


Iran Referred to U.N. Security Council

THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC Energy Agency's Board of Governors decided on February 4, in Vienna, Austria, that Iran will be referred to the U.N. Security Council for refusing to fully cooperate with the Agency and demonstrate its nuclear program's peaceful intent. Iran resumed work in its uranium conversion facility in Ispahan in August 2005 and decided to restart enrichment activities for research purposes this January.

A decisive majority of the 35-nation board supported the resolution introduced by France, Germany and Great Britain. The United States, Russia and China also supported the resolution. The Security Council will wait one more month to receive the IAEA's comprehensive report on the Iranian nuclear program.

Support by the Russians and the Chinese for the AIEA resolution was crucial as both countries have close ties with Teheran and are permanent members of the Security Council. As the world community continues to struggle to find a diplomatic resolution, some alternative measures have already been proposed. Russia had proposed to allow Iranians to conduct uranium enrichment in facilities in Russia rather than in Iran. This proposal is aimed at reassuring the world that Iran is conducting nuclear activities for civilian purposes and not for military purposes, and that it is not stockpiling weapons-grade uranium. The Russian proposal gained wide international support, but it is not clear whether Iran is prepared to accept it. 

TRANSPORT MINISTER VISITS NEW ORLEANS



Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Dominique Perben attended a luncheon at the World Trade Center in New Orleans on February 3 to discuss the recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The luncheon was also attended by French executives of multinational firms involved in relief and reconstruction programs in the region. Among those who attended were executives from Bouygues, LaFarge, Nexity, Suez Group, Vinci, and the Civil Engineering Association of the Rhône-Alpes Region. To date, French companies have contributed more than \$22 million to Louisiana's recovery efforts (see NFF 05.11).

INSIDE

- 2 L'événement**
*Nuclear Deterrence
Doctrine Reaffirmed*
- 3 France-Amérique**
*Young U.S. Artists Get
Fresh Take on France*
- 4 Profil**
Winter Sports
- 5 Économie / Science**
*Women Linked to
Prehistoric Paintings*
- 6 Société**
Madame la Présidente?
- 7 Culture**
*Francoffonies
Celebrates Diversity*
- 8 Chez nous**
Cézanne in Provence



Congress Goes Provençal to Celebrate Year of Cézanne

THE AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE to the United States, Jean-David Levitte, and Jacques Pfister, president of the Marseille-Provence Chamber of Commerce and Industry, honored the Congressional French Caucus during a reception in the Mansfield Room of the U.S. Capitol on February 1. The Congressional French Caucus, created in 2003, is a bicameral, bipartisan congressional member organization, dedicated to promoting partnership and cooperation between the United States and France. Since its inception, the caucus has fostered a sustained dialogue with French officials, and its delegations have met with French President Jacques Chirac and commemorated the 60th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy. The caucus is co-chaired in the Senate by Senators Gordon Smith (R-OR) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and in the House of Representatives by Reps. Jim Oberstar (D-MN) and John Boozman (R-AR).


Speaking at the February 1 reception, Rep. Boozman emphasized the strong economic ties between France and the United States, which represent hundreds of thousands of American jobs and \$1 billion a day in commercial transactions. Rep. Oberstar, who spoke in French, affirmed that despite their differences, the two countries remain close allies. Finally, Pfister, after thanking U.S. veterans for their sacrifice during World War II, invited all those present, and Americans in general, to visit *la Provence* and savor all it has to offer.

The reception, which featured Provençal cuisine and wine to coincide with the opening of the "Cézanne in Provence" exhibit at the National Gallery of Art (see our article on page 8), was also attended by Senator John Warner, the Honorable Bob Michel, Rep. Russ Carnahan, Rep. Lloyd Doggett, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, French journalists, American and French industry representatives, and congressional staff members. Members of Congress who were unable to attend the reception could take heart: the Senate's Dirksen Cafeteria



From left to right, **Jacques Pfister**, president of the Marseille-Provence Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MPCCI), **Rep. John Boozman** (R-AR), **Jean-François Bigay**, vice president of the MPCCI, **Rep. Jim Oberstar** (D-MN), **French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte**, chef **Francis Robin** of the Mas du Soleil restaurant in Salon-de-Provence, **Jean Luc le Formal**, of the Le Formal restaurant in Aix-en-Provence, and **Senator John Warner** (R-VA).

and South Buffet featured Provençal cuisine for three days, courtesy of Jean Luc Le Formal, of the Le Formal restaurant in Aix-en-Provence, and Dominique Frerard of Les 3 Forts in Marseille.

To learn more about Provence, visit www.provencetourism.com. 

FRANCE INCREASES TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

French Defense Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie announced on December 18 that France will be increasing its presence in Afghanistan by several hundred soldiers in 2006. Currently, there are 600 French troops in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and 200 more participating in the U.S.-led operation, Enduring Freedom. About 450 additional French troops will be deployed to Kabul by the summer of 2006 to join the ISAF as part of NATO's expanded presence in the region. France will also increase the personnel it devotes to the training of the Afghan National Army. Alliot-Marie's announcement to the French troops in Kabul airport was a chance for her to reiterate France's commitment to stability in Afghanistan and its continued firm stance in the fight against international terrorism.

2005 RECORD YEAR FOR BUSINESS CREATION

In a record year for France, 225,000 new companies were created in 2005, proof that France continues to provide fertile ground for new businesses. At this rate, President Jacques Chirac's inaugural promise of creating more than 1 million new businesses before the end of his mandate in 2007 will be kept and even surpassed. Much of this success can be attributed to government efforts to encourage investment in France, including the Law for Economic Initiative introduced by Minister Renaud Dutreil in 2003, which provides support and security to budding corporations. It is estimated that this economic revival has been responsible for creating 100,000 new jobs each year since 2002. To learn more about doing business in France, please visit www.investinfrance.org.

NEWS FROM FRANCE / February 8, 2006

FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS TURKEY

French Foreign Affairs Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy paid an official visit to Turkey on February 1-2. During his visit, the minister met with the president, vice president and prime minister of the Turkish Republic, as well as various other Turkish officials. Topics such as the situation in Iraq, Iran's nuclear ambitions, and bird flu were discussed. Douste-Blazy also had the opportunity to lay the first brick of the French High School that is being built in Ankara. The new high school will be a symbol of the long history of French-Turkish cooperation and will involve the participation of the entire French community in Ankara.

Chirac Reaffirms Value of Nuclear Deterrence

FRENCH PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac gave a speech on January 19 to reaffirm and update the French doctrine on nuclear deterrence during his visit to the Strategic Oceanic Forces base on Ile Longue, near Brest (Brittany). Below are some excerpts from his speech.

"In the face of crises that are shaking the world, in the face of new threats, France has always first chosen the path of prevention which remains in all its forms the foundation of our defense policy. (...)"

"Believing that prevention alone is enough to protect us would however be naively optimistic. To make ourselves heard, we must also be capable of using force when necessary. We must therefore have a substantial capability to intervene outside our borders, with conventional means, in

order to support or supplement this strategy. Such a defense policy rests on the certainty that, whatever happens, our vital interests remain safeguarded. This is the role assigned to nuclear deterrence which directly stems from our prevention strategy and constitutes its ultimate expression. (...)"

"At the same time, we continue to support global efforts to promote general and complete disarmament and, in particular, the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (...). It is in this spirit that France has maintained its deterrent forces while reducing them, in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (...)"

"The integrity of our territory, the protection of our population, the free exercise of our sovereignty will always be the core of our vital interests. But they are not limited to these. The perception of these interests is changing with the pace of our world, marked by the growing interdependence of European countries and by globalization. For example, safeguarding our strategic supplies and the defense of allied countries are, among others, interests that must be protected. (...)"

"As I emphasized immediately after the attacks of 11 September 2001, nuclear deterrence is not intended to deter fanatical terrorists. Yet, the leaders of States who would use terrorist means against us, as well as those who would consider using, in one way or another, weapons of mass destruction, must understand that they would lay themselves open to a firm and adapted response on our part. This response could be a conventional one. It could also be of a different kind. (...)"

"Against a regional power, our choice would not be between inaction or annihilation. The flexibility and reactivity of our strategic forces would enable us to exercise our response directly against its centers of power and its capacity to act. (...)"

"However, our concept for the use of nuclear weapons remains unchanged. There is no question, under any circumstances, of using nuclear means for military purposes during a conflict. It is in this spirit that nuclear forces are often referred to as 'weapons of non-use.' This formula should not, however, allow any doubts to persist about our determination and capacity to resort to our nuclear weapons."

"Thus the principles underlying our deterrence doctrine remain unchanged, but the ways of expressing this doctrine have evolved and keep evolving, so as to enable us to address the context of the 21st century."

The entire speech is available at www.elysee.fr.



GOODALL AWARDED LEGION OF HONOR



Courtesy: Institut Jane Goodall France

British primatologist Jane Goodall was awarded the Legion of Honor on January 17 for her humanitarian efforts and for her contributions to environmental preservation. Jane Goodall, now 71 years old, has dedicated her life to studying and protecting the apes of Africa, particularly the chimpanzees of Tanzania. She was the first researcher to demonstrate that chimpanzees, man's closest cousins in

the natural world, are able to make and use tools. She was also the first to observe that chimps have distinct personalities, that they are capable of conducting primitive warfare but also of adopting orphaned infants. Upon receiving her award from Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin (pictured), Goodall, in place of a thank you, cried out a chimpanzee greeting call. For more information, or to contribute to the Jane Goodall Institute, please visit www.janegoodall.fr.

France Proclaims May 10 Slavery Abolition Day

FRENCH PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac announced that France will commemorate the abolition of slavery every May 10. The date, proposed by the Committee for the Memory of Slavery, recalls the day in 2001 when France condemned the practice as a crime against humanity.

Annual commemorations will take place in Paris, France's overseas territories, and Africa. While many of the overseas territories already have such memorial days, this recognition marks an important extension of goodwill.

Chirac sees a direct link between slavery, which was abolished in France in 1848, and racism. "No date will ever reconcile all points of view. But what counts, above all, is that this day exists," the president said. He emphasized that the memory of slavery must "enter into French his-



France sent the Statue of Liberty as a gift to the U.S. in order to celebrate America's independence but also to commemorate the emancipation of black slaves. Indeed, the idea for the statue originally came from Edouard de Laboulaye, the president of the French anti-slavery society.

tory and be shared" so as to help heal social wounds. According to the president, "The greatness of a country is for it to assume all of its history."

Maryse Condé, head of the Committee for the Memory of Slavery and author of the Malian saga *Ségou*, agreed with Chirac. Present for the president's announcement, the writer from Guadeloupe stressed the recognition of slavery in school programs and history books.

To this end, a center for research on slavery will be created. Additionally, Edouard Glissant, a writer from Martinique, will preside over the founding of a national center for the abolition of trafficking and slavery. Chirac explained, "We must ensure that when western companies invest in poor or emerging countries, they respect basic labor rules such as have been laid out in international law."





Young U.S. Artists Get Fresh Take on France

LAST SEPTEMBER, nine American students were chosen from three prestigious California art schools, the Art Center College of Design, the California Institute of the Arts and the Otis College of Art and Design, to embark on a whirlwind tour of France and seek inspiration for their work. Following their return to America, the students each produced two works representing their reflections and feelings about their trip. These works will be on display from February 23 through March 1 in an exhibition at the M+B Fine Art Gallery in Los Angeles.

The program, christened "Jeunes Talents," was a joint initiative by the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles and the Maison de la France to set the stage for future artistic and educational exchanges. Three of the students were sent to the east-



Strasbourg, by Mae Suzuki
(a recent graduate of CalArts)

ern department of Alsace to see for themselves and learn about the contrast between cosmopolitan Strasbourg and the hundreds of fairytale-like villages that adorn the Alsatian countryside. In southern Provence, three students were inspired by the natural beauty of the Mediterranean coastline and by the impressive cultural history of a region that has attracted artists such as Paul Cézanne and Henri Matisse. Three other students were sent to western Brittany, whose long history and strong identity have been sculpted by the harbors, coves, and beaches that dot its coastline.

On February 22, during an exhibition preview, one work from each student will be sold at the gallery and the proceeds will be donated to scholarship funds at their respective schools. For more information about the program, visit www.consulfrance-losangeles.org.

Benjamin Franklin's Tercentenary Celebrated

THIS YEAR MARKS the 300th birthday of Benjamin Franklin, whose work as America's first diplomat to France has made him a symbol of French-American friendship. In addition to pioneering the invention of electricity, Franklin served in 1776 as part of a commission sent to France to gain its support in the fight for American independence. Events throughout France are celebrating Franklin, in what is France's first national commemoration of an American citizen.

Once in France, Franklin went above and beyond the call of duty by becoming the most popular of diplomats. Choosing to don plain garments in lieu of the elaborate wigs and robes worn by French aristocrats, the diplomat made quite a splash among the French elites and was soon a favorite among them. He soon forged an alliance between France and the 13

colonies in 1778, and France was the first country to salute the American flag as that of an independent nation.

The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission has organized a variety of events during the next two years spanning both continents. An international traveling exhibition which kicks off in Philadelphia and winds up in Paris includes stops at the Musée Carnavalet and at the Musée des Arts et Métiers. This exhibition will feature artifacts from his diplomatic work, as well as displays commemorating his scientific discoveries. The Monnaie de Paris has also introduced a new series of collector's coins featuring the engraved face of Franklin to celebrate the friendship he inspired.

For more information about these various events, visit www.amb-usa.fr/events/2006/bfranklin/events.htm.



A Big birthday bash for Ben Franklin in Philadelphia, PA

Pinch of Stardust for French Laboratories

SEVEREN FRENCH laboratories will receive samples of "stardust," or comet and interstellar dust particles, joining a global effort to determine once and for all what comets are made of. After chasing comets over 3 billion miles for the past seven years, the NASA Stardust mission has returned to Earth carrying long awaited comet dust samples. U.S. teams have extracted the particles and sent them to Preliminary Examination Teams all over the world to be analyzed.

Headed by François Robert of the Museum of Natural History in Paris and Louis d'Hendecourt of IAS Orsay, the French teams will study the chemical composition of the stardust to create isotopic maps detailing their makeup. To aid them in their quest, the teams possess a NanoSims 50, an advanced device capable of dissecting even the most microscopic particles. At the heart of their research is the hope that their results will provide insights into the mystery that sur-

rounds the origin of our universe. To learn more about the Stardust mission, visit <http://stardust.jpl.nasa.gov>.

SAFRAN DONATES ARIANE 4 ENGINE TO SMITHSONIAN



French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte (left) and Roger Launius, chair of the National Air and Space Museum's Space History Division and a NASA historian, pose during the ceremony in which French aerospace company Safran (parent company of SNECMA) donated an Ariane 4 Viking engine (right) to the Smithsonian Institution on January 26. This reliable and economical rocket engine was one of the most successful ever deployed, and launched 143 Ariane 4 rockets into space. It will be displayed in the Air & Space Museum's new Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, VA (www.safran-group.com).

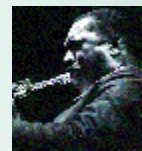


AMERICAN VERTIGO

Not only was he named one of *Vanity Fair's* best-dressed men, Bernard-Henri Lévy, French celebrity intellectual and philosopher, is also no stranger to the literary world, with over 30 published works under his belt. His new book, *American Vertigo*, was just released in the United States, one month before its March release in France, a first for Lévy. Though inspired by Alexis de Tocqueville's seminal *Democracy in America*, BHL, which is the name he generally goes by, insists his aspirations are much humbler. The book, written like a philosophy-interspersed travelogue, takes us with Lévy as he explores the social mores and peculiarities of American culture through the eyes of a Frenchman.

FOUR NEW ORLEANS MUSICIANS HEAD TO FRANCE

Four New Orleans musicians will head to Paris in coming weeks to share their music with French audiences, as part of a program funded by the Ministry of Culture. Leading the way are clarinetist Evan Christopher and pianist Tom McDermott, who will play their music for school children, perform at a well-known concert hall, and conduct classes for music students over a period of six weeks. French authorities are hoping to invite 15-25 musicians in all, in an effort to expose France to the uniqueness of New Orleans music, as well as give these artists an opportunity to perform while New Orleans gets back on its feet.



AIR FRANCE VOTED BEST TRANSATLANTIC AIRLINE

Readers of Global Traveler Magazine recently voted Air France the "Best Transatlantic Airline" for 2005. The reader survey was completed primarily by business and luxury travelers, who commented on Air France's "New Travel Concept" program, which greatly enhances its Business and First Class products. The airline, which posted record profits last year, currently operates 2,000 flights daily and flies from 13 U.S. gateways, providing service to 125 U.S. cities with partners Delta and Continental. Air France was presented with its award earlier this month in New York City. Learn more at www.airfrance.com.



Winter Sports



In just a few days, the world will cast its eyes on Torino, Italy, for the 20th Winter Olympiad. The Winter Games this year will host 2,500 athletes, 85 nationalities, 10,000 members of the media and over 1.5 million spectators. In the course of the 16-day competition, 84 gold medals will be awarded in 16 different disciplines.

Pour l'Amour des Jeux

THE FRENCH have always loved the Olympics and admired the ideals it stands for. Indeed, a Frenchman, Pierre de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics and helped organize the first modern games in Athens, Greece, in 1896. On June 5, 2005, almost a million people turned out on the Champs Elysées to participate in a presentation of the different Summer Olympic disciplines, intended to support Paris's candidature for the 2012 games. Even though Paris lost out to London, the French have not given up. Already Annecy, a ski village in Savoie, has submitted its candidature to host the 2014 Winter Olympics (www.olympiquons-nous.com). The final candidate cities for these games will be announced by the International Olympic Committee in late June. France has already hosted the Summer Olympics twice (1900, 1924) and the Winter Olympics three times (1924, 1968, 1992).

Of course, the French do not confine their interest in sports to the Olympics! The Ministry of Youth and Sports reports that 1 out of every 6 people in France are registered in a sports association, or almost 9 million people in all. Seventy-one percent of French citizens over the age of 15 practice a sport at least once a year and 74 percent of those practice a sport at least once a week. Of these *sportifs*, 800,000 are hockey players or figure skaters and 160,000 are skiers or snowboarders. Last year, the Ministry estimates that over 7 million people skied or snowboarded in France, of whom 5 million were French. For more information, visit www.sports.gouv.fr.

WINTER FUN IN THE FRENCH ALPS



The Avoriaz ski resort, located in Haute-Savoie (Alps), is one of France's favorites.

France, with its 357 winter resorts devoted to skiing, skating and sledding, boasts more ski slopes than anywhere else in the world. And French ski resorts are sure to benefit from their proximity to the Winter Olympics in Torino, Italy. Indeed, most of the competitions will actually take place closer to the French border than they will to Torino. The town of Cesana for instance, home to the

bobsled, skeleton and luge events, is only 6 kilometers away from the French border. Spectators can profit from the 59 different ski resorts in the Southern Alps region, not to mention an Olympic-size ice rink in Briançon and world-class cross-country skiing in Dévoluy. All of these places are within a two-hour drive of the Olympic Village in Bardonecchia, Italy. The ski resort of Montgenèvre, for instance, is only a few kilometers from the competition venues, and is a great way to enjoy a day of skiing for only 27 euros a day (\$33). The resort offers 65 km of ski slopes and 30 ski lifts. For more information, visit www.montgenevre.com.

A Strong French Delegation Going for the Gold

THE FRENCH DELEGATION, which is composed of 88 athletes, will be in attendance for the February 10 opening ceremonies with Bruno Mingeon at its head, carrying the flag. These Olympic Games will be Mingeon's fifth appearance at the Olympics and at the age of 38 he is still in contention for his first gold medal in bobsled.

The French are expected to be strongest in both the ski and snowboard events. Alain Méthiaz, president of the French Ski Federation, has predicted *les bleus* will take home between 8 and 15 medals. Carole Montillet, who won gold at the 2002 Winter Games in the women's downhill ski event, has returned to these games for her third appearance, this time to defend her title. Among other returning Salt Lake City medalists, Jean-Pierre Vidal and Laure Pequegnot, are considered to still be in contention for the gold. Vidal, a gold medalist at the previous winter games, is still at top of his game. Just two weeks ago, Vidal won gold at the Slalom World Cup in Kitzbühel, Austria.



Raphaël Poirée will be competing in the biathlon

Others athletes to watch out for are Raphaël Poirée and Vincent Defrasne, both French biathletes. Poirée, who has won numerous world championship titles and two Olympic medals, but never gold, is currently ranked third in the world and is without doubt France's best hope for a medal in biathlon. His teammate, Vincent Defrasne, recently

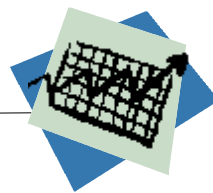
won his first world cup title and is now currently ranked eighth in the world rankings. The women biathletes are also expected to fare well among the competition, especially in the teams relay, where *les bleus* took a first place finish at the World Cup in early January. Not to be ruled out either is Xavier de la Rue, world leader in the World Cup Snowboarding standings. Xavier de la Rue recently fractured his ankle at a World Cup competition in Italy; however, he is still expected to be in contention for a medal.



2004 World silver medalist, Brian Joubert.

The French are also looking forward to another strong performance from their figure-skating delegation at these games. In the men's category, the French will have two skaters representing *les bleus*, one of whom is the 2004 World silver medalist, Brian Joubert. Joubert, who took the bronze medal at the European Championships this year in Lyon, is already considered to be among the favorites at these games. Frédéric Dambier, who was selected to be

Joubert's teammate at these games, is also projected to be among the top skaters, largely due to his fourth place finish at this year's European Championships. Isabelle Delobel and Olivier Schoenfelder are ready to defend a French gold in ice dancing, following their teammates Marina Anissina and Gwendal Peizerat's first place finish in Salt Lake City. Delobel and Schoenfelder have been teamed up since 1990 and have competed at eight world championships. Last year the duo placed third at the European Championships followed by a fourth place finish at the World Championships in Moscow. To learn more, visit www.franceolympique.com.

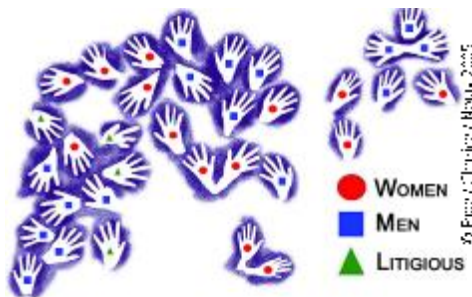


Women Linked to Cave Paintings

ETHNO-ARCHEOLOGIST Jean-Michel Chazine of the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) has verified that prehistoric men were not the only cave painters. In the grotto of Gua Masri II in eastern Borneo, Indonesia, 10,000-year-old "negative" handprints (prints made by tracing and coloring around the hands) have indicated that the sexes were equally active as artists.

Chazine's discovery is the culmination of international efforts to differentiate between hands based on a person's sex. There are, of course, differences in size (male hands are usually larger than female ones), but such variations are not conclusive. In 2002, British biologist John Manning discovered that, across thousands of different backgrounds, the majority of men had a ring

finger slightly longer than their index finger. For most women, the two fingers were the same length.



A computer diagram of handprints from Gua Masri II (those identified as female are marked in red).

Working with archeologist and computer scientist Arnaud Noury, Chazine created a program that measures the relationship between the two fingers. Chazine and Noury applied this technology to the grotto of Gua Masri II, and with it they were able to determine which handprints were made by women and which by men.

The women's handprints extend far into the grotto, in places thought to be reserved for sacred ceremonies. In this sense, Chazine and Noury's handwork has revealed an equality between prehistoric men and women not only in the frequency of their artwork, but also in their access to these sacred areas.

BREATHING BETTER WITH VANILLA

According to a new study conducted by the CNRS at the University of Strasbourg hospital, vanilla can help reduce respiratory problems for infants born prematurely. Babies born weeks, or months, before their respiratory systems have been able to fully develop often encounter life-threatening breathing problems. Luc Marlier, a researcher at the Center for Applied Physiology in Strasbourg, found that incubators perfumed with vanilla reduced problems with apnea and spontaneous shortness of breath by 36 percent on average. The study tested a variety of different odors, studying babies' reactions to a highly diluted q-tip for a period of 10 seconds. Unpleasant odors actually slowed down the respiratory system, while pleasant ones accelerated it. The results also showed that even the most premature baby is as sensitive to odor as an adult. The researchers will now determine whether other odors are more effective than vanilla.

RENAULT'S LOGAN SURPRISE HIT IN FRANCE



How do you produce a best-selling car? You gather a team of 50 top-class designers, engineers and car parts specialists, you make them work together in

one place for a year and a half, with one objective: cutting costs. You end up with the Renault Logan, a no-frills 5-passenger vehicle with a sticker price of only \$6,400. "The only driving force for the car's conception was cost," explained Renault executive Gérard Detourbet. Relying exclusively on computer design tools, Renault engineers focused on the basics, eliminating all superfluous features.

Originally destined for emerging markets (see NFF 04.08), the car has been getting a lot of attention from buyers all across Europe, who are not deterred by waiting lists of more than three months. In its first six months on the market, 145,000 Logans have been sold worldwide, including 13,719 in Western Europe. Delighted Renault officials are now planning to expand into the Austrian, Belgian and Swiss markets. For more information, visit www.renault.com.

FRENCH CHEF COOKS FOR THE STARS



The European Space Agency has asked Alain Ducasse, a leading French chef, to "spice-up" the menu for Europe's astronauts. ESA is focusing on eight or nine main ingredients which could be grown in the cramped confines of a spaceship. These include onions, potatoes, rice, lettuce and spinach. Mr. Ducasse's food academy will be working with these few ingredients to develop an astronomical menu for long-term missions.

FIRST EARTH-LIKE PLANET DISCOVERED

As part of an international effort, France's Jean-Philippe Beaulieu of the Institut d'Astrophysique in Paris announced the first discovery of an Earthlike planet outside our solar system in the January 26 issue of *Nature*. The icy and rocky planet, temporarily christened OGLE-2005-BLG-390 Lb, orbits a star about 28,000 light-years away from our solar system. The discovery was made possible through a special technique called gravitational microlensing, which can indirectly locate planets by the effect they have on a star's light (they create "a small brightening" or "blip" in the observation, according to Beaulieu). Beaulieu noted that the technique also allowed them to determine its size, which is about five and a half times the mass of Earth, from which they could deduce its temperature (a nippy -364 degrees Fahrenheit) and rocky Earth-like features. The new technique may allow scientists to discover a handful of medium-size rocky planets per year, bringing us closer to answering the question of whether or not we are alone.

AIRBUS KEEPS NUMBER 1 SPOT

Toulouse-based Airbus announced a record number of jet orders for 2005, unexpectedly beating Boeing's total orders for a fifth straight year. Airbus unveiled a total of 1,055 orders, versus Boeing's 1,002. The 2005 net orders defied predictions as Airbus only had 687 firm orders by November 30. Airbus CEO Gustav Humbert summed up December 2005 in two words: "very busy." Even though the European manufacturer beat its American counterpart in sales, Airbus conceded that it had lost its market leadership in value terms (45 percent vs. Boeing's 55 percent). For more information, visit www.airbus.com.

NEW DIRECTOR FOR CNRS

Arnold Migus was named the new director general of the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) on January 18, succeeding Bernard Larrourou. Migus, 57, is a specialist in fusion thermonuclear physics and in laser application studies. He is a graduate of the Polytechnic Institute and has founded the Institute for Laser and Plasmatic Studies, which he headed until now. Migus has worked in the United States, as a researcher for the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, as well as for Bell Telephone Corps. and the Laurence Berkeley Laboratory in California.

QUAERO: A NEW EUROPEAN SEARCH ENGINE

President Jacques Chirac began 2006 with a bang by declaring one of his main goals for the year to be the creation of a European search engine to rival the American giant, Google. The Quaero project, which means "I seek" in Latin, was first announced last summer by Chirac and should be initiated this summer. With the support of Thomson, France Telecom, and Deutsche Telecom, as well as several startups and research organizations, the project will offer full multimedia search capabilities. For example, a search for "Chirac" could yield video clips, photographs, recorded speeches and even entire written works. The search engine is slated to hit cyberspace in three years.

MICHELIN'S NEW X-ONE TIRES BOAST RECORD SALES IN U.S.

Though Michelin, famously secretive, refused to reveal exact figures, it recently announced that sales in the U.S. of its new X-One tires have increased by a factor of 5 since January 2003. These large tires, which can replace the two smaller parallel tires usually found on trucks, were specially developed for North America and help cut gasoline consumption by 5 to 10 percent (for savings equivalent to 1,320 gallons per truck per year). For more information, visit www.michelinman.com.

JOURNALISTS' RIGHT TO PROTECT SOURCES RECOGNIZED

French Justice Minister Pascal Clement announced that the right of French journalists to protect the identity of their sources, long recognized in practice, will now be fully enshrined in French law. An amendment will be made to the 1881 press freedom law, which will also extend protection to those who give sensitive or controversial information to reporters. The European Court of Human Rights has called the protection of journalists' sources one of the "founding stones" of freedom of the press.

LADJI DOUCOURE: CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

L'Equipe, France's premier sports daily, has named Ladji Doucoure the "champion of French champions" for the year 2005. Specializing in hurdling, Doucoure won the gold medal in the 2005 World Championships in Athletics, beating China's Liu Xiang and American veteran Allen Johnson. Along with his three teammates, he also won a gold medal in the 4x100m relay. His personal record in hurdles, 12"97, is also the French national record. Doucoure was awarded the well-established honor by a jury of 10 sports personalities.

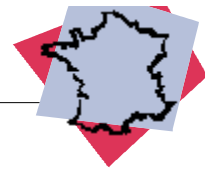
MAURESMO WINS AUSTRALIAN OPEN



At 26, French tennis player Amélie Mauresmo has won her first title in a major tournament, the Australian Open. After being the 1999 Melbourne runner-up, Mauresmo emerged victorious after defeating her opponent, Belgium's Justine Henin-Hardenne, in a 6-1, 2-0 set. Henin-Hardenne pulled out of the second set due to a debilitating stomach illness. "It would probably have been different if the match had gone to the end, but the joy is here," Mauresmo told a news conference following the match. Now ranked number 2 in the world, Mauresmo also won the WTA Tour Championship last November.

FIRST CHINESE CHURCH IN FRANCE

The first Chinese Catholic Church in France, Notre-Dame-de-Chine, was consecrated on January 8. Located in Paris's thirteenth *arrondissement*, the church was consecrated by archbishop of Paris, Mgr André Vingt-Trois. The archbishop's arrival was accompanied by two dancers disguised as dragons, in order to festively celebrate the church's inauguration. Paris's Chinese community continues to grow as many young Chinese immigrants find their way to France.



Madame la Présidente?

WITH LIBERIA AND CHILE having just elected female presidents (for the first time in both countries), and with Germany boasting its first female chancellor, is France next in line? Much progress remains to be done in terms of women holding elected positions in France: currently women only occupy 34 of the 331 seats in the Senate and 71 of the 577 in the National Assembly. Nevertheless, *les Françaises* have a better chance than ever to see one of their own elected president. Indeed, in a recently released Ifop survey, 94 percent of those polled liked the idea of having a female president. With only 16 months left until the presi-



Ségolène Royal (left) and Michèle Alliot-Marie may face off for the presidency in 2007

dential elections, here is a look at the women who might next reside at the Elysée Palace.

The current favorite in the socialist camp is Ségolène Royal, president of the regional council of Poitou-Charentes and deputy in the National Assembly. Fifty-nine percent of the Ifop survey's respondents said they would consider voting for Ségolène Royal should she decide to run. Others to watch include UMP's star, Michèle Alliot-Marie, France's first female defense minister. Also of the UMP, Christine Boutin ran in 2002 and has already declared herself a candidate for 2007. Marie Georges-Buffet, national secretary of the Communist Party in France, is the PCF's best candidate. Last but not least, Lutte Ouvrière's

Arlette Laguiller, the first female presidential candidate in France, has been a regular on the campaign trail since... 1974!

France: 63 Million Strong and Still Growing

FRANCE CONTINUES to grow, according to the INSEE census report, published in January 2006. There are 62.9 million people now living within the Republic, 367,000 more than the year before, with a third of the new growth due to net immigration. Within Europe, France is only second to Germany in terms of population and second to Ireland in birthrates (the average French woman has 1.94 children in her lifetime, compared with 1.5 for the average European woman).



Fortunately, there are enough cafés for all!

France's largest increase in population came from its overseas departments. French Guiana won the demographic award with a population increase of 3.44 percent per year between 1999 and 2005, followed by Réunion, Guadeloupe, and Martinique. The southern departments of

Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon posted the largest growth in *la métropole*. As the government has adopted legislation making it easier for women to have children while staying in the workforce, family sizes have increased, though the number of women having children remains stable. Even in Paris, where 12

percent of Parisian women stay at home versus 20 percent of women in the rest of France, women are having more children.

Though France is keeping its population stable, its neighbors (Germany, Spain and Italy) are in danger of experiencing substantial population decreases, as their birth rates are not sufficient to compensate for their death rates. According to the latest U.N. report, Europe as a whole will likely lose 41 million people by 2030. Learn more at www.insee.fr.

Mitterrand Mania

FORMER PRESIDENT François Mitterrand has been experiencing a surge of popularity on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death, a phenomenon that has been termed "Mitterrand Mania." In the French presidential election of 1981, Mitterrand became the first socialist president of the Fifth Republic, and his government the first left-wing government in 23 years. Though welcomed as a breath of fresh air by much of the left, his political opponents accused him of being opportunistic or even Machiavellian when it came to domestic politics. Throughout his presidency, Mitterrand was a controversial figure, loved by some, hated by others. But all recognized his shrewdness in international affairs and his lasting impact on the construction of Europe.

Jacques Attali, one of the former president's closest advisors, published a biography of Mitterrand, *C'était*



Former presidents Bill Clinton and François Mitterrand

François Mitterrand, that has been on the bestseller list for weeks. One thing is certain: the French have always been interested in history and politics, and the fascination with Mitterrand clearly combines both passions.



"Francoffonies!" Celebrates Diversity

FROM MARCH 16 to October 9, people from all over France will take part in Francoffonies!, a celebration of the vibrantly diverse francophone community that spans every continent. Announced by President Chirac at the 2002 Summit of Francophone Nations in Beirut, the 207-day festival will include poets, choreographers, musicians, playwrights and more. With its International Francophone Day (March 20) and its Week of the French language (March 20-26), the month of March traditionally ushers in a celebration of francophone culture every year.



The festival will include the work of 2,000 artists from the 63 member and observer states of the International Organization

of Francophone Nations (OIF). For instance, at the Salon du Livre in Paris, from March 16 to 23, the public will have an opportunity to (re)discover authors from countries such as Morocco, Senegal and Vietnam. Additionally, on June 21, the 25th annual Fête de la musique will celebrate francophone musical innovation.

A series of debates will encourage dialogue on multiculturalism. The first, "Francophony and Globalization," will take place on April 27 and 28 at the Senate in Paris. A colloquium at the National Assembly on June 26 will be dedicated to Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001), a former Senegalese president and the first African to join the French Academy.

Minister of Cooperation, Development and Francophony Brigitte Girardin explains, "In 10 years, the number of people learning French in the world has increased by more than 16 million. This increase ... is an encouraging sign for our work." For more information, please visit www.francoffonies.fr.

LES CÉSARS 2007



Actress-director Valérie Lemercier will host the 31th annual ceremony of Les César, set to take place on February 25 at the Châtelet Theater in Paris. The current favorite, a film by Jacques Audillard, *De Battre Mon Coeur S'est Arrêté*, has received 10 César nominations. The film stars Romain Duris (pictured above), nominated for best actor and best known for his role as Xavier in *L'Auberge Espagnole* and *Les Poupées Russes*. The film itself is a story about a young man torn between inheriting his father's job as a shady realtor and his desire to become a concert pianist like his mother. Other films in contention include *Joyeux Noël*, the 2006 French Oscar selection, and *L'Enfant*, winner of the Palme d'or at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival. For more information, visit www.lescesarducinema.com.

WONG KAR-WAI NAMED CANNES PRESIDENT

Director Wong Kar-Wai, praised for his 2000 film *In the Mood for Love*, will serve as president of the jury for the 59th Cannes Film Festival. The first Chinese recipient of the festival's Best Director award in 1997 for *Happy Together*, Wong Kar-Wai will also be the festival's first Chinese president. The Cannes Film Festival will be held from May 17 to 28. For more information, visit www.festival-cannes.fr.

2007 TOUR DE FRANCE TO BEGIN IN LONDON

France's legendary cycling competition will kick off in the British capital next year after its bid of \$2.68 million was accepted by the Tour's organizers. London officials hope that the event will attract tourists and motivate people to cycle in the British capital. After a welcome ceremony on July 6, the first stage of the race will take place in London on July 8, 2007, before the cyclists are transported to France. The exact route for the athletes has not yet been determined. The Tour regularly starts off from one of France's neighbors, but this will be the first time it will launch from Britain, and only the third time it will pass through the country. For more information, visit www.letour.fr.

Two Modern Art Museums Reopen Their Doors

THE MAGASIN, a center for contemporary art in Grenoble, and the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris (MAMVP) have both reopened after two years of renovations. Both follow in the footsteps of the Musée Cernuschi and the Petit Palais, which were both refurbished in 2005.

Housed in a hall built by Gustave Eiffel for the Paris World Fair in 1900, the Magasin was converted into a museum in 1986 by architect Patrick Bouchain. The Museum of Modern Art was built for the Universal Exposition of 1937, and a section for contemporary art, ARC, was added in 1967. While the renovations have not drastically changed the layout of either museum, Susan Pagé, director of the Museum of Modern Art, says that the refurbishing allowed her to "rethink the arrangement" of its works.

To celebrate its reopening, the Museum of Modern Art will present two special exhibits: "Artwork, a Pause in Time," featuring paintings and drawings by Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947), and



"Celebration Park," with the installations, films and videos of Pierre Huyghe. The museum's permanent collection includes works by Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp and Picasso.

The Magasin's inaugural exhibit, "Cinéma(s)," will run until May 7. It will include films and installations commemorating Grenoble's appeal to innovative artists such as cinematographer Jean-Luc Godard, who moved there to work in 1973. Additionally, the museum's long and narrow space, aptly named "la Rue," features the enormous work "Climate Change," by British artist Michael Craig-Martin (pictured above).

For more information, visit www.magasin-cnac.org and www.v1.paris.fr/musees/MAMVP.

Record Year for La Cité des Sciences

LA CITÉ DES SCIENCES et de l'Industrie de La Villette has become the fourth most-visited museum in all of France, having welcomed 3.18 million visitors in 2005. The number of visitors has grown by 14 percent since 2004. This year, La Cité, built by architect Adrien Fainsilber, will celebrate its 20th anniversary. It opened its doors on March 13, 1986—the night that Halley's comet appeared in the sky.

The Cité's popularity is no doubt due in part to the 11 new exhibits presented in 2005, most notably one revealing the secrets of the Star Wars saga's making (see NFF 05.13). This exposition, which will run



Science fact with a science fiction look

until August 27, explains the films' special effects, director George Lucas' imaginary universe, and the science behind it all.

Other exhibits in 2005 addressed topics such as the comics of André Franquin, the theories of Einstein and the historical and scientific origins of the cell phone. Many of the exhibits appeal specifically to children and young adults, by blending education and fun. Additionally, the Cité des Enfants, which includes a media center and cinema for children, offers kids between 3 and 12 the chance to learn about animals, biology, mechanics and more.

For more information, please visit www.cite-sciences.fr.



The Peasant (Le Paysan)
by Paul Cézanne (1890-92)

© Phillips Collection, DC 2006

Celebrating Cézanne at the National Gallery

AHUNDRED YEARS after his death, the world celebrates the life and work of artist Paul Cézanne (1839-1906). One hundred and eighteen of Cézanne's oil paintings and watercolors will be on display at Washington D.C.'s National Gallery of Art through May 7. The exhibit, "Cézanne in Provence," focuses on pieces of work from his hometown of Aix-en-Provence, in the southeast of France.

Unlike many of his contemporaries who painted urban scenes, Cézanne preferred to paint his countryside surroundings, reinterpreting the same subject over and over again. He painted his beloved mountain, Sainte-Victoire, 80 times over the course of his lifetime, drawn to it by its "momentum" and its interaction with the sun and sky. Fifteen of these paintings are on display in Washington.

In one, *Montagne Sainte-Victoire Above the Route du Tholonet*, Cézanne's quality as the "Father of Modern art" is evident. The revolutionary two-dimensionality of his subject is striking. The mountain and trees portrayed become mere shapes and colors. This same approach is even more glaring when Cézanne uses it on a classical subject: the female nude. His famous *Large Bathers* are reduced to flat geometric forms. "A picture represents nothing, and must represent nothing at first but colors," explained Cézanne. For him, the subject is irrelevant.

This turn toward shape and color as the heart of representation lay the foundation for 20th-century cubism. Picasso would be inspired by Cézanne and called the French artist "the father of us all."

Cézanne is in constant celebration in Washington, with a permanent collection of 22 oil paintings and 88 works on paper at the National Gallery. In 1986, the National Gallery purchased a collection of 15,000 items from art historian John Rewald, who spent his life creating an extensive reference library on the artist. In addition, eight oil paintings by the French artist hang in the White House, and two more are displayed at Washington's Phillips Collection.

With paintings borrowed from places as diverse as St. Petersburg (Russia), Stockholm (Sweden) and London for the duration of the exhibit, it is clear that Washington is not the only city in the world to hold Cézanne in such veneration. There is none so proud, however, as Cézanne's home city of Aix-en-Provence. From Washington, "Cézanne in Provence" will travel to the Musée Granet in Cézanne's hometown, where a year-long celebration was launched in his honor by the French Ministry of Culture on January 3. For "Cézanne



Montagne Sainte-Victoire Above the Route du Tholonet,
by Paul Cézanne (1896-98)

© The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

2006," Aix-en-Provence has organized an entire season of festivals and special events for its beloved artist and fellow *Aixois*. 2006 is the "Year of Cézanne," but the celebration of this artist as a great master began long before 2006 and will last for long afterward.

For more information about this major exhibit, please visit the National Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. To find out more about other events marking the centenary of Cézanne's death, or to learn more about the French artist in general, please visit the official Cézanne 2006 site at www.cezanne-2006.com. ■ ■

News from FRANCE

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Nathalie Loiseau

EDITOR

Emmanuel Gagniarre

MANAGING EDITOR

Amaury Laporte

SENIOR WRITER

Grant Mayotte

WRITERS

Megan Caiola, Elizabeth Elfman,
Claire de Lacviver, Amr Moubarak,
Kimberly Rinehimer

To change your address, subscribe (for free) or unsubscribe, please contact:

NEWS FROM FRANCE

FRENCH EMBASSY PRESS & INFORMATION SERVICE

4101 Reservoir Road, NW
Washington, DC 20007-2182
Tel: (202) 944-6060
Fax: (202) 944-6072

E-mail:

info@ambafrance-us.org

<http://www.ambafrance-us.org>

<http://www.france.diplomatie.fr>