

NATO's 60th Anniversary Marks New Era for the Alliance

On the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the leaders of its 28 member nations met in Strasbourg, France, to pay tribute to the Alliance's past and chart its future. French President Nicolas Sarkozy lauded the organization, noting that "the fact that there is peace is no coincidence — it is because we stand together." The occasion also provided an opportunity to celebrate France's full return to NATO's integrated military command: President Obama hailed this decision, declaring that "France, which is the United States' oldest ally, our first ally — once again is taking an extraordinary leadership role in NATO." (See page 4.) On the last day of the summit, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was named the new secretary general of what President Obama called "the most successful alliance in modern history."

During the summit, France joined many nations in pledging support for the United States' new strategy in Afghanistan. In addition to increases in troop strength already

completed last year, President Sarkozy announced that France would make new commitments in the area of law enforcement and economic aid to the effort. He also honored the special significance of the approaching D-Day anniversary for the Franco-American friendship, noting: "Here we are in Strasbourg ... I say to the French: Never forget what American democracy did for us."



Presidents Obama and Sarkozy exchange a display of respect at the NATO summit.

Prime Minister Fillon Visits the United States

While leaders of the G-20 states were preparing to head to London, French Prime Minister François Fillon visited New York City and Washington, D.C., from March 22 to 24 to outline the French perspective on the economic crisis. Accompanied by Finance Minister Christine Lagarde, Mr. Fillon started his trip in New York, where he met with several American executives, and promoted the French agenda for the upcoming London summit. Mr. Fillon then visited the American capital, where he pursued a busy and dynamic program of visits, and conversations with senior government officials and the press.

In Washington, D.C., Mr. Fillon met with Vice President Joe Biden at the White House to discuss France's full return to NATO, and to review foreign policy issues. Later, he promoted French "ambitions" of more regulations for the G-20 with President Obama's economic advisor, Larry Summers, as well as with Barney Frank, Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

Following these talks, Mr. Fillon addressed a high-level audience at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He recalled the historic significance of the London Summit, and made clear his appeal for more regulation, but



Prime Minister Fillon addressing the Carnegie Endowment.

also for an aggressive and comprehensive stimulus plan.

Prime Minister Fillon underscored that "regulation does not contradict the market, it strengthens it," and observed that "on this question of principle, there is no disagreement between the United States and France." Even if Mr. Fillon warned that "We should not create a bubble of public debt," he also recalled that EU member states have launched a "massive" stimulus plan, up to 3.3 percent of the E.U.'s GDP (approximately 400 billion euros).

While some have been stressing the difference of visions and expectations across the Atlantic during the G-20 summit, Mr. Fillon asserted that American and European outlooks are reconcilable, pointing out that regulation and stimulus are not

antonymic, but on the contrary, are necessary for any global plan to correct the crisis.

Finally, the prime minister lauded Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner's plan to solve the toxic assets crisis, which was unveiled the same day of his speech in Washington, stating that he was "rather reassured to see that the choice made by the US administration is one that associates public and private interests in the mechanism to deal with toxic assets."

From Capitol Hill to Kalorama: French Caucus Celebrates Its Anniversary



From L-R: Rep. Michel, Sec. LaHood and Amb. Vimont at the reception.

Ray LaHood, who was formerly a member of the caucus during his time in Congress.

"Created in 2003, the French Caucus has thrived under the able leadership of Congressmen Jim Oberstar and John Boozman in the House, and Senators Mary Landrieu and Susan Collins in the Senate," French Ambassador Vimont exclaimed in his opening remarks. With over 108 members in the House and Senate and counting, the French Caucus is a bipartisan, bicameral congressional organization dedicated to enhancing US-French relations, partnership and cooperation in bilateral relations.

"We've come along way since Freedom Fries," former House Republican Leader Bob Michel declared, characterizing the state of French-American relations and the success of the French Caucus. The success of the latter is the "result of everyone [in Congress] trying to build dialogue," Representative Boozman concurred. Illustrating that the transatlantic

solidarity extends beyond the realm of politics, Ambassador Vimont made reference to the dynamic trade relations the two countries enjoy, highlighting \$1.2 billion in daily bilateral commercial transactions, Rep. Boozman cited France's decision to reengage NATO's integrated military command structure as another example.

The reception came at an especially significant time; a bill designating the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail had been signed into law a day earlier by President Obama. The historic trail follows the 650-mile journey that General Rochambeau's French troops and their American comrades made from Rhode Island to Virginia — which culminated in the Battle of Yorktown and guaranteed the United States' independence. "Sponsored by two French Caucus members, Senator Joe Lieberman and Congressman Maurice Hinchey," Amb. Vimont announced, "this newly-enacted legislation honors the long-standing friendship, [...] and preserves a historic legacy and educates citizens about French-American history."

Members of Congress, the press, business and think tank communities, along with other distinguished guests, celebrated the centuries-old French-American alliance on March 31 during a reception held in honor of the French Congressional Caucus at the Residence of France. One of the honored guests in attendance was Secretary of Transportation

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FRENCH MATHEMATICIAN WINS ABEL PRIZE

Mikhael Gromov was awarded the 2009 Abel Prize by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research last month, recognizing his contribution to mathematics. This distinction also pays tribute to the *Ecole mathématique française's* great tradition of excellence and once again underlines the high quality of French fundamental research. A mathematician of Russian origin, Gromov has been a permanent professor at the *Institut des Hautes Études Scientifiques* (IHES) in Bures-sur-Yvette since 1982. Gromov became a French citizen in 1992. The Abel Prize was instituted in 2002 and is the de facto "Nobel Prize in Mathematics" according to the Mathematical Association of America. It has already been awarded twice to French mathematicians—Jean-Pierre Serre in 2003 and Jacques Tits in 2008.

BOOK FAIR BRINGS MEXICO TO PARIS



Sponge Bob visits the Mexico pavilion at this year's Salon du livre

This year's 29th annual International Book Fair attracted 1,200 publishers and 3,000 authors during the week-long event held at Porte de Versailles in

Paris from March 13 to 18. Mexico was this year's featured guest, honoring 40 authors who represented the finest in contemporary Mexican writing, including: Carlos Fuentes, winner of the Cervantes Prize in 1987 and founder of *The Mexican Review of Literature*; Octavio Paz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1990; and Alfonso Reyes, a forerunner of surrealism literature. "Their enthusiasm made us want to find out more and spread the word about fascinating Mexican literature, which includes some major authors," explained Christine de Mazières of the French Publishers Association, the organizer of the event. The tribute also took place in a 1,000-square meter pavilion designed by Mexican architect Bernardo Gomez-Pimenta, director of the Anahuac University School of Architecture in North Mexico City.

Current Events

G-20 Summit Seeks Global Solutions



President Sarkozy and Chancellor Merkel discuss the results of the G-20 Summit during a joint press conference on April 1.

The heads of state and government of the Group of Twenty (G-20) outlined a blueprint for a "global solution" to the current economic crisis during their summit in London last month. On April 2, the leaders of 20 of the world's largest economies committed to \$1.1 trillion in additional loans and guarantees to assist financially troubled countries and facilitate trade. The G-20's official *communiqué* declares that this broad action was based on the belief that "the only sure foundation for sustainable globalization and rising prosperity for all is an open world economy based on market principles, effective regulation, and strong global institutions."

The centerpiece of the G-20's plan is a more active

International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is to expand its role as a "responder" to economic distress. The Group pledged to triple the IMF's resources to \$750 billion to better equip the organization to make emergency loans to countries in need. The IMF will also issue \$250 billion in Special Drawing Rights, the synthetic currency of the Fund; this money is to be divided up among member states, who will then be able to lend it to troubled neighbor nations.

The G-20 also set out new international rules to regulate hedge funds and rating agencies, detailed a common approach to dealing with toxic assets in banks around the world, agreed to "name and shame" nations that attempt to interfere with free trade, and decided to establish a financial stability board to alert countries of systematic risks to the world economy. The members agreed to meet again before the end of the year to review their progress toward these goals.

Reflecting on the summit's results, French President Nicolas Sarkozy underscored the objective to restore confidence in the international financial system and the necessity for new regulation during a joint press conference on April 1 with Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel: "We well understand the need to put fuel [into the engine] and we've done so. [...] Without new regulation there won't be confidence and without confidence there will be no recovery."

Louisiana Celebrates French Cultural Heritage

In celebration of "*Le mois de la francophonie*," French Ambassador Pierre Vimont traveled to Louisiana. On March 20, the International Day of Francophonie, Vimont made a special appearance at the Park Vista Immersion School, home to a kindergarten through sixth grade French immersion program in Opelousas, central Louisiana. Vimont visited several classrooms, and noted "What I have seen so far is impressive, I must say. It is a wonderful way of teaching French, and I think we should develop it as much as possible."

Demonstrating his country's support for the educational program, Vimont met with the St. Landry Parish teachers of French and also donated 1,000 French books from the association *Bibliothèques sans frontières* to the school's permanent collection. Afterwards, the ambassador attended a reception hosted by St. Landry Parish at City Court. Vimont spoke graciously of the abundant French influences and culture in Louisiana, a state he had visited several times but never during this day of international celebration. "I have witnessed many strengths that have impressed me during my visit [...] Wherever we went, I was reminded of France," he expressed.

The ambassador then traveled to New Orleans for a series of appearances, including a visit to the World War II Museum. During a garden ceremony at the residence of the French Consul General Olivier Brochenin, Mr. Vimont awarded the Legion of Honor to New Orleans resident Nicole Spangenberg for her bravery and commitment at the young age of 16 when she cared for wounded soldiers and evacuated those in danger in France during World War II. Ambassador Vimont also attended the *fête française* at the *Ecole Bilingue*, as well as the Alliance Française annual Gala Dinner.



Ambassador Vimont speaks at the Park Vista Immersion School in Opelousas during his trip to Louisiana in March for *Le mois de la francophonie*.

Saint Laurent: From the Design House to the Art House

Yves Saint Laurent ranks among the top couturiers in history, not only designing some of the most highly desired garments but creating outfits for the changing roles of women. From November 1 to April 5, the de Young Museum of Fine Arts in San Francisco exhibited highlights from the designer's 40-year career, with 130 accessorized outfits ranging from Saint Laurent's early days as a teenager in Paris's fashion world to his last runway show in 2002.

The first retrospective look at Saint Laurent's work since his death last year, the exhibition displays the significant contributions of the designer to the way women dress and view themselves. His revolutionary "le smoking" — an evening tuxedo for confident women — was a symbol of empowerment,



Saint Laurent's multicolor feather coat and chiffon dress with tiger-print (1990).

allowing women to dress in ways that were previously limited to powerful men.

The exhibit also explores the many sources of Saint Laurent's inspiration, ranging from fine art to nature and worldly cultures. Designed in the 1960s, the Saint Laurent minimalist dress based on the block paintings of Piet Mondrian helped define the dramatic social changes of the decade. A fiery gown from his 1990 collection combines rooster, vulture and pheasant feathers and showcases the beauty of the natural world on the runway. The exhibition also displays a selection from the designer's African-inspired 1967 collection that incorporated Congolese wood beading into organza frocks.

For more information, please visit: www.ysldeyoung.org.

French Book Service Writes New Chapter for Young Minds

An online book rental service specializing in French-language children's books — *Les Petits Livres* — is now making French literature accessible to American children. Similar to Netflix or Booksfree, the recently launched site provides access to extensive resources, mails books to patrons' homes and ensures speedy delivery by automatically updating users' queues.

Les Petits Livres saves time and energy by selecting titles for patrons for a flat monthly fee. Understanding that non-French speaking parents may have trouble choosing French book titles, the automated reading lists ensure that books are age-appropriate and also expose children to a greater diversity of materials. Parents specify the age or reading level of the child, personal interests, and genre of book — fiction or non-fiction.

The site was created in response to the increasing demand of French resources for students of French language immersion programs which have been gaining popularity throughout the United States. *Les Petites Livres* is designed to provide an affordable literary resource to American students studying French, offering monthly packages and the ability to mail books anywhere in the United States. For more information, please visit: www.lespetitslivres.com.



Children can expand their reading comprehension with French books.

France Shines on Richmond's Silver Screen



"Mia et le Migou," an animated tale of a young girl searching for her father in the Amazon jungle, was screened at the Richmond Film Festival.

The French Film Festival in Richmond, Virginia, is the largest tribute in the United States to contemporary cinema of the francophone world. Established in 1993 by two professors of French literature and culture at Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond, the festival receives more than 21,000 entries each year for the limited slots and welcomes approximately

35 directors, actors and producers from France as well as other French-speaking countries like Haiti, Belgium and nations in West Africa.

Founded to promote Franco-American cultural partnerships, March's 17th annual celebration sampled the diversity of francophone cinema with 12 feature-length movies by established directors along with 16 "courts metrages" — shorts — by the next generation of groundbreaking filmmakers. Many works were screened for the first time in the United States and were followed by a question-and-answer session with the director or a starring actor.

This year's children's film, "Mia et le Migou," animated the adventure of a little girl looking for her father in the Amazon jungle. French director Pierre Marcel followed with the North American premiere of his documentary "Tabarly" — the story of the "father of French yachting," Eric Tabarly, who set numerous long distance sailing records before being swept out to sea.

For more information on this film festival, please visit: www.frenchfilm.vcu.edu.

FRENCH FILM FESTIVALS SWEEP U.S.

From coast to coast, theaters opened their curtains to French productions this spring. In Hollywood, the **12th Annual COL-COA** (City of Lights, City of Angels) film festival debuted on April 20. Opening night featured the international premiere of the romantic drama "Je l'aimais," followed by a discussion with co-writer and director, Zabou Breitman. Other films in the festival ranged from the North American premiere of espionage thriller, "Secret défense" to the west coast premiere of the comedic genius from fan-favorite Gérard Depardieu in "HELLO GOODBYE."

Moving across the country to New Orleans, the city held its film festival, **Cajuns on the Silver Screen**, on every Sunday afternoon in March, showing a total of five films featuring Cajun culture. After each screening, participants discussed the work with a special presenter.

The zeal for French films also carried through the Midwest. **The First Annual Chicago International Movies and Music Festival** (CIMMfest), in early March entertained over 15,000 attendees to 60 films from 15 countries. The festival featured exclusive world, national, and Chicago premieres, live musical performances, and a photo exhibit. During the CIMMfest awards ceremony, French film "But We Have the Music" received the honor of Special Jury Award. A fellow Midwestern city cast a spotlight on French-language films in the **Eighth Annual Francophone Film Festival of Kalamazoo**, Michigan. Commencing on March 18, the five-day event featured films from Haiti, Chad, Quebec, Tunisia and Burkina Faso. Also in the region, the **Cleveland International Film Festival** ran for its 33rd year in late March. It explored uniquely French films, as well as flicks created in partnerships with French and international directors, such as "La forêt danse," a motion picture about the triumph of the village of Baga, Togo, West Africa, created by cinematic collaboration from the U.K., Togo, and France.

On the east coast, the **Philadelphia Film Festival and Cinefest 09** welcomed international films from March 26 to April 6. "The French Reconnection" drew attention to an array of 10 French films. One of the most anticipated films, "La belle personne," came from director Christophe Honoré and featured prominent French actor Louis Garrel. In warmer temperatures, the **Miami International Film Festival** ignited the cultural hotspot for nine days in early March. Honoring imaginative and exciting audio-visual presentations, the "Cutting the Edge Competition," awarded first place to French film "De la guerre" by Bertrand Bonello.

France Rejoins NATO's Integrated Military Command Structure

Celebrating its 60th anniversary as a member of NATO this month, France symbolically solidified the decision to reengage the command structure of the North Atlantic Alliance. Nearly 43 years after Charles de Gaulle withdrew France from the integrated command structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), France set in motion last month the process to rejoin the structure.

During a discourse in Paris on March 11, French President Nicolas Sarkozy asserted that, given France's participation in NATO missions, it no longer makes sense not to fully participate in the command structure that runs such interventions. "We send our soldiers on the terrain but we don't participate in the committee where their objectives are decided," he argued. "The time has come to end this situation. It is in the interest of France and the interest of Europe." Mr. Sarkozy cemented the decision to fully reintegrate into the command structure by submitting a formal request on March 19 to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. During his speech to France's Strategic Research Foundation, Mr. Sarkozy stressed, "Our strategy cannot remain stuck in the past when the conditions of our security have changed radically."

History



The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington, D.C., on April 4, 1949.

and a major contributor to NATO, President de Gaulle disengaged France from the Alliance's military structure in 1966, asking all foreign military troops not under French command to leave France, including their military headquarters and arsenals. The withdrawal from the integrated command structure was an endeavor to consolidate French sovereignty and independence in the Cold War era.

France's decision to rejoin the Alliance's command structure is the culmination of two decades of debate, both within and outside France, and transnational dialogue dating back to presidents François Mitterand and Jacques Chirac.

Present: France Remains Major Contributor

Despite France's withdrawal from the command structure, it has remained an active member of NATO. In addition to being a full participant in the alliance's political bodies, France is one of the North Atlantic Alliance's leading contributors of personnel and financial backing. Its funds constitute approximately \$230 million (170 million euros) of NATO's budget — making France the fourth largest financial participant in the Alliance — and about 4,500 French military personnel are deployed under NATO's banner. French forces have been major contributors to every NATO military engagement, including ongoing NATO operations in Afghanistan.

About 3,800 French soldiers currently serve there as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), with some of them embedded within the Afghan National Army (ANA), which they help train (see NFF 08.10).

At France's initiative, the European Gendarmerie Force will deploy approximately 400 gendarmes within the upcoming weeks. France will send a detachment of 150 gendarmes.



A French and American soldier follow Afghan troops as part of the NATO Operational Monitoring and Liaison Teams in Afghanistan. France has been actively engaged in NATO operations throughout its membership, and its re-entrance into the integrated military command structure formalizes such efforts.

Future: France Resumes Full Participation

Over the years, France has moved steadily toward re-integration with NATO's command structure. For example, French officers assisted NATO's military committee during the operations in Bosnia, and as of 2004 France has three military headquarters authorized for NATO operations. President Sarkozy declared on March 11 that France would fully rejoin NATO's military command, pointing to both the post-Cold War landscape and France's significant participation in alliance's operations as reasons behind the decision. He announced that France would rejoin NATO's command structure as a "free but stalwart, independent but engaged ally." Under the arrangements being finalized, France's financial contributions will increase, and French generals may take command of NATO's regional headquarters, Lisbon, and the Allied Command Transformation (ACT) study group, Norfolk, VA, charged with planning for future NATO missions. France will decide upon the operations its military engages in — as all NATO missions must be approved unanimously — and will of course retain full control of its nuclear arsenal. Above all, President Sarkozy emphasized, France would "completely take its place in NATO [...] in the service of its values and of peace."

A fully engaged France in NATO is also compatible with European Security and Defense Policy (ESPD). "Our defense has two pillars," President Sarkozy assured during his March 11 address, "The European Union and the Atlantic Alliance." Similarly, the allied countries agreed during the 2008 NATO summit meeting that ESPD and NATO security are indeed complementary. "A stronger Europe contributes to European and global security and stability," former president George W. Bush declared, adding that "the European Union needs to be a strong and effective actor on the international stage and encouraged European nations to develop the resources and steps needed to strengthen their defense capabilities, which must be robust and flexible enough to support both NATO and EU operations."

Although there has been a change in US administration, American acceptance of France rejoining the integrated command structure has remained constant. President Barack Obama lauded on March 22 France's decision to return to NATO's military command after a 43-year hiatus, stating "France's full participation [...] will contribute to a stronger alliance and a stronger Europe. I enthusiastically welcome the decision made by French President Nicolas Sarkozy to fully reintegrate France into the NATO alliance." Mr. Obama continued, saying "President Sarkozy's leadership has been essential and is much appreciated. France is a founding member of NATO and has been a strong contributor to NATO missions throughout the alliance's history."

Driving on Air

Zero pollution and zero maintenance that rides on air: the advantage of the technology driving the AirPod — the latest automotive innovation of French corporation Moteur Développement International (MDI). After 10 years of research and development, the first introductory models were released this spring and featured in the Geneva International Motor Show in March. The Compressed Air Technology Engine powers the



A breath of fresh air for drivers, the AirPod minimizes pollution and increases urban mobility.

four-seater AirPod, costing only one euro to fuel approximately 125 miles of driving, and taking less than two minutes to recharge. Designed to accommodate the difficulties of urban pollution and traffic, the AirPod releases no CO₂ emissions, is ideal for parking in small spaces and glides through city streets

personnel into and out of buildings without affecting the indoor air quality. Following production of the AirPod, MDI will produce other vehicles with similar technology: OneFlowAIR, CityFlowAIR, and the MiniFlowAIR.

For more information, please visit: www.theaircar.com.

for up to 140 miles per tank.

While MDI plans for mass production of their vehicles for the general population in December, they recently announced a partnership with Air France-KLM, who will carry out six-month trials at Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam-Schipol airports using AirPods. Thanks to the innovative technology, the vehicles will facilitate the transportation of tools and spare parts as well as shuttle airport

The 20th Anniversary of the Web's Weaving

Twenty years ago, Tim Berners-Lee put forth a vision of what would become the now ubiquitous World Wide Web. Then a researcher at the *Organisation européenne pour la recherche nucléaire* (CERN) near the Franco-Swiss border, Berners-Lee published the unassumingly-titled "Information Management: A proposal" on March 13, 1989. The plan described a system of servers hosting information distributed through hypertext connections — the very foundation of the Internet.

Working as a software consultant and physicist for CERN, Berners-Lee began developing the basic components of the Web. At the time, computers did not communicate with each other — forcing CERN scientists to manage intricate projects on incompatible machines. Berners-Lee realized how useful it would be if scientists could share data directly between computers. Linking up with CERN computer scientist Robert Cailliau, Berners-Lee set out to realize his idea, and by December 1990, "info.cern.ch" became the address of the very first Web site.



Tim Berners-Lee (left) and Robert Cailliau celebrate their remarkable collaboration at the WWW@20 ceremony at CERN.

Berners-Lee, now 53, celebrated the 20-year anniversary with Cailliau at the WWW@20 ceremony at CERN, stating, "The Web is not all done. It's just the tip of the iceberg."

French Students Connect Through iTunes University



France is the first non-English speaking country that offers students a multitude of information through iTunes U.

Two French universities have recently gone digital by joining "iTunes U." Beginning in 2009, Nice Sophia Antipolis and Paris Descartes joined over 200 universities that participate in "iTunes U" worldwide. Being the first non-English speaking country to use this technology, France is facilitating the learning process in higher education.

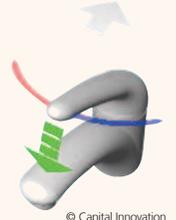
iTunes University, or "iTunes U," is an extension of Apple's iTunes Store that offers over 100,000 free educational video files and podcasts to students and teachers. The application is designed to aid both students who have missed classes and those looking for supplemental learning materials. This multimedia resource is free to registered institutions and provides lesson podcasts, recorded lectures as well as materials from class presentations.

"The most important issue is the progress of the students. In particular, students in their first year, thus the levels are very heterogeneous. Podcasts allow each [student] to review a definition, passage, etc," explained Alexandre Bonucci, professor of linguistics and computer sciences at the University of Lyon-II. In addition, Bonucci stressed the importance of using "iTunes U" to give students more opportunities to succeed.

Apple claims that mobile learning, through devices such as "iTunes U," is the future of academia because it allows students to study anytime, anywhere and at their own pace.

ECO-FAUCET TAPS INTO CONSERVATION POSSIBILITIES

Conserving water could be as easy as a simple push, thanks to a revolutionary new faucet unveiled in Frankfurt earlier this month by French design company Capital Innovation. The key improvement is the new mixing valve, known as the "ecoPUSH." Like conventional faucets, turning the handle left or right produces warmer or cooler water, and lifting up on it releases a steady flow *d'eau*. However, pushing down on the handle yields a burst of water that lasts only as long as the pressure — saving drops otherwise lost to inefficiency. "I was looking for a solution so that my children, though sensitive to this subject, would no longer let the water run while they brush their teeth," explained associate director of Capital Innovation Jean-Yves Corbin, who conceptualized the ecoPUSH. Capital Innovation estimates that the new product can save a family of four 1,500 gallons of water annually. Money does not have to go down the drain, either: upgrading standard faucets requires only a few minor modifications, according to *Le Figaro*. For more information, please visit: www.capital-innovation.fr.



A rendition of the ecoPUSH displays the four directions of movement.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT CREATES THOUSANDS OF JOBS IN FRANCE

Approximately 32,000 jobs were created or maintained thanks to foreign direct investment in France, Christine Lagarde, minister of Finance, and David Appia, president of the French Agency for International Investments (AFII), announced on March 13. In total, foreign enterprises pursued 640 investment projects in 2008 — up from 624 the previous year. "It's a sign of confidence on the part of investors," officials at the Ministry of Finance affirmed. 22,510 foreign businesses are present in France today, employing a total of 2.8 million people, according to *Le Figaro*. Microsoft recently created one hundred new jobs by opening a new research and development center in Issy-les-Moulineaux. "Structural reforms led by France, whether the greater flexibility in the labor market or research in tax credits" are behind such attractiveness to international business, the officials at the Ministry of Finance asserted.



A 3-D exhibition on Pablo Picasso brings new light to interpretation of his works.

La Cathédrale d'Images offers a unique way to experience the life and work of famed artists by projecting audio-visual installations onto the walls of a former quarry in the Alpilles Mountains, located in the South of France. This spring, Spanish artist Pablo Picasso will be featured in an exhibit titled "Picasso," which combines light, sound and vibrant larger-than-life Picasso reproductions projected onto the bauxite and limestone walls.

Multimedia artist and co-director Iannuzzi Gianfranco organized the images according to the different facets of Picasso's career, including neoclassicism, cubism, Guernica, the blue and rose periods, and even a collection titled "the women in his life." Gianfranco stated, "I have tried to reconstitute his work, in my own way, through free associations that are visual, emotional and artistic."

By displaying works of the famed artist onto the quarry surfaces, *La Cathédrale d'Images* offers a unique venue for visual interpretation. The jagged, uneven rock walls ensure that the painting is never centered or flat and often extends outside of the wall onto the ceilings, floors, and ridges of the quarry. As the viewer walks around the quarry, looking at the paintings from different angles, the images appear to vanish or cross-fade, making the entire viewing experience almost three-dimensional.

"*La Cathédrale*" was discovered by Albert Plécy in the late 1970s who first used the venue to show his research on the art of photography. Since then, the quarry has been converted into a gallery that aims to honor the eloquence of visual art in shows combining illustration and music. Previous exhibits include tributes to other influential artists such as Michelangelo, Cézanne, and Van Gogh.

"Picasso" will be showing through January 3, 2010. For more information on the exhibition please visit: www.cathedrale-images.com.

For Sports Aficionados, All Paths Lead to Paris

The finish line on the first level of the Eiffel Tower was a welcome relief for runners in Paris's second annual cross-country race held on March 14. Arranged by *Les Trailers de Paris Ile-de-France*, *Eco-Trail de Paris Ile-de-France* was a 50-mile course encompassing the capital city and its suburbs. Aiming to promote the practice of sports in natural areas, the course consisted of nature trails and attracted 1,004 runners equipped with two liters of water, reflective arm bands, and electric blankets. The winning time was just over six hours.

La Twin Santé, another race finishing at the Eiffel Tower, was a non-timed 13-mile event open to all adults. A portion of the entry-fee proceeds were donated to *Trans-Forme* — an association dedicated to helping athletes with transplants. Completed with a running partner, this race encouraged cooperation and friendliness among the 3,000 participants and provided an occasion to experience the picturesque and unique places around the City of Light.

New trails in Paris, *Les Randonnées*, offered four different hiking routes, ranging from 7 to 15 miles for beginners and professionals alike. All routes also finished at the Eiffel Tower, and a portion of the registration fees went to charitable organizations.

For more information on these events, please visit: www.traildeparis.com.



Sports enthusiasts explored the nature of Paris during a 50-mile race that ended at the Eiffel Tower.

Michelin Guide Celebrates its 100th Edition

The famous red MICHELIN Guide, the authority on gourmet dining and tourist activities, celebrated its 100th edition. First published in 1900, the guide suspended publication during WWII, and has since evolved over the last century. The 100th edition will feature nearly 8,500 establishments in over 2,000 pages for the centennial edition.

To commemorate its 100 years as a connoisseur of cuisine, MICHELIN organized "*Le mois Gourmand*," the month of fine dining, from March 9 to April 5. Inside the guide was a pass, valid to be used and re-used at over 900 restaurants. Patrons received special offers such as discounted menus,



From March 9 to April 5, the MICHELIN Guide's "*Le mois Gourmand*" celebrated gourmet cuisine with special offers such as wine tastings and discounts for restaurant-goers.

guided tours of wine cellars with tastings, as well as deals on wines and cooking classes.

The guide uses a rating system of one to three stars based on five criteria: quality of the products, mastery of flavor and cooking, "personality" of the cuisine, the value for the money, and the consistency between visits. One-star restaurants are considered "very good." Two star restaurants are "excellent cooking and worth a detour." Three-star restaurants are "exceptional cuisine and worth the journey."

There are currently 11 three-star restaurants in Paris, including world-famous *Hôtel Le Bristol* under the guidance of chef Eric Fréchon. Each night a team of 80 helps Fréchon serve 45 tables. Located near the Élysée Palace — the presidential residence — frequent patrons include French President Nicolas Sarkozy and accompanying world leaders from England to Egypt. In the U.S., there are six three-star restaurants in four cities rated in the Guide: New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Las Vegas.

For more information on the publication, please visit: www.michelinguide.com.



First published in 1900, and postponed during WWII, this year marks the 100th edition of Michelin Guide.

A Towering 120 Years for French Icon



The Eiffel Tower celebrated its 120th birthday on March 31.

The instantly recognizable silhouette that has become the shining beacon of France turns 120 this year. Officially inaugurated on March 31, 1889, the Eiffel Tower was opened to the public on May 15 to a crowd of 2 million onlookers flocking to see the then tallest building in the world. While initially criticized for its design, architect Gustave Eiffel responded to naysayers, "The Tower will have its own beauty."

The Eiffel Tower continues to dazzle audiences, alternating its decoration to honor various celebrations and events. To mark the French Presidency of the European Union in 2008, the tower donned a blue hue adorned with gold stars — representing the European flag. For the Rugby World Cup in 2007, the iron scaffolding was illuminated in shades of green with white crossbeams to symbolize the turf and goalposts of the rugby field. In 2000, the tower rang in the new millennium with shimmering lights and fireworks.

On her 120th birthday, the iconic structure will receive a facelift — the 19th time that the tower will have been repainted. A team of 25 painters, many of them experienced mountain climbers, will apply a total of 66 tons of lead-free paint to the Tower over the next three years. In addition, the Hôtel de Ville in Paris will host an exhibition in May dedicated to the life of Gustave Eiffel.

Warhol's Pop World Piques Parisian Interest

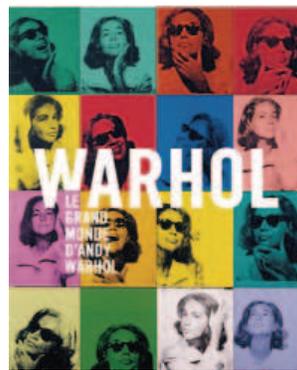
"Warhol's Wide World," an exhibition at the Grand Palais, encompasses all that is beautiful, colorful and quintessentially "pop." The Parisian museum is showcasing 150 portraits of Andy Warhol in the world's largest exhibit ever dedicated to the celebrated American artist. Running until mid-July, the exhibit is expected to draw record crowds for the artist's famous renditions of Marilyn Monroe and Chairman Mao along with his portraits of bygone musicians, film stars and art benefactors.

This exhibit is the first showing of Warhol's work in France since the artist's death more than two decades ago. According to head curator Alain Cuffe, the exhibition is designed to take a closer look at the artist and display Warhol as a master portraitist who grappled with heavy themes including life, death and religion.

"Warhol wanted to produce portraits that showed not just people, but a society, a whole wide world," stated Cuffe. Warhol used repetition and perfection in his works to comment on mass culture and consumerism. For example, while making "Ethel Scull 36 Times," a collage of headshots, the wife of a New York art patron posed for more than 300 photos in a Time Square booth as Warhol fed her jokes.

The resulting images were then altered during the screen printing process. "I don't want to keep the blemishes" Warhol once quoted, commenting on the mainstream way of life.

Warhol had a strong following in France. In fact, the artist owned an apartment on Paris's left bank where he exhibited his later works dedicated to sacred imagery.



The Grand Palais in Paris is showcasing 150 of Andy Warhol's portraits.

Famous French Satirical Sitcom Celebrates 20 Years of Mockery

Political puppets take on a whole new meaning in France's longest-running comedic program, "Les Guignols de l'Info." Organized by a crew of 300 for over 4,000 episodes, Les Guignols extended its usual 10-minute broadcast to a five-hour special on March 16 for a retrospective and behind-the-scenes look celebrating 20 years in the comedic spotlight. Real politicians replaced their plastic counterparts for the commemorative installment that included French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë.



A recently released DVD explores 20 years of Les Guignols.

The widespread popularity of the latex marionettes has grown to attract 3 million viewers for their nightly satirical

newscast on French television station Canal+. Farces target political heavyweights and celebrities, such as President Sarkozy as well as other world leaders and international personalities.

Another favorite puppet is a caricature of former French President Jacques Chirac who was a nightly staple of the show during his 12 years in office. Previously exaggerated as an impulsive politician making incredible promises, Chirac reportedly enjoys the political sitcom and stated that he still watches the show, calling the program "very clever, very political, very fierce."

LILLE LIGHTS UP WITH A CELEBRATION OF EUROPE



A glamorous celebration at this year's edition of Lille3000. "Europe XXL" recognized the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Lille, a cultural capital in northern France, is hosting the spring festival "Lille3000." this year's theme is "Europe XXL: East is the new West is the new East." Recognizing the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, this year's festival features Eastern Europe. From March to July, the streets of Lille are transformed each weekend with 2,500 events and 9 million participants highlighting cities from Berlin to Budapest. Exhibitions on fashion and literature, live music and theatre performances, as well as cuisine offerings are all designed to provide a "journey of discovery through a new continent, a voyage through a Europe transfigured 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall" according to event organizers. The festivities opened on March 14 with a parade in downtown Lille that included flying trapeze, a Yiddish orchestra and chorus performing traditional Eastern European songs. The cultural festival first occurred in 2006 and honored India. For more information on the festival, please visit: www.lille3000.com.

"FORE!!!!," OR RATHER, THIRD ANNUAL GOLF SHOW LINKS PARISIANS

The third annual *Salon du Golf* held from March 14 to 16 this year at Porte de Versailles in Paris gave golf enthusiasts a chance to learn and exchange information about new golf products, practices and services. Attracting a record crowd of 50,000 visitors, over 250 exhibits allowed golfers to test new products and clothing as well as receive advice from professional players. The *Salon du Golf* offers avid golfers a chance to practice their swing with 80 practice stations, as well as 500 square meters of putting green. In addition, a featured technology available to all visitors measured the movements of the golfer during the swing stroke and offered instantaneous expert tips.

Embassies of the E.U. will open their doors to the public on May 9, offering a unique "behind the gates" look into the diplomatic world and respective cultural treasures — no passport needed. Free shuttle services will provide public transportation to each embassy.

The French embassy will feature children's workshops, mini French lessons, and the opportunity to sample French music and gastronomy, among other events. For the first time ever, representatives from the Chancellery will take part: a 10-minute video will document the nature of the diplomats' work as well as their perspectives on French-American relations. For more information, please visit: www.ambafrance-us.org.

Coast-to-Coast Celebrations for Francophone Nations

Celebrations of la Francophonie last month brought together over 800 million people from 70 nations across the globe, uniting countries from Cameroon to Canada. This diverse mosaic of peoples commemorated their common linguistic heritage as well as their distinct



French light sculptor Patrick Rimoux projected excerpts of French literature on the Payne Whitney Mansion in New York City.

cultures with festivities across the globe that affirmed individual identity in a globalizing world. In the United States, Americans discovered exciting ways to experience the diverse make-up of the Francophone world with events including banquets, film screenings, concerts and literature readings.

La grande fête at the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C., kicked off the month of celebrations by showcasing music, cuisine, and the arts from the French-speaking camaraderie that spans five continents. Representatives from Gabon offered a taste of the country's spicy ginger drink. Romania provided samples of *mititei*, a national dish of grilled meat rolls. Tunisia gave out glasses of its domestic red and white wines.

New Englanders explored the tastes of the Francophone world as well. Boston hosted "A Taste of Francophonie," a food festival of flavors from the cuisines of French-speaking countries that included Moroccan date cookies, Lebanese hummus and *pain haïtien*. Further south in America's own French-influenced culture, New Orleans presented the "Art de vivre: création chocolat," showcasing the delectable confections by French chocolatier Benjamin Desmartins. Seattle was also treated to a

tasty feast with "*Repas de la Francophonie*."

In addition, cinema and literature highlighted the diversity of French-speaking cultures. Film festivals across the United States included the 8th Annual Francophone Film Festival in Chicago, the International Film Festival in Miami, and "Cajuns on the Silver Screen" in New Orleans. Florida State University emphasized the international influence of the

French language on global literature with a conference on Francophone prose titled "*La littérature-monde en France*."

French light sculptor Patrick Rimoux illuminated the Payne Whitney Mansion in New York City, home to the cultural service of the French Embassy in the United States. Honoring the month of French-speaking unity as well as the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City on March 19, Rimoux projected excerpts of French literature on the building's exterior for one night only, and also designed an indoor light installation specifically for the event.

The month culminated on March 20 with *La journée de la Francophonie*, International Francophone Day held in Paris. The event brought together all reaches of the French-speaking world with African music and dance, art exhibitions showcasing works from the Middle East, and speakers honoring the union of diverse cultures tied by a common language.

For more information about Francophone events in your region, please visit the embassy's Web site, www.ambafrance-us.org, and click on our interactive map to find the nearest French consulate.

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