

THE GAZETTE

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

Benelux news briefs

AFCU closes for Org Day

Andrews Federal Credit Union will be closed Dec. 12 for its Organization Day. AFCU ATMs and eServices will be still be available for member use.

Library closes for party

The JFC Brunssum Library will close early Dec. 10 at 3:30 p.m. for a Christmas party.

APOs adjust schedules

Benelux U.S. military post office are currently operating on holiday schedules.

Brussels: **Postal Finance** will be open weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and **Personal Mail Pickup** will be open weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Dec. 23.

Other Benelux APOs will have special hours through Dec. 18:

Schinnen's **Customer Retail Service** will be open Mondays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Brunssum's **Customer Retail Service** will be open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

SHAPE and Caserne Daumerie: **Postal Finance** will be open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and **Personal Mail Pickup** will be open weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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International teams compete at basketball tourney

The SHAPE International Basketball Tournament tips off with defending champion team USA Monday, Nov. 30, 2015, defeating Great Britain 78-39 in the opening game. View the remaining schedule at <http://www.shape2day.com/whats-happening/shape-events/international-basketball-tournament>. (U.S. Army photo by Tim Clark)

Exchange starts fuel-card conversion for Schinnen, Brunssum communities

Exchange Europe and Southwest Asia converted to the Esso/Forax fuel card system to replace the fuel-coupon system in Schinnen and Brunssum, the Netherlands, Nov. 30, according to a news release from Exchange-Europe in Sembach, Germany.

Eligible Exchange fuel-ration customers can now receive the new Esso/Forax fuel cards at the Schinnen Main Store.

"The new Esso/Forax cards will allow fuel rations to be tracked using their Military Star account and allows authorized card-holders to fuel up at more than 330 Esso stations across the Netherlands," said Ruth Wagner, manager of the Exchange Esso Fuel Card Program. "Prior to the card availability, authorized fuel-ration holders had 14 stations to redeem their coupons, and this gives them access to fuel up across the Netherlands."

The new Esso/Forax fuel cards replace the fuel-ration coupons and expand the capability for eligible military personnel,

their dependents and authorized U.S. civilian employees.

New Esso/Forax Fuel Card issue teams from the Exchange Europe Region will facilitate roll-out (with the exception of the conversion of the teachers and the Canadians, coordinated separately) during normal store hours of 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., including Mondays.

Customers are requested to use the front entrance of the store Tuesday through Saturday and the side entrance (metal stairs) Mondays.

Sign-up sheets in the Schinnen Main Store will be available to facilitate "first come, first served" coordination, as appointments won't be made.

Non-assigned Netherlands persons desiring to use the Esso/Forax fuel cards must provide temporary duty, or TDY, orders and customs documents that are issued at the Schinnen Military Police station to receive a temporary Esso/Forax card.

Mustaches promote men's health

SHAPE Healthcare Facility's mustache-growing contest for Movember raises awareness about men's health issues Monday, Nov. 30, 2015. Master Sgt. James Barton (below) won the contest. Other entrants included Debbie Wilkie, Holly Brown, John Timothy, Dave Bartley and Pam Hawthorne. (U.S. Army photos by Tim Clark)



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Students learn real-world self-defense

Special to the Gazette

Company A, AFNORTH Battalion, Family Readiness Group

Students at AFNORTH International School had the opportunity to learn self-defense skills Nov. 25.

Lt. Col. Dave DeAtley of AFNORTH Battalion's Alpha Company returned to the school to teach girls from the German section how to defend themselves in real-world situations. Their coach had volunteered to teach the first self-defense seminar at the school in October when he taught basic skills to the girls.

In order to demonstrate techniques to the fifth- to seventh-graders and do some hands-on teaching, he brought along two martial-arts pros: his son, Ryan DeAtley, and USAG Benelux-Schinnen military policewoman Spc. Jennifer Bermodes.

After a warm-up consisting of self-defense moves, DeAtley taught his students different

techniques on how to free themselves from chokes, grabs and holds.

The girls also learned how to gain distance from an attacker and ultimately have the upper hand. These techniques were first demonstrated by the professionals and then repeated by the students.

What first appeared to be fun moves (that made some giggle) later became serious as the girls quickly found out how they can defend themselves in dangerous real-world situations.

They learned that they are their own first line of defense. Gaining the skills needed to protect themselves in various situations as DeAtley, who is a Level 4 U.S. Army Combatives instructor. While teaching his students, DeAtley gave them more confidence and provided reassurance.



Spc. Jennifer Bermodes of USAG Benelux-Schinnen Provost Marshal Office teaches a student at AFNORTH International School a rear-choke defense technique ending with the defender throwing the attacker over the back to the ground Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2015. (Courtesy photo)

Air Force beats Army at local Turkey Bowl

Air Force and Army football teams battle it out at the AFNORTH International School football field in Brunssum Thanksgiving day, Thursday, Nov. 26, 2015. Air Force scored the first touchdown. Air Force gained the advantage over Army finishing with a score of 20-7. The Army team will fight for the title next year. Army had a special guest player, Command Sgt. Maj. Travis Childers of AFNORTH Battalion (U.S. Army NATO Brigade). Once again this year, the Army team was a coed team. (Courtesy photo)



Keep private counseling off record by using confidential MFLC services

Special to the Gazette

USAG Benelux Military and Family Life Counseling Program

When service members and their family members are having trouble they need to talk through, they might wonder if there is any way to keep counseling private and off their records.

The Military and Family Life Counseling Program fills that need. Military family-life counselors help service members and their dependents with everyday kinds of problems. They deliver free, confidential, problem-solving counseling services to help with situations that occur within the military lifestyle. (Department of Defense civilians may see a representative from the Employee Assistance Program, which is administered under the Army Substance Abuse Program.)

"The Military and Family Life Counseling Program is such a great asset in our community. MFLC services are available to service members, their families and retirees, offering short-term situational problem-solving, counseling and prevention education," said the director of Army Community Service, Yvette Castro.

The Military Family Life Counseling Program began in 2005 in an effort by the Army to assist American troops who were in Germany after returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The program has grown and is now used by all the American Armed Forces in the United States as well as overseas.

Service members and their families face unique challenges — deployment-related stress, reintegration, management of parenting and finances from a distance or while a loved one is deployed, as well as frequent moves, flexibility, adaptability and dealing with uncertainty.

MFLCs provide short-range, non-medical counseling as well as resiliency presentations at no cost to individuals, couples, families, groups and units.

Counseling

MFLC counseling is private and confidential, and it isn't entered into one's record. However, child abuse, domestic abuse, duty-to-warn situations and illegal activities aren't confidential and

Lunch and Learn

Military family-life counselors present lunchtime topics at "Lunch and Learn."

Upcoming "Bring your own lunch" events are scheduled in the Chièvres Army Lodging Conference Room from noon to 1 p.m. on the following dates: Dec. 8 — "Trauma and Children: Helping Children Manage Traumatic Events" (a workshop to help parents reduce children's anxiety about terrorists) and Dec. 15 — "Life in Balance: Relaxation and Stress Relief." Brown-bag it, and join the discussion.

will be reported.

Assisting active-duty military and their family members in developing action plans to address problems is a key function of military family-life consultants.

"The MFLC is based out of Army Community Service, but customers can arrange to meet in the office or at a mutually agreed-upon location," Castro said. "We are lucky to have this service as all MFLCs are master's- or Ph.D.-level licensed clinical counselors ready to help support our community."

Counselors work with existing military and family support programs to complement those resources already available. MFLCs rotate at designated times.

MFLCs can assist with relationships, crisis intervention, stress management, grief, occupational and other issues.

Resiliency presentations

MFLCs have the tools that service members and their families need to deal with the challenges that come with the military lifestyle.

To empower community members to deal with their situations more effectively, MFLCs give free presentations that focus on issues common to the military family, including

- reunion/reintegration,
- stress/coping,
- grief/loss and
- deployment.

Commands, family readiness groups, Soldier Readiness Processing and others are encouraged to request these presentations.

Support for military-lifestyle issues

- empowers individuals during the problem-solving process,
- increases individual and family competency and resilience in coping with the challenges of military life and
- ensures that these issues don't detract from operational readiness.

Requesting services

To set up a counseling session or schedule a presentation about resiliency topics for your unit or other group, contact the MFLC for your area or your local ACS site.

Benelux ACS locations are where you can normally find a military family-life counselor who works with adults:

• Schinnen: civilian +31 (0) 629-471920;

• SHAPE/Chièvres/Brussels: civilian 0497-653738. Phone is answered Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., except on holidays. If the MFLC is in session and doesn't answer the phone, leave a message for a call-back.

Some MFLCs work with children:

• Brussels American School: civilian 0472-285449;

• Schinnen CYSS at Brunssum: civilian +31 (0) 615-181036.

Andrea Wales contributed to this report.

'Customers can arrange to meet in the (ACS) office or at a mutually agreed-upon location.'

BRUSSELS COMMUNITY

Register now

- **ACS trip to Antwerp Christmas market** - Join the group from Brussels Army Community Service to explore the Antwerp Christmas market **Dec. 16**. For information on this trip or to register, call DSN 368-9729 or civilian 02-7179729.

Volunteer now

- **Coaches needed** - Volunteers receive free and reduced fees for their children to participate. If you are interested, call DSN 368-9539 or civilian 02-7179539.
- **CYSS Youth Sports Winter season programs** - Open enrollment is going on now for several sports programs offered by Child, Youth and School services during the January-February season. For additional information, call DSN 368-9539/9651 or civilian 02-7179539/9651.

Basketball - Youth ages 3 to 15 may be signed up for this sports program. Cost: \$20 for ages 3 to 5; \$40 for ages 6 to 15.

Cheerleading - Youths ages 6 to 12 may be signed up for this sports program. Cost: \$20 for ages 6 to 7 and \$40 for ages 8 to 12.

Dec. 3

- **Brussels Winterfest** - The festivities will be held at the 3 Star Lounge from 5:30 to 8 p.m.
5:30 p.m.: 3 Star Soup and Salad Bar. Cost: \$8.
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.: CYSS Art & Crafts Activities.
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.: Pictures with Santa.
7:30 to 8 p.m.: Tree-lighting ceremony and Christmas carols.

Dec. 4

- **3 Star Recreation Night** - Join the USAG Benelux-Brussels community Fridays from 5:30 to 11 p.m. Recreation Night features games, cards, music and movies. Snacks and beverages available for purchase: crispy chicken tenders, daily homemade soup and potato wedges. For details, call DSN 368-9822 or civilian 02-7179822.
- **BOSS Movie Night** - Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers hosts "Ricki and The Flash" (PG-13) from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the BOSS Movie Area on the third floor of Building 1. Movie is free, but space is limited so make your reservation soon at reservations3star@yahoo.com. For details, call DSN 368-9819 or civilian 02-7179819.

Dec. 8 to 10

- **Welcome, newcomers** - Brussels Army Community Service invites all service members, civilians and their families to participate in free newcomers events next week. Dec. 8: Supermarket Guided Tour is conducted from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Dec. 9: The deputy garrison manager's welcome and USAG Benelux-Brussels site brief start at 8:45 a.m. and are followed by a cultural acclimatization (information on local customs as well as basic French and Flemish), which ends at 12:30 p.m. Dec. 10: Hospital Guided Tour is conducted from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Meet in the ACS conference room in Building 4 half an hour before start time to get settled, get a snack or get ready to leave as a group for a tour. Register by calling DSN 368-9783/9729 or civilian 02-7179783/9729.

Dec. 9

- **Zero Dork Nerdy Comedy Show** - Armed Forces Entertainment presents Vargus' Zero Dork Nerdy, a free adults-only comedy show, at the 3 Star Recreation Center from 7 to 11 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. The 3 Start also offers a party-snack buffet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Cost: \$5. Seating is limited; RSVP for show/food by Dec. 4 at reservations3star@yahoo.com. Get more details about the show by calling DSN 368-9822 or civilian 02-7179822. Brussels CYSS offers hourly childcare from 6 to 9 p.m. Cost: \$12 per child, non-refundable. Call DSN 368-9651 or civilian 02-7179651 by Dec 7 to reserve a spot.

SCHINNEN/BRUNSSUM COMMUNITY

Register by Dec. 9

- **Basketball Officials Clinic** - The class will be held **Dec. 12** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at JFC Brunssum's Building H 602. To register or for more information, call DSN 364-4195 or civilian +31(0) 45-526-4195.
- **Kings of the Court Racquetball Tournament** - The **Dec. 12** tournament at the Schinnen Fitness Center is single elimination. Meet and brief is at 9 a.m. First game will start at 9:30 a.m. For details, call DSN 360-7561 or civilian +31 (0) 46-4437561.

Dec. 4

- **Holiday Celebration and Tree Lighting** - Holiday festivities will be held at the Schinnen Community Activity Center starting at 5:30 p.m. with a festive market environment, lighting of the tree, performances from the AFNORTH International School Concert Band and Choir, food and refreshments, children's activities and photos with Santa. For more information, call DSN 360-7370 or civilian +31 (0) 46-4437370.

SCHINNEN/BRUNSSUM COMMUNITY continued

Dec. 5

- **Zero Dork Nerdy Comedy Show** - Armed Forces Entertainment presents Vargus' Zero Dork Nerdy, a free adults-only comedy show, at the Schinnen Bowling Center from 7 to 11 p.m. For details, call DSN 360-7207 or civilian +31 (0) 464-437207.

Dec. 9

- **Basketball Coaches Clinic** - Clinic will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. at the CYSS Building. For more information, call DSN 364-4195 or civilian +31 (0) 45-5264195

Dec. 10

- **Ten Steps to a Federal Job** - Learn the steps to apply for a federal job including analyzing job announcements and writing effective résumés at the Schinnen Army Community Service Conference Room from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. To register, call DSN 360-7269/7500 or civilian +31 (0) 46-4437269/7500.

SHAPE/CHIEVRES COMMUNITY

Tickets on sale now

- **Into the Woods Jr.** - SHAPE Performing Arts School presents Fractured Fairy Tales in "The Emperor's New Clothes" and Fall Theater Camp in the musical "Into the Woods Jr." at the SHAPE Performing Arts Centre in Building 207. The curtain goes up **Dec. 10, 11 and 12** at 7:30 p.m. The curtain goes up on the Sunday matinee **Dec. 13** at 3 p.m. Tickets: \$10. To find out more, call DSN 423-3312 or civilian 065-443312 Tuesday through Friday from 1 to 6 p.m.

Dec. 3

- **SHAPE Holiday Experience** - Learn about and celebrate Belgian and American traditions from 4 to 7 p.m. at the SHAPE Events Centre through stories, a puppet show and more. St. Nicholas and Santa Claus will visit. Children can make fabric shoes (to be filled after the special guests arrive). Santa will be available for photos.

Dec. 4

- **ACS Holiday Open House** - USAG Benelux community agencies will be on site from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with information about programs and services. Other fun activities include photos with Santa, food, music and door prizes. You can also cast your vote for the best-decorated door. The New Parent Support Program Activities and playroom will be open. For details, call DSN 366-6824 or civilian 065-326824.
- **Christmas market** - SHAPE Arts & Crafts presents its Christmas market from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the lobby of Building 307, which it shares with the library. Browse through crafts made by artisans who teach classes in their crafts. For details, contact DSN 423-6049 or civilian 065-446049, or artsandcraftsshape@gmail.com.

Dec. 5

- **Italian Christmas market** - This market in the Events Centre from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. will raise money for charity.

Dec. 7 to 8

- **Host-Nation Orientation** - Army Community Service invites all service members, civilian employees and their family members to learn about the SHAPE/Chièvres community. Day 1: Learn Belgian customs and basic French. Day 2: Go on a cultural city excursion, tour a Belgian hospital as well as sample traditional Belgian cuisine and learn how to shop on the economy. Learn how to use public transportation and visit the Ste. Waudru Collegiale in Mons. Meet at the ACS conference room 15 minutes earlier than the 8:30 a.m. start time. Call ACS at DSN 366-6824 or civilian 065-326824.

Dec. 8

- **Dealing with PTSD** - Learn about "Response, Resilience and Recovery: The Effects of PTSD and Other 'Operational-Stress Injuries' on Life and Family" in the PAO auditorium of SHAPE's Building 102 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Given by Dr. Alexandra Heber, this seminar will talk about post-traumatic stress disorder, which can affect service members and others who have been through traumatic events. Beverages and snacks follow.

Dec. 15

- **Chièvres Tree Lighting** - Join Santa and other VIPs near the Main Exchange and Commissary at 5 p.m. when they light the Christmas tree on Chièvres Air Base. Sing carols with SHAPE American Elementary School and the Girl Scouts, and sip warm drinks while Santa has an chance to mingle.

Movies at SHAPE Cinema

Rates — 2D movies: adults €7.50 and children 11 and under €4. 3D movies: adults €9 and children 11 and under €6. Check <http://www.shape2day.com> under "Morale & Welfare (MWB)" for the movie schedule.

Movies at JFC HQ Alliance Theater

Adult admission is €6.5 (ages 12 and older) - Child admission is €3.75 (ages 11 and under). Check the web page at <http://www.shopmyexchange.com/reel-time-theatres/Schinnen-1366146> for the movie schedule.

Travel the Benelux

Valkenburg celebrates Christmas season

Story and photos by Tim Clark

USAG Benelux Public Affairs Office

Located in the Dutch province of Limburg, Valkenburg has been a tourist destination since the 1800s. Set in an area of natural beauty, the city still retains its historical charm. The ruins of Valkenburg castle overlook cozy restaurants, fine hotels and interesting boutiques offering a wide variety of products and gifts.

Christmas season, the city really shines. Famous for its two Christmas markets in caves, Valkenburg goes all out for the holiday. Signs of Christmas are everywhere — from decorations over the streets to a lineup of chocolate St. Nicholas's in the candy store to twice-weekly Christmas parades. Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 7:30 p.m., floats, dancers and other entertainers move through the center of town in the parade.

Protected from the elements and with a steady temperature of 50 F, the caves offer a great place to hold a market. A profusion of lights, trees and decorations turns the caves into a festive wonderland. Along with the vendors, a new Christmas scene awaits around every corner. You can get a lot of your Christmas shopping done in the caves where vendors offer a diverse range of merchandise from ornaments to pottery. If you have questions about the merchandise, don't be shy about asking the vendor. Most Dutch speakers also speak English. Both caves have cafés where you can take a break from shopping and enjoy a coffee, hot cocoa or, if you prefer, a glass of wine or beer.

The town cave (Gemeentegrot in Dutch) and the velvet cave (Fluwelengrot in Dutch) are within easy walking

distance of each other. If you tire of shopping, you can view murals and sculptures from the 17th and 18th centuries in the larger of the two caves, the velvet cave.

The ruins of the castle of Valkenburg sit above the velvet cave. Through the centuries, the castle has been besieged, destroyed and rebuilt. After being destroyed in 1672 by William III, the castle was never rebuilt. A secret passage was discovered between the castle and the cave that allowed the knights of the castle to come and go undetected during battles.

Beatrix of Valkenburg was raised in Valkenburg castle. Considered by many to be one of the most beautiful women of her time, she was 15 when she married the 60-year-old Richard of Cornwall, one of the wealthiest men in Europe.



Gemeentegrot (town cave) - Open Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Sundays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Dec. 23 from noon to 6 p.m.

Fluwelengrot (velvet cave) - Open Sunday through Thursday from noon to 7 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Sinterklaas/Saint Nicholas, European version of Santa Claus

In some parts of the world, Santa Claus is dressed in a red suit and rides a sleigh pulled by reindeer to deliver gifts to the children. In others, Sinterklaas, or Saint Nicholas, is dressed in a red robe and wears a bishop's miter and rides a horse or a donkey, has a helper and drops the gifts through the chimney.

Both have the same origin dating back to the fourth-century: the bishop of Myra in Asia Minor (in what is now Turkey). However, one delivers gifts at Christmas and the other one, Sinterklaas, or Saint Nicholas, delivers them during the night of Dec. 5 to 6.

In the Netherlands, it is believed that Sinterklaas comes from Spain and travels to the Netherlands by boat, accompanied by his helper, Zwarte Piet (Black Peter). Although Sinterklaas' helper still raises some controversy, he was given his name because he is always covered with soot while climbing down chimneys to drop off presents and candy.

There are some differences in how the Dutch and the Belgians celebrate Saint Nicholas. Leaving a beer for Saint Nicholas (Saint Nicolas de Myre in French) is a Belgian tradition. In both countries, children leave some goodies for the saint and carrots for the horse or the donkey. Sinterklaas, or Saint Nicholas, knows everything about the children. He will specially recognize those children who have made efforts to be good during the past year.

The town of Sint-Niklaas in East Flanders has a statue of Sinterklaas in front of its town hall. In Belgium's capital city, the annual Sinterklaas parade will start at Brussels' Grand-Place Dec. 5 at 3 p.m. and is expected to run until 5 p.m.



Upcoming organized trips

SHAPE Trips and Tours

Serving Brussels, Chièvres and SHAPE. Call DSN 423-3884 or civilian 065-443884.

- **German Christmas markets overnight, Dec. 5 to 6**
- **Alsace Christmas markets overnight in Triberg im Schwarzwald (Black Forest), Dec. 12 to 13**
- **Aachen and Monschau Christmas markets, Dec. 19**
- **Paris in winter, Dec. 28**
- **London New Year's, Dec. 30 to Jan. 1, 2016**
- **Amsterdam with the Heineken Experience, Jan. 16**
- **"The Nutcracker" Ballet, Brussels, Jan. 24 (Seats are limited.)**
- **Thermae 2000 in Valkenburg, the Netherlands, Jan. 30**
- **Malta, Feb. 5 to 10**

- **Paris with dinner cruise on the Seine, Feb. 13**
- **London with "Wicked" show, Feb. 20**
- **Cooking class in Lille, March 12**
- **Croatia with Venice and Slovenia, March 28 - Apr. 6**

SHAPE Travel Group

Call civilian 0470-876369 for details.

- **Canterbury, England, Dec. 3**
- **Aachen Christmas Market, Dec. 10**
- **Paris Lights, Dec. 15**
- **Snow World, the Netherlands (transportation and four-hour ski pass), Jan. 19, 2016**
- **Trocs and Leuven, Jan. 28, 2016**

Schinnen Trips & Tours

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

- **Cologne Christmas Markets, Dec. 5**



Read about events near Chièvres, SHAPE and Brussels.

Dec. 4 and 5

- **Secondhand toys, children books, baby equipment, and more in Obourg** - At the school at Rue des Ecoles 52/54 Friday from 2 to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Small admission fee.

Dec. 4 to 6

- **Wine and delicatessen fair in Leuze** - At the city hall at Avenue de la Résistance 1 with various wines, cheese, chocolate, foie gras, and more. Entrance fee is €3 with wine tasting glass included. Open Friday from 6:30 to 9 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- **Christmas market in Havré** - The 25th edition held at the Château des Ducs d'Havré will gather various booths with decorations, gifts and food. At Chaussée du Roeulx 1101 Friday from 6 to 11 p.m., Saturday from 2 to 11:30 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission: €1.50.



- **Creative market in Forest** - Various artists will be selling their creations: jewelry, candy, decorations, T-shirts and more at the Abbaye at Place Saint Denis 9 Friday from noon to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dec. 5

- **Volksmarch in Perennes-lez-Antoing for 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 km** - Departs "L'Escale" at Rue du Centre 57 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Small participation fee.
- **St. Nicholas in Mons** - From 1 to 6 p.m., St. Nicholas will be visiting the pedestrian area (Rue de la Chaussée) - Various children's activities will be going on to include pictures with St. Nicholas.
- **St. Nicholas in Mignault** - Musical parade will depart the city hall at 3 p.m. and tour the neighborhood with St. Nicholas. At 4:30 p.m., picture opportunity at the "Salle communal Mignault" at Rue des Déportés 1.
- **St. Nicholas parade in Etterbeek** - At Quartier de la Chasse from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., St. Nicholas, his helper and his donkey will be parading the neighborhood and handing out candy to the children.
- **Mountain bike ride in Brussels** - Ride is 5 km and starts on Rue Puccini at 2 p.m. Participation fee: €5 if you come with your own bike or €10 with bike rent. Prior registration is required at 0483-265530.



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

Dec. 3 to 5, 9 to 12

- **Winter fair in Garderen** offers a Dickens-style Christmastime experience in De beeldentuin at Oude Barnevelderweg 5. Open Dec. 3 to 4 and Dec. 9 to 11 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Dec. 5 and 12 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: €6.50.

Dec. 3 to 6

- **Winter fair in Rotterdam** is held at Ahoy 1. This Indoor fair offers items for the coming holiday season. Open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: €15. For details, visit <http://www.winter-fair.nl>.

Dec. 3 to 6, 9 to 13, 16 to 20

- **Christmas market in Merode, Germany**, is when the Prince and Princess von Merode open Castle Merode to the public for a traditional Christmas Market. Open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 9 p.m., Fridays from 2 to 9 p.m., Saturdays from 2 to 10 p.m., Sundays from noon to 8 p.m. Admission: Wednesday through Saturday €6.50, Sundays €7; children, ages 6 to 16, €2.

Dec. 3 to 6, 10 to 13 and 17 to 20

- **Christmas market in Bad Sassendorf, Germany**, offers a festive atmosphere for shopping. Open Thursdays and Fridays from 2 to 7 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Dec. 4 to 6

- **Gastronomic Christmas village in Aubel, Belgium**, will be located in the center of town on Place Nicolai. Open Dec. 4 from 5 p.m. to midnight, Dec. 5 from 11 a.m. to midnight, Dec. 6 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Dec. 4 to 6, 11 to 13

- **Christmas market near Altötting, Germany**, is a special Christmas event when Castle Tüßling opens its gates. Open Fridays from 3 to 8 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 8 p.m. Admission: €5; children, ages 6 to 15m €1.

Dec. 4 to 6, 11 to 13, 18 to 20

- **Christmas market in Monschau, Germany**, will be held at the town square. Open Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sundays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dec. 5 to 6, 12 to 13

- **Christmas market in Mesch** near Eijsden will take place at De Laathof Farm on Langstraat. Open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission.

Dec. 5 to 6, 12 to 13, 19 to 20

- **Christmas market in Kerkrade** will be held at the beautiful 900-year-old Abbey Rolduc. Open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: €3.50.



Dec. 5 and 6

- **Wine fair in Arbres (Ath)** - At Vinathitude at Chemin d'Impegnies 44 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission: €7 (includes wine-tasting glass).
- **Flea market at the Mons Lotto Expo (75 booths)** - On Avenue Thomas Edison from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **International fencing tournament in Watermael-Boitsfort** - On Saturday, competition in teams of two (one man, one woman). On Sunday, competition in male teams. At the sports center "Des Trois Tilleuls" at Avenue Léopold Wiener 60 Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Dec. 6

- **Flea market in Jemappes (200 booths)** - On Avenue Maréchal Foch from 4 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Volksmarch in Ophain-Bois-Seigneur-Isaac for 5, 10, 15 and 20 km** - Departs from Rue Sart Moulin 1 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Volksmarch in Flobecq for 5, 10, 15 or 20 km** - Departs from Rue de la Crête 32 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Repair Café in Soignies** - Volunteer technicians will help you repair your broken appliances at Rue Henri Leroy 15 from 2 to 6 p.m. Free admission.
- **13th Vinyl Records fair in Brussels** - At Galerie Ravenstein from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For additional information, visit <http://www.brusselsrecordfair.com>.
- **Brussels Vintage market** - Market for vintage clothes, accessories, furniture and decorations at "Les Halles Saint Géry" at Place Saint Géry 23 from noon to 7 p.m.

Register now

Dec. 12

- **Christmas Gospel Concert in Chièvres** by Word of Truth International Christian Ministries at the Saint-Martin Church on Rue du Château. The concert will start at 7 p.m. Registration required at civilian 068-645961. Free admission.

Ongoing

Through Jan. 17, 2016

- **Exhibition "Mankind, The Dragon and Death. The Glory of St Georges" in Boussu** - Exhibition is held at the Musée des Arts Contemporains (MAC) Grand Hornu site at Rue Sainte Louise 82. Open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, visit at <http://www.mons2015.eu/en/man-dragon-and-death>.



Dec. 5 to 6, 12 to 13, 19 to 20 continued

- **Christmas market near Jüchen and Mönchengladbach, Germany**, will be held at Schloss Dyck. Open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission: €12; children €1.50 (includes admission to castle/park).
- **Christmas market near Mechernich, Germany**, will take place at Burg Satzvey (castle). Open Saturdays from noon to 8 p.m., Sundays from noon to 7 p.m. Admission: €8; children, ages 4 to 12, €4; children, ages 12 to 18, €6.50.

Ongoing

Through Dec. 20

- **Christmas show in Valkenburg** offers English country style at Rico's at Hekerweg 37. Open Fridays from 1 to 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 5:30 p.m.

Through Dec. 22

- **Medieval Christmas market in Siegburg, Germany**, fills market square in the center of town. Open Sunday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Through Dec. 23

- **Christmas market in Aachen, Germany**, takes place around the historic town hall in the city center. Open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Christmas market in Bad Münstereifel, Germany**, is held in the middle of the timber-framed houses in the center of town. Open Monday through Thursday from 1 to 8 p.m., Friday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Christmas market in Bochum, Germany**, fills the historic market square at the foot of the St. Paul Church. Open from noon to 9 p.m.
- **Christmas market in Bonn, Germany**, presents illuminated storefronts and the festive scenery of Münsterplatz, Bottlerplatz, Friedensplatz and connecting streets. Vendors offer traditional Christmas goods. Open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Nikolaus market in Düsseldorf, Germany**, can be found on market square in the old historic city center. Christmas markets are also held at Stadtbrückchen (trendy), Schadowplatz (nostalgic), Heinrich-Heine-Platz, Flinger Strasse, Schadowstrasse and Königsallee in the city center. Open Sunday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Through Dec. 24

- **Authentic Christmas Show in Schimmert** is held in Lupa Outdoors Vijvercentrum Limburg at Op de Bies 70. Open Mondays from 1 to 5:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Remain vigilant, and maintain situational awareness at all times.