



News From France



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A free monthly review of French news & trends

In Paris Meetings, a New Team of Players in French-American Relations

▲ Laurent Fabius, France's Minister of Foreign Affairs, welcomed U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to Paris on March 27. The visit to France was Sec. Kerry's second since his nomination, with the first taking place on February 27. His sessions with Mr. Fabius covered French-American cooperation on a range of international subjects.

In both meetings, the leaders addressed the situation in Mali, the Middle East peace process, the Syrian humanitarian crisis, the Iranian nuclear program, the stabilization of Afghanistan, as well as North Korea's nuclear activities. The talks also highlighted economic cooperation in light of President Obama's State of the Union address, when he announced the goal of establishing a free trade area between the United States and the European Union.

Minister Fabius stated in the February 27 meeting that "We all agreed that it is an excellent thing that there is a prospect of a free trade agreement between the United States and European Union," adding that the accord should be "beneficial to both parties and can contribute to growth" in both regions. The two leaders gave a joint press conference during which Minister Fabius noted that their meetings occurred "during a particularly favorable period in French-American relations."

This strong partnership continues today in Africa's Sahel region, "where France is committed and determined to restoring Mali's integrity," Mr. Fabius said during the February meeting, in fighting terrorist rebel groups from the country's north.



Sec. John Kerry traveled to Paris on March 27, where he was welcomed for the second time in a month to the Quai d'Orsay, France's diplomatic headquarters, by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius.

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

▲ It's springtime here in Washington, and the city's famous cherry blossoms are in full bloom. The partnership between France and the U.S. is looking just as vibrant.

On February 27 and again on March 27, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius welcomed John Kerry to Paris for official visits to France as U.S. Secretary of State. During their meetings, which I had the honor of attending, the two ministers reviewed French-American cooperation on many issues of global importance, including Mali, Syria, Iran, the Middle East peace Process, climate change, and the transatlantic partnership.

In addition, the embassy hosted French and American leaders from an international poverty-relief organization in honor of International Women's Day. On March 5, Mr. Philippe Lévêque, the head of CARE France, joined Dr. Helen Gayle of CARE USA in a ceremony recognizing their outstanding efforts to eradicate poverty and empower women worldwide. I was very proud to welcome them to the embassy. Through its governmental and non-governmental institutions, France remains fully committed to defending the equality and dignity of women everywhere.

On March 18, at the invitation of U.S. Representative Ed Royce, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, I visited Congress for a wide-ranging and

very fruitful discussion on international flash points, including Syria and Mali.

We also recognized cooperation between France and the U.S. in scientific and military affairs. On March 21, I went to Baltimore as part of a ceremony honoring the accomplishments of American physicist Dr. David Wineland and his French colleague, Dr. Serge Haroche, who jointly received a Nobel Prize last year for their respective research in quantum mechanics. On March 27, we welcomed at the embassy General Jean-Paul Paloméros, who heads NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT), based in Norfolk, Va. The General's work and residence in Norfolk, Va., speaks to our country's commitment to robust military relations with the United States and all of our NATO partners.

In culture, this month marked a dynamic set of events throughout the U.S. surrounding the International Day of the Francophonie on March 20, which pays tribute to the diversity of the world's French-speaking cultures, which count more than 220 million people all over the world. In Washington, six weeks of celebrations reached their high point on March 22 with the night of La Grande Fête at the Maison Française. No fewer than 32 embassies gathered to offer the best of Francophone food, music, and art to a lively international public.



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Workshops Help Teachers of French Pump Up the Fun

At workshops this past month at the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C., and the French School in Raleigh, N.C., French teachers from around the U.S. gathered to learn new teaching strategies for tackling what can be one of the tougher aspects of any language instruction: keeping students interested by making learning fun.

Called "Fun Activities for Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary in the Classroom," the seminars were led by Chafia Chetioui, a representative from the Alliance Française in Paris who specializes in training educators of French in the tricky work of grammar instruction.

Activities and discussions encouraged the participants to first reflect on their own teaching methods in order to find creative ways to promote grammar and vocabulary mastery, and to motivate students in their learning.

To find out more about events for teachers of French sponsored by the Embassy of France and to find online teaching resources, please visit french-language.frenchculture.org/teach.

Development Agency Marks 70th Anniversary

To mark the conclusion of roundtable discussions in development aid along with the 70th anniversary of the French Development Agency (AFD), 140 photographs were displayed in an exhibition in Paris from March 1 through 15.

The confluence of these two events highlights important progress being made in French development projects across the globe. Roundtable discussions called the *Assises du Développement et de la Solidarité Internationale* concluded on March 1. These discussions had been an ongoing, collaborative event with 600 participants from all over the world to exchange ideas around development themes.

Some of the subjects they covered in these working groups included transparency and effectiveness of public aid in development, coordination between governmental and non-governmental agencies, research, innovation, and the international development agenda.

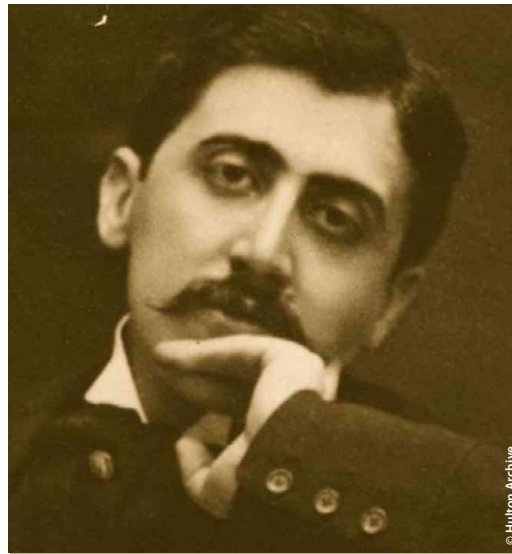
To raise awareness of these projects, the photo exhibition "Objective: Development" displayed compelling photographs from seven AFD projects, from agriculture in Guinea to educational support in Cambodia. The exposition was also displayed in 50 other AFD offices abroad, including Dakar, Senegal, and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Proust Exhibition Celebrates 100 Years of *Swann's Way*

▲ The Morgan Library & Museum in New York City has kicked off centennial celebrations of Marcel Proust's world-famous novel, *Swann's Way*, with an exhibition organized in conjunction with *La Bibliothèque Nationale de France* and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy.

Published in 1913 at Mr. Proust's own expense after the work was turned down by several major publishers, *Du Côté de Chez Swann*, known in English as *Swann's Way*, went on to become the much-admired first novel of Proust's monumental series, *In Search of Lost Time*. At the author's death, the project stood at more than 2,000 pages.

Despite its early struggles to even reach publication, *In Search of Lost Time* came to be recognized as one of the seminal novels of the 20th century. William M. Grisworld, director of the Morgan Library & Museum, said in a press statement, "Marcel Proust is truly one of the icons in modern literature. His daring moved away



Originally published in 1913 at the author's own expense, *Swann's Way* is the first of a world-famous novel series.

from the plot-centered realism of the 19th century to a more personal and introspective view of a world full of nuance and multiple points of view."

In one of the book's most memorable moments, the narrator finds himself plunged into a world of forgotten childhood memories after eating a small French cake, called a madeleine, dipped in herbal tea. The combination of flavors transports him back to his school days, when his aunt would offer him the same treat.

The exhibition, hosted at the Morgan Library & Museum, gathers together the majority of Mr. Proust's drafts and manu-

scripts of *Swann's Way*, the author's correspondence with his mother, and photographs portraying the world that inspired the author's work. The exhibition will run through April 28.

For more information about the centennial celebrations, please visit www.themorgan.org.

Paris Agricultural Show Celebrates 50th Anniversary

▲ France is full of farms and livestock, but they aren't usually associated with the grand boulevards and buildings of Paris.

Between February 20 and March 3, hundreds of thousands of people poured into Paris's Porte de Versailles Exhibition Center for the *Salon International de l'Agriculture*, or the Paris International Agricultural Show. One of the largest such conventions in the world, it celebrates food and farming industries around the globe, showcasing livestock, crops and plants, products, and agricultural services. It also promotes food cultivation in France, exhibiting a variety of French products and regional specialties.

Featuring over 1,000 exhibitors from 22 countries, the event was sponsored by the French Ministry of Agriculture. Referring to this year's "At the Heart" theme, Agriculture Minister Stéphane Le Foll called it a fitting label, since agriculture is "at the heart of France, at the heart of society, at the heart of productive recovery, [and]

at the heart of change."

This year's show marked the event's 50th anniversary, which it celebrated with commemorative products and a video created by French radio network RTL.

The show also added a "teaching farm," providing visitors with the opportunity to learn about agricultural lifestyles.

Another highlight of the exposition was the 2013 General Agricultural Competition, a French tradition that dates back to 1870. Categories for the competition included French wines, dairy products, local produce, and animals. This year's competition featured a representative animal for each of the seven participating species.

President François Hollande inaugurated the event, officially opening it to an international public. Other notable attendees included Minister Delegate for the Food Industry Guillaume Garot, Minister Delegate for the Social Economy Benoît Hamon, and U.S. Ambassador to France Charles Rivkin. Altogether, about 700,000 attendees took part this year.



Du 23 février au 3 mars 2013

© SIA AP / FOUCHÉ

The 50th annual Paris agricultural expo saw visits from President Hollande and U.S. Ambassador Charles Rivkin.

François Richard, Customs Attaché



▲ Since 2008, **François Richard**, a 34-year veteran of France's customs and border activities, has led his country's efforts in Washington. He keeps watch on everything from terrorism networks and drug trafficking

to art theft and counterfeit goods.

News From France sat down with Mr. Richard for a few questions on how, in today's shifting landscape of transnational crime, France stays ahead of the bad guys.

How do you describe your role as customs attaché at the Embassy of France?

I do several different things. We have a customs cooperation agreement with the United States, and I also cover Canada and Mexico. This means we share information and cooperate technically and operationally. In this globalized world, we work together to try and fight against organized crime, and the agreement makes everyone more efficient. The main thing is to try to find a balance between security and fighting trafficking, while facilitating legitimate trade.

What are the main issues France and the U.S. share in the customs field?

At the operational level, the main issue is countering terrorism and organized crime. So, we really work together on fighting against trafficking of drugs and tobacco, and money laundering. We also share best practices, in trade facilitation for example, as well as on all issues related to intellectual property rights.

Early last year, several stolen paintings were returned to France by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). Tell us more.

ICE mainly does investigation, and we work together on a regular basis. The paintings' operation was historic because it involved ICE and Interpol investigations. Some major paintings from France, including a Degas, a Breton, and a Pissarro, were presented and sold at auction in New York City. ICE's investigation proved that these paintings were stolen from France, some of them 40 years ago or more, and after a long judicial process, they have now been returned. It was really something fantastic.

Here's a common question from tourists: How can Americans traveling to France take advantage of the value-added tax (VAT) refund?

When they buy something in a store, the store will give them a special form. The most important thing to know is, when they leave France or the EU, they have to present the form and goods to the customs officer at the airport. They have to comply with this before checking their luggage. If they don't present both the form and the goods, it's more difficult to get the refund later. So, before leaving France, go see the customs officer at the airport.

Could you describe your background, and how long you've worked at the embassy?

I've been here since 2008. I've worked in customs for 34 years now, and I have spent a lot of my career in the field. French customs officers number about 18,000 people. Some of them work in the office dealing with international trade. Others are in uniform and doing border controls. I've spent half my career on each side, so I have a good view of all the aspects of the work. Before being there, I worked for four years at headquarters and I was in charge of all those in uniform.

With the shifting challenges of international customs, are you optimistic about the future?

International cooperation has really improved from year to year. We have really good cooperation with the Americans and with others, which is key, because we cannot be efficient if we work only in our own country. Regarding the fight against counterfeiting, for example, we have had some real success. The key is to always evolve and always change, because as soon as we find a way to be more efficient, the bad guys change their ways, too.

Chicago Talks Benefits of French in Business World

In an increasingly globalized world, French is proving to be more important than ever in global business, which a conference in Chicago emphasized on March 13.

Organized by the French-American Chamber of Commerce (FACC) and the Québec Government Office in Chicago, "Words That Make Cents: Using French in Today's Business World" stressed the significant role of French in business and communications. The event included a breakfast, seminar, and question-and-answer session.

During the seminar, a panel examined *la francophonie économique*, or the French-speaking global economy, and how it has influenced and been applied to international commerce.

The panel members who participated conduct business in Francophone communities throughout the world, including Belgium, Haiti, and Québec, Canada.

The conference was one of many events that were part of the Alliance Française de Chicago's Festival de la Francophonie (see page 4).

Chartres Cathedral Explored in Harvard Lecture

On March 12, students and members of the public gathered at Harvard University's Sackler Museum for a lecture on the Cathedral of Chartres by Professor Emeritus Paul Crossley, one of the world's foremost experts in Gothic architecture.

The presentation, called "Chartres and the Rhetoric of Gothic Cathedrals," examined the history and religious symbolism of the broader French Gothic tradition as well as of the Cathedral of Chartres, a 12th-century masterpiece and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The church is considered to be one of the most comprehensive architectural expressions of medieval Christian spirituality.

Prior to the lecture, the American Friends of Chartres, an organization which aims to finance the restoration of the cathedral, gave a short presentation of its activities. For its inaugural project, the association is raising funds to restore five stained-glass windows above the cathedral's southern portal.

For more information about this initiative, please visit www.friends-of-chartres.org.

French for the World: The U.S. Fêtes La Francophonie

What does it mean to be Francophone in 2013? If you are one of the 220 million global citizens who speak French, you know it's a language that opens doors and bridges cultures.

The *Fête de la Francophonie*, or the Francophone Culture Festival, took place throughout the United States last month. Concerts, film screenings, food, and dancing all illustrated the vibrancy of French-speaking cultures worldwide.

The Embassy of France and its consulates lent their full support—and a whole lot of work—to making this year's festivals a success.

The History of an Idea

But before we look at this month's cultural celebrations, just what is la Francophonie? The Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), an international body formed in 1970, describes the idea as combining two founding notions of France's modern identity: the French language, and humanist values. The OIF's members and mission therefore advocate far more than the simple ability to speak French. "They also share the humanist values promoted by the French language," according to the organization's official website. In other words, within French, a whole worldview emerges. The OIF's stated mission is to promote this *vision des choses* all over the globe.

And the Francophone community is global indeed. Spanning five continents, 77 countries count either as members or observers of the OIF. Taken together, la Francophonie makes for an unparalleled palette of cultural and social diversity. These elements were the cause for celebration throughout the United States.

Celebrating Nationwide

Amid a slew of related programs, the Embassy of France kicked off the Francophonie Cultural Festival on March 1 with a unique occasion: a French-Malian musical collaboration between Vincent Segal and Ballaké Sissoko. The musicians, who respectively play the cello and traditional stringed kora, created new sounds in Washington with a performance melding African and European sounds in a creative project now several years running.

Other French diplomatic missions organized or helped celebrate equally festive programs. In Baton Rouge, La., singer Marc Broussard, a native Louisianan with a French family background, took the stage on March 8 with the iconic Dirty Dozen Brass Band. A poetry "slam," or open mic-style performance session, followed on March 20 at Louisiana State University, with one twist: all words and lyrics were in French. The French consulate of New Orleans promoted both events as part of a 20-date calendar of Francophone culture, put on largely by private local groups celebrating Louisiana's rich French heritage.

Activities continued further south with the French Cultures Festival, a multi-state program in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma. Houston's Museum of Fine Arts delivered its third edition of *Five Funny French Films* from March 18 through 21, gathering standing-room-only crowds. Classes like "Survival French" gave key vocabulary to tourists and students of French. Art exhibits included "Texas Meets Paris," and popular author Cara Black signed copies of her book, *Murder Below Montparnasse*, on March 7.

The Chicago consulate held its own lively events. On March 2, French author Arno Bertina and translator Laird Hunt spoke at the city's Alliance Française about his new book, *Brando, My Solitude*. Mr. Bertina described the inspiration he has drawn from American cultural figures as diverse as fellow author Thomas Pynchon and early conservationist John Muir. The event was supported by the Book Office of the Cultural Services of the French embassy.

Aside from the events organized by France's official agencies in Chicago, other participants, notably Vincent Desroches of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, brought to the Midwest new Francophone perspectives through




In this March 7 photo, Amb. Delattre speaks with Huguette Moussodou, protocol officer at the embassy of Gabon, during the Francophonie Cultural Festival.

film. Held at the local Alliance Française, the eight-hour session on March 23 showed films with the French language at the heart of their stories. *Matière grise* (*Gray Matter*) explores a Rwandan filmmaker's ingenuity when a much-awaited grant falls through just days before production. *Toussaint Louverture* chronicles the historic rise to power by Haiti's leader of the same name, who at the end of the 18th century led the only successful slave revolt in the western hemisphere. *Mesnak*, a 2011 production between Québec and the First Nations, describes a young man's journey through the pasts of his estranged mother, his deceased father, and the reservation chief of a Canadian indigenous tribe.

If the multiple Francophonie festivals offered many kinds of cultural goings-on, perhaps the largest soirée was the Grande Fête de la Francophonie, held on March 22 at the French embassy's cultural center, La Maison Française. Billed as "an invitation to travel the continents of the world," no fewer than 32 embassies in Washington joined to celebrate the diversity of the French-speaking world. A sumptuous buffet of food and drink allowed visitors to take in global gastronomy, while a raffle tempted attendees to enter and possibly win round-trip airfare to Europe, courtesy of Brussels Airlines.

A Francophone Future

The Francophone world has as much reason to celebrate its future as its present. Projections for the French language's use in the world are considerable: of all the world's French speakers, 60 percent are under 30, according to the OIF website. The language is spoken in areas inhabited by some of the world's fastest-growing populations, especially in Africa, where more than 90 million people speak French every day. In 2050, some 700 million will speak French, with the number of French speakers worldwide jumping from three to eight percent. By the same date, 85 percent of the world's Francophones will live in Africa.

Given its 40-year history, current vibrancy, and bright future, the idea of La Francophonie seems in step with its times. Knowing the language will bear rich and unique opportunities in tomorrow's global cultures and markets. From Arkansas to Africa, from its humanist values to its worldwide social engagement, tomorrow's global citizen will in many cases speak French, too. 

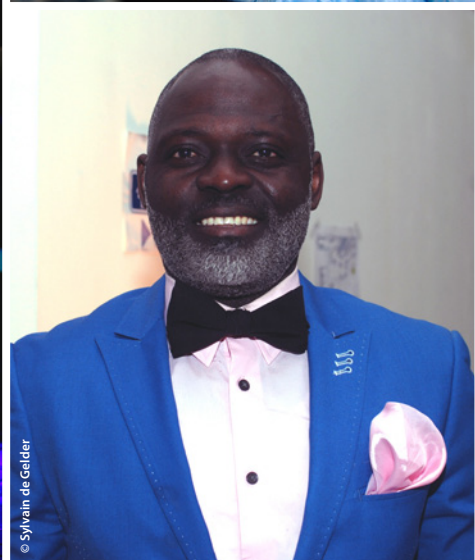
Franc·o·phon·ie

nf

/frãkɔfɔni/

Noun

1. The collective body of French-speaking communities and countries around the world.
2. The notion that the French language represents humanist values, with economic, social, and international duties therein.



From top left: Maman Sidikou, Ambassador of Niger to the U.S.; embassy staff work the "France stand"; Francophiles from around the world pose for a photo; Swiss pop performer Bastian Baker takes the stage; Malian group Terakaft plays on March 13; a well-dressed Washingtonian smiles at the Grande Fête; a guitarist plays with Mr. Baker.

New Orleans Forum: "Think Europe, Choose France"

As an active champion of *la diplomatie économique*, or economic diplomacy, French Consul General in New Orleans Jean-Claude Brunet led a seminar called "Think Europe—Choose France" for Louisiana business students on March 11.

Hosted by Tulane University's Freeman School of Business, the speech outlined Europe's important economic position relative to the United States, France's major role in the European economy, and the advantages of U.S. investment in European markets.

Mr. Brunet specifically emphasized the advantages of investing in France, citing flexible working hours, international mobility, modified labor and trade-union laws, and tax incentives.

In addition to the "Think Europe—Choose France" conference, Mr. Brunet participated in a roundtable called "The Future of the Euro" in late February with Dominik Knoll, CEO of the World Trade Center of New Orleans.

The events make up the most recent parts of France's "Say Oui to France, Say Oui to Innovation" program launched in October 2012, promoting win-win economic partnership and innovation for France and strategic countries around the world.

French-U.S. Climate Team Awarded Major Science Prize

Following a French-U.S. project gathering climate data, French geochemist Jean Jouzel and American atmospheric chemist Dr. Susan Solomon have won the prestigious 2012 Vetlesen Prize.

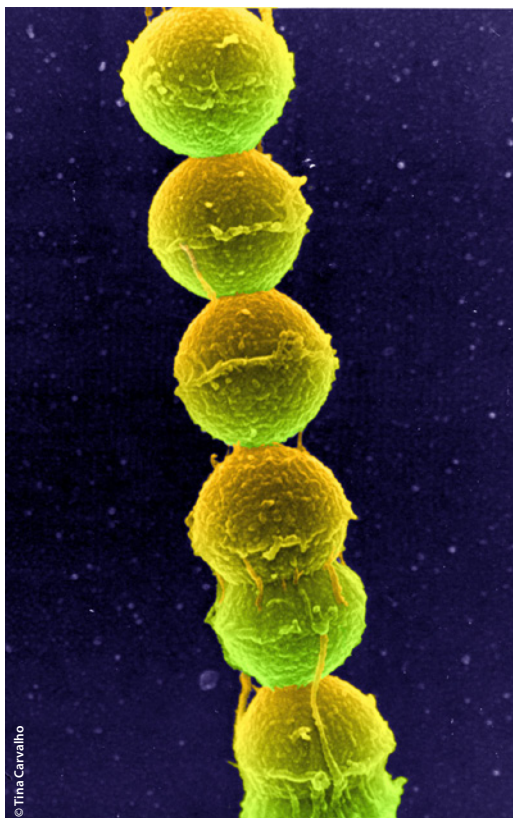
Considered the earth sciences' equivalent of a Nobel Prize, the award is given "for scientific achievement resulting in a clearer understanding of the Earth, its history, or its relations to the universe."

Mr. Jouzel, 65, extracted the longest- yet climate record from polar ice cores, and Dr. Solomon led efforts to identify the cause of the Antarctic ozone hole.

Since the 1970s, Mr. Jouzel has been involved in collecting ice-core records from both poles, and has refined techniques for extracting past climate information from them.

"If we want to avoid significant climate change, we need to act now on greenhouse gases," he said. "Global warming is not yet damaging, but if we do nothing in the coming years we will have more extreme events, droughts, storms and so on."

French-U.S. Team Makes Discovery in Fight Against Strep



© Tina Carvalho

A French-U.S. group of scientists have made new strides in combating the *Streptococcus* bacteria, pictured above.

▲ In a study released in late February, public-health researchers in France and the U.S. made a crucial discovery about a species of *Streptococcus*, the bacteria that causes strep throat. The new knowledge could lead to greater ability to treat strep infections.

The bacteria is responsible for the deaths of dozens of newborns in France every year. Those who survive often suffer lasting neurological damage. Although normally found in the human digestive and reproductive tracts, the strain can turn virulent and cause fatal infections, especially in infants.

Thanks to a partnership between *l'Institut Pasteur-CNRS*, *l'Institut Cochin*, *l'Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris*, *l'Inserm*, and the University of Massachusetts Medical School, a team of researchers identified a membrane protein, since named Abx1, involved in regulating the bacteria's virulence. Prior to the group's discovery, scientists had thought that a separate protein-based regulatory system, also located in the cell's membrane, acted in isolation to trigger the bacteria to become infectious.

Researchers hope that the discovery will lead to treatments of strep infections on the basis of the Abx1 protein, confining the pathogen to a harmless, non-virulent state.

The regulatory protein discovered by the French-American team belongs to a family of related proteins present in a wide range of other bacteria, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, an antibiotic resistant strain of which, called MRSA, has been claiming victims for decades. If drugs developed to inhibit infections of the strep bacteria prove successful, scientists think there is hope that a similar method will help lead to the prevention of other lethal infections.

French Start-Up Selling Weather Device in Apple Store

▲ Only six months after the release of its innovative new weather station, French start-up Netatmo has been featured in the Apple Store. The product boasts an integrated capability featuring a free app, which runs on the iPhone, iPad, and Android mobile devices. Though not the first French start-up to be featured in the Apple Store, Netatmo sets itself apart by delivering a unique, sleek design.

The Netatmo Urban Weather Station is "the world's first personal weather station designed for users to monitor indoor and outdoor environments," according to a press release from the company. What makes Netatmo's weather station original is that it assesses the quality of the environment by measuring air and noise pollution.

Founded by Frédéric Potter and Jean-Pierre Dumolard, Netatmo was created in 2011. With its integration with Apple interface, Netatmo is the first of its kind. The weather station does not include a screen and works instead using only wireless devices.

Mike Aim, the company's Vice-President of Marketing, explained to *Le Figaro* that, "Rather than having a weather station with an ugly black-and-white screen, we've invested in the development of connected devices."

Additionally, with the permission of the user, the app collects and consolidates weather data, giving it a predictive capability. Priced at just over 220 dollars, Netatmo says its combined features cost consumers significantly less money than if they bought a machine for each of its component parts.



© Masaki Okumura

The Netatmo weather station combines multiple devices. The innovative product is to be shown in Apple stores.

“Terroir to Table” Offers Food, Wine Throughout U.S.

▲ Though surrounded by gourmet wines, chocolates, and other delicacies, food and wine industry professionals were hard at work on March 4 at the Terroir to Table luncheon in New York City.

Sponsored by Ubifrance, the French agency for international business under the Ministry for the Economy, Finance, and Industry and the Ministry for Foreign Trade, the Terroir to Table event featured a walk-around tasting luncheon. Seventeen French food and wine producers showcased their products, and American industry professionals sampled goods and networked. Chef Marco Canora and sommelier Paul Grieco paired the foods and wines.

In addition to the luncheon, guests had the opportunity to meet with individual wine producers, where they could order the showcased wines to sell to the American wine market. According to Vinexpo, which conducts wine market studies, American consumption is predicted to grow by about 12 percent between now and 2016. The French Customs Agency has reported that U.S. imports of French wine increased by 15 percent between 2011 and 2012.

A separate Terroir to Table luncheon took place in Toronto, Canada, on March 7, and Ubifrance plans to host a similar event in Chicago and Montréal in October.

Also coming to New York in September 2013 is Taste of France, a two-day festival celebrating French culture and *art de vivre*. The Consulate of France in New York co-sponsors this annual event, of which Ambassador François Delattre will serve as Honorary Chairman.



In an effort from several French public-sector trade organizations, “Terroir to Table” came to New York on March 4.

© Terroir to Table / Ubifrance

Chicago Museum Celebrates 100 Years of Picasso

▲ In honor of the city’s unique and enduring relationship with Pablo Picasso, the Art Institute of Chicago is hosting *Picasso and Chicago*, a collection of over 250 of his works.

One hundred years ago, the United States acquired its first Pablo Picasso piece, a sculpture called *Head of a Woman* (right). The Art Institute displayed it at the International Exhibition of Modern Art, or the Armory Show.

The exhibit, which commemorates the 1913 Armory Show, runs through May 12, and features works such as *The Old Guitarist*, *Self-Portrait*, and *Red Armchair*.

The Spanish-born artist drew inspiration for his famed works in France, where he spent most of his adult life.

“Some of the most significant events in the reception of his art—including the first presentation of Picasso’s works at an American art museum and the first permanent display of his work in an American museum—all happened in Chicago,” said Stephanie D’Alessandro, Curator of Modern Art at the Art Institute. “This exhibition marks the special hundred-year relationship of Pablo Picasso and our city.”

Supplementing the art exhibition is a variety of events that celebrate his artwork, including a lecture by *The New Yorker* writer Adam Gopnik, a film screening of *The Mystery of Picasso*, a symposium about the history surrounding Picasso and Chicago, and a commemorative book, titled *Picasso and Chicago: 100 Years, 100 Works*.

The Art Institute has also created special installations throughout the museum featuring artists that inspired Picasso or that help shed light on his artwork, as well as a showcase of works presented in the Armory Show.



Picasso’s first work ever to be shown in the U.S., *Head of a Woman*, returned to Chicago with a centennial exhibit.

© Estate of Pablo Picasso 2013 / ABS

French Actor Performs Eastern Epic in Houston

Jean-Claude Carrière gave new life to an old story, and captured the attention of Houston, Texas, in doing so.

Mr. Carrière, a French actor, has not only won awards for his film scripts from the Cannes Film Festival and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts, the governing body for the Oscars. He has also acted in a multitude of films and television shows. On March 11 and 12, Mr. Carrière brought his talents to Houston, where he presented his rendition of the *Mahabharata*.

An Indian epic with over 100,000 stanzas, the work dates back thousands of years and is one of the world’s longest poems. Mr. Carrière studied the epic in India for 11 years, after which he created film and stage adaptations, which are five and nine hours long. He distilled the epic in his Houston performance, where he played the role of an Indian storyteller.

The *Mahabharata* performance was part of the 2013 French Cultures Festival in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, organized by the French Consulate in Houston every March.

France Works Within OAS to Abolish Death Penalty

In its latest effort to abolish the death penalty worldwide, France participated in a hearing about capital punishment on March 11. Pierre-Henri Guignard, France’s Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS), represented France, an observer state to the OAS. The hearing examined the issue in the context of OAS Member States, and was proposed by Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and Panama.

France’s participation in the events is aligned with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs’s current campaign to abolish the death penalty all over the world. The OAS event follows advocacy for the same cause by Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2012. The following month, the French delegation participated in a roundtable about the issue with the OAS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), a branch of the OAS, with the theme “How much longer until the universal abolition of the death penalty?”

The hearing acts as a preparatory event in the lead-up to further death penalty abolition conferences at the UN General Assembly this June.

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Lascaux Cave Exhibit on Display at Chicago's Field Museum

▲ With its intricate cave paintings and rare artifacts, the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History's *Scenes from the Stone Age: The Cave Paintings of Lascaux* sheds light on France in the Paleolithic era.

Featuring full-size replicas of the nearly 20,000-year-old paintings found in the Lascaux Caves in southwest France, the exhibition opened in Chicago on March 20. Originally discovered by four young boys in 1940, the archaeological treasure has since attracted over one million visitors.

"We saw a cavalcade of animals, larger than life, painted on the walls and the ceiling of the cave," said Jacques Marsal, one of the paintings' discoverers, who worked as the caves' chief guide for the remainder of his life. "Each animal seemed to be moving."

Organized by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the General Council of Dordogne, the Regional Council of Aquitaine, and the European Union, *Scenes from the Stone Age* offers the most technically accurate reproductions of the paintings to date. The paintings reflect early man's traditions and culture that were far more sophisticated than many experts thought at the time of the caves' discovery.

The exhibition, which opened in Bordeaux, France, runs at the Field Museum through September 8, 2013.



Discovered by a group of boys in 1940, the Paleolithic cave paintings of Lascaux, in France's southwest, have attracted waves of archaeologists, researchers and tourists ever since. The Chicago exhibition runs now through September 8.

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