




Muscle Shoals Chapter
Spring 2023 Issue

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ANNUAL PICNIC/HEALTH FAIR EDITION

It's springtime in The Shoals!! Not only is it time for Mother Nature to bloom in all her glory, but a time for TVARA retiree chapters to participate in some worthwhile endeavors.

TVA celebrated its 90th anniversary on May 18, with a Valleywide Day-of-Service. TVA employees, along with TVA retirees, were active in providing volunteer service to a wide variety of non-profits.

For the TVA 90th Anniversary Day-of-Service, our Chapter, in conjunction with the Power Services Shop, assisted Sleep in Heavenly Peace in building approximately 40 beds. The beds will be given to under-privileged children in the Muscle Shoals area who do not have a bed of their own. In addition to the bed, a mattress, pillow, and bed linen will be gifted to a deserving child.

Chapter members took over 740 applications for the annual garden seed program. Each participant received a \$50 voucher to purchase garden supplies at one of the local co-ops.

Our annual Health Fair and Picnic will be held on Tuesday, June 20, at the Florence/Lauderdale Coliseum. The doors will open at 9:30 a.m. and lunch will be served after a short program. As in the past, there will be several vendor tables with free giveaways and door prizes for attendees.

TVA's regional offices are working on an engagement program to assist non-profits with their respective areas. Each region is looking for opportunities for TVA employees and retirees to work together in assisting community organizations. Further information will be made available regarding this endeavor so be on the lookout for opportunities our chapter can submit for assistance.



Sometimes the best fishing trips don't necessarily involve the fish...

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Looking forward to seeing you at the picnic. Have a safe and fun-filled spring/summer. - Tim

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, June 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Annual Picnic and Health Fair

Program: Health, Fitness, & More

Great Door Prizes (thousands of dollars)

Florence/Lauderdale Coliseum

Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Program to be announced

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Benefits Update and Christmas Medley by Alyssa

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Program to be announced

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Our Advertisers

Our advertisers are contributing to our Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA Endowment by advertising in our newsletter and at the Annual Picnic. When considering any of the services offered, please think first of our advertisers!

TVA Community Credit Union

Alabama Health Guidance

Lauderdale Christian Nursing Home

Helen Keller Hospital

Columbia Cottage

Delta Dental

Special Thanks to non-advertising
Supporters

TVA Power Service Shops

Meet your Muscle Shoals TVARA Board Members

President, Tim Cornelius

Vice President, Debbie Norton

Treasurer, Joan Marsh

Secretary, Carol Sherer

TVARA Picnic Manager, Henry Long

Hospitality, MJ Ligon

Scholarship Program, John Ingwersen

Newsletter: John Ingwersen

Board Members: John Blackwell, Cameron Kay, Jim Green, Bill Baggett, Jim Harris,

Greg & Anita Vandiver

Problems with benefits, pharmacy? Contact TVA Service Center 888-275-8094.

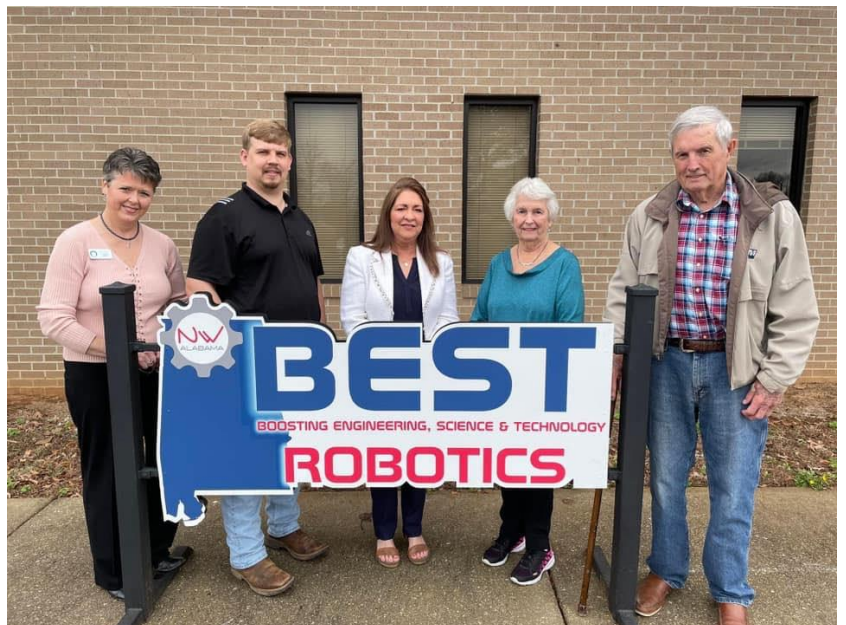
Comments/Recommendations/Articles for Newsletter? Send to jlingwersen@gmail.com.

BEST Robotics receives \$15,000 donation from Muscle Shoals TVA Retirees

Northwest Alabama BEST (Boosting Engineering Science & Technology) Robotics received a \$15,000 donation last week from the Muscle Shoals Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Retirees for the upcoming 2023 season.

According to Kim Sheppard, Northwest-Shoals Math Instructor and Co-Hub Director for Northwest Alabama BEST Robotics, the donation will help tremendously as they prepare for the 2023 season. “We are so appreciative of the Muscle Shoals TVA Retirees and their faith in us to help train and prepare middle and high school students for careers in STEM related fields,” said Sheppard. “We survey our participating students and approximately 95% of them say BEST Robotics has caused their interest in STEM careers to increase.”

Northwest Alabama BEST Robotics is made possible by a partnership between Northwest-Shoals Community College and the Shoals Chamber of Commerce. Students can participate in BEST Robotics for FREE. There are no robot materials or registration charges.



Pictured left to right: Stephanie Newland, VP of Workforce Initiatives at the Shoals Chamber of Commerce; Trent Allen, Co-Hub Director for NW AL BEST & Design Engineering Instructor at NW-SCC, Kim Sheppard, Co-Hub Director for NW AL BEST & Mathematics Instructor at NW-SCC, Joan Marsh, Treasurer of Muscle Shoals TVA Retirees, and John Blackwell, Board Member of Muscle Shoals TVA Retirees

Northwest Alabama BEST Robotics are now registering teams from area middle and high schools. Teachers are encouraged to register their teams early to participate in summer training opportunities. Register at <https://registry.bestrobotics.org>.

For more information on Northwest Alabama BEST Robotics, please call Kim Sheppard at [256-331-5331](tel:256-331-5331) or email kim.sheppard@nwscc.edu.



VALLEYWIDE TVARA PICNIC COMING SOON

The TVARA annual Chattanooga picnic will be September 13th, 2023. Muscle Shoals chapter will again have two buses available for a cost-free trip there and back. Loading ([6:00AM](#), departure [6:20](#)) will be in the PET SMART parking lot next to Academy Sports, Florence AL. We will make one additional pickup stop, Foodland parking lot, Rogersville, AL.

We will be taking sign-ups at our picnic in June or by telephone following the picnic.

Billy Baggett 256-394-1435
Cameron Kay 256-810-6569

Recognition of our Vietnam Veterans

By John P. Blackwell

It was not until a recent meeting of TVA retirees that I became aware of the In Memory program recognizing Vietnam veterans.

In Memory was created in 1993 by the group Friends of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The In Memory Program gives recognition to Vietnam veterans who suffered due to Agent Orange, PTSD, and other illnesses as a result of their service. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) began managing the program and hosting the ceremony in 1999. VVMF believes all those who served in Vietnam should be honored and remembered for their service. This program enables the families and friends of those who came home and later died the opportunity to have them be forever memorialized. A plaque is provided on the grounds of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site in Washington, D.C. The

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site for these plaques was dedicated in 2004 and reads: *In Memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.* More than 6,000 veterans have been added to the *In Memory* Honor Roll since the program began. To see all the honorees, please visit the *In Memory* Honor Roll.

What does having a veteran recognized include?

An invitation to *In Memory* Weekend in Washington, D. C. and [includes a touching ceremony](#) on the site of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial where each honoree's name is read aloud. If you are present, you may read the name. Each applicant also receives a printed personal tribute certificate with their veteran's photo(s).

- As part of the [In Memory Honor Roll](#), an online personal remembrance page is created for each honoree with their photo and biographical information. Family members can share the page and leave remembrances about their loved one.
- VVMF's mobile exhibit, *The Wall That Heals*, includes the digital photos of all *In Memory* honorees from the state where the exhibit is on display.
- An invitation to join our Facebook group: In Memory – Families of Vietnam Veterans lost to Agent Orange and PTSD. The group gives family and friends an online community to connect and share their stories.

How does one have veteran honored?

Fill out an online application and download the In Memory application.

What a Vietnam veteran's family from Muscle Shoals is saying about the In Memory Program.

Carol Sherer, wife of Carl Douglas Sherer, stated her husband will be honored in this year's In Memory Program on June 17. The In Memory ceremony will be held on the grounds of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. – the place our country has set aside for Vietnam veterans.

Carol Sherer said "Carl was a devoted family man and an amazing friend to many. He had an infectious smile and never met a stranger. He is definitely missed."

Carl Douglas Sherer, Vietnam veteran and TVA retiree.





**FOOD BANK OF
NORTH ALABAMA**

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www.foodbanknorthal.org
2000-B Vernon Ave SW, Huntsville, AL 35805

March 13, 2023

TVA Retirees Association
c/o Joan Marsh
3416 Lenz St
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

Dear Caing Friends:

Thank you for your donation of \$5,000.00 (Check #3708) given to the Food Bank of North Alabama on February 8, 2023. Your gift makes a tremendous difference throughout the rural and metro areas of the eleven counties we serve.

Along with our network of agencies, donors, and volunteers, the Food Bank of North Alabama works to reduce hunger by providing nourishing food to our neighbors. Your contribution will help many in our communities, including those whose income cannot keep up with rising grocery costs; school-aged children on weekends, breaks, and during times of remote instruction; seniors on fixed incomes; and, disabled individuals. Through our over 200 agency partners—food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless and women’s emergency shelters, and addiction services—we distribute more than 11 million pounds of food annually across North Alabama.

We appreciate your dedication to our community and commitment to ending hunger and cannot thank you enough for your generosity. We could not accomplish our mission to provide nourishment to those in need without your support.

Sincerely,

Shirley Schofield
Chief Executive Officer

The Food Bank of North Alabama is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and must rely on community support. The Food Bank did not provide you with any goods or services in exchange for your generosity. Retain this document for your records. It may be necessary in order to take advantage of tax deductions for your donation. Our tax ID number is 63-0884372.



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VOLUNTEERS BUILD-A-BED

by John Blackwell



TVA 90th Anniversary, May 18, 2023, Sleep in Heavenly Peace project. Cooperative project between TVA and the TVA Retirees Association.

Picture: Tim Cornelius, TVA Retiree, Greg Vandiver, TVA Retiree, Anita Vandiver, TVA Retiree, Doug Keeling, TVA Employee, General Manager Power Service Shop, John Blackwell, TVA Retiree, Joan Marsh, TVA Retiree, John Ingwersen, TVA Retiree, Henry Long, TVA Retiree, Penny Walker, TVA Retiree, TVARA Volunteer Coordinator

In recognition of TVA's 90th Anniversary, TVA sponsored projects across the valley to showcase TVA's dedication to making the valley a better place to live. TVA and the Muscle Shoals Chapter of the TVA Retirees Association worked together on a project to build beds for kids that don't have their own beds. Working with the Shoals Area chapter of "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" (SHP), the project was undertaken in the parking lot of the Power Service Shop on May 18, 2023.

The workday began with a large group of TVA employees and TVA retirees eager to get to work on this worthwhile project. The SHP organization had everything in place, not only the lumber to make the beds but all the tools and equipment to get the task accomplished. The work crews found their way to the dozen or more shelters to begin the process of building beds. Crews cut, sanded, drilled, and painted lumber to build the head and base boards and side rails. While I have never seen this project before, I was very impressed on how well the project was organized. In about two hours 40 beds were built and loaded for distribution. The SHP will deliver the beds and bedding material to needy kids throughout north Alabama. The TVA family did its part to be sure that no kids sleep on the floor in the Shoals area.



Endowed Scholarship - Your Support Needed!

We have several businesses and charities who have been supporting our endowed scholarship by providing financial support through the purchase of ads for our newsletter and booths at our Annual Health Fair/Picnic. We thank them for their generous support, and hope that each of our members will look at their advertisements in this, and future newsletters, and support them as they support us.

As of April 30, 2023, our scholarship endowment totaled \$85,676. We need your support to push on toward a \$100,000 endowment.

The endowment for 2023-2024 will support two scholarships. These awards exceed \$1,500 each. The scholarship award gives preference to relatives of active (paid) Muscle Shoals TVARA members. In addition your TVARA Board has approved an award of \$200 for the winning essay.

Please make our endowed scholarship a priority for your charitable giving. Donations are tax-deductible. If you would like to donate, go to: <https://www.una.edu/give/tva-scholarship.html>.

You may also donate by check. Make your check payable to Muscle Shoals Chapter, TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship and mail it to:

UNA Foundation Office (Attn: Endowed Scholarships)
Box 5113
Florence, AL 35632-0001



UNA Scholarship Luncheon. From left, Abigail Smith, Joan March, John Ingwersen, Lynn Ingwersen

FROM HOLLAND TO BELGIUM

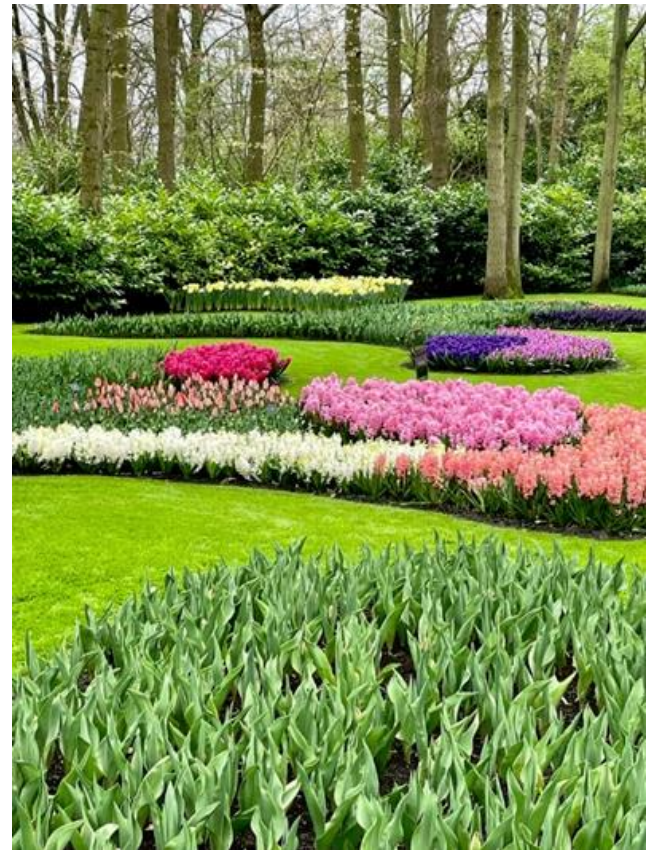
By Joan Marsh

My daughter Lisa, her college roommate Cathy, and I traveled from Holland to Belgium on a riverboat journey in April. We had a kaleidoscope of experiences from the inspiring art of Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum to the cobblestoned Ghent and the fairy tale streets of Bruges. The journey was set against a backdrop of the region's famous flowers in Holland. We began our journey with a canal tour of Amsterdam followed by a tour of the Rijksmuseum (national museum). Since it was rainy and tickets were sold out at the Van Gogh Museum we opted to head back to the ship.



The Amstel Hotel - celebrities tend to stay here when in Amsterdam:

We docked in Rotterdam and took a bus to Keukenhof Gardens. It is 79 acres with over 7 million flowers! They plant three bulbs in each spot at different depths to ensure they are blooming throughout their two-month season. They also have several pavilions with flowers throughout.





We visited Mauritshaus, a state-owned museum. We had a private showing of some of their artwork - the most well-known being Vermeer's "Girl with a Pearl Earring."

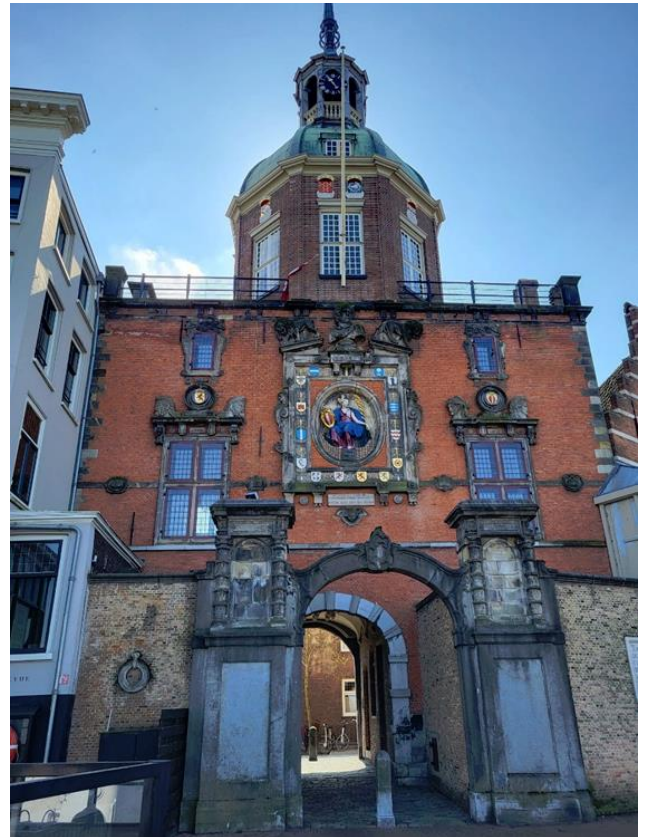
On Saturday we went to see the windmills at Kinderdijk where 19 original centuries-old windmills are preserved today as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. These windmills were used to control the water level. When the blades turn, they turn a gear that turns a larger gear that turns paddles that pushes the water out of the river. Most of the windmills were built in the 1700s. There is one that is white that is called a signaling windmill to let the next town know to start their windmills so they are working together. The windmills were originally made of brick but they were so heavy they sank so they began covering them with thatch.





In the afternoon we did a walking tour of Dordrecht. It used to be a major port city in Holland because three rivers intersect there - one goes to Belgium, one to England, and one to Germany. Market houses were built along the river for trading various goods. The facades of the houses were decorated, and many of the decorations indicate what kind of goods were traded. The more elaborate the façade, the wealthier the homeowner.

This is one of the two remaining medieval gates to the city. The lower portion is left from the 1400s while the upper portion was built in the 1600s. This side opens towards the intersection of the rivers to welcome people.





We docked in Willemstad for a short while so a band could perform for us after dinner. Lisa and I took a quick walk-through town. It's a small town with a population of less than 3000. It had some beautiful buildings. Check out the gas station on the sidewalk!

An unusual entrance to a home.

We took a bus to Bruges for a walking tour. Bruges is known as the Venice of the North. It is a beautiful city with lots of canals.





The story is told that Emperor Maximilian from Austria hated Bruges and outlawed all festivities. The people revolted. The emperor was forced to watch his friend be beheaded. His friend was called long neck. The emperor escaped but in tribute to his friend he forced them to keep 101 swans. It is said that the city will be cursed if the swans are removed.

We stopped in Ghent for a walking tour. The highlight of it was seeing the Ghent Altarpiece which is the painting also known as "The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb." It was one of the pieces of art in the movie, "The Monuments Men" about the soldiers' recovery of art taken by the Nazis. The city also had some interesting architecture.





This is the corner of the city hall. It has four exterior structures of different architecture - Gothic on the corner and Renaissance on the left. Each floor of the Renaissance has different column types.





Our next stop was Antwerp. The main items of interest were several paintings of Rubens in the Cathedral of Our Lady. We also toured the Red Star Line Museum which is a museum depicting the immigrants from Europe using the Red Star Line ships from Antwerp to immigrate to America. It had several personal stories of interest and discussed the showers, disinfecting of belongings, and medical exams conducted on third class passengers before they left. It also had information about Einstein immigrating through here.

★ The Red Star Line's official name was Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine or SANBA. It was founded in 1872 by American shipping magnates and two Antwerp-based partners: Jules Bernard von der Becke and William Edward Marsily. The aim was to transport cargo from America to Europe on the outbound voyage and passengers on the return voyage.

The company received financial backing from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, which saw the passenger line across the Atlantic as an extension of its railway network. The *Vaderland* departed on its maiden voyage to Philadelphia on 20 January, 1873.

The Red Star Line flourished until the First World War and was the sole operator at the Rijnkaai. During the line's heyday two ships left for North America every week.

In the 1920s, when the United States imposed immigration restrictions, the shipping line began to experience financial problems. It was liquidated in 1934 and a German ship-owner, Arnold Bernstein bought the ships. The Holland-America Line took over the fleet in 1939 when Bernstein was forced to flee Germany.



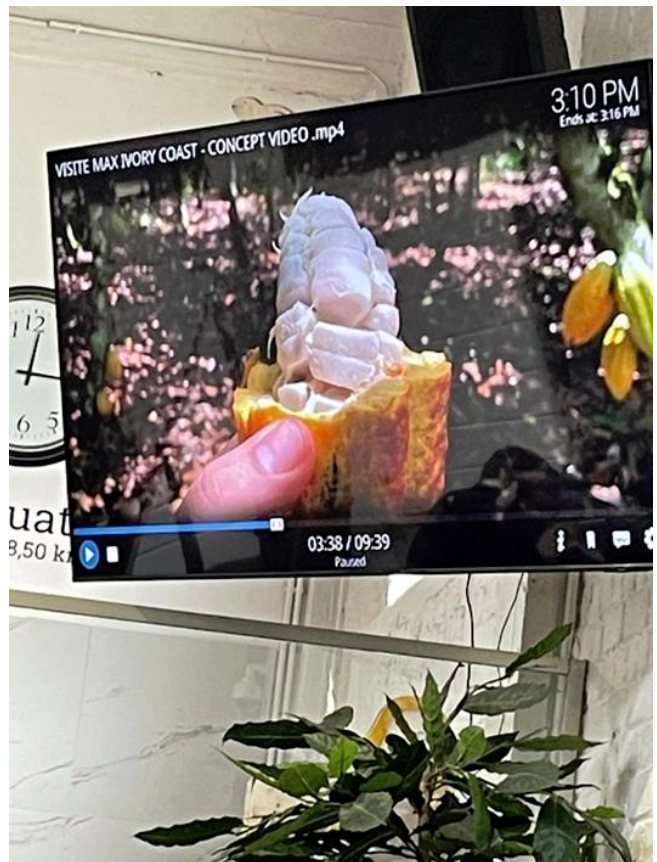


The City Hall

We did a bus and walking tour of Brussels- another city with some beautiful architecture. In the afternoon we went to Concept Chocolate and was told how chocolate was made from the pod on the tree to the finished product. We were also allowed to sample! It was very interesting and delicious!



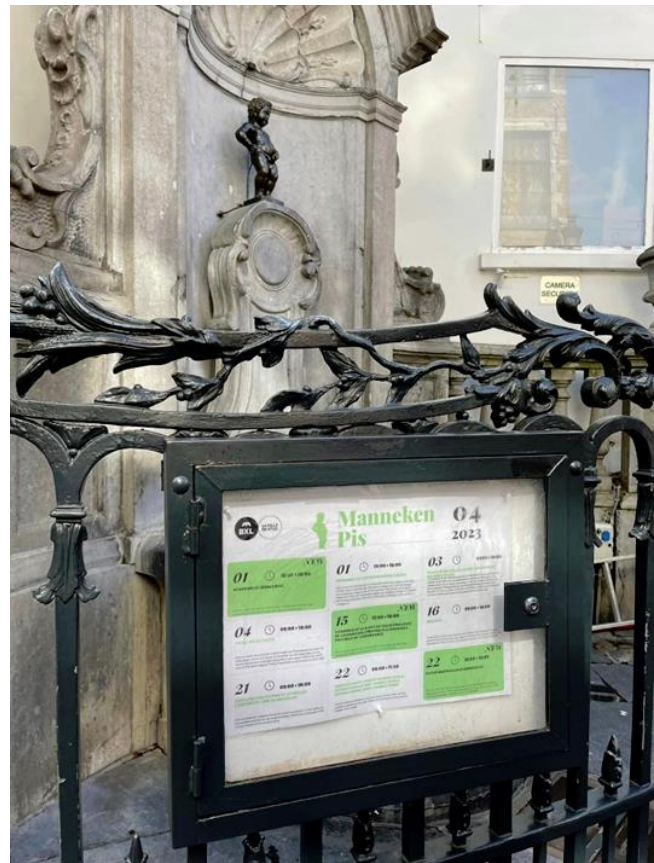
Atomium - this was made for the 1958 World's Fair. It represents an iron molecule but originally was made from aluminum so the name combined atom and aluminum:





Manneken Pis statue - this actually isn't the original. It kept getting stolen so they moved the original one to a museum. He wasn't popular at first but survived the bombardment by the French in 1695 so became a symbol for Brussels. He is covered on special occasions and has been given clothes by several governments. There are 5,000 outfits including one of Elvis!

The Royal Gallery of Saint Hubert which is filled with shops.







This was the guild house for wheat. You can tell by the wheat stalks in the hand of the woman on the frieze at the top.

Pictures or words cannot depict the beautiful squares in the cities we visited nor the picturesque historic centers and architecture of the buildings in the city centers. It was an adventure of a lifetime!

Joan Marsh

April 2023

Help! We Need Your Help!

Do you enjoy writing or photography? We're working to make this newsletter the best; and your talents are needed. If you would like to occasionally write an article on your experiences, or on a TVA person who deserves recognition, please let me know; and I will schedule your article for a future newsletter. Do you enjoy photography? We could use a designated photographer to get pictures at our various events. We have been somewhat haphazard at this, and would like to get better. Call John Ingwersen at 256-757-5325; or email him at jlingwersen@gmail.com.



Suggestions?

We want your feedback, comments, and suggestions. Let us know what you would like for TVARA programs, for our newsletter, and/or ways we can improve, in any way, our service to you.