



# News From France



Vol. 13.02  
February 2013

A free monthly review of French news & trends

## 50 Years of Peace: France Continues U.S. Campaign for “Franco-German Year” 2013



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France is continuing its celebrations of 2013 as the “Franco-German Year,” so named in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty.

Signed in January 1963 between France and Germany, the watershed agreement formalized peaceful relations between the two countries and paved the way for lasting peace in Europe. Numerous programs, from regular government meetings to bi-cultural youth programs, were launched as a result of the accord and remain active today.

In 2012, the European Union, in which both France and Germany have played founding and central roles, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

In this photo from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs on February 8 (story, p. 3), a moderator engages Ambassadors François Delattre and Peter Ammon, who represent France and Germany in Washington. Each diplomat spoke on aspects of their countries’ past and present relationship. The appearance is part of a full year’s worth of events related to the Elysée Treaty, which are taking place throughout the United States.

## From the Ambassador’s Desk: A Monthly Message From François Delattre

The month of February provided several great displays of cooperation between our two countries. I’ve included just a few highlights here.

On February 4, French President François Hollande welcomed U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden to Paris at the Elysée Palace, the headquarters of the French presidency. The two conducted a working lunch as well as a press conference, with each leader underscoring his commitment to tackling issues of common concern. In global security, they discussed restoring security and democracy in Mali, the Syrian crisis, the Middle East peace process, and actions to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Climate change shaped their exchange, as did the need to reinvigorate economic growth through transatlantic cross-investment.

Also on February 4, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, began his working relationship via telephone with the newly appointed U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry. The two met in Paris on February 27 for their first working session, where they again addressed each of the issues mentioned above and noted the excellent, substantive nature of the French-American relationship.

A little closer to home, we at the French embassy have been hard at work with our American counterparts. With the help of my team, I made several public appearances across the U.S. in recent weeks. I spoke at Washington’s Georgetown University on February 1 as part of a confer-

ence called “The Elysée Treaty at 50,” a reference to the anniversary of a watershed 1963 agreement signed between France and Germany to formalize peaceful relations. I was also at Iowa State University on February 7 for an Elysée Treaty discussion that I had the pleasure to co-preside with my colleague Peter Ammon, Ambassador of Germany to the United States. On February 8, he and I traveled to Illinois for a joint conference at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.



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French-American economic partnership brought me to Montgomery, Ala., on February 12. The reinforcement of French investment in Alabama was at the heart of my discussions with Governor Robert Bentley and featured prominently in my speech before the Alabama World Affairs Council the same day. French investment in Alabama includes a \$600 million manufacturing site to be built by French aviation company Airbus, with a \$2 million project underway from the French aerospace company Safran.

Cooperative education led me to New York City on February 28, where I helped steer the annual board meeting of the Partner University Fund, a public-private organization designed to foster scholarly exchange between higher education professionals in France and the United States.

All in all, it’s been another busy month for the French-American relationship. We’re making sure that the strong bond between our two countries remains as vibrant and as close as ever.

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## Shale Gas on the Docket at Boston's *Café des Sciences*

French-speaking members of Boston's scientific community lined up for the most recent *Café des Sciences* speaker series on February 13.

Dr. Roland Pellenq, Director of Research at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), and Dr. Normand Mousseau, professor of physics at the University of Montréal, presented "Shale Gas: from Geopolitics to the Atom."

Fabien Fieschi, the Consul General of France in Boston, introduced the speakers, who argued that shale may soon be a leading global energy source due to the methane it contains in gaseous form, as well as its abundance throughout many parts of the world. They also analyzed the potential consequences of its exploitation from both scientific and political perspectives.

The *Café des Sciences* is a monthly speaker series that hosts scientists from all around the world. All presentations are conducted in French, and they are organized by the Office for Science and Technology of French Consulates General of France.

The program is one of several making up France's *diplomatie scientifique*, or scientific diplomacy (see p. 4).

## Florida Luncheon Details Napoleon's Exile at St. Helena

The life and times of iconic French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte have long been a source of fascination for Jean-Pierre Miquel, French Foreign Trade Advisor and member of the Napoleonic Society of America.

The keynote speaker at a luncheon held on February 5 in Palm Beach, Florida, Mr. Miquel expressed a fondness for the splendor of this era even as a child. Growing up after World War II, Mr. Miquel looked to this era of French history as a source of inspiration and personal passion.

Mr. Miquel shared his enthusiasm with an audience of Francophones and history buffs by detailing his trip to St. Helena, the island to which Napoleon was exiled and where he spent the final days of his life. The lecture retraced the steps of St. Helena's "unusual prisoner," his term for the former leader.

Mr. Miquel has given numerous speeches on other Napoleonic topics, and he has published recently a biography of the French leader's life and impact on history.

## France, EU Partner With U.S. on Human Brain Project

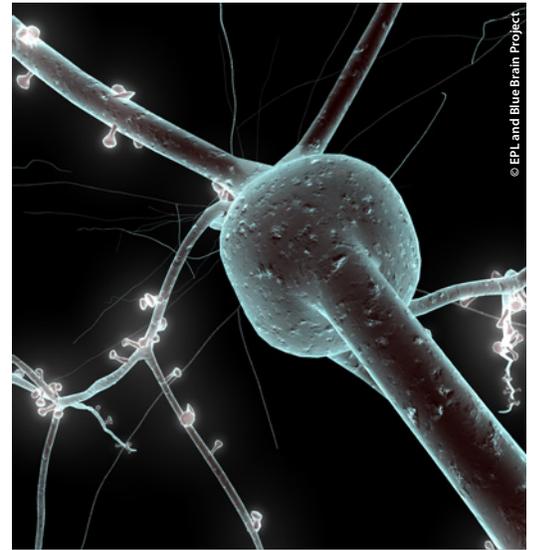
▲ A major Euro-American science project has been chosen to receive funding from the European Commission. The Human Brain Project is a collaborative effort which includes research institutions from throughout Europe in addition to groups from the United States, Canada, China, Israel, and Japan, among others.

Called the Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) initiative, the European Commission launched the program to promote "visionary, mission-oriented research with the potential to deliver breakthroughs in information technology," according to its website.

The Human Brain Project seeks to understand the intricacies of the human brain, while simultaneously using the new findings for information technology.

The convergence of these fields could potentially create new treatments for brain diseases while propelling information technology into a new era of interactive supercomputing. The *Ecole Normale Supérieure* and the *Collège de France* are among the French institutions taking part in the project.

In addition to the development of new medical knowledge, the innovation spurred by the supercomputers could have a significant impact on the information technology and electronics sectors.



With new EU funding, the Human Brain Project has the "potential to deliver breakthroughs" in several fields.

## Ambassador Speaks on "The Elysée Treaty at 50" in D.C.

▲ In a speech that began a half-day conference on February 1 at Washington's Georgetown University, François Delattre, Ambassador of France to the United States, provided his insight on the event's theme of "The Elysée Treaty at 50."

Amb. Delattre offered specific analysis through prepared remarks and a question-and-answer session, titled "A French Perspective on the Transatlantic Relationship." The conference was organized by Georgetown's BMW Center for German and European Studies.

The Ambassador spoke by turns about the French-American relationship, as well as broader transatlantic cooperation between the U.S. and European states.

In a multipolar world with shifting economic and security dynamics, Amb. Delattre explained, Europe remains "relevant for our American friends." He cited rising U.S. investment in France and close cooperation on global hotspots like Iran, Mali, and Syria as indicators of the strong need for continued transatlantic partnership.

He referred specifically to the Franco-German relationship, calling it the "main engine" of the EU's construction.

Amb. Delattre also noted the healthy rapport between the two countries' current leaders. The relationship between French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel is "strong, friendly, and vital," he said.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Elysée Treaty. Signed in 1963 between France and Germany, the watershed agreement formalized peaceful relations between the two nations following World War II. By offering greater political and economic cohesion to peace, the accord paved the way toward a peaceful modern Europe and the European Union.

In 2012, the European Union, of which France and Germany have played historic and founding roles, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

In coordination with their respective governments in Paris and Berlin, the embassies of France and Germany in Washington have launched the "Franco-



Amb. Delattre said the Franco-German relationship remains "relevant for our American friends" in 2013.

German Year," an event series which will be organizing programs like the Georgetown conference throughout 2013 to inform the public about the Elysée Treaty's history and importance.

## Cyril Pinel, Counselor, Nuclear Affairs

▲ As Nuclear Affairs Counselor at the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C., since 2011, **Cyril Pinel** works to promote cooperation between the French and American nuclear sectors, whether through collaborative efforts carried out by institutional actors, industry giants, or safety agencies. *News From France* sat down with Mr. Pinel to hear his take on the current state of nuclear energy in France, the U.S., and the world at large.

### How would you describe French nuclear energy?

France has been at the forefront of nuclear energy for many years, but France is not alone. The United States has 104 reactors in operation on U.S. territory. France has 58 on its territory. These are the two most important nuclear fleets in the world. In the 1970s, the French government decided to maintain a competitive, safe, and independent source of energy through nuclear means.

The origin of the French nuclear program is very much American, actually, as [U.S. energy company] Westinghouse provided us with the original design for pressurized water reactors that we developed and customized. Now our reactors are designed by [French nuclear industrial group] AREVA, and operated by Electricité de France (EDF).

### How is nuclear energy perceived in the U.S. after accidents like the one at Fukushima, Japan, in 2011?

The possibility of an accident is a reality, and it is the responsibility of countries relying on nuclear energy to make this energy safe and take into account the risks posed. The impact of Fukushima has been quite significant in France and in the U.S. Some people were afraid of nuclear energy and characterized it as something we should turn away from. But the safety response developed by countries involved in nuclear energy has been very ambitious. Today, two years after Fukushima, more than 65 percent of people are in favor of nuclear energy in the United States, and we know how to better prevent accidents and respond to them should they occur.

### Is nuclear energy still competitive in the U.S. given new realities like shale gas, oil, and other new industries?

In terms of competitiveness, I think that nuclear energy is facing some strong challenges. Natural gas in the U.S. has become so cheap that it is very difficult to compete with it today. The world economy will need energy and will continue to need energy in the future. Therefore, we need all different sources of energy, including nuclear.

In 10 or 20 years, we should see even more nuclear power plants being built, because it is, in the long term, a very competitive source of energy. The original investment in building a nuclear power plant is massive, but once it is made, you gain access to a very cheap source of electricity for many, many years. Keep in mind that a nuclear power plant can operate for 40, 60, some experts even say 80 years, and you start seeing a great return on investment after 20 years.

### Some nuclear issues remain unresolved, especially the waste management issue. Where do you see nuclear energy 50 years from now?

In the United States, there is today no final disposal site for nuclear waste or spent nuclear fuel. We've been grappling with this issue for a very long time in France, and we are close today to deciding on a final disposal method for high-level waste. Certainly, we need to show people that



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we have safe solutions for nuclear waste's long-term management. When we have a consensus-based, responsible approach, one can convince people we have solutions.

Taking this into account, I am convinced that nuclear energy has a role to play in the long term. Once again, the world will need energy, and nuclear energy is a safe, reliable, non CO<sub>2</sub>-emitting clean energy. 

## New Orleans Consulate Now Doubling as EU Office

With the arrival of 2013, the Consulate General of France in New Orleans has seen its diplomatic role expand to include serving as the local representation of the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, the EU's diplomatic mission headquartered in Washington, D.C., that seeks to promote political, economic, and cultural relations between its own 27 Member States and the U.S.

To mark this historic evolution in the consulate's diplomatic functions, João Vale de Almeida, European Union Ambassador to the United States, visited New Orleans on January 28 and 29, where he met with the regional Consul General of France, Jean-Claude Brunet, as well as Mayor Mitch Landrieu. Mr. Vale de Almeida concluded his visit of the city with a lecture at Tulane University, focusing on the economic advantages offered by a possible trade and investment agreement between the EU and the U.S.

## Chicago Conference Honors Franco-German Peace

As part of continued celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs hosted a public luncheon on February 8 featuring Ambassadors François Delattre of France and Peter Ammon of Germany, both of whom represent their countries in the United States.

Presentations by Messrs. Delattre and Ammon centered on issues of pan-European concern, such as the situation of the eurozone, and examined the ways in which not only France and Germany, but also the countries' transatlantic partners, are working to stabilize domestic and international economies and promote growth.

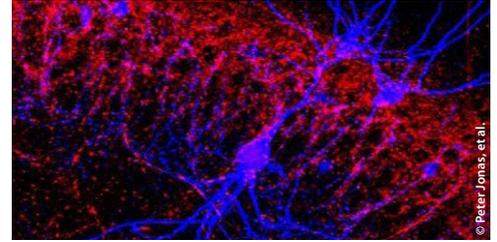
Signed in 1963, the Elysée Treaty formalized peaceful Franco-German relations after World War II. The landmark text affirmed both countries' willingness to ensure greater European stability through increased bilateral cooperation and coordination of key policy decisions.

The two speakers were well qualified to address topics of international cooperation, with both Amb. Delattre and Amb. Ammon having served in diplomatic missions in each other's home country. Mr. Delattre was previously posted in Bonn at the French embassy in Germany, while Mr. Ammon served as German Ambassador to France in 2007 and 2008.

## France Uses Diplomatique Scientifique for Global Success

**M**arie Curie, Luc Montagnier, François Barré-Sinoussi, Serge Haroche. What do these names have in common? Nobel prizes in science, all won by leading French scientists. The country's flagship *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS), the largest such organization in Europe, employs more than 35,000 researchers, engineers, and technicians. France enjoys a rich history of scientific excellence, a tradition that continues today in full force.

Updated in January 2013, France's *diplomatie scientifique*, or scientific diplomacy, provides a unique means of engaging with the world while putting French expertise at the service of the global good. In the areas of space research, civil nuclear energy, and sustainability, France is leading through a wide range of partnerships with the U.S.



### Space: Access for Europe, Innovation Globally

A longtime champion of space research, France began 2013 with a pair of important events that show its current engagement in the field. On January 9, the French embassy gathered an international group of space policy chiefs from business and government to assess the state of European space activities. Representatives included former head of NASA, Sean O'Keefe, as well as senior representatives from several of the sector's most important industrial players. France's role in space research began in the 1960s, when President Charles de Gaulle implemented laws to act on his conviction that France should possess independent access to space. What resulted was 50 years of French commitment to the discipline. The country also shared its progress with its European partners, and today, in large part because of France's early leadership role in space activity, Europe now enjoys its own means of launching spacecraft.

The second event showcased France's space innovation in real time. On February 7, an Ariane 5 ECA rocket was launched from French Guiana, at a site managed by the European Space Agency (ESA). The vehicle propelled two satellites that are now orbiting Earth, improving telecommunications and gathering weather data. The launch marked a record-breaking moment for the ESA, in that it successfully delivered the heaviest combined weight of satellites in the agency's history. The event marks France's continued innovation at space technology's cutting edge.

### Nuclear: Energy & Jobs at Home

A second area of French scientific excellence—which has seen a lot of cooperation with U.S. stakeholders—is civil nuclear energy. As a result of some 40 years developing its domestic program, France provides for roughly 75 percent of its national energy needs through its nuclear fleet.

But producing nuclear energy is not without risk, which the world witnessed in the tragic nuclear accident at Fukushima, Japan, in March 2011. While already committed to stringent safety standards, France has redoubled its efforts with an even stronger commitment to energy safety. In June 2012, Bernard Bigot, head of France's Atomic Energy Commission, visited Washington. In March 2013, Pierre-Franck Chevet, the newly named Director of France's Nuclear Security Authority (ASN), will visit the United States to discuss new avenues of cooperation with his American counterparts at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The meeting follows a similar gathering in February 2012, in which leaders from the French National Radioactive Waste Management Agency (ANDRA) met

with U.S. Members of Congress to discuss best practices and bilateral cooperation in nuclear waste management, one of the industry's most important concerns.

French-American nuclear cooperation has been equally robust in the business world. A subsidiary of France's nuclear industrial group AREVA, Transnuclear International, which provides services to half of all American nuclear sites, announced in December its acquisition of Columbian Hi Tech, a manufacturing firm based in Greensboro, North Carolina. The deal should streamline costs and boost quality of production for the French-American partnership, while creating jobs in the Greensboro region.

### Sustainable Solutions

The French embassy in Washington is also using scientific diplomacy to act locally. The new "Green Roof" project, rolling out above the embassy's own building, will transform its heating and cooling practices while reducing strain on Washington's water system. By planting vegetation on the roof, the embassy will benefit from a new layer of insulation that will help keep summertime air conditioning and wintertime heating inside. The installation boasts over 10,000 square feet of surface area and a four-inch bed of soil, which absorbs significant amounts of water that would otherwise drain into the city's sewage network. The Green Roof project was launched in partnership with the Anacostia Watershed Society, a local conservation group.

Likewise, on February 27, the French embassy's Mission for Science and Technology hosted a French-American panel discussion on the "Impact of Global Change on Socio-Ecological Systems." Dr. Yvan Lagadue, of the Université de Rennes I, and Dr. Scott Collins, of the University of New Mexico, shared perspectives on the need for coordinated global policies in response to rapidly shifting environmental conditions. The event culminated with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the French National Research Center (CNRS) and the Long Term Ecological Research Network, an international body created by the Washington-based National Science Foundation.

With its long history of scientific excellence—from space research and nuclear energy to innovating sustainable practices—France has led, together with its American partners, in a diverse set of disciplines. Its scientific diplomacy acts as a positive and practical force in responding to international challenges. In cooperating with the U.S. and the world, French science offers a way to tackle some of the planet's most serious issues, in a way best handled by France's deep field of talent across multiple fields of expertise. 

**75%**  
French energy needs met  
by domestic nuclear power

**7,808**  
French-American  
publications through CNRS

**35,000**  
employees at CNRS, Europe's  
largest research organization

**\$2.32  
billion**  
2012 budget for CNES,  
France's space agency

Sources: CNES, CNRS



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Clockwise from page 4: a photo from the Human Brain Project, which features French-American collaboration (see p. 2); an Ariane rocket blasts off from Kourou, French Guiana; President François Hollande visits a laboratory in Bordeaux last January; and the French embassy in Washington acts locally by installing its "Green Roof."

## Amb. Delattre Visits Alabama as French Investment Grows

In recognition of investment between France and Alabama, Ambassador François Delattre visited Montgomery on February 12 for a whirlwind day of activities in the "Sweet Home" State.

Amb. Delattre praised the business-friendly environment Alabama has cultivated, attracting French companies. Amb. Delattre's visit included a meetings with Alabama Governor Robert Bentley, the Consul General of France in Atlanta as well as a speaking engagement at the Alabama World Affairs Council (AWAC).

According to the Montgomery Advertiser newspaper, Amb. Delattre noted that "we are working not only with the Governor but with his economic development team to see precisely where he and I should promote these investments."

Two recent French projects include an Airbus assembly plant in the city of Mobile, as well as a \$2 million investment from the aerospace and defense company Safran for the construction of a new engineering center.

## Paris Launches Global *Marque France* Campaign

With the launch of *Marque France*, don't be surprised if French-made products start lining more store shelves around the world.

At a press conference on January 30, the French government unveiled *Marque France*, or the "France Brand," which aims to boost the French economy by simultaneously increasing exports and attracting foreign direct investment, while enhancing the reputation of French-made products.

"We want this new image to strengthen our competitiveness in exports," said Nicole Bricq, the French Minister of Foreign Trade.

Ms. Bricq played a key role in launching the *Marque France*, along with Arnaud Montebourg, Minister of Industrial Renewal; Sylvia Pinel, Junior Minister of Crafts, Trade, and Tourism; and Fleur Pellerin, Junior Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises, Innovation, and the Digital Economy. The campaign chair is Philippe Lentschener, who is the CEO of McCann Worldgroup.

*Marque France* is part of President François Hollande's push for economic growth. It also acts in tandem with the French Foreign Ministry's current policy of *diplomatie économique*, or economic diplomacy, designed to leverage the country's large diplomatic network and stimulate economic activity with global partners.

## AREVA Acquisition Benefits North Carolina Economy

▲ With AREVA's acquisition of an American nuclear-equipment manufacturer, French-American nuclear cooperation will soon create jobs in Greensboro, North Carolina.

As France's public energy company, AREVA specializes in nuclear power and renewable energy. Among its many affiliate companies is Transnuclear International, whose American subsidiary, Transnuclear, Inc., acquired Columbiana Hi Tech, LLC, on December 31.

Transnuclear, whose services are used by more than 50 percent of all American nuclear plants, focuses on nuclear storage, handling, and transportation, while the Greensboro-based Columbiana Hi Tech supplies industry equipment.

"This is an exciting step forward for Transnuclear," said Mike McMahon, the company's President and CEO. "As an AREVA company, we are an important part of [its] global transportation logistics expertise and share AREVA's demonstrated commitment to worldwide operational excellence."

Working together, the companies will combine their realms of expertise to offer products and services of

even higher quality, which will boost both countries' economies. Expected economic benefits from Transnuclear's investment in Columbiana Hi Tech include innovation, job creation both in France and in North Carolina, and stronger manufacturing output in the region.

"Through the acquisition of Columbiana Hi Tech, Transnuclear will be able to strengthen its operational excellence by streamlining costs and improving quality while maintaining control of our design innovations and intellectual property," said Mr. McMahon. "We are honored to be affiliated with an American manufacturer whose process and quality assurance programs have a very high degree of precision, and whose integrity and reputation for excellence is remarkable."

France and the United States have long cooperated in the nuclear sector. With a combined total of 162 reactors, the United States and France are the largest and "two most important [nuclear] fleets in the world," according to Cyril Pinel, Counselor for Nuclear Energy at the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C.



Columbiana Hi Tech, a holding of Transnuclear International and the recent acquisition of French nuclear industrial group AREVA, will be operating at this plant in the Greensboro, N.C., area. It should add jobs to the local economy.

## Google to Invest 1 Million Euros in Paris Tech Center

▲ A recent boom in technology innovation has led to investment growth in the heart of Paris. The Internet company Google announced on January 24 that it would be investing close to 1 million euros (\$1.34 million) in Paris over the next three years. The project will help foster growth of French start-ups by providing a 1,500-square-meter space for events, meetings, and training for young entrepreneurs.

The investment for the project, set to begin next September, will be administered by the association Silicon Sentier, as well with partnerships from the *Région Île-de-France*, the regional authority for the metro Paris area, and the city of Paris.

The joint-investment project with Google comes on the heels of several notable tech trends in France, which have contributed to creating an environment more conducive to investment and innovation. Jean-David Chaboredon, head of Internet Savvy & Active Investors (ISAI), a fund that invests in start-ups, claims that venture capital in France has been more resistant to the recession thanks to a government program that gives investors tax breaks when they help back new projects, according to Reuters. Additionally, budding entrepreneurs now have their own school, *l'Ecole Européenne des Métiers de l'Internet* (l'EEMI), at the former location of Paris Bourse, the capital's stock exchange.

## French Ministry of Education Accredits School in Maine

▲ With its strong commitment to bilingualism and quality education, it is no surprise that *l'Ecole Française du Maine* was recently recognized by the French government.

Also known as the French School of Maine, the French-immersion school in the town of South Freeport, was recently granted full accreditation by the French Ministry of Education for its preschool and elementary-school programs.

The school was founded in 2002 by French native, Willy LeBihan, and his wife Elizabeth, and currently offers preschool through seventh grade. Its curriculum is taught primarily in French, preparing the students to take the *Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française*, or DELF exam, a certification of French-language proficiency.

For graduates and adults, *l'Ecole Française du Maine* offers opportunities to acquire or improve French-language skills through group classes, private lessons, and immersion days.

The school, whose French curriculum is only one of about 40 such programs in the U.S. accredited by

the French Ministry of Education, also holds licenses to teach French by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Maine Department of Education, and the New England Association of Independent Schools. It maintains multiple affiliations with French organizations, including the *Mission Laïque Française*.

Fabien Fieschi, the Consul Général of France in Boston, presented the school its certificate of accreditation during a public ceremony on January 31. Attendees included David Webster, Maine State Representative; Louis Morin, the Executive Director of the Franco-American Heritage Center in Lewiston, ME; and Larry Gilbert, the mayor of Lewiston, among other distinguished guests.

In addition to offering his *félicitations*, Mr. Fieschi participated in the celebration of a new building addition during his visit. Followed by a reception at the school sponsored by the Parents' Association, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in honor of a newly built entrance and classroom, representing the school's plans to expand its offerings to include grades eight through 12.

## Brooklyn-Based French Artist Draws on Love of Baseball

▲ A French-born Brooklyn artist has come up with a whole new kind of baseball card.

Amélie Mancini, a printmaker and visual artist originally from Lyon, became fascinated with baseball after watching a New York Mets game with some friends in 2007. In an interview with *News From France*, Ms. Mancini says it was the enthusiasm of the fans at the ballpark that drew her to the sport.

"I didn't really understand the rules, but I loved seeing the crowds and how excited everyone was," she said.

After her first game, she began to read more about the sport, and soon became a New York Mets fan. Last year Ms. Mancini, an artist by training, channeled her passion for baseball into printmaking. She began to produce her eclectic baseball card series, the first of which bore a "Bizarre Injuries" theme.

She says she "didn't want to do the best players, but rather something silly and fun." Her cards have grouped players according to a quirky trait or a Presidential name in common.



Amélie Mancini, a French artist in Brooklyn, makes cards with quirky baseball themes such as players' strange but true facial hair styles like "The Trucker" (right). She grew interested in the sport after watching a New York Mets game in 2007.

## Art and Politics: French, U.S. Universities Hold Conference

International artists and scholars gathered in the heart of Los Angeles on February 7 and 8, where the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the University of Southern California (USC), and the University of Paris VIII co-organized the Politics in Art Forms conference.

Held at UCLA and USC, Politics in Art Forms examined how fine-arts works can intersect with politics, and the necessary conditions of art for representing politics. In addition to panel discussions such as "The Political Dynamics of Dance" and "Beyond Atrocity: Looking at Photojournalism," the conference included musical performances, film screenings, and visual arts exhibits.

The participants drew from ongoing debates within the artistic and academic communities. They critically analyzed issues at the nexus of these debates, discussing to what extent the politicization of art is appropriate, among other important questions.

Politics in Art Forms was also sponsored by the *Région Ile-de-France* (the metro-Paris regional authority), the *Institut Français*, the University of Paris I, and the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles.

## Miami's French, German Consulates Play Soccer Match

Cries of "*Allez les Bleus!*" and "*Deutschland vor, noch ein Tor!*" filled Miami's Midtown Stadium Indoor Soccer on February 9, where the Consulates of France and Germany in Miami held an exhibition soccer game.

The "friendly" match, as many Europeans call non-league games, was held in honor of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Elysée Treaty. Enacted by France and Germany in 1963, the landmark agreement formalized peace between the two countries after World War II, which would set the stage for European integration.

French and German soccer players of all levels participated in the event. A similar match between the French and German national teams was held at Paris's *Stade de France* on February 6, which French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel attended together.

The soccer game is just one of the many events that will take place around the United States in 2013 as part of the "Franco-German Year," which celebrates the Elysée Treaty's historic anniversary.

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## WWII Vets From Around U.S. Given France's Highest Honor

▲ In ceremonies held this month at French diplomatic missions around the United States, former American soldiers of World War II were decorated with the Legion of Honor, France's highest award.

On February 1, 15 U.S. World War II veterans received the Legion of Honor in Houston for their service on the battlefield as well as for public-service contributions since leaving the military. Among the attendees was Johanna Butte, who served as an American nurse during operations in France. Although other female veterans have received the medal in the past, Mrs. Butte is the first female recipient in the Houston region "in at least a decade and a half," according to Véronique Lhemann, Press Attaché of the French General Consulate in Houston.

A large number of veterans received the award compared with previous years, making the ceremony espe-

cially notable. Ms. Lhemann said the consulate typically recognizes one or two veterans at a time. To have more than a dozen at the ceremony was a special honor.

On February 12, eight veterans were awarded the Legion of Honor in Jacksonville, Florida, in an event attended by the mayor of the city.

At a ceremony held on the following day in Washington, D.C., 20 veterans, 14 of whom could be in attendance, likewise received the prestigious award. Colonel Jacques Aragonès, Deputy Military Attaché for the French Army, paid tribute to the sacrifices made by the medal's recipients, saying, "We are proud to reward the ones that freed us. They left a part of their youth in France."

Established in 1802 by Emperor Napoléon Bonaparte, France's Legion of Honor, or *Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur*, recognizes excellent civil or military conduct.



Consul General Olivier Sérot Almeras, left and right, officiates at a Legion of Honor ceremony on February 13 in Washington. Similar events took place in Houston, Texas, and Jacksonville, FL, to honor France's defenders in World War II.

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