



Federation Focus

NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION OF ALLIANCES FRANÇAISES USA | SPRING 2016

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President's Message



Bonjour tout le monde!

Although the Federation's annual meeting took place months ago, we're still receiving positive feedback about the valuable information offered during the

workshops, and the wonderful exchange of ideas and thoughts that were a huge part of our Chapter Communication sessions.

The great energy and upbeat buzz from the convention was palpable, and we thank everyone who participated. A very special thanks goes to Annual Meeting Planning Committee members Jack McCord of AF Chicago, and Paul Azzara of AF Milwaukee, who worked diligently to organize a strong program for the weekend. They truly deserve our thanks!

For the Federation board of directors, the annual meeting is like looking in the mirror. It enables us to

make sure that we like what we see, and that we're putting our best foot forward. It's an important opportunity to find out more about your alliances and, in turn, further define our role in supporting all of you.

Because we were able to hear from so many of you, directly and individually, we've been able to look at what we have to offer with a more educated perspective. As a result, we're implementing improvements like streamlining the workshop registration process for the 2016 Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, expanding our Chapter Communications efforts, and revamping and renewing our Cultural Offerings programs.

We're very eager and enthusiastic about these new projects, as well as others in the pipeline. They're all designed to help us "build a better mousetrap." We hope to share them all with you in Minneapolis.

Enjoy this issue of Federation Focus, and please stay in touch!

Josette



2015 Prix Charbonnier recipient Master Chef Jacques Pépin and Federation of the Alliances Françaises USA President Josette Marsh. Click [here](#) to watch a video of the award ceremony and Pepin's acceptance speech.

A list of past Prix Charbonnier recipients and a link to the video can also be found on the [AFUSA website](#).

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Annual Meeting



Top: Isabelle Morieux, AF Fondation Paris; John Green, AF Charleston; Marie-Laure Arnaud, Federation AFUSA Secretary

Left: Matt Wyatt, AF Nashville, and VP Jack McCord, AF Chicago

Marie Lalevée, Head Librarian at the French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge

Attending the Fédération meeting this Fall was a wonderful opportunity to meet colleagues from the network, and to strengthen bonds with those I met in Denver earlier this year. It was great to present Culturethèque (and the educational potential it offers in the classroom setting) and to receive comments and constructive criticism so that we may keep improving the system, offerings, and editing of this platform. Thanks to all who attended! The Culturethèque Editorial Committee continues to relay your feedback and is doing everything in its power to make this platform better and better. Thanks to the Fédération for this enriching series of presentations!

Right: Patrice Courtaban, COO TV 5 Monde USA and Katharine Branning, VP FIAF



Post-Conference Party Alliance Française of San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco



© AF San Francisco

Linda Witt from AF Portland shares her biggest take-aways from the annual meeting:

1. Good time- and money-savings tips from Sarah Diligenti's and Frederic Martin's technology presentations .
2. The other was from a conversation "en colisse" where I learned that AF Denver and Sacramento both published their term schedules way earlier than our Alliance did. AF Portland put that nugget to use immediately and kicked ourselves for not thinking to do that earlier.
3. I also appreciated learning about CAVILAM's immersion programs and that may end up fostering a partnership with them.

The Federation of Alliances Françaises USA would like to recognize and thank the following Patrons from the San Francisco meeting for their generosity

3

Marie Laure Arnaud

Anne Marie Kenny

Cynthia Ruoff

Paul Azzara

Renée Ketcham

Lucy Sprayregen

Danielle Badler

Martin Lafitte

David Thoms

Danielle Dana

M Josette Marsh

Barbara Tucker

Barbara De Bragança

Jack McCord

Linda Witt

Marketta Fourmeaux

Nan (Nanette) Melton

Daniel Wolff

Steven Galante

Sarah Pickup-Diligenti

Matthew Wyatt

Richard Galton

Kristin Rapinac

Marie-France Hilgar

Jane Robert

Anne Marie Kenny's from AF Omaha Key Take Aways

My best take-away was the workshop "Fundraising: The Gala is still a major event" presented by Isabelle Leroux and Nicole Montgomery. The Alliance Française d'Omaha is planning our big Centennial celebration in 2017. It will be our first Gala, and the information provided about LA's successful experience was very informative indeed. In fact, I contacted them afterwards and they kindly sent me the powerpoint, and offered further advice if needed. I have presented this information to our board of directors and Centennial planning committee.

Other "take-aways" were the "Chapter Communications" discussions. Others

were interested to learn about our chapter's huge success in organizing an event with a speaker recommended by the FAF cultural programs: Lance Donaldson-Evans, author of 100 Great French Books: From the Middle Ages to the Present (2010). (Read "AF Omaha Chapter Going Strong!" on page 4 for more.) His presentation elevated our status in the community among French teachers, students, and members who are lovers of literature. That event drew many new people who became members on the spot, and also a book club was launched around Lance's 100 books.

Another helpful discussion was learning about software other chapters use to track membership, payments, etc. A treasurer from a nearby state even offered to come to Omaha to show us the program he uses.

Cultural Programs

You have speakers, songsters, actors, and theater productions at your disposal!

The Federation AFUSA offers Cultural Offerings à la Carte, a list of cultural resources recommended by AF chapters around the country. By choosing from this list of geographically convenient speakers and performers, these programs can be available to you at a modest cost.

Visit www.afusa.org/cultural_programs.php

Call for Proposals

We are currently seeking workshop proposals from individuals who would like to share their expertise, experience and best practices with the conference attendees from throughout the United States. Prospective presenters may be Alliance staff, board, members or individuals from outside organizations. To offer your services and expertise, please click [here](#) to fill out a simple form online. Submit proposals by May 31.

**Save
the date!**

2016 CONVENTION & ANNUAL MEETING | OCTOBER 20-22 | MINNEAPOLIS



Member Cultivation

Petanque

Alliance Française of Charleston

This new version of the Petanque, located in Mount Pleasant, has been very well attended and is a great way to attract younger members. Everyone brings a dish and something to drink, and the game can begin!



Pat Caldwell enjoying Petanque on the riverbank facing Charleston Harbor.

Reception for New Members

Alliance Française of Charleston



Valerie and Winnie McEnd and Marie Arnaud sing at the new member reception

Alliance Française of Charleston has started a new tradition: a cocktail reception to welcome new members. Laura Beckstrom, member of the Board and in charge of membership, opened her beautiful home on the beach with champagne and hors d'oeuvres. A few of our talented members gave a little concert of French songs.

AF Omaha Chapter Going Strong!

Next year the Alliance Française of Omaha (AFO) will mark its 100th anniversary. We are planning big Centennial Celebrations including a fabulous gala. Vous êtes cordialement invités! Venez à Omaha!

Our chapter is a growing organization. Membership has increased by 50% — from 212 to 318 members — in the last couple of years without membership drives or campaigns. We are an all-volunteer organization (except for our teachers) and our dedicated board and committee chairs are making a tremendous effort to provide

top-quality cultural events and language courses. We have implemented some brand new programs, too. Several more student and teacher members have joined since we began a scholarship program for high school students of French. We also started a summer French camp for kids and have launched a book club.

The social events such as the Bastille Day Picnic in July and our Bienvenue Reception in September draw large crowds, as do our cultural presentation luncheons on subjects such as French art, history, and the social and political climate in France after the recent and tragic attacks.

Our October event featured a speaker recommended by the FAF cultural programs: Lance Donaldson-Evans, author of 100



Author Lance Donaldson-Evans

Great French Books: From the Middle Ages to the Present. We brought Lance and his wife Mary to Omaha from Philadelphia, and publicized it widely as a "literary event not to miss!" His presentation

elevated our status in the community among lovers of great literature. Close to 70 people attended and several first-time guests became members on the spot.

Further, Lance's book and talk have inspired us to start a book club "Désir de Lire." Twenty-five people have joined thus far. Each month we read and discuss en français a book chosen from one of Lance's 100 recommendations... this project will be completed in 8.3 edifying years!

Because I have only a few years of experience as leader of this wonderful Omaha chapter, I have found the FAF conventions to be very helpful. Leaders from other chapters are remarkably generous in sharing their experience which I bring back to our board of directors. In between conventions, I can email or pick up the phone and call the FAF office or other AFs for ideas and advice. Thank you, fellow Federation members.

Submitted by
by Anne Marie Kenny

www.afomaha.org



*AFO Presidente
Anne Marie Kenny*



Annual "Bienvenue Reception" at which members are encouraged to bring guests

Cultural Events

Beaujolais Nouveau

Alliance Française of New Haven



Marché de Noël

French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge



Fête des rois, January 10, 2016

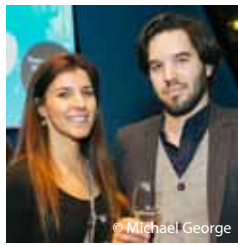
Alliance Française of Milwaukee



Galette des Rois Celebration

French Institute Alliance Française

On the evening of January 14 in Le Skyroom, FIAF toasted the New Year with a glass of wine and a delicious slice of Galette des Rois from Maison Kayser.



© Michael George



© Michael George



© Michael George

In France, since the Middle Ages, the festival of the Epiphany has been celebrated with the Galette des Rois, literally the Kings' cake. Made of delicate puff pastry and filled with frangipane—an almond-flavored filling—this beloved treat is only available during the month of January. Each galette contains a small, hand-painted porcelain charm, or fève.

Those lucky enough to find the fève became King or Queen (with gold paper crown) for the day!



© Michael George



© Michael George

Fête des rois, January 9, 2016

Alliance Française of St. Louis

The Alliance Française, the Société Française and the St. Louis-Lyon Sister Cities Organization celebrated the event with great friendship, wonderful food, and outstanding cheer at the Missouri Athletic Club in St. Louis.



© AF St. Louis

Executive Director Isabelle Heidbreder surrounded by members of the Alliance Française



© AF St. Louis

Winners who found feves in the galettes des rois



© AF St. Louis

President of the Alliance Française Lucy Morros addressing the group



We love videos!



If your chapter has video to share, send us your URL links.

We'd be glad to feature them in the next issue of *Federation Focus*.

Cultural Excursions

Alliance Française of Jackson

The Alliance Française of Jackson (AFJ) explored local cultural connections to France in the Fall with visits to Natchez and the Mississippi Museum of Art.

AFJ member Gail Buzhardt shared the history of the French colony at Natchez during a day trip to the city in October. The group visited the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, Rosalie Mansion (built on part of the land that had been the original French settlement), and Natchez Under the Hill before enjoying dinner at The Castle restaurant.

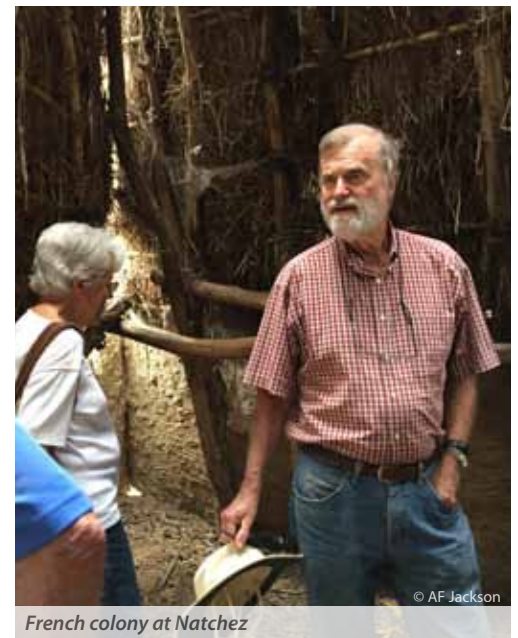
Stephen D. Cook (M.F.A., Professor of Art, Mississippi College) led a guided tour for the Alliance Française of Jackson of the Bright



© AF Jackson

Stephen D. Cook leads a guided tour at the Mississippi Museum of Art

Fields: The Mastery of Marie Hull exhibition at the Mississippi Museum of Art in November. Cook, a member of AFJ, studied under Hull and shared memories of the artist during the tour. Sketchbooks from Hull's travels in France in the early 20th century were included in the exhibition.



© AF Jackson

French colony at Natchez

Art • Music • Media

Focus on French Cinema

Alliance Française of Greenwich

Now in its 12th year Focus on French Cinema (FFC), the acclaimed annual showcase of cutting edge cinema from around France and across the French-speaking world, presented by the Alliance Française of Greenwich, CT returned to Connecticut and New York from April 1-5, 2016. The 2016 lineup included a total of 24 films including one World Premiere, 10 U.S. Premieres, 2 NY Premieres and 8 CT Premieres. The selection included 64 César Nominations, 18 César Awards and one Oscar Nomination.

New This Year

A "Festival Eve" screening at the United Nations of the U.S. Premiere of *Demain/ Tomorrow*, winner of the César for best documentary set the stage for the five day festival and closed Le Mois de La Francophonie.

The festival opened with the U.S. Premiere of Christian Carion's epic war drama, *En Mai, Fais ce qu'il te plait* (Come What May).

Legendary actress, Nathalie Baye was the "Marraine" for Focus on French Cinema 2016 and was accompanied by Mélanie Laurent, Cyril Dion, Lionel Baier, Christian Carion, Carlos Chahine, Alix Delaporte, and Matthew



Rhys.

Spotlight on Lebanese Cinema

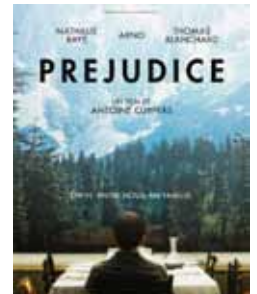
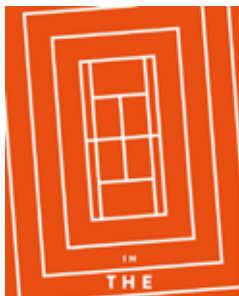
A curated selection of contemporary Lebanese cinema included the U.S. Premiere of *La Vallée* (The Valley) in the presence of Carlos Chahine as well as the Sundance success, *Halal Love*.

Closing Night at the French Institute, Alliance Française (FIAC) featured Nathalie

Baye in attendance for the U.S. Premiere of *La Volante/The Assistant* followed by an "After Party" at FIAF honoring our invited guests.

Over 6,000 cinéphiles attended the 2016 festival.

The Alliance Française of Greenwich is already working on 2017.



YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA

Discover a New Generation of Directors

Following a successful first edition in 2015, the Young French Cinema Program, which makes a selection of contemporary French films available for screening at American theaters and venues, is launching its second edition this month.

Young French Cinema offers a selection of today's best films and filmmakers and focuses specifically on rising talent. The 2016 program includes independent works, high-profile documentaries, quirky discoveries, and exciting shorts. It showcases a young generation of filmmakers with a global vision and a superior capacity to combine cultural influences and create innovative styles and stories. Most of the films have premiered in the US in 2015 in one of the top North American festivals.

First launched in 2014 by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and UniFrance in the United States, Young French Cinema has expanded this year: films will be available for screening in Canada, in addition to in the U.S., thanks to a partnership between Telefilm Canada and UniFrance. The 2016 selection will include an independent Quebecois film: *Chorus* by François Delisle.

Young French Cinema films are available for screening at all commercial theaters, universities and nonprofit organizations. Each feature film in the 2016 program is available for a \$300 booking fee that covers up to two screenings per film. Shorts are available to theaters free of charge. Theaters may organize Young French Cinema screenings at their convenience around existing programming and may set up recurring events or dedicate a specific period to Young French Cinema screenings. Thanks to our sponsor Ymagis Group, all films will be available in DCP quality on Ymagis' CineConductor, an online platform for content management (Feature & Trailer DCPs, KDMs, Cinema Ads). This program has led to 53 projections at 11 different locations in North America since March 2015.

Theaters wishing to organize a master class with a director or actor in one of the films can apply for a travel grant to fly the artist to the US by contacting UniFrance. In 2015, director Thierry de Peretti went to Puerto Rico to present his *Apaches* and led a master class at the University of San Juan. Director Sophie Letourneur went to Los Angeles and Chicago to present her film *Macaroni and Cheese* and led master classes in each city.

The 2016 Young French Cinema films available for screening :

- *40-Love* by Stéphane Demoustier
- *The Challat of Tunis* by Kaouther Ben Hania
- *Eat Your Bones* by Jean-Charles Hue
- *Astragalus* by Brigitte Sy
- *Portrait of the Artist* by Antoine Barraud
- *Sense of Humor* by Marilyne Canto
- *Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait* by Ossama Mohammed & Wiam Simav Bedirxan
- *Story of Judas* by Rabah Ameur-Zaimèche
- *The Last Hammer Blow* by Alix Delaporte
- *Vincent* by Thomas Salvador
- *Young Tiger* by Cyprien Vial

In partnership with Téléfilm Canada :

- *Chorus* de François Delisle (Canada)

Short films :

- *Don't Speak About Love* by Hadrien Bichet
- *The Wanderer* by Peter Dourountzis
- *Breathe* by Just Philippot
- *One, Two, Tree* by Yulia Aronova
- *Uncanny Valley* by Paul Wenninger
- *Mother(s)* by Maïmouna Doucouré
- *No One Will Be Any the Viser* by Lyes Salem
- *Rewind* by Frédéric Mermoud

Film Synopses are available at <http://frenchculture.org/sites/default/files/yfc-2016.pdf>.



Film Rétrospective 2015-16's Made in France: Fashion on Film

Alliance Française of Chicago

Made In France: Fashion on Film is all about cinema being a harbinger of style. Think Catherine Deneuve, Belle de Jour in Yves Saint Laurent, or Audrey Hepburn going for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* in Givenchy.

From the French New Wave's gamines to the glamour of Hollywood's Golden Age, Film Rétrospective 2015-16, AF Chicago's monthly film screening, revisits the classics as well as what's trending on today's big screen. With guest speakers from Chicago's fashion scene and beyond...



© AF Chicago



© AF Chicago

Les Little Black Dresses - Breakfast At Tiffany's film screening



© AF Chicago



© AF Chicago



© AF Chicago



© AF Chicago



Chicago International Children's Film Festival

Alliance Française of Chicago

On Saturday, October 24 kids took center stage at the Alliance with a full day of award-winning animations, feature films, French directors, croissants and live performances in between screenings by French-speaking

chansonnier, Edouard Landry. Landry had les petits et les grands dancing to catchy melodies with charming folk, rock and pop arrangements.

Renefer Exhibition 1914-18: an Artist on the Front Lines of the Great War

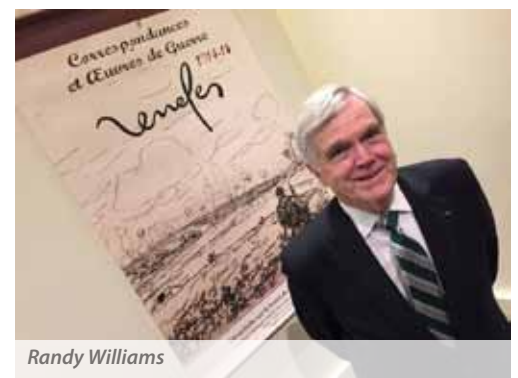
Alliance Française of Chicago

Writer and artist Raymond Fontanet, known as Renefer (1876-1957), was mobilized to serve in the French military in 1914 and, throughout the war, always carried pencils and a sketchbook in his hands.

The Alliance Française of Chicago was pleased to present this free exhibition showcasing Renefer's works including illustrated correspondence with his daughter – a unique testimony from a father to his daughter about life in the trenches. This bilingual exhibition presented the correspondence and works of Renefer during the Great War with each panel

including text depicting the life of Renefer as an artist and soldier as well as some of his illustrations.

Awarded the label "Centenaire" by the French Government, this exhibit was on display at the Alliance until December 22 and was organized by the Association Renefer, the Cultural Service at the Consulate General of France in Chicago and the Department of French at DePaul University with the support of the Institut Français and the Mission Centenaire 14-18 in Paris.



Randy Williams



Vernissage Tuesday, November 3



DePaul University students

Graffiti Art Exhibition

Alliance Française of Los Angeles

Alliance Française of Los Angeles and ONO'U International Festival graffiti in Tahiti held an exhibit showcasing the finest artworks created during the playoffs and final of the world largest international graffiti competition that took place in French Polynesia in May 2014.

The exhibition featured art pieces by 10 finalists of the contest including top 3 winners: Mast (NYC), Berst (NZ) and Kalouf (FR) and presented the island of Tahiti through photos of amazing mural art walk created in the city center of Papeete by some of today's living legends of the graffiti worldwide scene among which MadC, Inti, Sofles, Soten, Askew, Dabs&Myla & Kem5.

The exhibition concluded April 1, 2016 at the AF Los Angeles at 10390 Santa Monica Blvd, Suite 120, Los Angeles CA 90025. For more information, please contact Wendy at: wendy@afdela.org.



Ionna Vautrin: *Le bestiaire*

French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF)

Part of the inaugural Tilt Kids Festival, presented by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF), *Le bestiaire* transformed the FIAF Gallery into an imaginary zoo where children have the chance to become all kinds of animals, from the most gentle to the very wild. The brainchild of artist Ionna Vautrin, this exhibit featured the whimsical illustrations of 14 artists and invited kids to play and make their own creature costumes. The exhibit concluded April 2 at the FIAF Gallery at 22 East 60th Street.

Le bestiaire is part of Oui Design, a program initiated by Cultural Services of the French Embassy.



Exhibition produced by the City of Design as part of the Saint-Etienne International Design Biennial 2015.

For more information, visit: <http://tiltkidsfestival.org/events/ionna-vautrin>



Educational Programs

Workshop for Teachers of French

Alliance Française of Cincinnati

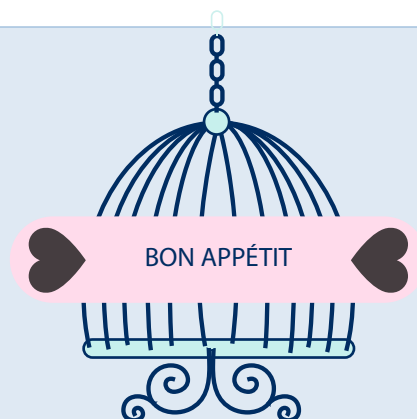
Done by Ghislaine Bellocq at the Cincinnati Art Museum for French teachers of Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio with the Alliance Française and the French Cultural department (Chicago) on November 17, 2017. More than 30 teachers participated in the event.



Brioche Class

Alliance Française of DuPage County

The aroma of warm brioche filled the air as several members of the Alliance Française of DuPage County practiced their culinary skills last November. Led by Chef Christopher Thielman, a chef instructor in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, the participants were guided through the process of preparing the dough, forming brioche shapes and baking the product in a professional bakeshop. In addition, everyone learned about the history of this French bakery staple, and were delighted to take home a box of their freshly-baked creations.



Erik Orsenna Lecture & Book Signing

Alliance Française of Chicago

En ce jeudi 21 janvier, L'AF de Chicago célébrait la venue d'Erik Orsenna: un membre éminent de l'Académie Française, conseiller culturel de François Mitterrand et primé du grand prix Goncourt en 1988 pour son roman *L'exposition coloniale*. Les introductions de Jack McCord, directeur de l'AFC et celle du Consul Général de France à Chicago Vincent Floreani donnaient le ton d'une soirée place sous le signe de la langue Française. L'auteur et académicien qui, dans un premier temps, venait aborder de la problématique de l'eau par rapport à l'évolution de notre monde. A la suite de sa conférence, l'auteur et académicien a dû faire face aux questions et interrogations de l'auditoire. Enfin et autour d'un verre de l'amitié, Erik Orsenna s'est prêté à une séance de dédicace et de photographies sur son nouvel ouvrage *La Vie, La Mort, La Vie*.



The Rebecca and Jean-Paul Valette Alliance Française Prize

French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge

Rebecca and Jean-Paul Valette have generously renewed their support of the Rebecca and Jean-Paul Valette Alliance Française Prize, which offers beginning students the opportunity to spend several weeks improving their language skills in a French-speaking country. Thanks to their gift, the French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge will continue awarding this prize for many years to come.

Awards And Scholarships/Prix et Bourses

Alliance Française of Greenwich

The Alliance Française of Greenwich has a long history of distributing achievement awards and scholarships to middle and high school students in the Town of Greenwich. The scholarships give students the opportunity to continue and increase their language proficiency in French and to

enrich their understanding of French culture and contemporary society. We feel strongly at the Alliance Française of Greenwich that this is part of our mission: to promote the French language and culture. What better way than encouraging our youth to excel in their French studies.

Each year for the last 40 years we have awarded scholarships, book and video prizes and certificates of achievement to over 25

middle school and high school students in all private and public schools in Greenwich. More than 1000 students have benefitted from this program. This year our Bourses et Prix ceremony will be held on May 9th 2016. It is a joyous occasion to gather together and celebrate our students.

Vive la langue française et les jeunes américains qui l'étudie!

Celebrations

Holiday Celebrations

Alliance Française of Jackson

Margaret and Jim Webb opened their home to the Alliance Française of Jackson for its annual Saint Nicolas party in December. The festive celebration included dinner, singing, and a visit from Saint Nicolas himself who delivered clementines and chocolates to all who said they had been good!

The Alliance Française of Jackson kicked off the new year with its Fête des Rois dinner, which included the traditional galettes des rois and the crowning of a king. Members enjoyed catching up with each other after the Christmas holidays, welcoming new members, and singing.



Annual Meeting

Alliance Française of Charleston

Held this year at the Enclave in Mt. Pleasant, the annual meeting of the Alliance Française of Charleston was well attended. Besides the usual meeting business, member Jerry Marterer presented his book *Paris 201: Uncommon Places in the City of Light*. This guide written in English contains a treasure trove of information.

In addition to desserts and salads made by the members, the buffet included boeuf

bourguignon, one of Marie Arnaud's specialties.



Fête de fin d'année

Alliance Française of Chicago

On Friday, December 4 the AFC celebrated the holiday season and thanked its volunteers, partners and students with live music, fabulous food, and executive director Jack McCord's famous vin chaud!

Elise LaBarge sang melodic Cabaret des Fêtes with pianist Paul Hamilton and a selection of songs by Edith Piaf, Cole Porter, Josephine Baker and French Holiday Classics.

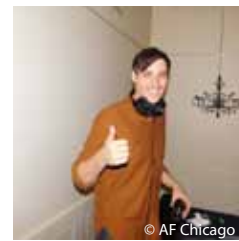
A cocktail dînatoire was served in our salon thanks to Team Alliance under the direction of Chef McCord, and afterwards, a festive dance party brought by DJ Maxime Bonnard; Maxime is a former Alliance Française intern who created a "webzine" about electro music; l'oiseau de nuit, which won the Golden Blog awards in 2013.



© AF Chicago



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© AF Chicago

The cooking team... aux fourneaux!



© AF Chicago

Elise LaBarge and Paul Hamilton for their Cabaret des Fêtes!

Members' Holiday Party

French Institute: Alliance Française NY

On the evening of Friday, December 11 the FIAF famille celebrated the holidays at our annual soirée for members, held at the French Consulate in New York.

A festive evening of live music, wine, delicious French food and the traditional Bûche de Noël, the FIAF Members' Holiday Party was topped off with a drawing for fabulous prizes.



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La fête de Noël, 13 décembre

Alliance Française of New Haven



Holiday Celebrations

French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge



Children at the Fête des Enfants were treated to a visit and presents from Papa Noël



Members mixed and mingled over French wine and live jazz at the annual Members' Holiday Party.



Children exercised their creativity during a cookie decorating workshop at the Fête des Enfants event



Héloïse Darcq, Artistic Director of the French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge, greeted Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge board member Jean-Paul Valette



Children and parents shared the delight of a French heure du conte at the annual Fête des Enfants



Patricia Richoux, a long-time teacher at the French Cultural Center/Alliance Française de Boston et Cambridge entertained a sold-out audience at the Fête des Enfants with a wonderful story time



Regis de Silva posed with his son at the French Cultural Center/Alliance Française of Boston & Cambridge's President's Holiday Party



Catheline van den Branden, President/Executive Director of the French Cultural Center and Secretary of the Alliance Française de Boston et Cambridge, along with her husband Jeffrey D. Plunkett and son Guillaume hosted a festive holiday party for supporters and partners at their home



Supporters Ed Takacs, Giuliana Berchicci and Aline Arslanian enjoyed the festive holiday party

Fête de St. Nicolas

Alliance Française of Newport RI

Anyone who has attended the Fête de St. Nicolas hosted by of Newport, Rhode Island's Alliance Française knows that the highlight of the party is the presentation of the Bûche de Noël – followed, bien sûr, by serving generous slices to one and all. From 1996 to 2010, all the bûches, at first three, then four, then five, were baked by Yvonne Salaun who had never made one before coming to the US. In France, bûches are ordered from the local patisserie. No worries, she comes by her pastry skills honestly, learning to bake from her grandmother who served after school treats hot from the wood-fired earthen oven. Yvonne's Tante Marianne was famous for making the very best pastes, a traditional butter-rich brioche loaf exchanged with neighbors for Mardi Gras. She remembers her aunt spreading a thick layer of butter on the dough with her fingers!

Shortly after WWII, Yvonne and her husband, Adolphe, left the village of Lanildut, Brittany to start a new life in America, arriving in New York City in 1951 on Washington's birthday. They summered in Jamestown, RI for years, retired there in 1996 and joined the Newport Alliance right away.

After three years of persistent coaxing and pleading, Yvonne agreed to show Alliance member Smidgie Reid how to bake "une belle bûche." Working side by side with Yvonne, a superb cook, was a dream come true! Smidgie has passed on the secrets to members Cindy Dressler and Joan Fletcher. Since then, generous Alliance members have hosted bûche-baking afternoons in their kitchens (with the resulting sticky counters) inviting four to five members to gather for a cozy December afternoon of baking. John and Cindy Larned hosted this year's baking.



Bakers wear French blue aprons embroidered in red with "l'équipe bûche" and sign their names and the year on them. As the grande mère of bûche-baking, Yvonne's apron reads "l'équipe bûche, Yvonne Salaun, chef d'équipe." There are

now a dozen Newport Alliance bakers who have added une bûche de Noël to their family Christmas traditions and have passed the skills on to the next generation. Vive Yvonne! Vive les bûches!



The Alliance Française of Newport, RI has a long-standing tradition of baking bûches de Noël for its annual Fête de St. Nicolas. The Club uses a recipe from a member who was born in France.



YVONNE SALAUN'S

Bûche de Noël

CAKE:

1 CUP SUGAR
4 LARGE EGGS
1 CUP FLOUR
1/2 TSP BAKING SODA
3/4 TSP BAKING POWDER

PREHEAT OVEN TO 350 DEGREES.

COAT A JELLY ROLL PAN WITH NON-STICK SPRAY. LINE WITH PARCHMENT PAPER, SPRAY THE PAPER, DUST WITH FLOUR. MAKE SURE THE SIDES OF THE PAN ARE WELL COATED. MAKE SURE THE PAPER IS LONG ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO LIFT THE CORNERS OF THE CAKE TO CHECK FOR DONENESS.

BEAT SUGAR & EGGS UNTIL PALE YELLOW. MIX DRY INGREDIENTS THOROUGHLY WITH A WHISK, THEN ADD TO EGGS IN 2 BATCHES. MIX WELL BUT DO NOT BEAT. STIR IN 2-3 TBSP WATER

POUR BATTER INTO PREPARED PAN. TAP PAN TO LEVEL OUT BATTER. BAKE 8-12 MINS. CHECK FOR DONENESS BY LIFTING CORNER OF CAKE. IF BROWNISH ON BOTTOM, IT IS DONE. DON'T LET TOP BROWN.

LOOSEN SIDES OF CAKE WITH KNIFE. TURN THE BAKED CAKE ONTO A CLEAN PIECE OF PARCHMENT PAPER OR A TOWEL SPRINKLED WITH POWDERED SUGAR. LET COOL A FEW MINUTES. THEN REMOVE THE PAPER FROM THE BACK OF THE CAKE. STARTING AT A SHORT END, ROLL THE CAKE AS TIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE. IF CAKE CRACKS A LITTLE, FROSTING WILL HIDE THE CRACKS.

MOCHA CREAM FILLING:

3 CUPS HEAVY CREAM
2 TSP INSTANT COFFEE OR ESPRESSO DISSOLVED IN WATER.
1 1/2 CUPS CONFECTIONERS SUGAR, SIFTED

BEAT UNTIL VERY STIFF, BUT NOT QUITE BUTTER. SPREAD FILLING ON COOLED CAKE AND RE-ROLL THE CAKE FIRMLY. PUT ON SERVING PLATTER.

CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING:

2 STICKS OF BUTTER, SOFTENED
1 CUP CONFECTIONERS SUGAR, SIFTED WITH
3 TBS COCOA

BEAT UNTIL CREAMY.

Dîner de la Saint Nicolas

Alliance Française of Cincinnati



Christmas Dinner

AF Charleston



French restaurant Bougnat opened its doors for our Christmas celebration. Owner Bernard Vard cooked for the sold-out event. The traditional bûche de Noël from Saveurs du Monde Café, a French Bakery in Mt. Pleasant, was a real treat.



Fête de Noël

Alliance Française of DuPage County

The annual Fête de Noël is one of the favorite events of the year for the Alliance Française of DuPage County. Hosted by Chapter President Corinne Farrell and her husband Juan Palomar, members shared in a bountiful feast of holiday delicacies, followed by a sing-a-long of French carols and a white elephant gift exchange.



Soirée Trivia: How to Have a Night of Fundraising and Fun

Alliance Française of North Shore (IL)

The Alliance Française du North Shore's (IL) Trivia Night last March was a beyond-our-expectations success that raised \$1700 for local French programs and created opportunities for networking and community involvement.

Le concept

The committee took advantage of our monthly programs in January, February, and March to publicize the event using Powerpoints and a trivia event simulation with sample questions. It was explained that there would be ten teams composed of ten people working together to answer questions in English about France and the Francophone world. The testimonials of committee members who attended a similar event in a nearby community emphasized the camaraderie that came from each team bringing snacks to nibble on and soft drinks, wine, or beer to share with their team members. The announcements of the raffle prizes created excitement and illustrated the fundraising aspect of the event.

La publicité

"Save the Date" messages were sent by email to local Francophone and French-related organizations in January followed by invitations and registrations forms in February and March. The committee reached out to the members of the local chapter of the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), the organization that was to receive the proceeds, by attending one of their meetings. So, of the over 90 attendees who paid their \$20 registration, there were two teams



of students from local colleges, many teachers, as well as members from another local Alliance Française and a Sister Cities Commission.

Le décor

Decorations were kept simple with tables covered alternately in blue, white, and red tablecloths. A 14" Eiffel Tower made from a template, enlarged, and printed on cardstock sat on each table, flanked by two tabletop French or Francophone country flags. A metal stand on each table held a table number sign. Bouquets of helium balloons and programs at each place provided added color and design.

La tombola

Thirteen local French restaurants, bakeries, and shops responded to our inquiries with raffle prizes that included a kitchen visit plus four-course dinner with three wines, a tray of Lebanese pastries, and a 1lb box of Belgian chocolates. Raffle tickets could be purchased for 1/\$5 or 5/\$20. We

expect even increased excitement for our 2016 raffle with two new prizes: a tour and cooking demonstration at The French Pastry School and a French class at the Alliance Française of Chicago. Based on a committee contact with the Quebec Government Office, we were also able to offer a complimentary tasting of Unibroue beers and the liqueur "Sortilège." The members of the winning trivia team each received a \$15 gift card.

For more details, contact: alliancefn@yahoo.com.

Submitted by: Eileen Walvoord, 2016 Trivia Night Committee, Chair



HELP WANTED

RUN A SUCCESSFUL EVENT?

If you run a regular event that members enjoy, visitors attend, raises money, increases knowledge of French language and/or culture, please share how you do it. Email federation@afusa.org.



Bordeaux: Between Stones & Vineyards

Véronique Banzet/Veronic Travel

Discover Bordeaux through this six-day sojourn in Bordeaux and its region.

Bordeaux, in southwestern France, is a port city on the Garonne and hub of the famed wine-growing region. It's known for its Gothic Cathédrale St-André, as well as its many fine and contemporary art museums and 18th- and 19th-century mansions. Public gardens line the curving river quays, and grand Place de la Bourse opens to the water, with the Three Graces fountain at its center.

Day 1 - Hotel - B&B

Check in from 3PM, welcome at 5PM

Hotel at a premium location in the heart of the city will allow you to walk in Bordeaux old town and along the Garonne River and its magnificent façades. Individual arrival to the hotel. Dinner on your own.

Day 2 – Saint Emilion

Guided walking tour of the center and its underground cellars. One stop wine tasting included. Lunch in the mythical old town of Saint Emilion followed by free time.

Day 3 – Bordeaux City Tour Half Day

Morning city tour in an open air coach and Wine Museum tour. Lunch, afternoon, dinner



on your own.

Day 4 – Arcachon Atlantic coast

Lunch at a restaurant with a ocean view. "Dune du Pyla" boat tour then return to Bordeaux dinner at your own.

Day 5 – Médoc Wine Region

Wine workshops & Chateau dinner. Discover your own personal wine tastes. While tasting six very different wines, you are invited to express the way you feel about them using an electronic platform. This information is then analyzed by a special software which determines your wine 'profile'. Whether you turn out to be 'gourmet', 'aesthetic' or 'explorer', you will leave the session with a personalized cellar book adapted to your tastes and budget. Lunch in the "Winery" restaurant. Private visit and tasting at Château Kirwan, a Margaux classified Grand Cru. Guided tour, wine tasting, and aperitif on the terrace at Château du Taillan à Médoc "Cru Bourgeois" classified property. Dinner at Château du Taillan.

Day 6 Bordeaux

Day of Leisure & Departure

Dates: 10 to 15 October 2016

Price: \$1,800/person, based on 10 people minimum in double room

Includes: 6 days/5 nights in Bordeaux - Hotel – B&B - in the center; wine workshops; Bordeaux & Arcachon city tours; Médoc & Saint Emilion tours; Day 5 lunch at the Winery & dinner in a Médoc Château with the wine of the château; day to Arcachon Bay – Atlantic Coast – boat tour; private bus transfer between all activities; private guide, English & French speaking.

Not included in the price: meals & drinks not mentioned in the itinerary (restaurants can be suggested and reservation made upon request); international and domestic flights or train; personal expenses.

Contact:

info@veronictavel.com
www.veronictavel.com



Paris Photo 2016

Alliance Française of Pittsburgh



Travel to Paris with Catherine Evans, Chief Curator, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA and Dan Leers, Curator of

Photography, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA November 6-13, 2016.

Join a curator-led tour to Paris Photo, the premier International art fair for Photography. Enjoy VIP access to the fair and behind the scenes views of the Jeu de Paume, Le Bal, and the Richelieu-Louvois Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Other visits include the impressive new Fondation Louis Vuitton designed by Frank Gehry and the Musée Picasso, recently opened after five years of renovation. Travelers will also have the opportunity to enjoy VIP receptions at

the renowned auction houses of Christie's and Sotheby's. Our home away from home will be the venerable Le Meurice Paris combining 18th century opulence with contemporary chic: the embodiment of the perfect Paris hotel.

From \$5,999/person; double occupancy (airfare not included). Each Alliance sending travelers will receive \$200/person.

Contact Barbara Tucker, Présidente Alliance Française of Pittsburgh at tuckerb@carnegiemuseums.org or 412.578.2618. Or complete our online form at www.carnegiemuseums.com/travel.

Provence in September: a GG2P Guided Trip

Doni Belau



Have you dreamed of Provençale hilltop villages, Chateneuf du Pape vineyards, olive trees with glistening ripe olives dripping from them?



What about strolling through a farmers market in Provence in September selecting farm-fresh produce for your early autumn riverside picnic?

Join me on a ladies-only trip September 25 - October 1, 2016 to this special part of the world for antiquing, truffle-hunting, wine tasting, a cooking class, market tours, picnics, wine harvests and much more. Wake up to warm croissants, meet a local potter and raise a glass of champagne to toast your newly made friends.

September 25

Arrive Sunday afternoon by 4pm.

Optional Jet Lag massage. Champagne Dinner with your new friends at the hotel under the stars. Discuss the week's activities.

Day 1

Shop for antiques, French vintage and brocante with the Antiques Diva of Provence, the largest and most prominent antique expert guide in all of Europe. Hit L'Ile sur la Sorgue, the antiques capital of France in the morning and enjoy lunch at a charming bistro in town. Then hunt down unique French finds in Avignon in the afternoon. After we'll enjoy dinner in this historic town.

Day 2

We will drive to a secret location and go truffle hunting with experts in the beautiful fields and forests of Provence. After our hunt we'll enjoy lunch in the darling village of Lourmarin at the L'Antiquaire.

In late September and early October the Vendange occurs (the wine harvest) throughout France. We will take advantage of this and try a little grape stomping after harvesting some juicy ripe grapes. Doing it the old fashioned way is not only fun but 'fruitful'!



Dinner in Ile Sur la Sorgue.

Day 3

Today we will learn how to cook with the truffles we found on Tuesday. Eric Fraudeau the owner and founder of Cooking with Class, the most popular cooking class in Paris, has a new outlet in Uzès. Chef Eric and his wife Yetunde are friends and have created a unique hands-on instructional day for us to create for a 3-course truffle lunch. We will sit down and enjoy the fruits of our labors after class, with wine of course!

Stroll around the village of Uzes and see the Medieval garden. Make a stop at the Pont du Gard and then head back to Ile sur la Sorgue our home base.



Dinner on your own.

Day 4

Today we'll visit the fresh French Market in L'Ile sur la Sorgue in order to create our own picnic lunch. We'll pick up some Provençal cheeses like Banon and St. Marcellin and whatever strikes our fancy. Then we'll take a leisurely bike tour of the area and eat our picnic lunch with Provençal rosé.

Tonight we'll enjoy a wine tasting and dinner in the famous town of Chateneuf-du-Pape, where they originally made wines just for the popes of Avignon.

Day 5

Visit Aix-en-Provence to visit a renowned French pottery maker, the most famous Calisson factory (the almond confection of Provence) in the area then enjoy a tasting, of Brad Pitt's own rosé wine. On the way home we'll visit at an artisanal Liquoristerie for a unique Provençal product tasting.

Hint: One of the products is Thyme liqueur, something I discovered a few years ago that you cannot get in the states but which is an absolutely divine digestif. All day you will have the opportunity to buy gifts and souvenirs to take home with you.

Celebratory last dinner together in a secret location.



Day 6 - Departure

At breakfast put together a look board and organize a special keepsake of group photos, recipes and quotes which you can take home to you. This keepsake will include what inspired you about the trip and ideas on how you can do to take that inspiration home with you.

Minimum size for trip: 6 people, **max** 12.

Price \$3995 per person (non-refundable downpayment \$1000 due by June 1st.)

Reduce by \$500 if you want to share a room with a friend.

What's included: Your hotel stay here, breakfast lunch & dinner with wine everyday except where indicated. Transportation during your stay, all tours and experiences.

What's not included: Airfare, transport to your hotel (but this can be arranged for you), optional massage, extra alcohol, any souvenirs.

Email us at info@girlsguidetoparis.com to reserve your spot today!



for Paris



AF Cincinnati © Martine@Photo Passion



© AF New Haven

Marie Dominique Boyce represented the AF New Haven at the memorial ceremony in Greenwich on November 23, 2015 for the Paris attacks.



AF Cincinnati © Martine@Photo Passion

Serge Gabriel of Greenwich hoists the French National flag (left) during a ceremony honoring the victims of the terrorist attacks in Paris



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AF Cincinnati © Martine@Photo Passion

Sponsored by The Alliance Française of Greenwich, the event at Greenwich Town Hall on Nov. 20, 2015 was attended by 50 residents and town officials who joined in unison in singing the French national anthem, La Marseillaise, led by Serge Gabriel of Greenwich (below).



© Matthew Brown / For Hearst Connecticut Media

Above, Renée Ketcham, of Greenwich, stands with First Selectman Peter Tesei in a moment of silence to honor the victims of the terrorists attacks in Paris during a Friday ceremony at Greenwich Town Hall.



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Michael Sandifer, of Greenwich, wrapped in the French national flag, along with Lynton Kaufman, of Stamford, second from right, honoring the victims of attacks in Paris, at Greenwich Town Hall.



© Matthew Brown / For Hearst Connecticut Media

A small group stands in a moment of silence honoring the victims of the terrorists attacks in Paris.



© Matthew Brown / For Hearst Connecticut Media

The French National flag billows in the wind, honoring the victims of last week's terrorists attacks in Paris, alongside the American flag during a ceremony at Greenwich Town Hall on Nov. 20, 2015.

Other News

Solidarity with the Alliance Française de Katmandou

Alliance Française of Kalamazoo

The Alliance Française of Kalamazoo, consisting of 60 members, responded to the devastation resulting from the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. Prior to news of the destruction in Nepal and damage to the Alliance Française de Katmandou, we were planning a presentation "Nepal: the Roof of the World" and a tasting of typical food in Nepal at the home of Deepa

Lohani, a member from Nepal. Since her family members returned to Nepal to aid in the relief effort, our event was postponed.

In solidarity with the Alliance Française de Katmandou, our president Cynthia Ruoff and our treasurer Nelly Kurzmann requested donations from our members. Their generosity resulted in a gift of \$500.00 to help repair the structural damage to the Alliance Française building.

In gratitude, the director Ophélie Bélin wrote: "Au nom de toute l'équipe de l'Alliance Française de Katmandou au Népal, je vous remercie chaleureusement ainsi que l'équipe et le comité de l'Alliance Française de Kalamazoo pour votre don suite au séisme qui a frappé le Népal le 25 avril 2015. Nous sommes émus de constater que, dans le réseau, règne un fort esprit de solidarité. Nous n'oublierons jamais le grand geste de générosité de l'Alliance Française de Kalamazoo."

Federation of Alliances Françaises USA



Melissa Saura

We bid a fond au revoir to Larissa Rolley who served the Federation for almost ten years. We wish her well as she moves on to explore new horizons.

Join us in welcoming program coordinator Melissa Saura, who should be familiar to many of you. She will be taking over Larissa's duties.

You can still reach the Federation at the same email, but **please note our new phone number.**

Federation of Alliances Françaises USA

P.O. Box 42726, Washington DC 20015

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