

10 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

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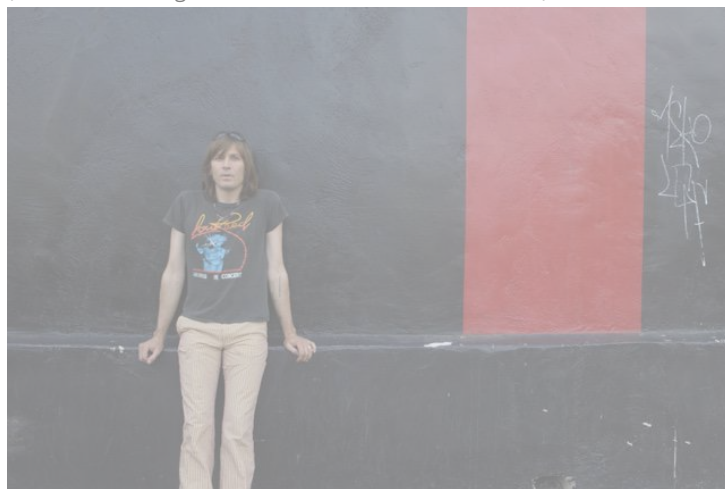
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“I KNEW I WANTED TO KEEP TIES WITH LUXEMBOURG”

(https://delano.lu/news/give-language-chance/161566.)

NEWS (/NEWS) • BUSINESS (/BUSINESS) • 18.11.2017 • INTERVIEW BY AARON GRUNWALD



Liz Wenger (<https://twitter.com/learnluxembourg>) of Learn Luxembourgish (<https://www.facebook.com/learnluxembourg/>) wears a T-shirt saying “Speak Luxembourgish with me, I’m learning!” (<http://delano.lu/news/give-language-chance/>) in portrait taken for Delano in March 2015 by Gaël Lesure

Born and raised in the grand duchy, Liz Wenger studied in Scotland and now lives in Canada with her husband and son, where she runs learnluxembourgish.com (<http://learnluxembourgish.com/>), a website that teaches Luxembourgish to English speakers.

Delano spoke with her as part of the "[Celebrating Luxembourg \(http://www.maisonmoderne.com/en/celebratingluxembourg\)](http://www.maisonmoderne.com/en/celebratingluxembourg)" series running this year in Delano and its sister publications.

Aaron Grunwald: Can you sum up in a few sentences what you do for a living?

Liz Wenger: I'm the founder of learnluxembourgish.com and author of the book "[Learn Luxembourgish: an English Beginner's Guide to Teach Yourself Luxembourgish \(http://learnluxembourgish.com/store/learnluxbook\)](http://learnluxembourgish.com/store/learnluxbook)". I also organise online Luxembourgish courses for anyone around the world who wants to learn our language, and through social media and print articles I promote the Luxembourgish culture and language.

What do Canadians say when you tell them you're a Luxembourgish teacher?

They are genuinely embarrassed and ask, "Is that a language?", then they apologise for not knowing. It's the Canadian way of being polite and apologetic. We always have a good laugh about it.

If you could highlight three major dates in your life, what would they be?

September 2003: moving to Scotland to start studying at the University of Glasgow. Even though I spoke English before moving there, for three straight months had no idea what anyone was saying to me. If you don't know why, a quick YouTube search on the Scottish accent will reveal the reason as well as prove very entertaining. I love the Scottish dialect and treasure the experience of being in a foreign country without understanding the language around you. It helps me to figure out what people need when they learn Luxembourgish.

August 2007: moving back to Luxembourg after having lived in Scotland. I find it enriching to experience other cultures and then gain a fresh look on your own home country. Distance is helpful in trying to determine the essence of Luxembourg and what it means to be Luxembourgish. Now, when I come back to Luxembourg, I don't take those things for granted anymore.

October 2012: as soon as we moved to Canada, I knew I wanted to keep ties with Luxembourg. Even though it is not always obvious to Luxembourgers or foreigners alike, our culture and language are fun in many ways and that story needs to be told.

If someone said that you were a shining ambassador for Luxembourg, how would you take that?

I would be proud to be recognised as an ambassador for Luxembourg. My book, "Learn Luxembourgish", has been sold in over 30 countries around the world and my website has been viewed in even more countries. My hope is not only to bring the language outside of the walls of Luxembourg but to also share the rich culture and history the country has to offer.

When you talk about Luxembourg to non-Luxembourgers, what do they say?

First, I have to explain that Luxembourg is indeed its own country and that there is a language called Luxembourgish. Then I talk about its size and beauty, and its importance within the EU, from the EU parliament, to the banking [sector], to the Schengen agreement that allows people to travel freely among the EU countries.

A surprising amount of Canadians tell me that they've been to Luxembourg at least once before. Their story often involves a journey through Europe when they were in their late teens or early twenties. They always say how absolutely stunning they remember Luxembourg to be.

Why did you leave Luxembourg?

My husband had an excellent opportunity in Toronto and we took it. I think people coming and going with the flow of opportunity is a sign of our times. Both Canada and Luxembourg have been built on this very principle with close to 50% of inhabitants being foreigners. I'm grateful for the chance to widen my horizon this way.

How is Luxembourg viewed where you live? Is its reputation marred in the media?

I don't think many people think about Luxembourg much as it's so far away from Canada, although since Brexit there has been a lot more people asking about the country.

What is your impression of Luxembourg now that you live abroad?

I love Luxembourg and enjoy my summer visits every year, and I think in a way I appreciate it more now that I have lived outside of it for a while. I miss the beauty, the cleanliness, the cosy and quaint small town feel, the traditions, the rich history, the simplicity, and the list goes on.

What is your favourite Luxembourgish expression?

Lëtzebuerg ass kleng awer oho (Luxembourg is small but mighty)!

[LIZ WENGER \(/D/CATEGORY/LIZ-WENGER/96032\)](/D/CATEGORY/LIZ-WENGER/96032) · [LEARN LUXEMBOURGISH \(/D/CATEGORY/LEARN-LUXEMBOURGISH/96034\)](/D/CATEGORY/LEARN-LUXEMBOURGISH/96034) · [LUXEMBOURG \(/D/CATEGORY/LUXEMBOURG/51946\)](/D/CATEGORY/LUXEMBOURG/51946) · [CANADA \(/D/CATEGORY/CANADA/49614\)](/D/CATEGORY/CANADA/49614) · [SCOTLAND \(/D/CATEGORY/SCOTLAND/53162\)](/D/CATEGORY/SCOTLAND/53162) · [#CELEBRATINGLUXEMBOURG \(/D/CATEGORY/CELEBRATINGLUXEMBOURG/73323\)](/D/CATEGORY/CELEBRATINGLUXEMBOURG/73323) · [CELEBRATING LUXEMBOURG \(/D/CATEGORY/CELEBRATING-LUXEMBOURG/71151\)](/D/CATEGORY/CELEBRATING-LUXEMBOURG/71151) · [LANGUAGE \(/D/CATEGORY/LANGUAGE/51748\)](/D/CATEGORY/LANGUAGE/51748) · [CULTURE \(/D/CATEGORY/CULTURE/50036\)](/D/CATEGORY/CULTURE/50036) · [INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS \(/D/CATEGORY/INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS/51314\)](/D/CATEGORY/INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS/51314)

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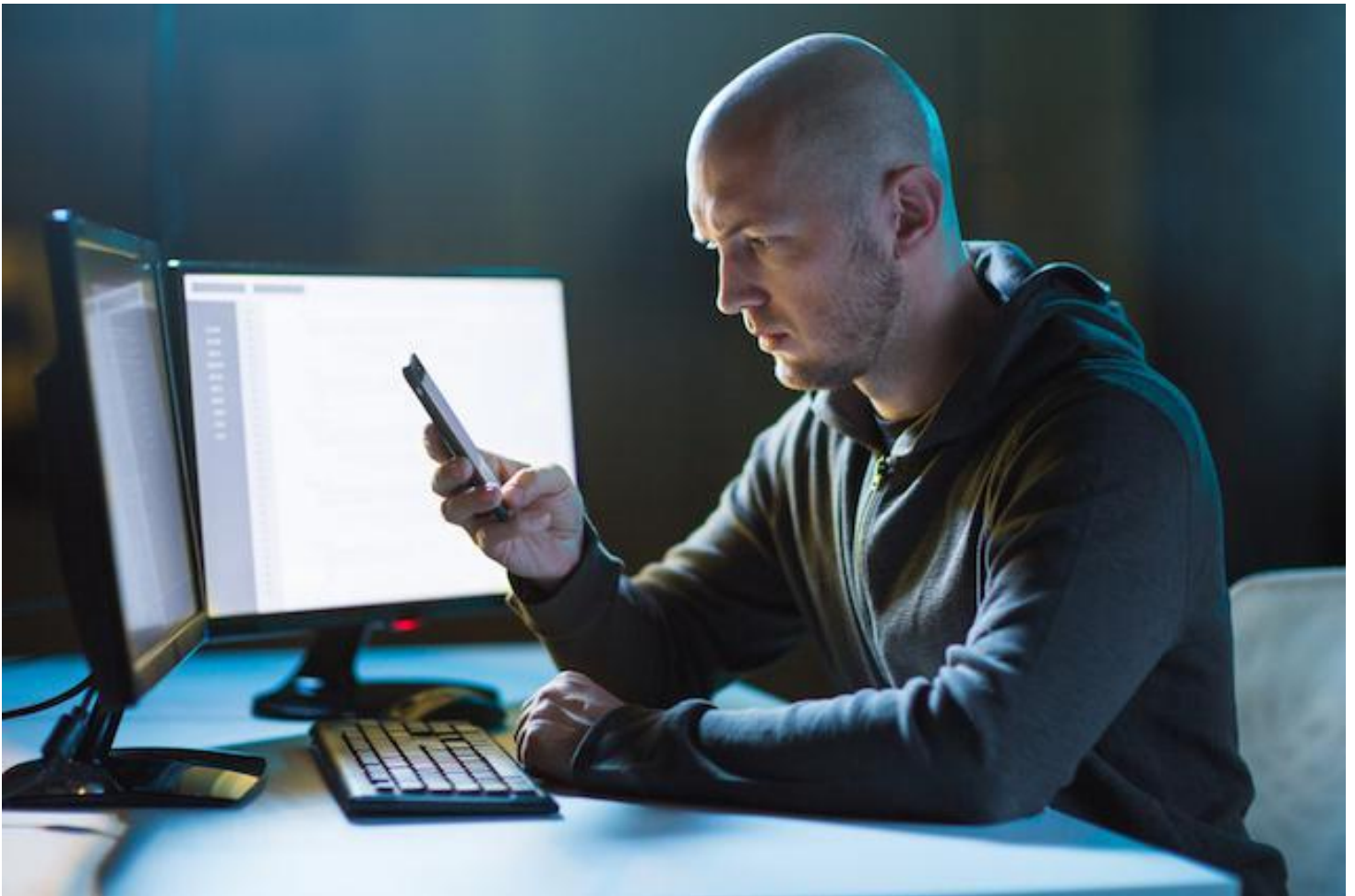




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- 25.02 **EUROQUIZ: HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EUROPE? (/D/DETAIL/EVENT/EUROQUIZ-HOW-MUCH-DO-YOU-KNOW-ABOUT-EUROPE/203566)**
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- 26.02 **MEET SPACE PIONEERS (/D/DETAIL/EVENT/MEET-SPACE-PIONEERS/202114)**
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“I want more content and better storytelling.”

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