

Aeroplane

VLAAMSE TECHNISCHE KRING

Monthly - Edition 3: February 2015



Crossing culinary boundaries



VTK's Christmas



Exploring Leuven's seven wonders



The first virtual reality movie

Visiting the city of Bruges

February

- 10 Opening Cantus**
- 12 International Pub Evening**
- 16 Accenture Masterclass**
- 19 Afrekening - The Party**
- 23 AB InBev Beer Hero Challenge**

More info on vtk.be

Table of Contents

Contents

3	Table of Contents
4	Word from the president
5	Word from the vice-president
6	CityTrip: Bruges
8	International dinner: Spain & Belgium
10	Last month in engineering
12	Leuven Secrets: The seven wonders of Leuven
14	Photo Report: VTK's Christmas



Citytrip to Bruges

6



Spanish-Flemish dinner

8



The wonders of Leuven

12

Word from the president

Dear student,

Welcome (back) to Leuven. For the students who are new here this semester, I would like to refer to Aeroplane 1 of this year and to our website, if you want to know more about what VTK is and what we have to offer. But name it and we have it; we have sandwiches, beer, books, jobs and we've got your back when it comes to student representation.

Congratulations anyway for choosing for an exchange. I personally stayed in Leuven and kept being involved with VTK year after year, but although I never did an Erasmus, I do believe in the benefits it can bring you. The glimpses I got of it through an ATHENS exchange course of only one week were already very promising. You start to see the world in a more broad and nuanced way as you see how cultures and people differ and you work on yourself by stepping far out of your comfort zone and build a new one in your temporary home. Partying and drinking will probably all be part of it, but eventually you'll be like Neo in The Matrix when you return home, you can just see things in a way other people can't. And to all the haters that think that's a problem, that Erasmus is not always serious enough: "the road of excess, leads to the palace of wisdom".
(-William Blake-)

We, engineers, we understand the tricky stuff. We get it that the world is big and that 7 billion is a lot. We also understand we are not rooted to the soil of our home country. I might be wrong, but I think engineers are generally more mobile than people in general. There's possibly less than six degrees of separation between us on average. And engineers are everywhere.

Last week's vacation to Prague and Berlin provides a good anecdote for this. Apart from running into Flemish people all the time in clubs and bars, we had a very coincidental encounter. We were sitting down in the club Karlovy Lazne in Prague, and noticed some older guys who clearly knew how to party and didn't give too much of a fuck of what younger people might think. They noticed us being a bit passive and one of them came up to me and started talking. Because of the loud music, there were some communication problems which soon pointed out we both spoke Flemish and didn't have to use English. "Ah, Vlaming! - Ja, Vlaming!". "We're engineering students. From Leuven." He was an engineer as well, from KUL, who studied at ESAT and now works for the Belgian railways. As if that wasn't enough, he had been in VTK, as a candidate president at a certain point. So we exchanged some memories of studying in Leuven, and concluded that it seems to be a small world we live in from time to time. Although we, as engineers, know the facts don't really favor that idea. Me and my friends went back to partying, so did they.

It is comforting to think that, although we'll soon be working instead of studying, in the end, not everything will change.

Manu, your president (praeses@vtk.be)

Word from the vice-president

Dear international students,

It's finally time to wear those summer clothes again. I open the left door of my wardrobe and I am instantaneously happy again, as bright colors overpower my view. That's a very different picture from the right side of my wardrobe, where my winter clothes are hanging. (Yes, my closet is divided into 2 parts: summer and winter.) Oh, I love to be a woman: that abundant choice of skirts, shorts, dresses and tops in a variety of colors and models.

And then it's time to get my summer shoes out of the depository. (Yes, there is a clear distinction between summer and winter shoes. Because the shoe cabinet is too small for both of them, I put away my summer shoes in the depository during the winter and vice versa.) I feel like a child who got some money to get some candy, I am that excited. Soon I realize I forgot half of my shoe collection, woops. And still, a woman can't have too much shoes.

It is time to show off those summer outfits again. It's 28 degrees Celsius where I currently am and the sun is shining on my face, the sound of the rolling sea provides a soothing atmosphere. Though that cocktail in my hand can be a reason too.

The holidays are over again, I have to go back to chilly Belgium. Fortunately, we can still leave our books closed for a while and all the student bars are open again. The party period, during for me the very last semester, has started again. I will make sure that I'm going to enjoy Leuven's parties for the very last time.

Emily, your vice-president (vice@vtk.be)

CityTrip: Bruges

As the <Gopass 10> allows people under the age of 26 to travel anywhere in Belgium for only five euros, most of you will find it very easy to take a day off on the weekend and visit one of Belgium's beautiful cities. Every month, we'll give some practical information and background on one of these Belgian cities, and we'll start off the new semester with perhaps the most famous one: Bruges



A new semester has started in Belgium, and the early semester is the perfect time to explore the country. In the weekends there are very few deadlines to worry about (which will change as the semester progresses), so you might as well pick up a Gopass and travel around Belgium. Most of you probably want to visit Bruges at some point, and therefore we've listed up some information and places you should definitely visit.

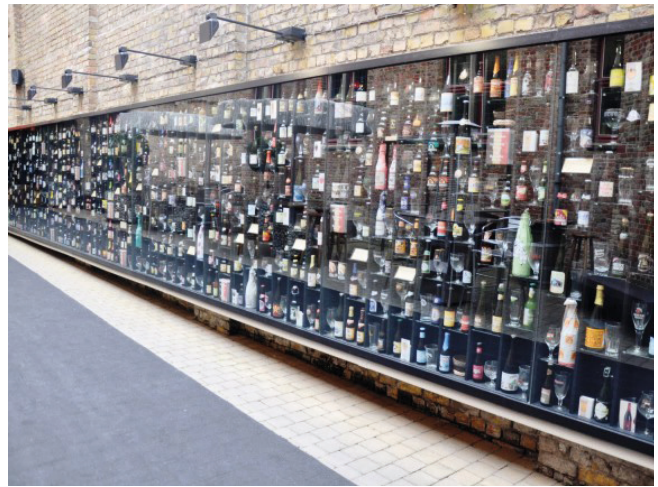
Bruges was one of the most influential cities in medieval Europe, as it was the crossroads for trade between Northern and Southern Europe. The city flourished, and most of the magnificent buildings are still intact. It is definitely one of the world's most beauti-

ful cities to walk around in, as almost the entire city center remains a warm assembly of broad canals, sprawling churches, gothic houses and cobblestone bridges. You can walk through narrow alleys with hidden pubs, take a boat over one of the canals, or if you feel really fancy, discover the city by horse carriage.

We're not even going to try to list all the famous buildings and museums you could visit, but some of them particularly stand out of the crowd. On the central square you can find Bruges' most famous building, the 13th century bell tower. The tower is part of the belfry, which once contained the city archives and treasury. You can still climb the slightly le-

aning tower to get a magnificent view of the medieval city and the surrounding countryside. Other buildings of interest near the central square are the city hall, and the basilica of the holy blood, which is said to contain a vessel with the blood of Christ. If you move away from the central square, you may encounter a great variety of things, depending on your direction. You may head for the Saint Salvator's Cathedral (which houses the only statue by Michelangelo to ever leave Italy), stroll into the shopping district, or encounter Bruges' Bierkelder (Beer cellar). Also spread across the city are many different museums, ranging from the Groeningemuseum displaying Belgian fine arts, to the museum of Belgian fries.

Most of the historical buildings will be closed in the evening, but that's no reason to return to Leuven just yet. After getting something to eat, you can still walk around the poetic city as the evening falls, and settle for one of the many pubs in alleys or by the canals. A pub that's certainly worth passing by is the one featuring the famous Beer Wall, which is a glass wall behind which the rich expanse of different Belgian beers is proudly displayed. You can even wind down with one of the beers from



Bruges itself, like Brugse Zot or Straffe Hendrik.

Bruges is a versatile city, offering history, art, and a wide variety of Belgian beers. The experience will be even better in the early spring, as the masses of tourists will mainly come when summer approaches, whereas now you have the city relatively to yourself. And visiting the most famous medieval city in Belgium will certainly leave an impression to remember.



International dinner: Spain & Belgium

While the world is talking about integration problems, students in Leuven are enjoying themselves having a multicultural dinner. Spanish appetizers, Belgian truffles, Spanish omelette, Belgian chocolate mousse, Belgian stewed meat with French fries, Belgian chicory with a sauce of ham and cheese, and of course the good Belgian beers shouldn't be forgotten. The result: a delicious, unforgettable evening with a lot of fun!



Tortilla de patatas – Spanish omelette

Ingrediënts

6 eggs (more can be added to increase the size)

1 onion

2 cloves of garlic

olive oil

salt

Potatoes (depends on size of the omelet and the potato itself, trust your eye and use as much as needed to fill the omelet)

1 green pepper (optional)

Cut the onion into small pieces, and throw them in a pan with a generous layer of olive oil. The onion must look transparently baked but not burned. While the onion is baking, cut all the potatoes into pieces of bigger size than the onion (more or less 1 or 2 cm diameter), and when the onion pieces are ready, throw the potatoes, the garlic (in very small pieces), and the pepper into the pan and wait until the potatoes are getting soft. Meanwhile, add salt to your personal preference. Now we can add the eggs, first you have to beat them, then add the beaten eggs to the pan and let the lower part of the omelet form. This part is difficult: you have to turn around the omelet successfully so the omelet is turned upside-down and the other side can bake as well; a dish could be helpful for this. When both parts sides are fully formed, the omelet is ready to be served!



Belgian Chocolate Mousse

Chocolate mousse is one of Flanders' best desserts. And if you make it the right way, you don't even need a fitness session the next morning. Prepare yourself for this creamy, delicious, melt-in-your-mouth experience...

Ingrediënts (for 8 persons):

200 grams of Belgian dark chocolate
(Côte d'Or for example is one of the best brands)

8 eggs



Break the dark chocolate bars in small pieces and melt them in a pan.

Turn off the heat and add the egg yolk (the yellow inner part of the eggs).

In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until frothy, and continue to beat until the egg white is completely stiff.

Mix half of the beaten egg white into the chocolate mixture, and stir gently, because in that way you keep the mixture airy. If possible, use a wooden spoon for this. Fold in the remainder of the white and transfer the mousse to small bowls. After a few hours in the fridge, the mousse is firm and ready to satisfy all your friends.



Do you have a really good recipe from your country that you want to share with us? Don't hesitate to let us know! Honour will be yours!

international@vtk.be



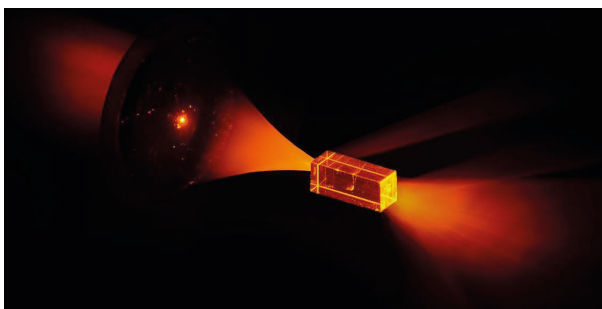
Last month in engineering

Many of you may already know, but for those who haven't: Microsoft is developing an answer to Google glass, and their plan is to improve considerably. [Project HoloLens](#) will add holographic interaction to the picture, enabling services not yet found in any other devices.



A new [smart keyboard](#) can learn the way you type, and recognize you by typing pressure and speed. When other people try to use it, the keyboard will notice and lock them out. The keyboard also harvests energy from typing to power itself and clean the keys.

Oculus Rift has devoted a team to the exploration of a new form entertainment: [virtual reality movies](#). To showcase the medium's abilities, a short movie called 'Lost' was produced, and the pace of storytelling depends on the actions of the viewer.

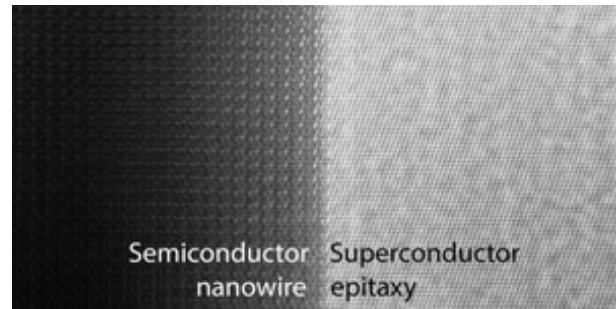


Australian physicists were able to store [quantum information](#) for six hours, improving storage time by a factor of more than 100. The approach uses a solid state technique which may be a promising alternative to the laser-based systems that have been developed so far.

South-Korean researchers have revealed a new ultrastrong [type of steel](#) with the same strength-to-weight ratio as high-performing titanium alloys at only a tenth of the cost. Furthermore, the material is compatible with manufacturing methods common in the industry.

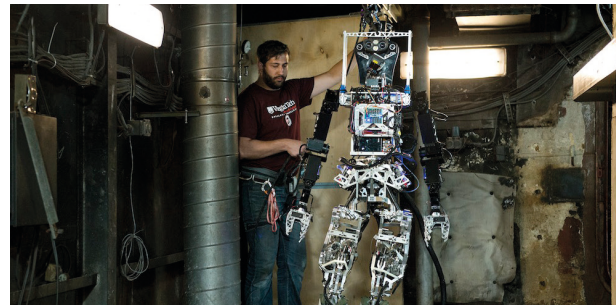


A new type of **hybrid nanocrystal** has been developed in Copenhagen. The nanowire is a hybrid of a semiconducting nanowire and its metallic contact, and provides a perfect transition between a transistor and a superconductor.



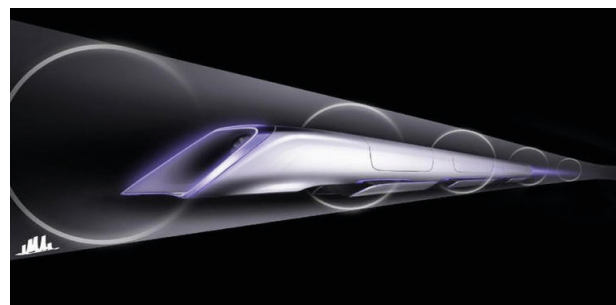
Nvidia has launched the world's first mobile **teraflop supercomputer**, the Tegra X1. Their aim is to implement deep neural learning into self-driving cars. The computer already learned to recognize different kinds of objects, such as pedestrians, speed signs, and cop cars.

The US navy has unveiled a robot prototype that can assist in **firefighting**. The robot can walk over uneven terrain, spot overheated equipment, and use a hose. It can be remotely controlled by a human user, exploiting the benefits of human-robot interaction in critical situations.



A food chain from Shanghai provides a different payment method: a **face scan**. A thermal scan allows to find the network of capillaries in a face, which is unique for each person.

Elon Musk has announced a new test facility for **Hyperloop** – an underground near-vacuum transportation system. Musk eventually wants to transport people at higher speed and lower cost than with any medium currently available, and all of that on solar power.



Leuven Secrets: The seven wonders of Leuven

To those of you who just arrived: welcome in Leuven! For the rest of you who, like me, have been isolated between their course texts for the past month, I hope all the hard work paid off. Every month I try to write about a new discovery I made in Leuven, and this time I even used exploration of the city as a form of procrastination. Inner Leuven is usually crowded with students, but during exams the streets are almost empty. The people you meet in Leuven during exams are often just regular citizens, and apparently many of them like talking about their city. In between my hours of studying, I made many walks around the city to relax, and the people of Leuven have taught me a lot of things I didn't know. One of those things: Leuven used to have its own seven wonders.

When I say Leuven used to have seven wonders, you may be wondering how many of them are still standing. We know that from the ancient wonders of the world, only one is still standing today, and it doesn't look like the Pyramids are going anywhere anytime soon. Now the list that rose to popularity in Leuven is a bit younger than the one made up by the Greeks, dating from the 17th century to be precise. Even though the city has changed a lot in the past few centuries, three of the seven 'wonders' managed to survive.

The first wonder on the list is the 'tower without nails'. This expression refers to the tower of the Saint-



Gertrude church in northern Leuven, which is the part of Leuven where most students (including myself) never really come. Which is a real shame, as some streets are really cosy, tucked away little villages inside a small city. At the time it was built, churches

were typically built around a wooden framework, and the fact that this churches' tower was hewn completely out of stone was a small miracle at the time. In the centuries after its construction this led to the belief among Leuven townsfolk that the tower was built by magical gnomes.

The second wonder is a building I know all too well, as it is the first church I saw when I first arrived in Leuven. Known as 'the bell outside the church', the church of St. Jacob is not only close to my initial student dorm, but also close to my favorite board game store. Even though the bell was built outside of the church so that its sound would reach further, the people of Leuven made their



own stories as to why the bell was hung outside. Some people say that the bell wasn't allowed inside the church because it was never blessed, others said that it was a gift from a socialist group that wasn't socially accepted at the time. I'm just wondering why nobody apparently listened to the architect's explanation when these buildings were constructed.

The last wonder still standing is the church of Saint Michael, known as the 'altar outside the church'. This church received its position on the list because of the frontal façade. This façade is very detailed, and the statues and other objects that decorate it make it look similar to a giant altar, with candles and the holy bread on top.

The other four wonders have sadly been lost in the changing city of Leuven, and therefore it may seem like the people of Leuven only cared for their churches. But only one of the four lost wonders is itself a church (the church with a tower lower than its roof, demolished in 1808), and the other wonders are actually pretty cool as well. One of them was the old eastern gate, now the Tienestraat, with a church built on top. Because this church had its own tomb, there were people buried under the church, but above the gate. This led to the expression that at this gate, the living walk underneath the dead. Another wonder was located at the southwestern gate, where several large

trees grew over the walls. Therefore, the people leaving entering Leuven through the gate would be walking underneath the giant roots. The final wonder was something that is rather trivial to modern people: water flowing upstream. The river Dijle used to split in many different paths, and due to water locks, water would be flowing upstream in a specific part of Leuven. You'd think that people wouldn't be paying much attention to the direction of water flowing in different places, but Leuven has a famous legend about a girl, Margaret, floating upstream after

being murdered. Therefore the waterway was dubbed a wonder, as it was associated with the legend of Margaret.

So all in all I still learned a great deal about Leuven during my study breaks, including the fact that the non-student citizens of Leuven rarely stop talking when you get them started. But I think it's good to be passionate about something, and if you're passionate about the place you live, about Leuven, it means that from all the places you could have gone, you picked the right one.



Photo Report: VTK's Christmas



