Regular business hours for pharmacies are Monday to Friday 8/9 a.m. - 5:30/6 p.m. However, chemists are open on a rotation schedule to cover nights and weekends.

Usually restaurants are open for lunch 11 a.m. - 2:30/3 p.m. and for dinner, 5:30 - 10/11 p.m.

Travel Warnings

Visiting the Benelux and the rest of Europe will make your tour of duty very enjoyable. However, we encourage you to remain vigilant and check the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov/travel/warnings.html> before you choose a destination.

Winterize your car

Heidelberg, GE — AAFES Car Care Centers, U.S. Forces Vehicle Inspection Stations operated by the U. S. Army BASOPS Maintenance Center - Europe, and all auto repair shops on the economy will provide free inspections during October in support of the International Motor Vehicle Lighting campaign.

The purpose of the campaign is to encourage motor vehicle owners to have their vehicles inspected prior to the onset of winter weather.

The campaign is conducted each year during October to correct deficiencies prior to the more hazardous winter driving season. This is the time when hours of darkness increase and winter road and weather conditions begin. German garages, AAFES Car Care Centers and most U.S. Forces Vehicle Inspection Stations will be conducting free inspections to check vehicle lighting systems to include headlights, taillights, fog lights and turn signals.

In addition to the lighting inspection, AAFES Car Care Centers will also inspect windshield wipers, exhaust systems and tires. Those AAFES Car Care Centers equipped with a brake analyzer will test brake systems. Any repair work to correct deficiencies is, of course, chargeable to the vehicle owner. Upon successful completion of the lighting system inspection, a safety sticker will be affixed to the windshield showing that the vehicle has successfully passed the inspection.

Take advantage of the International Motor Vehicle Lighting Equipment Campaign and prepare your automobile for winter weather.

For further information, contact the Schinnen Car Care Center at 360-7383/Civ 046-443-7383.

254th BSB Local Calendar

Army Community Service - Schinnen Playgroup for Toddlers on Oct. 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Schinnen Sports Center. **OB Orientation/Prenatal Education Class** on Oct. 12 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Geilenkirchen Clinic Conference Room. **Infant Massage Class** on Oct. 19 at 10 a.m. in the Schinnen ACS Conference Room. **Schinnen Playgroup for Toddlers** on Oct. 21 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Schinnen Sports Center. **La Leche League** on Oct. 27 at 10 a.m. at the Schinnen ACS Conference Room. **Schinnen Playgroup for Toddlers** on Oct. 28 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Schinnen Sports Center. For information, call DSN 360-7500/7367/7355

Schinnen Fitness & Sports - Regular opening hours are Monday to Friday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday, Sunday and Holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The following classes are offered: *Taebo / Kickboxing* every Monday and

Wednesday from 6 to 7 p.m., *Step Aerobics* every Tuesday and Thursday from 6 to 7 p.m., and *Body Balance* on Thursdays from 5 to 6 p.m. For information, call DSN 360-7561

Youth Services at AFNorth, Bldg H603 - Open Monday to Friday from 3:30 to 6 p.m. (after school) and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (non-school days). Youth in grades six thru eight must be registered as YS members and the yearly fee is \$15.00. For information, call DSN 364-3595

Teen Center at JFC Brunssum - Open Monday to Friday from 3:30 to 6 p.m. (after school) and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (non-school days). Youth in grades nine thru 12 must be registered as YS members to use the center. There is no cost to register. For information, call DSN 364-3033/3088.

Bowling Center - Cosmic Bowling every Friday at 6 p.m. For information, call DSN 360-7207.

Indoor Swimming Pool - Various instructional classes offered. Catered parties and special events are available for a nominal fee. Call DSN 364-3172 for details.

MWR BOSS Office - Next meetings are Oct. 14 and 28 at 2 p.m.

MWR Special Events - Trunk or Treat on Oct. 29 from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. To reserve a table or space for your car, call ACS at 046-443-7451 or DSN 360-7451. There will be car/table decorating contest with prizes, children's games and prizes, a haunted house and free Cosmic Bowling for children in costume from 6 until 9 p.m.

Central Texas College in Treebeek is now offering onsite courses leading to an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice and Early Childhood Education. Term II registration is Oct. 11-22. Contact the CTC Field Representative at DSN 364-6005 or civ.: 0031-455-63-6005 or check www.ctc-europe.com

Get to know capit

Amsterdam, "Venice of the North"



Amsterdam counts some 100 kilometers of canals

In the course of the 17th century the famous crescent shape of the Amsterdam city center was designed resulting in the unique ring of canals. A number of narrow streets and canals, fanning out from the center of the crescent, crossed the network of concentric semicircular canals.

On the outskirts of the city center, the canals ended in squares, where the city gates were located. The squares were used as parking places, since vehicles were not always allowed into the city itself. The 'Venice of the North' as Amsterdam is often referred to, consists of approx. 90 islands, separated by some 100 kilometers of canals and linked by about 400 stone bridges. About one third of the historical center was built prior to 1850. As such, Amsterdam is the proud owner of one of the most important intact historical city centers of the world.

The canals of course are one of the major attractions of 'Venice of the North'. By daytime already very charming, by night they become even more enchanting because a lot of the canal houses and bridges are beautifully illuminated. The four main city center canals are Prinsengracht, Herengracht, Keizersgracht and Singel. You can sample the canal views by taking a canal tour with one of the shipping companies on the Damrak or Rokin. Another option is to take the Canal Bus, with stops at the major museums and attractions.

Amsterdam is not a city of churches and palaces, but of monumental mansions. The only two houses in Amsterdam worthy of the name palace are the Royal Palace on the Dam Square and the Trippenhuis, Kloveniersburgwal 29. And even these two were not commissioned by royalty or aristocratic patrons. Originally, the Trippenhuis was built for wealthy citizens and the Royal Palace was designed to serve as Amsterdam's town hall, which it was until 1808. The Royal Palace is nowadays the official palace for the reigning queen of the Netherlands. Except for official receptions it is not used much. In the summer you can take a guided tour of the palace, the highlights of its interior being the Empire furniture Bonaparte left behind and paintings by Rembrandt's pupils.



Dam square

The Dam square on which the Royal Palace is located, is the physical center of the city ever since the dam was built to keep the Zuiderzee (Southern Sea) out. In the midst of the square is the National Monument, dedicated to the Dutch soldiers and members of the resistance who died during World War II.

Leidseplein

Just like Paris has Montmartre, Amsterdam has its Leidseplein. During the sixties when

Amsterdam was divided between Nozems (greasers) and Provos (hippies) the Leidseplein was the major Nozem hangout, and thus a very cool place. Nowadays the area has deteriorated a bit, with an abundance of fast food, travel agencies and money changers. Nonetheless, the Leidseplein itself is a pleasant small square, flanked on three sides by bars and with a large tree-shaded terrace in the middle. During summer the square comes alive with street performers; everything from jugglers and fire-eaters to percussionists, mime players and clowns.

Vondelpark

The largest park of the city, close to the Leidseplein is by far the most popular with visitors and locals alike, especially during the summer. The park is always alive with skaters, joggers and all sorts of street performers. In the summer the Vondelpark open air theater stages regular performances. All in all a very pleasant place to spend a lazy sunny afternoon.

Anne Frankhuis



Anne Frank and her family were hidden in this house

This house located on the Prinsengracht is where Anne Frank, her family and some friends were hiding from

the Nazi occupation forces during World War II. Here Anne Frank wrote her famous diary, which describes not only the situation during the war but also the sometimes difficult relationships between the families in hiding, and her own adolescence.

After Anne's father returned from the concentration camp where Anne, her sister and her mother died, he decided to publish the diary. The hiding place has been left in the same state as Anne's father found it upon his return.

The Anne Frankhuis also houses an exhibition on the prosecution of Jews during the war, and on current developments in racism, neo-fascism and anti-semitism.

Rijksmuseum

By far the largest museum in the Netherlands, this state museum is housed in a monumental neo-renaissance building on Stadhouderskade,

42, and ranks as a major European museum of Western European painting and decorative arts.

Currently the Rijksmuseum is the subject of an extensive renovation, and work is scheduled to be completed no sooner than 2008. Until then the museum is showing the finest works from its 17th century collection in the redesigned Philips Wing, under the title "The Masterpieces". More than 400 highlights from the Golden Age are on display, amongst which of course Rembrandt's Night



A typical street along the canal

Watch.

Besides Rembrandt's there are paintings by Frans Hals,



Rijksmuseum

Paulus Potter, Jacob van Ruysdael, Jan Steen, and Johannes Vermeer.

Van Gogh Museum

Most of the work by Vincent van Gogh has never left the Netherlands, and 200 paintings and 500 drawings are on permanent exhibition in the Van Gogh Museum, located on Paulus Potterstraat, 7.

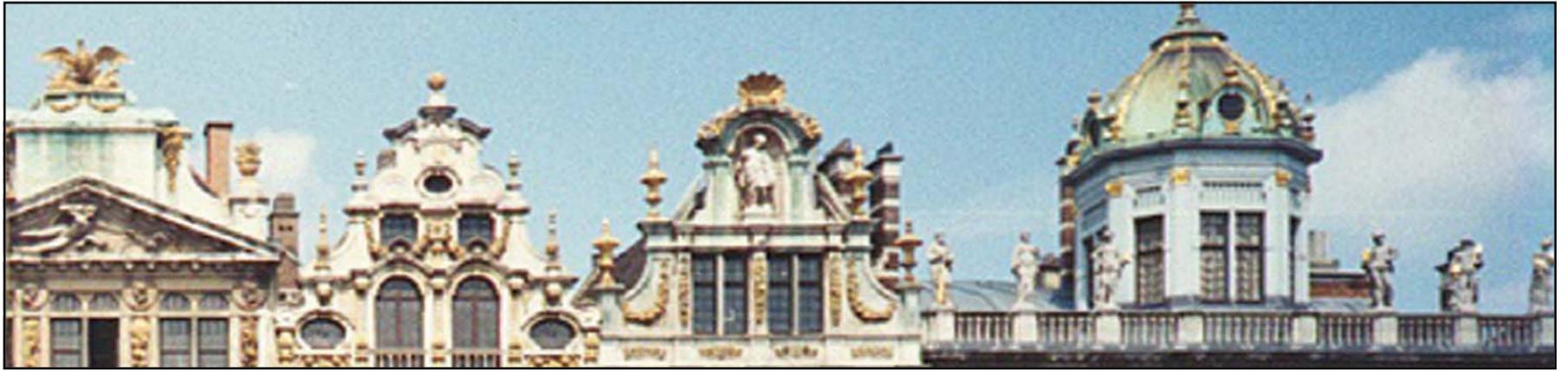
Rembrandthuis

Rembrandt lived for twenty years in a charming house on Jodenbreestraat, 4-6, until he left it bankrupt in 1658. It might be interesting to know that his bankruptcy came about because the company who commissioned the Night Watch were totally dissatisfied with the painting, which eventually ruined his career!

His house is now faithfully restored, and on display are over 250 of his etchings.

Photos courtesy of National Tourist Offices

tals of Benelux



Beautiful multicultural Brussels

Brussels is more than a 1,000 years old. Today the name Brussels stands for an agglomeration of 19 communes forming one of the three Regions of the federal Belgian state, the capital of the Kingdom of Belgium, and the headquarters of the French and Flemish Communities. Brussels also has an important international vocation, as the city is home to the European Commission, the Council of ministers of the European Union (EU) and NATO headquarters.

The heart of Brussels and its main square called the Grand'Place or Grote Markt is the place to start getting to know the city. This historic market square with its splendid guild houses and the impressive Gothic beauty of the city hall is widely considered to be one of the most beautiful town squares in Europe.

On the Brussels main square, follow the street on the left side of the city hall. On the corner of Stoofstraat or Rue de L'Etuve and the Eikstraat or Rue du Chêne, you'll find the famous "Manneken Pis". Nobody actually knows why the "manneken" is there. He is believed to be nothing more than a decoration on top of a fountain, where people in the Middle-Ages came to get fresh water. A lot of people do not know that the manneken-pis is very often dressed. He has a wardrobe of more than 600 costumes, which are all preserved in the King's House, or city museum on the main square. Manneken Pis also has a female counterpart named "Janneken Pis" which is much less known and located nearby Impasse de la Fidelité.

Sablon Square

The name of this area refers to the time when this square was still located outside of the city walls during the 12th century. It was originally a sandy road along which people had access to the city gates. Because of frequent use this road had become hollow and on both sides a yellowish earth layer could be seen. This type of sandy clay was called "zavel" in Dutch and "sablon" in French. Nowadays, the Sablon is visited by lovers of antiques and art. Especially popular is the weekly antiques market which is held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Sundays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. A lot of people also visit the daily flea market from 6 a.m. until 1 p.m. located at the Vossenplein or Place du Jeu de Balle in the adjacent Marolles area. Not only famous for its antiques, the Sablon also offers a range of good restaurants and pleasant cafés. You'll also find the most exclusive pastry maker and the best chocolates in Brussels.

Cinquantenaire Park

In 1880, Belgium celebrated the 50th anniversary of its independence and organized a world exhibition in Brussels. Through this exhibition, the world would be able to see that the new state of Belgium was prospering and able to take its place between the important nations of Europe. Part of this project was the Cinquantenaire park with its imposing monuments.

The Royal Museum of the Army and Military History is



Cinquantenaire Park

located in one of the buildings of the Cinquantenaire Park and contains about one hundred thousand items. This collection makes the museum rank among the top military museums in the world.

The Museum of Art and History in the Cinquantenaire Park has an important collection of art objects from different civilizations from all over the world. It offers an overview of the history of mankind in the five continents from prehistoric times until today.

Atomium

Brussels also hosted a world exhibition in 1958 which was the first one to take place after World War II. Over 35 million people visited the Expo 58 and 46 countries from six continents were represented. Most pavilions were built in a very modern futuristic architectural style. The only major monument of Expo 1958 that has remained at the Heysel is also the most spectacular: the Atomium. It symbolizes an elementary iron crystal with its nine atoms and magnified 150 billion

times. It honored the metal and iron industry and the belief in the atomic power. The Heysel also hosts the football stadium and Kinopolis, a major movie complex showing most of the movies in their original version.

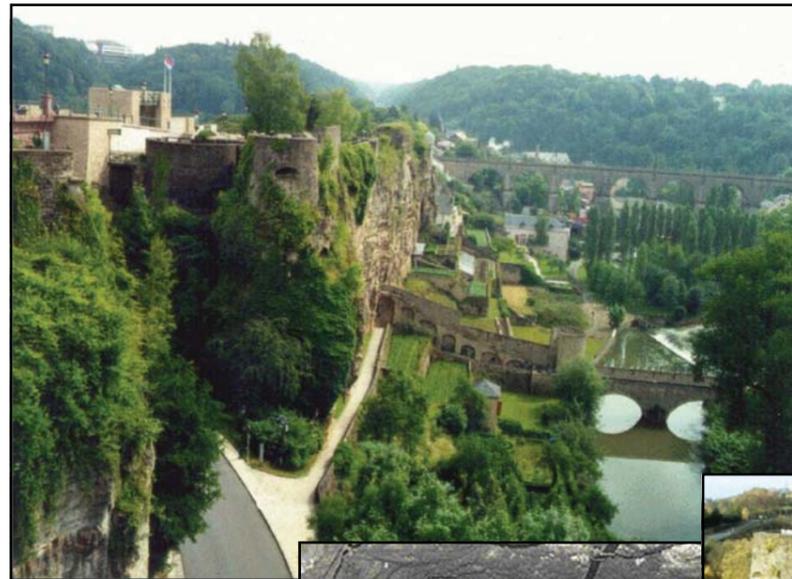
Royal Square

The royal square lies at the Koudenberg or Coudenberg. Here, the duke of Brabant had a castle built in the 11th century. In the course of the following centuries, the dukes of Burgundy and, later, the Habsburg kings and emperors all adapted the castle to their needs and wishes. By the 16th century, the palace had become one of the most impressive and picturesque royal residences in Europe. It also had a magnificent garden, which is now the royal park.



Royal Palace

Luxembourg City has rich history



nous views of the valley along the massive towers of Duke Wenceslas's fortifications, which were built in 1390. The casernes (barracks) were added during the 17th century by the French. From the Bock you can gain access to the military tunnels or "casemates", a 23 kilometer labyrinth of defensive underground tunnels that helped forge Luxembourg's impressive military reputation. They were capable of sheltering not only thousands of defenders with their equipment and their horses, but also workshops for artillery and arms, kitchens, bakeries and slaughter-houses. They were also put to good use 300 years later as bomb shelters during World War II.

Stroll down from the Bock along the Chemin de la Corniche known as the "finest balcony in Europe", and you will find yourself on the Citadelle du St. Esprit. Enjoy the spectacular view of the lower town and the surrounding river valleys, before taking the "Wenceslas Circular Walk"



The Bock



The "Casemates", former military tunnels

When Luxembourg's founder laid the city's first stone back in the tenth century, he chose his spot carefully. Count Siegfried, as he was known, decided to perch his fortress on a daunting rock. By the end of the Middle Ages, Siegfried's city had the Burgundians, Spanish, French, Austrians and Prussians all waging bloody battles to conquer and secure it.

Besieged, destroyed and rebuilt more than 20 times in 400 years, it grew to become the strongest fortress in Europe after Gibraltar.

The fortress surrounded by a simple fortification was built on a jutting promontory known as the Bock, and it's here that you will find most of the town's historical gems.

Over the years a second and third fortification were constructed on the west side, where the rocks of the Pétrusse valley and Alzette valley formed a natural defense. All these powerful ramparts, however, did not prevent the Burgundians from taking the city by surprise in 1443.

It developed into a strategic position, important on the European chess-board. From the Bock, you have vertigi-

around the oldest parts of the town. Long before Siegfried founded "modern" Luxembourg, the Romans had marked the site out as a key strategic point. Wander around the Fishmarket area, where two major Roman roads met over 2,000 years ago. Very close to this historical crossroads, a watchtower was erected in the 4th century, emphasizing once more the city's status at the centre of Europe.

Palais Grand-Ducal

The Palace of the Grand Dukes located on Rue du Marché-aux-Herbes, is the city residence of the grand ducal family and dates from the 16th century, notably the section that once served as the town hall. A distinctive Spanish-Moorish influence is obvious in the elaborate facade. Tickets for guided tours (often sold out) are available only at the City Tourist Office.

Car vandalism

You can get compensation under certain conditions

If you have ever had your vehicle vandalized, you know that sinking feeling to find it keyed, scratched, or the windows broken. You think: "How am I going to get this fixed?"

There are ways for compensation but certain criteria must be met.

Private insurance is the most effective way to receive compensation for vandalism. It is up to you to make certain that you have adequate insurance on your vehicle. Some policies may not cover vandalism making compensation difficult or impossible.

Your Army Claims Service may offer an alternative source of compensation. Before you can file with the Army Claims Service, however, you must exhaust all of your private insurance options. Keep in mind, the Army Claims Service is not a substitute for private insurance and many vandalism claims are not payable by the U.S. government.

For both private insurance claims and Army Claims, accurate compensation requires compliance with several procedures and requirements. Private insurance company requirements may vary from company to company, but AR 27-20 and DA PAM 27-162 specifically outline the Army's requirements.

When vandalism occurs, report the incident to the local police authorities and the military police as soon as you notice the damage. Waiting too long to report an incident or refusing to do so may result in denial of the claim or greatly reduce payment.

Keep in mind that you will be required to produce "clear and convincing" evidence of vandalism to meet the high burden of proof required by Army regulations.

Do not move the vehicle until you have proven that the vandalism occurred and compiled all of the details pertaining to the incident.

One way to do this is to have either the police or an uninterested third party perform a complete inspection of the vehicle and of the location where the vandalism occurred. If this is not possible, you can take pictures or make a videotape of the damage and the surrounding area. Include location, condition of other vehicles in the area, any statements from witnesses, how the damage was noticed, and any identifying markings (such as words or designs) left at the scene. Your statement alone is generally not sufficient.

After you have gathered all of the information, gather repair estimates for the damages. Prior to having any repairs done, take pictures of the damage. This will assist both your private insurance company and the Army Claims Service in substantiating your claim. Keep copies of all estimates and receipts until your claim is finalized. Claims personnel may also ask questions about the condition of your vehicle prior to the vandalism, such as age and value of your vehicle, and if any modifications have been made to your vehicle since its purchase (such as a new paint job).

Once all of these criteria are met, you are ready to submit your claim. Your private insurance company may require more information, but this will give them a good start. Once you have settled with your private insurance company, report to the local Army Claims Office and pick up a claims packet. The claims personnel there can assist you with the final steps to submitting your claim.

If you have any concerns or questions, contact the Claims Office at the Northern Law Center, SHAPE. Call DSN 423-4061 or Civ 065-44-4061.

Is your private vehicle secure?

U.S. Army claims policy compensates for loss or damage to a privately owned vehicle from a break-in or theft at quarters or other authorized places. Regulations specify under what circumstances theft from a vehicle would be payable. An important one in the determination process is that the owner properly secured the vehicle.

In recent years auto manufacturers have marketed several models of semi-recreational vehicles that pose inherent security risks when parked unattended. These vehicles are characterized by a soft-top, non-metal doors and non-glass windows. They can be easily opened by removing the doors from the hinges or unsnapping the top from the sides of the vehicle. These vehicles pose an attractive target for thieves.

The U.S. Army Claims Service has determined that these vehicles do not have the structural theft deterrence capability to satisfy the requirements that they can be properly secured. Any claim arising from theft of property from this type of vehicle can not be compensated.

Remember, the Personnel Claims Act is a gratuitous payment statute not intended to be a total insurer for any or every loss an individual may suffer.

For vehicles with these operational characteristics, there is a failure to satisfy the already existing claims policy requirements for a properly secured vehicle test.

Owners of such vehicles, who have purchased factory installed stereo or radio equipment, or who have installed stereo or radio equipment, are warned that thefts from these vehicles normally will not be payable barring extraordinary circumstances.

If you own such a vehicle, you should consider the risks involved and of the need to consider purchasing insurance to cover the contents of the vehicle.

If you have questions, contact the Claims Office at the Northern Law Center by calling DSN 423-4061 or Civ. 065-44-4061.

There must be 50 ways to leave for London

By F. Neil Neeley

Just hop on the train, Jane, grab a big bus Gus... We are fortunate in the Benelux to be centrally located at the perfect jumping off point for travel to all areas of central Europe and beyond. With London only 199 miles away as the crow flies, it's so easy to get there from here. There are many air, ferry, rail and bus connections from the continent to the United Kingdom.

Two low cost airlines fly out of Belgium. Both offer extremely low fares if you are willing to put up with the inconvenience of the remote location of their departure and arrival points.

The low fares can be somewhat offset by the cost of traveling on to the center and you'd best arrive at the check in extra early or you could be bumped from your

seat. The ferry companies, in an effort not to be outdone by the budget airlines, have set up a website to promote discount ferry travel. For information, go to www.sailanddrive.com.

If you are a family of four or four people traveling together, you may find it cheaper to drive to one of the Belgian ports and take the ferry on to the UK.

The shortest ferry crossing to the UK is from Calais, France to Dover. Calais is at two hours driving distance from Chièvres. The time it takes to cross the channel from there varies slightly depending on which company you use but the trip averages about an hour. Another possibility from Calais is the ferry to Folkestone.

From Belgium, the only choice is to use the ferry from Zeebrugge to Hull, an ac-

ceptable option if you are traveling to the North of Great Britain. These crossings depart early evening and arrive at Hull early morning.

In the Netherlands, you have two options to cross the channel by ferry. These are Hoek van Holland to Harwich, which takes about three hours, or Rotterdam to Hull, which takes all night.

A helpful hint on finding the best fares is to check out <http://www.aferry.to> once you have your dates set.

If you don't like to take a ferry and still want to take your car along, the

Eurotunnel or Chunnel may be your solution. Your car and its passengers will be on the train going through the tunnel un-



der the Channel from Calais to Dover.

If you are going to Great Britain without a car, consider riding the high speed train. From Brussels, it will bring you into London's Waterloo station in two hours and twenty minutes; from Lille, France it will take one hour and forty minutes.

Tickets are the cheapest if you book at least two weeks in advance. Typical advance purchase fares from Brussels are 40 euros one way with a mandatory Saturday stay. Tickets are non refundable and cannot be changed. Details at www.eurostar.com.

Waterloo is located within walking distance of many restaurants, bars, the Royal Festival Hall and the London Eye. Buses, taxis and the underground are available from the station to whisk you to all parts of London.

The bus à la Greyhound may be an acceptable alternative if you are young or young at heart. Fares are cheap and the bus departs from and arrives in the city center next to major rail stations. Eurolines bus has a special offer of 55 euros round trip from Brussels North station to London Victoria station. Details at www.eurolines.be.

Small local train stations gateways to Europe too

By F. Neil Neeley

Have you ever noticed the small railway station in your village and wondered about it? Perhaps it looks tiny or abandoned. Maybe you seldom see any activity around it except when an ancient looking red train stops to exchange a few passengers.

Where do those trains go from there? Well, you might be surprised to learn that Belgium has one of the densest rail networks in Europe.

Even the smallest rail station has regular service connecting directly or indirectly with Brussels. From there one can continue onward by rail, bus, ferry or air to anywhere in Europe.

Laurie Bach is a firm believer in using the trains to get about. She teaches the community activities branch's Learning



About Belgium class. "The trains run really well and are mostly on time," she says. "They make life so simple."

Laurie believes that taking the train to Paris makes more sense than driving. "If you are driving to Paris, even if it's just to the outside of the city, you've got to think of gas, tolls and parking when you get there."

For an affordable day or weekend in Paris, buy your ticket at least two weeks in advance and you qualify for a low roundtrip fare on the Thalys from Mons (one train per day). One hour and ten minutes later you could be in the center of Paris ready for a day of sightseeing.

Paris is not the only easy nearby destination from your village station. Ath, Erbisoeul, Jurbise and Soignies are among the local stations with direct hourly ser-

vice to Brussels and on to Zaventem national airport. The next time you have an international flight, why battle the traffic or endure the hassle and expense of airport parking?

Fancy a romantic evening out in Brussels? You could take the train up in time for dinner and a stroll around the Grand'Place and still be back in time to tuck the kids into bed. On weekends the first person gets 40 percent off and a second to sixth companion each gets 60 percent off. All must travel together.

If you are the least bit timid about taking the train, you should consider taking the Army Community Service's 'Take the Train' to Brussels class. You will learn how to read the schedules and purchase a ticket. You will then get to take the train to Brussels and enjoy a pleasant afternoon of sightseeing. Sign up by calling ACS at DSN 423-4332. To get the fares and schedules for the Belgian trains on line, go to www.b-rail.be/E/index.php.

SHAPE and Chièvres Community Calendar

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

A Women's Health Seminar is scheduled at the SHAPE Clinic on Oct. 20 in the 2nd floor conference room, from 1-3 p.m. and on Oct. 21, Bldg 318, from 9-11 a.m.

October marks the 20th year of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. U.S. figures show that breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, aside from skin cancer. During 2004, an estimated 215,990 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to occur among women, the second leading cause of cancer death, after lung cancer. An estimated 40,110 women are expected to die from breast cancer this year. The risk of breast cancer increases as a woman grows older with 82 percent of breast cancers occurring in women age 50 and older. The risk is especially high for women age 60 and older. Since the program began, mammography rates have more than doubled for women age 50 and older (from 25 percent in 1987 to 69 percent in 1998) and breast cancer deaths have declined by 1.6 percent between 1989 and 1995. This is exciting progress, but there are still women who do not take advantage of early detection at all and others who do not get screening mammograms and clinical breast exams at regular intervals. Opportunity will be given to obtain a clinical breast exam by a female provider Oct. 19-21. Referral for mammograms may also be done at this time.

Contact the SHAPE Clinic Community Health Nurse at 423-5948 for more information or to arrange a session in another language between Oct. 19-21.

The SHAPE Officer's Bridge Club (SOBC) is a recognized activity by HSC and is open to military officers, their spouses and local nationals. The club meets in the SHAPE Officers' Club's Namur Room every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. - noon for ladies/spouses and at 7:30 - 11 p.m. for everyone. We play contract bridge and encourage players of all skill levels from those wishing to learn the game to accomplished players to come and join us. If you are interested in becoming a member, contact Jerry Cummings at DSN 423-4173.

The U.S. Navy Ball is scheduled for Oct. 16 at 6:30 p.m. at SHAPE Officers' Club. Info and tickets: LI1 (AW) Thompson at DSN 423-5474 or YN2 (AW) Castillo DSN 423-4177.

Army Community Service - The "Cultural Adaptation Trip" is on Oct. 9 from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Bus leaves at Bldg. 318, SHAPE. Trip includes visit of a cost saving warehouse, furniture store and food tasting along with introduction to the Belgian culture. Children are welcome. Sign up for this free trip at ACS, Véronique Hensgens, DSN 423-4332 or MWR office, DSN 361-5904. The next ACS *Newcomers Briefing* is on Oct. 14 at 8:30 a.m. at the Hotel Maisières - Free lunch provided. After lunch at 1.30 p.m. head out to Mons for "Take the Bus", an introduction to the Belgian Bus system. Civilians are also welcome. Sign up at DSN 423-4332. Next "Take the Train" Class is on Oct. 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. *Anger Management Course* every Tuesday morning from 9 to 10 a.m., for information, call DSN 423-5263, *Job Opportunities Briefing* every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to noon (Pre-Registration required). Call ACS at 423-4904.

BOSS - Next meeting is on Oct. 21 at 130 p.m. at the Community Activity Center on SHAPE. *BOSS Halloween Party* is on Oct. 30 at the SHAPE IC Club. Call DSN 423-4561 for more information.

Prime Time Lounge - Country Night on Oct. 9 at 8:30 p.m. and *Halloween Party* on Oct. 31 at 8:30 p.m.

Trips and Tours - Haunted Paris Trip on Oct. 30. Call DSN 423-3884 for details.

Outdoor Recreation - Horseback Riding Trip on Oct. 9 in Chaleux and *Deep Sea Fishing Trip* on Oct. 30. Call DSN 423-3884 for details.

Arts & Crafts - Holiday Bazaar on Oct. 9 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Handmade items for upcoming Holidays. For information, call N-C Bland at DSN 423-4680.

Entertainment Center - Children's Theatre Classes every Thursday and Friday from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

SHAPE Health Facility - Infant Massage Class is every Thursday from 11 a.m. to noon. *Breastfeeding Support Group* on Oct. 19 from 10 to 11 a.m. *Childbirth Education Class* from Oct. 27 to Dec. 1 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the SHAPE Healthcare Facility. Call Fiona Webster at DSN 423-4274 to sign up for one of the classes.

SNAP Office - The SNAP office is now located in the WEB Office at the Hotel Maisières. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The 80th ASG SNAP Program Coordinator can still be reached via email at: Marcia.DeVill@benelux.army.mil or at SNAP@benelux.army.mil. The SNAP Automated hotline will also remain the same: 068-27-6300. To leave a telephone message for the Program Coordinator please contact the Chièvres MP Desk at 068-27-5301 or DSN 361-5301.

The SHAPE American Schools PTSA hosts their annual *Fall Bazaar* on Oct.

16, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Oct 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the SHAPE International School Cafeteria and Gym. All proceeds go to the PTSA to support our schools. For information, contact Tammy Oluvic, 065-82.26.57 or at mnolovic@yahoo.com.

The Unit Level Basketball coaches meeting will be held on Oct. 20 at 10 a.m. in the Main Gym conference room. The season will begin on Nov. 9. For more information contact Cisco at DSN 423-3947.

The Shape Jewish Community - Oneg Shabbat followed by the service is on Dec. 3 at 8 p.m. For information, call Lisa Arbeiter at DSN 423-4938.

American Red Cross - CPR/First Aid classes will be held Oct. 9 from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Oct. 19 - 20 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. each night. *Babysitter's Training* will be held from Oct. 12 to 14 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. each night. *Pet First Aid class* will be held on Oct. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information contact DSN 423-4008.



The general election is Tuesday Nov. 2nd.

For information on how to register please visit the Federal Voting Assistance website: <http://www.fvap.gov> or contact your unit Voting Assistance Officer at DSN 361-6225.

Brussels Community Calendar

The Brussels American Community Chorus welcomes adults and teens of all nationalities. Men are needed even if they must miss some practices.



Rehearsals are every Monday (even on holidays)

from 7:30-9 p.m. in the parish hall at St. Anthony's Church, Kraainem. The chorus will perform in October and December. Music ranges from Christmas carols to Irving Berlin's songs. Contact Carol at 02 757-0621 (ignore change in dial tone) or Lamdm@attglobal.net.

Army Community Service - Newcomers Briefing on Oct. 19 from

8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., *Hospital Tour for Newcomers* on Oct. 20 from 9:30 a.m. to noon and *Newcomers Brief* on Oct. 21 from 9:30 to 11.00 a.m. *Friday Metro Madness Outing* on Oct. 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Limit of 10 persons. Call ACS at DSN 368-9783 to sign up.

Child and Youth Services - Fall

Festival on Oct. 29 from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Call CYS at DSN 368-9639 for details.

Three Star Lounge - Thursday Movie Nights, enjoy free popcorn and the hottest box office hits. All Tri-Mission ID cardholders and accompanied guests 18 years and older are welcome. For details and movie schedule call DSN 368-9732.

Benelux Meteor Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy due (noon)	Print Date						
Oct. 8	Oct. 22	Nov. 8	Nov. 19	Dec. 6	Dec. 17	Jan. 14	Jan. 28
Oct. 25	Nov. 5	Nov. 22	Dec. 3	Jan. 3	Jan. 14	Jan. 31	Feb. 11

About Us



The *Benelux Meteor* is the authorized unofficial Army newspaper published under AR 360-1 for 80th Area Support Group personnel. Editorial content is provided by the 80th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office and the 254th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 80th Area Support Group. The *Meteor* is published twice per month. Circulation is 3,000. Our mailing address is Benelux Meteor, HQ 80th ASG, Unit 21419, Public Affairs Office, APO AE 09708. Telephone: DSN 361-5419; fax: DSN 361-5106; civilian telephone prefix: 068-27-5419. The country code for Belgium is 0032. Email address: meteor@benelux.army.mil

Policy

- We encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request. Letters regarding an issue should contribute to informational interest.
 - We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
 - Articles in plain text and separate photographic files may be submitted but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor. All submissions should be in electronic form as plain text. We cannot process information in documents such as PowerPoint, Excel or Acrobat.
 - Event announcements must use civilian dates and times. Spell out acronyms and include a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. To save space, we cannot reproduce prepared flyers in the *Meteor*.
- Advertising**
- Messages from readers from profit and non-profit organizations which involve money exchange constitutes advertising.
 - Neither the *Benelux Meteor* staff nor other public affairs personnel can accept advertising requests.
 - The appearance of advertising, including inserts, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services offered. Everything advertised must be available for purchase, use or patronage, without discrimination.

- Any gambling or lottery requiring payment for chance cannot be advertised as stated in 18 U.S.C. 1302.

Deadline

Copy and photographs are due by noon 10 calendar days before publication date.

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 - Lt. Col. Jon M. Davis Jr. NATO Support Activity
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Battle of the Bulge museums tell of GI struggle for victory

In September 1944, after four years of occupation, the area welcomed their liberators. But, a few months later, the cheerfulness was to be brutally interrupted by a last major offensive launched by the German army. The objective was to reverse the course of events by striking through the Ardennes, cross the Meuse river, retake the port of Antwerpen, and isolate the British army from the American Army.

On Dec. 16, at 5:30 a.m., on a cold and foggy morning, from Monschau to Echternach, the Battle of the Bulge began. It is also known as the von Rundstedt offensive.

On the Allied sector, the surprise was total. But soon, in the North, the push of the German 6th Panzer Armee, was to be broken by the desperate resistance of the American units. In the South, despite certain difficulties, the German 5th Panzer Armee surrounded Bastogne and progressed with determination to the Meuse river. But the day before Christmas, the tanks of the German breakthrough were stopped and destroyed in view of Dinant.

The German army was never to cross the Meuse river and the tactical objective was no longer Antwerpen but Bastogne.

On Jan. 3, 1945, in bitter cold and snow, the general counter-attack began by the Allies. By Jan. 28, the German army was finally pushed back to its initial positions of Dec.

the invasion and occupation of the area for good.

None of the American, British and Canadian servicemembers who were in the Battle

tions of weapons, uniforms, vehicles, soldiers' personal belongings, photographs and maps.

Remember Museum at Thimister-Clermont (near Henri-Chapelle cemetery)

The particularity of this privately owned museum on Les B  olles, 4 is that the owner, Marcel Schmetz, will tell the story behind each and every item on display. Visits are only upon request at 071/324800.

Others worth seeing

- The Baugnez Memorial commemorating the 17 December 1944 massacre at Baugnez-Malmedy

- Wood of Peace at Bizory, Bastogne not far from the Mardasson memorial

- German offensive extreme advance at Dinant

- American Military Cemetery and the 1st U.S. Infantry Division monument at Henri-Chapelle

- Monument honoring the 99th U.S. Infantry Division at Krinkelt

- U.S. Military Cemetery at Neuville-en-Condroz

- Commonwealth War Cemetery at Hotton



On the walls of the Mardasson, one can read the history of the Battle of Ardennes and the names of the main units who had participated in the action. On the crown, the names of 48 States appear in bronze letters.

16, beyond the Siegfried line. The Battle of the Bulge was over. It was also the end of

of the Bulge will ever forget the bad weather, the rough terrain and the fierce fighting. Nor

could they ever forget the 8,802 comrades left behind. The youngest were barely 18.

In order to learn more about the Battle of the Bulge, visit one of the following museums:

Bastogne Historical Center at Bastogne.

The museum is located next to the Mardasson monument, a star-shaped monument honoring the memory of all American soldiers who fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

The museum holds a large collection of Battle of the Bulge uniforms and weapons, and shows a 30-minute movie explaining the battle.

Museum December 1944 at La Gleize

You cannot miss the museum as you'll notice a huge Tiger II tank in front of it. With several scenes, a large collection of guns, vehicles and other authentic items, this museum is also a must.

Museum of the Battle of the Bulge at La Roche-en-Ardenne

The American and German armies with their respective weapons and vehicles are well represented in this museum located at Rue Chamont, 5. Moreover, it also highlights the British participation during the Allied counter-attack and the liberation of La Roche and the villages on the left bank of the Ourthe river.

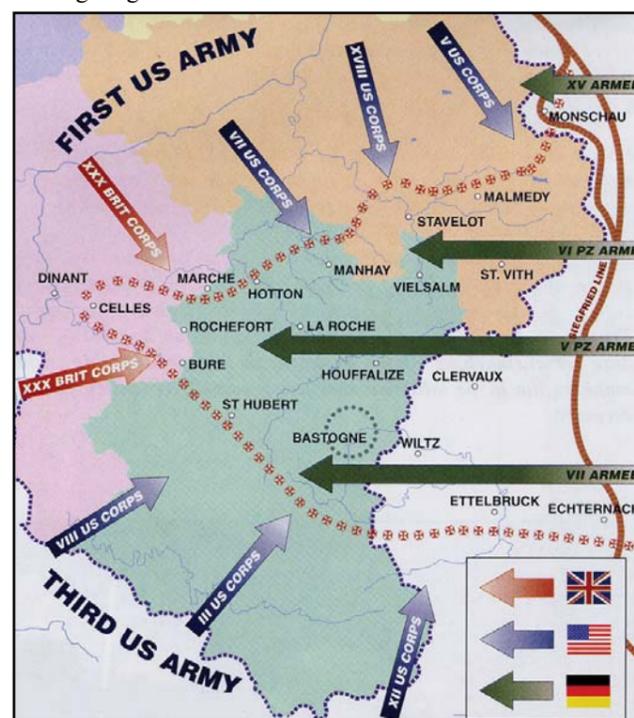
Poteau 44 Museum

Poteau is a small village in the Sankt Vith area where the American 14th Cavalry Group was ambushed by the German "Kampfgruppe Hansen" on December 18, 1944.

The museum located on Poteauerstrasse 22 also offers tours around the historic battlefield on board a Halftrack.

National Museum of Military History at Diekirch

The key topic of the museum on Bamertal, 10, is the objective historical representation of the military operations in the Battle of the Bulge with numerous life-size dioramas. Special showrooms feature large collec-



3 January 1945 counter-offensive

My Dad did his duty

By Jeff Shriver

My Dad was one of those lucky guys drafted for military service during the winter of 1943. He was in high school at the time. That is how desperate the world was then, engaged in 'total war'.

We talked more about war stories when I was a boy growing up in Indiana. As he got older and I was maturing, we talked about other things. So I don't have as many details as I would like. My Uncle Burt has some letters for me from Dad that I have to collect.

My guess is that Dad was drafted and reported to duty by January 1944. He had a choice of duty to compete for. He wanted paratroopers and was accepted. During training he suffered a hernia and was shuffled to armor. He was a machine gunner on half-tracks. He said several times he could write his name with bullets. I believed him — anything he said, he was able to back it up with deeds.

During that timeframe, the world was bracing for the invasion. They (the government) knew what they were doing by collecting and training every possible resource available for that event.

Dad wasn't part of D-Day. He was assigned to an Armor Division of Patton's 3rd Army. I remember going to Arlington Cemetery with Dad for a visit to the Tomb in 1983. In the visitor center, we looked at organizational patches for different wars. We looked at the armored division patches and he said he remembered being a part of several that are described as forward units during the Battle of the Bulge. And then he called attention to the 16th Armored Division patch and said Patton took everything that was left, formed new units and kept pushing across Germany and into Czechoslovakia. Dad met the Russians at the Elbe River. It is called a different name in the Czech Republic, the Labe River. I finally went there this year for the first time.

I worked at SHAPE in 1994 during the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. I told my Dad I would buy his plane ticket if he would come. He declined. I went to Bastogne for him — we had ice fog that year. Nothing unlike what those men went through decades earlier, except they had no shelter, no hot food, no warm clothes, and they were being shot at and terrorized

throughout the recovery effort.

All soldiers, like it or not, are infantry. Dad was not wounded physically, but he was a very hardened combat veteran. He was part of the relief column. He was in Bastogne. He was a Company runner of coded messages. He was placed on guard at least once when the "Old Man" visited his unit's headquarters. His feet were most likely frostbitten during the relief of Bastogne because he kept Dessenex in business his entire life.



He had a camp tin shot out of his hand by a sniper one night. He had an antenna wire cut in half by a passing bullet in a vehicle he was riding shotgun. He stopped short of the details of what really happened over here. He made friends that didn't make it back. He had his ghosts to stir his memory. I witnessed that bunches of times.

Dad did his duty. He returned home, not 21 yet. He married Mom and he lived his life as an ordinary citizen. He was a Roosevelt Democrat but more than anything else, he was respected and loved by many people for whom and what he was.....A life time member of America's greatest generation. A modest patriot who earned his way in everything we had and a man's man who was reliable and trustworthy. In short, he was a positive role model with flaws who led without wanting to and taught without understanding his impact on the rest of us. Thanks again Dad!

Note: Jeff Shriver is the 80th ASG Provost Marshal Security Guard Contract Coordinator.

- German Military Cemetery at Recogne (Bastogne)



Monument of the junction between the 1st and the 3rd U.S. Armies on the square of Houffalize. Also displayed in town is a German Panther tank Mark V

Pictures are courtesy of the Walloon-Brussels Tourism Promotion Office (OPT) located on March  -aux-Herbes, 61/63 in Brussels.