



News From France

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A free monthly review of French news & trends

Laurent Fabius, France's Foreign Affairs Minister, Visits Chicago and Washington



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In a three-day trip to the United States, Laurent Fabius, France's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, traveled to Chicago and then Washington, D.C., on May 11 through 13. Above, John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, welcomed Mr. Fabius to the Department of State for talks and a press conference. Story, p. 2

From the Ambassador's Desk: A Monthly Message From François Delattre

► Spring is giving way to summer in Washington, and French-American relations have been as warm as the weather. May proved a particularly busy month between our two countries.

On May 2, the French and American space agencies signed an agreement to jointly build, launch, and maintain a satellite that will map the waters of the Earth's surface. The project, known as the Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) mission, was signed in Washington by Jean-Yves Le Gall, President of France's CNES space agency, and Charles Bolden, Administrator of NASA.

On a more somber note, I was deeply saddened by the loss on May 6 of former U.S. Representative James Oberstar, who served as a co-founder and onetime Co-Chairman of the Congressional French Caucus. I remember bestowing upon him the insignia of Commandeur of France's National Order of Merit in 2012. A true friend of France and a dear friend of mine, Jim will never be forgotten.

The leading French-American event of the month took place from May 11 through 13, when Laurent Fabius, France's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, visited Chicago and Washington, D.C. The Minister's schedule in the Windy City included meetings with members of its business and investment commun-

ties, a visit to the offices of French company Valéo, and a meeting with Pat Quinn, Governor of Illinois.

In Washington on May 12 and 13, Mr. Fabius spoke at the American Jewish Committee's Global Forum. He also met with John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, discussing matters of shared concern to France and the United States.

The Minister concluded his visit with public remarks at the Brookings Institution.

France's public diplomacy saw an especially bright highlight this month: the EU Open House. An annual event in Washington, held on May 10 this year, the day-long program allows visitors to explore the Embassies of the European Union. France co-hosted with the Embassy of Germany, and over 4,000 people discovered French and German culture, gastronomy, and children's programs.

On May 28, the Embassy hosted an international conference on the illegal trafficking of real and counterfeit medicines. The event featured remarks by Mireille Ballestrazzi, President of Interpol. France remains committed to protecting the consumers and intellectual property owners concerned by this illicit activity, which constitutes a growing concern in terms of public health.

Clearly, French-U.S. partnership ran through a diverse set of issues this month. I look forward to more cooperation with our American friends this summer and further on.



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Think Tank Head Visits Washington, Promotes Book

At his Residence on May 8, Ambassador François Delattre welcomed members of the think tank, press, and diplomatic communities in honor of Thierry de Montbrial and his book, *Action and Reaction in the World System: The Dynamics of Economic and Political Power*.

The recent publication of the English edition of his latest work provided the opportunity to discuss global affairs in Washington. He then headed to New York City, where he attended the international conference, Council of Councils, as held from May 11 through 13 this year by the U.S.-based Council on Foreign Relations.

He later appeared as a featured guest on the evening talk show *Charlie Rose*.

Dr. de Montbrial is the Founder and President of the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), one of France's leading think tanks. Originally trained as an economist and mathematician, he has also served as a French diplomat, notably as Head Director of Policy Planning Staff of France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Chicago's Lycée Français Breaks Ground at Future Site

On May 10, supporters gathered in the Lincoln Square neighborhood of north Chicago to celebrate the formal groundbreaking ceremony at the new site of the city's Lycée Français.

Financed largely by the French government and costing an estimated \$35 million to build, the new location is set to open its doors in 2015. In the meantime, the Lycée, which conducts classes in both English and French to students ages three through 18, will continue to offer instruction at its current location while construction at the new facility is completed.

The groundbreaking follows the school's strong appeal to French, American, and international families in the Chicago region, which drove a rapid rise in enrollment numbers in recent years. The Lycée's future site is projected to accommodate over 800 students, about 50 percent of which will be American.

The project "shows the commitment that France places on French education and Chicago," said Graham Paul, Consul General of France in the city.

Also present was Alan Weber, President of the school, who praised the future campus as able to offer modern facilities in a state-of-the-art building.

current events

In U.S., Minister Addresses Gamut of French Foreign Policy

During a three-day trip to promote bilateral engagements, Laurent Fabius, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, visited Chicago and Washington, D.C., from May 11 through May 13.

The Minister, who took office in May 2012, maintained a full schedule during his U.S. visit and met with many prominent leaders working in politics, business, and education.

Mr. Fabius began his trip in Chicago, where he was present for a demonstration on a Smartphone-controlled valet parking system, created by the French automotive components manufacturing company, Valeo. The opportunity allowed Mr. Fabius to meet with French and American community business members, as well as to highlight the benefits of transatlantic trade and investment.

The visit coincided with the first edition of French Innovation Week, organized jointly by the Consulate General of France in Chicago and the French-American Chamber of Commerce. The event highlighted French contributions to the fields of gastronomy, automobile manufacturing, education, and scientific research, among other areas.

Mr. Fabius began the second half of his trip at the American Jewish Committee's Global Forum in Washington, D.C. During his speech, the Minister addressed the need to combat racism and anti-Semitism in the world, as well as underlined France's continuing efforts to promote peaceful coexistence through the country's foreign and domestic policies.

During a televised interview with CNN's Wolf Blitzer the same day, Mr. Fabius reiterated France's diplomatic stance on several pressing foreign security concerns.

On Tuesday, May 13, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, met with the Minister to discuss topics of shared concern for the U.S. and France. At the meeting they focused on matters relating to the crises in Ukraine, Syria and Africa, the Iranian nuclear program, and climate change.



Mr. Fabius spoke before thousands at the American Jewish Committee's Global Forum on May 12 in Washington.

A press conference given at the French Embassy and a final speech given at the Brookings Institution concluded Mr. Fabius's visit. The event was titled "France in an Age of Geopolitical Upheaval" and featured remarks from the Minister as well as a question-and-answer session with the audience.

Rep. James Oberstar, Great Friend of France, Dies at 79



U.S. Rep. James Oberstar, who spent 36 years in Congress, helped found and lead the Congressional French Caucus.

After having spent 36 years in office representing Minnesota's 8th District, former U.S. Congressman James Oberstar passed away on May 3, at his home in Potomac, Md. His legacy bears a strong commitment to the deepening of French-American relations.

Recognizing that France had been a strategic ally throughout America's past, Rep. Oberstar helped create the Congressional French Caucus in 2003. The bipartisan French-American friendship group consisted of over 100 members from both houses of Congress.

In personal remarks issued following the news of Rep. Oberstar's death, Francois Delattre, Ambassador of France to the United States, said that "he embodied the values of service and democratic governance," referring to him as "a great friend of France."

In 2012, Amb. Delattre bestowed upon Rep. Oberstar the insignia of Commander of the National Order of Merit, in recognition of his services rendered to France.

In Paris, the spokesman for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expressed condolences on behalf of France, calling Rep. Oberstar a "true connoisseur of our culture" who "always worked actively to promote the friendship between our two countries."

interview with the expert

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Véronique Aulagnon, Counselor for Global Affairs

Experts say globalization is changing the world, and **Véronique Aulagnon** is on the case. As the French Embassy's Attaché for Global Affairs, she tracks the events, trends, and issues of a planet in constant evolution. Whether on climate change—Paris is hosting the much-anticipated COP21, a UN-organized convention set for 2015—or on energy, summits, and human rights, it is diplomats like Ms. Aulagnon who are steering France's foreign policy toward tomorrow's critical needs. The officer, who has conducted diplomacy from Morocco and Africa's Great Lakes region, sat down with **News from France** to shed light on her work in Washington.

What is your role at the Embassy of France?

I'm in the political section, where my job is to follow U.S. policy on all global affairs. This portfolio covers economic matters, development, global health, energy, and the environment. I report on U.S. policy in these areas, communicate our position to the U.S. administration and to other important stakeholders, and identify possible initiatives that France and the U.S. could pursue jointly.

How do your previous posts inform your work here in Washington?

As a diplomat, you're not necessarily a specialist in one area; you're supposed to go from one field to another field. I worked on conflict mediation in the Great Lakes of Africa and worked in Morocco on regional politics. I started my career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Bureau for Economic Affairs, and I also worked for the French presidency of the G8 and the G20 in 2011, devoting a lot of my time to economic and development matters, which is a strong asset for my job. These experiences helped me get to the position I have today.

With which agencies of the U.S. government have you worked and do you work currently?

I mainly work with the U.S. State Department, the National Security Council, and USAID [United States Agency for International Development]. I've also worked with the U.S. Treasury, the EPA, the Center on Environmental Quality, the Department of Energy, and a lot of other agencies. In addition, I spend a lot of time engaging with stakeholders outside of the political world, such as non-profits and the business community.

In terms of experiences I would like to highlight, global health and climate change definitely come to mind. France and the U.S. are the first and the second contributors to the Global Fund on AIDS. I'm also proud of our work on climate change, as France will host the conference on climate change [COP21] in 2015. France and the U.S. are playing large roles within this effort. So I think we've been able to establish a very strong relationship and dialogue at all levels, including with Members of Congress, NGOs, and civil society.

Globalization: how would you describe France's current stance, and what can be expected in the future?

I think France has been a long-time proponent of stronger international governance of globalization. In a nutshell, we've advocated stronger international rules. For example, we've been calling for a global organization on the environment akin to the WTO [World Trade Organization] on international trade issues. Our idea



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was to strengthen the existing UNEP [United Nations Environment Programme] because we feel that environmental aspects currently do not receive the attention they deserve. France has also called for innovative financing of global public goods and development, since many international activities generate a lot of revenue but are not subject to taxes. The income of air ticket levies implemented by several countries already goes to fund the fight against AIDS, for example.

We've also promoted stronger financial regulation after the financial crisis that began in 2008, and we've been very much in line with the U.S. on this. In short, I would say that we want more and better globalization.

Climate change is of mutual concern to France and the U.S. How have you addressed this topic?

This is an area I'm particularly proud of. Of course, there are frequent contacts between our principals and experts in Paris and Washington. But we also have an important role to play in Washington. This is a joint effort. We've been able to foster a very strong bilateral dialogue, and a lot of confidence among our leaders. Our efforts have included reaching out to other stakeholders as well. We're holding a meeting with the business community soon to discuss its involvement in the Paris conference in 2015. We have lots of ideas about involving American civil society in the broadest sense of the word. In our opinion, the conversation is not only between our two governments, but also between our societies.

Are there any other examples of French-American cooperation that you're particularly proud of?

There are many areas in which France and the U.S. cooperate closely. I could talk about global health: the U.S. and France are the biggest donors to the Global Fund, which finances the fight against pandemics around the world. France and the U.S. were instrumental in starting the fund more than a decade ago, and since then, we've worked to ensure its success. ■

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Nashville Hosts Lawyers From Normandy Sister City

The longstanding sister city relationship between Caen and Nashville, Tenn., grew even stronger this month, when a delegation of French lawyers visited Music City.

From April 30 through May 4, the group met with Karl Dean, Mayor of the Tennessee capital, as well as Alberto Gonzales, former U.S. Attorney General and currently the Dean of the Belmont University law school.

The visit also included tastings of locally grown wine and a tour of the historic Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art. Participants stayed with host families, which added a personal dimension to what was for most of them their first exposure to the American Southeast.

At the root of the Caen-Nashville partnership—now nearing 30 years of existence—is Steve Cobb, former President of the Nashville Bar Association and a law professor who has taught at the University of Caen. Mr. Cobb, who directed the Sister City Committee in the 1990s, has also founded programs for doctors, students, athletes, and youth, as well as professor exchanges between Belmont University, the University of Caen, and Vanderbilt University.

Alliance Française D.C. Hosts Press Freedom Event

On May 16 in Washington, an exhibit commemorating press freedom drew together journalists, activists, and participants to the cause.

Hosted by the Alliance Française and co-organized by the local chapter of Reporters Without Borders (RWB), a France-based advocate of press freedom, the event featured 100 photos from the VII Photo Agency, a renowned photojournalism group.

The exhibit marked the worldwide launch of RWB's collection, 100 Photos by the VII Agency for Press Freedom. Over 70 people had the opportunity to view the exhibit as well as hear from notable photographers like Ron Haviv, Ed Kashi, Franco Pagetti, Tomas van Houtryve, and Sim Chi Yin.

The VII Photo Agency began 13 years ago and currently represents 19 of what many industry professionals consider the finest war and conflict photographers in the world.

Reporters Without Borders, an NGO founded in 1985, monitors threats to freedom of information and press freedom, works with governments to protect free expression, and aids persecuted journalists and their families.

France and Germany Celebrate Culture in Washington

Nearly 4,300 Visitors Welcomed as Part of Annual EU Open House Event



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On May 10, The Embassy of France opened its doors to the Washington public as part of the EU Open House. Organized annually around Europe Day (May 9), the citywide event offers a look into each of the 28 embassies of the Member States of the European Union, their diplomacy, and what they do in the capital of the United States.

The Embassy of France held its own event, and, for the third year in a row, co-hosted with the Embassy of Germany. The joint efforts are fitting, given the peaceful, vibrant relationship the countries have maintained since World War II.

Here's a closer look at how visitors learned more about the European Union, Franco-German unity, and how new technologies showcased EU countries like France as the rich cultural hubs that they are.

Europe Without the Jetlag

The EU Open House was billed as "Europe without the jetlag," in hopes of appealing to many U.S. visitors who have not had the opportunity to see the

Continent in person. No fewer than four bus routes were planned to accommodate the large numbers of curious Washingtonians. The vehicles took passengers along and beyond the city's famous Embassy Row, a section of Massachusetts Avenue in the city's Northwest quadrant that is occupied by foreign representations and their diplomats from around the globe.

At the Embassy of France alone, some 4,300 people came to sample the free taste of French and German cultures—from food and drink to exhibits on each country's industry, agriculture, scientific research, and militaries. Contestants at the French and German trivia booths attempted to win prizes by answering trivia questions on each country's geography, pastimes, and role in developing the European Union.

Photo booths featuring iconic images from each country's capital—Paris's world-famous Eiffel Tower, along with a throwback Berlin Wall in front of the Brandenburg Gate—inspired wanderlust. Dozens of photos were taken by aspiring travelers of Europe.

Franco-German Unity

The joint open house speaks to far more than France and Germany's desire to host the Washington public together—it suggests a much broader partnership. The two nations manage the largest economies in the Eurozone, which is the part of the EU that uses the euro currency. They have also been at the heart of peaceful relations in Europe in the post-World War II period.

This Franco-German peace is rooted in history. In 1963, French President Charles de Gaulle and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer signed the Elysée Treaty, a comprehensive agreement between their countries which committed both to a long-term cooperation through exchanges between government officials as well as ordinary citizens. In 2013, the "Franco-German Year" saw multiple events and commemorations celebrating the 50 years of peace between two of Continental Europe's leading states following the accord.

Little wonder, then, that in 2012 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the whole of the



Clockwise from opp. page: A view of the French Embassy's Open House; the French and German Deputy Chiefs of Mission try out the Berlin Wall; Embassy personnel show off their red tee-shirts; a visitor plays for prizes; the Embassy's press team shows its spirit; splits and champagne by the Eiffel Tower; and kids celebrate with painted faces.

European Union for having “over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.” Just as peace in Europe stands as a pillar of the EU’s modern identity, peaceful relations between France and Germany have done much to foster growth and stability across the broader EU region. Such partnership was on vibrant display during the Open House, where offerings like the bicultural “diplomatic lunch,” French and German language lessons, and kid’s games furthered the spirit of healthy relations between former adversaries.

Modern Europe, New Tech

If the Open House was steeped in history, new technologies showed a contemporary side as well. Several innovations marked the Franco-German event, notably the Twitter wall displaying real-time messages from the embassies and visitors alike. Operated with the social media platform Zompf, personnel from the French and

German embassies were able to post or re-post content created either by themselves, or by attendees. Followers on Twitter received updates using “hashtags” (keywords) including #ParisBerlin and #EUOpenHouse, which generated more than four million impressions.

Another high-tech aspect of the day centered on the photo booths representing some of Germany’s and France’s most widely recognized images. Some attempted to scale (or tear down) the Berlin Wall, while one man play-acted a marriage proposal to his lady friend at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. No sooner were the photos snapped than they were prepared for printing or for publication online. Those with a smartphone and social media access were able to share their photos instantly.

Photos taken at the Embassy of France often found their way into a larger online photo event organized by the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, which ran a daylong “EUselfie” competition. The event encouraged those visiting EU embassies to post photos of themselves (“self-

ies,” in the Internet Age’s current parlance) with prizes offered for the best photos submitted. The competition generated over 500 entries. By the end of the day, nearly 100,000 visitors had participated in the EU Open House event. News and images of the event reached far more than those physically present—netizens from around the world had the chance to see the innovative, tech-savvy face of European diplomacy in Washington.

In short, France and Germany’s combined effort during the 2014 EU Open House proved fruitful on multiple levels. Visitors experienced “Europe without the jetlag,” given nearly 30 sites to explore, and nearly 4,300 of them made the trip to the Embassy of France. The event showed characteristic Franco-German unity, the product of decades of working for long-term European peace and prosperity. And new technologies broadcast this vibrancy to the viewing public, whether they joined the fun virtually or in person. Preparations are already underway for the EU Open House 2015.

Industrial Material Makers Exhibit Wares in Atlanta

Two French industrial manufacturers made a splash at one of the Western Hemisphere's largest professional conventions from May 13 through 15.

At the JEC Americas show held at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, French brands CQFD Composites and Kermel presented products that supply critical needs in sectors such as construction, wearable protective equipment, and automobile manufacturing.

CQFD Composites, a startup that specializes in the field of thermoplastic pultrusion, develops materials like glass fiber and enhanced aluminum for use in construction. The Lyon-based company, which has operated since 2011, takes its name from the French mathematics term *ce qu'il fallait démontrer*—"what should have been demonstrated"—an abbreviation used to conclude academic presentations in France and an indication of the advanced science employed in making the company's products.

Kermel creates protective apparel for workers in heavy industry and other high-risk occupations. The company's products include fireman's suits and bulletproof armor for police and special forces. The company has operated since 1992 and is based in the eastern French city of Colmar.

French Beauty Suppliers Hope to Win Over U.S. Market

Sixteen French beauty-supply companies were spotlighted at the French Pavilion at this year's Suppliers' Day Show, held on May 13 through 14 in Edison, NJ.

French participation at the event was organized by Ubifrance and hosted by the New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists. The gathering has become one of the largest trade shows for make-up ingredients in the United States.

The Pavilion allowed French companies—a diverse mix of established and emerging brands—to showcase their latest innovations, which covered everything from algae-based cosmetics, to testing companies committed to responsible testing practices.

The show provided the companies a chance to meet with distributors and other large brand names such as Johnson & Johnson and Avon.

Ubifrance, France's Agency for International Business Development, organized the French Pavilion as a way to promote French expertise and facilitate transatlantic connections between companies in the fields of beauty, skin care, and makeup.

business & technology

French Firm Reaches Completion on Miami Tunnel Project



Work on the Port of Miami Tunnel wrapped in May, a partnership between Florida and French firm Bouygues.

Nearly four years after construction started on the colossal project, work on the Port of Miami Tunnel finished this month. The completion of the Miami Tunnel owes its success to partnerships among French and American entities in business and government.

Of particular importance was the role played by French company Bouygues, in association with several local public actors, including the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County.

The Tunnel, which will soon open to traffic, is expected to see some 16,000 vehicles pass through it per day. Costing nearly \$1 billion, the structure is intended to facilitate access to the city's port, as well as ease traffic within the congestion-prone city.

Florida Governor Rick Scott attended the inauguration ceremony on May 19, joined by Philippe Létrilliart, Consul General of France in Miami, and local and state officials.

The public-private partnership offers a model for future cooperation between French and U.S. authorities, according to many of those involved in the Miami Tunnel's construction. "We look forward to partnering with the public for other great projects," said Louis Brais, the Project Executive for Bouygues.

Bouygues Civil Works Florida organized the design and construction of the Tunnel and has employed more than 500 people, most of whom are local Miami residents.

French and U.S. Experts Present Science Education Festival

The third annual French-American Science Festival ran from May 13 to 15 at the Office for Science and Technology at the Consulate General of France in Chicago, Northwestern University, and the Alliance Française of Chicago.

The festival was a part of the larger French Innovation Week that took place from May 9 to 16. Different events throughout the series showcased French

science and technology as well as gastronomy and culture.

Two free conferences and hands-on activities welcomed students and their teachers, titled "Climate Change: the 21st Century's Challenge" and "Discovery of the Higgs boson." There were also films, a virtual tour of famous French and European research labs, and debates among leading scientists. The hands-on education portion included information on superconductivity, energy storage, and nuclear energy.

The event was designed for young French and American students from fifth through 10th grades. About 20 exhibitors set up booths to talk about their activities with attendees.

David Archer, University of Chicago Professor of Geophysics, and Hervé le Treut, Member of the French Academy of the Sciences, presented a conference on climate change. The leaders of the Higgs boson conference included leading French scientist Michel Spiro, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory researcher Scott Dodelson, and experts from the European Organization for Nuclear Research (known by its French acronym, CERN), which is based in Switzerland.

Recent developments in the advancement of science in the U.S. and France were also discussed. These include France's nomination by the United Nations to host the 21st Conference of the Parties on Climate Change in 2015, and the Nobel Prize in Physics to François Englert and Peter Higgs for their 2012 discovery of the Higgs boson, an elementary particle first theorized in 1964.

Festival partners included the Embassy of France in the United States, the Argonne National Laboratory, and the Illinois Institute of Technology.

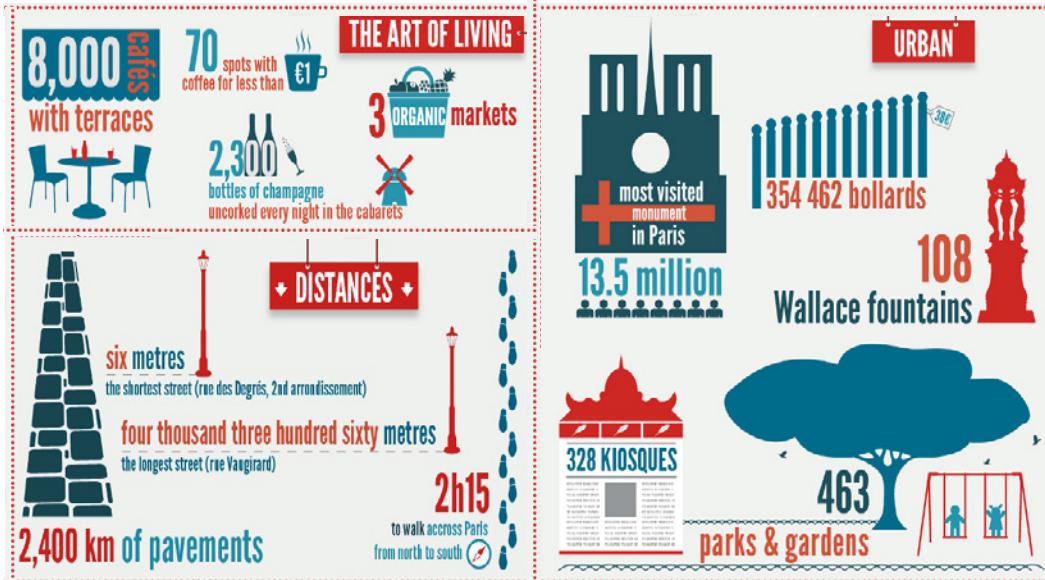


The third French-American Science Festival returned to Chicago to shed light on French innovative excellence.

8,000 Cafés and Counting: Paris Tourism by the Numbers

As the single largest tourist destination in the world, Paris acts as a perennial record-breaker. But just what are those records? What are the numbers that signify the city's worldwide appeal? The infographic

below helps quantify everything from the commonplace (streetposts) to the extraordinary (Notre Dame Cathedral). Want to know more, like how many pigeons call Paris home? Find out at www.france.fr.



In Nod to Influences, Johnny Hallyday Plays First U.S. Tour

Though he has spent over a half-century performing, French rock icon Johnny Hallyday took his talents to the United States for the first time this spring.

France's best-known music star played 14 dates in the U.S. from April 24 through May 11. Beginning in California and working his way east, the tour traveled through some of the largest North American music markets, many of which also feature sizable French expatriate populations.

Visiting Hollywood's Fonda Theatre for his first stop, Mr. Hallyday—who keeps a residence in Los Angeles—played to a familiar environment there. The "Born Rocker" tour then traveled to San Francisco before starting a five-concert leg in Canada.

Returning to the U.S., the artist played New York City, Washington, D.C., Boston, then Miami before a final trio of shows at House of Blues locations in New Orleans, Houston, and Dallas.

These and other parts of the American South are the birthplace of much of the rock'n'roll Mr. Hallyday heard as a youth, which fueled aspirations for a music career of his own. He is often called "the French Elvis" for his pioneering role in establishing rock music in France since releasing his first music in 1960. The artist himself cites Mr. Presley, whom Mr. Hallyday saw in Las Vegas in 1974, as a primary influence for his music and career.

Born Jean-Philippe Smet in 1943, the boy who would become Johnny Hallyday spent much of his young life in and around show business. As a child, he performed in the cabarets with his extended family. A defining moment came to the artist in 1957, when, after seeing the film *Lovin' You* starring Elvis Presley, he set his ambition on achieving similar success.

Mr. Hallyday has demonstrated commitment to his American influences through the full sweep of his lengthy career. He scored a hit in 1961 with the song



Johnny Hallyday, shown here in France earlier this year, went on his first U.S. tour from April 24 through May 11.

"Viens Danse le Twist," a French-language adaptation of Chubby Checker's "Let's Twist Again." In 1967 he covered "Hey Joe," the Jimi Hendrix title, and in the 1970s recorded two albums of American rock and blues standards.

Other works that speak to his appreciation of U.S. music include the 1985 smash single "Quelque Chose de Tennessee" and the 1996 album *Destination Vegas*.

en bref

Embassy Hosts Experts for Day on Medicine Trafficking

On May 28, the Embassy of France hosted a daylong seminar on the need to combat the illegal trafficking of real and counterfeit medicines.

François Delattre, Ambassador of France to the United States, provided opening remarks and welcomed officials in attendance. Among the speakers at the event were Mireille Ballestrazzi, President of Interpol, an international police organization with 190 member countries, as well as Stephen Sola, of the Office of Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator at the White House.

The event was organized by Pierre-Edouard Colliex, Attaché for Police and Homeland Security at the Embassy of France, with support of the European Institute, a Washington think tank.

The program's objectives, although representing a wide range of public and private initiatives, dealt mainly with identifying and sharing investigative tools for enhancing the international operational network of law enforcement officials.

The conference concluded with a round-table discussion given by Joëlle Attinger, President of the European Institute, and a speech by Ms. Ballestrazzi.

Notre Dame Organist Performs in Maryland

On May 4, Johann Vexo, organist at Paris's iconic Notre Dame Cathedral, played a recital at St. Jane Frances de Chantal Catholic Church in Bethesda, Md.

The performance was part of a series the parish held called "Sacred Music in a Sacred Space." The series kick-off took place in November 2013.

Mr. Vexo is one of four professional organists at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Born in 1978 in Nancy, Mr. Vexo studied organ at the Conservatory of Strasbourg, where he was awarded first prize for the organ. He also studied at the Paris Conservatory.

In 2004, Mr. Vexo was granted the position of organist for the Choir Organ of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris. Since 2009, he has also served as the organist of the Cathedral of Nancy. He holds an Aptitude Certificate and teaches organ at the Regional Conservatory of Angers and at the European Music Master Classes in Nancy.

The organist also regularly gives concerts and teaching seminars, in France and elsewhere in Europe, as well as Canada, the United States, and Russia.

The free event was open to the public and followed by a reception.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Arnaud Guillois

EDITOR

Dana Purcarescu

MANAGING EDITOR

William C. Fleeson

PHOTO EDITOR

Elaina Waters

FEATURE WRITER

William C. Fleeson

STAFF WRITERS

Emily Canfil, Algance Mahdjoub,
Adorabelle Namigadde, Elaina Waters

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

William C. Fleeson

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NEWS FROM FRANCE
FRENCH EMBASSY
PRESS & COMMUNICATION SERVICE
4101 Reservoir Road, NW
Washington, DC 20007-2182

Tel: (202) 944-6060
Fax: (202) 944-6040

www.franceintheus.org
info@ambafrance-us.org
 www.facebook.com/FrancelnTheUS
 Twitter: @franceintheus

The Cannes Film Festival: French-American From the Start

▲ May 14 kicked off the start of the 67th edition of the Cannes Film Festival, the world's largest gathering dedicated to celebrating film. But did you know that, since the festival's founding in 1946, the French ceremony has shared close ties with the United States?

Located on France's Mediterranean coast, Cannes welcomes movie-makers, celebrities, journalists and fans to celebrate the year's best motion pictures from around the world.

Originally the product of U.S. and French collaboration, the Festival was meant to compete against the popularity of the Venice Mostra after the Second World War. The city and the glamorous people it attracted quickly brought international media attention, cementing its longevity.

Hollywood's influence in Cannes remains strong in many respects, and the American film industry continues to play an important role in the event.

Since its debut, 18 Americans have served the coveted role of President of the Jury, second only to the number of French nationals having served. The nomination to the post recognizes the individual's exceptional career in film.

The trend is reflected in similar achievements as well. American films have won the most *Palmes d'Or* of any country, the highly prestigious award given for Best Film at the ceremony.

The event, which once hosted such legendary stars as Bette Davis and Kirk Douglas, again welcomed and recognized internationally acclaimed American film industry giants this year.

The festival opened with a screening of the film "Grace of Monaco," starring Nicole Kidman in a role honoring the famous Hollywood icon, Grace Kelly.

The American star Julianne Moore won the award for Best Actress for her role in "Maps to the Stars," while American film director Bennett Miller won in the Best Director's category for his film, "Foxcatcher."

May 25 marked the closing of the 2014 ceremony. Taking home the illustrious *Palme d'Or* was the film "Winter Sleep," directed by Kış Uykuşusu. ■



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At this year's Cannes Film Festival, U.S. star Julianne Moore won Best Actress for leading in "Maps to the Stars."

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