

De Wieken News

January 2012

About us

Established in 1986, De Wieken caters to the Dutch people living in the North Carolina Triangle area, and to those who, for whatever reason, have a special interest in Holland.

The club's get-togethers are a fun way to rekindle ties with the old country, taste some Dutch *lekkernijen* or just enjoy the company of friends.

Our list of members is larger than you might suspect.

Anyone can join upon payment of nominal dues: \$16 for singles, \$20 for families.

Students join for free.

De Wieken

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We look forward to seeing you at our next club function.



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Sinterklaas visits NC Triangle



Naughty Dutch children in the North Carolina Triangle area lucked out this year. Officials of the U.S. Transportation and Security Administration confiscated Zwarte Piet's *roe* at the airport after determining he didn't have a concealed weapons permit. Piet tried to claim racial bias but to no avail.

Sinterklaas's horse, Schimmel, spent a few days in quarantine to ensure he wouldn't bring equine diseases into the country and U.S. customs unwrapped every piece of candy, suspecting illegal drugs.

The chocolate letters, in particular, attracted scrutiny, with one officer suggesting they could be used to convey messages to terrorist " sleeper cells."

Eventually, the charitable couple made it to the Bent Tree clubhouse in Raleigh, where they were greet-

ed by at least 35 children, singing, jumping and otherwise struggling to contain their excitement.

José Kreuk, Peter Greijn and Gerrit van Doorn entertained the visitors with songs and stories, after which Sinterklaas called each of the children and gave them a gift. Soon enough, the little ones were opening packages and playing with their new toys.

In addition to traditional Sinterklaas goodies such as *pepernoten* and *taai-taai*, there was plenty of other traditional Dutch fare, including *erwtensoepp*, *stamppot* and *saucijzenbroodjes*.

De Wieken can look back at another successful Sinterklaas celebration.

Eager to avoid the hassles of modern air travel, Sint announced he would travel to the U.S. by steamship next year. ■

Heksenwaag big hit at International Festival

Klaverjassen

On the second Saturday of every month, members of De Wieken get together to play klaverjassen, a traditional Dutch card game.

Players take turns hosting the games at their homes, and guests usually bring some drinks or snacks.

Below is the schedule for the first half of 2012

January 14
Ton Schoenmakers and Shelly Bluth

February 11
Volkert and José Kreuk

March 10
Peter and Diana Greijn

April 14
Peter and José v/d Ham

May 12
Ton Schoenmakers and Shelly Bluth

June 9
Volkert and José Kreuk

July 14
Peter and Diana Greijn

New players are welcome.
For information, write Volkert Kreuk:
volkert@dewieken.org.



De Wieken's cultural booth was voted "Best in show" during the Raleigh International Festival in early October. The awards committee unanimously decided that the club's replica of the *Heksenwaag* in Oudewater was the festival's most attractive exhibit.

The adjoining Sidewalk cafe, too, was a big hit, thanks to the help of many volunteers.

Created in 1482, the *Heksenwaag* was a tool to determine whether a person's body weight was proportional to their height and size. Its purpose was not to promote fitness or reduce obesity, but to help customers fight accusations of witchcraft.

In the Middle Ages, anybody could accuse anybody of witchcraft, and the burden of proof was on the accused.

Because witches were believed to have unnaturally low body weights (a prerequisite for broom flying and other wicked pastimes), suspects were often subjected to a weight test.

If the accused was found too light, she would be burnt alive. Unfortunately, many "weigh masters" were prepared to adjust their findings in return for bribes, and hundreds of innocent women were sent to their deaths.

But the weigh master in Oudewater proved uncorruptable. The *Heksenwaag* became the only one in Europe to be recognized by the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, for its fair weighing process. As a result, people from all corners of the empire came to Holland to establish their innocence. Nobody was ever convicted of witchcraft at Oudewater.

Under direction of Willem Bodisco-Massink, Conrad Collins, Sytse Douna, and Bob Sundstrom recreated the Oudewater weigh house for the International Festival.

Visitors lined up for a certificate stating that their weight was proportionate to their size, and were advised to keep the document in a safe place.

After all, you never know when a neighbor might report you for sorcery. ■



Rijsttafel: *smullen* in good company

De Wieken's annual rijsttafel, held on August 20, once again brought out the best in the chefs among the club's members.

Participants prepared their favorite Indonesian dishes, which were also entered into a competition.

Judge Adrie Van de Sterre, who made a career in the restaurant business, had the difficult but pleasurable task of separating the winners from the runners-up.

After careful deliberation, he announced the winners in each category:

Most unique dish

Carin Serrano's saté in yellow peanut sauce

Best tasting dish

Ted Orban's tender and tasty lamb saté

Best Dessert

Yvonne Pronk's Wadje—glutinous rice and brown gula Jawa (Javanese sugar)



Mark your calendar: The Stammpot avond has been scheduled for February 25 at the residence of Peter and José van der Ham

Akkie Monsma passes away

Akkie Monsma, a long-time member of De Wieken, passed away Nov. 21, after a fight against brain cancer.

Akkie was an active member of our organization, a steadfast regular at the *Koffiekllets* gatherings and other events.

She particularly enjoyed participating in the annual *rijsttafel*.

Her most notable contribution came every fall during the International Festival, when she would make *oliebollen* with Brigitte Daschall.



Dutch school continues

José Kreuk's Dutch school for children aged 4-6 will continue in 2012.

Classes take place every other Saturday from 10-12 am at the Kreuk residence in North Raleigh.

The group currently consists of 7 children. For more information, please send an e-mail to José : jose@dewieken.org.

De Wieken is also exploring the possibility of restarting Dutch classes for older kids and adults.

If you are interested in such lessons for yourself or your children, please contact Ria van der Veen at ria@dewieken.org.

The class will need at least five students to justify the investment in time and money.



You came here to do *what*?

Fun with immigration formalities

Anybody who has ever boarded an international flight will be familiar with the questions asked by security officials prior to check-in. Who do these bags belong to? Are you carrying sharp items? Has your battery-operated equipment been out for repair recently?

intend to engage in such activities in the future?

- Do you plan to practice polygamy?

It is clear why the agency wants to know these things. Prostitution and polygamy are illegal in the United States, and changes in government are supposed to take place by popular vote, not armed rebellion. The presence of mass murderers could cause unrest among the population and spying is against the law.

Frequent flyers know the answers by heart. “Me, no, no” will produce a boarding pass, while “someone else, yes, yes” guarantees a bag search and further interrogation.

Still, I can’t help but wonder how many pimps, provocateurs and other undesirables have been prevented from entering into the country because they revealed their intentions on the visa application form.

While it’s easy to understand the reason for these questions, asking them also seems a bit pointless. After all, a hijacker who has done his homework is not going to respond in a way that will invite additional scrutiny.

My guess is not many.

I was reminded of those airport exchanges when cleaning out paperwork of my 1995 immigration procedure this week.

The only reason for asking these questions I can think of is that they constitute a contract—a bit like the terms you are asked to agree to before downloading software.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service has the unenviable task of weeding out bad apples from tens of thousands of applicants. Perhaps in an effort to expedite the process, it simply *asks* aspiring immigrants about their intentions.

If authorities catch you e-mailing to Russia the blueprints of the next generation Predator aircraft, they can confront you with the visa application form on which you vowed not to do so. Likewise, they will be able to annul your second marriage because you answered “no” to the polygamy question.

One of the forms I encountered while purging my records contained the following questions. Applicants had to check Yes or No.

But this approach isn’t entirely waterproof. After all, a revolutionary who has just overthrown the government is unlikely to feel bound by promises made to the previous rulers.

- Do you intend to engage in espionage?
- Do you intend to overthrow the government of the United States by force, violence or other unlawful means?
- Have you ever engaged in genocide?
- Have you ever been a prostitute or procured anyone for prostitution, or

So in the margins of that visa application, I’ve scribbled a reminder to myself: Once securely in power, void all existing contracts.

—Taco Tuinstra

De Wieken News

Ideally, *De Wieken News* is published every quarter -- in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

In reality, the publication comes out when the editor has had time to work on it.

To submit articles and announcements, or to express your outrage about the newsletter’s content, please write to editor@dewieken.org

