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Ask the Abbot

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What does the “F.K.” stand for in the F.K. Bemis International Center?

Kaylee Beck '13

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September 2009

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

I'm not an alum (yet), but I have a question. What does the "F.K." stand for in the F.K. Bemis International Center?

Kaylee Beck '13

Answer:

Dear Kaylee,

Thank you most kindly for your question. Know that I enjoy hearing from our fine students just as much as from our alumni. I am so very pleased that you wrote.

The F. K. Bemis International Center is certainly well known and used not only by many on campus, but also by the greater community. It is from a member of that greater community that the center draws its name.

Francis von Kaas "Pete" Bemis hailed from the lakeside city of Sheboygan, Wis. He obtained a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1935 and set up a private law practice before joining his father, Albert Bemis, at the Bemis Manufacturing Co. in Sheboygan Falls, just west of his hometown.

There, he worked for some 50 years, succeeding his father as company president in 1947. He eventually became board chairman, a role he filled diligently until his retirement in 1985.



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

[Submit Your Question](#)

Pete also served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 as a procurement officer in Washington, D.C., attaining the rank of Major. He passed away in 1987 at the age of 77.

I do hope that, knowing the story of the center's name, you will enjoy it all the more. It is most assuredly one of many campus treasures.

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.

St. Norbert College

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