



A free monthly review of French news & trends

Hollande Makes First Visit to U.S. as President

▲ In a whirlwind start as France's President of the Republic, François Hollande took strides along the international stage during a four-day visit to the United States on May 18 through 21. Mr. Hollande, who had been inaugurated into office just three days previously, visited Washington and Chicago in what was his first trip outside of Europe as a head of state.

He was greeted by U.S. President Barack Obama the morning of Friday, May 18, for a bilateral meeting in the White House's Oval Office. Accompanied by senior-level staff, the two enjoyed a cordial first encounter that included policy discussions on subjects including Afghanistan, the euro currency zone, and a less serious aside between Msrs. Hollande and Obama cheeseburgers.

After leaving the White House, Mr. Hollande met with Prime Minister David Cameron. The UK's highest elected official was also in Washington for the Group of Eight (G8) Summit the following day at Camp David, Maryland. Organized in 2008 with leadership from France as a response to the global financial crisis, the G8 regularly gathers the world's eight largest economies to coordinate global economic stability.

A press conference was held later the same afternoon at the French embassy in Washington with 80 French and international journalists present. Mr. Hollande then met with the French community in Washington at the embassy, with whom he discussed the election, his plans for the next five years, and expressed his thanks for the French community's support. Arriving in Chicago on Saturday night in advance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit, Mr. Hollande reaffirmed a number of goals set forth during his presidential campaign. Chief among these was his decision to withdraw French troops from combat operations in Afghanistan by the end of 2012.

Along with the NATO summit's official activities, Mr. Hollande pursued a busy itinerary of bilateral meetings and coordinated with heads of state and government from Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Poland and Portugal. He also convened with Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai, and Abdullah Gül, president of Turkey.

For more information and photos on President Hollande's official visit to the United States, please visit www.ambafrance-us.org. Also see photos of the events on the embassy's Facebook page (address on p. 8).



President François Hollande addresses a crowd during a May 18-21 visit to the U.S. He met with heads of state at the G8 and NATO Summits.

© Embassy of France in the United States

Laurent Fabius Named Minister of Foreign Affairs

▲ On May 16, newly elected President François Hollande announced the ministers who will form his government. At 65 years old, Laurent Fabius, France's new Minister of Foreign Affairs has enjoyed a 31-year political career. Three times a minister, twice president of the Assemblée Nationale and France's youngest-ever prime minister, Mr. Fabius is a veritable *homme d'expérience*.

Like many top-ranking French politicians, Mr. Fabius holds degrees from the renowned Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences-Po) and the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA). In 1981, under Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy, he became Minister of the Budget, a post he held until 1983, when he was named Minister of Industry and Research. The next year, he was named Prime Minister at just 37 years old, becoming the youngest-ever prime minister of the Fifth Republic. After the end of his service as Prime Minister in 1986, Mr. Fabius was twice elected President of the Assemblée Nationale, once between 1988 and 1992, and again between 1997 and 2000. He was subsequently named Minister of the Economy, Finances and Industry, but stepped away from government in 2002. He was elected to the Assemblée Nationale in 2007.

Mr. Fabius will direct France's global affairs through challenges including the euro currency turmoil, France's diplomacy with the "Arab Spring" countries in the Middle East, and plans for Afghanistan.



Laurent Fabius brings more than three decades of political experience to the new cabinet, established in May.

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President Hollande Visits Chicago for NATO Summit



President François Hollande followed his meetings in Washington (see p. 1) by flying to Chicago to attend the city's first NATO Summit. NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a political-military alliance that seeks collective defense crisis management and cooperative solutions to international security concerns, and counts France and the United States as two of its 28 members. The summit, held on May 20 and 21, gathered political dignitaries and delegations from more than 60 countries, as well as some 2,000 journalists. World leaders examined a broad range of issues, including the current state of affairs in Afghanistan, the construction of "smart" robotic defense systems and collaborative methods of ensuring continued European security.

Social Media: A Growing Force in French, U.S. Politics

It's no secret that social media plays an important role in contemporary politics. Today's voter may follow a politician's every update on Twitter and "like" his or her Facebook page. On May 3, the French American Foundation and the Alliance Française de Washington, D.C., presented "Social Media and Politics: A French-American Cross-Examination" to explore the role of social networks in the modern political arena. The discussion featured New York Times political reporter Nicholas Confessore, Alexandre Cournot of the Union for a Poplar Movement (UMP) youth group and Mathieu O'Keefe of the Parti Socialiste youth group. Alix Bouilhaguet, the Washington correspondent of "Le Parisien: Aujourd'hui en France," moderated the event. The panelists mixed French and American views on the changing face of online citizen media, a topic that bears particular relevance, as 2012 is a presidential election year for both France and the United States.

France Joins Global Leaders for G8 Summit at Camp David

Recently elected French President François Hollande and U.S. President Barack Obama convened for the Group of Eight (G8) Summit at Camp David, Maryland, on May 18, and set a positive tone for future Franco-American cooperation.

Present at the summit were the highest elected officials from Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan and the United States. Russia was represented by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. Two senior leaders from the European Union, José Manuel Barroso and Herman Van Rompuy, also figured among the attendees.

The G8 assembled Friday evening at Camp David for the summit, which offered a peaceful setting for the meeting. European economics dominated the discussion among world leaders. Mr. Hollande and Mr. Obama both favor economic stimulus and growth packages for Europe over austerity plans. As Mr. Hollande stated, "There will not be growth without confidence, and there will be no confidence without growth." Mr. Obama described an "emerging consensus" on the pursuit of growth and job creation.

As leaders sought common ground among each of their proposed solutions, Mr. Obama said that the eventual plan must be flexible, because "the right measures are not the same for each of us."

The G8 also agreed that they will work toward keeping Greece in the euro currency zone. The country has been teetering economically since 2010, but world leaders have warned that, should Greece exit the system, the consequences for the world economy could be severe.

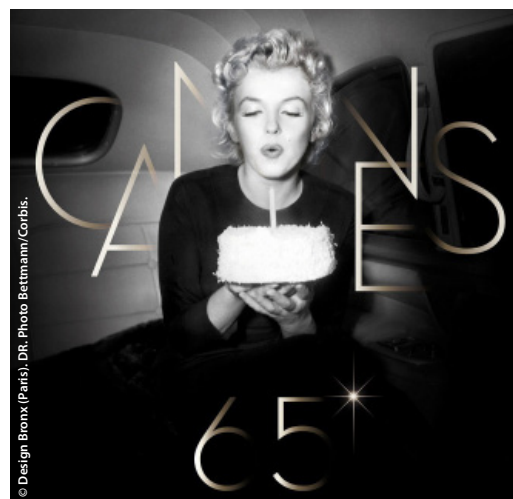
The heads of state also forged a new plan for hunger relief in Africa, dedicating themselves to a new food security program that promises to bring aid to 50 million Africans over the next decade. Mr. Obama stressed the importance of government and private sector contribution to the project, emphasizing the "urgent challenge that confronts 1 billion men, women and children around the world."

After the Camp David meeting, most of the G8 leaders then headed to Chicago for the NATO Summit. Following their first encounters, Mr. Obama told a top advisor, "It's clear that France is going to be a good friend and ally."



The leaders of the world's eight largest economies gathered at Camp David, Maryland, on May 18 for the G8 Summit. Leaders discussed economic growth, job creation and African food security programs for hunger relief.

Cannes Opens its Doors for 65th Annual Film Festival



The 65th Cannes Film Festival paid special tribute to the life and work of mid-century film icon, Marilyn Monroe.

From May 16 to 27, filmmakers, celebrities, journalists and fans crowded the French Riviera for the 65th annual Cannes International Film Festival. Considered the most prestigious in the world, the festival celebrates the best motion pictures of the year.

This year's festivities kicked off with a screening of American director Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* and concluded with the late French director Claude Miller's final production, *Thérèse Desqueyroux*. In an homage to the success of Academy Award-winning French film *The Artist*, as well as a tribute to the 50th anniversary of the death of film icon Marilyn Monroe, the 2012 Cannes Film Festival mounted an exhibition celebrating the glamour of the industry.

Every year, filmmakers both established and emerging flock to the festival to present their work and compete for international acclaim. A panel of jurors distributes awards to the best productions in a range of categories. The coveted *Palme d'Or* (Golden Palm) is awarded to the best feature length film. This year, the prize was awarded to Michael Haneke's *Amour*. You can find the complete list of awards at www.festival-cannes.fr.

Jacksonville, FL Celebrates 450 Years of French History

▲ You may have been dancing around the May pole on May 1, but residents of Florida were celebrating their first annual French Day in honor of Jean Ribault.

The Florida House of Representatives passed a resolution in February to officially establish French Day, commemorating 450 years of French history in Florida. Huguenot (French Protestant) leader Admiral Gaspard de Coligny sent Mr. Ribault to the New World to escape religious oppression in Europe.

The city of Jacksonville honored Jean Ribault's 1562 landing with a cultural festival, including a re-dedication ceremony of the Ribault Column at historic Fort Caroline in Jacksonville. The current column is a 20th century reproduction of Mr. Ribault's original monument, erected the year of his landing. Present at the ceremonies were 24th-generation descendants of the Ribault family.

Two schooners from the French Navy, the *Étoile* and *Belle-Poule*, docked in Jacksonville for the festivities. The vessels were originally intended as fishing boats but were used by the Free French Forces during World War II and were integrated into permanent naval service thereafter. The stop in Jacksonville was only part of these schooners' U.S. travels. They headed to the Tall Ships Challenge race in Savannah, Ga., following their French Day appearance, then docked at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., before heading toward Canada with several U.S. Naval Academy students as a summer training experience.



L-R: Gaëtan Ribault, Gaël de Maisonneuve and Mayor Alvin Brown dedicated the Ribault Monument on May 1.

Ambassador Hosts Correspondents' Dinner After-Party

▲ Monsoon-like rain storms couldn't keep French Ambassador François Delattre from hosting the White House Correspondents' most exclusive and anticipated fête of the year—the Bloomberg Vanity Fair White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. With a guest list limited to 250 invitees, the cream of broadcast and entertainment media attended this year's 98th after-party. Held on April 28, the event highlighted Mr. Delattre's elegant Washington residence, decorated from interior to lawn with tiny

balls of color-changing lights.

The night was a heady fusion of Washington politics, A-list celebrities and French chic. If the guest list was anything to go by, the soirée was nothing short of glamorous—actors George Clooney, Daniel Radcliffe and Charlize Theron were among the mix, mingling with former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and White House press secretary Jay Carney.

Clad in a bow tie, the canine star of *The Artist*, Uggie, garnered coos of praise from Barbara Walters and Reese Witherspoon. Late night TV host Jimmy Kimmel emceed the event, and the attendees spent the evening taking photos and enjoying the spread of steak tips, meringue-dipped strawberries, lobster rolls and a full espresso bar.

"Now this is a party," said Mr. Clooney, upon arriving. Such a party, it seems, that he wasn't spotted leaving until almost four o'clock in the morning.

Wasting no time recovering from this year's festivities, the organizers at Vanity Fair have already begun plans for next year's bash, which has already been confirmed for the French residence in 2013.



French Ambassador François Delattre and his wife, Sophie Hélias-Delattre, in blue, welcomed celebrities like George Clooney for an evening organized by Vanity Fair.

Through Paris Festival, Keeping Portland 'Weird'

"Keep Portland Weird," an American festival celebrating Portland, Or. and the broader northwest's independent music and creative scene, arrived in a perhaps unlikely place last month—Paris. The French capital's La Gaité Lyrique theater played host from April 19 to 29 to the same region that produced groundbreaking rockbands like Pearl Jam and Nirvana.

The festival included five nights of concerts, featuring music by artists Stephen Malkmus of the established indie-rock group Pavement and Slimkid3 from the California-based rap duo Pharcyde. Events also included film screenings, panel discussions (concluding with one titled "How Did Portland Get to Be So Creative?") and even Portland cuisine. The festival aimed to expose the French public to a taste of the American region's distinctive local culture.

The "weird" title derives from Austin, Texas, which in 2000 began using "Keep Austin Weird" as a slogan and marketing campaign. Portland is not the first foreign destination to be imported by the Gaité; Berlin and Istanbul have also inspired cultural events at the venue. With a variety of different events, "Keep Portland Weird" promoted the city's identity as a cultural and musical gem.

Central Market's "Passport France" Fêtes French Culture

Texans bit into France's rich gastronomic culture last month during Central Market's 3rd-annual international festival, "Passport France." The event focused on the southern French region of Provence, and lasted from May 9 to May 22 throughout Central Market grocery stores in Texas, providing authentic French food, music and décor, along with classes in French cooking and traditional cheeses.

The program's main attraction took place during its May 9 kick-off, as festival guests enjoyed signature dishes of Chef Patrice Olivon, winner of Iron Chef America. Aromas of *tomates farcies* and roasted lamb with ratatouille filled the air, accompanied by live performances of traditional French music. For two weeks, Central Market festival shoppers enjoyed exclusive offers on French delicacies and specialties. "Passport France" gave local Texans the opportunity of a French tourism experience without the cost of airfare.

François Hollande: Profile of the New President

François Hollande became President of the French Republic on May 15, and just days later, began a rapid series of U.S. visits. But just who is the new leader of France? **News From France** digs deeper into the life, education and political career of Mr. Hollande.

A French Education

Born in the northern French city of Rouen to a mother who worked in a factory and a father who practiced medicine, Mr. Hollande's early life was defined more by soccer than by politics. He lived there for nearly 14 years, playing right-forward for his local football club, until his family relocated to the upscale suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine in 1968. He attended the prestigious Lycée Pasteur high school, playing soccer and excelling in his studies.

Mr. Hollande pursued his education in some of France's finest institutions, or *grandes écoles*. He studied at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, commonly referred to as Sciences-Po, considered the country's top political science school. In 1974, he entered HEC Paris (École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Paris), where he studied business and management.

While at the HEC, Mr. Hollande and a group of students took off on a school-sponsored summer trip to the U.S. to study a famous American industry—fast food. Not only studying macroeconomics and cost-benefit analysis, Mr. Hollande also studied McDonald's and other fast food chains, which had not yet become commonplace in France. The experience was for him as personal as it was academic. "It allowed me to love the United States," he said of his American jaunt.

Soon after returning to France, Mr. Hollande was admitted to the National Administration School, the ENA, in 1978. As the country's highly selective training ground for public service leaders, its application process is as brutal as it is competitive. Thousands of students apply each year for approximately 80 spots. The entrance process includes a written exam, an oral exam and an additional 45-minute period, the famous *Grand Oral*, in which ENA hopefuls stand before a panel of administrators, who can ask a series of questions on any topic they wish.

First Political Steps

It was during his time at the ENA that Mr. Hollande took his first steps in the political arena. He was frequently elected into the National Union of Students in France. Later, he began making political headway, serving as municipal counselor for the commune of Ussel in the Corrèze region of central France beginning in 1983. He climbed up the political ladder, working at the Élysée, the Presidential headquarters, as an assistant to the special advisor Jacques Attali and serving at the Cour des Comptes, France's national auditing agency, from 1984 through 1988. Mr. Hollande eventually won a seat in the National Assembly, France's lower parliamentary body, and became First Secretary of his party in 1997.



Mr. Hollande's lifelong involvement in politics brought him to France's Presidency on May 15.

Progressing to the Presidency

In March 2011, Mr. Hollande was re-elected as President of the General Council of Corrèze, chairing departmental authorities and representing the department when necessary. He announced his candidacy for President on March 31. His campaign focused on economic growth and issues concerning youth, such as high unemployment rates. "Nothing will cause me to give up," he said of his determination. His resolve helped propel him to the French presidency, and, on May 6, Mr. Hollande was officially elected as President of the French Republic.

Inaugurated on May 15, he traveled to the U.S. three days later, embarking on a four-day program from Washington, D.C., to Chicago. He met first with U.S. President Barack Obama, then attended the G8 Summit and the NATO Summit, held this year in Chi-

cago (see pages 1 and 2).

While traveling, Mr. Hollande spoke about the relationship between the U.S. and France during a press conference at the embassy.

"I want the United States and France to have a relationship that is one of both proclaimed friendship and candor [...] I am attached on many different levels—culturally, historically, personally—and I understand that the relationship between France and America is essential!"



Left: French President Hollande met U.S. President Barack Obama at the White House's Oval Office on May 18. Right: President Hollande addressed Washington's French community at the embassy the same day. His remarks detailed his political and economic projects, as well as the importance of promoting French culture and language globally.

Ubifrance Comes to Electric Vehicle Symposium in LA

▲ The French government's export promotion agency, Ubifrance, showed off its progress this May with a product that it hopes will be economically lucrative: electric cars. Acting as the host of a number of French companies working in hybrid and electric car production, Ubifrance oversaw the French delegation to the 26th Electrical Vehicle Symposium (EVS 26) in the Los Angeles Convention Center from May 6 through 9. The delegation, under the heading of EV France, was a consortium of 22 diverse companies, from established car companies Renault and PSA Peugeot-Citroën, to research and development



Spectators at the Electric Vehicles Symposium in Los Angeles were able to test drive brand-new electric cars, many of which featured French parts and components.

companies, such as FM Lighthouse and companies specializing in cables, electric accessories and engineering.

At the convention, Ubifrance's delegation had business-to-business meetings (B2B) with interested American vehicle companies and research organizations, doing a great deal of networking to better promote its products. The EV France companies undertook these efforts in order to not only strengthen international ties and create demand for their products, but also in the hope of creating both research

and commercial partnerships on a global scale.

EVS 26 was not merely a gathering of research and commercial companies, but was open to the public as well. Over 3,000 spectators came to the Los Angeles Convention Center to learn about cutting-edge technology and to test-drive several brand-new electric vehicles in a program called Ride and Drive. The public embraced the opportunity to try out the vehicles, many referring to it as the highlight of the Symposium.

Ligne Roset Brings New Design to Renovate D.C. Showroom

▲ Sleek and modern style reigned supreme at the celebration of Ligne Roset's newly renovated showroom in Washington D.C., on May 3. Ligne Roset is headquartered in France, near Lyon, but has a distribution of 700 shops and 1,200 employees and exclusive stores worldwide. Founded by Antoine Roset in 1860, the company had humble beginnings as a manufacturer of Bentwood walking sticks. Though Ligne Roset remains family-operated to this day, its product line has shifted dramatically.

Though the brand may be over 150 years old, it is not your traditional furniture. For decades, it has been at the forefront of modern furniture design. One of their most famous pieces is the Togo sofa, designed by Michel Ducaroy in 1973. Like a good wine, the slouchy and plush Togo only seems to get better with age—it remains an integral piece in the Ligne Roset collection.

Antoine Roset, great-great grandson and namesake of the company's founder, is vice president of Ligne Roset's North American branch. He hosted the event at the showroom on Wisconsin Avenue.

The furniture available at the D.C. showroom and elsewhere is not only chic, but also sustainable. Mr. Roset describes how Ligne Roset incorporates a practical green approach into its business practices: "We put design first, and then do it the nicest way possible." For example, the company obtains wood from sustainable forests and has stopped using fuel to recycle factory waste.

When commenting on the company's future, Mr.

Roset said, "We will always offer quality designs, services and technology, and give the best that we know how to the customer, never forgetting that our relationship with our fellow human beings is the most important thing there is."



This living room has been furnished with Ligne Roset classic designs, including the Pumpkin sofa, a company staple.

France's Atlanta Consulate Launches Twitter Account

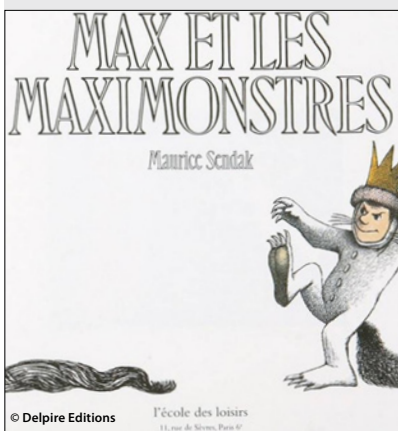
As part of the French government's effort to increase its engagement with global citizens through social media, the French Consulate General in Atlanta expanded on April 13 to the realm of Twitter, the prominent online social network. The consulate's Twitter account represents a new, open medium of communication with the public. Users can also share and respond to the information posted by the consulate. The Twitter account serves to promote the consulate's annual project with the Georgia Institute of Technology, called France-Atlanta, which offers a series of multidisciplinary events centered on innovation. This year, France-Atlanta will take place from October 25 to November 10 across metro Atlanta. The public can take part in France-Atlanta's diverse program of activities, including a scientific symposium on robotics and opto-electronics, a business workshop on water waste management, a jazz concert from French artist Raphaël Imbert and a humanitarian-based construction work with Habitat for Humanity in Atlanta and the Metz area (France). The Twitter account notifies followers of the dates, times and progress of the programs. To follow France-Atlanta on Twitter, go to www.twitter.com and search for the phrase @FranceAtlanta.

French Amphibious Airplane to Land in U.S.

LISA Airplanes, a cutting-edge French aviation company founded in 2004, is planning to show off its newest feature at the Airventure Oshkosh aviation show starting July 23. Experimental Aircraft Aviation (EAA) hosts the annual exhibition in Wisconsin. The LISA Akoya amphibious skyplane, a light leisure plane, has the ability to maneuver capably through both air and water, and can take off from almost any surface, including snow. The company claims that the plane is perfectly designed to "fulfill dreams of freedom, pleasure and security." The secret is in the "seafoils," the state-of-the-art hydrofoils under the fuselage that allow for greater stability. LISA aims to introduce the plane to American markets, where the plane is currently listed at the price of \$300,000. The Akoya can traverse distances of over 1,000 kilometers (621 miles) and reach speeds of 250 kilometers per hour (155 miles per hour). Noting the innovative nature of the plane, LISA executive Jean-Francois Clavreul said, "We've broken the seaplane rules, but the results of our work are now acknowledged by the most renowned aviation experts."

France Honors Creator of *Where the Wild Things Are*

Maurice Sendak, the celebrated American children's book author, was honored by the French Consulate in New York City at the opening of its exhibition of children's book illustrations on May 10. His beloved classic, *Where the Wild Things Are*, arrived in France in 1967 thanks to legendary publisher Robert Delpire. Antonin Baudry, Cultural Counselor of the French Embassy, lauded the work in a moving tribute. "*Where the Wild Things Are* is the first book I remember reading, as it must be for many children in France, as well as in the U.S. Maurice Sendak ... was a visionary and a poet." *Max et les Maximonstres*, the original French translation of Mr. Sendak's famous book, is the exhibit's main attraction. It comes at a poignant time, as he passed away May 8, just two days before the event's opening.



A Corsican Community in Puerto Rico—Who Knew?

Puerto Rico is famed for its tropical climate and lively Latin American culture—yet many people may not know that the island has been home to a sizeable Corsican population for 200 years. Best known as the birthplace of Napoleon Bonaparte, Corsica is a department of France situated in the Mediterranean Sea below France's southern coast. As France exerted more control over the island during Bonaparte's reign, many Corsican partisans went into exile. An 1815 Spanish decree encouraged non-Hispanic Catholics to immigrate to its Caribbean colonies, with the hopes of maintaining the country's colonial power. The legislation spurred an influx of Corsicans to Puerto Rico, then under Spanish control. Even after the decree's repeal in 1836, many Corsicans continued immigrating. Today, the population has grown from a small enclave on the Southern coast to a vibrant modern community.



"Post Tenebras Lux," a Mexican film at the 2012 Cannes film festival, benefited from the "Aide aux Cinémas" fund.

New Subsidy Gives Boost to Film in Developing Nations

▲ Early this May, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed its longstanding commitment to international filmmaking by creating a new fund called, "Aide aux Cinémas du Monde" (World Film Subsidy). The structure prioritizes feature-length films with non-French directors around the globe, and aims to support works made in developing countries that often lack the financial means for film production.

The foreign affairs agency has placed the program under the shared direction of the Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée (The National Center for Cinema and the Animated Image) and the Institut Français (The French Institute). The two organizations specialize in the promotion of cultural works outside of France and will jointly manage the new fund.

Aide aux Cinémas du Monde expands on previous efforts to promote movie-making abroad, including "Fonds Sud" (Southern Fund) and "AFLE" (Aid to Foreign Language Films). Aide aux Cinémas will be replacing the AFLE.

As the new subsidy begins its disbursement abroad, movie lovers worldwide can look forward to seeing the fund's fruits at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013.

Washington's EU Embassies Hold Open House 2012

▲ In its sixth-annual spring event, the embassies of the member countries of the European Union (EU) opened their doors to an enthusiastic public in the nation's capital on May 12. All 27 representations of the European Union's member states—plus the EU Delegation to the U.S. and soon-to-be-member Croatia—took part in the day-long festivities, officially called "Shortcut to Europe: European Union Embassies' Open House."

As testimony to how popular the yearly function has become, no fewer than four bus circuits were put in place to serve the scores of visitors who took advantage of the opportunity to see beyond the gates and doors of EU embassies scattered throughout the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C. The hop-on-hop-off system enabled participants to see a maximum number of foreign delegations. Of 106,000 total attendees, the Embassy of France

welcomed 6,000 visitors with usual fanfare, and with one twist: since the German embassy was conducting renovations during the event, a team of its workers set up at the French embassy. German and French displays stood side-by-side under one roof, in a joint effort that would have surely made the EU's early visionaries like Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer proud.

The event rolled out another first: "social media reporters." Volunteers were recruited before the open house and tasked with creating a buzz on popular online networks like Facebook and Twitter. The media-savvy cub journalists posted and tweeted on everything from the samples of croissants to the green-screen pictures of famous German and French landmarks.

For more information on the French embassy's part in the EU Open House, visit our Facebook page (see p. 8).



French embassy employees Brune Liquard and Sylvain Quatravaux greeted some 6,000 visitors during "Shortcut to Europe: European Union Embassies' Open House" on May 12, offering an inside peek behind EU embassy gates.

“Paris at the Harris” Arts Series Kicks Off in Chicago

▲ The famed Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the crown jewel of European ballet, the Paris Opéra Ballet, will be treating Chicago audiences to French-inspired works throughout May and June, marking the first time that either entity has ever performed at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance.

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center performed a variety of French chamber works on May 22. The concert featured pieces such as Amédée-Ernest Chausson's Concerto in D major for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet, and two works by Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns, Trio No. 1 in F major for Piano, Violin, and Cello and Sonata No. 1 in D minor for Violin and Piano.

The performance featured pianists Inon Barnatan and Juho Pohjonen; violinists Jessica Lee, Kristin Lee, and Elmar Oliveira; violist Beth Guterman; and cellist Andreas Brantelid.

The Paris Opéra Ballet is set to perform two programs, the full-length classical ballet *Giselle*, featuring a score by French composer Adolphe Adam and choreography by the renowned French duo Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot, as well as a mixed-repertoire bill of three other works.

The evening will include French legend Maurice Béjart's fiery choreography of *Le Boléro*, coupled with the Grand Park Orchestra playing French composer Joseph-Maurice Ravel's famous Spanish theme. The company will also perform Serge Lifar's one-act ballet *Suite en Blanc* and Roland Petit's *L'Arlésienne*, a tragic saga based on the short story by 19th-century French novelist Alphonse Daudet.



In a series of shows from June 26 through July 1, the Paris Opéra Ballet will showcase four works in Chicago.

New French Paleolithic Cave Murals Deemed World's Oldest

▲ A French team of excavators has unearthed rare Paleolithic paintings from 37,000 BCE inside the Chauvet cave in southern France, which have been confirmed as the oldest works of cave art in the world.

The mural-style creations, painted on the cave's limestone interior, are even more ancient than those originally uncovered during the Lascaux cave excavations in 1979. The paintings depict various scenes of horses and offer rare insight into the lives of early humans.

Randall White, professor of anthropology at New York University, believes that the paintings even reveal aspects of early human language. "It's hard to imagine such a conceptual and technical complexity without the ability to express themselves through language, and also to transmit this knowledge."

The discovery is the latest of several made in the same region. In 1911, archeologists found similar styles of cave murals, along with human and animal bones in Abri Castanet, 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from the Lascaux site.

Archeological excavation offers insight into the past and opens dialogue for the future, reaching beyond the scope of historical discovery and into international diplomacy. Consistently at the forefront of archeological discoveries, France is home to several national organizations dedicated to archeology. *L'Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche-Orient* (The French Institute of Archeology of the Middle East), and *Le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (The National Center for Scientific Research) played an instrumental role in naming the Saudi Arabian city

of Mada'in Saleh as a UNESCO cultural heritage site in 2008, while the same French teams also led excavation efforts at Lalibela, Ethiopia and Baghdad, Iraq.

Many rock shelters in southern France have yet to be explored, and the team intends to continue its excavations throughout the coming months.



Recently unearthed, this painting of horses, done in red and blue, might be part of the world's oldest cave mural.

Louvre, Nintendo Partners for Cutting-Edge Audio Guides

What do the Nintendo 3DS and the *Mona Lisa* have in common? They will both be featured in the world's most renowned museum of art. Last month, in a deal with the Japanese electronics company Nintendo, the Louvre introduced 3DS game consoles to their audio-guided tours. The technology is meant to provide new ways of accessing information for the millions of people who visit the museum each year.

Among 2,000-year-old statues and centuries-old paintings, Nintendo 3DS consoles are the museum's most modern innovation since I.M. Pei's glass-and-steel pyramid that sits in the former chateau's courtyard. Replacing the standard audio-guides, the game consoles come with a navigation system and a guided "Masterpieces Walk." The museum will offer 700 audio recordings on the best-known pieces at the Louvre, including the *Mona Lisa* and the *Venus de Milo*. Costing an additional five euros to the standard entrance fee, the 3DS consoles will offer virtual close-ups of artistic details too small to see with the naked eye.

Hometeam Victories Mark First Days of French Open

The 111th French Open commenced on Sunday, May 27 in Paris. The tournament figures among the Grand Slam circuit, the sport's highest echelon of events that also include Wimbledon, the Australian Open and the U.S. Open. Roland Garros owes its name to the famous French tennis player, as does the Parisian stadium in which it is held annually. On the first day, American Venus Williams advanced to the second round of women's singles after besting the Argentine Paula Ormaechea. Andy Roddick, also American, was not so lucky, defeated by the French Nicolas Mahut in the first round of men's singles. France also celebrated the victory of the fifth-ranked Jo-Wilfried Tsonga over the Russian Andrey Kuznetsov. Mr. Tsonga, who initially doubted that a Frenchman could win the tournament, now seems more optimistic. The second day saw the victory of the renowned Swiss Roger Federer over the German Tobias Kamke in the first round of men's singles. Three French competitors, Gilles Simon, Michael Llodra and Marion Bartoli, also advanced to the second round. The outdoor clay court tournament will last until June 10. Final results will be reported in the next issue of *News From France*.



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Georgetown Hosts Open-Air Market à la Française

▲ The open-air market is perhaps the most emblematic element of the French village. It captures the carefree environment of an authentic bustling French marketplace, typified by temporary stalls selling an assortment of farm-fresh foods, herbs and cheeses. On April 29 and 30, Washington's Georgetown neighborhood evoked a bit of this *joie de vivre* at its annual French Market.

An outdoor market and sidewalk sale, the bazaar featured live music, children's games and, of course, delicious French food. In its eighth year, the event saw an impressive turnout of Washingtonians.

Making their way among shoppers, vendors and even a mime, attendees enjoyed sidewalk delicacies, such as croissants, crêpes and colorful French *macarons*. Early attendees were given free baguettes. In a neighborhood known for its shopping, visitors discovered a myriad of marked-down goods from nearly 40 Georgetown boutiques.



Georgetown's Wisconsin Avenue was transformed into a classic French marketplace on April 29 and 30.

Festival Brings French Hip-Hop Dance to the District



The Compagnie Stylistik performed the piece "Entre Deux" at Howard University's Ira Aldridge Theater.

▲ From May 17 through May 25, the Alliance Française of Washington, D.C., presented Urban Corps: A Transatlantic Hip-Hop Festival celebrating the shared cultural relationship between France and the United States in the world of contemporary urban dance. Several notable venues in the capital hosted the festival's five performances throughout the week, including Howard University, Kalorama Park and the Kennedy Center.

Though the hip-hop dance art can boast a diverse mix of origins, Urban Corps demonstrated its universal appeal through a variety of different events. After a week of performances, lectures, galas and workshops, the cultural exchange inspired by Urban Corps culminated in a "dance battle" between the French crew Urban Artistry and the American group DCypher on May 25.

For the complete list of events and more information about the festival, please visit the official website at www.francedc.org.