

DOING BUSINESS IN THE EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE
The newsletter of the Chambers of Commerce of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine

Q3, 2004

Issue 10

September, 2004

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This project has been made possible thanks to the European Interreg III program for the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, the Région Wallonne (B), the Provincie Limburg (B) and the Land Nordrhein-Westfalen (D).



CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

THE EXPORT CLUB

[COM: Maastricht, September 10]

The Export Sociëteit Limburg (ESL) is a business contact center for companies in international business. The club meets around six times a year for the purpose of networking and exchanging information. On September 27, ESL is visiting Linssen Yachts BV in Maasbracht. The program starts at 15.45 hrs and this is followed by a presentation on the developments and market position of Linssen Yachts. This will be followed by a look around the business and a short trip on the local Meuse broads. Cocktails and buffet follow at 20.00 hrs. Contact Ardy Assink on 00-31-43-3506511 or mail : aassink@maastricht.kvk.nl
<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

DUTCH-WALLOON BUSINESS CLUB

[COM: Maastricht, September 10]

The fourth meeting of the Dutch-Walloon Business Club will be held September 29 at the Interbrew brewery at Jupille sur Meuse. Interbrew has since become InBev, the world market leader with 200 brands, 7,000 employees and locations in 30 different countries. For information contact Bernard Piette on 00-31-43-3506613 or e-mail : bpiette@maastricht.kvk.nl
<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

TECHNOLOGY TRIP TO LIEGE

[COM: Liège, September 10]

Liège is an important center for biotechnology and aerospace activity and a day has been organized to familiarize the participants with the high-tech resources of Liège.

1 Aerospace employs 1,500 in the Walloon country with one third of the jobs in the Liège region. Information can be accessed at the following websites:

<http://www.wallonie-espace.be> and <http://www.wsl.be>

2 Water and water treatment has an important a cluster of relevant companies and
3 Micro and nanotechnology is on the threshold of a new industrial revolution, offering prospects of new materials and hitherto unheard of applications. The day includes a visit to the Initiatives trade fair and lunch with members of the Liège and Verviers Chambers. For information contact Bernard Piette on 00-31-43-3506613 or e-mail :

bpiette@maastricht.kvk.nl
<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

MEETING CLOSE NEIGHBOURS

[COM: Maastricht, September 10]

On October 26, Meeting Close Neighbours will take place at the Düsseldorf K (Plastics) Trade Fair in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce of Düsseldorf and the East Belgian Development Company from Eupen. The K Fair is the biggest in the world for the plastics industry with 3,000 participants and 100,000 visitors last time. In cooperation with Dutch and Belgian colleagues Meeting Close Neighbours 2004 will enable business from the southern Netherlands to establish contact directly with German and Belgian colleagues during the fair. 32 Businesses have already been contacted which are interested in meetings and on registration you will receive a list. 30 Minute matching meetings can then be held. A list of appointments will be mailed a week before the start. Fee for participation in Meeting Close Neighbours includes admission to the Fair, lunch and the organization of the appointments. You have to get there yourself. For information contact Bernard Piette on 00-31-43-3506613 or e-mail : bpiette@maastricht.kvk.nl
<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

SOUTHEAST ASIA

[COM: Maastricht, September 10]

There will be a Euroregional business lunch on doing business in Southeast Asia with a special focus on Thailand and Malaysia on Wednesday November 3 at Kasteel Bloemendaal, Vaals. The lunch will be preceded by a reception at 09.30 and a series of presentations from 10.00-12.00 hrs on socio-economic developments and opportunities in Southeast Asia, the does and don'ts of business in Southeast Asia, legal and banking aspects and the practical experience of three companies from Meuse-Rhine. The aperitif will be served at 12.30 and the meeting concludes at 14.30 hrs.

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

AACHEN AREA RAIL IMPROVEMENTS

[COM: Düren, July 5]

The Düren district's regional committee of Aachen's Chamber of Commerce has made recommendations for the improvement of rail connections in the Aachen region, which include the improvement of the high-speed section between Düren and Aachen before 2010. This area should not become the bottleneck of the European high-speed rail network; particularly since the high-speed line between Brussels and the border at Aachen will have been completed by 2007.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

EU LOCAL COOPERATION

[COM: Hasselt, June 22]

Eight organizations with a European focus (EURES, Info Point Europe, Euro Info Center, Leonardo, GOM Limburg, Province Limburg (B), BIC, IRC) met on June 22, in the context of the EU local cooperation project. The objective is to bring various organizations together, so that they will be able to cooperate more efficiently in the future and reach and serve their target groups. The European commission and the local authorities have, in the course of time, established a number of networks. These networks fall under the authority of various directorates general and they have a range of target groups each with a specific mission. But they also share a great deal and, in broad terms, they have the same objective (in getting those looking for work and the companies that need them together to inform and advise them) and they have the same problems. The European Commission is also looking for synergy between these networks and local governments. The Euro Info Center also took part in this initiative.

<http://www.kvklimburg.voka.be>

AACHEN CHAMBER EXHIBITION

[COM: Aachen, June 16]

Under the heading '200 Years at the heart of Europe', the Aachen Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its bicentenary. Its foundation goes back to a Napoleonic decree of April 2, 1804. The jubilee has been marked by an exhibition of moments in history. The exhibition gives an interesting overview of 200 years of business history in Aachen. Among the vignettes is the story of the Fafnir Motorbike Works, on one of whose machines, Rudolf Caracciola won his first race. Railway construction in the region is another topic. The President of the Chamber, at the time, David Hansemann played a major role in this industry. The paper and needle industries are also represented. The exhibition runs through September 19, 2004 on the ground floor of the Chamber, at Theaterstrasse 6-10, Aachen. Opening hours are Mondays through Thursdays from 8.00 – 17.00 hrs and on Fridays from 8.00 – 15.00 hrs.

<http://www.aachen.ihk.de>

MEUSE-RHINE TESTBED 2015

[COM: Maastricht, May 26]

The Euregional Chambers have produced a joint document on orientation and prospects through 2015 in English. It covers the standards for existing and future locations, the infrastructure, industrial sites, education and employment, research and innovation, quality of life and tourism. It is available from the Chamber of Commerce in Maastricht on +31.43.350.6533 and can also be downloaded from the home page of the Chamber of Commerce for South Limburg at the website below.

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

BKD MEUSE-RHINE

[BIZ: Heerlen, August 27]

Meuse-Rhine is to have its own Euregional pavilion at the Bedrijfscontactdagen (BKD) business contact fair. It will be particularly valuable for developing contacts with Germany. A number of cross-border players have already indicated that they will be on the stand in October 12/13 at the MECC in Maastricht. The group includes:

MAHHL Cities (Maastricht, Aachen, Hasselt, Heerlen, Liège)

Grenslandhallen- Hasselt

Initiatives- Liège

Parkstad-Aachen Marketing (PAM)- Landgraaf

Euregiomatch.com- Maastricht

Novotel Am Europaplatz- Aachen

Regii BV- Maastricht

<http://www.bkdlimburg.nl>

PHENIX DATA CENTER

[BIZ: Villers-le-Bouillet, July 28]

Phenix Data Center is a first in the Walloon Country offering secure data storage, at a former Arcelor site. It ensures business continuity for customers in the case of disasters, natural or otherwise. It offers co-location, data recovery, backup data, IT support and broadband service. It also has office space and services.

<http://www.phenixdc.com>

EUR 360M HIGHWAY PLAN

[BIZ/INFRA: Maastricht, July 24]

One aspect of Maastricht, less often alluded to, is the fact that it holds up traffic flows from the northern Netherlands to Italy on the A2 highway, since it is the only part of the highway which has several sets of traffic lights. The flow of traffic on this highway is very great. 45,000 Vehicles a day passed along the Maastricht section in 1986. Currently the figure is 75,000 daily and by 2010 the figure is expected to reach 100,000 vehicles a day. So Maastricht has decided to provide an underground bypass for the traffic, by building a tunnel through Maastricht for the A2.

Tendering procedures are expected to be completed by 2006 and the whole project is expected to cost around EUR 360m. The actual construction is scheduled to start in 2007 and will continue to 2012

<http://www.maastricht.nl>

COCKERILL AT FLEMALLE

[BIZ: Flémalle, July 22]

Le Libre Belgique has reported that the Cockerill steel operation is going to regroup its administrative operation, which has been distributed around the Liège basin, at Flémalle. The subsidiary at Arcelor will build a large building in place of unused centers. This is a sign of the will to maintain some activity in the region and to satisfy the unions who hope for more.

<http://www.lalibre.be>

HYUNDAI EDC LUMMEN

[BIZ/LOG: Lummen, July 19]

Hyundai is to open its new EDC office building later this year in Lummen. Hyundai-Mobis, which has had it's EDC in Lummen for many years, distributes parts for Hyundai and Kia. This development should create 100 jobs.

<http://www.gomlimburg.be>

S-VC STAKE IN PROLAS

[BIZ: Würselen, July 16]

The Würselen-based Prolas Produktionslaser GmbH, a full-service engineering company in laser material processing, has strengthened its capital base in its partnership with the Aachen region venture capital company S-VC GmbH. This will allow the ongoing growth of the business. ProLas was founded in September 1998 as a spin-off of the Fraunhofer Institute for laser technology in Aachen and has been developing very satisfactorily. It includes Siemens, Pierburg, Saint-Gobain Sekurit among its clients. There is no mention in of the size of the stake taken.

<http://www.prolas.de>

EUR 8M FOR MAASTRICHT

[BIZ: Maastricht, July 17]

The Chamber of Commerce reports that Maastricht is expecting an additional EUR 8m in income thanks to the Dutch presidency of the EU, which started on July 1 and lasts through January 1. There are 30 EU conferences in Maastricht during this 6-month period.

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

LUMILEDS /AIXTRON 4 YR DEAL

[BIZ: Aachen/San Jose, July 7]

Lumileds has issued a long-term purchase order to Aixtron for its anticipated increase in epi system capacity within the coming 4 years. This purchase order includes a significant number of Aixtron Planetary Reactors® for Lumileds' Luxeon™ products.

Lumileds Lighting is the world's leading manufacturer of high-power LEDs and a pioneer in the use of solid-state lighting solutions for everyday purposes including general lighting, automotive lighting, traffic signaling, signage and LCD backlighting.

<http://www.Lumileds.com>

DUEREN: ENERGY OUTSOURCING

[BIZ/INFRA: Düren, July 7]

Nuon Energie and Service GmbH is taking over the energy supply and wastewater treatment program from Akzo Nobel chemicals at the Düren business park. Nuon is taking on all of the technical plant for the production and transmission of power, to include electricity, gas, steam, compressed air, cool water, wastewater and a wastewater treatment plant, services which had, in the past, been provided by Akzo Nobel Chemicals. Former employees will be taken into the service of the new company Nuon IP Düren GmbH.

The take-over still requires approval by the anti-trust authorities.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

ALRO TAKES OVER GIRAB

[BIZ: Dilsen-Stokkem, July 3]

The Alro Group, a leader in coating metals and plastics, has taken over the Limburg coating company Girab. The new company, which will be called Asitec, will be used by the Alro Group for production facilities and as a test center for applications and new technology. Its 20 employees will be able to continue with the Alro Group. The price has not yet been revealed

<http://www.kvklimburg.voka.be>

CEGEKA WASTE CONTRACT

[BIZ: Hasselt, July 3]

The Hasselt IT specialists, Cegeka, announced sometime ago that they had received an outsourcing agreement of unlimited duration with the Limburg (B) waste utility: Regional Environmental Care. This outsourcing agreement relates to the whole spectrum of IT management on the basis of service level agreements and the development of new software systems for monitoring, registering and directing waste disposal behavior for the area. Cegeka was established in 1992, it has two branches, one in the Netherlands and one in Belgium and achieved revenues of EUR 22m in 2003. It employs 240.

<http://www.cegeka.be>

WFG ANNUAL REPORT

[BIZ: Eupen, July 2]

East Belgium/DG's economic development company WFG has presented its report for 2003, which revealed that there had been 375 startups, primarily in the context of the start up initiative Xistence. WFG counseled 311 people in 2002; this went up to 375 in 2003, making a rise of 21%. After consultation with WFG, 87 people set up their own businesses, which gives a start up percentage of 23.2%. Xistence was particularly useful in setting up business plans and helping with permits applications. WFG also played a role in export promotion and had contacts with 127 businesses.

<http://www.wfg.be>

FNAC TO COME TO MAASTRICHT

[BIZ: Maastricht, June 24]

According to a front page report in Dagblad De Limburger, deriving from the project developers 3W, responsible for the new market development Mosae Forum in Maastricht, Fnac the retailer of cultural and leisure products in France, Spain and Portugal is to come to Maastricht in 2006. It will be part of the new development. Of the 18,500 m2 of rentable space at the new Mosae Forum project, half has now been rented out. Fnac, the famous French bookstore, covers the written word, hi-fi, photography, video and all associated technologies.

<http://www.fnac.com>

IPTE IN GERMANY

[BIZ: Genk, June 23]

IPTE is a market leader in the supply of production equipment for the electronics industry. Its subsidiary Connect Systems International is beginning activities in Germany, after acquiring Infotron GmbH. The acquisition dovetails with Connect Systems' corporate strategy of targeting internationalization and European player status in the delivery of cable assemblies, printed circuit boards and in-board assembly for complete systems. The company will operate in Germany as Connectronics GmbH.

<http://www.ipte.com>

EUR 20.4M WINTERSLAG PROJECT

[BIZ: Genk, June 23]

A design center is to be built at Winterslag. The City of Genk is going to establish its design center, with a focus on industrial design, graphic design and media on the former mining site at Winterslag. It is expected that the project will be completed by 2006. The center will have two auditoriums, an exhibition room for rehearsals and meetings, offices and a theater café. A new building will be put up for the auditoriums. The visitors' center will be set up to open up the site. The city of Genk is going to invest EUR 15m in the project, which will be added to the EUR 5.4m already available in the City Funds. There will also be underground parking and space for 600 housing units.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

NEXFOR TO TAKE OVER AGGLO NV

[BIZ: Genk, June 22]

Interlin Invest NV of Genk, Belgium and Nexfor Inc of Canada today announced that the OSB and particleboard assets of Interlin Invest's affiliate Agglo NV, located at Genk, Belgium, will be acquired by Nexfor. The acquisition will take effect in the third quarter of this year, and is subject to satisfying certain conditions including regulatory approval. On closing, the Belgian operation will be renamed Norbord NV, and will become part of Nexfor's European Panel Business, with headquarters in Cowie, Scotland. Agglo employs approximately 250 people. The company is owned by some founding families through the holding company Interlin NV and, through various operations, by LRM NV, an investment company focusing on venture capital activities in Limburg (Belgium).

<http://www.nexfor.net>

MAJOR PIPELINE PROJECT

[IND/INFRA: Brussels/Geleen, June 19]

The European Commission has approved state aid of EUR 26.4 m for a consortium of companies led by Royal Dutch/Shell Group, BASF AG, Celanese AG and DSM NV to build a propylene pipeline, connecting Rotterdam, Antwerp, Tessenderlo, Geleen and Cologne and the German Ruhr area, at the cost of EUR 200m. Currently, the propylene, derived from petroleum and used to produce plastic, is transported by rail and barge.

This pipeline network means that DSM will be able to use 1,000 fewer hazardous-cargo rail tank cars at the marshaling yards in Venlo. Subsidies of EUR 18.7, EUR 4m and EUR 3.7 are to come from North-Rhine Westphalia, the Netherlands and Belgium respectively. The European Pipeline Development Company from Venlo will build the network.

<http://www.limburger.nl>

DTZ'S EUR 25M IN 6 MONTHS

[BIZ: Liège, June 18]

DTZ, the British-based real estate holding company, which has been in Liège for two years, has achieved revenues of EUR 25m on the first 6 months of trading this year. Christophe Nihon, the director of DTZ's Walloon operations, notes, however, that inbound investors to Liège are disconcerted, on arriving in the region, at not knowing who to talk to. In an interview in 'La Libre Belgique', Mr Nihon mentioned in this connection the representative of a major German bank interested in sites to be vacated by hot rolled steel operations [There is, in fact, a deplorable lack of English language publicity, relating to the very interesting business developments in the Principality. Ed.].

<http://www.lalibre.be>

DYNEEMA MEDICAL APPLICATIONS

[BIZ/LIFE-SCI: Heerlen, June 16]

DSM Dyneema, producer of the world's strongest fiber, has announced that it has started building a production line for Dyneema® Purity, a high performance fiber for use in medical applications, such as strong orthopedic sutures and other surgical implants. The production line will be located at DSM Dyneema's site in Heerlen, the Netherlands, and will serve the global medical device industry. The new line will come on stream in early 2005.

<http://www.dsm.com>

WTC AT AVANTIS

[BIZ: Heerlen, June 15]

The World Trade Center is going to be established, initially at least, in the Centipedes building at the transfrontier Avantis Science and Business Park between Heerlen and Aachen. The decision is in a preliminary phase, but is expected to become definitive on July 21, depending on financial matters.

It is understood that the Aachen Chamber supports this method of finally getting the ball rolling at Avantis. As regards the proposal to establish the WTC in the center of Heerlen, which has been languishing on the drawing board for at least three years, it has been decided to get on with the job at Avantis and think about Heerlen center when and if a concrete opportunity should arise. (Source: Rob Bosma, City of Heerlen)

<http://www.avantis.org>

EUR 20M FROM ARIAKE

[BIZ: Maasmechelen, June 12]

Ariake Japan Co., Ltd, a producer of seasonings and famous for its Sushi sauces, is going to invest EUR 20m in Maasmechelen. This will produce 30 jobs and in the longer term probably 80. The Japanese company has purchased a site in Maasmechelen from the Pingo Poultry processing plant. (Source: Het Belang van Limburg)

<http://www.hbvl.be>

RAVAGO PLASTICS

[BIZ: Lommel, June 12]

Ravago Plastics from Arendonk are going to build a European warehouse and distribution center on the new Kristalpark site in Lommel. This is initially expected to produce 90 jobs and the figure should rise within three years to 150. The mayor of Lommel Louis Vanvelthoven has confirmed that Ravago is going to buy a 9 ha site. (Source: Het Belang van Limburg).

<http://www.ravago.com>

FEV EXPANDS IN ALSDORF

[IND: Alsdorf, June 12]

FEV Engine Technology GmbH, an internationally recognized leader in the design and development of internal combustion engines, a major supplier of advanced testing instrumentation products and services to some of the world's largest powertrain OEMs set up a test center in Alsdorf in 1999. They have now they have taken up a further 10,000m² to develop the center that has been employing 100. They expect soon to have a new workshop with labs and offices which should produce 60 new jobs. The company is considering a new option for any further 21,000m².

(Source: Aachener Zeitung)

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

FN HERSTAL RESULTS 2003

[BIZ: Liège, June 12]

The FN Herstal Group has just reported its results for 2003. Revenues achieved reached EUR 403m, EUR 1.5m more than the previous year. The breakdown of the figures into civilian and military business produces 62% for civilian business and the rest for business with the armed forces of various countries. Business conditions are sensitive but the weakness of the dollar has not prevented the Browning and Winchester units from growing their sales. The production of new weapons and new calibers for hunting weapons has made this possible.

Military sales have managed to keep their end up and produced a net consolidated result at EUR 5.3m. (Source: La Meuse)

<http://www.lameuse.be>

HASSELT WANTS A SLICE OF MAA

[BIZ/INFRA: Hasselt, June 11]

The city of Hasselt is thinking of taking a stake in Maastricht Aachen Airport. The Netherlands Limburg Provincial Government and the Dutch Central Government have reached an agreement on the privatization of MAA. They have agreed to an offer of EUR 5m for the Airport Businesspark Holding company and currently the consortium has taken over only 70 per cent of MAA (See next story). The remaining 70% is in the hands of regional stakeholders, municipalities, LIOF and the Chamber of Commerce. These regional stakeholders have five months to decide whether they want to hold on to their stake or not. This presents new options for partners, like the city of Hasselt. Ten years ago Maastricht y made the proposal to Hasselt, but because of difficulties with the East/West runway, they did not take it up.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

CEGEKA TAKES OVER HOSTIT

[BIZ: Hasselt, June 11]

The Hasselt IT company Cegeka has reached an agreement with the publisher Concentra over the take-over of HostIT, a subsidiary specializing in hosting services. HostIT employs 30. The take-over is in the context of Cegeka's plans to move into a new market. HostIt is an important player in supporting internet activities for media companies, financial institutions and service providers. Willy Lenaers of Concentra, who is responsible for the sale, noted that the publishers want to concentrate on core business. Concentra will remain a client of Cegeka-HostIT, noted Lenaers.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

LIOF INVESTS IN FORTIMEDIX

[BIZ/LIFE-SCI: Maastricht, June 10]

LIOF and Limburg Ventures are taking 26% and 6.5% stakes respectively in Fortimedix, a medical device company located in Nuth. Fortimedix was founded in 1999 to produce cardiovascular stents. Stents are thin, metal tubes which can serve to prevent obstruction of blood vessels, following Angioplasty, a medical procedure in which a balloon is used to open narrowed or blocked blood vessels of the heart. In addition, Fortimedix develops and supplies equipment for production of stents and catheters and offers consultancy services to catheter producers.

Fortimedix employs 25. The company's founders worked with Medtronic in Kerkrade on the development and production of catheters before starting up the company.

<http://www.fortimedix.com>

LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SCANVAN AND NCTS

[LOG: Liège, July 16]

Belgium is introducing new systems at its airports, including Liège, to speed up transit and to combat abuse. The new computerized transit system (NCTS) is a Europe-wide system, based on electronic customs declaration and processing, designed to replace the existing paper-based transit system and to provide better management and control of community and common transit. It involved all of the EU member states and others and its use is also a condition of accession for new EU members.

The EUR 500,000 scanner in the Scanvan will help in the detection of drugs and other contraband and can be used at Liège TNT and elsewhere. 90,000 packages have to be checked at TNT each night, according to an article in Le Libre Belgique.

<http://www.hmce.gov.uk>

FIBEROPTIC PARKSTAD

[INFRA: Heerlen, July 16]

A foundation called Isidoor has been established to implement a high-value fiber optic network. The Municipality of Heerlen and the province of Limburg have taken the initiative to strengthen the fiber optic cable network in Parkstad. The presence of a high quality affordable digital infrastructure will improve the climate for investment and provide encouragement for innovative service providers. Isidoor is a cooperative association, primarily concerned with the purchase of fiber optic connections. The foundation will also act as an IT platform, permitting new IT initiatives.

<http://www.isidoor.net>

LIEGE RUNWAY EXTENSION

[INFRA: Liège, July 8]

Extension of the main runway at Liège airport by 413 meters, for a total length of 3,700 meters has been approved by the appropriate authorities. The authorities have not accepted the complaints about noise from the airport from neighboring municipalities.

<http://www.liegeairport.com>

WATER PROJECTS FOR HEERLEN

[INFRA: Heerlen, July 8]

The municipality of Heerlen will receive a EUR 3m national subsidy for sustainable water projects. There are 15 projects, where the application of durable hydraulic systems will be implemented to combat regional flooding problems. The projects runs from January 1 2004 through December 31 2007. Heerlen's projects, including renovations at Schelsberg/ Bokstraat where a double sewer will be built so that the contaminated wastewater and rainwater can be separated. The rainwater will be then treated in the Maria Christinawijk, where use will be made of the locally available silversand to filter the water. There will also be separated sewage systems in Molenberg.

<http://www.heerlen.nl>

NEW ROADS AND RAIL

[INFRA: Aachen, July 2]

The highway and rail network in the Aachen region can be extended. The German Parliament has passed the necessary legislation for the infrastructure. Upgrades include a six-lane development of the A4 highway between Eschweiler and Weisweiler, starting this year.

On the rail front, from 2005 there will probably be a new track between the Aachen central station and the Belgian border at the Busch tunnel location and this refurbishment will cost EUR 50 million. Together with the EUR 20 million for the upgrading of the central station and the EUR 24 million for the line between Düren and Cologne, this means a EUR 100 million package for the region. The Aachen/Düren stretch has been prioritized and will probably be built in 2008.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

ANTWERP-GENK-SITTARD-GELEEN...

[LOG: Sittard-Geleen, June 29]

New project plans are being tabled today for a EUR 200m major rail logistics program for industry, providing a heavy-rail link over the Meuse and a link to the public intermodal terminals, including Genk, Born and the new Chemelot facility.

This would lead to a new European West-East logistical axis from Antwerp, via Genk and Sittard-Geleen to the Ruhr/Rhine and the new states in central and eastern Europe. The rail bridge would provide a passenger transport facility, linking into the light rail plans on both sides of the river and the Belgian bus company De Lijn is also interested in cooperation.

The project, called FENIX, was initiated in mid-2003 by the Western Mining Region and the Province of Netherlands' Limburg, linking into a study by Professor Allaert of Gent in his study Maastricht/Maasland, dating from 2000 to 2001.

<http://www.rivertosuccess.nl>

LIFE SCIENCES AND SCI-TECH

MEDICAL IT PRIZE

[LIFE-SCI/ SCI-TECH: Maastricht, July 20]

'Slice of Life' is an annual conference at which medical and health science educators and developers gather from around the world to explore and share the use of multimedia and IT in medical education. Each year an USD 1,000 prize is awarded to a student, preference is given to a medical or graduate student who has created an exceptionally software application. This year the prize went to Maastricht's Pieter Kubben for his PDA content delivery system for medical decision support. Check the website for details.

<http://www.kubben.nl>

WATERWAYS

[SCI-TECH: Aachen, July 16]

The waterway project is a cross-border Euroregional project that casts its eye broadly upon the waters. Following the advent of the European Water Framework Directive, in future all the influences on flowing water will be viewed as a whole, to give an all-embracing image. In Meuse-Rhine, this integrated approach will be expanded by a proposal for cross-border cooperation and this will produce a challenge for the authorities, scientists and the public sector. The waterway project is a pilot project promoted by the EU and the state of North-Rhine Westphalia to develop the framework conditions and consequences for the new view of rivers and streams in the Euroregion. The project is being run as an Interreg IIIA project, which means they provide 50% of the money. The other 50% is coming from the state of North-Rhine Westphalia, the Walloon region and partner institutions.

<http://www.wegedeswassers.de>

VIRTUAL INSTITUTES

[SCI-TECH: Jülich/Aachen, July 16]

The research center Jülich and the RWTH Aachen University have founded two virtual institutes for information technology and biohybrid technology. The aim is to create centers of excellence of international standing

<http://www.fz-juelich.de>

NANOIMPRINT TECHNOLOGY

[SCI-TECH: Aachen, July 8]

The Aachen-based, private non-profit company AMO GmbH (Gesellschaft für angewandte Mikro- und Optoelektronik) is dedicated to applied research on micro-, nano- and optoelectronics. Its AMICA (Advanced Microelectronic Center Aachen) department has been working on nanolithography technology and its applications since 1997. UV Nanoimprint technology has been a major activity since then. This topic is covered in Aachen (RWTH) University's latest Science survey.

<http://www.amo.de>

4-TESLA MRT SCANNER

[LIFE-SCI: Jülich, July 5]

The Jülich research center has started to use a 4-Tesla magnetic resonance tomography scanner, which cost EUR 3.5m. This scanner is the second most powerful in Europe. Jülich neuroscientists and physicists will be using it in brain research. The 4-Tesla Scanner will produce detailed pictures of the brain and enable researchers to see the areas involved in particular processes of thought. Following a stroke, they will be able to locate areas of functional breakdown. Research can be undertaken into multiple sclerosis or strokes during therapy and dementia can be more easily diagnosed. This is important in an aging population, where 30% of those above the age of 70 suffer from senile dementia.

<http://www.fz-juelich.de>

ATRIUM IN LIEGE

[LIFE-SCI: Heerlen, July 5]

Showing its interest and involvement in Meuse-Rhine, a group from the Atrium hospital met staff from Molis, the laboratory information and management system used by the medical sector in the departments of clinical chemistry, microbiology and a part of the pharmacy section, for an update on their activities. Molis has a base in the province of Liège. Later, a delegation from the Atrium hospital visited the TNT distribution center at Liège Airport, which also has a medical express package specialization.

<http://www.atriummc.nl>

AIXTRON IN TOP 10 AGAIN

[SCI-TECH: Aachen, July 5]

Aixtron has again been ranked as one of the 10 best in VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration) Research Inc's independent Customer Satisfaction Survey in the category of 'Small Suppliers of Wafer Processing Equipment' as well as in the overall 10 best 'Focused Suppliers of Chip Making Equipment'. Aixtron moved from number four to the number two position in the wafer processing 10 best rankings which clearly reflects the successful approach to push continuous improvements in customer service and performance of its state-of-the-art MOCVD (Metal Organic Chemical Vapor Deposition), equipment.

<http://www.aixtron.com>

THE NANOCOSMOS

[SCI-TECH: Aachen, July 5]

The University of Aachen has produced a 100-page brochure on nanotechnology. This deals with research into the characteristics and applications of very small structures - one billionth of a meter - involving physics, chemistry, electronics, medicine and engineering. Aachen's competence in this area is described in the booklet: 'Vielfalt des Nanocosmos' [The Abounding Variety of the Nanocosmos], available free of charge at +49241809432.

<http://www.rwth-aachen.de>

WATER CLUSTER

[SCI-TECH: Liège, July 3]

Among the many cluster focuses in the province of Liège, one is called Aquapôle and focuses on water sciences. It is moving into new buildings under construction at the Sart Tilman campus in Liège. The EU Water Framework Directive, published December 22, 2000, is intended to establish the contacts for the protection of services in subterranean waters. In brief, by 2015, surface and subterranean waters in the EU should be in good shape. In order to achieve this objective, the member states have to establish river basin management plan for 2009. Liège is working on this, and has in its Aquapôle a center of expertise, presided over by Professor Emmanuel Serusiaux and managed by Anne Goffart. It will be located in the new buildings under construction in Sart Tilman. In addition to offices, the building will have hydraulic laboratories and those of Cebedeau. (Source: Athena 202)

<http://athena.wallonie.be>

JUELICH NEUTRON SOURCE (FRM-II)

[SCI-TECH: Jülich, July 1]

The Jülich Research Center is going to set up an external unit at the new FRM-II high performance neutron source research reactor in Garching Munich, the world's most modern source of neutrons for fundamental research. The research neutron source in Garching is a high flux source, which has a broad application spectrum for the neutrons generated.

<http://www.fz-juelich.de>

MILLIONS FOR OBESITY

[LIFE-SCI, Maastricht, June 24]

The European Commission is making EUR 14.5m available for a large-scale European investigation into the relationship between obesity and genetic factors. The project is called DiOGenes and is being carried out in cooperation between the University of Maastricht's Nutrim Institute and the industry. DiOGenes is an integrated project within the European KP6 program. Check the Nutrim website for details.

<http://www.nutrim.unimaas.nl>

GIS FOR PDA AND TABLET

[SCI-TECH: Liège, June 24]

Star Informatic has announced that it is currently shipping release 2.1 of MobileSTAR, its mobile GIS solution for PDAs and TabletPCs. MobileSTAR is an open GIS solution, compatible with all of the industry standard formats and databases. A key point of asset is the use of the new STAR XML format embedding all information related to a GIS project within one single XML file.

<http://www.star.be>

EUR 100,000 RESEARCH AWARD

[LIFE-SCI: Brussels, June 23]

CEFIC, the European Chemical Industry Council, has announced the award of the first LRI (Long-range Research) Innovative Science Prize to Dr. Roger Godschalk of the University of Maastricht. He will receive EUR 100,000 to conduct research into 'Paternal carcinogen exposures and genetic risks in their offspring'. The award was presented in conjunction with the Federation of European Toxicologist & European Societies of Toxicology (EUROTOX) at a ceremony in Brussels.

<http://www.cefic-lri.org>

WOOD GASIFICATION IN AACHEN

[SCI-TECH/INFRA: Aachen, June 23]

Aachen's city power utility, STAWAG, is planning a wood gasification plant with the University's Chair for Coke Oven Plant Operation. The plant will be built on the university's old incinerator site in Aachen-Seffent. It will be operational in 2006, demonstrating the viability of wood as an environment-friendly and economically viable source of energy. The wood gasification plant means a start on energy production from biomass for STAWAG. Between 6 and 10 plant workers will produce 70,000-megawatt hours of electricity annually. This will provide 20,000 households with power.

<http://www.rwth-aachen.de>

HEALTH CARE PRIVATIZATION

[LIFE-SCI: Maastricht, June 22]

There is an increasing degree of privatization in European health care. This was revealed in a recent study at the University of Maastricht called 'Privatization in European health care', produced by Professor Hans Maarse, in cooperation with foreign experts. Maarse emphasizes that the change is a gradual process and there is no question of a radical break. Nevertheless, privatization of health care can have far-reaching consequences for the development of costs and access to care, where the patient has to pay a large part of the costs. This means that there will not be equality of access to care. The study is available in the 'Elsevier Gezondheidszorg series', Privatization in European health care, edited by J. Maarse, ISDN: 9035227034.

<http://www.pers.unimaas.nl>

FAST HEART ATTACK DIAGNOSIS

[LIFE-SCI: The Hague/Maastricht, June 21]

Testing blood for the FABP protein enables a more rapid diagnosis of a heart attack. This allows patients to be treated more quickly. Maastricht researcher Maurice Pelsers presents his findings in his Ph.D thesis, 'Fatty acid-binding protein as a plasma marker for tissue injury'. The presence or absence of proteins in the blood gives a definitive answer as to whether there has been a heart attack or not. In the case of a heart attack, as a result of the death of muscle cells in the heart, cellular proteins are released into the blood and the blood tests are therefore important in the diagnosis. Other current blood tests can show whether there has been a heart attack three to six hours after the complaint. The Maastricht FABP test reveals this within one to three hours.

<http://www.unimaas.nl>

INTERNATIONAL DSM AWARDS

[SCI-TECH: Heerlen, June 16]

Belgian researcher Filip Frederix today won the first prize in the International DSM Awards for Chemistry and Technology. An international jury selected Filip Frederix, a doctoral student at the Catholic University of Louvain, for his research in the field of biosensors. His work involved the development of sensors for biomedical applications. Frederix's work has made it possible to produce highly sensitive biosensors that enable certain types of blood tests to be performed quickly, easily and cheaply. His research project was a multidisciplinary blend of physics, chemistry, nanotechnology and biomedical technology. Frederix was presented with a cash prize of EUR 7,500 by Mr Jan Zuidam, the vice-chairman of DSM's Managing Board. The winner of the second prize, Jürgen Groll, received a cash prize of EUR 5,000, and the winner of the third prize, Nathalie Charlier, was presented with a cash prize of EUR 2,500. The other six prize-winners all received prizes of EUR 1,250.

<http://www.dsm.com>

GEOSPATIAL DATA PROVISION

[SCI-TECH: Liège, June 10]

IONIC Software is supporting an innovative project at the Ordnance Survey by providing RedSpider Web Services technology for the delivery of web-based geographical information in an e-commerce environment. These service intend to enable all of OS's customers and partners to obtain MasterMap® data on-demand and 'just-in-time'.

<http://www.ionicsoft.com>

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