

The French Government Mixes It Up

French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced a reshuffling of his government cabinet June 23. The government reshuffle reinforced President Sarkozy's speech the previous day in which he relayed his plans to overhaul the pension system, invest in infrastructure and research, and help France emerge from the global recession. In total, eight new ministers have been appointed to the cabinet and nine ministers changed positions. One of the most notable changes was the moving of Michèle Alliot-Marie from the Minister of the Interior to the Minister of Justice and her replacement by Brice Hortefeux, the former Labor and Social Affairs Minister. Luc Chatel, President Sarkozy's spokesman and former Secretary of State for Industry and Consumer Affairs, now occupies the post of minister of national education.

Some of the new faces in President Sarkozy's cabinet include Pierre Lellouche, formerly France's envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan, who now serves as the Secretary of State for European Affairs, as well as Frédéric Mitterrand, the nephew of former president François

Mitterrand, who will serve as the new Minister of Culture. Though the changes were widespread, incumbents at the crucial posts of budget, environment, foreign affairs and defense remain intact and François Fillon retains his post as Prime Minister.



President Sarkozy poses with the new cabinet at the steps of the Élysée.

French Tall Ships "Challenge" the Open Seas



The French ships *Belle Poule* and *Étoile* prepare for the high seas.

France wished the *Étoile*, the *Bel Espoir* and *Belle Poule* a "bon voyage" as the three ships set sail for the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge. The Challenge is a three-and-a-half month trip that began at the end of April and continues through August, comprising a grueling 7,000 nautical miles. It may be called a "challenge," but this competition emphasizes international understanding and amity rather than speed; the top prize is the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge Friendship Trophy. With the purpose of educating youth of diverse nationalities, cultures, religions and backgrounds, the Challenge series first took place in 2001 on the Great Lakes

and included six countries and 30 vessels. This year, 18 countries participated, comprising 38 vessels with crews of novice and experienced sailors.

The ships follow a historical route that begins at Vigo, Spain, and continues to Tenerife, Canary Islands; Hamilton, Bermuda; Charleston, South Carolina; Boston, Massachusetts; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and finally Belfast, Northern Ireland. French vessels *Étoile* and *Belle Poule* observed the Fourth of July in New York City at the Piers. Guests were welcomed aboard to meet the crew and sailed to the Statue of Liberty, where a ceremony was held for the reopening of Lady Liberty's crown. Guests included French Ambassador Pierre Vimont and Mayor Michael Bloomberg. From July 8 through 13, crews explored Boston, taking the city's "T" from the Seaport District, where vessels were docked, to destinations including the Freedom Trail and Fenway Park. The numerous activities and events focused on U.S. and international maritime history.

One of the Challenge's aims is to provide sailors with a pleasant experience of making new friends and learning more about the visited communities and cultures. Upon arrival at the ports, the vessel's crews meet and interact with local businesses, families and sailing enthusiasts, explaining the trip's purpose and sharing their love of impressive vessels.

Bastille Day Takes Paris by Storm

From *l'Hexagone* to the overseas departments and collectivités, France celebrated Bastille Day on July 14 — the event that symbolizes the end of the monarchy and the beginning of the Republic.

In Paris, President Sarkozy seized the opportunity of this festive day to highlight France's presence in the international stage. One of the main events involved a massive parade along the *Champs Élysées*, including about 5,000 men, 300 military vehicles, 83 motorbikes, 280 horses, 68 planes and 37 helicopters, according to France 24. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was this year's guest of honor at the annual parade along *To* recognize India's military participation in World War I and to underscore the increasingly strong ties between the two countries, 400 Indian soldiers joined French counterparts in the one-mile march down the world-renowned boulevard.

The attendance of Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the Secretary General of NATO, served a symbolic reminder of France's reintegration into the Integrated Command Structure of the Atlantic alliance. In recognition of France's current military activities, troops stationed in Afghanistan, Tchad, and Kosovo were present as well as the new addition of commandos from the Atalanta anti-piracy operation. This year was also the first time that a detachment



Skies turn red, white and blue as the *Patrouille* flies over the parade.

from the Franco-German brigade participated in the parade since its inception 20 years ago.

The newest technological innovations were also featured in the parade including an infantry fighting vehicle and Caesar cannons that will be deployed to Afghanistan later this summer. With a modern, international military parade on the ground and the traditional sky-high aerobatic performance from the

Patrouille de France, this year's festivities celebrated both France's historic and current global activities. Rocking the patriotic day out on a "high" note, thousands of Parisians gathered in front of the Eiffel Tower, where French rock hero Johnny Holiday performed, followed by a display of fireworks.

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E.U. PROVIDES AID TO PAKISTAN

The European Union pledged to give Pakistan \$100 million in aid at the first ever E.U.-Pakistan summit, which convened in Brussels on June 17. "Last year, the people of Pakistan voted for a strong, secular democratic government," José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, stated before the summit. "I welcome President Zardari's commitment to reinforce the democratic institutions, reform the economy and defeat extremism and terrorism ... The E.U. will continue to assist Pakistan in its fight against both militant insurgency and economic crisis, while boosting significantly our humanitarian aid." The aid is designed to provide food, water and shelter to the approximately two million people who have fled Swat Valley and the nearby regions of Pakistan. This emergency response aid is going to supplement, not replace, the \$670 million that the European Commission already promised Pakistan for long-term development aid over the next five years. France has similarly reaffirmed its support for Pakistan by pledging up to 300 million euros over 3 years for economic development as well as 12.3 million euros in emergency assistance for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of the Swat valley.

LÉVI-STRAUSS WINS SMITHSONIAN BICENTENNIAL MEDAL



Ambassador Vimont (second on left) receives the award on behalf of Mr. Lévi-Strauss.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, famed French anthropologist and social scientist, was granted the Smithsonian Institution's James Smithson Bicentennial Medal on June 12. French Ambassador Vimont received the award on behalf of Lévi-Strauss, who used his work to transform modern views of non-Western cultures. "This award recognizes and celebrates Professor Lévi-Strauss's fundamental contributions to understanding the human condition and passionate personal engagement in defense of the common humanity and dignity of all peoples," said Hans-Dieter Sues, associate director for research and collections of the Smithsonian. Mr. Lévi-Strauss grew up in Paris and studied law and philosophy at the Sorbonne. In addition to his accomplishments as an author, he was also a chair of social anthropology at the Collège de France and is a member of the Académie Française.

The Tour de France Attracts Tour-ists From Around the World



A peloton, a cluster of bike riders who save energy by riding together, speeds onward during the Tour.

Hearts raced and tensions soared as cyclists from around the globe gathered at this year's Tour de France, the world's third largest sporting event after the Olympics and the Soccer World Cup, to compete in a grueling race that began July 4 in Monaco and will end July 26 in Paris. Consisting of 21 stages that include time-trials, flat courses, and arduous mountain paths, the Tour covers approximately 2,175 miles in 23 days, stopping in 34 towns and passing through 560 municipalities as well as Spain, Andorra, Switzerland, and Italy along the way.

The Tour's international presence is highlighted by the sheer number of multinational viewers: besides drawing foreign crowds, which comprise 20 percent of the fans present at the race, the event is broadcast on television in 180 countries and attracts representatives from 76 radio stations and 450 newspapers, photography agencies, and news media from countries around the world. Together, 3,600 accredited media members follow the event. The Tour's budget is around \$140 million, 50 percent of which comes from television rights and 40 percent from sponsors; the remainder is paid by the towns in which the Tour's stages begin and end.

One of the Tour's most recognized participants, seven-time American champion Lance Armstrong, returns this year for a shot at a record-breaking eighth yellow jersey. Riding for the Kazakhstan-based team Astana, the 37-year-old cancer survivor came out of retirement in January and competed in the recent Giro d'Italia, Italy's version of the Tour de France. Other famous participants of the Tour will include 2007 Spanish Tour de France winner Alberto Contador and American rider Tyler Farrar.

Created in 1903 by Géo Lefèvre, a journalist at the French sports publication *L'Auto Magazine*, the Tour de France symbolizes French athleticism and sportsmanship. The much-anticipated race unifies French citizens as thousands flock to the racing path to cheer on their favorite rider and fosters regional pride as towns across the country vie for the honor to be included in the Tour's route. This year's race promises to deliver both top-notch cyclists and thrilling competition.

Climate Change a Hot Issue for Major Economies Forum

To what extent can we restrict global warming? France, with its firm commitment to battling climate change, is ready to play a leading role in the global effort to do so. In response to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) urgent call for industrialized nations to reduce their overall emission by at least 25 percent, France aims to individually reduce its emissions by more than 14 percent and to press for a European reduction of at least 20 percent by 2020. Paris demonstrated its commitment to these goals on May 25 and 26 when it hosted the European Union and 17 other nations for the second preparatory meeting of the Major Economies Forum — a meeting that concentrated specifically on energy and climate in continuation of a meeting held last April in Washington, D.C.

Collectively responsible for 80 percent of the planet's green house gases, the nations present at the meeting discussed targets for reducing emissions, courses of action applicable to different countries, and ways in which efforts against climate change and international cooperation on technology can be financed.

France expanded its efforts in the third preparatory meeting held from June 22 to 23 in Mexico, where nations further discussed options for financing emission reduction initiatives. Minister of Ecology Jean-Louis Borloo explains that the ultimate aim of this active preparation is to ensure that nations will not tackle this issue "face to face but rather side by side" when they reunite in Copenhagen this winter for what he calls the "rendez-vous of humanity."



France is taking action to prepare for the Copenhagen Summit on ways to combat global warming.

Joan of Arc Captures the Heart of New Orleans

Francophiles, artists, entrepreneurs and other community members gathered at New Orleans's French Quarter on May 8 to celebrate not only the anniversary of Joan of Arc lifting the siege of Orléans, but also the launch of a non-profit organization known as the Joan of Arc Project. Horses, medieval costumes, and the sounds of French gypsy jazz were just a sample of what this initiative aspires to accomplish in the coming months: "to put the French back in the French Quarter and the artistry back into Mardi Gras!"



New Orleans is celebrating Joan of Arc's lasting memory.

The Project aims to transform the short-lived, annual commemoration of Joan of Arc into a lasting memory that becomes a definitive part of the French Quarter's identity. By celebrating New Orleans's connection to this legendary hero, the Project strives to

"highlight the relationship ... of New Orleans to France." The organization has stirred up considerable excitement. Cécile Andry, president of the New Orleans Council of French Societies, finds that it is "coming at a perfect time to breathe new life into the many French cultural organizations in the city."

The organization will hold various events in the coming months, including costume sales, student contests, book clubs, French holiday celebrations, the Joan of Arc Fête and Parade. Intending to evoke "Joan as a symbol of individual strength, determination, and loyalty" in all these events, the project hopes to "honor New Orleans' French heritage" and renew "pride in...[its]...uniqueness." For more information on this organization, please visit: www.joanofarcproject.org.

Napoléon Conquers Philadelphia's Imagination

This summer, a walk through the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia is a journey back to the 19th century and a window into the legacy of Napoléon Bonaparte. Open to the public until September 7, this exposition encourages visitors to "see beyond the legend to gain an understanding...[of a leader who]...reshaped the landscape of Europe and America."

In its grand North American tour, the 6,000-square-foot international traveling exhibition features more than 300 objects from the First Empire of Bonaparte. The framed paintings, sculptures, personal articles, documents and Imperial furniture, some of which are being displayed to the general public for the first time, are items from First Empire-authority and author Pierre-Jean Chalençon's collection. From the earliest known letter written by Napoléon at the age of 14, to one of his signature hats worn during the Battle at Essling in 1809, each object recalls an element of Bonaparte's legacy. Divided into 12 parts, the exhibit is organized such that each section represents a certain phase of his life. For an additional \$4, one can walk through the exhibit guided by an iPod audio tour.

Linda Johnson, National Constitution Center President and Chief Executive Officer, stresses the importance of this exhibition in conveying "how the destinies of France and America intersected from the time of the American Revolution to Napoléon's reign." This relationship is highlighted through the display of objects such as a book on the American Revolution from Napoléon's time in exile, as well as the valise containing the signed Louisiana Purchase documents. In partnership with the Alliance Française and the French-American Chamber of Commerce in Philadelphia, the center hopes to highlight this interesting and historically deep Franco-American connection. For more information, please visit: www.constitutioncenter.org.



Philadelphia's National Constitution Center will feature various objects of Napoléon.

French Sculptures on the Move in California



Houdon's sculpture *La Frileuse* (1787) is featured in the exhibit.

The exhibit "Cast in Bronze: French Sculpture from Renaissance to Revolution" debuted at Musée du Louvre in Paris, traveled to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and currently resides at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. Inspiration stemmed from the current resurgence of interest in sculpture and a widespread taste for Renaissance and Baroque art. According to the Getty, the more than 120 bronze statues from European and American museums display the "most splendid manifestations of the artistic genius" of French sculptors, such as Girardon, Bertrand and Houdon. Highlights of the exhibit include the 16th-century Barthélemy Prieur's female allegorical figure *Abundance* and Michel Anguier's *Montarsis bronzes*, a depiction of seven gods and goddesses. Michael Brand, director of the Getty, commented that "'Cast in Bronze' exemplifies the Museum's commitment to exhibitions that are of tremendous scholarly importance, [and] allow for collaboration with our sister institutions around the world ... the comprehensive catalogue that accompanies it will be the most current reference on the subject matter, and promises to be a tremendous resource for future scholarship and research." "Cast in Bronze" is open for the public through September 27. For more information, please visit: www.getty.edu.

BOSTON ZOO GETS HAIRY WITH ARRIVAL OF FRENCH DONKEYS



Boston commemorated *Le Jour de la Bastille* with more than just a fête at the Liberty

Hotel — its Franklin Park Zoo welcomed new additions to its animal family. Two French, male donkeys made their grand entrance just in time for France's independence day on July 14. These mammals (pictured above) are no regular quadrupeds — they are *Baudets du Poitou*, or Poitou donkeys, "an extremely rare breed ... and the oldest breed approved in France" according to Zoo New England, as well as the hairiest donkey breed in the world. With only about 500 in existence, it is no wonder that "the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy lists the Poitou as critical on its Conservation Priority List." With their long, thick dark coat highly prized by breeders, white nose, grey underbelly, and tall stature, these unique donkeys are sure to be a hit with young and old alike. The donkeys were greeted with French-themed decorations and are located in the Children's Zoo.

FRENCH EMBASSY RACES FOR THE CURE AND THE FINISH LINE

Thousands displayed their dedication to fighting breast cancer at the District of Columbia's Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure 5K on June 6 as supporters, fundraisers, and runners filled the National Mall. In total, almost 45,000 people participated in the event and raised \$4.3 million, most of which will be used to fund the fight breast cancer in and around Washington, D.C. The rest will help support underprivileged patients in areas of high breast cancer mortality rate. This year was an exciting one for the Embassy of France in D.C. as dozens of employees demonstrated their determination to be involved in supporting breast cancer research by participating in the Komen Race. Amidst a cheering crowd, Emmanuel Jacq, a hearing-impaired employee of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, finished 9th overall out of 2,763 runners and represented France as he stood at the winner's podium. "It was a pleasure to run with the French Embassy's team to combat cancer, and [I] will repeat the experience next year," stated Mr. Jacq. Fellow colleague Rose-Marie Josselin has been organizing the Embassy's team with the help of Mercedes and José Martins since 1999.



Jacq finished 9th.

Sky-High Success for Paris Air Show Centennial

At this year's Paris Air Show, considerable crowds gathered at the Paris-Le Bourget exhibition park to participate in the world's largest aviation event and celebrate its 100th anniversary. From June 15 to 21, entrepreneurs, researchers, politicians, and the general public cruised the vast span of the aeronautical industry's past, present, and future.

Reflecting an increasingly interconnected world, the air show soared to new heights as it welcomed an exceptionally sizable and diverse crowd. With doors open to the general public, the number of visitors reached 157,000 in addition to 3,500 journalists. With a major business component, the *Salon du Bourget*, as it is known in French, attracted 150 official delegations coming from 20 countries, over 155,000 trade visitors, and a record number of 2,000 exhibitors who all seized the opportunity to "set up commercial links, put forward future programs, present equipment, and broker contracts and partnership projects." Together, this massive crowd embodied the air show's strong emphasis on the international sphere. Overall, 48 countries were represented, including new participants Australia, Lithuania, Libya, Mexico, and Tunisia. This international gathering provided the forum in which to showcase innovations such as the new Russian regional transport twin-engine jet dubbed the *Sukhoi Superjet 100*, and the latest Chinese L-15 advanced jet trainer. Austrian company Schiebel displayed its Camcopter helicopter drone, the first unmanned vessel to be exhibited in the air show's history.

France and greater Europe's technological achievements stood out among this distinguished international crowd. The numerous contracts signed demonstrated the extraordinary progress achieved from the pioneers' first hesitant airplane models to the Airbus A380. European conglomerate EADS's Airbus unit reported that airlines from across the Middle East and Asia ordered 58 planes and were committed to buying 69 more. French satellite manufacturer Airanespace also signed several contracts at the event. Marking a towering presence by a 660-square-foot exhibit featuring scale models of its three launchers, including the Ariane 5 based at the space center in French Guiana, a large external screen showed the launcher from the Spaceport, while mini-theaters offered short subject video presentations of preparations for the Spaceport's new launch site.

Airplanes and launch systems were just a glimpse of the ground-breaking new technology at this year's Paris Air Show. Outside, visitors shuttled around a sizable general public area to observe aircraft and rockets in an up-close display, and watch aircraft take off from the nearby runway. Indoors, the public could visit an air and space museum while businessmen attended meetings in the spacious conference halls and ventured into an exposition of aerospace trade, professions, and training area before making their way down extended aisles of business chalets. Believing strongly in "the diversity of its exhibitors," the show's organizer, *Groupement des Industries Françaises Aéronautiques et Spatiales*, "[ensured] that all sectors of aviation [were] represented" along these aisles by welcoming enterprises covering "research, development, construction, marketing, and maintenance of all aerospace programs,



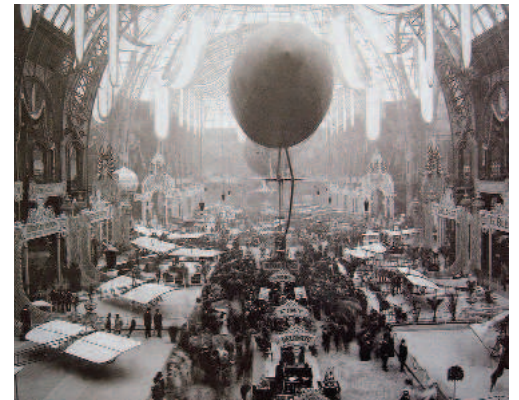
Civil aviation takes off with a demonstration of the A380.

civil and military." Moving from one stand to another, visitors traveled "from power units for engines to airborne weaponry, from piloting aids to cabin design, from composite materials and surface treatment to airport equipment and services, and from mechanical and metallurgical subcontracting to maintenance." Even aeronautical medicine was included in the presentation of the traveler's aid kit and a discussion of pre-flight consultations. In a span of six days, the Paris Air Show demonstrated to the public how far aeronautic and space technology has come since 1909.

An Air Show 100 Years in the Making

Previously perceived as a sport, aviation was transformed in 1908 with the formation of the *Chambre Syndicale de l'Industrie Aéronautique*. This association, created by a group of aircraft builders and inventors, among them French aviation pioneers Louis Blériot, Louis Breguet and Gabriel Voisin, aspired to infuse aviation with "an industrial and commercial dimension." The group's first step towards revolutionizing aviation was to arrange "the first airborne locomotion exhibition" at Paris's Grand Palais the following year.

Initially, innovations in balloons, engines, and aircraft attracted visitors to the unique annual event, which became biannual in 1924. That same year, the exhibition expanded dramatically by opening its hangar doors to British and German aircraft manufacturers — the first step in establishing an international dynamic and worldwide participation. In 1927, American pilot Charles Lindbergh successfully completed the first non-stop flight from New York to Paris's Le Bourget airport, emphasizing the show's international reach. The year 1946 saw the first flying displays in Orly, and again at Le Bourget in 1951, where the air show relocated permanently in 1953.



The Air Show began in 1909 at the *Salon de la locomotion aérienne*.

Since its inception, the Paris Air Show has retained its place at the forefront of aerospace innovation. The air show has introduced many advances, such as the Concorde and Boeing 747 in 1969 and the Ariane launch vehicle a decade later. At this year's exhibition, the Paris Air Show's century-long existence was certainly not neglected. Approximately 30 vintage planes manufactured in France, Europe, and the United States were displayed to highlight the history of aviation between 1910 and 1960. For example, the days of aviation pioneers were commemorated with the *Blériot XI*, the first aircraft to cross the English Channel. Each set of historical aircraft was contrasted with the most current models, such as the Airbus A380. Audiences could also feast their eyes on the aerobatics team *Patrouille de France*, which spiced up French skies with a performance for the first time at Le Bourget since 1975.

For 100 years, the Paris Air Show — the oldest of its kind — has served as a platform for global collaboration and many crucial business partnerships by attracting a myriad of buyers, ranging from military to commercial airlines to private customers. In the last century, Le Bourget airport has brought the public under its wings, dazzled them with aerial displays of twists and turns, and delighted them with promising technological advances.



Ariane 5 (left) and Ariane 1 (right) launch vehicles at the 2009 Paris Air Show gave visitors a taste of out-of-this-world technology.

Rats! A Cutting-Edge Robot with Whiskers

The future of robotics could send some scurrying for cover: researchers at France's Institute for Intelligent Systems and Robotics (ISIR) have recently created a uniquely sophisticated artificial rat. Named Psikharpax after the mythical king of rodents, the mechanical mammal was designed in the hopes of opening new frontiers in artificial intelligence. The goal of the French researchers is to overcome one of robotics's greatest challenges — reproducing learning ability — by getting Psikharpax to "survive" on its own. "We want to make robots that are able to look after themselves and depend on humans as least as possible," explains Agnès Guillot of the Psikharpax team.

Psikharpax represents a new direction in scientists' quest to design a robot that can act independently of human guidance. Instead of attempting to jump right into replicating the intense



Scientists hope that Psikharpax can survive in new environments on its own.

complexities of the human brain, researchers at ISIR are starting with the simpler abilities shared with other animals — such as rats. "The rat is the animal that scientists know best, and the structure of its brain is similar to that of humans," elaborates Steve Nguyen, a doctoral candidate at ISIR. Psikharpax's creators believe that its biomimicry, sophistication of sensors and rat neurology-mirroring software is unparalleled in the field of robotics. The large, white automaton has cameras for eyes, microphones for ears, wheels for movement, and four-inch long whiskers on its snout, all of which collect data sent to a chip imitating the structures in a living rat's brain. Unlike its real-world counterparts, however, Psikharpax feeds strictly off of battery power.

How Cinderella Got Her Groove Back

One of Disney's most famous princesses is getting a makeover — not from her fairy godmother but from Pascal Hérold, French film director and producer of *La Véritable histoire du chat botté* and founder of the cinematic production company Herold & Family. His new movie *Cendrillon* (Cinderella) will be produced jointly by Herold & Family and animation company Nexus Factory in Paris's Delacave Studio. One of the movie's claims to fame is that it will be one of the first French stereoscopic three-dimensional animation films, but it certainly will not be the last. According to *Variety* magazine, "Stereoscopic 3-D is making waves in France, as indeed much of Europe, both from its impact on box office results, and the consequent rollout of dedicated 3-D cinema theater screens. The number of French directors announcing 3-D projects grows almost by the week."

Based on the fairy tale by 17th-century French author Charles Perrault, the new version of *Cendrillon* is written by a team of screenwriters that includes Hérold as well as Frederic Le Bolloc'h and Alexandre and Jérôme Apergis. The film's setting is America's Wild West with a host of exciting characters and scenarios to match, while its creative leaps will include pirates, iguanas, vultures and a Native American sorcerer in lieu of a fairy godmother. The film is expected to debut in 2011.



Pascal Hérold will revamp Cinderella's image in his upcoming, modern version.

L'Oréal Celebrates 100 Years



Women have turned to L'Oréal for innovative cosmetic products for the past 100 years.

At the beginning of the 20th century, natural-looking hair dye was in great demand, but the only products available in the market caused severe allergic reactions to women with sensitive skin. All this changed in 1909, when French chemist Eugène Schueller created the world's first safe hair dye, which he named "L'Auréale." Since then, L'Oréal has been the site of some of cosmetics' greatest innovations, including Dop, the first mass-market shampoo

made without soap (1934), *Récital*, the first ever home hair dye kit (1966), and *Revitalift*, a skin cream with a "facelift" effect. Nearly 100 years after its inception, L'Oréal is one of the world's leaders in cosmetic research and products — last year, the Paris-based company employed 67,500 men and women globally.

L'Oréal's areas of operation, however, are not limited to business or cosmetic innovation. Launched in celebration of its centennial anniversary and in demonstration of its desire to give a makeover to its spheres of social responsibility, its "100 Citizen Projects Around the World" focus on enhancing education and professional opportunities. Some of these projects include facilitating the entrance of young handicapped individuals into the beauty and commerce industries in France, financing schooling and educational opportunities for girls in Turkey, promoting art and music education of underprivileged children in Australia, supporting disadvantaged youths in Sweden, and many others. These projects remind customers and business entrepreneurs alike that L'Oréal plans on taking seriously its mission of beautifying the world for at least another 100 years.

JUMPSTARTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES



New initiatives will drive the production of new electric vehicles

A new financial incentive aims to re-energize the production of clean-running electric vehicles. Announced on June 8, the initiative will make almost \$350 million in fixed-rate, subsidized, long-term loans available to automotive companies setting up production lines for next-generation projects, such as zero-emissions or hybrid cars. Firms that qualify will be able to borrow up to half of the investment cost of these projects. Former secretary of state for industry Luc Chatel unveiled the plan and championed its added value in a challenging economic climate. "This can have a real impact at a time when companies are having difficulty in obtaining financing," he declared, adding that "the objective is to have a good year in 2009." The incentives will be in place at least through the end of the year. A similar drive, offering buyers of new cars bonuses when they trade in old vehicles, has already seen great success in a surge of low-emission vehicle sales.

AOL LAUNCHES BEBO IN FRANCE

In a French media landscape bustling with various online social networks, AOL has launched its own program: Bebo. Already thriving in the United States and United Kingdom, and rising in popularity in the Netherlands and Spain, AOL sees potential in extending Bebo to France, where 67 percent of Web users belong to online social networks. Despite competition from Facebook, MySpace, and Skyrock, AOL believes that "the race is not over." Among other features, Bebo offers "Lifestream," a function that allows interaction between members of different social networks. Also, in partnership with Allociné, an online cinema portal, Bebo provides four channels of TV programming, and "Merci Qui!," a service dedicated to cinema classics. With Filmltrailer, Bebo offers members easy access to a wide selection of the latest Hollywood films in French. In partnership with Diagonal View, a digital production company, Bebo will also provide original and unique footage from a variety of genres. Nielsen recently rated Bebo as the second most popular online social network worldwide after MySpace.

RACING TO SEE RACINE: THE PHÈDRE REVIVAL

French playwright Jean Racine's 17th-century masterpiece *Phèdre* returns to the stage this summer starring the Academy-Award winning Helen Mirren in the titular role. The dramatic tragedy, translated into English by poet Ted Hughes, will be performed at the National Theatre in London throughout the summer as well as at the Ancient Theater of Epidaurus in Greece and the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C. The June 25 performance was transmitted to 270 movie theaters across the globe. The play recounts the story of the Greek mythological character Phèdre, who falls in love with her stepson Hippolytus (played by Dominic Cooper, of the hit musical-movie *Mamma Mia!*), while her husband Theseus (played by Stanley Townsend) is away from home. Even though Racine's masterpiece is over 300-years-old, this powerful reproduction promises to entrance a whole new generation of viewers.

FRANCE MOURNS THE LOSS OF THE KING OF POP



French fans gather at Notre-Dame de Paris to mourn the loss of pop icon Michael Jackson.

Thousands of fans gathered on June 26 at Notre-Dame de Paris to honor Michael Jackson's accomplishments and contributions to pop culture the day after his death. The fans, who wore t-shirts bearing Jackson's face, held signs proclaiming, "We will miss you so much, Michael!" and "Michael, you bring us happiness—you're magic." French people of all ages and backgrounds were deeply touched by the untimely death of the music legend. "We all have a bit of Michael Jackson in ourselves," said newly-appointed Minister of Culture Frédéric Mitterrand, who also called Jackson a "universal star." Jackson was admired by many French people for his myriad talents: First Lady and fellow singer Carla Bruni-Sarkozy recalled being "seized" by "his beauty, his grace, his talent and his uniqueness," when she watched him perform *Billie Jean* and execute his famous moonwalk for the first time. Prime Minister François Fillon, who expressed feeling "great emotion" at the news of Jackson's death, was also an admirer of Jackson's, but for different reasons: "I was above all an admirer of his success. Someone who sold 750 million records, it's unique in the history of music."

City of Light Shines in City Brands Index



The aesthetic quality of Paris's iconic landscape plays a large part in its worldwide appeal.

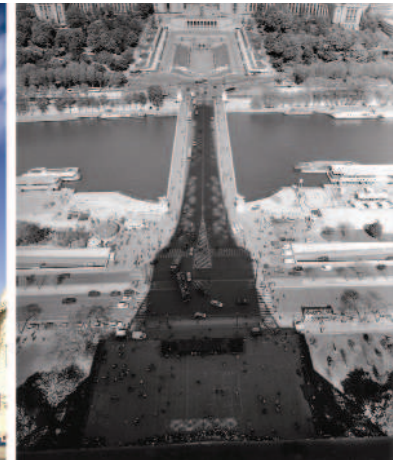
Ultimately, the goal of the index is to provide cities with information that will allow them to formulate a public relations strategy to improve trade, business, tourism and, perhaps, their ranking in the survey. "Particularly in the face of today's uncertain economic climate, it's vital to understand the forces and opinions that drive business towards and away from these cities," states Anholt. For Paris, the survey is a chance to maintain its standing as a top city and pursue opportunities for improvement.

Despite tough competition from cities such as Sydney, London, Rome and New York, Paris was ranked the top city among 49 others in this year's Anholt-GfK Roper City Brands IndexSM, released on June 16. As an analysis of data from approximately 10,000 adults in 20 countries, the results were derived from averaging the scores of six categories. Paris especially shone in three areas: its presence in the global community; its climate, cleanliness, and overall appearance; and the quality and types of lifestyles available to the public. These findings highlight Paris's status as a beautiful, globally recognized city that offers an array of exciting events, tourist attractions and lively nightlife.

Combining the efforts of market research organization GfK Custom Research North America and British author and government advisor Simon Anholt, the study is based on the latter's concept of "city branding," which encompasses criteria ranging from popular perception and overall likeability to vitality of business and tourism.

Paris and Chicago: Picture Perfect

A picture-perfect exhibition at the Loyola University Museum of Art (LUMA) in Chicago frames transatlantic friendship through a display of contrasting yet strikingly comparable images of sister cities Paris and Chicago. Showcasing the work of French photographer Jean-Christophe Ballot from June 13 until August 16, the exhibition presents pairs of photographs that "[create] a visually rich dialogue" and emphasize "the similarities of the two urban centers." For example, Ballot matches Chicago's Flatiron Building with the shadow of Paris's *Tour Eiffel*, effectively highlighting both architects' aspirations of grandeur and modernity. Ballot focuses on the Field Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago and LUMA, juxtaposing these photographs with images of Paris's Musée du Louvre, Musée de l'Orangerie and Musée Rodin, among others, to "[celebrate] the unique relationship between [the] sister cities." Besides prominent architecture, Ballot also shines his creative light on subjects that tend to be overlooked, such as Paris's Gare de l'Est, to better reveal the city's "true character."



Jean-Christophe Ballot finds similarities between the Eiffel Tower and the Chicago Flatiron Building.

The idea for the exhibition originated during the artist's 2006 Chicago visit where "he was struck by both the similarities and the great contrasts between Chicago and his home city of Paris." LUMA is partnering with, among others, the French Cultural Services in Chicago and Alliance Française de Chicago to make this exhibition possible.



A "SHOWWINISTE" IS PARTIAL TOWARD DELICIOUS WINES

Wine aficionados thirsty for a source of wine news and commentary can rejoice in www.showwiniste.fr, a French wine-centric blog. The site boasts several wine-related categories of posts, including current events, information about prominent wine makers, natural wines, and the science of wine-making,

or enology. This resource offers in-depth explanations for wine amateurs such as establishing the subtle distinction between "vin bio" and "vin naturel." The former, the site explains, is wine that is made of organic grapes. The latter is wine made from grapes that involves



no pesticides during harvest and where the fermentation process takes place with as little human intervention as possible. Olivier Lebaron, the author of the Web page, explains that "Showwiniste ... is a new destination for people near and far who are interested in the world of wine."

Le Centre Pompidou Finds Its Female Intuition

Modern and contemporary women artists of all nationalities conquered Le Centre Pompidou on May 27 with their exposition "elles@centrepompidou." Following the "Big Bang" and the "Mouvement des Images," "elles@centrepompidou" is the third major theme to be featured at the museum (www.centrepompidou.fr).

The works of 200 artists, including Maria-Elena Vieira da Silva, Sonia Delaunay, Frida Kahlo, Dorothea Tanning, and Joan Mitchell, adorn the rooms of the fourth and fifth floors of the museum in chronological and thematic order.

Among the seven topics are "Pioneers," a presentation of works that were at the forefront of artistic change, "Free Fire," a representation of individuals who played historic roles by challenging established boundaries and categorizations, and "A Room of One's Own," an embodiment of the notion of private space.



Suzanne Valadon's 1923 painting, *La Chambre bleue*, is showcased at elles@CentrePompidou.

Some of the artists accompanied their pieces with commentaries and engaged the public through lectures and discussions. For additional instruction on the exhibition, an audio-guide provides guided tours while a 384-page catalogue contains several essays and a chronology of women's art over the past century, published in French and English.

After Nearly 90 Years of Smiling, the Laughing Cow Still Says 'Cheese'

A famous ongoing French commercial asks: "Why does the Laughing Cow laugh?" *La Vache qui rit*, the smiling 90-year-old celebrity on the package of the soft, easy-to-spread cheese, now welcomes the public to its home in the Jura province where one just might find the answer.

Created in 1921 at Lons-le-Saunier, in the heart of the mountainous Eastern region of France, this product quickly earned global recognition thanks to its unique recipe, triangular shape, and unforgettable icon. The producer of *La vache qui rit* is shedding some light on the inner workings that helped create its product, including the story of its production, promotion, and even its imitators. The public is invited to tour the old factory, facilities, and machinery and to watch a movie that traces the technological advances that formed the cheese's product life-cycle. The museum also boasts a collection of over 600 objects including the original round container and drawing of French illustrator Benjamin Rabier. Children embark on an interactive adventure as they make their way through the "heros' obstacle course" with their very own multimedia badges, accompanied by the projection of a 3-D *Vache qui rit* who orients their journey. The surrounding grounds invite toddlers to enjoy the large garden equipped

with various thematic toys, and an obstacle course that explains the intriguing transformation of milk to cheese.

This museum not only focuses on the company's history, but also inspires both creativity and innovation. The *La vache qui rit* company, for whom energy consumption is no laughing matter, envisions a future where efficiency is essential. Architects Reichen et Robert & Associés equipped the museum with environmentally-friendly technology and numerous energy optimization processes, including 560-ft² of photovoltaic panels, geothermic technology, low-energy consuming lighting, and larch wood without chemical protection.



La Vache Qui Rit's museum invites visitors to learn about the cheese.

Lights, Camera, Action: Celebrating French Film

A journey into the world of French cinema began in Boston with French director Rémi Bezançon's moving box-office hit *The First Day of the Rest of Your Life*. From July 9 to 26, the 14th Annual Boston French Film Festival, in cooperation with Cultural Services Office of the French Embassy in Boston, premiered 20 French feature films. The diverse selection of movies included comedies, historical dramas, thrillers, and mysteries. The festival ended on a high note with the screening of Martin Provost's drama *Séraphine* in which young French painter Séraphine Louis captivates viewers as she works exhausting house-keeping jobs by day and paints beautiful canvases by night. Other screenings included Claire Denis's latest film *35 Shots of Rum*, Mäiwenn le Besco's *All About*



Séraphine screened in Boston, Denver and Sacramento.

Actresses, and Pascal Thomas's *Towards Zero*, an original adaptation of an Agatha Christie novel.

Several other cities partook in the French cinematic season in the U.S. The 2009 Denver French Film Festival, organized by the Denver Film Society and the Alliance Française de Denver, ran from June 17 to 28 at the Starz FilmCenter and screened 14 films. Some features highlighted veteran directors' latest achievements such as Agnès Varda's self portrait-documentary *Beaches of Agnès*. The Denver Film Society honored productions such as *The Beautiful Person*, a modern adaptation of Madame de Lafayette's novel *La Princesse de Clèves*, by younger artist Christophe Honoré. California's capital held its 8th Sacramento French Film Festival from June 19 to 28 at the Crest Theatre, where audiences enjoyed more than just the delights of French cinema. In addition to midnight movie showings, a fashion show, French classics, short films, premieres, and a special visit from actor Aurélien Wiik, the theater offered viewers all kinds of treats, including an open wine bar and French food at the opening, and pastries and coffee at late-night showings.

THE LOUVRE: A CULTURAL AND FINANCIAL STAPLE OF THE CITY



The Louvre supports 21,000 people at any given time.

The Louvre — a wonder rooted in centuries of innovation, and a touristic site that attracts 6 million visitors a year — never ceases to stand out as an exceptional cultural center. A recent study by the Centre d'Économie de la Sorbonne that examined the Louvre's economic influence revealed that unlike most museums, it is an active profit center that plays a major role in the community. According to French daily *Le Figaro*, with annual revenues 10 times greater than its spending, the Louvre earns between \$835 million and \$1.39 billion in profit. As a major destination for the average visitor of Paris, the museum alone is responsible for almost \$544 million in yearly tourist spending. Most telling was an in-depth look at the Louvre's role in generating employment. While the Louvre employs 2,000 people, the sum of individuals involved professionally in this institution at any given time amounts to 21,000 people. With these figures, the Louvre boasts its transformation from a site at the margins of Paris to one that "dominates the heart of the city."

FESTIVAL DE SAINT-DENIS STRIKES AN INTERNATIONAL CHORD

The soft reverberations of classical music filled the outskirts of Paris as the Festival of Saint-Denis celebrated its 40th anniversary with music, dance and musical theater. From June 7 to July 7, European artists, choirs and orchestras featured international talents such as Russian violinist Alina Ibragimova and German conductor Kurt Masur. The performances ranged from Verdi's "Messa de requiem" to Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to Rachmaninoff's "The Bells." Festival musicians reached out to younger generations, and students had the opportunity to meet with musicians, attend workshops, and visit the Basilica of St. Denis. The concerts ranged from \$15 to \$91, and were recorded by Radio France for free online broadcasting. For more information, please visit: www.festival-saint-denis.com.

The Embassy of France would like to thank Colonel Robert F. Elliott, Chairman of the Washington, D.C., Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association, for successfully organizing the DC leg of 'Normandy Day,' featured in the June 20th edition of News From France. Veterans and guests at the Arlington National Cemetery and Embassy of France were grateful for his time and energy. Mr. Elliott, who has received honorary medals and awards for his military service and accomplishments throughout his distinguished career, raised approximately \$2,000 to fund the events at the French Embassy. Thanks to his efforts, the celebration had great educational and cultural value.

Bastille Day Storms the United States

France was not the only country where fireworks illuminated the skies this July 14. *La Fête Nationale* was celebrated in many major American cities as Francophiles from all over the United States enjoyed the opportunity to commemorate French culture and history through French food, games, and entertainment.

Boston celebrated July 14 in style at the Liberty Hotel, an appropriate venue, as it was formerly a prison. To start off the evening, the event offered a broadcast of Parisian festivities, cocktails,

and dancing. At the hotel's deluxe restaurants, party-goers savored classic French dishes such as *gâteau de foies de volaille* (chicken foie gras) and *jambon du porc braisé sur nouilles fraîches* (braised pork on fresh noodles). As day turned into night, a French DJ helped revelers tear up the dance floor of the Liberty Hotel. Harvard Square likewise participated in the festivities, with various French music, food, and performances.

New York City's Upper East Side came alive on Sunday, July 12, as French cuisine and performers, even cancan dancers, stormed 60th Street (www.bastilledaynyc.com). The theme this year, *l'Art de Vivre à la Française* (The Art of French Living), aimed to give the festivities a luxurious touch. An open-air picnic offered delicacies while children tried their hand at soft *pétanque* and adults perused French market-stalls. For two lucky people, the highlight of the celebration was winning round-trip tickets to Paris.

Philadelphian festivities began July 9 and did not rest until July 12 (www.easternstate.org). Most notable was Philadelphia's very own version of the Storming of the Bastille, during which "Marie Antoinette" was abducted by an angry crowd, threw Butterscotch Krimpets from her prison window in imitation of the real monarch's alleged assertion to "let them eat cake," and was finally brought to justice in front of a crowd which decided her fate *vis-à-vis* a (real) guillotine.



The Eastern State Penitentiary of Philadelphia allowed visitors to relive the Storming of the Bastille and Marie Antoinette's capture.

On the opposite coast, *Le bal des pompiers* (Firefighter's Ball) was held July 11 in Seattle (www.seattle-bastille.org) amidst plenty of live music and other festivities. *Le bal*, a French tradition, is usually held the night before or the day of *La Fête Nationale* in many French cities and is hosted by the local firemen. The dancing often moves to the streets and can last until the early morning.

The memory of the Bastille did not lack attention from the Midwest. Milwaukee's 28th Bastille Day celebration

included its version of the Storming of the Bastille, a five-kilometer run that started off the festivities on July 9. Milwaukee (www.easttown.com) offered events until July 12, which included mini-French lessons, street performances, and a traditional French mass. A 43-foot Eiffel Tower soared above the participants and gave the festival an authentic feel. Similarly, Minneapolis (www.afmisp.org) offered various sorts of traditional food and wine as well as mimes, children's performers, and even an exhibition of vintage Citroën cars at its Opera Center on July 11.

In the South, Atlanta (www.afatl.com) celebrated in its Atrium of City Hall with fine dining and an exhibition of photography featuring the city of Atlanta through the French lens. The band *US Beat* performed throughout the evening, and a French market and silent auction offered, among other things, jewelry, art, and travel accommodations. This event, held on July 11, commemorated not only Bastille Day but also the Atlanta Consulate's 20th anniversary.

Many other cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco also celebrated the French holiday. Los Angeles featured a *pétanque* tournament and a Parisian Waiters Race, while San Francisco hosted a *bal populaire*. Please visit the embassy's Web site (www.ambafrance-us.org) and click on the interactive map to find out more about each region's consulate and festivities.

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