

France Plays an Active Role in Haiti Relief Efforts



French President Nicolas Sarkozy meets with Haitian President René Préval in Haiti.

In the wake of the earthquake that devastated the nation of Haiti, the international community has undertaken a quick and coordinated effort to alleviate the crisis situation affecting the island. A country that shares deep historic, cultural and linguistic ties with the Haitian nation, France was one of the first countries to respond with support and relief by mobilizing firefighters from its *sécurité civile* (emergency services unit), doctors

from its mobile emergency medical unit, a *gendarmérie* unit, search-and-rescue and rubble clearing teams, among other services. Deploying teams from the French West Indies from the outset to ensure rapid delivery of assistance, France has drawn on its global relief resources and has been an active organizer and participant of humanitarian support to Haiti.

"There are tragedies in the history of nations that immediately elicit both horror and enormous compassion, and of course, the duty to show solidarity. The earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12 — the most violent in two centuries — is one of these," stressed French President Nicolas Sarkozy in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. "It is our duty to do everything in our power to save lives."

France, with the rest of the international community, mourns the loss of those who perished in the tragedy. "In these extremely painful moments, my thoughts go to the Haitian people who are exhibiting great courage in the face of the implacable adversity of nature," the French president continued. "My thoughts also go to the large Haitian community in France, who have rallied together in an exemplary fashion in these past hours."

An estimated 25 French citizens were lost in the tragedy, while another 9 remain missing. The plight affecting those on the ground in Haiti has elicited a swift reply by the French people, who have taken great lengths to demonstrate their solidarity and support for all of the victims, especially children, who remain particularly vulnerable.

A month following the disaster, President Sarkozy visited Haiti on February 17 for a morning of meetings and visits with his Haitian counterpart. Haitian President René Préval called the trip "historic," as Mr. Sarkozy was the first French president to visit the country since its independence in 1804. President Sarkozy highlighted key points of the aid package that focus not only on physical rebuilding of the country, but also on manifold restructuring efforts of Haitian administration in light of the approximate 40 percent

Secretary of State Clinton Visits France

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited France as part of her tour to Europe from January 26 - 29. Taking place on the margins of the Montreal Ministerial Conference on Haiti and the London Conference on Afghanistan, the U.S. Secretary of State met with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner to discuss the international Haiti relief effort, and developments in Iran, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan, among other issues of mutual concern. On the subject of Haiti, "the emergency situation is still extremely worrying," stated Minister Kouchner in a joint press conference with his US counterpart. "There's common ground between Mrs. Clinton's ideas and mine. [...] For the reconstruction we have to find a plan we are going to work on together, the Americans and us, with the Brazilians, Europe, the Canadians and Spain. We have decided to set up a working group which should meet very soon." Representatives will convene at the U.N. Headquarters in March.



Minister Kouchner and Secretary Clinton discuss cooperation during a press conference.

While in Paris, Secretary Clinton also addressed the prestigious Ecole Militaire concerning the future of European security. She underscored the importance of strong transatlantic relations, asserting "The transatlantic partnership has been both a cornerstone of global security and a powerful force for global progress. Now we are called to address some of the great challenges in human history. And to meet them, we are required to modernize and strengthen our partnership. [...] European security is far more than a strategic interest of my country. It is also an expression of our values. We stand with Europe today, as we have stood with Europe for decades, because enduring bonds connect our nations and our peoples."

of Haitian government officials that were lost in the tragedy. "Today I would like to say with solemnity, from the bottom of my heart, we feel for the citizens of Haiti," the French president stated. "I want to share with you the admiration and respect of all of those around the world who helped in this amazing lesson of courage and of dignity exhibited by the Haitian people."

For more information on France's relief efforts from both government and civil enactors, please turn to pages two and three.

Paris Tribunal Houses a New Section to Investigate Genocide



France launched a system to complement the work of the International Criminal Court (above).

Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner and Minister of Justice Michèle Alliot-Marie announced the creation of a genocide and crimes against humanity section at the Paris Tribunal de Grande Instance (TGI) in an article published in French newspaper *Le Monde*. The Paris TGI handles cases ranging from anti-terrorism to organized crime. The creation of a special section aimed at prosecuting *genocidaires* and other perpetrators of atrocities "will make it possible to bring together in a single specialized section all the litigation services concerned with genocide and crimes against humanity," according to the announcement. The TGI will complement the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) based in the Netherlands, which has universal

jurisdiction and rules on disputes between nations. While the TGI's sphere of influence will not be as elaborate as that of the ICC, it will seek "to win support for the principles of international law within the national courts" and will follow the principles of the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The creation of this special section is an important step in bringing criminals to justice for France and the world; as jointly stated by Ministers Kouchner and Alliot-Marie, "France resolutely supports the fight against impunity. [...] True to her principles, proud of her justice delivered in the name of the French people, France will prove herself equal to her history, her values and her ideals."

INSIDE

- 2 Current Events**
France and the Olympics
- 3 In Depth**
Relief Efforts in Haiti
- 4 France & America**
Wine Education
- 5 Business & Tech**
Science Cooperation
- 6 Society**
Christmas Cleanup
- 7 Culture**
Louvre Ranked # 1
- 8 France in America**
Cultural Season in the U.S.

FRENCH "SPIDERMAN" TO CLIMB WORLD'S TALLEST BUILDING



Alain Robert, the Frenchman known as the human "Spiderman," has announced his intention to climb the recently opened tower Burj Khalifa in Dubai. The city's

newest addition is the world's tallest man-made structure, standing at over 2,625 feet, making it more than twice the height of New York's Empire State Building. The Burj Khalifa, named after the current president of the United Arab Emirates, was officially unveiled on January 4. Upon its completion, it took the title of "world's tallest skyscraper" from the 1,671-foot-tall Taipei 101, which Robert mounted in 2004. The French daredevil scales buildings without harnesses or ropes and has climbed many of the world's famous skyscrapers. His feats include the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Sears Tower in Chicago, and the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala-Lumpur. Robert, 47, suffers from vertigo, but that has not stopped him from scaling the world's tallest buildings using only his bare hands. "My biggest fear is to waste my time on earth," Robert said. "For me, climbing is as important as eating and breathing. Climbing skyscrapers is my lifetime love and passion."

FRANCE VOTED BEST PLACE TO LIVE FOR THE FIFTH YEAR RUNNING

For the fifth year in a row, the magazine *International Living* has ranked France as the top country in which to live in its annual *Quality of Life Index*. The report accounts for nine different factors, including economy, leisure and culture, environment, among other indicators. In the 2010 report, France received perfect scores in the categories of health, and risk and safety. The country also received near perfect scores for infrastructure and climate. However, evaluating "quality of life" extends far beyond quantifiable evidence. "France always nets high scores in most categories," the *International Living* report states. "But you don't need number crunchers to tell you its *bon vivant* lifestyle is special. Step off a plane and you'll experience it first-hand." France's robust economy and generous health benefits may contribute to its top ranking. In addition to its low cost of living, a recent World Health Organization report found France to have the best healthcare system in the world. *International Living* has been publishing the Quality of Life Index for 29 years.

Current Events

France and the Olympic Games

As the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver unfold, the event recalls the historic significance of France's commitment to the Games dating back to the 19th century.

In 1894, general secretary of the Union of French Societies of Athletic Sports Baron Pierre de Coubertin lobbied and won the unanimous support of 2,000 representatives from over 12 countries to revive the Olympic Games. They elected him the second president of the International Olympic Committee, and he presided over the first modern Games in Athens in 1896.

An athlete himself, Coubertin made it his personal goal to launch a renaissance of the Greek sporting event that continues to demonstrate the enduring link between the human mind and body. In addition to introducing the games, he also designed the logo of the five interlinking rings, explaining that, "they represent the five parts of the world united by the Olympic spirit and the six colors represent those of all the national flags that fly across our world today. [...] The Olympic Games are the greatest lesson in philosophy that humanity gives itself. They are a reflection of happiness, perfection, and love."

This year, the French Olympic Team has its sights set on surpassing the nine medals earned in the 2006 Torino Games. With over 100 athletes competing in almost every event, the French have an excellent chance to achieve this goal.

Jason Lamy-Chappuis, born in Missoula, Montana, and raised in France, won the Nordic Combined ski competition. Participating on behalf of France, Lamy-Chappuis defended his past triumphs — fourth place in the same event four years ago in Torino and his six World Cup medals in the 2009-2010 season. He represents one of France's gold medalists. A product of both the United States and France, Lamy-Chappuis demonstrates the international spirit of the Olympics Games, a quadrennial occasion for athletes and spectators to unite far beyond the actual sports arena. The Olympic Games also provide a chance to "promote peace and a sense of brotherhood throughout the world," according to the International Olympic Committee.



Courtesy: Timothé Cozzolino

The Montana-born Jason Lamy-Chappuis brought home the gold-medal for France.



Interview with Aurélien Lechevallier, Counselor for Africa and Western Hemisphere at the Embassy of France

What are your reflections on the outcome of the Montreal Conference regarding Haiti reconstruction?

World leaders, international organizations and NGOs met in Montreal for a conference last month — an important first step in demonstrating the international community's commitment to Haiti. The conference resulted in a consensus for Haitian authorities to take the lead in developing their own action plan for reconstruction with long-term sustained assistance from other countries worldwide. Secondly, the United Nations will continue to play a strong role, despite the tremendous loss suffered by their local mission's headquarters, MINUSTAH. There will be an emphasis on developing sustainable infrastructure better equipped for natural disasters. Another global conference is tentatively scheduled in New York in March to implement the action plan introduced by Haitian authorities moving forward.

What role did French missions in the U.S. play in handling the disaster?

From the beginning, the Embassy in D.C. arranged a team to react to the crisis comprised of military and diplomats. The French Embassy in D.C., the Consulate general in Miami and our liaison officer in Key West, close to U.S. Military Southern

Command, facilitated a good flow of information between Port-au-Prince, Paris, and our military people in Martinique. French companies in the U.S., including L'Oreal, Renault, Sofitel and Air France, alongside with many French people living in this country, wanted to help, so we directed them to where they could channel their donations. When the recently appointed Ambassador responsible for interministerial coordination of aid and reconstruction, Pierre Duquesne, visited D.C., the embassy was instrumental in establishing rapport with high-level officials — where he has met with USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah and Secretary of State Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills.

What do you foresee as the greatest long-term challenges in the reconstruction?

There will be necessary investment in the sectors of sustainable infrastructure, agriculture and health. Strengthening the institutional capacities to build up public and economic services will also be a priority. Beyond supplying food for the population, investment in the agricultural sector has the potential to facilitate repatriation of farmable land throughout the country, as well as to stimulate the economy with increased exports. Health remains a key concern for international relief teams — French doctors in particular have performed over 8,000 consultations and 400 surgeries on the ground as of February. A long-term challenge will be in establishing a new health system with more equal access and sustainable treatment centers and hospitals around the country. But what we've seen from international actors has been a mutually responsible engagement in working towards these long-term goals.



L'interview with the expert

France Responds to the Tragedy in Haiti



French hospital ship *Siroco* arrived on January 24, staffed with doctors to care for injured Haitians

The 7.0 earthquake that hit near Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, on January 12 is the worst that the country has experienced in over 200 years. The death toll currently exceeds 200,000, with millions of survivors desperately seeking relief.

In addition to the support of Brazil, Spain, the U.S., Australia, and other members of the international community, the European Union has allocated 430 million euros to Haitian relief efforts. As of February 9, the U.N. had raised 517 million dollars of its 575 million dollar flash appeal. Shortly after the earthquake, the UN Security Council passed a resolution to send 3,500 additional troops to the UN Haiti Mission, MINUSTAH, thereby increasing the total staff to over 12,000 people. The E.U. has dispatched 350 policemen to support U.N. efforts, and part of the European Police Force is already in place and growing.

As countries around the world united to demonstrate their solidarity for Haiti, France, which enjoys long-standing cultural ties with the island nation, is playing a particularly active role in supporting the relief efforts. France pledged millions of euros toward relief efforts in Haiti, including 30 million for immediate urgent aid, 100 million for post-crisis funding, and 200 million for reconstructing the nation's infrastructure through 2013. Authorities also confirmed a supplementary 92 million euros to U.N. assistance, including an emergency two million euros for the World Food Programme. In an effort to alleviate the financial burden on the devastated nation, France has annulled approximately 54 million euros of Haiti's debt.

France is acting in close coordination with the United Nations and other countries present on the ground. Since the onset of the disaster, France has been collaborating with the international community, particularly the U.S., to streamline the delivery of relief and supplies. President Sarkozy and President Obama discussed the common effort during a phone conversation on January 14, two days after the tragedy. The French president lauded "the United States's outstanding mobilization in support of Haiti and the vital role the Americans are playing on the ground," and expressed his "entire satisfaction with the cooperation between [the] two countries and, beyond that, the continuous coordination between the crisis centers of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and US Department of State."

Despite damage the earthquake caused to the French Embassy and residence in Port-au-Prince, the French remain committed to helping the Haitian people. From the outset, France has channeled assistance through the French West Indies and redirected other resources from around the world to aid Haiti's relief efforts. In addition to medical assistance, France has sent military and civilian support to facilitate food distribution. As of February 2, 1,018 French personnel were deployed in Haiti: 364 from civil security, 540 from the Ministry of Defense, and 114 from the National Police. To provide search-and-rescue and rubble-clearing assistance, 1,140 personnel and 1,630 tons of equipment have been deployed. Nine charter planes have delivered close to 150 tons of equipment and emergency supplies to the capital city.

Among other mobilization efforts, France has appointed Pierre Duquesne as an ambassador for inter-ministerial coordination of aid and recon-



French Ministry of Health relief workers evacuate victims to receive medical treatment.

struction. French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner has also decided to strengthen diplomatic and consular staff in Port-au-Prince by bolstering the presence of several more officials to support the efforts of Haiti's French ambassador, Didier Le Bret.

The health of victims remains at the forefront of the aid agenda. In response, France has sent the *Siroco*, a hospital ship with a team of surgeons ready to operate on injured Haitians. On land, teams of French doctors, nurses, and coordinators are stationed throughout the country to provide medical attention. A field hospital and advanced medical unit operational since January 17 has seen over 800 patients and admitted over 200. French medical facilities have consulted over 7,200 patients and performed 364 surgical operations as of February 4. Water purification units, capable of supplying up to 20,000 people a day, have also been installed. As updated on February 4, France has evacuated 2,769 people, either to metropolitan France or to the French West Indies. The 2,769 evacuees comprised 1,221 French nationals, 1,216 Haitians, 47 (non-French) European Union citizens and 57 nationals of other countries.

Civilian Assistance

Since the earthquake struck, there has been an outpouring of civilian aid, much of which has been made possible through the fundraising efforts of various NGOs. *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), also known as Doctors Without Borders, is an international humanitarian medical aid group established by a group of French doctors and was co-founded by French Foreign Minister Kouchner.

An international organization with projects in over 70 countries, MSF has been a leader in providing emergency medical assistance in Haiti's disaster-stricken region. Erecting an inflatable hospital, which houses 100 hospital beds, two operating theatres, an emergency room, and an intensive care unit, MSF volunteers in Haiti have been working together with other international teams, the Red Cross and representatives from the French Ministry of Health. In an effort to keep hospitals open to the continuing influx of wounded persons, MSF has also created post-operative "villages" where patients can recover from their operations. Thanks to the collection of funds through various outlets such as internet and television programs, the American Red Cross has been able to send disaster specialists, provide medical care, distribute nearly 4.2 million liters of water and dispatch 56 flights carrying aid as of January 29. Along with distributing essential supplies such as mosquito nets and hygienic kits, the French Red Cross and Red Crescent have made psychological support an integral part of their operations in Haiti. Volunteers have been working closely with medical professionals to support the growing number of victims who have experienced mental trauma. These efforts complement the contributions of other international NGOs such as Habitat for Humanity, Oxfam America, United Way and World Vision who significantly contributed to relief assistance in Haiti.

The exorbitant death toll has torn apart many families and left countless children homeless. In conjunction with the Embassy of France in Port-au-Prince and the Crisis Center, the International Adoption Service (SAI) has played a formidable role in extending assistance to children by collecting important census information regarding children who are in need of adoption. As of February 4, 278 children have been adopted by French families and 909 families are in the process of working with the SAI. French authorities remain fully mobilized both in France and on the ground in Haiti to provide children with the help they need, and to ensure the legal security of the adopted children.

People around the world are coming together by events to benefit the earthquake victims. On January 18, Opia restaurant in New York held a concert, with proceeds going to Save the Children for Haiti. The event was sponsored by the Consulate General of France, the newsletter French Morning, the social group French Tuesdays and Help Haiti 2010. With over 350 attendees and performances by musical artists Antoine Bleck, Francis Jocky, and Vanessa and Alex Jacquemin, the event raised an estimated 8,500 dollars. On January 22, many notable entertainers — including Haitian-born musician Wyclef Jean — participated in an internationally-broadcast telethon organized by George Clooney to raise funds for relief efforts.



Treating victims on the ground, *Médecins Sans Frontières* works to bring aid to Haiti.



The French heroine receives a festive celebration.

Citizens of New Orleans gathered in the French Quarter on January 6 to celebrate Joan of Arc's 598th birthday. The second annual Joan of Arc parade commemorated the life of the French heroine, who is celebrated for her success over the English at the Battle of Orléans during the Hundred Years' War. Known as the Maid of Orléans, she is a symbol of hope and courage for the population of New Orleans, a city rich with French tradition. Festivities in Louisiana included a parade, where revelers joined the celebration by dressing up in full Renaissance garb, as well as reenactments of the renowned figure's life. New elements of this year's commemoration included a free all-day conference exploring the life of Joan of Arc, ranging from her involvement in military battles to her canonization by the Catholic Church. Titled the "Joan of Arts Fête," the conference also included a French-language workshop led by instructors from the local Alliance Française, and performances by various musicians. To commemorate the heroine's pivotal role in the crowning of the dauphin, Charles VII, parade-goers watched a reenactment of the coronation.

BUBBLY IN BOSTON

Those with a palette for first-rate champagne and the finest local cuisine were in for a treat on January 30, as the Tour de Champagne made its third annual stop in Boston. The yearly tour celebrates both the delightful fruits of France and the culinary masterpieces of local chefs. Participants had the opportunity to sample over 20 varieties of France's finest champagnes along with culinary treats from some of Boston's top chefs. The main event took place in the Charles Hotel in Cambridge, MA, where the festivities included a silent auction with proceeds going to the Greater Boston Food Bank. Before the evening's events drew to a close, VIP ticketholders were treated to a special cognac tasting by Peyrot and coffee service by EVS Nespresso.

France & America

No Whining About Vintage Education

The French Wine Society (FWS), a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of French wine through education in North America, recently launched an eight-week French Wine Scholar certification program. The industry-recognized course offers enthusiasts and professionals alike the opportunity to deepen their understanding of both an industry and culture to become conversant, and even "fluent in French wine."

An abridged version featuring core elements of the traditional course to become a sommelier, the certificate appeals to those who do not have two years to spend studying for the exam but still want to quantifiably expand their knowledge. Julien Camus, President of the French Wine Society, affirms, "Wine is no longer a field driven by self-professed experts." Today, there are creden-



The French Wine Scholar Certification yields "fluency in French wine."

tial programs worldwide that allow a wine professional to validate his or her proficiency on the subject matter. The FWS's exclusive focus on France makes its Certificate Program one-of-a-kind.

"All students of wine eventually discover France. It is the benchmark," FWS Director of Education Lisa Airey asserts. "Chardonnay, Pinot Gris/Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, all of the most widely planted commercially produced international grape varieties, are indigenous to France."

Thanks to the intoxicating opportunity to cultivate one's palate and knowledge, 15 individuals passed the inaugural examination in October 2009 and were declared proficient French Wine Scholars.

For more information on the program, please visit: www.FrenchWineSociety.org.

A Music Award with "Pijazz"

World-renowned trumpeter Terence Blanchard was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque 2009, the premier French award for musical recordings. The American trumpeter and Golden Globe-nominated film score composer received the Grand Prix in the Jazz category for his album titled Choices. Selections from Choices will be hitting the big screen this month, as his jazz is featured in Disney's newest animated film The Princess and the Frog.

The award was introduced by the French association Académie Charles Cros in 1948. It offers prizes in various categories including Ancient Music, Baroque Music, Blues, Chamber Music, Choral Music, Jazz, Opera, Recordings for Children, Vocal Soloist (new talent) and World Music. Académie member Claude Carrière presented Mr. Blanchard with the award at the Snug Harbor in New Orleans on January 26. Blanchard's students from the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, whom he helped relocate out of New Orleans fol-



Terence Blanchard won the prestigious Grand Prix du Disque 2009.

lowing Hurricane Katrina, performed to sound out the good news.

It may seem fitting for this American jazz musician to win such high French praise for his art. The music has been very popular in France since it first crossed the Atlantic during the first World War. The French continue to embrace the art to this day and have added their own European flavor, combining American swing and French dance hall music.

French Rock the Grammys

French rock group Phoenix took home the trophy for Best Alternative Music Album at the 52nd Annual Grammy Awards, held in Los Angeles on January 31. The four-piece band's winning album Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix was released in May 2009 and has appeared on Billboard's Top 200 for over 35 straight weeks. Phoenix is the first French band to win this particular award.



French DJ David Guetta received a Grammy Award.

The Parisian DJ David Guetta won the Grammy for Best Remixed Recording, Non-Classical for his production of the song "When Love Takes Over." American singer Kelly Rowland performed the vocals for the track. Guetta also co-produced I Gotta Feeling, by Black Eyed Peas, which won the Grammy for Best Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals.

Phoenix and Guetta were not the only French-speaking laureates of this year's Awards. Other Francophone Grammy winners included Mamadou Diabate of Mali, who won the award for Best Traditional World Music Album for Douga Mansa. Diabate plays the kora, a large West-African instrument that resembles a harp. Also, vocalist Dobet Ghahoré of the Ivory Coast shared the Grammy for Best Urban/Alternative Performance with the American singer India.Arie for their song Pearls.

France and the U.S. Have Brainstorming Down to a Science

Somewhere in Florida, hurricane-force winds are roaring and inciting waves into a frenzy. Fortunately for all nearby, this storm is just a simulation inside a wind tunnel at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) research facility at the University of Miami. Onlookers from NOAA, French counterpart the Research Institute for the Exploitation of the Sea (Ifremer), and the Embassy of France's Office of Science and Technology (OST) compare notes. The two national oceanographic organizations have formally collaborated since 2008, and such field visits are an opportunity to see directly where and how to share ideas, materials, and for researchers to work on major, potentially devastating issues.

The partnership between Ifremer and NOAA is just one example of France and the United States's joint efforts to make advances for society through science and technology. Acting as a key intermediary in such projects, the OST provides informational, logistical, and financial support for transatlantic collabora-



The Air-Sea Interaction Saltwater Tank at the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine Sciences simulates extreme wave conditions such as those caused by a hurricane.

tion and exchange. Topics covered range from nanotechnology to biodiversity, and food safety to higher education. Recent OST-sponsored events include a French-American Innovation Day and a Seminar for European and American Research on Climate and Health, each of which hosted panels of international experts. Annual programs include the Chateaubriand Fellowship,

which offers opportunities for American doctorate students to live in France and work with French higher education institutions and research laboratories. OST is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and its mission is carried out nationally with the help of staff in French consulates across the United States.

To learn more about OST or to pursue areas of mutual interest, please visit: www.france-science.org.

Auto-Entrepreneur Initiative Pays Off



The term "entrepreneur" derives from the French verb *entreprendre*, meaning to undertake, a verb thousands of French businessmen are bringing to new light. At the beginning of last year, the French government enacted a new business provision encouraging entrepreneurial growth, one of several initiatives developed over the past decade. Titled *auto-entrepreneur*, this novel status has eased requirements for both creation and management of small businesses in France by reducing bureaucratic obstacles such as simplifying and reducing annual expenses by waiving initial registry fees. A key component of the measure is that it makes taxation solely a function of revenue collected during a specific period. Creating further incentive for French entrepreneurs, this initiative is a sign of the blossoming entrepreneurial culture in France today. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies estimates that 300,000 people have registered for the program since its inception, with an additional 56,000 in December alone. According to Hervé Novelli, Secretary of State for Small and Medium Enterprises, more than 380 million euros (\$550m) worth of business has been generated in the French economy just in the last quarter as a result of *auto-entrepreneur*. For more information on the program, please visit: www.auto-entrepreneur.fr.

Franco-American Cooperation in Exploring "Origins of Humans"



The David H. Koch Hall of Human Origins is an international collaborative effort.

The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History will be premiering a new exhibition on March 17 that examines the origins of human beings. Assembling resources from approximately 50 institutions around the world, three of which are French, the debut will coincide with the museum's 100th anniversary.

The exhibition examines the defining characteristics of human beings, featuring both a physical and virtual component. The latter offers exclusive access to resources not on display at the museum,

while the 15,000-square-foot exhibition hall provides an interactive experience, illuminating major milestones, dramatic climate changes, as well as a time tunnel depicting the life and environments believed to have been endured by generations of humans long ago. Other key features will include "snap shots" in time inspired by the actual field sites at which research was conducted.

In addition to lending an integral component — an alleged cranium of Cro-Magnon man — of the museum's exhibition, General Director of France's Natural History Museum of Paris Bertrand-Pierre Galey will be participating in the inaugural events. Galey's piece will complement a display of more than 75 cast reproductions of skulls believed to be indicative of evolution.

To assist with public engagement around the exhibition, the museum has assembled the Broader Social Impacts Committee, with members from a range of cultural perspectives to support dialogue about science and religion.

For more information, please visit: www.mnh.si.edu.

CNRS WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR



Alain Fuchs is the new CNRS director.

On January 20, Alain Fuchs, the current Director of Chimie ParisTech (Ecole Normale Supérieure de Chimie de Paris) was appointed as President of the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS).

CNRS is the largest fundamental science agency in Europe. Fuchs succeeds Catherine Brechignac, the former CNRS Chairwoman, and Arnold Migus, the former CNRS General Director. Fuchs's knowledge of both the French and the international scientific system has been one of the key factors in his appointment, since his role in this new position will be to carry out the reform of the Center in coordination with that of the French universities.

Fuchs attended the Federal Polytechnic School in Lausanne and received his doctorate from the University of Paris Sud-Orsay in 1983 where he later became a professor. His research has focused on modeling and molecular simulation of the behavior of confined fluids. Throughout his career, Fuchs has stressed the importance of technology transfer and innovation, "a key area for France's competitiveness." His leadership and technical abilities promise a bright future for the CNRS as the organization moves ahead with continued excellence in research and development.

CNRS RANKED #1 WORLDWIDE

As the CNRS begins a new chapter of leadership, the organization forges forward with incredible momentum. The research organization has garnered national and international attention over the past few years. In 2009 alone, more than a dozen awards were presented to CNRS researchers, lauding insightful research in fields including molecular biology, optical electronics, and antiviral defense. The laureates received prizes from global and European institutions, including the Nobel Foundation.

Last year, CNRS was named the number one institution worldwide for output, international collaboration and scientific impact by *SCImago*, in the *SCImago Institutions Rankings 2009 World Report*, followed by the Chinese Academy of Science (#2), the Russian Academy of Sciences (#3), and Harvard University (#4). The report is available at: www.scimagoir.com.

For more information on the CNRS, please refer to NFF 09.08.

THE GOLD STANDARD: USING A PRECIOUS METAL AS A SIGNATURE



Gold is the new currency of *pâtisserie*.

The head pastry chef of France's famous gourmet food chain Fauchon does not use fool's gold to embellish his confectionary creations. Melding real gold into pastries like his salted butter and caramel *éclairs*, Christophe Adam adorns his bitter chocolate macaroons with gold pastry shells. The emerging phenomenon has turned the precious metal into the signature of Fauchon's pastries. According to Adam, there is certainly an air of luxury associated with the metal. One must use it tastefully, however, because "too much gold is not chic." It is extracted from little booklets of twenty sheets that measure 8 x 8 cm. In contrast to last year — when one entire gold sheet covered a chocolate *éclair* — Christophe Adam is now experimenting with the metal in smaller quantities. This year Adam envisions small gold touches on bite-sized chocolates as a way to brighten their appeal. Although gold has no taste, it creates style and can be an irresistible addition on festive occasions such as New Year's Eve. In France, Fauchon is not the only brand to use edible gold. Ladurée, a luxury pastry boutique based in Paris, released a "gold macaroon." The French tea company, Mariage Frères, also produces jasmine-infused teas with gold and silver pearls. When it comes to restaurants, sprinkling gold here and there — mainly on desserts — is an excellent way to charm patrons. Though it is not a contender in the 2010 Winter Olympics, French gastronomy is going for the gold.

MOBILE INTERNET ON THE MOVE

Mobile internet usage in France skyrocketed in 2009, according to a survey by French research organization Crédoc. As consumers — young people in particular — increasingly seek to stay informed and in touch, their mobile phones have likewise evolved to incorporate internet-surfing capabilities. More than 50 percent of French people use the internet daily, according to the National Study of Daily Life, a jump of eight points since 2008. The advent of smart phones allows nearly five million people in France alone to browse the internet anywhere with cellular service. With seniors in mind, one service provider — Proxima Mobile — launched in 2009 as a portal for accessing a large set of geo-localized information and public services through a mobile phone. Especially designed for senior citizens, the service is one of the first of its kind in Europe, helping the elderly find services in their neighborhood such as hospitals, drugstores, and police.

Christmas Cleanup

Christmas season has ended and it's time to dismantle the Christmas tree. But where does one put it? As part of a new initiative to avoid the transformation of urban streets into a forest of lifeless Christmas trees, French city councils have devised a green alternative. Paris, Lille, Montpellier and suburban cities alike have established a network of collection points for retired trees. The fruition of a public-private partnership, the numerous recycling locations, often in city squares or plazas, provide drop-off points ensuring the remains will be salvaged. According to the Paris City Council, approximately 25,000 trees were collected and recycled last year. The trees are then transformed into compost or mulch to be used in the City of Light.

To increase the incentive to recycle, this season IKEA sold live trees at a discounted price. For every tree returned before mid-January, IKEA agreed to donate one euro to the National Office of Forestry. The furniture chain turned a blind eye toward what could have been a veritable stockpile of supplies, opting instead to produce compost that the Parisian city council can use to fertilize its many parks and gardens. In addition to the 25,000 trees collected in 2009 in the capital, IKEA recollected another 200,000 throughout the country. The Christmas tree removal program also lightens the workload for sanitation workers and other public service people in charge of removing bulk materials from the streets.



Young and old participate in the Christmas tree recycling initiative.

Groceries on-the-Go



Thanks to a novel approach towards grocery shopping, consumers can virtually finish their shopping without ever stepping foot inside a store. The French supermarket chain, Chronodrive, has implemented an innovative method for customers to streamline their shopping. From the convenience of their homes, customers place orders online, choose from thousands of products, and select a pickup time. Upon arriving in the designated warehouse, an employee places the pre-packed order in the trunk of the car. Suburban neighborhoods prove to be prime locations for such stores. The supermarket's innovative drive-up grocery method responds to consumer demand to save both time and money. Specifically, this system caters to the needs of busy families. Since supermarkets have recognized the shifting consumer preferences, several other market chains have implemented similar drive-up grocery options. The hypermarket chain E. Leclerc is well established with over 30 pick-up sites and supermarket giant Carrefour is beginning to test a model as well.

Blogs



CONFERENCE GOES BEYOND BLOGGING TO VIRTUAL REALITY

French blogging pioneers Loïc and Geraldine Le Meur recently held their sixth annual LeWeb conference in December 2009, attracting participants from 50 different countries to Paris. What began in 2005 as a tech conference welcoming 250 people has metamorphosed into a 2,400-participant convention that addresses countless issues pertaining to the high-tech world.

LeWeb's main objectives center on "people, entrepreneurs and partnership." During the conference, participants had the opportunity to interact with each other, share ideas, talk investments, and network with others in the field. The annual Start-Up competition, an event within the event, helps entrepreneurs gain visibility in the eyes of influential tech leaders.

Also, partnerships form as sponsors work together to build lasting relationships in hopes of improving global tech dialogue.



Loïc and Geraldine Le Meur pioneer global technology dialogue.

This year, the conference's theme "Real-Time Web" focused on popular issues such as the "battle" between social networking Web sites, the expanding role of smart phones, and the possibility of payments via text messaging. Some of the conference's most inspirational figures included Jack

Dorsey, the Inventor, Founder and Chairman of Twitter, Osama Bedier, Vice President of PayPal and Chad Hurley, Co-founder & CEO of YouTube, Inc.

The concept of Real-Time Web, a new step in technology that allows people to publish and receive updates instantly, does not only pertain to techies. Real-Time Web affects entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, politicians and internet pop stars alike. According to LeWeb's Web site, people and brands that use the Internet to their advantage are "winning the race." Traditional marketing and advertising techniques seem to be increasingly replaced by the concept of online community-building. This innovative conference provides answers to these questions by creating the tools and instructions necessary to cope with the demands and trends of the ever-changing technological era.

Louvre Stays atop the Pyramid



© Benh Lieu Song

The Louvre's enchanting front entrance welcomes millions of visitors.

The Louvre, one of the world's largest museums and one of Paris's most cherished historical monuments, welcomed 8.5 million visitors in 2009, maintaining its position as the world's most-visited museum. The results published by *Art Newspaper* ranked the Louvre in first place, followed by the British Museum in London, with 5.9 million visitors, and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in third place, with 5 million visitors.

In addition to its permanent collection in Paris, traveling exhibits both in and outside of France attracted an additional 3.5 million art-goers. The exhibitions *Les Portes du Ciel* (Heaven's Gates), and *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice* alone welcomed over half a million visitors in Paris. Regardless of its success, the museum is determined to continue widening its audience. Not limited to France's physical boundaries, many of the museum's treasures have seen almost every continent. In 2008 and 2009, the Louvre hosted exhibitions in 16 different countries.

An increasingly large player in the sphere of cultural diplomacy, the Louvre commemorated the longstanding relationship between France and the United States through a three-year partnership with the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. According to the High, the French-American partnership has lured in over 1.3 million visitors from all 50 states, out of which 140,000 were students. Following in the footsteps of Paris, the "Louvre Atlanta" rose through the ranks to become one of America's top ten most-visited art museums.

Doisneau Exhibit Sheds Light on 1930s Suburban Life



© Atelier Robert Doisneau

The Doisneau exhibition in Paris highlights some of the artist's lesser-known works of the Parisian suburbs.

Robert Doisneau is most famous for capturing pleasant black and white images of daily Parisian life in unexpected anecdotes of romantic lovers and picturesque cafés. He has been recognized for his professionalism and the poetry of his seemingly simple snapshot. Doisneau is most famous for his *Kiss by the Hotel de Ville* (1950, Paris), splashed on posters and

postcards all over the world. Much of his lesser-known work has focused on a darker reality — facing world wars and social unrest — a component of his photography which is often overlooked by popular culture.

A collection of famed French Photographer Robert Doisneau's photographs of suburban subjects is on display at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson galleries, in an exhibit titled *From Craft to Art*. The spring exhibit will bring to light the solemnity of lesser-known black and whites of 1930s suburban reality and personal hardship documented in his photographs. The Fondation Cartier-Bresson opened its doors in 2003 in an elegant remodeled atelier in the heart of Paris's art-inspired area of Montparnasse. The building itself was named the House of Artists and won the Prize for Architecture in 1913 — creating a fitting backdrop to Doisneau's

Parisian realism and symbolic of his friendship with Henri Cartier-Bresson, a renowned photographer himself.

Doisneau's work evolved through times of war when he worked as both a soldier and photographer during the French Resistance and subsequently freelanced for *Life Magazine* and *Paris Vogue*.

FRENCH CHILD CAPTURES ENVIRONMENTAL APPRECIATION



© Airbus

8-year-old Clémence Bonnefous's picture wins the international competition.

Clémence Bonnefous, a talented French eight-year-old, won the top prize for her entry in the "See the Bigger Picture" photography competition, earning a trip to Washington, D.C., with seven other winners, from December 3 - 6, 2009. Clémence snapped her winning photograph while she was walking in Aveyron, southern France, and spotted two caterpillars crawling over a beautiful yellow plant. She was chosen as the winner over 2,597 entries from 99 countries around the world. "It is important to look after the planet, and it would be a shame to damage nature which is so pretty. I am very proud to have won," stated Clémence excitedly.

The competition was launched in July by aircraft manufacturer Airbus, in conjunction with National Geographic and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and aimed at encouraging youth to engage in dialogue about environmental awareness. CEO and President of Airbus, Tom Enders, stated, "The standard of entries from every corner of the world has been extremely impressive and a great reminder of the variety of living species we have around us." "See the Bigger Picture" is part of "The Green Wave," a youth engagement program led by the CBD to increase awareness of the complexity of the environment.

In Washington, D.C., Clémence and the seven other winners visited the National Geographic Headquarters as a part of their tour of the U.S. capital. They also participated in a photography workshop led by world famous National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore at the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History. The eight young photographers received a certificate and other prizes during a red carpet awards ceremony at National Geographic on December 4, attended by politicians, executives, and the CBD among other distinguished persons.

Alliance Française Unveils a Season of Culture



© Delphine Jouandeau

Prize-winning author Delphine de Vigan will discuss her novels.

The Délégation Générale de l'Alliance Française is kicking off the decade with a new series of events. With nearly 1,000 locations worldwide and 114 chapters throughout the United States, the Alliance Française (AF) offers myriad educational and cultural events, including French

language instruction and the following highlights:

From February 2 - 16, International judge Jean-Louis Bruguère, High Representative of the European Union in the United States for the fight against financing of terrorism, will be touring 10 cities throughout the U.S. this month, lecturing on Transatlantic Cooperation in the Fight against Terrorism. He will be visiting Providence, Boston, Washington, D.C., Birmingham, Fresno, Los Angeles, San Diego, Kansas City and Denver.

Various chapters nationwide are sponsoring lectures by Jean Pruvost, a lexicologist who will discuss the evolution of the French language. One of Pruvost's featured lectures will review the evolution of gender-specific nouns as they relate to men and women in the French language. For example, should a female author be called *une auteure* or *un auteur*? His tour (Charlotte, New York, El Paso and Houston) is organized by the Délégation Générale in collaboration with the Radio des cinq académies de l'Institut de France (Canal Académie).

The best of French and European short films will hit the road this spring during the French and European Short Films Festival. The *Lutins du Court Métrage* tour will make several stops in the Southwest and other parts of the U.S. Since 1998, *Les Lutins du Court Métrage*, or *The Leprechauns of the Short Film* has been working to bring short films to a wider audience and to recognize emerging actors and directors.

In March, as part of the Festival de la Francophonie, the French

author Delphine de Vigan, winner of *Prix des Libraires 2008*, *Prix révélation roman 2007* and *Prix Littéraire du Rotary Club* for her book *No et Moi*, will be touring throughout the mid-Atlantic, Northwest and Midwest (New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, Washington) in partnership with the Rotary Club Paris Académies. She will discuss important insights into the composition of her books *No et Moi* and *Les heures souterraines*.

The *French Troubadours* Tété and Eric John Kaiser are bringing the best of their Francophone songs repertoire with pop, folk and blues notes. As an urban troubadour (a troubadour was a composer and performer of Occitan lyric poetry during the High Middle Ages), living in Portland, French singer Eric John Kaiser surfs the musical vibes of Paris, Portland, Australia, Hong Kong, and many other oceans along the way. The group will be performing at the invitation of the AF and French Cultural Services in New Orleans, AF in Minneapolis and AF in Washington, D.C.

In April, a selection of the most remarkable texts by contemporary French-Swiss writer, painter, director and playwright Valère Novarina will be staged by both French and American actors (from the only French-speaking Theater in the U.S., the *Théâtre du Rêve* in Atlanta) with the artistic collaboration of Valéry Warnotte, stage director. Valère Novarina has created words and gestures unique to humans as well as a script that is living, burning, visceral and free. Performances will be held at Georgetown University on April 12 and 13, at the invitation of the AF in Washington, D.C., in collaboration with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in New York and with the support of CulturesFrance.

For more information on these events please visit www.alliance-us.org or the local AF Web site in your area.



Urban troubadour Tété will be serenading audiences around the U.S. this March.

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