

French Minister of Interior Nicolas Sarkozy Visits The United States

NICOLAS Sarkozy, French Minister of the Interior, visited the United States from September 9 through 12. Minister Sarkozy kicked off his four-day visit in New York by paying his country's respects to firefighters, police, and generally, all American citizens affected by the tragedy of 9/11. After New York, Mr. Sarkozy went to Washington, D.C.

In New York, on behalf of the President of the French Republic, Mr. Sarkozy presented France's highest award—the Legion of Honor—to Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly on Saturday, September 9. The very next day, he bestowed the French Medal of Honor upon the New York Fire Department in a ceremony held at the station of Engine 54, Ladder 4, which lost 15 firefighters — more than any other station — during the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. Ten-year-old Aidan Fontana, whose father died while serving in the line of duty, accepted the prestigious medal on behalf of the department. Also in attendance were ten French firefighters from a battalion on the outskirts of Paris. Mr. Sarkozy stressed the bonds of courage that unite French and American firefighters: "I am proud to present to you this Medal of Honor, usually given to French firefighters for exceptional work, as a symbol of our gratitude and of the fraternity that unites New York and French firefighters."

In Washington, Minister Sarkozy delivered a speech at the Memorial Continental Hall (Daughters of the American Revolution) on Tuesday, September 12, at the invitation of the French-American Foundation. In his address, Minister Sarkozy underscored the long-lasting Franco-American friendship and the importance of a joint effort in facing common challenges in the future.

"It seems the relationship between our two countries has always been a particular one. If I wanted to be frank, I wouldn't say particular, I would say complicated. We have a complicated relationship and that's been the case since George Washington received the surrender of the British at the final assault at Yorktown on October 19, 1781." He later added "Let's not be afraid to say that relations between France and the U.S. are often difficult. It has always seemed to me that our disagreements have been secondary compared with what we share. Because the paradox is that our two people are united by common values. Freedom? We have exactly

the same idea. Universalism? The United States and France both think that their values are so strong that it's their vocation to nurture the entire world. Democracy? The same. Human rights? The same analysis. And basically we're so complex and so passionate because we resemble each other so much."

Emphasizing the vital character of the French-U.S. relations, the Minister noted: "Our relationship with the U.S. is one of the pillars of our foreign policy, and the United States must accept a strong European political union, because it's in its interest. Because a strong European political union will ensure

that the United States doesn't have to stand alone in bearing the weight of the world, which is unbearable both literally and figuratively."

During his address as well as during his meeting with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, Mr. Sarkozy reiterated the excellent cooperation between intelligence services in the fight against terror, exchanging vital information on a daily basis, even during the crisis in 2003. Elaborating on common future challenges, the French Minister stated, "sharing common values and the same vision, only together will we be able to confront new transnational scourges: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, failed states, environmental and humanitarian disasters, and pandemics. America is Europe's obvious and natural partner in all of these battles."

Later that day, Minister Sarkozy met with President Bush at the White House, during a scheduled meeting with National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley. He also met that day with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Senators John McCain and Barack Obama received Mr. Sarkozy on Capitol Hill, completing a series of high level meetings that started with Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan in New York City.



Minister Sarkozy addresses the French American Foundation

"Two years ago, in Normandy, the French showed that they have not forgotten and would never forget the sacrifice of thousands of young Americans who twice crossed the Atlantic, in 1917 and 1944, to save our Continent, which was on the verge of suicide."

"The United States and France have both shouldered a universal mission: to promote democracy and defend freedom and human rights. Some analysts point out that we resemble each other."

"Today, I would like to express to you the admiration and the solidarity of the French firefighters and my entire country. Your devotion is a lesson in humanity, your heroism, on September 11 and every other day, is a lesson in courage"

"The truth is that the French listen to Madonna, just as they used to love listening to Elvis and Sinatra; like me, they go to movies to see "Miami Vice" and enjoy watching "The Maltese Falcon" or "Schindler's List" for a second or third time; they read James Ellroy and, like me, re-read Hemingway; they wear American jeans and love American burgers and pizza."

- Nicolas Sarkozy

INSIDE

2 L'événement

France Leads Peacekeeping Mission

3 France-Amérique

U.S. Delegation Explores TGV

4 Profil

Visit France on the Road Less Traveled

5 Économie / Science

L'Oréal's Latest Innovation

6 Société

Integrating Islam

7 Culture

Monet Viewed in a Different Light

8 Chez nous

19th Century France



France Leads Peacekeeping Mission in Lebanon

ON September 8, the amphibious French ship *La Foudre* docked at the Beirut port in Lebanon carrying French military troops and vehicles. Several days later, a battalion of 900 soldiers arrived in Lebanon on September 15. Their supplies- 430 vehicles including 13 Main Battle Tanks "Leclerc", 4 self-propelled canons AUF-1, 30 AMX-10P Infantry Fighting Vehicles, 2 counter battery platoon radars "Cobra" - transported by two chartered ships, arrived on September 12 and 13.

These arrivals are part of the French deployment in the area since French President Jacques Chirac announced France would increase its troop contribution to 2,000. The French force will join the reinforced UNIFIL, which is monitoring the cease-fire between Israel and Lebanon. Furthermore, the French military maintains a naval force to support the maritime control in the region and land based aircraft in Cyprus. Those additional assets account for more than 1,700 uniforms under national command and control dedicated to the reinforced UNIFIL's support. Consequently; a total of approximately 3,700 French military personnel will soon be involved in the current peacekeeping operation.

France was one of the first countries to respond to the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, unanimously adopted by the Security Council on August 11 at the initiative of France and the U.S. The resolution aims to restore Lebanese sovereignty as well as to guarantee Israel's right to security. It came after an extensive search for a permanent cease-fire agreement and complete political solution.

Resolution 1701 includes the reinforcement of the United Nations force, UNIFIL, which has been stationed in Lebanon for the past 28 years as an observer mission. The resolution allows the force to increase its numbers up to 15,000 and to take necessary measures to prevent hostilities. In addition to France, Italy, Germany, Finland, Greece and Turkey have all



Minister Douste-Blazy watches as humanitarian supplies are loaded onto the *Cap Camarat*

pledged to send peacekeeping units to the region, as well as Russia, China and other Asian countries.

France also maintained a crucial humanitarian presence throughout the conflict and is contributing to the reconstruction of Lebanon. The first cargo planes out of Charles-de-Gaulle included emergency doctors and Red Cross personnel, along with vital relief materials compiled by the French government's aid agency. Along with shipments by air, France launched Operation "A Boat for Lebanon" (picture on left) in cooperation with several E.U. member states and international humanitarian organizations, such as UNICEF, the UNHCR, and the World Food

Programme (WFP). The ship carried 1,500 tons of emergency relief supplies, including: ambulances, trucks, food, medication, medical and health supplies, lodging supplies, fire-fighting equipment, generators and water purification stations. Efforts such as these will continue throughout the reconstruction of Lebanon, as France has pledged 40 million euros to the effort.

15 metal Bailey bridges have been sent to Lebanon to facilitate deployment of the international force and the Lebanese army, as well as aid the return of the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons to Southern Lebanon. Bailey bridges are portable, pre-fabricated, truss bridges designed for use by military engineering units.

These strong commitments are the first made by any of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, and are critical to improving the situation in Lebanon.

French Minister of Defense, Michèle Alliot-Marie, kicked off a two-day visit to Lebanon in Beirut on September 18, recalling that France wants the United Nations to react with "rigor and firmness." Minister Alliot-Marie also stressed that "France believes in a sovereign Lebanon who exerts its authority over the entire territory." ■ ■

France Continues to Aid New Orleans

It has been just over one year since Hurricane Katrina hit the city of New Orleans. Since then, French aid to the region has come in many different forms. The long-lasting relationship between France and New Orleans dates back to 1682 when the city was part of a vast French territory. Although sold to the United States in 1803, France's affection for the region can still be seen today. In the words of French Ambassador to the United States, Jean-David Levitte, "All of the French people have Louisiana on their minds and want to help make New Orleans better and more beautiful than ever." The desire of the French people to help has manifested itself both in relief assistance and efforts to maintain the spicy and unique culture of New Orleans.

In the storm's immediate aftermath, numerous French organizations quickly and effectively mobilized humanitarian aid efforts. The French government promptly sent the Airbus Beluga, one of the world's largest aircraft, from Toulouse to deliver approximately 20 tons of emergency supplies. The Defense Ministry dispatched a team of 17 military divers who worked to help clear waterways of debris, allowing for the evacuation of victims and delivery of additional supplies. The French armed forces sent military personnel with expertise in underwater engineering, the French Red Cross provided the American Red Cross with logistics specialists, and private French companies

along with their American subsidiaries contributed approximately \$18.5 million dollars in aid. Many French companies, including Air Liquide, L'Oréal, Michelin, and Société Générale have contributed \$100,000 or more to the American Red Cross alone.

In addition to its extensive humanitarian assistance, France is launching initiatives designed to promote the local culture. New Orleans's distinct music and style has long been admired in France, particularly since the Jazz Era, when Paris became a beacon for many musicians. Many jazz greats, including James Reese Europe, Ada "Bricktop" Smith, Sidney Bechet, and Josephine Baker, garnered fame in Paris, where they received a warm reception from Parisians swept away by the new sound. This connection is being revived in the post-Hurricane Katrina reconstruction, as France is welcoming Louisiana musicians into the country to participate in festivals and perform concerts. French officials have also created residency programs for musicians from New Orleans, providing them with apartments and stipends, thereby enabling them to work in Paris.

An up-coming exposition titled "Les Femmes: The Changing Image of Women in French Painting in the 19th Century," will be on display from March 3 through June 2, 2007, at the New Orleans Museum of Art. To promote the rich cultural heritage of New Orleans, French national museums will lend works by such artists as Monet, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Picasso for the exhibit. ■ ■

Nuclear Fusion: A Hot Prospect for More Efficient Energy

AT the Europe's site of Cadarache, located in Southern France, scientists are working on reproducing on Earth the thermonuclear fusion reaction that powers the sun and the stars. Last year, this research site was selected by an international coalition to host an experimental reactor designed to demonstrate the technical and economic feasibility of the process. Construction of ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) will begin in 2008 and is expected to be operational in 2016.

Extracting energy from fusion involves two light atomic nuclei (two hydrogen isotopes in the case of ITER) fusing together to form a heavier one (helium in that case), which then releases a large amount of energy. To make this reaction possible, the atomic nuclei must be heated to a temperature exceeding 100 million degrees, in a physical state called "plasma." The heat produced is so high that this plasma must be contained in a torus-shaped magnetic field, preventing any physical contact with the present materials.

If the economic feasibility of fusion is demonstrated at Cadarache, the ramifications of commercial fusion reactors would be a determining step in the worldwide development of a clean, safe and abundant energy source.

The construction and implementation of ITER is truly a multilateral effort, uniting the members of the European Union, Russia, Japan, China, India, South Korea and the United States. It is also a good example of how international cooperation could be implemented for future scientific equipment created on such a large scale. The United States recently announced its management team for the project, and the countries involved are working on coordinating efforts and scientists.

Realizing the goals put forth by ITER would be quite a challenge, the project has been described as comparable to "building a star on earth." While touring the site, French President Jacques Chirac underlined the importance of ITER: "This project is essential for our future and the future of the planet." ■ ■



U.S. Delegation Explores France's TGV

THIS summer, a delegation of leaders from Texas and California had the opportunity to see France in luxury and style - aboard the TGV (*Train à Grande Vitesse*, or High-Speed Train.) In addition to taking in the beautiful sights on the world's fastest train, the trip gave the senators, county judges, mayors, and board members something to think about - the possibility of introducing the TGV's technology to the United States.

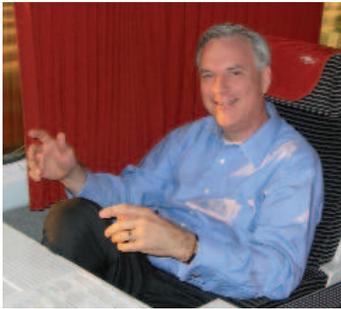
Because of its high speed, safety, and environmental friendliness, the TGV is an attractive option for transport in America. The train has enjoyed tremendous success in France, with the number of passengers about to reach 2 billion since its inception in 1981. More than a third of the high speed train passengers in the world ride

a French train on the European network. With 250 cities and towns connected by the rail system and service to the city-center, travel has become convenient for the French. Furthermore, during its 25 years of operating experience, the TGV has had a perfect safety record.

The Acela Express, one of America's fastest trains, connects New York to Washington, a distance of 225 miles, in approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes (an average of 79 mph.) On the other hand, the TGV from Paris to Lyon, a distance of 289 miles, takes only about 1 hour and 45 minutes (an average of 163 mph from station to station.)

Because of its unique adaptability features, the TGV is able to run on both classical train tracks and its own specialized tracks. It can reach speeds of 137 mph on the classical tracks, and speeds of 200 mph on its own tracks. The TGV is still the fastest train in the world with a record at 320 mph in 1993.

In the American delegates' home states, one of the high-speed trains could connect Austin to Houston (a distance of 165 miles) in about one hour and Los Angeles to San Francisco (a distance of 384 miles) in about two hours. With expedited travel to many possible destinations in the United States, the TGV could be a blessing to business travellers, adventure-seekers, and cities which hope to promote tourism. ■ ■



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County Judge Robert Eckles, Harris County, Texas, experiences the TGV

French Wine Society Celebrates Birthday

THIS fall, wine-lovers in the D.C. area will have reason to toast as the French Wine Society (FWS) celebrates its first anniversary. The young non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of French wine to the American public is announcing the launch of its wine tastings and activities throughout the United States.

The FWS was created in Washington, D.C., by three young professionals in the French wine industry with the goal of offering opportunities to quench Americans' thirst for French wine education and enjoyment. With activities ranging from special tasting events featuring hundreds of French wines, intimate weekly tasting in var-

ious restaurants, French wine classes and French wine tours, the FWS enjoyed great success in the nation's capital.

Starting in October, the "Tour de Champagne," featuring dozens of Champagne houses and renowned, chefs will officially launch the FWS in Chicago, New York and Atlanta. Other major cities will follow in early 2007, including Miami, San Francisco, Boston and Philadelphia. For more information about the FWS and upcoming events, please visit their website at www.frenchwinesociety.org. ■ ■



© French Wine Society

French Football Player Trains with Washington Redskins

TO most Europeans, "football" does not describe a game filled with touchdowns, linebackers, cheerleaders, and linebacker blitzes, but rather "soccer," as it is called in the U.S.

But for Philippe Gardent, the football that is foreign to much of Europe has taken him from his native France to foreign lands, and even the opportunity to play with the Washington Redskins. Gardent is part of the NFL International Development Practice Squad, a program created three years ago to invite some of the most talented international football players to train with American NFL clubs.

Gardent is a member of the Cologne Centurions in the NFL Europe League (NFLEL). It was with this team that he made a name for himself as a linebacker by earning the NFLEL Most Valuable Player award in the 2006 season, when he led the league with 70 tackles.

Gardent is among eight players from

the NFLEL who were invited to join American teams this season. Though the players cannot become part of the active roster, the opportunity allows them to gain experience in



Courtesy Washington Redskins

Frenchman Philippe Gardent trains with the Washington Redskins

the fast-paced NFL. Director of Football Operations in the European League Mike Chan said: "The players who have been through this program in previous seasons have enhanced their skills and knowledge greatly thanks to spending an entire season facing the physical and mental challenge of the NFL."

An avid winter sportsman (and member of the French national bobsled team), Gardent first became interested in football after watching the Green Bay-New England Super Bowl in 1997. He joined a local team and then played in college at NSC Marseille before being recruited by NFL Europe. ■ ■

"FUTURE LEADERS" FOSTER FRENCH — U.S. RELATIONS

To Americans, the Marquis de Lafayette remains one of the most memorable French participants in the American Revolutionary War. Appointed to command a division under General Washington, Lafayette became symbolic of a strong and lasting Franco-American alliance. Two centuries later, an organization was officially created in celebration of Lafayette's dedication to French-American friendship on September 6, 2006. *Le Cercle Lafayette*, was inducted with the mission of continuing to strengthen the bonds between the U.S. and its oldest ally. The organization draws its roots from an annual program established by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1989, titled "Future Leaders," designed, in part, as a forum to foster cross-cultural understanding, appreciation and networking. *Le Cercle Lafayette* aims to continue the spirit of the French-American alliance by promoting dialogue between important leaders of the U.S. and their French counterparts. To launch the program, French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte hosted a reception for almost 80 people at his residence on September 6 — a day that also marked the 249th birthday of Lafayette.

DEAUVILLE HOSTS 32ND ANNUAL AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

Every year, the charming town of Deauville in Normandy welcomes an influx of Hollywood celebrities, French cinematic stars, and film-lovers from around the world, as it plays host to the American Film Festival. Since its inception in 1975, the American Film Festival has highlighted the best and brightest in American cinema, and this year was no exception. Held from September 1 through September 10, the 2006 festival showcased 60 films, old and new, from a wide variety of genres. Featured films included *A Prairie Home Companion*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *The Devil Wears Prada*, and *Reservoir Dogs*. This year marked the debut of the "Spotlight" program, which aims to highlight the work of a young talent in American cinema. Actress Ashley Judd was selected to be the first person so honored by this exciting new initiative. As it has in years past, the 2006 festival paid special tribute to people and institutions that have shaped American cinema. This year's honorees consisted of Sidney Pollack and the Sundance Film Institute. The festival also awarded a Grand Prix to the best film of the year. This year's winner was *Little Miss Sunshine*. In addition to a full line-up of American films, visitors to Deauville were able to experience the *Centre International de Deauville's* "American Village," created to help visitors discover the culture of the United States. The main themes of the village consisted of music and the arts, the American West, western films, and national sports of the U.S.



Visiting France on the “Road Less Travelled”

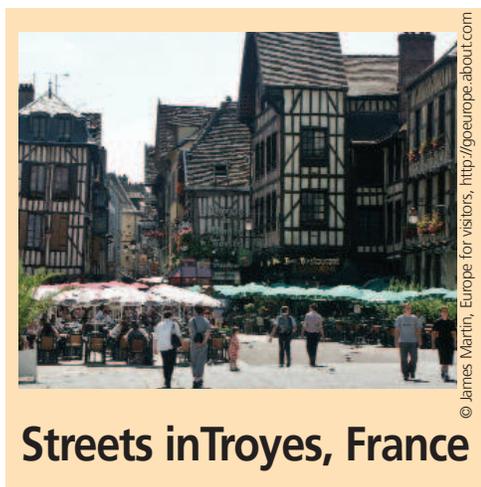


View of l'île d'Oléron

When planning a trip to France, most people are sure to place certain well-traveled sites on their itineraries. The Eiffel Tower, the beaches of the French Riviera, and Châteaux of the Loire are all popular destinations. But for those tourists who enjoy searching out that hole-in-the-wall restaurant, unspoiled beach, or unique hotel, France offers a wealth of possibilities.

The Champagne region of France attracts countless tourists eager to explore caves filled with the area's famous bubbly drink. Most visitors head for Reims, which is the region's largest city and home to many of the great champagne houses.

But many people overlook the town of Troyes, located less than 200 miles to the south. While it's true that Troyes is not home to any major champagne houses, it is home to an exceptional collection of medieval buildings and the shape of the town is rumored to follow the outline of a champagne cork. Visitors will find champagne vineyards coming within five miles of the city center, and can discover Troyes's history as a wealthy commercial area where medieval champagne trade fairs took place. To learn more, visit www.tourisme-troyes.com.



Streets in Troyes, France

While many people visit the Châteaux of the Loire valley, travelers who wish to avoid the lines and get a more intimate look should consider actually staying in one. The Château des Briottières in Anjou is an excellent choice. Visitors will be treated to a small private apartment furnished in period style, can spend the day exploring the surrounding park, and can arrange to have a romantic candlelit dinner in the elegant dining room. A number of châteaux in western France offer similarly unique accommodations (please visit: www.bienvenueauchateau.com), while rooms in local manor houses, abbeys, and cottages provide additional options for unique overnight stays.

Paris is the city of romance, and most couples wouldn't miss the chance to steal a kiss on the famed Pont Neuf. If kissing on this renowned lover's bridge seems too cliché, why not pay a visit to the Médicis Fountain instead. Located in the Luxembourg Gardens, the narrow and deep refectory pool is lined with urns and vases and features a statue of the Cyclops Polyphemus looking on with envy at a pair of young lovers. You are sure to woo and impress the object of your affection at this lesser known but equally romantic Parisian locale.

The glamorous city of Cannes, located on the French Riviera, is famous for its fabulous sun-drenched beaches. Unfortunately, those beaches can become uncomfortably crowded during the peak tourist season. If you like to relax in the southern sun, but don't want to share your beach towel with a host of other tourists, consider visiting the unspoiled beaches of Languedoc. Languedoc's quieter beaches stretch for miles. For those traveling with children, the charming resort of Le Grau du Roi offers a gentle beach perfect for the little

ones to explore. Heading farther south brings you to the amazing sandscape at Espiguette, where it takes a good 15 minutes to walk across the beach to the sea. No visit to this area would be complete without an exhilarating horseback ride along the shores, and there are plenty of nearby stables willing to oblige. Learn more at www.sunfrance.com.

Corsica attracts many tourists looking for adventure off the mainland of France. But island hoppers should not overlook the lesser-known Ile d'Oléron, located just off the coast of Poitou-Charentes (www.oleron.org). Oléron is the largest French island after Corsica, and is dotted with picture-perfect fishing villages. Visitors can wander the fish markets in search of the evening's meal, or visit one of the excellent restaurants and leave the cooking to the locals. Oyster farming is also plentiful on Oléron. At low tide on-lookers are treated to glistening beaches as the exposed shells sparkle beautifully in the sun.

If you really want to get off the beaten path, consider visiting the Glénan archipelago, just off the Brittany coast. Bird-watchers will find a host of sea birds to observe, as the protected areas are dedicated to nesting. Flower-lovers will enjoy The Nature Reserve of Saint Nicolas, created to protect the Glénans daffodils, an endemic species of the Atlantic coast. Inhabited by humans only during the summer months, Glénan's quiet coves, inlets and white sandy beaches are sure to provide a relaxing respite from the hubbub of daily life. You can learn more about this hidden getaway at www.iles-du-ponant.com.

Finally, if you can't bear to miss the most famous of France's tourist destinations, but would prefer to avoid long lines and photo-snapping crowds, consider visiting France in the fall or spring rather than the tourist-filled summer.

May and early June are excellent times to visit, as is September. Generally the weather is still quite pleasant, especially in the south, and you won't feel overwhelmed by tourists who head to France for their summer vacations. Plus, prices for big-ticket items like hotels and airfare are lower during these off-peak times.

No matter what time of year you go, or which sites you choose to visit, France is sure to delight your senses, and create fantastic memories. Nevertheless, if you prefer a quieter, more unique experience, consider taking a trip along the road less traveled. With her incredibly varied landscape, countless charming villages, and hidden big-city surprises, even the most seasoned French tourist can find new and unexplored destinations to visit within the hexagone.

To learn more about travel in France, please visit the French government's tourist office: www.franceguide.com.



Médicis Fountain, Paris



Fort Cigogne, Glenan Islands

L'Oréal Product to Block UVA Waves

STARTING this fall, a new sunscreen filter made by L'Oréal SA will be available in the United States in a daily moisturizer that will significantly reduce exposure to harmful UVA waves. The filter, called ecamsule, has been hailed as the highest photo-stable UVA and broad-spectrum sun protection available, according to L'Oréal.

The product, called Anthelios SX, contains ecamsule, also called Mexoryl™ SX. Its makers say that ecamsule is the only sun filter available in the United States designed to block short UVA waves and that it is photo-stable, meaning it does not degrade after long exposure to the sun. Ecamsule has been available in Canada and Europe but it only recently received approval from the Food and Drug Administration to be sold on the U.S. market. It will be available without a prescription in select pharmacies and doctors' offices.

The ultraviolet radiation in sunlight comes in two forms. UVB rays are responsible for tanning and sunburn, but doctors suspect that UVA rays are responsible for skin damage such as wrinkles and melanoma. UVA waves can pass through glass and are present all day, every day of the year. They account for 95 percent of the ultraviolet radiation that reaches the earth. Until now, most sunscreens focused mainly on blocking UVB rays.



Courtesy, L'Oréal

Anthelios SX

Desalinated Ocean Water Whets French Cities

LOWER costs and improved technology have made desalinated ocean water an attractive alternative for some of France's coastal islands. On July 20 the island of Belle-Ile, just off the coast of northwestern France, began pumping pure, potable water from the ocean into its reservoir at a rate of 25 m³ per hour.

In 2005, Belle-Ile residents decided to invest in water desalination technology for several reasons. After a three-year drought, the island's potable water reservoirs were at a dangerously low level; citizens worried about the island's ability to not only satiate its 4,800 permanent residents, but also to provide for the summer population of 40,000 vacationers.

Due to a new, more energy-efficient and cost effective water desalination technique called reverse osmosis, the price of desalinated water at 4.3 euros per cubed meter made the process considerably more appealing than the existing procedures at 23 euros

per cubed meter, said the administrative director of the community of townships for Belle-Ile.

Through reverse osmosis, water in tubes with semi-permeable membranes is subjected to high pressure. The pressure forces the pure water through the membranes, leaving impurities such as salt in the tubes. Distillation, the traditional water desalination process, requires significantly more energy to extract impurities by vaporizing water.

Reverse osmosis facilities are rapidly multiplying throughout Europe as hotter summers and increased numbers of tourists deplete water supplies. The French company Degrémont announced on July 21 plans to construct a desalination plant in Barcelona, Spain, that will process 200,000 m³ a day, making it the biggest unit in Europe. It is expected that by 2010, 25 million m³ of desalinated water will be produced daily.

France Invests in Renewable Energy

FRANCE'S ability to harness wind power as a source of renewable energy is showing great progress according to Marion Lettry, director of the windmill branch of the *Syndicat des énergies renouvelables* (Renewable Energies association) in Paris. Created in 1993, the organization has been devoted to promoting industrial and professional interest in renewable sources of energy. It hopes that by 2007, windmills will produce about 2,000 Megawatts of energy (twice as much as they currently produce) and 13,500 MW by 2010. To facilitate France's gradual transition to renewable energy, the French government has introduced a series of mechanisms to make windmill electricity more cost-effective in the long run than existing sources of electricity.



Courtesy: INAISE

French experts are increasingly confident about renewable energies as they see the price of oil take off. "In ten years, the production of electricity from windmills will be less costly than that of natural gas power plants," said Lettry.

One key actor in windmill trade is Gaz de France, the number one European distributor of natural gas, with 13.8 million

customers, 11.1 million of whom are in France. Gaz de France is considering teaming up with Maia Sonnier, a company that engineers and constructs projects that focus on infrastructure, the environment and energy, in the hopes of producing 1,000 Megawatts of windmill-powered energy by 2012. If approved, the company they would head together is a subsidiary of Maia Sonnier called Maia Eolis.

The president of Gaz de France, Jean-François Cirelli, has voiced optimism about the new partnership with Maia Sonnier. He said that Gaz de France is determined to be greatly involved in the development of renewable energies and that the windmill incarnates this ambition. The partnership is an important step toward Gaz de France's goal of producing 10 percent of its electricity from a renewable energy source.

These combined efforts can be appreciated within the context of a symbolic and perhaps economically efficient step in the fight to reduce global green house emissions. If the 2012 goal is reached, Maia Eolis will provide enough energy for 300,000 homes and, more importantly, would prevent the release of two million tons of carbon dioxide into our atmosphere per year.

FRENCH MATHEMATICIAN WINS FIELDS MEDAL

Jacques Chirac offered his congratulations on August 22 to Wendelin Werner, a French mathematician who specializes in probabilities, for winning the Fields Medal. First awarded in 1936, the Fields Medal is considered the Nobel Prize of mathematics. This was the first time that it was awarded to a probabilities specialist, and Werner is glad his field is being recognized. Werner's accomplishment augments the prestige not only of the field of probabilities but also that of his university. Werner is the latest addition to a legacy of Fields Medal winners at l'Université de Paris-Sud Orsay, along with Jean-Christophe Yoccoz received the honor in 1994 and Laurent Lafforgue in 2002. The president of the university, Anita Bersellini, said that their mathematics department is "probably the best in the world." Seeing that three out of the nine total French mathematicians ever to win this quadrennial award came from Orsay's math department, the probability that Bersellini is right is quite high.

AIR FRANCE-KLM CELEBRATE 60 YEARS OVER THE ATLANTIC

In the summer of 1946, after 24



Courtesy of AIRFRANCE-KLM

AIR FRANCE- KLM flight attendants model uniforms of the past

hours and two layovers, 44 passengers went from Paris to New York on Air France's first transatlantic commercial flight. Today, Air France (which merged with Dutch airline KLM in May 2004) transports close to a million and a half passengers annually across the Atlantic. On June 13, AIR FRANCE-KLM celebrated the 60th anniversary of their services to North America by holding a convention in Manhattan. AIR FRANCE-KLM's chairman Jean-Cyril Spinetta and vice-chairman Leo M. van Wijk flew across the Atlantic to celebrate their transatlantic success. They welcomed six hundred guests in the salon of the Morgan Library. Also in attendance was French Ambassador to the United States Jean-David Levitte who recounted the story of Air France's generosity in having flown one hundred American World War II veterans to France in June 2004 in honor of the 60th anniversary of the beach landing at Normandy.

SUD DE FRANCE

Is it possible to find the sun, beaches, cuisine and charm of the South of France in a bottle? Wine producers from the Languedoc-Roussillon area of France hope so, as they unite under a common brand name "Sud de France" which will be prominently featured on new labels set to adorn each bottle of wine from the region. Explaining the move, Thierry Mellenotte, who works for a cross-industry association called Inter Sud de France, said, "It is about one message and one region with the same values." Languedoc-Roussillon is known particularly for its reds, which are generally earthy and peppery, with a splash of fruitiness. The newly-labeled bottles are expected to appear on shelves next year.

VINTAGE CAR RALLY

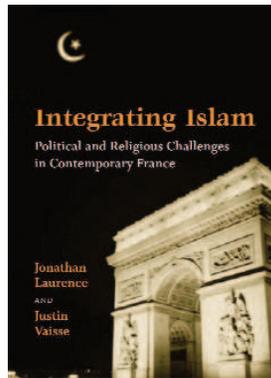
A convoy of pre-1918 vintage French cars returned to Castillonès on July 23 for an annual fête themed "from horse to car" at the Hippodrome after having toured much of France in a rally organized by the *Amis de l'automobile ancienne de la Gironde*. The cars were all in superb condition, ranging from the one built most recently, in 1914, to the one built as far back as 1901. In the vintage spirit, many of the drivers and passengers wore costumes from the period. Ranging from single- to four-cylinder engines and often with right-hand or central drive, some of the makes were well known while most had long since disappeared such, as the Clément-Bayard, Delage, De Dion-Bouton, Hotchkiss, Panhard & Levassor, La Licorne, Le Zebra, and Vermorel.

EUROPE'S LARGEST FESTIVAL FOR TWINS

Ten thousand people attended the thirteenth annual Twins Festival at Pleucadeuc in the Brittany region of France on August 15. The festival is the largest of its kind in all of Europe. Taking place on the first full weekend of August every year, the festival is held in Pleucadeuc, northwest France. The festival has grown in size each year, starting out with only 295 sets of twins the first year to about 1,500 sets of twins this year. "It's great to be able to swap anecdotes with other twins," say Marie-Louise and Marie-Claude. The twins ranged from ages three months to 80 years and came from as close as the town of Pleucadeuc itself to as far away as Madagascar. Most twins came dressed identically and some even came as famous twins, such as the Thompson twins from the popular Tin Tin comic books. In 2001, the invitation was extended to identical triplets, quadruplets and quintuplets. Beginning next year, fraternal twins will be invited.



New Book on Integrating Islam In France



INTEGRATING Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France, published by the Brookings Institution, examines the complexity of integrating Islam into France's diverse and secular democracy. Authors Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse approach this topic with comprehensive discussions, unique insights and extensive empirical data to go beyond the headlines of sensationalism in mainstream media to paint an accurate picture of the reality of

Islam in France. Despite contradicting schools of thought, Vaisse and Laurence foresee the emergence of a religion and a population that feel at home in, and at peace with French society. The authors pay special attention to socioeconomic benchmarks and public policies recently enacted by the French government to encourage integration and discourage extremism—for example the 2004 banning of headscarves in public schools and the establishment the new French Council of the Muslim Religion. Their results are also consistent with the Pew Global Attitudes Project (see article below).

Jonathan Laurence is an assistant professor of political science at Boston College, and Justin Vaisse is a French historian and an adjunct professor at Sciences-Po Paris. Both are affiliated scholars with the Center on the U.S. and Europe at the Brookings Institution. For more information, please visit: www.brook.edu/press/books/integratingislam.htm. 

France Earns High Marks on Tolerance and Integration

According to the Pew Global Attitudes Project, hosted by The Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan group in Washington, D.C. that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world through public opinion polling, France is faring better in promoting tolerance than its European neighbors. France is home to not only the largest Muslim population in Europe (around five million), but, as the study indicates, the most tolerant and moderate Muslim population. The project was conducted in 13 countries between March 31 and May 14, with interviews of over 14,000 people.

According to the report, French Muslims tend to oppose extremism and terrorism more than their counterparts. French Muslims are concerned about the rise in Islamist extremism (73%), a figure comparable to that recorded in the U.S. (79%) Almost unanimous in their disdain, 93 percent of French Muslims say they have little or no confidence in Osama bin Laden, whereas in Britain it was only 68 percent. Most French Muslims also think that democracy could work in Muslim countries. A solid majority of French non-Muslims have "favorable opinions of Muslims."

The report also indicates that French Muslims are more tol-

erant of other faiths than their counterparts and the general public in Europe and the United States. Seventy-one percent of French Muslims view the Jewish faith positively, compared with only 38 percent of German Muslims, 32 percent of British, and 28 percent of Spanish. French Muslims reflect France's overall favorable opinion of Jews at 86 percent—a higher proportion than even among the American general public, according to the Pew project.

What most distinguishes French Muslims from other European Muslims is their self-perception. When asked what they consider themselves as first, a French citizen or a Muslim, French Muslims are split 42 to 46 percent. Eighty-one percent of British Muslims put faith before nationality.

The project was co-chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and by former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and former Republican Senator of Missouri John C. Danforth. On the topic of integration, the project states: "the French need take no integrationist lessons from their European neighbors." For more information on the Pew Global Attitudes Project, please visit: www.pewglobal.org. 

French Woman First to Cross the Atlantic in "Oceankite"

ANNE Quéméré became the first person ever to cross the North Atlantic Ocean by "Oceankite" on August 13 when she arrived at l'île de Ouessant, an island off the coast of Brittany. The entire expedition took 55 days. Quéméré made the journey alone, making use only once of the assistance of her escort team to replenish her food supplies.

The prototype "Oceankite" is a lightweight boat powered by a kite-like sail similar to those used in kitesurfing. The small

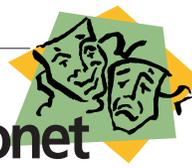


Quéméré crosses Atlantic in "Oceankite"

craft is only 5.5 meters long by 2.5 meters wide, light enough to graze across the waves and large enough to stock several weeks' worth of provisions.

The 40-year-old native of Brittany earned the title of the first woman to row across the Atlantic in 2003, then made another voyage in 2004. This year she heeded the call of the ocean once again, setting out from New York on June 18. The 2006 challenge was estimated to take five weeks but was delayed due to poor winds. After a few days on the island, she was welcomed on August 16 at the port of Tréboul in Douarnenez. 

© Roman Quéméré



Scientists Extrapolate Meaning in Monet

ART lovers are no longer the only ones appreciating the world-renowned paintings of Jean-Claude Monet. The work of the famous impressionist is now of great interest to environmental scientists who hope to use his paintings as visual records of Victorian London's smog level. Monet painted various portraits of London's Houses of Parliament during his visit to London between 1899 and 1901.

Environmental scientists Jacob Baker and John Thornes at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom are analyzing these paintings and attempting to decipher the components of London's smog by scrutinizing the arrangement of colors and tones in Monet's paintings. However, proverbially speaking, a picture is not worth a thousand statistics—or so the saying goes...

No one is sure whether Monet's depictions were accurate snapshots of the actual weather conditions or whether he used some artistic license in his finishing touches. Nevertheless, Baker and Thornes became confident Monet's paintings were true-to-life after having compared the position of the sun in nine of his paintings to his accounts in letters to his wife. "Monet did truthfully paint the sun as he observed it at the time," says Baker. "He did-



The Houses of Parliament, Sunset, 1903

© National Gallery of Art

n't modify it later." Although no one can be absolutely certain of the accuracy of Monet's representations, in the absence of modern technology, Monet's paintings serve as a valuable window to London's past environmental conditions. "Although we know that smog was a problem at that time, we don't know much about it," says Baker. "Now we can potentially get real air quality information from a time when scientific instruments weren't around." ■ ■

Lyon City Zoo Announces its New African Plain

STARTING this October, the Lyon City zoo will offer a highly innovative learning experience called "The African Plain." Covering an area of approximately seven acres, the Plain will protect endangered species in a biotope similar to their original habitats while allowing the animals to roam in a cage-free environment. Zoo officials exercised precaution when selecting the 130 animals that would inhabit



Illustration of Lyon's African Plain

© Agence Ostry

Three exclusive enclosures are also designed for zebras and giraffes on the savanna and crocodiles on the wetland. Visitors will also enjoy observing flamingos, pelicans, and crowned canes among some of the other species chosen for the African Plain.

Located on 14 acres in the Parc de la Tête-d'Or, the Lyon zoo has dazzled visitors with 300 different species since 1858. The

African Plain compliments the diversity of the zoo with 130 species of its own. The Zoo de Vincennes in Paris is also considering opening its own African Plain in the near future. ■ ■

Marie-Antoinette's Minichateau Undergoes Renovation

MARIE-ANTOINETTE seems to be the topic of discussion lately with the Hollywood blockbuster that premiered and was nominated for a *Palme D'Or* at the Cannes Film Festival. Already released in France and scheduled to hit American theatres on September 20, American director Sofia Coppola recently filmed the \$40 million, visually stunning *Marie Antoinette* at Versailles. The film generated a resurgence in interest in France's most famous queen, who is also receiving additional attention as a result of the work being done to her estate.

"This pleasure house is yours," Louis XVI reportedly told a teenage Marie Antoinette as he presented her the Petit Trianon as a wedding gift. The minichateau is part of the 86-acre "Domaine" of Marie-Antoinette - a retreat where she gambled, played parlor games, held concerts, put on theatrical performances and received guests. Petit Trianon (see page 8 for picture) is now scheduled to undergo necessary renovations to accommodate visitors.

The current renovations are part of the "Grand Versailles" project that aims to show Versailles' contrasts: Classical and Baroque, destitution and extravagance, male inspiration from Louis XVI

and female inspiration from Marie-Antoinette to Madame de Pompadour. A vast planting project is in progress, and a tiny farmhouse where cheese was once made and butter churned has been opened. A small "educational farm" with chickens, roosters, goats and sheep, used mostly to welcome schoolchildren, will continue to operate, while the rest remains very much a work in progress. The somewhat removed site attracts only 300,000 visitors per year, and has no permanent restaurant, no café or gift shop, there not enough restrooms, only a few parking spots, and ineffective means of getting from the main château of Versailles to the queen's estate. "We have a vision but one that will take time," said Christine Albanel, Director of Versailles. Pierre-André Lablaude, the chief architect at Versailles, adds, "This is a dynamic project. We want to model it on Mount Vernon or Monticello (...) we need to find sponsors. And that requires imagination."

Though the Petit Trianon will close in November for renovations, the Marie-Antoinette "Domaine" will be open daily through October 31. For more information, please visit: www.chateauversailles.fr. ■ ■

MULHOUSE'S AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM RECEIVES NEW WING

On July 10, the mayor of Mulhouse, Jean-Marie Bockel, inaugurated the newly finished extension to the city's Automobile Museum. Renovations to the building, whose original edifice



Bugatti Royale

© Culturespaces / C. Recoura

was constructed in stages during the years 1880 to 1930, began in 1999. The next step in the renovation process will begin in 2007. Mulhouse's Automobile Museum is recognized as having the world's largest collection of cars. It began as the private collection of Fritz Schlumpf, who used his fortune to purchase numerous collectable cars and housed them in his mill. That mill later became the present-day museum, where visitors can admire the best creations from Rolls Royce,



More vintage cars on display

© Culturespaces

Mercedes, Hispano-Suiza, and the famous Bugatti Royales.

MARILYN MONROE EXHIBIT OPENS IN PARIS

Paris's Musée Maillol is currently hosting an exhibit titled "Marilyn, la Dernière Séance" (Marilyn, the Last Sitting), featuring 59 breathtaking photos of the iconic American actress. The photographs date to 1962, when renowned celebrity photographer Bert Stern photographed her for a spread in the magazine *Vogue*. Captured on film just before her tragic, untimely death, visitors to the exhibit will see the actress at her best: playful, vibrant, and beautiful. The photographs will be on display at the Musée Maillol through October 30.



Continued from page 3: Marie-Antoinette's Petit Trianon
Courtesy: all-free-photos.com

Portland Hosts Exhibition On 19th Century France

In an exhibit at the Portland Museum of Art running through October 15, 2006, "Paris and the Countryside: Modern Life in late 19th-century France," 88 works of art display artistic responses to different aspects of modern life in the late 1800s. Beginning with the work of impressionists and ending with neo-impressionism and symbolism, the exhibit demonstrates the diverse ways to express modernity through art.

The subjects of the works range from leisure activities, such as dance halls and family life, to developments in technology, such as transportation and commercial advertisements. Both country life and city life are depicted, from water-scapes, to the rise of suburban living, to city nightlife. Visitors can also witness the budding influence of non-European cultures.

Impressionists such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-



Troupe de Mlle Églantine, Toulouse-Lautrec, circa 1890

© Scott M. Black Collection

Auguste Renoir, and Edgar Degas use their characteristic loose brushwork and less-polished style to capture each moment, allowing the viewer to transcend the motif and experience the time period through the eyes of a member of that society. Post-impressionist paintings are also on display, by artists such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Painting in the same era in a completely different method were the symbolists, like Emile Bernard, who used images to represent ideas beyond sensory experience.

The diversity of both artists and their works provides insight into modernity and its artistic depiction in the late 19th century. Awaiting viewers is an inclusive description of modern life, from details of everyday life to broader social issues. For more information, visit: www.portlandartmuseum.org. ■ ■

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Baltimore Features: "Courbet and the Modern Landscape"

Braving the elements, Gustave Courbet, a renowned 19th-century French painter, bucked many conventions of his time by insisting on painting directly from nature. Typically known for his work with figures, a special exhibition at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore will exhibit Courbet's lesser-known work in landscapes.

Courbet's landscapes give a diverse view of the scenery of France with representations of forests, snowscapes, and seascapes. His technical dexterity and attention to detail capture the swiftness of the day's passing light as it falls on every object with dimension. Juxtaposing realism with idealism and touching upon abstractness, some may speculate if Courbet used too much of a creative license. Courbet's work in landscapes have



Gust of Wind, Courbet, 1865

© Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Gift of Caroline Weiss Law

influenced some Impressionists, particularly Claude Monet and Paul Cézanne, for they also struggled to capture the essence of light, and hence created semi-organic, quick brushstrokes.

One of the most aesthetically commanding paintings on display is *The Gust of Wind (Le Coup de Vent)*, which captures warm colored dark clouds advancing over a wooded area. Courbet's use of analogous colors, which happen to be revealed in a cool color scheme, almost give the viewer the feel of an approaching storm. Also on display will be *Stream in the Forest*, a peaceful work in which tall, graceful trees shade the stream below. Most of the landscapes in this exhibition were painted in the artist's beloved hometown of Ornans.

In addition to the exhibit, the Walters Art Museum is offering other ways for art lovers to enjoy the works of Courbet. In partnership with The Peabody Conservatory, students from the institute's composition department have written pieces of literature to stimulate the viewers as they explore Courbet's landscapes. To help explain Courbet's techniques, Eik Khang, a Walters curator, will describe in detail Courbet's complex technique which involved the use of palette knives, paint brushes, sponges and even his fingers."

The entire "Courbet and the Modern Landscape" runs at the Walters Art Museum from October 15, 2006 to January 7, 2007. ■ ■

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