



San Francisco, September 2013

Dear Belgian Friends,

HRH King Albert II, King of the Belgians, was pleased to accept my request for end of mandate as of 30 June 2013. In recognition of my service, HRH has honored me with the permanent title of **Consul of Belgium**.

I am confident that my successor, Nathalie Delrue-McGuire, will excel in her assignment as Honorary Consul of Belgium.

With gratitude I look back at a rewarding and enriching tenure. During twenty-plus years, it has been a privilege to represent my country: in numerous cultural events; in governmental and academic exchanges; in introducing visiting Princes, Ministers and Ambassadors; in supporting every Consul General in Los Angeles and the Trade Commissioners of Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia; in connecting Trade Missions to the right trade partners for enduring economic exchanges; in honoring American Veterans; in serving the Belgian Community and consolidating American-Belgian friendships. I have been most impressed with the spirit of openness and cooperation between the Belgian Club and my office.

One of my greatest pleasures has been to get to know, to work with, and to start friendships with our Belgian Family of exquisite minds, great talents and entrepreneurial personalities who continuously flock to the Bay Area. A friend of mine in Belgium told me (with regrets) "...the best and brightest of Belgium leave for America". It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you.

My warmest thanks go to successive Board Members of the Belgian Club, for their unwavering dedication and commitment, and to the Presidents, Present and Past, for their active engagement and relentless hard work. The Belgian Club of Northern California, and its Members, are truly Cultural Ambassadors of Belgium and are instrumental in forging Belgian-American friendships.

As I remove myself from the day-to-day operational role, I look forward when requested to provide my experience as a strategic resource to Belgium's benefit and to continue our warm friendships and fun celebrations.

See you soon,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rita Bral".

Rita Bral
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