

## Prime Minister de Villepin Reaffirms France's Fight Against Anti-Semitism at World Jewish Congress

**F**RENCH Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin delivered a speech at the dinner of the World Jewish Congress held on November 12 in Paris reaffirming France's commitment to combat racism and anti-Semitism.

Prime Minister de Villepin highlighted measures that France has undertaken in the fight against anti-Semitism. Among them, France has stepped up surveillance of sensitive sites and departments with the highest incidences. Approximately 1,200 officers, plus local police and gendarmerie forces are assigned exclusively to the security of Jewish community religious and cultural premises. In addition, a program to make sensitive buildings more secure has been included in the budget of the Interior Ministry. France has strengthened legislation against racist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic acts which has become one of the toughest in the world. The Prime Minister emphasized France's vigilance by pointing to the Interministerial Committee to fight Racism and Anti-Semitism, which meets several times a year to monitor domestic progress. "Increasing preventative measures," said Mr. de Villepin at the World Jewish Congress, "means being faithful to our duty of remembrance.



PM. de Villepin addresses the World Jewish Congress

France is facing up to her past." As an example, he highlighted the annual day devoted to remembrance of the Shoah being introduced in schools.

As a result, anti-Semitic acts in France fell by 47 percent in 2005, compared with the previous year. "But," says Prime Minister de Villepin, "we must keep up our vigilance because we will win this battle only over time."

Prime Minister de Villepin also stressed the need for a continued French-Israeli friendship: "to wage this battle, we have to strengthen the Franco-Israeli relationship still further. Since 2002, we have made considerable headway on the path of dialogue and friendship between our two peoples. We have stepped up our political exchanges (...) we have also stepped up our cooperation. France is determined to place this friendship, this

commitment, at the service of peace. At a time when the region is running the risk of a new outbreak of violence, France stands resolutely at Israel's side. She will not compromise on Israel's security, which can be achieved only through the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is the whole thrust of France's and Europe's commitment in the Middle East." 🇫🇷

## Minister Douste-Blazy Assesses the Situation in Darfur

**F**RENCH Minister of Foreign Affairs Philippe Douste-Blazy traveled to Egypt and Sudan to encourage the strengthening of African forces and to provide an opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Darfur. The region lies at the crossroads of the Arab and African worlds. "Nearly 250,000 people have been murdered in Darfur, and 2.5 million people have been displaced [by this conflict]," Minister Douste-Blazy said in an op-ed published in the French newspaper *Le Figaro*.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly on September 19, French President Chirac characterized the situation in Darfur by saying, "A crime against humanity looms." "As far as France is concerned," stated Minister Douste-Blazy, "it cannot possibly resign itself simply to speaking out." So far, France has provided 76 million euros (approximately \$100 million) bilaterally and multilaterally for Darfur's civilians. There are 13 UN agencies, 84 NGOs, and 14,000 humanitarian workers on the ground.

"In Egypt and Sudan, I wanted to meet those who are ready to help us in the quest for a lasting solution," Minister Douste-Blazy explained. He met with President Mubarak in Egypt, and in Sudan with President al-Bashir as well as U.N., E.U., and NGO representatives. On November 12 in Khartoum, he proposed "an intermediate solution which would make it possible to strengthen the effectiveness of AMIS--the African Union force- on Sudanese territory, while respecting that country's sovereignty."



Minister Douste-Blazy visits Kassab refugee camp in Sudan

On November 16, the Addis Ababa meeting, organized under the auspices of Secretary General of the U.N. Kofi Annan and attended by France, began to map out the modalities of the international community's response and to facilitate humanitarian aid. "France is relying of the Sudanese authorities' ability to accept on their country's borders an international presence capable of assisting the return of stability in the area", says Minister Douste-Blazy. There is also the risk of the situation in Darfur spreading to Chad and the Central African Republic.

The foreign minister asserted that "neither France nor the international community desire Darfur's secession or the dismantling of the Sudanese administration. Our sole objective is to take the political heat out of the region and further regional stability. For its part, France is ready to make active efforts to facilitate new talks."

The minister of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed France's commitment to implementing a solution to the situation in Darfur, stating that "everyone has their share of responsibility. The aim is not to impose a blueprint from elsewhere, but, through dialogue, to achieve a responsible solution in everyone's interest. This is what France, under President Chirac's impetus, has always sought. It is on this condition that we shall be able to move forward on the path of restoring peace, which, first and foremost, for the suffering civilians, means a promise of regaining dignity and security, too long neglected." 🇫🇷

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# Colin Powell Wins Prestigious French Award

## FRENCH CHEF FOR APEC...

French chef Didier Corlou displayed his culinary skills in Hanoi, Vietnam, as the head chef for the most recent gathering of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The APEC conference brought together 21 world leaders, including Presidents Bush, Vladimir Putin of Russia, China's Hu Jintao and South Korean leader, Roh Moo-Hyun. Corlou has much experience in diplomatic cuisine and former U.S. President Bill Clinton is said to have enjoyed his work. The fare at the APEC summit fused French and Vietnamese cuisine, with a mouth-watering selection featuring clam and artichoke soup, crispy rice cake, a tower of spring rolls, cinnamon-sprinkled veal, and for dessert, chocolate cake with a passion fruit coulis.

## PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S WWII OFFICE SOLD

The WWII office of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme allied commander, was sold for \$340,000 on November 11. The office, located in Reims, a city east of Paris, was where Eisenhower mapped out his military strategies during World War II. He even kept a cot there to take naps during this intense period of his career. Built in 1911 out of fine oak, the 273-square-foot room has curved corners, hidden cabinetry and a columned marble mantle, and is encircled by ten decorative, hand-carved panels depicting a salute to the arts, the sciences and heroism of warfare. It was disassembled and shipped to Red Barron's, an auction house in Atlanta, GA. The highest bidder was a wealthy businessman from Raleigh, N.C., who plans to build a house around the room.

## FRENCH WOMAN CROWNED QUEEN IN VILLAGE IN TOGO

Retirees to warm climates should take note of one of the golden years had to offer one woman from France: life as a monarch. Marie-Claude Lovisa, a mother of two from Lyon, had been looking to settle in a warmer climate to ease her rheumatism, and instead found herself crowned queen of a small village in Togo. Lovisa had traveled to Africa to spend a few therapeutic weeks in the country, but later returned to work on humanitarian projects for African children in the small village of Takpla. Appreciative of her developmental efforts, village elders asked her to be the new queen, awarding her a throne and a crown during a traditional ceremony. The 52-year-old now focuses principally on regional development projects, like the creation of new classrooms, micro-credit for women, and health care dispensaries.

NEWS FROM FRANCE / December 6, 2006

**F**ORMER President of France Valéry Giscard d'Estaing bestowed the Tocqueville Award on former Secretary of State Colin Powell for his autobiography, *My American Journey* on November 30.

Alexis de Tocqueville, renowned for his book *Democracy in America*, is considered in France as well as the United States to be one of the greatest thinkers of liberalism. His work has been translated into multiple languages and has played an integral role in examining democratic systems.

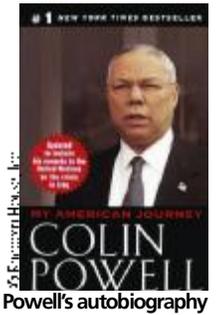
In addition to his life as an author, Alexis de Tocqueville was also a politician. He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs (akin to the position of Secretary of State) in 1849 under the Second Republic.

In memory of Alexis de Tocqueville's contributions to literature, the Conseil Général de la Manche and the Regional Council of

Basse-Normandie created a literary prize Le Prix Tocqueville in 1979 to honor writers whose insight parallels that of de Tocqueville.

The prize, which also carries a stipend of approximately \$18,750, has been offered in the past to such influential persons as ex-president François Mitterrand and ex-Prime Minister Raymond Barre.

Born April 5, 1937, Powell had an outstanding military career. On January 20, 2001, Powell became the first African American Secretary of State, and in 2003, Powell published his well-received autobiography.



# France Breaks Ground on First-ever Ecological High School

**T**HE construction of Europe's first "ecological" high school is under way in France. The building will be located in Poitiers, France, and is expected to open its doors to 500 students in a little less than three years. Ségolène Royal, the representative of the Poitou-Charentes region and the Socialist Party's candidate for next year's presidential elections, laid the first stone in a ceremony that marked the groundbreaking. Royal said the high school "demonstrates that it is possible to have a public building which consumes zero fossil fuels (energy obtained from gas, carbon, and petroleum)."

The designers of the project aim for the new high school to be a model for reducing energy consumption detrimental to the environment.



Ségolène Royal lays cornerstone for ecological school

The building will be equipped with 1,000-square-meters of photovoltaic transducers, which process solar energy, and will generate heat and electricity from a blend of vegetable oils. The high school will use low-consumption equipment and will collect and treat rainwater.

Ecologist Nicolas Hulot explained the significance of this effort: "With this high school, we are going to reduce energy consumption by more than 10 times. This shows that solutions to face environmental problems exist." The ecological high school project is among other environmentally conscious ventures in the Poitou-Charentes region, such as the upcoming circulation of regional express trains powered by a form of bio-fuel.

# Memorial Dedicated to Harlem Hellfighters

**A**RMISTICE Day ceremonies throughout France came on the heels of another ceremony less than two months ago honoring WWI veterans. On September 29, a memorial was unveiled in honor of the 369th Infantry Regiment. Better known as the "Harlem Hellfighters," the all African-American 369th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the French Army for the duration of the U.S.'s participation in WWI. They were among the first American units to arrive in France during WWI. Wearing a combination of U.S.-issued uniforms and French-issued helmets and brown leather pouches, the Harlem Hellfighters fought under French command during various campaigns. The unveiling marked the 88th anniversary of the battle to liberate Séchault, in northern France's Ardennes Mountains, during which their participation was crucial. A third of the regiment suffered casualties during this battle. Following the war, the French government recog-



369th Infantry Regiment being honored

## FRANCE CELEBRATES 88TH ARMISTICE DAY

France commemorated Armistice Day (known in the United States as Veterans Day) on November 11. This year's Armistice Day marks the 88th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice of November 11, 1918, in a railway carriage in Compiègne forest northeast of Paris. The signing officially ended WWI. President Jacques Chirac greeted one of the four surviving World War I veterans (out of the 8.5 million French soldiers who fought in the war, 107-year-old René Riffaud) at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe. After the bugle call which symbolized the sounding of the cease-fire, Riffaud rose from his wheelchair and laid a bouquet of carnations on the war memorial, promising to be back next year.

nized the regiment for their gallantry and heroism by decorating 171 members with the Cross of War, and one officer with the Legion of Honor. The memorial, a 12' tall black granite obelisk with gilded inscriptions and the regiment's crest and coiled rattlesnake insignia, is a replica of the memorial that already stands in Séchault.

Members of the U.S. and French armed services were present at the ceremony, as well as French Consul General François Delattre who spoke at the unveiling. Consul Delattre paid homage to the 369th Infantry Regiment's heroism in WWI by highlighting its part in the victory of 1918 and bringing to the forefront the regiment's important contribution to the friendship between France and Harlem, between France and the African-American community, and between France and the U.S.

# French Cultural Aid to Louisiana Post-Katrina

**T**HE French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, and the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (Codofil) renewed the linguistic and educational cooperation agreements between France and Louisiana in Paris on November 14, 2006.

Founded in 1968 by Jacques Domengeaux, a Louisiana attorney and French-speaking senator, Codofil, a US-incorporated agency, intends to revive and develop the practice of French in Louisiana.

The renewal of these agreements will be the occasion for France and Louisiana to reaffirm their commitment to strengthening educational, academic and linguistic cooperation in order to consolidate the Francophone dimension of the state. To this end, these agreements have been revised in response to action by the State of Louisiana which has launched, in the framework of its plan to rebuild areas destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, a number of educational and cultural projects to which France is contributing.

Some of the projects include: Support for the New

Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) and the Historic New Orleans Collection; sponsorship of musicians' residencies throughout France (Odyssey program) as well as various music festivals; historic preservation projects such as the renovation of a Creole cottage, a plantation, a church, a convent and a house. In addition, the Université d'Orléans (France) welcomed 35 students from the University of New Orleans for two semesters and provided tuition and lodging. The French American Cultural Exchange (FACE) relief fund provided significant assistance for schools in New Orleans and has also supported various other cultural foundations, including: the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, the Resource Center at Louisiana State University, the Alliance Française of New Orleans and Lafayette, and a Multimedia Center for Pedagogic Training.

The cultural initiatives complement those taken in the field of education by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Agency for the Teaching of French Abroad. For more information, please visit: [www.ambafrance-us.org](http://www.ambafrance-us.org). 



Baltimore Basilica

France's contribution to the construction of America's first cathedral, the Baltimore Basilica, was honored at the commemoration of the building's bicentennial on November 10. The Roman Catholic Basilica's cornerstone was laid in 1806. French architecture significantly influenced the design of the church, and its clock, bells, artwork, altar, and various other furnishings all came from France, many as donations. Mark Potter, the executive director of the Historic Trust for the Basilica said that the French "contributed two of the large paintings in the back of the church: King Louis XVIII and King Charles X of France. Our bells are from Lyon, France, and our third archbishop was actually a Frenchman." Consul General of France in Washington, Jean-Pierre Alex-Lyoudi, was present at the event marking the historic church's 200th anniversary, during which both countries' national anthems were performed. Church leaders from both sides of the Atlantic organized a simultaneous "tolling of the bells" to commemorate the 175th anniversary of when the Basilica's two tower bells were cast in Lyon, France, and to honor the country's overall contributions to the Baltimore Basilica. The Baltimore Basilica as well as the Cathédrale Saint-Jean-Baptiste and the Basilique Notre-Dame de Fourvière in Lyon rang their bells two hundred times at their respective designated hour: 12:00 p.m. in Baltimore and 6:00 p.m. in Lyon.

## NATIONAL FRENCH WEEK

Students at the Waynesboro Area High School, PA celebrated National French Week in November. Organized by the school's French club, a handful of students travelled to the Waynesboro Middle School to prepare and serve crêpes during the lunch period to kick off the week. Other activities throughout the week celebrated French culture, including French music, "thoughts of the day" from famous French literary figures were broadcasted during the morning announcements, and an ongoing trivia contest held every day at lunch featured French mindbenders that stumped even the brightest of students. To celebrate cuisine day, the French classes prepared for themselves a full course French meal, using authentic French recipes. A chocolate mousse eating contest was held on the last day as a grand finale. Each lunch period held at least two contests which were packed with onlookers anxious to see that chocolate mousse fly (see pic. on p.8). Despite the mess from the mousse eating contest, the week was a success.

## NBA Welcomes French Basketball Players

**T**HE Seattle Supersonics are now benefiting from the skills of two French basketball players, Johan Petro and Mickaël Gelabale. Gelabale joined the team for the 2006-2007 season, while Petro already has a year under his belt with the Sonics. Lojze Milosavljevic, the Sonics' European recruiter, expressed his enthusiasm for the potential of Gelabale, a 6'7" point guard: "He has great athletic potential, he's a strong shooter off of the dribble, and a good defensive player."



Frenchman Boris Diaw was voted Most Improved Player for 2005-2006

Another French player, Boris Diaw, recently agreed to a five-year contract extension with the Phoenix Suns. Diaw, nicknamed "Mr. Versatility" for his formidable presence all over the court, won the NBA's Most Improved Player Award last year. In the 2006 post-season, Diaw averaged 18.7 points in 20 games.

Petro, Gelabale, and Diaw are among seven French players currently active in the NBA, along with Mickaël Piétrus, Ronny Turiaf, Yakhoubia Diawara, and Tony Parker. Parker, one of the quickest players in the NBA, has become a household name as a point guard for the San Antonio Spurs. 

## 40th Annual ACTFL Conference

**T**HE American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) held its 40th Annual Meeting and Exposition November 16-19 in Nashville. At the forefront of this year's conference was ACTFL's *Discover Languages* public awareness initiative: a campaign that launched one year ago to rally support for language education among the general public and to energize those in the profession to renew their efforts to promote language learning at the local level. With over 10,000 visitors last year, the event attracted administrators, methods instructors, and students alike.

Exhibitors at this year's event in the heartland of country music included embassies, public and private organizations that promote language education, and also a large variety of cultural and gastronomic companies. The Cultural Services of the French Embassy was present at the exposition, with a display called the French Pavilion, which offered a contest about the French-speaking world, chocolate tasting, and French music. The French Embassy, the Government of Quebec, Bayard Presse-Milan Presse, the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi, the American Association of Teachers of

French, the Belgian Tourist Office, CLE International and the Centre d'études et de Recherches anglaises et nord-Américaines (CERAN) were in attendance to discuss strategies for French-language education. Participants also learned about a valuable resource specifically designed for French educators by the Cultural Services at the French Embassy: [www.frenchresources.info](http://www.frenchresources.info). This educational portal offers easy access to a wealth of resources for students and teachers of French alike. For more information about ACTFL, please visit: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org). 



French Embassy's Cultural Services at "French Pavilion"

# The Life of CHANEL

**G**ABRIELLE Bonheur "Coco" Chanel (August 19, 1883-January 10, 1971) was an iconic French couturier whose revolutionary philosophy, modern femininity, and legendary fashions have made her one of the most important figures in the history of 20th century fashion design.

Fashion Show: Paris Collections 2006 debuted on November 12, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. This exhibition, running until March 18, 2007, brings together the latest designs from 10 of the most influential and creative fashion houses, including Chanel. Highlighting approximately 10 pieces from Chanel's spring couture, the exhibit explores contemporary fashion in Paris. Chanel's selections feature "pure Chanel," a collection of youthful updates of the classic suit, as well as subtle references to house signatures. The Chanel exhibition mannequins wear the same flat, white go-go boots as did Coco in the 1950s.

Chanel was born in Saumur, France, the daughter of Albert Chanel and his lover Jeanne Devolle. Gabrielle had five siblings: three sisters, and two brothers, one of whom died after only a few months. Her mother died while Gabrielle was an adolescent, and her father abandoned the children. She spent seven years in the orphanage of the Catholic monastery of Aubazine, where she learned how to sew. In 1910, to exert her independence, she opened a shop in Paris selling hats, and later moved her popular business to the fashionable 31 rue Cambon.



Mlle. Chanel in her Hotel Ritz suite, Paris. Published in Harper's Bazaar in 1937, this photo was chosen as the first advertisement for perfume N°5

The nickname "Coco" came about one night at La Rotonde, a café frequented by members of a French cavalry regiment and many of the artists who flocked to Paris's Montparnasse at the turn of the 20th century. It was there that Chanel, then a cabaret singer, performed a song called "Qui qu'a vu Coco," and the name stuck with her ever since. Paris had long been hailed the epicenter for art and fashion, and in 1920, Chanel began laying the foundation of her style and a legacy that would further perpetuate this reputation as well as establish herself as a female icon in the world of fashion. Her designs in this era were simple, practical, and often inspired by menswear, especially by the uniforms of World War I. As the geopolitical climate evolved, so did

Chanel's designs. Her styles reflected the changing role of women as a result of WWII, using boxy lines and shortened skirts, allowing women to leave their corsets behind so they could be free for the work made necessary by war. Elements

of this "boxiness" and design remain at the foundation of the elegant House of Chanel.

She updated her classic looks in 1954 and the Chanel suit became the status symbol for a new post-war generation. Famous for her many love affairs, Coco Chanel never married, and for more than 30 years, she called the Hôtel Ritz in Paris her home. When she broke off

## CHANEL N° 5

"Where should one use perfume?" asked a young woman. "Wherever one wants to be kissed," Chanel famously replied. In 1921, the House of Chanel, and the world of perfume, was changed forever by one creation: Chanel No. 5. The scent, the first perfume created by a couture designer, has been the best-selling Chanel product ever since, and was the first perfume ever to be sold worldwide. Until its inception, most perfumes produced were organic-based and exuded a natural "beautiful" floral aroma, designed to enhance a woman's beauty with sweetness and flowers. Coco Chanel subscribed to the aesthetic theory that "ugly" placed next to "beautiful", by contrast, makes the beauty more pronounced. Chanel No. 5 was the first artificial perfume introduced to heavily rely on synthetic floral aldehydes to contrast and therefore highlight a woman's natural beauty. Before synthetics, perfume either had to be applied heavily before going out to ensure that the fragrance would last, or reapplied throughout the night.

The perfume still has a sales growth rate of over 18 percent, and occupies 5 percent of the world market share for perfume. Sales of Chanel No. 5 have soared ever since it was introduced in the U.S. in the 1950s. The perfume was immediately embraced by the masses and Hollywood alike. Famous spokes-models for the fragrance include Nicole Kidman and Marilyn Monroe. In 1953, when asked in a press interview what she wore to bed, Monroe playfully replied, "two drops of Chanel No. 5." Andy Warhol, as a tribute to the cultural icon of Chanel No. 5, created nine silk screens of the perfume. The design of the perfume bottle Chanel No. 5 itself was considered to be a work of art. In 1959 it was inducted into the Museum of Modern Art in New York's collections. Today, it is estimated that a bottle of Chanel No. 5 is sold every 30 seconds.



an engagement to the Duke of Westminster, Chanel notoriously asserted, "there are many dukes, but there is only one Chanel." Chanel's influence on haute-couture was such that she was the only person in the field to be named on TIME Magazine's 100 most influential people of the 20th century, and by her death at age 87, the French couturier had long since established herself as the 20th century's single most important authority of fashion.

## CHANEL's Legacy

**C**OCO Chanel is remembered as a leader whose fashion ingenuity helped to liberate and re-define women. She served as a role model of grace, beauty, and femininity defined by simplicity. By shortening skirts and designing comfortable pantsuits, Chanel afforded women the sort of comfort and ease hitherto reserved to men's fashions.

"Dress shabbily and they remember the dress; dress impeccably and they remember the woman," echoed one of Chanel's maxims that is omnipresent in her designs. It was Chanel who saw past the corset and replaced it with comfortable, sexier clothing. She demonstrated that women could wear pants and still be feminine. In 1926, she introduced "the little black dress," which was fabricated from jersey—the comfortable fabric used in men's shirts. The dress was classy, sexy, and came in only one color: black. Today "the little black dress" is seen as a beacon in the fashion industry that lends itself to be either dressed up or down, and allows the woman, and not her clothes, to shine.

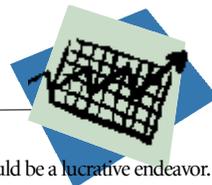
Chanel championed simple lines and utility in order that women feel comfortable in their skin and their clothing. Her fashion empire, at her death, brought in over \$160 million a year. Yet at the time of her death, the woman Picasso termed "the most sensible in the world" had a Paris wardrobe consisting of only three outfits. More than

a fashion icon, she brought about a way of life and fashion that was championed by other cultural icons, such as Marilyn Monroe, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, Catherine Deneuve and Audrey Hepburn. She has been portrayed on Broadway by Katharine Hepburn and on screen by the French actress Marie-France Pisier. The influence of the House of Chanel in the fashion world continues to be extremely important, and Coco Chanel remains an influential legend. Chanel changed not only how women looked but how they looked at themselves.



Audrey Hepburn in a "little black dress" in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961)

# France Télécom Gets the Picture!



**F**RANCE Télécom announced on November 7 that it is going into the film business. While the company has stressed it will leave the production to the experts, the new unit it has created aims to co-produce 10 to 15 French and European films a year in conjunction with key figures in the sector. The new subsidiary will be part of the Content Division and will be headed by Patricia Langrand.

"It is only right that they should financially support the film industry," states Michel Gomez, Director General of ARP (Association of Authors, Directors and Producers). Gomez thinks



**DVB-H Technology broadcasts to handheld receivers**

France Télécom is moving in the right direction with this new venture, which he calls "a logical move, in keeping with the way the industry is evolving." Consumers will be watching more and

more videos on nontraditional devices such as portable media players, cell phones and soon, perhaps even watches. Holding the rights

to the content of these video streams could be a lucrative endeavor.

France Télécom states that this operation is fully in line with its strategy, which aims to move from a network access logic to a service access logic. The move reflects France Télécom's commitment to playing a key role in the pre-financing of French and European cinema, contributing to its diversity and safeguarding the key balances in this sector.

"With the creation of this subsidiary, with a dedicated team and resources, France Télécom, with its Orange brand, is firmly committed to supporting cultural diversity and its financing," explains Didier Lombard, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of France Télécom.

Though the new entity has yet to be formally named, its director has. Frédérique Dumas, a renowned independent producer of such films as Oscar winner *No Man's Land* and Golden Lion winner *Before the Rain*, will be heading the nascent project. She has also served as the ministerial adviser for cinema for the French culture and communications ministry (1986-1988), head of development at Polygram Audiovisuel, chairman of the producers' union (*Chambre Syndicale des Producteurs*) and the cinematographic industry liaison office (*Bureau de Liaison des Industries Cinématographiques*).

## French Stocking Company Launches Lingerie Line

**L**E Bourget™, a well-known French stocking company is launching a line of lingerie to celebrate its 80th anniversary. Traditionally, Le Bourget™ has focused its efforts on producing pantyhose. The scope of the launch of the lingerie line for their 80th anniversary, however, includes a new demographic: young professional women. The new line of lingerie will communicate a fresh, modern attitude, and will serve as a reminder that stockings can always be chic. "Young women," explains Thierry Simon, General Director of Le Bourget™, "have spent their adolescence in jeans and don't really wear stockings. (...) The fashion today of short skirts is in our favor, and our first collection of lingerie '*Les Dessous Chics*' (name of new line) will coordinate our stockings with our lingerie."

Women's stockings have reflected the ever-evolving standards of fashion and social norms throughout Le Bourget's history. During



Le Bourget

**Advertisement of Le Bourget Stockings**

the 1950s, French icon Bridgette Bardot (and her legs in particular) were featured in advertisements for Le Bourget™. The company became one of the largest producers of nylon stockings in the 1960s. It was Le Bourget™ who invented the new fabric Voilance, a slightly gauzier version of nylon, perhaps best known by their famous slogan, "the best invention since skin."

Even though Le Bourget's products have evolved throughout the past eight decades, the company has maintained its quality assurance. "Le Bourget™ stockings

have a history, roots, and values that have made the difference for 80 years," explains Simon, "but at the heart of the textile sector that has evolved so much these last years, it's better to launch into the future than to return to the past."

## International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

**T**HE European Union, the United States, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation signed an agreement, November 21 at the Elysée Palace, to establish the international organization that will implement the ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) fusion energy project. ITER, representing the world's largest international scientific partnership, aims to provide a new, safe energy source, via fusion energy.

The program provides for the construction, then operation, of the international thermonuclear reactor at Cadarache, in the Bouches du Rhône department-the site selected by the parties in June 2005. Among the goals of ITER is to improve understanding and to master the phenomena of controlled thermonuclear fusion so as to have a virtually inexhaustible energy supply.

"It is our duty to undertake the research that will prepare energy solutions for our descendants. This major scientific project is one of the most innovative programs to steer this tremendous change. It is

the hand held out to future generations, in the name of solidarity and responsibility. (...) For the first time ever, seven major partners - Japan, Russia, China, the United States, Korea, India and Europe-representing half of humanity, have joined forces to build an immense scientific facility," President Chirac said at the signing.

Fusion energy-commonly called "star energy"-is produced by nuclear reactions, which, in matter in the plasma state, enable the sun and stars to give off light and heat. Fusion does not pose a problem in terms of the availability of the resources needed in the long run: it uses elements which are available in practically inexhaustible abundance (deuterium and lithium, present in seawater, in particular). Moreover, fusion is an environmentally attractive process: it produces no greenhouse gas emissions and no long-lasting, highly radioactive waste. Finally, the process is safe: there is no risk that the reactor could have a "meltdown" or "run-away reaction." ITER will be the most significant scientific program in the world for the next 30 years.

## RECYCLING STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY

Today's technology is notorious for being state-of-the-art today and trash the next. The problem arises with how to dispose of yesterday's technology. Electronics add up to 1.7 million tons of garbage a year and the amount is increasing by three percent every year. In an initiative by the French Ministry of Ecology, out-of-use household appliances, computers, and cell phones will now be recycled by manufacturers in France. Under the guidelines of the DEEE (the Ministry's policy regarding electronic equipment) consumers will be able to return their used equipment to the distributor for recycling after the purchase of comparable, new merchandise. This kind of policy is already in place for other products hazardous to the environment such as tires and packaging materials. The policy is to take effect before the holiday season, when the number of old products that are tossed out is at its peak.

## CNES TAKES SPACE EXPLORATION TO NEW LEVEL



**Rendition of COROT Satellite**

France's space agency, CNES confirmed the arrival on November 15 of its space telescope COROT (Convection ROTation and planetary Transits) at the Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. The 27-cm diameter afocal telescope is equipped with, among other highly sensitive instruments, a camera sensitive to tiny variations of the light intensity from stars. Through a method known as stellar seismology, COROT will make it possible to probe the inner structure of the stars. The telescope will also be able to detect extrasolar planets by observing the periodic micro-eclipses occurring when these bodies transit in front of their parent star. COROT's launch is presently scheduled for December 21. For more information and to follow the launch countdown, please visit: <http://smc.cnes.fr/COROT> or <http://corot.oamp.fr>

## FRENCH SOCCER PLAYER MAKES 100TH INTL. APPEARANCE



Patrick Vieira

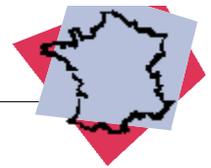
In his team's recent "friendly match" against Greece, the captain of the French National Soccer Team, Patrick Vieira, became the fifth player to make 100 international appearances for France. Vieira joins other soccer legends Lilian Thuram, Marcel Desailly, Zinedine Zidane, and Didier Deschamps, all of whom are among the most highly honored players in France's history. In 1998, Didier Deschamps predicted of Vieira, "He will beat all records for number of matches played." Deschamps foresaw a long and successful career for the midfielder, who has two World Cup finals under his belt and intends to stay on for the 2008 UEFA competition and possibly even the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

## FRENCH FALL SHORT ON KISSING RECORD

In Paris, the romance capital of the world, French kissers gathered on November 9 to attempt to break the record for the most people kissing in one spot at one moment. Precisely 1,188 participants assembled at La Défense to get themselves into the Guinness Book of World Records. However, the city of passion fell quite short of the world record, which is maintained by Budapest, where 11,570 kissed at the same time in 2005. Parisian spirits remained high about their reputation for romance, however. Muriel Deshayen, a French businesswoman, met Belgian tourist Gregory Robert at the event and decided to kiss him. Deshayen explained her spontaneity by saying, "It'll be a nice memory for him," and Robert added, "After all, Paris is the city of love."

## CELEBRATION OF TRANSPORTATION

Just about every mode of transportation, from the bicycle to the rocket ship, was featured at the second annual *Fête des Transports et de la mobilité* (Transportation and Mobility Festival) in Paris, November 17-19. The festival stretched along the Champs Elysées, beginning at the port of Champs Elysées and continuing to *la Place de la Concorde*. Nearby on the Seine river sailed a fleet of approximately 40 ships of all shapes and sizes. Inaugurated by Minister of Transportation Dominique Perben, the festival's aim was to celebrate the progress made in transportation and the impact it has made on our lives—to break through the utilitarian dimension of transportation and show people its human dimension.



## Beaujolais Nouveau Has Arrived

**M**ID-November marks a special occasion in France, and indeed, for wine lovers around the world. It is the much-anticipated annual arrival of the Beaujolais Nouveau, a crisp, fruity red wine best consumed young and slightly chilled.

By French law, the Beaujolais Nouveau cannot be opened until the third Thursday of November. The wine hails from the Beaujolais region, which is near Lyon, France's third largest city. The Gamay grape used to make the wine must be picked by hand, and is then harvested, fermented and bottled just six weeks before its shipment around the world. It is estimated that 65 million bottles of Beaujolais Nouveau are consumed on the occasion.

The Beaujolais Nouveau's popularity and consumption are due in part to its reputation as the most "white" of red wines,



George DuBoeuf's Beaujolais Nouveau 2006

Coin on November 15. At the stroke of midnight, the District's Mayor, Anthony A. Williams, popped the first cork, and the Bistro offered complimentary Beaujolais until closing time. 

## Hip New High-Tech Hotel Opens in Paris

**A**NEW hotel on the Champs-Elysées, considered a veritable Parisian palace, has redefined luxury and cutting-edge technology. Fouquet's Barrière, located at the intersection of Paris's most famous street and Avenue George-V, opened on November 3. The Barrière is built



View of new club at Fouquet's Barrière

around an interior garden designed by architect Edouard François, with a terrace that offers a panoramic view of Paris.

With flat-screen TVs in each room (and sometimes in the bathrooms), iPod outlets in each corner, wireless Internet connection, and a scanner, printer and color photocopier built into every desk, the technology-savvy are sure to be pleased. However, the Barrière still offers the regal charm of such a hotel, with a monumental stairway, vaulted walls, and personalized butler service for each of the 107 rooms.

The luxury hotel is the first "palace hotel" built in Paris in almost 80 years. The Hotel Georges V, which opened its doors in 1928, was the last such hotel built before the Barrière. François designed the building in "Haussmann" style and the cornerstone of La Barrière is legendary restaurant, Le Fouquet, which has been a staple of Parisian society since its inception in 1899. 

## Mushroom Enthusiasts Eating Up End of Season

**F**RENCH mushroom foragers raced to gather as many mushrooms as possible until the first frost settled in November. France consumes hundreds of tons of wild mushrooms

each year in their mushroom sauces, mushroom omelets, quiches, and other dishes. There is usually one significant harvest in June and another in September. In addition to these two harvests, forests typically fill with foragers in search of "cèpes," beefy brown toadstools that are considered to be the "royalty" of wild mushrooms, about a week after a soaking rain, as well as the gournelle rose—a melt-in-your-mouth fungi that is finer than cèpes.

Foragers also spend the month of November in search of the last crop before winter sets in. They are waiting for the *coup de grâce* of mushrooms: the "gris de sapin," which comes only with first frost, when the other fungi die.

As rewarding as mushroom foraging can be, there are also dangers inherent to the hobby. French health authorities reminded mushroom enthusiasts just last month about the potential



Mushroom season is nearing an end

health ramifications if poisonous mushrooms are consumed, and urged citizens to take advantage of the various measures and safeguards in place to ensure healthy consumption. For example, foragers can take their fungi to any French drugstore for an expert opinion. All French pharmacists are trained mycologists, and in rural areas they regularly sort through baskets of mushrooms to remove the toxic ones.

There are hundreds of wild mushroom varieties, but only a dozen or so that are commonly eaten and just a few that are collected for commercial sale. From golden girolles, to black trumpets of death to porcini mushrooms, foragers will continue until first frost to provide mushrooms to French markets and dinner tables. 



# Toni Morrison Leads Series at Louvre

**A**CCLAIMED American novelist Toni Morrison was invited to the Louvre in November to lead a series of events based on a theme of the author's choice. As notions of home, asylum, community, and isolation prevail throughout Morrison's works, the Nobel Laureate in Literature designed the theme called "L'Etranger Chez Soi" ("The Stranger at Home.") The events at the Louvre included lectures, conferences, films, music, and slam poetry.



Toni Morrison standing in front of *Le Radeau de la Méduse*, Théodore Géricault, 1819, Musée du Louvre

One of Morrison's contributions to the project was an exploration of the topic in art; a central piece that launched her study was the painting found in the halls of the Louvre, *Le radeau de la Méduse* ("The Raft of the Medusa.") Painted by Théodore Géricault in 1819, the masterpiece depicts the shipwreck of a French frigate on an island off the coast of Senegal. Guests of the Louvre had the opportunity to interact with Morrison

on many occasions: she hosted a book signing at the museum's bookstore, a reading of excerpts from her latest novel, a dialogue with other writers called "In my country, I am in a far-off land," and a presentation with filmmaker Charles Burnett.

Many other artists from diverse media participated in the Louvre's events, including Toumani Diabaté, Michael Ondaatje, Fatou Diome, Peter Welz, and William Forsythe (see NFF 06.11) Visitors were also invited to explore the museum itself in connection with the theme of Morrison's visit. Curators organized a special exhibit that gathered works from the Greek, Assyrian, and Egyptian wings, which were illustrative of the idea of the "stranger." ■ ■

## 145 ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS

One year after a successful debut, the second annual Festival of Educational Films took place November 20-23 at the *Ciné Zénith* (Zenith Cinema) in Evreux, Normandy. Created in 2005 at the initiative of the *Centre national de documentation pédagogique* (National Center of Educational Documentation), the festival was a joint project between the Ministers of Justice and Education. The festival featured around 30 documentaries and dramas, including foreign films such as *Camera kids*, an American and Indian co-production, as well as the Hungarian drama *Les Paumes blanches* (White Palms).

## RETRACING THE HISTORY OF PARIS THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

For lovers of Paris, its history is now at their fingertips. A new experimental Web site hosted in French called "*Paris en Images*" offers visitors access to nearly 35,000 photographs of Paris since 1850. The photographs are available for free, and can even be uploaded by Orange (a subsidiary of France Télécom) customers' cellphones and PDAs. The Web site is a project spearheaded by "*La Parisienne de la Photographie*" in conjunction with the Mayor's Office and France Télécom that has restored and digitalized thousands of images. The restoration of the photographs began in 1985, and then a preservation plan was set up in 2002 to put the photographs online. The Web site pays tribute to arguably one of the most frequently photographed cities in the world. Some of the pictures were taken by renowned photographers; others by amateurs. The subject matter also varies widely, ranging from the grandeur of Paris's splendid monuments to intimate portraits of people inhabiting neighborhoods. For more information, please visit: [www.parisenimages.com](http://www.parisenimages.com).

## PASCAL LEONETTI NAMED BEST SOMMELIER IN FRANCE

Pascal Leonetti was crowned "best sommelier in France" in Strasbourg on November 19. A sommelier is a trained wine professional, often working in fine restaurants, who specialize in wine service. They are often responsible for wine procurement, storage, wine lists, and wine recommendations for patrons. Created in 2000 by the Union of the French sommeliers, the contest for best sommelier in France is sponsored by Ruinart champagne and is organized every two years in different places throughout France. This year, 48 candidates from 20 regions were in the running, but only 9 made it to the final round in Strasbourg. Leonetti hails from L'Auberge de l'III, located in Illhaeusern, Alsace, and will represent France at the next European sommelier contest in June 2008. That same year, he might also have the opportunity to compete for the title of best sommelier in the world.

# Tommy Hilfiger Established Presence in Paris

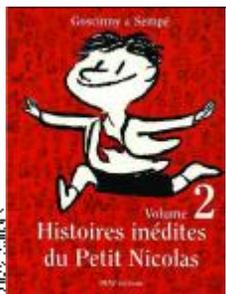
**T**OMMY Hilfiger, the popular American designer, is setting up shop in Paris. Hilfiger opened a boutique in November on *rue Saint-Honoré*, one of the most chic streets in Paris. To celebrate his grand opening in Paris, the renowned designer updated his designs to fit his new demographic.

Hilfiger, best known for his colorful polos and sweaters, will adapt his products to a European, more specifically French, market. "We needed to understand what the European consumer wanted and offer him cashmere sweaters of the best quality," Hilfiger explains. "Even our jeans will be updated. Thanks to Europeans, we redesigned a product that we now offer to Americans."

The "Jean Bar" in the store's basement offers customers a

choice between 12 cuts and 12 washes of jeans. Cocktail and longer-fitting dresses will be sold in November just in time for New Year's festivities. Next year, a new collection, already sold in the U.S., will arrive in Europe. His new strategy, Hilfiger explains, is to "occupy this huge space between Zara and Prada."

Tommy Hilfiger got his start in the fashion world at the young age of 18. He opened a store called "The People's Place" in upstate New York to vend jeans and bell-bottoms that were not available in his hometown. At the age of 25, he relocated to New York City and in 1984, founded the Tommy Hilfiger Corporation. The new company introduced Hilfiger's signature menswear collection, and his company has since grown to offer apparel for men, women, and children. ■ ■



New Petit Nicolas edition

# Second Volume of Petit Nicolas Released

**P**ETIT NICOLAS (Little Nicholas), one of France's most beloved cartoon characters is making a reappearance, much to the delight of fans of all ages. Comparable to the American cartoon *Peanuts*, *Petit Nicolas* chronicled the adventures of a

group of schoolchildren in the mid-20th century. Now, 45 episodes of the cartoon, published between 1959 and 1965 in the newspapers *Sud Ouest Dimanche* and *Pilote*, have been collected into a second volume celebrating the most famous schoolboy in France and his band of friends. The series was the collaboration of Jean-Jacques Sempé and René Goscinny, who is also well-known for his cre-

ations *Astérix* and *Lucky Luke*. Drawn in black and white, "Petit Nicolas" is written from the perspective of its title character and is a charming look at the everyday life of a child, from a tyrannical headmaster to unwanted trips to the barber to schoolyard romance. The release of the second *Petit Nicolas* collection by publisher Imav Editions coincides with a program by Phaidon Press (an international art book publisher) to reissue, and in many cases publish in English for the first time, much of Sempé's work. Sempé began to gain attention in the United States especially in the 1970s when his artwork appeared in *The New Yorker*, which continues to feature his covers and drawings. For the month of November, Phaidon brought out Sempé's *Martin Pebble*, *Nicholas Again* (a *Petit Nicolas* book), *Monsieur Lambert*, and four volumes of collected cartoons. ■ ■



Philadelphia Hosts Exhibit Featuring Videos as Medium



Cntd. from p. 3: students from Waynesboro Area Senior High celebrate National French Week with chocolate mousse eating contest

THE Philadelphia Museum of Art is running a special exhibition on the work of Mircea Cantor, an artist based in France. The display, called *The Title Is the Last Thing* features a series of eight videos, photographs, and objects created by Cantor. The young artist uses these visual and audio mediums to explore and offer thoughtful commentary on the relationship between time and labor, politics, tourism, and history. The French-American Fund for Contemporary Art helped to bring the show to the United States.



Scene from *The Landscape Is Changing*, 2003

Cantor was born in Romania in 1977. After studying film and video in his country of origin, he moved to France for post-graduate

study at the Ecole Régionale des Beaux Arts, Nantes, and is now based in Paris. Cantor has been called "one of the most promising and interesting artists to work in the international art world today." He is also the co-founder and co-editor of *Version Magazine*. The latest edition of the art magazine is, according to the editors, "a very unusual coloring book for kids between 5 and 101 years."

"The Title Is the Last Thing" is on display until February 11,

For more information on the exhibition, please visit: [www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org)

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Alliance Française in New York Celebrates 42nd Anniversary of "Cinéma Tuesdays"

THE French Institute Alliance Française (FI AF), which is the New York chapter of Alliance Française, celebrated its 42nd anniversary of "Cinéma Tuesdays" with a retrospective on the career of director Jacques Audiard, considered the new master of French thrillers. The film series kicked off with *De Battre, mon coeur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*), a Hitchcock-style suspense about a young man caught between the dark side of his father's business and the beauty of his late mother's gift of music. FI AF also provided guests with the opportunity to meet the director following the screening. Moderated by director James Toback, Audiard answered questions about his films from fans in the audience. In the spirit of "Cinéma Tuesdays," the following Tuesdays showcased the rest of Audiard's full-length features to date, *Sur*



*mes lèvres* (*Read My Lips*), *Un Héros très discret* (*A Self-Made Hero*), and *Regarde les hommes tomber* (*See How They Fall*), as well as *Vénus Beauté* (*Venus Beauty Institute*), a film that Audiard worked on as a consultant.

At the outset of his professional career, Audiard wanted to be a professor, but dived into the movie industry instead, first as a film editor and then as a screenwriter. Audiard's directorial career has earned him many admirers, both in France and the United States. With his deft and surprising camera angles, Audiard successfully establishes a feeling of tension that prevails in his films. He is frequently compared to filmmakers like Jean-Pierre Melville and Henri-Georges Clouzot.

For more information about events at an Alliance Française near you, please visit: [www.afusa.org](http://www.afusa.org)

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