

April 2020



Dear Members:

The Coronavirus is affecting the life of everyone in Northern California, in Belgium and around the world. We have been in shelter-in-place now for over a month and, as we read in the news, the confinement is helping to flatten the curve of folks getting affected by the virus. How much longer this will last is the unknown. We hope that you and your family here & abroad stay safe and healthy, and that you follow the advice that has been circulating by medical professionals.

Due to this epidemic, the Belgian Club canceled some of its events: the Easter Egg Hunt that always brings so much enjoyment for our youngsters, and the scheduled visit of the JW House that was planned in May. We hope to be able to resume the following events: the Independence Day Picnic, the White Water Rafting, the Oyster Feast at Point Reyes, etc. Meanwhile, we want to thank our Board member Saskia Rock for having worked so hard to plan the Easter event.

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**Face-to-Face With Our Regional Trade Representatives**  
**Wednesday, May 6, 4 PM**  
**Zoom Video Conference from Your Home**

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With the shelter-in-place, we came up with a new event using the Zoom video technology where everyone can join our presentation from the comfort of their home! We invited our 3 Belgian regional trade commissioners to present their work in Northern California and other western states. This presentation will be in 3 parts. First, each speaker will describe what their job consists of; then, they will tell us some success stories; and finally, we will have questions & answers from the participants...so you will be able to interact directly with the Commissioners of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. As you see, we like you to be involved not only in the conversation, but we also want you to invite your friends from here and/or Belgium.

The presenters:

- **Eric Gabrys**, Trade & Investment Commissioner, HUB.Brussels
- **Baudouin de Hemptinne**, Trade & Investment Commissioner, Wallonia Export-Investment Agency
- **Wim Sohier**, Science and Technology Counselor, Flanders Investment and Trade

The moderator: **Martine Peetermans-Bolsens**, Executive Director, Amici Lovanienses...encouraging creative thinking today to benefit from powerful inventions tomorrow.

Please join us for this presentation and discussion via Zoom video conferencing to understand what the local assignments of our regional Commissioners are, how their work helps the different regions of Belgium, and how entrepreneurs can benefit from their knowledge & services. For more information on the Face-to-Face, please contact Pierre Smit at [Pierre@bcnc.com](mailto:Pierre@bcnc.com)

**When:** Wednesday, May 6 at 4 pm

**Where:** Using Zoom Video Conferencing from your home computer

**Attire:** Whatever you want, and of course BYOBeer

**Note:** This is going to be a live event that will not be recorded (by request). If you have not yet experienced Zoom, this will be the perfect time to do it. More information, including log-in details, will be available when we get closer to the date of this event.

**Cost:** There is no cost for this event. However, we are suggesting a min. donation of \$5 per BCNC member and \$10 per non-member.

**Registration and Donation:** please go to our website [www.bcnc.com](http://www.bcnc.com) and select **Face-to-Face** under “Events”. You can pay by credit card or Paypal or mail check to: Fabienne Sowa, 2820 Willow Creek Trail, Cool, CA 95614. For membership sign up, visit [bcnc.com](http://bcnc.com) and select “Become a BCNC Member”.

**Deadline to register:** Monday, May 4.

### **Announcements**

- Unemployment Benefits have been increased by \$600 weekly ... If you are looking for some information, our Board member Saskia Rock ([Saskia@bcnc.com](mailto:Saskia@bcnc.com)) can help answer questions or lead you to apply and qualify.

- *Thank you* to Dirk De Mol for being the BCNC president for a great 8 year period. During the New Year reception at the International House in Berkeley, the applause was loud and long from all participants showing their deep appreciation for his leadership.

- *Thank you* to Philippe Jansen and Marcia Saecker for the flawless organization of the New Year

reception at the International House in Berkeley.

- *Thank you* to Wim Sohier and Flanders Investment & Trade for the generous sponsorship of the New Year reception.

- *Thank you* to Martine Peetermans-Bolsens for her presentation of Amici Lovanienses and to Koen Van Rompay for this presentation of Sahaya International at the New Year Reception.

- Join our BCNC Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/5421040815/?ref=bookmarks> where you will find a series of posts on:

- sharing a place, museum, treasure or building in Belgium that you know about and that is not-so-well known...we all want to learn about it.
- sharing your way to remain in good spirit and productive during the shelter-in-place...we can all learn from it.
- sharing your best pictures of the shelter-in-place moments

#### **Message to all foreign mission emergency Management officers:**

In response to numerous inquiries from foreign missions, OFM is sharing the California COVID-19 Immigrant Resource Guide, which provides information concerning state of California initiatives to support and assist foreign nationals impacted by COVID-19.

English and Spanish versions of the guide are attached and are also available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/guide-immigrant-californians/> and <https://covid19.ca.gov/guia-californianos-inmigrantes/>.

**Save the dates** for the *Independence Day Picnic* on July 19, the *Oyster Feast on the Beach* on October 11, and the *Belgian Dynasty Dinner* on November 14. These are just a few upcoming events to add to your schedule now. Other happenings will be announced in future newsletters as it gets developed.

Stay safe and healthy,  
The Board

**BCNC is a social club** to enjoy being with other Belgians & friends. If you are in Northern California for a day, a month, a year or a century, you can participate! If you know of something happening in or with our Belgian community, or if you know of a “special” Belgian visiting the Bay Area, let us know with a simple email to [Board@bcnc.com](mailto:Board@bcnc.com), or on our Facebook page. Thanks to members sharing information, members have had the chance to enjoy an evening, a beer or a meal with consuls, ambassadors, entrepreneurs, scientists, athletes, singers (Stromae and Johnny Hallyday) and even prime ministers such as Jean-Luc Dehaene and Guy Verhofstadt. To become a member, simply sign up now at [BCNC.com](http://BCNC.com).

