

Normandy Dedicates New Visitor Center to Remember Fallen D-Day Soldiers

A new visitor center was dedicated at Colleville-sur-Mer, Normandy, on June 6 in memory of the soldiers who died during the D-Day landing. The inaugural celebration was attended by several high-ranking officials, including French Minister of Defense Hervé Morin; U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates; U.S. Ambassador to France Craig Stapleton; as well as retired Army General Frederick Francis Jr., chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), a federal agency established to commemorate the service of U.S. Armed Forces domestically and overseas. Other honorary guests included World War II veterans and families of those buried in the Colleville cemetery, where 9,387 American soldiers who lost their lives at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944 were laid to rest.

The ABMC acquired appropriations from the U.S. Congress to construct the new center, which aims to raise awareness of the magnitude and significance of Operation Overlord, to design a facility that blends seamlessly with the cemetery's landscape, and to introduce the organization to a larger public.

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates delivered the center's inaugural address, in which he honored the memory of the soldiers who perished on D-Day. "We mourn every man who fell," said Gates, "even as we quietly give thanks for their sacrifice."

Emphasizing the significance of the center, the U.S. Defense Secretary noted: "Today we mark another chapter at this hallowed place with the opening of a new visitor center. We build memorials like this to remind us of the past. So that



© Photo by Cherie A. Thurlby, Department of Defense
Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates (center) and Minister of Defense Hervé Morin (right) pay respects during the 63rd Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France

every year, the new \$30 million center covers more than 30,000 square feet. A third of that area comprises exhibition rooms that illustrate through a blend of texts, pictures and interactive presentations, the memories and stories of soldiers who stormed the beaches.

"Let the people never forget that we are bound by history and values just as we are bound by blood," Secretary Gates concluded. "The blood of Americans. The blood of Frenchmen. The blood of our allies. The blood of everyone who has ever perished in defense of the lofty ideals that gave rise to and still underpin our great alliance. Those ideals were given their birth on this continent, and given their renewal on battlefields like this one." For more information please visit: www.abmc.gov.

successive generations will know the enormous cost of freedom. So that our children and grandchildren will never forget the stories of those who fought here. So that the passage of time and the thinning of their ranks will never dim the glory of their deeds."

Underlining the partnership between France and the United States, Secretary Gates reasserted the importance of French-American relations to his French counterpart, Hervé Morin: "Events like this also remind us of all we have endured together — remind us of our long history in times of war, and in times of peace — remind us of the shared values that transcend whatever differences we may have had in the past, or may have in the present."

Built alongside the Colleville Cemetery, which faces the sea and welcomes approximately 1,600,000 visitors

Two New Appointments at the Foreign Ministry



Rama Yade, Secretary of State responsible for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights

Two new appointments were made at the Foreign and European Affairs Ministry following the legislative elections and a subsequent cabinet reshuffle in France. Reporting to Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner will be Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of State responsible for Cooperation and Francophony, and Ms. Rama Yade, Secretary of State responsible for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights.

Rama Yade, born in Senegal in 1976, is the youngest member in the Cabinet. After graduating from the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, she became an administrator at the Senate and began a political career in the UMP party, the center-right party of Nicolas Sarkozy, where she was appointed national secretary responsible for Francophone affairs in 2006. She played a prominent role in Nicolas Sarkozy's presidential campaign and advocated a greater presence for French citizens of immigrant descent on the political stage in France. She published an essay this year titled "Noirs de France" (Blacks of France). She is herself evidence of President Sarkozy's resolve to open government to new talent from among France's minorities.

Her position in the government also emphasizes the importance of human rights in France's foreign policy.

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FRENCH AUTHORITIES RECOVER TWO STOLEN CONCERT VIOLINS



The stolen violins were successfully retrieved by French police

Two concert violins stolen last December from the home of a Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist have been returned to California. A 43-year-old man was charged with possession and foreign transportation of stolen goods, having smuggled the rare and expensive violins from California to Paris via Amsterdam. One of the two was crafted in the 18th century by the Italian Carlo Tononi, while the other was fashioned in the 19th century by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume, a renowned French violin maker. A police alert was raised in the small Parisian violin-making community when the thief attempted to sell the instruments to a violin shop for \$65,000, a fraction of their estimated worth of \$300,000. He was arrested without incident by French police on March 9 and will be extradited to the U.S. at the conclusion of his French case.

SUSPICIOUS SHIPMENT INTERCEPTED BY FRENCH NAVY IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS OF GULF OF GUINEA

Thanks to the well-planned coordination between the French Interagency Security and Intelligence Center and British authorities, France's Maritime Prefect in Brest ordered on June 8, 2007, the ship Jules Verne, from the French Navy, to intercept a suspicious vessel sailing in the international waters of the Gulf of Guinea and to conduct a verification of the flag in accordance with international regulations. Some of the required information came from U.S. Interagency Headquarters in Florida and its recent European counterpart in Lisbon, Portugal. For the operation, the French Navy used additional assets, including a maritime patrol aircraft, *Atlantique 2*, as well as eight Navy Special Forces and light crafts. The French Navy interception unit discovered 24 bales of cocaine stacked mainly under the foredeck of the ship. The illegal shipment represented some 1,800 pounds of cocaine.

US Soldiers and Civilians Join French Ceremony to Honor Heroes

In keeping with annual tradition, the Embassy of France in the U.S. commemorated Général de Gaulle's 1940 address to the French people on Monday, June 18. François Rivasseau, *chargé d'affaires*, presided over the military ceremony that included the hoisting of the French tricolor; the presentation of the French decoration *Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite* (Officer in the National Order of Merit) to two French officers, Colonels Rode and Bader; and the awarding of the National Defense Medal to six US officers who had served alongside French troops in various theatres



Soldiers decorated on June 18

of operations. The ceremony also featured a recording of Général de Gaulle's historic address originally broadcasted by the BBC on June 22, 1940.

Attendees included nearly 50 members of the French Embassy staff, a group of 25 French veterans, and more than 40 US citizens — from the liaison offices at the Pentagon and *invités* supporting the American recipients. Following the formal military ceremony, the party gathered inside the *Maison Française* for a reception and French appetizers to celebrate "with taste" a defining moment in French history.

A New "Immortel" Elected to l'Académie française



Max Gallo, the newest *immortel*

French writer and historian Max Gallo was elected for life to hold a seat as an *immortel* at *l'Académie française* on May 31. Mr. Gallo will replace the late Jean-François Revel, a great figure of French philosophy and literature. The election is the first of a series of six that are to take place this year to replace recently deceased *académiciens*.

l'Académie française was founded in 1635 by Cardinal de Richelieu, prime minister under King Louis XIII, to regulate French grammar, spelling and literature. He appointed its members whose first task as *académiciens* was to write a dictionary published in 1694. Eight editions have been published since then, each adapting to linguistic evolutions. The ninth edition is in progress.

In addition to its duty as the official authority of the French

language, *l'Académie française* has a patronage function, as it is charged with awarding some 60 literature prizes every year.

l'Académie française has 40 members, known as *les immortels* (the immortals), who have notably illustrated the French language. Members have included poets, doctors, art critics, philosophers, scientists, ethnologists, former politicians and even military officials. The name "*immortels*" is derived from the motto that appears on the seal given to the *Académie* by founder Richelieu: *À l'immortalité* (to immortality). Some current *immortels* include former president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and renowned anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Since Richelieu, every French head of state has successively been the "*patron*" of *l'Académie*.

Max Gallo was selected for his contribution to the study of French history through his numerous bestselling biographies, ranging in subject from Charles de Gaulle to Napoléon, as well as for his popular novels "*La Baie des Anges*" ("The bay of Angels"), "*Les Patriotes*" ("The Patriots"). Prior to being elected an *immortel*, the 75-year-old Gallo had a versatile career, ranging from serving as a communist activist, socialist deputy, spokesman of the socialist government of François Mitterrand, editorialist, editor-in-chief, as well as president of the left-wing political movement, *le Mouvement des citoyens* ("the Citizens' Movement").

Thirty-Third President of the Cour de cassation Named

The *Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature* (CSM), or the Superior Council of Magistracy, has named Vincent Lamanda 33rd *Premier Président de la Cour de cassation* (First President of the *Cour de cassation*), the highest position in the French judiciary system. He was inducted into office on May 30 before an audience of French high government officials, including President Sarkozy, Minister of Justice Rachida Dati, President of the Senate Christian Poncelet, and President of the National Assembly Patrick Ollier.

The *Cour de cassation*, which sits in Paris, is the highest judicial institution in France. It is composed of six different chambers: three civil chambers, a commerce chamber, a social chamber, and a criminal chamber, whose decisions are based on their respective codes of law in addition to prior *cassation* rulings. The Court is tasked with protecting the law as a tool of justice by ensuring that the cases brought before it by parties are correct interpretations of the law. Laws themselves cannot be contested and the actual facts of cases are never reviewed. If the *Cour de cassation* finds that the law has not been thoroughly respected, it "breaks" ("*casse*" in

French) the litigious ruling, and returns it to the lower court to be retried under the conditions of the *Cour de cassation's* decision.

The *Cour de cassation* is one of the only French judicial institutions with the ability to create legal precedent. However, it does not have the power to find laws unconstitutional, which is a prerogative of the *Conseil constitutionnel* (Constitutional Council).

Addressing Minister of Justice Rachida Dati along with his fellow judges during his inaugural speech, Mr. Lamanda promised that "[he] will be who [he] always has been: a magistrate, conscious above all of the independence and dignity of justice, in a continuous quest for excellence and humanity in his acts."

Mr. Lamanda graduated from the *Ecole nationale de la magistrature* (ENM—National School of Magistracy), in 1972. He pursued a career as president of many high courts in France, such as the Bordeaux Tribunal and the Rouen and Versailles courts of appeal. For more information on the *Cour de cassation* please visit: www.courdecassation.fr.

NYC Public Schools Introduce Bilingual French-English Program

This fall, for the first time, three public schools in New York City will offer a French-English dual-language program: PS 125 on the Upper West Side, PS 58 in Brooklyn, and CIS 22 in the Bronx. The free program, conducted half in French and half in English, responds to the needs of an increasingly multicultural world and will allow francophone children to preserve their linguistic heritage. In a June 13 event, the French Embassy, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education, the FIAF (French Institute Alliance Française), and EFNY (*Education Française à New York*), showcased several of the new dual-language programs and invited prospective teachers and school leaders to join the initiatives.

Other programs were also presented, such as the ground-

breaking work that has already been achieved by the parents and members of EFNY in setting up French after-school programs in several public schools. One such program, the French Heritage Language Program, currently serves 75 children of Francophone origins in five public schools. The dual-language program, which also sponsors Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Haitian Creole initiatives, partners with researchers from the Center for Applied Linguistics to help the schools strengthen their programs through specialized bilingual learning services.

In her keynote address, Cultural Counselor Karen Rispal observed that "New York and Paris have many business and cultural partnerships. With this evening's program, we add education to the list of fruitful collaborations between these two cities."

French Frigate *La Fayette* Celebrates Anniversaries in U.S.



La Fayette arrives for a port of call in New Orleans

The French Navy frigate *La Fayette* arrived in New Orleans on June 5 for a 4-day port of call honoring both the 250th anniversary of the birth of its namesake, the Marquis de La Fayette, and the 63rd anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

The navy ship, the first of France's state-of-the-art *La*

Fayette-class stealth frigates, was open to public tours June 7 and 8. On the anniversary of D-Day, Commander Jean-Philippe Rolland presented four American veterans of the Second World War with the *Légion d'Honneur* (France's highest military honor) aboard the vessel. During that ceremony, the French *Consul Général* in New Orleans, Pierre Lebovics, spoke for all French citizens when he expressed "our gratitude, our pride and our admiration."

"And let us not forget today your brothers in arms [...] who fell on the field of honor," he continued. "Many of them rest in French soil. They will remain in our hearts for eternity." Officers from the *La Fayette* also participated in a wreath-laying ceremony in the New Orleans's Lower 9th Ward, which was devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

This marked the frigate's first visit to the United States, a departure from its normal areas of operation. *La Fayette* spent 2005 and 2006 patrolling the Indian Ocean in anti-terror operations and has also served in the Mediterranean Sea. After leaving New Orleans, it made stops in Tampa, FL, Savannah, GA, and Norfolk, VA.

Versailles Glistens for Costume Ball Fundraiser

The Palace of Versailles glittered on the night of June 16, its halls playing host to an 18th century costume ball organized by the American Friends of Versailles (AFV). The ball, which included fireworks and a live orchestra, was only one event in a five-day schedule of activities for the AFV that included various receptions and luncheons from June 13-18. Among the distinguished hosts of these events were the Baron and Baronne Gérard de Waldner, members of the Spanish royal family, and former French president and Mrs. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who opened their Parisian home to the AFV.

The ultimate beneficiary of these gatherings is the *Pavillon Frais*, a structure on the grounds of Versailles that was built by King Louis XV. Destroyed by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1810, the *Pavillon* was a summertime dining area for the royal family.



Guests of the American Friends of Versailles in the Hall of Mirrors enjoy the fundraiser

Originally scheduled for restoration in 1980, it fell victim to budgetary constraints, and the project was never completed. The AFV is now helping to restore its former glory.

Established in 1998, AFV is a charitable corporation dedicated to promoting Franco-American relations by supporting seminars, educational exchanges, and specific restoration projects. The palace has long been a point of cooperation between French and

Americans — philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr., played a major role in the preservation of Versailles in the early 20th century with his numerous visits and considerable donations. According to the AFV, the palace and its grounds receive more visitors of American origin than of any other nationality. For more information, please visit: www.americanfriendsofversailles.org.

HAPPY HOUR A LA FRANÇAISE

A young, international crowd gathered at the *Alliance Française de Washington, D.C.* on May 25 for the organization's first monthly "Soirée Carte Blanche," a happy hour à la française. Music was provided by DJ Hervé, of Planet Chic Productions, and by guests bold enough to bring their own iPods to show off favorite tracks from their personal collections. European techno, lounge and house beats pulsed throughout the rooms, coaxing guests onto the dance floor. Attendees were offered light snacks and crêpes, which, along with the cash bar, fueled conversation and the high energy that marked the debut's success. For more information about future *Soirée Carte Blanche* events, please visit: www.francedc.org.

NOVARTIS CEO RECEIVES AWARD FROM PASTEUR FOUNDATION



French Amb. Levitte (left), beside the 2007 Pasteur Foundation Laureate Dr. Vasella, with *Institut Pasteur* President Dautry and Swiss Consul General Bubb

Dr. Daniel Vasella, Chairman and CEO of the Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis AG, was presented the Pasteur Foundation Award on the evening of May 3 at Gotham Hall in New York City. The award recognizes outstanding individuals whose work in basic and applied biomedical research demonstrates their global commitment to the improvement of public health. The Pasteur Foundation works to introduce research from the Paris-based *Institut Pasteur*, a world leader in infectious disease research, to the American public, in addition to raising funds and developing exchanges between *Institut* scientists and their American colleagues. The Foundation selected Dr. Vasella as the 2007 recipient of their annual award for his efforts to improve his company's research capacity and his initiatives to provide institutions such as the World Health Organization with access to medicines below market price. The Foundation also credited Dr. Vasella with Novartis's leadership in becoming one of the first multinational corporations to sign on to the U.N. Global Compact — an initiative which encourages private companies around the world to come together with U.N. agencies, labor, and civil society to support common principles dealing with human rights, labor standards, the environment, and anti-corruption efforts.

Once Again, Paris Becomes the Focus of the World of Tennis

Athletes from 48 countries took to the courts from May 27 to June 10 in Paris's *Stade de Roland Garros* for the 2007 French Open. Roland Garros, as the tournament is also known,



Three time Roland Garros champion Rafael Nadal returns ball during 2007 French Open

hosted 104 men and 106 women vying for the high honor of winning one of the most difficult tennis tournaments in the world.

After a sluggish opening day in which all but 14 matches were cancelled due to rain, the participants' tennis skills truly began to shine. The American men were eliminated from the tournament in the first round, something that has not happened since Roland Garros became an open event in 1968. The competition quickly turned into heated anticipation of a final match between Switzerland's Roger Federer and Spain's Rafael Nadal, who won Roland Garros both in 2005, the year of his first

entry, and in 2006. The final turned into a repeat of last year's duel, and in the end, Nadal again triumphed over Federer, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, becoming the second man

Roland Garros

Roland Garros, the namesake of the stadium and, by proxy, the event, was a renowned 20th century French aviator. He achieved the record for the highest altitude reached in an airplane (5,610 m) in 1912, and the next year, he became the first person to cross the Mediterranean Sea by plane. He joined the French Air Force during World War I, and was captured by the Germans in 1915 after having downed three German planes. He later escaped and rejoined his unit, but he was fatally shot down in 1918. Garros was also responsible for developing the first system by which a machine gun could safely fire through the propeller of an airplane, thus greatly enhancing the effectiveness of fighter aircraft.

in 93 years to win three consecutive singles titles at Roland Garros.

American women fared somewhat better than the men. Venus Williams set a Grand Slam record with a 128 mph serve. She was, however, beaten by Serbia's Jelena Jankovic in the third round. Her sister Serena, the last American in the tournament, lost in the quarterfinals to Belgian Justine Henin. Russian women played strongly, with Maria Sharapova advancing to the semi-finals. The most impressive performance by a single nationality, though, belonged to the Serbian contingent, from which three members have entered the list of the top ten tennis players in the world in the past year. Novak Djokovic advanced to the semi-final in the Men's competition, while Jankovic advanced to the Women's semi-final and Ana Ivanovic advanced to the Women's final against Henin. Ivanovic's early advantage, however, quickly disappeared, and Henin, who won both the 2005 and 2006 French Opens, dominated the court, winning 6-1, 6-2. Henin walked away with her third consecutive title from Roland Garros — the first woman to do so since Monica Seles in 1992.

History of the French Open

Originating in 1891 as a one-day men's tournament between French tennis club members, Roland Garros rapidly evolved into an internationally renowned tennis competition. Six years later, the tournament opened its doors to women, and in 1925, the tournament invited foreign competitors for the first time. The 1920s and 1930s ushered in what is sometimes referred to as the "golden era" of French tennis. Suzanne Lenglen became famous during this period for winning six of the seven titles from 1920 to 1926, after already having won the tournament prior to the First World War at the age of 15.

In 1928, the then-"French International" moved into the newly constructed stadium which soon became the tournament's namesake. The unique red clay composition of the *Stade de Roland Garros* courts significantly increases the level of difficulty during play. The red clay, whose key component is tightly packed brick powder, generates higher and slower bounces, giving each player slightly more reaction time. This results in longer matches that demand higher levels of endurance from the players. The clay also requires more dexterity of the players, since there is less traction on the clay surface than on grass or hard courts. The dust-like layer of crushed brick that rests on the surface of the court gives the advantage to players who are accustomed to sliding.

By 1933, as other tournaments around the world developed and evolved, Roland Garros came to be included with Wimbledon, the U.S. Open, and the Australian Open in what American journalist John Kieran dubbed the "Grand Slam." Roland Garros blossomed after the end of World War II and many international competitors began to emerge. It became an "open" contest in 1968, allowing both amateur and professional athletes to participate.



The Court Philippe Chatrier at the *Stade de Roland Garros*, featuring the stadium's infamous red clay courts

While some of the most famous names in today's tennis circuit, including Serena Williams, Andre Agassi, Martina Navratilova, and Steffi Graf, have emerged victorious in Paris, other notable tennis stars have never been able to master the red clay. Roger Federer, currently ranked as the world's number one player, has never won Roland Garros, despite winning every other tournament in the Grand Slam. For more information about Roland Garros, please visit www.rolandgarros.com.

Air Liquide Opens New Research and Technology Center in Delaware



Air Liquide Chairman & CEO Benoît Potier and Delaware Governor Ruth-Ann Minner cut the symbolic ribbon, inaugurating Air Liquide's new center in Delaware

Benoît Potier, Chairman and CEO of Air Liquide, inaugurated the company's new Delaware Research and Technology Center in Newark on June 4. François Rivasseau, *chargé d'affaires*, attended the ceremony. As of June 2007, the new center employs 80

researchers and is scheduled to expand its research staff to a total of 150. Air Liquide, which has locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia, invested \$35 million in the nearly 55-acre site south of Philadelphia. The facility conducts research in twelve fields, ranging from food and agriculture to computer modelling, but focuses primarily on clean energy technology. The Newark location will unite Air Liquide staff members from around the country, including researchers from the Chicago Research Center; experts of MEDAL, a subsidiary which produces membranes for gas separation and purification; engineers from the Advanced Technologies Division in the USA; and teams of the SEPPIC subsidiary, which produces specialty chemicals.

Air Liquide is a world leader in the development, production, and distribution of industrial and medical gases, among other services, and has nearly 37,000 employees in 72 countries, who serve one million customers, including large industries and individuals. The company was founded in 1902 by Georges Claude and Paul Delorme, following the invention of a process for liquefying air that enabled a much greater production of oxygen. With the opening of the new U.S. center, Air Liquide demonstrates its continued commitment to innovation and international service.

New TGV Service an Engine for Growth

The *TGV Est Européen* roared into service on June 10 on its maiden voyage with passengers aboard, ushering in a new era of accessibility to eastern France and opening a new gateway to Luxembourg, Germany, and Switzerland. The newest line of the TGV (*Train à grand vitesse* - "High Speed Train") significantly reduces travel times to eastern France and beyond. The voyage from Paris to Strasbourg, for example, which once took 4 hours, will take only 2 hours and 20 minutes aboard the new rail system.

One hour and 15 minutes were shaved off the trip from Paris to Zurich, while the Paris-Frankfurt journey was nearly halved.

More than 186 miles of new high-speed track have been laid down over the past five years in order to establish the infrastructure for the *TGV Est Européen*, and 17 train stations in the region have been renovated in preparation for its arrival. Additionally, three new TGV stations have been built in



The TGV Est line rolled into service on June 10

Lorraine, Champagne-Ardenne, and Meuse that will supplement the existing network of conventional rail lines.

Past experience suggests the TGV can act as a powerful vector for economic development. In the southern cities of Marseille and Avignon, tourism has jumped and housing markets have grown 120 percent since 2001, when a new TGV line cut travel times to Paris to three hours.

Anticipating a similar effect with the new TGV service, Metz has extended a pedestrian-only zone in its city center, while Nancy is building a convention center near its TGV station.

The rail cars for the new TGV line feature spaces designed by *haute couture* legend Christian Lacroix and run 12.4 mph faster than previous TGV models. The new rail lines, which will continue to expand in coming years, will also permit the German high-speed train, the ICE, to begin running to Paris.

Conference Dissects Subject of Stem Cell Research

Scientists, ethicists, and policymakers from Europe and the United States came together at the Embassy of France on Thursday, June 14, to discuss scientific advances in the field of stem cell research. The participants, who met again the following day at the Center for American Progress, also addressed the effects of European Union and U.S. policies regarding research in this field. The Office for Science and Technology at the Embassy of France and the Center for American Progress organized the event, which was co-host-

ed by Science and Technology Offices from E.U. member embassies, as well as the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington.

Stem cell research, especially research using cells from human embryos, has engendered extensive discussions around the world. This international workshop was an effort on behalf of partners on both sides of the Atlantic to exchange information, discuss policies and to promote transatlantic cooperation within the field.



Solar energy contributes an increasingly large percentage of France's energy

Solar thermal power usage in France has grown 80 percent since 2005, according to Enerplan, an energy management services company. French people are increasingly switching to solar energy for a number of reasons, according to the management services company: its low cost, the simple installation of solar captors, and the increased tax credit for using alternative energy sources. The *Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maitrise de l'Energie* (ADEME), an agency that manages energy research and usage under the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Planning and Development, provides grants and support to encourage people to start using solar heating. France is not the only place where people are making the switch. Countries such as Germany, Austria, and Greece also contributed to the overall strength of the European market for solar thermal energy, bringing the estimated increase in its usage to 22.8 percent throughout the European Union. In recent decades, Europeans have made great strides in renewable energy. According to Eurostat's 2007 *Panorama of Energy* bulletin, Europe's usage of solar energy in 2004 increased to five times what it was in 1990.

CELLULAR COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS FOR TRANSATLANTIC TRAVELERS

International travelers who make frequent trips across the Atlantic no longer need to worry about losing talk-time on their European cell phones once they return home. Call-In-Europe recently announced its SFR 30 and SFR 75 plans, both designed to reduce cell phone costs for Americans traveling in France. The two plans allow customers to choose between 30 and 75 minutes of French national call time, and unused minutes rollover for use in future vacations. Additionally, on these plans, customers are able to receive inbound calls free of charge. For more information, please visit: www.call-in-europe.com.



©Crocs, Inc.

Crocs are making their way across the Atlantic

Crocs have arrived in Paris. For those for whom the word "croc" conjures up images of those large aquatic reptiles dwelling in the world's swampy regions, be forewarned that there is a new type of croc hitting the streets of the fashion world in France. These chunky plastic dogs, named "Crocs" because of their resemblance to the snout of a crocodile, have enjoyed a cult-like following in the United States and are now intent on spreading their comfort and versatility to weary feet in other countries. With the initial intent of developing a boating and outdoor shoe, Crocs, Inc. has rapidly expanded in the past five years to fill a market niche for fashionable and functional footwear. Converts, ranging from nurses to brides to boaters, praise the unclassifiable shoe for its light weight, unique design, and foot-molding capabilities. Available in over 25 colors, Crocs are odor resistant, non-marking, and equipped with plenty of holes that allow the free passage of air, water, and sand. What remains to be answered is whether these notably inelegant clogs can replicate their American acclaim among the ranks of the historically stylish French.



For those who would love to sample a French perspective on politics and humor without

crossing the Atlantic, expatriate Denis's blog will satiate a variety of needs. The Frenchman, well known in both American and French circles on the immense political *blogosphère*, is appreciated for his humorous English-language critiques of what is happening "on the other side of the pond," as well as right here in the United States. His entries range from "create your own caption" photos of political meetings and speakers, to philosophical reflections on the state of French-American relations today, all while featuring comments on sports, food, and culture. For more information, please visit:

www.superfrenchie.com.

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Annual Exam Puts Students to the Test

France's much anticipated examination period leading to the awarding of the *baccalauréat* officially began on June 11. Following tradition, this year's 621,532 candidates kicked things off with an exam on *la philosophie*, for which students had four hours to write logical, convincing, and charmingly original dissertations before the morning's end. Successful completion of the examinations, most commonly referred to as *le bac*, grants students access to institutions of higher education while certifying one's completion of primary studies.

Although some students obtain a technical or professional *bac*, which prepares students for entry in specific careers, the vast majority opt for a *baccalauréat général*, which requires either a scientific, literary, or economic specialization. Each exam is awarded a grade based on a 20-point scale, and students must obtain an average of 10 to officially earn the diploma. *L'oral de rattrapage*, a supplementary oral examination period, exists for students whose final scores are just shy of the 10-point score needed for a diploma. On the other hand, students earning averages above 12 can expect special mentions to accompany their scores.

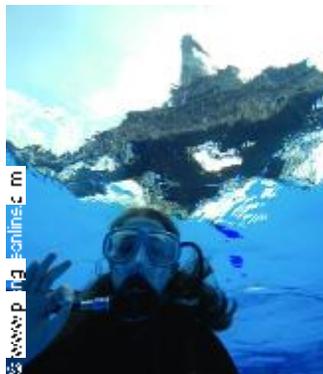
The *baccalauréat* often becomes the subject of media attention in France. Recent phenomena include 45-year-old author François



Students around France prepared for *le bac*

Dufour, who re-took his *bac* 28 years after receiving a diploma in 1979, or the impressive efforts of a 12-year-old candidate, the youngest to date, whose anonymity was strictly protected so as not to interrupt his concentration. Other students geared themselves for setting records, hoping to top the highest score currently on record: 20.28. For more information regarding *le bac*, please visit: www.education.gouv.fr.

Eiffel Tower Gets an Ocean View



Tourists and Parisians alike take advantage of the Scuba tank under the Eiffel Tower

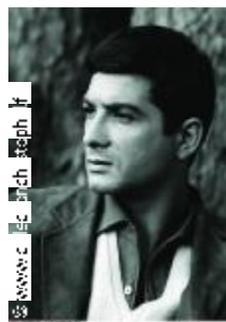
to a "breathtaking" view completely free of charge, but also walked

away with a heightened sense of awareness of the safety and environmental issues with which scuba diving is intrinsically intertwined. It was an offer that approximately 3,000 participants, including native Parisians themselves, could not turn down. "At a moment when environmental matters are becoming more and more important, the ones who need to be informed about the future of the Earth and its oceans are the tourists, those traveling across the world exploring it. What better means than this introduction to scuba diving to discover the underwater environment, its beauty and above all its fragile nature?" asked Mr. Bros, director of *Société d'Exploitation de la Tour Eiffel*. Visitors agreed, describing the experience as no less than "magnificent," from the underwater view of the Eiffel Tower to the carefully illuminated photographs of fish on the swimming pool's floor. Measuring 50 by 50 ft. and 4 ft. in depth, the pool provided the perfect opportunity for people of all ages to get their feet wet and view the world from a different perspective. For more information, please visit: www.plongeeoutoureffel.com.

France Mourns the Loss of a Screen Legend

Jean-Claude Brialy, renowned figure of French cinema and culture, died on May 30 at the age of 74, following a battle with cancer. His passing was deeply mourned by the French film industry and public. A ceremony was given in his honor and attended by high-ranking government officials, including President Nicolas Sarkozy, Minister of Culture Christine Albanel, Minister of Interior Michèle Alliot-Marie and Mayor of Paris Bertrand Delanoë. Many famous artists and friends, such as Alain Delon, Catherine Deneuve and Charles Aznavour also attended.

The celebrated actor appeared in nearly 200 movies over the



Jean-Claude Brialy

course of his 40-year career and won several distinguished awards, including a *César* (the French equivalent of an Oscar) in 1987 for best supporting male actor. A 1958 Claude Chabrol film, *"Le Beau Serge"* ("Handsome Serge") proved to be Brialy's breakthrough role, leading to work with some of France's most reputed directors. Brialy developed close friendships through these cinematic collaborations, appearing in Jean-Luc Godard's film *"Une femme est une femme"* ("A Woman Is a Woman," 1961), and François Truffaut's *"La Mariée était en noir"* ("The Bride Wore Black," 1968).

Brialy will be remembered by the public not only for his acting but also for his witty sense of humor and subtle intelligence. As a result of his inspiring performances on television, in films, and on stage, he became one of France's prominent artistic icons and was the recipient of several honorary titles: Commander of the Legion of Honor, Commander of the National Order of Merit, and Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters.

French Cowboy Makes Rodeo History in Texas

Rodeo fans sat in awe on June 2 as Evan Jayne skillfully maneuvered the tricks and turns of Bad Company Rodeo's horse, *Moulin Rouge*. The rodeo cowboy racked up an impressive 92 points during his ride, a score which placed among the top 10 in professional rodeo history. The horse, however, was not the only one carrying a name with links to France. Jayne, a 24-year-old teacher-turned-cowboy, stood out from the crowd as a rodeo talent hailing from Marseille, France.

The French cowboy who has stolen many hearts in his new home in Huntsville, Texas, may have inherited a knack for riding in his genes. His father was a trick rider who inspired Jayne to pursue riding as a young boy. In 1998, Jayne left for Magnolia, Texas, where he finished high school as a foreign exchange student. His host family, rodeo aficionados themselves, helped Jayne to pursue his passion by



© John Painter, Mesquite Championship Rodeo

Cowboy Evan Jayne, riding at the Mesquite Championship Rodeo

February, where he walked away with the bareback title. The victory only inspired him further. On June 1, Jayne decided to leave his teaching position at Coldspring High School in order to become a full-time competitor. Winning the title "really showed me I could compete against the top-ranked guys," says Jayne. "Now, it's on to the next level."

enrolling him in the high school rodeo championships. When he emerged victorious from the Texas High School Rodeo Association bareback riding state championship, the rising star not only qualified for the College National Finals, but was awarded a scholarship to Sam Houston State University.

After watching his idols tour the pro rodeo circuit, the former agriculture teacher tried his own luck at the Fort Worth Stock Show Rodeo in

Harry Potter Casts His Spell on SNCF



Courtesy: Warner Brothers

Children around France enjoy the Harry Potter-themed train run by SNCF

Children around the world have dreamed of becoming Harry Potter. *La Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français* (SNCF — the French National Railway Company) and Warner Bros. Pictures are now working together to make those dreams come true. French fans anxiously anticipating the release in theaters of "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" on July 11 are taking tours on a recently debuted Harry Potter-themed train, as it tours the country taking passengers on a magical travel experience. Original costumes and accessories are on display in two of the train's seven cars, while the remaining five dazzle passengers with their intricate decor featuring music, lighting, and trailers from the movie's most memorable scenes. The cars also feature an on-board magician set to charm audiences with numerous magic tricks during the ride. Electronics enthusiasts even have the opportunity to preview

the latest Harry Potter video game based on the film. The tour, which "magically appeared" on June 19 in Paris, will end July 1 in Lille as the train vanishes before its fans' bedazzled eyes. For more information, please visit: www.sncf.fr.

Cultural Festivals Light Up Midsummer Nights in France

Saxophone melodies reverberate in the warm zephyrs of Nice, windows into distant lands emerge in Giverny and Arles, and Shakespearean royals come out to play the arenas of Avignon. It's Festival season in France, and urban and rural landscapes will play host to illuminating events during the summer months. The French newspaper *Le Monde* recently highlighted 210 events that will take place around the country from June to September.

France is home to a wide variety of open-air summer music concerts for all tastes. Normandy's "Swing'in Deauville" will showcase an eclectic music selection July 20-27, including French rap artist Abd Al Malik and American soul and funk musician Isaac Hayes. The Nice Jazz Festival, running July 18-25, will feature not only jazz performers such as Marcus Miller and Madeleine Peyroux, but also a mixture of rock, reggae, and funk. American R&B artist Lauryn Hill will be among those taking the stage in Nice.

From the sunny beaches of Nice to Haute-Normandie, visual arts festivals of many colors will be held. "*Recontres d'Arles*" will present a new generation of Indian photographers and other world photography from July 3 through September 16. An American Impressionist show, titled "*Le Temps des Loisirs: Peintures Américaines*" (July 15 to October 31), will feature paintings by Henry Potthast and Edmund Tarbell at Giverny's Musée d'Art Américain.

For those in search of the performing arts, the *Festival d'Avignon* (July 6-27) will bring together professionals from across the spectrum of the international theatrical community to celebrate their art. "King Lear" and "*Le Silence des Communistes*" are among this year's shows to be performed.

More information on these and other festivals in France can be found at: www.culture.fr. News about cultural events and festivals in the U.S. can be found at: www.frenchculture.org.

PARIS CULINARY SCENE COMES TO LIFE ON THE BIG SCREEN



"Ratatouille" tells the story of a rat with a talent for haute cuisine

Disney and Pixar Animation Studios' eighth animated film, "*Ratatouille*," ventures beyond such kid-friendly subjects as monsters and bugs into the world of French *haute cuisine*. In a story inspired by the play "*Cyrano de Bergerac*," a rat named Remy overcomes his family's skepticism and the contempt of restaurant staff to realize his gastronomic ambitions. Set to debut in the U.S. on June 29, the film crew performed extensive research in the Parisian culinary scene in order to achieve a precisely rendered aesthetic, as well as to capture the dynamic ambiance of the French restaurant industry. Three-star Michelin Chef Thomas Keller modeled dishes for the film designed to transport even the harshest critic "back to his childhood in a Proustian sort of way." Mr. Keller, who also lent his voice to a restaurant patron in the film, describes "*Ratatouille*" as "extraordinarily clever" for its dedication to kitchen detail. He is more taken, however, by its ultimate message. "It's about somebody who is willing to take the risk, to take the gamble on doing something regardless of what the critic is going to say about it."

CLASS IN SESSION AT PARIS AIRPORTS THIS SUMMER

Paris airports are offering free classes to the 15 million passengers expected this summer. *Aéroports de Paris* (ADP) opens its "*Ecole des Vacances*" in response to their survey findings that nearly 80 percent of French people seek a learning experience during their vacation time, and 60 percent consider their holiday to begin at the airport. "With '*Ecole des Vacances*,' we would like to offer our clients a pleasant experience which mixes culture, relaxation and encounters on the occasion of summer holiday departures," said François Rubichon, Chief Operating Officer of *Aéroports de Paris*. The workshops take place in boarding lounges of the Paris-Orly and Paris-Charles de Gaulle airports, on Fridays through Sundays beginning June 29. Experts in foreign culture, health, nutrition, and relaxation conduct 10-15 minute sessions on themes ranging from introductory Tai-chi and multicultural lessons to summer health risks.

Bastille Day Celebrations Storm the U.S.

Celebrate Bastille Day with your local *Alliance Française*! The *fête* in Washington will feature the Groanbox Boys, while the Boston *Alliance* will block off streets for a party boasting francophone musicians Ricardo Lemvo and Makina Loca, Emeline Michel, and Ousmane Touré. New York City will play host to a three-block festival with French Cancon dancers, live music, *pétanque* demonstrations, and an evening ball. For more information on events in your region, please visit: www.afusa.org

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Plisson Exhibits "Eyes of the Sea" in Boston

The *Alliance Française de Boston* welcomed Philip Plisson's photography exhibition "*Les yeux de la mer*" ("The Eyes of the Sea") in collaboration with the artist's son Guillaume to the gallery of the Boston French

Library on June 1. More than 70 photography enthusiasts, including Plisson himself and M. François Gauthier, the Boston consul general of France, attended the inaugural reception of the exhibition on June 6. The exhibition features more than 50 of Plisson's latest images on paper and canvas, shot during a trip to New England last fall.

Plisson was born in 1947 and raised along the *Seine* in the *Beauce* and *Sologne* regions of France. Bringing more than 25 years of experience to his maritime photographs, he was appointed "*Peintre de la Marine*" (Official Painter

Courtesy of the French Library and Alliance Française



"Avis de Coup de Vent sur les Poulains," by Philip Plisson

of the Navy) by the French Minister of Defense in 1991. Through his work, Plisson endeavors to reveal the beauty of the relationship between man and the sea, often highlighting the contrasts between serenity

and violence found in his off-shore inspirations. In addition to Philip Plisson's photographs, several works by his son, Guillaume, can be found in the gallery. Guillaume follows the path of photography forged by his father, but has expanded his portfolio to include shots of monuments and landscapes and hopes to incorporate more media into his work. The exhibition of New England images captured by the world-renowned Philip Plisson will be on display through July 26. For more information, please visit: www.frenchlib.org.

Pissarro Leaves His Impression on Milwaukee

The Milwaukee Art Museum opened an exhibit titled "Camille Pissarro's Revolutionary Impressionist Paintings" on June 9. The exhibition, which will remain on display for three months, explores the transformation of Pissarro's landscapes through more than 40 paintings. These works range from his 1860s compositions for the *Académie des Beaux-Arts's* Salon to a selection of his entries for the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874. Representative of his role in the Impressionist movement, Pissarro was the only artist to show in all eight Impressionist Salons.

Camille Pissarro was born in 1830 on the island of St. Thomas. Intrigued by the art world from an early age, Pissarro abandoned his bourgeois upbringing at age

22 to travel throughout Venezuela with his first artistic influence, Danish painter Fritz Melbye. In 1855, he moved to Paris to study at several academic institutions, including the *École des Beaux-Arts*, and to work under a succession of influential painters, such as Gustave Courbet. The critical period displayed by this exhibition laid the groundwork for an entire generation of painters, many of whom were influenced by his experimental techniques and vision of light, climate, and season. In conjunction with the exhibition, the museum has planned a number of events, including a major four-part lecture series featuring Pissarro's great-grandson Joachim Pissarro as well as Richard Brettell, one of the foremost scholars of Impressionism.



Camille Pissarro, *Côte des Jalais, Pontoise, 1867*

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