

THE GAZETTE

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

Orphanage Wish List

The orphans from the La Fermette orphanage in Ath have submitted their wishes to Santa. If you are interested in buying one of their wishes, call the USAG Benelux Public Affairs Office at DSN 361- 5694 or +32(0)68-275694. Santa will distribute the gifts to each of them Dec. 20 in the afternoon at the Community Activity Center on Chièvres Air Base. See page 7.

Housing Office Closure

From now to Dec. 22, the Housing Office will be under renovation. Additionally, the office will be closed Dec. 13 from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The normal entrance will be closed for that whole period. Customers will be given access through the conference room.

MWR is Hiring

Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation is hiring part-time and full-time U.S. employees. Visit the USAJobs website (USAJobs.gov) and search for listings in Belgium or the Netherlands.



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Santa Claus visits the Brussels community

A little girl explains to Santa Claus what she wants for Christmas during Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Winter Wonderland Extravaganza in Brussels, Dec. 1, 2017. All children got a smiling photo with Santa and received a free candy cane (U.S. Army photo by Christophe Morel)

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Senior civilian leader retires from government service

By Jessica Ryan

USAG Benelux Public Affairs



The community said farewell to Cheryle Hess, deputy garrison commander to U.S. Army Garrison Benelux, as she retired from 32 years of government service Dec. 1 at Caserne Daumerie on Chièvres, Belgium. Hess served as the top civilian advisor to the garrison commander for over two-and-a-half years.

As friends and co-workers gathered for a retirement ceremony in the community auditorium, Army Col. Kurt Connell, garrison commander, spoke about Hess' mentorship

to others and him. He remarked that her career as an Army officer, both active duty and reservist, and civilian leader gave her well-rounded knowledge of U.S. Army Installation Management Command's mission.

"She understands the IMCOM mission from a number of different perspectives. There isn't any part of this business that she doesn't know and doesn't know well. She, more than

anyone else, coached me in that first year and a half [that I was here]. Any successes I had, I can attribute to Cheryle," he said.

"She always took the time to teach, coach and mentor to make all of us better. Her impact will last for hundreds of years to come. I'm not speaking with hyperbole there. If you take the knowledge she gave you, you can pass it on to your subordinates and they will pass it on.



Army Col. Kurt Connell (right), garrison commander, presents a certificate to Cheryle Hess (center) and her husband Ron (left) during her retirement ceremony Dec. 1, 2017, at Caserne Daumerie on Chièvres, Belgium. (U.S. Army photo by Jessica Ryan)

Her influence will last well after her lifetime and well beyond my lifetime.”

During the ceremony, Hess received the Meritorious Service Medal. In addition, she was presented a folded American flag, which signifies her retirement from government service. The flag was previously flown at the garrison’s headquarters building that day.

Hess spoke to the audience about how the U.S. Army provided her with many career opportunities that she would have never received in the civilian world.

“Looking back at my entire life, the smartest thing I ever did was join the U.S. Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps in college. It was the first year that it was open to women nationwide,” she said.

Hess commissioned as a second lieutenant through the ROTC at Michigan State University in December 1976. Her long career includes serving two tours in Afghanistan. She retired as a lieutenant colonel.

She began her Army civilian career with U.S. Army Support Command in Hawaii. She then held various assignments in Heidelberg, Germany, and Washington, D.C. After completing the Defense Senior Leader Development Program, she was selected as the deputy to the garrison commander for USAG Benelux in 2015.


“My career was both challenging and rewarding. I did my best, and I was well-rewarded in my career progression and the friendships I made. I will be forever grateful for all the wonderful people here and whom I had the opportunity to work with,” she said.

She thanked the audience for their dedication and hard work during her time at the garrison.

“I pay tribute to your dedication, your commitment and your professionalism. I’m very fond of what we have accomplished together in the last two-and-a-half years,” she said. “We’ve gone through some tough challenges. Our success is a testimony to each and every one here. We are still working hard to take the best care of Soldiers and families. We created a real team here, working together for the greater good.”

Hess and her husband plan to retire in northern Virginia and spend more time with their children and grandchildren.

Thomas Joyce assumed responsibility as the deputy to the garrison commander. He is responsible for the management and execution of a variety of installation management activities supporting the U.S. and NATO in multiple locations and countries throughout the region. Prior to this assignment, Joyce served as the first chief, human resources division at IMCOM Directorate-Training.

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Commander..... <i>Col. Kurt Connell</i>	<p><i>The Gazette</i> is an unofficial publication published under the provisions of AR 360-1 for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of <i>The Gazette</i> are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of the Army or the USAG Benelux. <i>The Gazette</i> is a free weekly publication distributed via email every Thursday, except when that day is an American, Belgian or Dutch Holiday, then <i>The Gazette</i> is published on Wednesday. The editorial content of this publication is prepared, edited, provided, approved and published by the USAG Benelux Public Affairs Office, Unit 21419, APO AE 09708. Telephone (0032) 068-275419/DSN 361-5419. Everything advertised in this publication will be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the publisher will refuse to print advertising from that source until the violation is corrected. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services advertised by the U.S. Army. Submit content or story ideas to usarmy.benelux.id-europe.list.pao@mail.mil by Monday at 3 p.m.</p>
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BUN-D opens at Chièvres Air Base

By Jessica Ryan

USAG Benelux Public Affairs



From left to right: Army Command Sgt. Maj. Samara Pitre, Christa Rodriguez, AAFES services business manager, Army Col. Kurt Connell, garrison commander, Omer Serbetci, BUN-D manager, and Laurent "Gus" Elius, AAFES services and vending business supervisor, cut a ribbon to signify the opening of BUN-D at the Chièvres Exchange food court Dec. 5, 2017 on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium. (U.S. Army photo by Jessica Ryan)

Food concessionaire BUN-D officially opened Dec. 5 at the Chièvres Exchange food court on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium.

Garrison leaders and Army and Air Force Exchange Service, or AAFES, staff members celebrated the grand opening by having a ribbon-cutting ceremony as community members lined up to order food and taste samples to see if it was "love at first bite," the concessionaire's slogan.

According to AAFES, BUN-D is a new restaurant with the Exchange around Europe. Its menu includes a variety of health and fresh food assortments, such as pitas, salads, rice bowls, juices and smoothies.

"It [BUN-D] was something missing on base. Community members can now get a healthy breakfast, lunch or dinner [at the food court]," said Christa Rodriguez, services business manager at AAFES Benelux and Spangdahlem. "These foods are good for you,

since they are fresh and have nutritional value. It's great food!"

Laurent "Gus" Elius, services and vending business supervisor at AAFES Benelux, added that the decision to open BUN-D was to be lined with the Exchange's BE FIT program. According to its website, the program offers products and services targeting consumers who want to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

The restaurant pre-opened Monday as employees quickly took customers' orders, especially during peak times such as lunch hours, and customers learned the process of selecting items for their made-to-order meals.

"It's very fast service," said Elius. "Customers just wait a maximum of a couple of minutes."

In the near future, customers will be able to order food in advance by calling the concessionaire and picking up orders when they are ready. This option will help alleviate concerns for customers who have short lunch breaks or other time conflicts.

One customer waiting in line during the grand opening was Sarah Naumcheff, an Air Force spouse, who was excited to have another dining option, especially since her family live in the nearby area and often visit the base.

"There are not a whole lot of fast-food options in the area. If you are on a lunch break and need to grab something fast, you only had two options here before," she said.

BUN-D is open to all NATO members, U.S. ID cardholders and host-nation individuals who have access to Chièvres Air Base.



Special to the Gazette

The Combined Federal Campaign-Overseas, or CFC-O, for this year kicked off in October. For those who are not familiar with CFC, it is the only fundraising that can be done in the federal workplace. This year's theme is "Show Some Love."

From now to Dec. 15, federal employees (including U.S. and host nation employees) and U.S. service members overseas have the option to donate to charitable organizations via payroll deductions or one-time or reoccurring monthly pledge via credit card, debit card or direct bank transfer. Cash donations are not permitted. Eligible organizations are listed at <https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/welcome>.

Pledges can be done via online or by paper forms. Paper forms are available through the local CFC office.

Employees are advised to include their unit code (see column on the right) in their contribution.

Employees can also pledge volunteer hours to participating charities in addition to monetary donations.

CFC is one of the largest and most successful workplace fundraising campaigns in the world. Over the past 56 years, the CFC has raised \$8.2 billion to help those in need around the corner, across the nation, and throughout the world.

In 2016, more than 400,000 federal employees around the world pledged more than \$167 million to help people and communities in need – a reflection of the generous nature of federal employees. In addition, more than 19,000 uniformed service members and DOD civilians in the five overseas combatant commands pledged more than \$4.7 million to help people and communities in need.

The campaign has a collective impact, allowing employees to join co-workers in supporting those in need in our local military communities, across the nation, and around the globe. Additionally, the campaign shows how U.S. military members place service above self. Contributions through the CFC-O are a tangible extension of the selfless service give to their country every day.

For more information about CFC-Overseas campaign at U.S. Army Garrison Benelux, contact your unit representative or contact Richard Smith at DSN 361-5973 or richard.j.smith52.civ@mail.mil.

BENELUX UNIT CODES

383650002: USAG Benelux Schinnen - Civilian
 383650003: USAG Benelux Schinnen - Military
 383670022: USAG Benelux Chièvres - Civilian
 383670029: USAG Benelux Chièvres - Military
 383680001: USAG Benelux Brussels - All
 383650004: AAFES
 383650005: DODD Schools Schinnen
 383670010: DODD Schools SHAPE
 383650010: DECA
 383670001: AFN Benelux
 383670003: 650th MI
 383670005: SHAPE Healthcare Facility
 383680006: Brussels Health Clinic
 383680005: Dental Clinic
 383670006: BFO
 383670007: Andrews FCU
 383670008: 39th SIG
 383650001: AFNORTH ACO
 383670009: AFNORTH BCO
 383670011: 424th ABS
 383670023: Air Force Element
 383670014: US Survey Division
 383680002: US DEL NATO
 383680003: US MISSION NATO
 383670027: Northern Law Center
 383670030: ACS
 383680007: 409th CSB, RCO

Bastogne to commemorate the Battle of the Bulge

Special to the Gazette

The 40th Bastogne December Historic Walk, which will occur Dec. 16, brings the participants in the footsteps of the 101st Airborne Division during the Battle of the Bulge. Participants will walk through the sector of Hemroulle this year.

Many re-enactor groups participate in the walk or line up along the different routes to reconstitute some Battle of the Bulge scenes.

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux is an official partner of the city of Bastogne and Base Bastogne in the organization of the Historic Walk.

All partners agreed to donate the proceeds from the walk to Honor Flights, a U.S. foundation that organizes trips to the Washington, D.C. Mall so veterans can see the memorials.

Participants have the choice between three distances: seven, 14 and 20 kilometers. Participation is €6 per person. Registration and payment are on-site only Dec. 15 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 16 from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Walkers depart from the Sports Center of Bastogne, between 7 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. (Rue Gustave Delperdange). Participants will receive a certificate of participation, a free hot beverage along the route, a historical booklet and a souvenir patch.

In addition to the walk, a patriotic parade will begin at 3 p.m. on Dec. 16 as well as a wreath-laying at the Patton and McAuliffe monuments. In honor of Army Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe's famous quote "Nuts!" nuts will be thrown from the city hall balcony at 4 p.m.



Participants of the annual walk have the choice between three distances: seven, 14 and 20 kilometers. (Archived photo)

Local orphans await Santa's arrival

Special to the Gazette



Santa makes a merry Christmas possible for the children of La Fermette, the local orphanage in Ath. (U.S. Army photo by Cis Spook)

Christmas is around the corner, and the children of the local orphanage La Fermette in Ath are ready for a visit from Santa.

Ever since the U.S. community settled in the SHAPE/Chièvres area in 1967, it has been supporting the local orphanage in Ath. La Fermette takes care of children under the age of 18 in two facilities located close to Ath. It also watches over additional children who are still living with their families but need specific attention.

To make Santa's job easier, the children have submitted their wish list for Christmas. The American Legion and U.S. Army Garrison Benelux's goal is to provide each of the children with one of their wishes at a party the afternoon of Dec. 20. Event details will be released soon, but Santa has already saved the date.

If you want to support the program, you can in two ways. You may request to see the wish list at Caserne Daumerie and sign up to purchase the gift for a particular child. You can also donate funds to be used to get gifts that haven't been purchased for by other donors.

If you want to take a look at the wish list or if you have any questions on the orphans program, contact the USAG Benelux Public Affairs Office at DSN 361-5694 or civilian +32 (0)68-275694.

Commentary: Christmas in the Netherlands

By Rita Hoefnagels

USAG Benelux-Schinnen Public Affairs

To me, Christmas means snow, candles, nicely decorated open fireplaces, the smell of firs, warmth, coziness and family time. Christmas in the Netherlands is actually a religious family fest. Although, it is becoming more of a tradition to give presents on Christmas day, traditionally presents were only given on Dec. 5 or 6 during the fest of Sinterklaas.

I am often asked if the feast of Sinterklaas, or Saint Nicolas, is the same as Christmas. Every time, I have to say that it is not. Saint Nicolas is celebrated on Dec. 5 and 6 while Christmas is observed on Dec. 25. Sinterklaas rides on a white horse and delivers the presents in shoes lined up by the fireplace. Santa rides a sleigh drawn by reindeers and travels through the sky. He delivers the presents in Christmas socks hanging by the fireplace. Santa's helpers are elves. Sinterklaas has its companions called "Pieten." Sinterklaas wears an episcopate and carries a bishop's crosier while Santa's hat looks a bit like an old fashion nightcap. However, both men share one distinct feature – they both have a white beard.

Legend has it that, in the 4th century, Saint Nicolas was the bishop of Myra in Turkey. He used his wealth to fight injustice and gave everything to the poor. Other stories about Saint Nicolas have been shared throughout the years. In one story, he used his wealth to help three maidens who were forced into poverty. Another story recounted how he brought three children back to life who had been murdered. In another, he is sailed the Ocean and, through prayers, saved his ship from sinking in storm. He was among others the patron saint for the seafaring. Historians think that Saint Nicolas' long white beard and his white horse can be traced back to the Teutonic God Wodan who flew through the sky on his beautiful white horse Sleipnir.



Courtesy graphic

The Dutch colonists in America kept the tradition of Sinterklaas alive and after a while the English colonists adopted the legend as well. It is believed that the English-speaking children got as excited as the Dutch children and pronounced the Dutch "Sinterklaas" so fast it started to sound like "Santa Claus." Saint Nicolas is also the patron Saint of New York.

Until 1800, the Santa was pictured in the United States as a tall, skinny and stately man dressed in bishop's robes and riding on a white horse. This changed in 1809 when in Washington Irving's book *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, the author described Santa as a chubby and pleasant man dressed in trousers and wearing a wide-brimmed hat. In 1823, a New York newspaper published the poem "Twas the night before Christmas." In the poem, the author described Santa as a chubby and jolly person with twinkling eyes and a red nose dressed in a red suit with white-fur trimmings. He traveled through the sky in a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer and delivered the presents on Christmas Eve. Thomas Nast, an American cartoonist with *Harpers Weekly* gave Santa a beard in a series of strips that were published in 1863 to 1886. However, the final stage in the evolution of the modern

Santa Claus was brought about by Coca-Cola when they launched an advertising campaign in the 1930s with Santa Claus as a cheery, chubby fellow that millions of people throughout the western world know today.

In the Netherlands, Christmas has two festive days, Dec. 25 and 26. In the southern part of the Netherlands, which is predominantly Catholic, many people attend a night mass on Dec. 24. Christmas Day is observed Dec. 25 as many spend time with their families. During dinner that day, a special dish, consisting of rabbit marinated in wine is served. Dec. 26 or second Christmas Day is much the same. Although nowadays, people go more out for dinner on both days, but it is still very much a family-oriented time.

Personally, I always enjoy the time before Christmas, the Advent, more. Decorating the tree, visiting the Christmas markets and seeing all the preparations for the festive days are just wonderful to me. The Christmas markets are so inviting and fun. The largest and oldest Christmas Market is probably the Gingerbread and Toy City in Nürnberg, Germany. Almost every town in Germany has at least one market, but in the last couple decades the markets have become a tradition in the Netherlands and Belgium too.

I hope you will find time to visit these festive attractions in Europe and wish you already a peaceful and wonderful holiday season.

Families celebrate Christmas in Brussels

By **Christophe Morel**

USAG Benelux Public Affairs



Families make holiday crafts as they wait for Santa Claus in the 3 Star Recreation Center in Brussels, Dec. 1, 2017. (U.S. Army photos by Christophe Morel)

The Brussels community kicked off the holiday season Dec. 1 with Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Winter Wonderland Extravaganza. "Everybody come together just to make the event great and just to celebrate the holidays," said David Coldwell, MWR business and recreation division chief.

Families gathered in the 3 Star Recreation Center to celebrate Christmas with food, decorations, crafts, music and, of course, Santa Claus.

The long-awaited moment of the evening was the arrival of Santa in a military police sedan. Children were ready to tell him what they want for Christmas. One of the girls said she would love to have a pony. Other children didn't know yet or were too shy to talk with Santa, but everybody got a candy cane at the end.

The purpose of the event was to give the community a little bit of America in Belgium. According to Coldwell, the Brussels community is a family. "We come together and work together as partners to make things happen," Coldwell concluded.

Check out more event photos at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usagbenelux>.

ALL COMMUNITIES

Through Dec. 11

- **2017 Federal Benefits Open Season** - The 2017 Federal Benefits Open Season for the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program, or FSAFEDS, Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program, or FEDVIP, and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, or FEHB, will end Dec. 11 for civilian employees. For more information, go to <https://www.abc.army.mil/FederalBenefitsOpenSeason.html>.

Dec. 14

- **Positive Parenting** - Trying to control your child and feeling frustrated? Learn techniques on how to teach your child to control themselves. From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Brussels (Bldg. 4, 2 Floor).

Positive parenting is a VTC-projected class. For information about and to register for VTC classes, contact:

- For SHAPE: DSN: 366-6824 or +32(0)65-326824.
- For Brussels: DSN 368-9783 or +32(0)2-7179783.
- For Schinnen: DSN 360-7500 or +31(0)46-4437500.



BRUSSELS COMMUNITY

See also above in "All Communities"

Open Enrollment for Cub Scout Pack 457

- Brussels community families are invited to sign up their children in first to fifth grade or 6-to-10-year olds for the Cub Scouts. Scheduled activities planned for this year include camping, hiking, community service projects, day camps and quarterly pack outings to exciting venues in and around Brussels. For more information, call +32(0)49-1867101.

Every Friday

- **3 Star Recreation Night** - Join the Brussels community every Friday for games, cards, music and movies starting at 5 p.m. at the 3 Star Recreation Center. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. U.S. military, NATO, U.S. Embassy and mission cardholders are welcomed. For more information, call DSN 368-9822 or +32 (0)27-179822.

Through Dec. 14

- **Community Movie Night** - Enjoy free entertainment at the 3 Star Recreation Center starting at 6:30 p.m. The schedule includes *Kingsman: The Golden Circle* (R) on Friday and *Flatliners* (PG-13) on Dec. 14. For more information, call DSN 368-9822 or +32 (0)2-7179822.

Dec. 12-14

- **Host Nation Orientation** - Newcomers will receive information about USAG Benelux and the Brussels community, visit local sites and learn about the language and local customs. Advance registration is required. For more information, call DSN 368-9783 or +32 (0)2-7179783.



SCHINNEN/BRUNSSUM COMMUNITY

See also above in "All Communities"

Andrews Federal Credit Union

- ***New Hours of Operation*** - The AFCU Schinnen Branch's new operating hours are Mondays to Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and closed Saturdays and Sundays.

Dec. 8

- ***Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremonies*** - Don't miss the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on Friday at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Activity Center on Schinnen. Enjoy "Selfies with Santa at the Bowling Center," Child, Youth and School Services crafts, food, hot drinks and more. Open to all NATO and US ID cardholders.

Dec. 12

- ***2017 GK Tree Lighting*** - Join the community from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Chapel Annex on Geilenkirchen AFB for the 2017 GK Tree Lighting. There will be fun activities, Santa, hot chocolate, cookies and more. For details, call +49 (0)2451-637291.

Dec. 13

- ***Play & Parent Support Group*** - From 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m., a mixed age Play & Parent Support Group for parents with children up to 36 months old is available at ACS in Schinnen. Each meeting has toys, circle time (with songs and books) and a sharing section where parents can discuss their parenting successes and challenges with the new parent support home visitor. New Parent Support is available to all U.S. ID cardholders. For appointments, please call DSN 360-7500 or +31 (0)46-4437500.

Dec. 14-15

- ***Schinnen Installation Access Control System Office Closed*** - The Schinnen IACS Office at the Military Police Station will be closed for mandatory training. For emergencies, please call the Schinnen MP Desk at DSN 360-7555 or +31(0)46-4437555.

Dec. 16

- ***Danika Portz Holiday Tour*** - Nashville singer/songwriter Danika Portz will play a free country music concert at the Schinnen Community Recreation Center starting at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.

- ***CYS Family Fun Day Trip to Valkenburg Cave Christmas Markets*** - Enjoy a free trip to the most visited underground Christmas Market in Europe starting at 3 p.m. Transportation is included, but parents are recommended to bring a car seat for their child if needed. The registration deadline is Dec. 13. To sign up, visit Parent Central Services or call DSN 606-2443121/2023 or +31 (0)45-5263121/2023.

Dec. 21-22

- ***Host Nation - Newcomer's Orientation & Cultural Tour*** - From 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Schinnen ACS, all newcomers and spouses are invited to learn about your new community, including local customs, culture and language. On the first day, explore the Dutch culture with an introduction to the language and get an overview of Tri-Border services. On the second day, go beyond the gate to visit a few local attractions and shopping areas and learn how to use the local train system. For more information, call DSN 360-7500 or +31 (0)46-4437500.

Dec. 27 – Jan. 5

- *Kindergarten to 5th Grade SAC Winter Camp* – Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Activities include Lego Master at Brunssum library, winter arts and crafts, cooking class, pajama day, Grinch day, a new year’s celebration and more. Registration by Dec. 22 is required. Contact Parent Central Services (Bldg. H602) at JFC Brunssum on Mondays to Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call DSN 606-2443121/2023 or +31 (0)45-5263121/2023.

SHAPE/CHIÈVRES COMMUNITY

See also page 10 in "All Communities"

Commissary Hours of Operation for Christmas Week

- In observance of Christmas, the Commissary’s hours of operation will be:
 - *Week before Christmas*: Open Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
 - *Week after Christmas*: Open Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to p.m. The Commissary will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

AAFES is Hiring

- AAFES is hiring on Chièvres Air Base. To apply, visit <https://www.applymyexchange.com>. For more information, call DSN 361-5337 or +32 (0)68-275337.

Through Dec. 9

- *American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Contest* - The American Legion "Flanders Field" Post BE02 will sponsor the first stage of the American Legion High School Scholarship Contest Saturday starting at 1 p.m. at SHAPE American Middle School. The contest is open to U.S. high school freshmen through seniors, or the home-school equivalent. The local prizes are \$250 for first place and advancement to the Department of France competition, \$100 for second place, and \$50 for third place. For more information, email flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com or visit <http://postbe02oratoricalcontest.weebly.com>.

Through Dec. 13

- *Winter Driving Training Classes* - The Logistics Readiness Center will provide mandatory annual winter driving classes for government license holders. Classes are held at SHAPE Bldg. 220 training room on Wednesdays from 9:15 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (in English). For more information, call DSN 366-6603 or +32 (0)65-326603.

Dec. 8

- *Winter Award Night* - Join Child, Youth and School Services as they congratulate youth that go above and beyond to make the CYS programs great! The event will be held 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Youth Center (SHAPE Bldg. 503) and is open to youth in grades 6th to 12th. Dinner will be served. For more information, call DSN 366-6791/6810/6813 or +32(0)65-32-6791/6810/6813.

Dec. 11

- *Chièvres Installation Access Control System Office Closed* - The Chièvres IACS Office at the Military Police Station will be closed for mandatory training. For emergencies, please call the MP Desk at DSN 361-5301 or +32(0)68-275301. Normal hours of operation will resume Dec. 12.

Dec. 11-12

• **Host Nation Orientation** - Army Community Service is inviting all incoming service members, civilians and their family members to participate in Host Nation Orientation in Bldg. 318 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registration is required. Call DSN 366-6824 or +32 (0)65-326824.

Dec. 13

• **USAG Benelux Tree Lighting and Danika Portz Concert** - Join the Chièvres community for their annual tree lighting from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Exchange and Commissary parking lot. Immediately after the tree lighting, enjoy a free country music concert with Nashville singer/songwriter Danika Portz, brought to you by Armed Forces Entertainment.



Dec. 16

• **Jingle Bell Jog** - Burn off those Thanksgiving calories with the annual Jingle Bell Jog 5K/3K run/walk starting at the Chièvres Fitness Center at 10 a.m. For more information, call DSN 361-5643 or +32(0)68-275643.

Upcoming Organized Trips & Tours

SHAPE Trips & Tours

Serving Brussels, Chièvres and SHAPE. Call DSN 423-3884 or +32 (0)65-443884.

- Düsseldorf Christmas Markets, **Dec. 9**
- Strasbourg, France, **Dec. 16**
- Aachen and Monschau Christmas Markets, **Dec. 23**
- Paris, **Dec. 27**
- New Year's Celebration in Berlin, **Dec. 29 to Jan. 1**
- Ice Sculpture Festival in Bruges, **Jan. 6**
- Amsterdam Light Festival, **Jan. 13**
- Thermae 2000 in Valkenburg, **Jan. 20**
- Belgian Beer Tour in Antwerp, **Feb. 3**
- Dubai and Abu Dhabi, **Feb. 8-12**
- The Hague, Netherlands City Tour, **Feb. 10**
- Rosenmontag Carnival in Cologne, **Feb. 12**
- Valentine's Dinner Cruise on the Seine in Paris, **Feb. 17**
- Cooking Class in Lille (or Lille only), **Feb. 24**
- Marrakech and Essaouira, Morocco, **Apr. 8 to 15 (School Break)**
- London (with optional musical *Dreamgirls*), **Apr. 14**

Schinnen Trips & Tours

Call DSN 360-7560 or +31 (0) 46-4437560.

- London Express, **Dec. 9**
- Bruges, **Jan. 13**
- Luxembourg, **Feb. 17**
- Weekend Trip to Normandy, France, **Jul. 20-23**



Read about events near Chièvres, SHAPE and Brussels.

Through Dec. 10

- *Autumn Fair in Mons (Grands Prés)* - The traditional Autumn Fair ended Dec. 3 on The Grand'Place, but you can still enjoy few attractions near the Grands Prés on Avenue Abel Dubois until Sunday.

Through Dec. 13

- *Schuman Lights up in Brussels* - The Schuman roundabout (European quarter) will be illuminated and become the stage for European events. On Tuesday, there will be a Hanukkah evening with lighting of the first candle, music, dance and buffet, held from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. On Wednesday, specialties from Estonia, workshops, folklore and more will be there from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Free entry.

Through Dec. 27

- *Winter Wonders. Fun for Children* - Held at the Office of Early Childhood, on Place Sainte Catherine. There will be a special area for children up to age 6, workshops and activities. Open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Booking is required. Free entry. For more information, call +32 (0)2-2793632.

Through Jan. 14

- *Manage on Ice* - The ice rink spans 525 square meters. Held on Place de La Hestre from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Entrance fee: €6.

Through Feb. 25

- *Exhibition in Mons: David LaChapelle. After the Deluge* - The Beaux-Arts Mons, or BAM, is hosting, for the first time in Belgium, a major exhibition dedicated to the American photographer and director David LaChapelle. With an international reputation in the world of fashion, advertising and fine art photography, his work is characterized by touches of surrealism and humor. Held on Rue Neuve, 8. Open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call +32 (0)65-405325 or visit <http://www.polemuseal.mons.be/en>. Entry is €9. Free entry on every first Sunday of the month.

Dec. 9

- *Christmas Concert in Bouvignies (classical music)* - Held at the church on Place de Bouvignies from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Entry: €12; free admission for children age 12 and under.

- *Flea Market in Koekelberg* - Held on Place Simonis featuring 100 booths from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Dec. 10

- *Night of Lights in Neufvilles* - Three kilometers walk with lights. Departs Place de l'Eglise at 5 p.m.

- *Volksmarch in Binche for 5, 10, 15 or 20 km* - Departs Rue St-Jacques, 33 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- *Volksmarch in Flobecq for 5, 10, 15 or 20 km* - Departs Rue de la Crête, 32 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- *Volksmarch in Graty for 5, 10, 15 or 20 km* - Departs Place de Graty from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Read about events near Brunssum and Schinnen (in the Netherlands unless otherwise indicated).

Through Dec. 23

- *Warm Winter Weeks in Soest* – Held at Garden Center Vaarderhoogt on Dorresteinweg, 72b. It has a Christmas Village with many nostalgic shops, live music and more. Open all days from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. No entrance fees.

Through Dec. 24

- *Christmas Show in Valkenburg* – A show in English Country Style at Ricos on Hekerweg, 37. Open only Fridays from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays to Sundays from noon to 5:30 p.m.
- *Christmas Show in Schimmert* – Held at Lupa Outdoors Vijvercentrum Limburg on Op de Bies, 70. Open Mondays from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tuesdays to Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Through Jan. 1

- *Magical Maastricht* - There are many traditional and nostalgic attractions and Christmas Markets at several locations in the center. The Vrijthof is transformed into a large ice-skating rink. Open Mondays to Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Thursdays to Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 6 p.m. On Dec. 24, the market will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Dec. 25 and 26.

Dec. 8-10

- *Christmas Country Fair in Beesd* - Held at “Heerlijkheid Mariënwaerd” estate. The main house is open to the public. There will be choirs and more than 80 stands with a variety of Christmas articles. Sledge rides are also available. Open: Dec. 8-9, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Dec. 10, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entry: €10 for adults; €7.50 for youth age 13 to 17; free for children age 11 and younger. Take A2 highway Utrecht-Den Bosch, exit at #14 Beesd, and follow signs for “Kerstfair.”
- *Castle Christmas Fair in Heemskerk* – Held at Castle Assumburg on Tolweg, 9. Open Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entry: €10 for adults; €5 for children age 7 to 14.

Dec. 8-11 & 16-18

- *Christmas at the Castle in Lisse* - Held in Castle Keukenhof which is across the street of the famous gardens. The court and castle are nicely decorated and it is as if the inhabitants just left the castle for a walk around the estate. Open: Friday to Sunday & Dec. 16-17 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Dec. 11 & 18 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Dec. 13-17

- *Christmas at Castle Middachten in De Steeg* - The castle is beautifully decorated for Christmas and opens its doors to the public. A Christmas Market is held in the castle’s outbuildings. Open each day noon to 8 p.m. Entry: €15 for adults and €7.50 for children age 4 to 12.

Dec. 15-24

- *Royal Christmas Fair in The Hague* - Held at the stately Lange Voorhout along the Kloosterkerk, glorious Hotel Des Indes and Escher Museum daily from noon to 9 p.m.

Christmas Markets in the Benelux

Many Christmas Markets opened in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. In Germany, every town, city or village has at least one Christmas Market. Some even have four or five. Most German Christmas Markets start around Friday and close around Dec. 23 or 24. On Sunday, a German religious fest day, many markets will be closed or open for only a few hours. In Belgium and the Netherlands, the majority of Christmas Markets do not start until after the fest of Sinterklaas, Dec. 5 and 6. This week's Outside the Gate includes a few Christmas Markets and fairs.



Courtesy photo.

Through Dec. 23

- **Christmas Market in Aachen (GE)** - Held around the historic Town Hall. Open daily 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Christmas Market in Bernkastel-Kues (GE)** - The small streets in the town with its medieval timber-framed houses are a perfect background for this Christmas Market. Open Mondays to Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Fridays to Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Christmas Market in Bonn (GE)** - Held on the Münsterplatz, the Bottlerplatz, the Friedensplatz and connecting streets. The vendors offer traditional Christmas goods such as candles, arts and crafts and more. Open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Closed Sunday.
- **Christmas Market in Dülmen (GE)** - Open Mondays to Fridays from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Christmas Market in Valkenburg (NL)** - Located in a cave in Gemeentegrot on Cauberg 4. Open Mondays to Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays to Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Dec. 23 from noon to 6 p.m. Entry: €7 for adults; €5 for children age 5 to 11.
- **Another Christmas Market in Valkenburg (NL)** - Held in the Fluwelen (Velvet) Cave under the castle ruins on Daalhemmerweg. Open Sundays to Thursdays from noon to 7 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entry: €7 for adults; €5 for children age 5 to 11.

Through Dec. 30

- **Christmas Village in Liège (BE)** - Held at Place de Marché and Place Saint-Lambert, this is the largest Christmas Market in Belgium. Open Sundays to Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Thursdays to Saturdays from 11 a.m. to midnight.

Through Dec. 31

- **Winter Fun in the center of Brussels** - Every winter, the heart of Brussels beats to the rhythm of 'Plaisirs d'Hiver' (winter pleasures) featuring a magical décor with an ice-skating rink and a beautiful Christmas Market (Europe's most original). Open Mondays to Thursdays,

noon to 9 p.m., Fridays to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Dec. 24 and 31 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Dec. 25 from noon to 10 p.m.

Through Jan. 7

- *Christmas Town in Valkenburg (NL)* - Romantically illuminated streets, decorated Christmas trees and beautiful Christmas songs bring this little town alive. Every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. and every Saturday evening at 7:30 p.m., there will be a Christmas Parade with beautiful floats, dancers and animators that will move through the center.

Dec. 08

- *Christmas Market in Stambruges (BE)* - Held at the school on Rue Eugène Lebailly, 3 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. Santa Claus will be there. Free entry.

Dec. 8-10

- *Christmas Market in Vaassen (NL)* - Held at the court of Castle Cannenburch, Maarten van Rossumplein 4 in the town of Vaassen (NL). The castle is decorated for Christmas and is the perfect setting for this event. Entry is €3.50; free for children age 11 and younger. The market and the castle are open Friday from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- *Christmas Market in Havré (BE)* - Held at the Castle of Havré on Chaussée du Roeulx. Open Friday from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday from 2 p.m. to midnight, and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Dec. 8-10, 13-17 & 20-23

- *Opening of the Castle Merode - Christmas Market (GE)* - The market is open Wednesdays to Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 8 p.m. Entry is €7 (Wednesdays to Fridays), €8 from (Saturdays to Sundays) and €2 for children age 6 to 16.

Dec. 8-10 & 14-17

- *Christmas Market in Bad Sassendorf (GE)* - Open from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Dec. 8-10 & 15-17

- *Victorian Christmas Fair in Spaubeek (NL)* - Held at Victorian House, Musschenberg, 30 with English antiques such as furniture, accessories and more. The fair is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dec. 8-10, 15-17 & 22-23

- *Christmas Market in Ahrweiler (GE)* - Open Fridays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturdays to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. On Dec. 16 during the Mitternachtweihnachtmarkt, the market is open from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m.

Dec. 8-10, 15-17 & 22-24

- *Christmas Market in the Abbey of Maredsous (BE)* - Open Fridays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Dec. 24 from noon to 8 p.m.

Dec. 8-10 & Dec. 15-Jan. 7

- *Christmas Market in Durbuy (BE)* - Held in the park Roi Baudouin. Open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dec. 9-10

- *Christmas Market held in Mesch (NL)* - Held at De Laathof Farm on Langstraat. No entrance fee. Open all days from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dec. 9-10 and 16-17

- *Christmas Market in Kerkrade (NL)* - Held at the beautiful 900 years old Abbey. Open Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entry: €3.50 for adults; €1.50 from children.

- *Christmas Markets in Mechernich (GE)* - Held at gorgeous Burg Satzvey (castle) near Mechernich (GE). Open Saturdays from noon to 8 p.m., Sundays from noon to 7 p.m. Entry: €8 for adults; €4 for children age 4 to 12; €6.50 for age 12 to 18.

Dec. 9-Jan. 7

- *Christmas Market in Mons (BE)* - Numerous stands, attractions, local delicacies, a heart-shaped ice-skating rink, a magical forest, choirs and Santa Claus will be in the Grand Place. Open Mondays to Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Fridays to Sundays from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Dec. 10

- *Christmas Market in Urmond (NL)* - From 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Grote Straat in the old historic center of Urmond.

- *Christmas Market in Casteau (BE)* - Attendees will find traditional Christmas goods, accessories, decorations, food and drinks. Held on Rue des Déportés. Open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Free entry.