

AATF Philadelphia Fall/Winter Newsletter 2014/2015

A blustery February hello to all. The snow has barely fallen this winter, but it is cold. Soon we will be administering Le Grand Concours exams to our students, a sure sign of spring! Le Grand Concours is in its 80th year nationally, and headed up locally for the past 37 years by the tireless Sister Mary Helen Kashuba at Chestnut Hill College. Merci, Soeur!

While neither Edith nor myself was able to attend the National Convention in New Orleans last summer, our vice president did go. Rochelle was happy to report that the conference was uniformly positive at every level, well organized, and centrally located. The hotel was very accessible (Canal St.) and offered excellent accommodations and staff.

Local chapter member Maria Mele, who won a free registration at our Winter Mardi Gras workshop last year, also attended. This was her fifth National Conference. She returned fully energized, still filled with the sights, sounds, and flavors of New Orleans. She attended a wide variety of sessions, from "... the importance of French in our ever more globalized world, ... all the possibilities that exist to practice one's French with Web enabled devices (such as an iphone), ... how to develop lesson plans about Mardi Gras around the world, ... how to plan motivational activities for students ranging from trivia contest to film festivals and fashion shows", to a presenter's take on how she uses the Socratic method to really get students thinking and speaking in French.

She was even able to get out of the center of town to have a private tour of Edgar Degas' home in New Orleans where his interest in Impressionist art began, and where some of his great-nieces continue to give tours.



In the fall, we were fortunate to have **Catherine Ousselin** present. She is the AATF National Chair on the Commission for Technology. She is a self-professed tech geek and is more than thrilled to share her knowledge and expertise of all things web with anyone at any ability. Even though she teaches French, she has suggestions for teachers from any world language, beginner to post AP. Her generosity knows no bounds. If you try a website and get stuck, she is

more than happy to help you trouble-shoot. It was a fun-filled and fast-paced 6 hours that included individual hands-on time to practice. If you missed her workshop or want a refresher, please visit her site at <http://catherine-ousselin.org/technology.html>

In January, we had a French movie night at the Bryn Mawr Film Institute. *Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait au bon Dieu?* is the #1 top grossing film of all time in France. It was released in April 2014 but has been deemed too politically incorrect for American audiences and therefore no American film distributor dares to pick it up. About 60 people viewed and enjoyed the typical French humor. Afterward, half the group remained for a discussion about culture and political correctness, led by a representative of the Bryn Mawr Film Institute. It was informative, to say the least, as people from different generations and from different backgrounds and countries offered their points of view.



Check out the trailer:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbyLWzBLLf8>

And if you want to see it, you'll have to buy it from Amazon Canada...

Congratulations to our very own Rita Davis, former co-president of our chapter from 2009-2013, who has been elected as the new vice president of AATF National Headquarters! She joins another local member, Sister Mary Helen Kashuba, who is currently serving as president. Vive la Philadelphie! We can rest assured that our nearly 10,000 member organization nationwide is in good hands.

Below is a list of upcoming events in the Philadelphia area. We have discovered a treasure in our own backyard, Stephanie Schechner. She and her colleague are the creators of the French Facebook page at Widener University. She introduced it to us at an Executive Council meeting in December. We were so enthralled with it that we have invited her to present at our next workshop in conjunction with MLAPV on April 18 at Chestnut Hill College. Further details will be forthcoming and sent to you as they become available via the listserv.

We hope to see you then. Remember that attending a workshop can not only spark your imagination but it can also offer you the opportunity to connect with other French teachers and to share ideas and socialize, something we as teachers seem to have less and less time to do.

Until then, Joyeux Mardi Gras!

Chris and Edith

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| February 21-March 22, 2015 | Le Grand Concours, (levels 01-5), |
| February 24, 2015 | MCATFL Oral Proficiency Contest and teachers' session: Virtual tour of the Internet at Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School (http://mcatfl.org/) |
| April 17, 2015 | IUP Spring Methodology Conference on FL Teaching at Indiana University of Penna. (http://www.iupmethodologyconference.com/) |
| April 18, 2015 | MLAPV Spring Conference at Chestnut Hill College (http://mlapv.org/) |
| April 22, 2015 | MCATFL Spring Conference: Integrating Authentic Materials into Your World Language Classes (http://mcatfl.org/) |
| May 12, 2015 | Distribution des Prix at Chestnut Hill College (http://aatfphila.org/) |
| July 8-11, 2015 | AATF 2015 Convention at Saguenay, Québec (http://frenchteachers.org/) |