

NAUL NEWSLETTER

Netherlands America University League
Volume 34, No. 2, May-June 2012

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Report of the Annual Meeting **April 21, 2012**

Membership attendance at the Annual Meeting and Rijsttafel was again disappointing. There were fewer than twenty people there and, with the exception of one loyal member, all were current board members and/or their partners. Last year only nineteen members attended. Disappointing to put it mildly!

After the minutes of the 2011 meeting were approved, Karla Vandersypen presented the Secretary's report highlighting activities and programs held during the year, 2011-2012. After that Elizabeth Ong's Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved. Bottom line – the NAUL is solvent, with total assets of \$11,525. Annual expenses run approximately \$2,000 – \$2,500 per year. Membership is stable at just under 100 members. Board members whose terms expired were Karla Vandersypen and Elizabeth Ong. Elizabeth chose not to continue her service. Board nominations from the floor resulted in Erik Zuiderweg indicating that he would be willing to serve on the board. Karla and Erik were then elected to the Board of Directors for three-year terms. The following changes in Committee assignments were made – Lineke Zuiderweg as treasurer, replacing Elizabeth Ong, Els Nieuwenhuijsen, replacing Lineke together with Nanna Fecteau for hospitality. Other committee changes will be announced as they arise.

Under New Business:

Upon the recommendation of the majority of Board of Directors at their meeting of April 4, the board recommended the following to be

presented to the members at the April 21, 2012 Annual Meeting:

The NAUL will, in future, no longer include Zwarte Piet at its annual Sinterklaas party. This reflects the practice that was already put in place at the December 2011 celebration.

There was virtually no discussion at the meeting, although the board members were prepared to talk about the proposal. As noted above, with one exception, those present at the meeting were either current board members or their partners, so most were already familiar with the many lively discussions that had previously taken place on this subject. The motion was adopted with one member voting in opposition and two abstaining.

A good way to have your voice heard on subjects that may interest you and others is to participate.

ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETINGS!

At the conclusion of the business meeting, those loyal NAUL members enjoyed a most delicious Rijsttafel. Convivial conversations could be heard. This year the variety and quality of the dishes were outstanding. In future, if you think that sitting through the organization's business meeting may be boring, just think of the wonderful Rijsttafel you may be missing.

Regarding the Newsletter

As noted previously, the NAUL Newsletter appears on the website www.naul.info shortly after the hard copies are mailed. We will continue to mail hard copies of the Newsletters unless you advise us that you prefer to look at the newsletter on-line. However, if you **do not want to receive the hard copy of the Newsletter, you must e-mail Janet Broos (janetbroos@comcast.net)**. When the newsletter is available on-line, an e-mail will be sent to those who declined the hard copy. We will continue the already established practice of e-mail reminders of events.

Pub-crawling on the pub!

The beer-bike, a pub on wheels, is propelled by peddling. It is thought to have been invented in the Netherlands in the late 1990s. Nowadays it is promoted as a healthier and an environmentally correct way to see a city while of course sipping your favorite brew. It has become a great tourist attraction, and interest has crossed the Dutch border. There are some 30 pub-bikes in Germany and now are also to be found in Budapest and Belgium. In London, the pedibus sometimes serves champagne as well as beer. A clever American started the "The Cycle Pub" in the US and is importing Dutch beer-bike technology to Reno, Nevada, Boise, Idaho, Portland, Oregon, Madison, Tucson, Denver, Santa Monica and Redondo Beach in California. The beer-bike is not welcome everywhere. Munich has banned them and a special permit is needed in Düsseldorf. In Amsterdam, the spokesperson for the Amsterdam tourist board said, "It is not something that we promote." Is Ann Arbor next? It would be quite a site on campus.

An ending is announced

The Dutch-American newspaper *The Windmill Herald* will cease publication as of June 2012. The Dutch members of the NAUL may be familiar with this paper. The paper was founded in 1954 in Ontario as *Hollandia News*. The newspaper brought news from the Netherlands to expats in Canada and the US.

On Language

The Frisian language as a university subject is under threat. Because of a shortage of students, the only Dutch university course in Frisian language and culture may disappear. The Frisian BA degree has been protected by the education minister because it is an official language in the Netherlands. Only 15 students are now studying Frisian and that is not enough to justify a full time instructor according to Professor Jensma of Groningen University. Frisian is the native tongue of around 175,000 people who live in the province of Friesland.

Trivia

The Dutch government ranks second worldwide in online services according to a UN study "E-government for the People". The high score relates to the secure manner citizens can interact digitally with government. South Korea was number one.

The Dutch are the world's most active twitters. Japan and Spain are second and third.

In 2011 smoking cigarettes among the Dutch dropped to an all time low of 25% from around 28% in previous years. In the middle of the last century, smokers accounted for a whopping 70% of the population of those over the age of 15.

Information

Ton Broos received the following e-mail message from C.T. Leader, the President of the NW Ohio Netherlands Society.

"Sometime ago, some one contacted us from the Ann Arbor area about joining our Netherlands Society of NW Ohio together with the Dutch friends of Ann Arbor. We don't recall who this might have been, but we thought that was a great idea. Maybe this summer sometime our two clubs could get together for a picnic between Toledo and Ann Arbor. Could you ask your members if they would like to do that. If so, could you suggest a park where we could meet on a Saturday afternoon sometimes. Maybe Luna Park by Lake Erie? I am looking forward to hearing from you."

Let us know what you think of this idea.

Contact Janet or Ton Broos.

CHANGES

How three became thirty.

On January 1, 2012, Ton Broos officially retired from the University of Michigan, although he taught one more course on a temporary basis for the Winter Term 2012, namely his course on Anne Frank. The chairperson in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Scott Spector, said some very nice things about Ton and his long association with the Department. You can read that in the Department's newsletter. Ton's own musings are much more interesting. He said, 'I intended to stay for three years, but stayed for thirty.'

Embarrassing moments: Once, many years ago Ton made a flyer to promote Dutch. He remembers using the slogan "Dutch is an exciting alternative" but goes on to say "Unfortunately I had spelled the word 'exciting' without the 'c'." He further remarks "It was in fact applicable to my situation today [exiting] as the golden years have arrived and I have become a grey wolf in sweat pants." Let me just quote some of Ton's musings. "Teaching Dutch has changed over the years; one notices that the students read less and have a shorter attention span. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as I see a great future in interactive communication with virtual reality, or greater possibilities in traveling abroad, even if only in Skype format. We have had great students over the years.... Hopefully many students will think back to their Dutch classes with a smile. Last week one of my students returned a book she had borrowed eleven years ago. I will miss the students"

The one-eyed king: "You get the strangest requests when you are the one-eyed king rowing in his own Dutch pond. A few weeks ago I was asked to evaluate and translate someone's kickboxing ability. Who knew that there is a special Dutch way of kicking? I remember one of my first UM students asking if I would be giving quizzes. I answered 'perhaps', thinking of Jeopardy rather than tests. One of my most extraordinary requests was to sing a favorite Dutch song ("Op de grote stille heide") over the telephone, to be

recorded and played at the funeral of Martin Zwart.....a fine and unique gentleman....Because of him, we have Kaleidoscope, a poetry anthology with CD and are able to provide scholarship support to students who wish to study in Holland."

Proud moments: "...when Laura Schwartz and her husband decided to help fund teaching of the Anne Frank course. She was among my very first students. I am not sure whether I taught her Dutch as I should have since I was teaching by the seat of my pants. I had studied Dutch in Amsterdam, but there was no such thing as Dutch for foreigners. ... I have the most rewarding memories of the DeVries-VanderKooy Memorial Lectures—those evenings with absolute top-notch speakers. We have had so many interesting speakers and writers-in-residence over the years—and I am not just referring to the most famous ones."

And finally: "I intended to stay three years, but stayed for thirty. Silly questions come up as soon as you announce your retirement. The one most frequently asked is, 'What are you going to do?' As if I can sit brooding behind the geraniums watching the world go by.Well I hope to have a lot of free time and do whatever I like which might include a new edition of an 18th century Dutch 'robinsonade' or a book on Anne Frank. I may also dig in the LRC's archive to reconstitute the interviews I did over the years with many Dutch writers. Getting older is like Dutch cheese: it gets tastier when older, more mature, harder to cut and easily crumbling. The English translation of my last name in Dutch is 'fragile', and that is what eventually will remain: a brittle person, fading away, until just the name remains."

Compiled by Janet Broos

Ton's successor in the Department is Anne Marie Toebosch. Anne Marie taught the first and second year language courses in the Winter Term and in the fall term, she will offer a course on Amsterdam as well as the language courses.

Welcome to a tiny NAUL member

Congratulations to Henrike Florisbusch and Arthur Verhoogt on the birth of their third child, Ludger Huig, born April 2, 2012. Parents and sisters Lidewij and Oda welcomed Ludger, a healthy Dutch boy.

Upcoming events for your calendar.

June 24, 2012 – NAUL Picnic 3:30 P.M.

At the home of Toos and Frank Judge, 2600 Brockman Blvd. Ann Arbor. Bring a salad or dessert, lawn chairs for your family, and any favorite games for your kids. NAUL will provide the rest – drinks (beer, wine soft drinks), hamburgers, sausages and all the ‘fixins’. If you have any questions about the food/drinks for the picnic, call hospitality chair, Els Nieuwenhuijsen at 734-995-1817 elsni@comcast.net.

The Judge’s home is located on the southwest corner of Brockman Blvd. and Frieze Ave. From East Stadium Blvd., go south on Brockman until Frieze Ave. Their phone number is 734-662-3650 or fpjudge@umich.edu. An e-mail reminder will be sent in mid-June.

NAUL Fall Reception

No date has yet been set for the Fall Reception. When the date is known, we will advise members by e-mail.

The DeVries-VanderKooy Memorial Lecture, Thursday, October 4, 2012

The Lecture entitled, *Dutch Dialogues: Dutch Expertise in the Post-Katrina rebuilding of New Orleans*, will take place in the Michigan League. The guest lecturer is **Jane Wolff**, Associate Professor and Director of the Masters Program in Landscape Architecture at the University of Toronto, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design. She will speak on her work with a project called “Dutch Dialogues” in post-Katrina New Orleans, a collaboration between the Royal Netherlands in Washington, DC, the American Planning Association, and Dutch and Louisiana engineers, urban designers, landscape architects, city planners, and soils hydrology experts charged with New Orleans rebuilding and redesign efforts. Professor

Wolff will spend some additional time on campus to give lecturers in relevant classes. This promises to be a fascinating lecture.

Sinterklaas 2012

The next Sinterklaas Celebration will take place on Saturday, December 1, 2012. Sint will meet NAUL people (big and small) at Gretchen’s House on DhuVarren Road. Details will be provided in the Sint Newsletter and by e-mail.

Dues Reminder

NAUL dues for 2012 are due now. If your mailing label shows (12) or later, your dues are up to date. If earlier, your payment is past-due. Dues categories are:

Family with young children	\$30.00
Individual or Senior Couple	20.00
Senior or Student	10.00
Sponsor	50.00
Sustaining	100.00

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