

Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France and a selection of things to see and do

Thought for the month:

Never make a woman mad.

They can remember stuff that hasn't even happened yet.

Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area [(35) = area; \pm = stalls expected]

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Thu. 1 st | Rennes (35) | Monthly <i>brocante</i> in <i>Halles Centrales</i> , Blvd de la Liberté, ± 30 |
| W/e 3 rd / 4 th | Le Teilleul (50) | monthly <i>brocante</i> in 1,200 sq.m warehouse, route de Domfront, 9h-18h (see page 3) |
| Sun. 4 th | Pontorson (50) | <i>vide-garage</i> and <i>bourse d'échanges</i> Auto Moto (see page 2) |
| “ | St. Hilaire-du-Harcouët (50) | <i>Bourse d'échanges</i> (see page 3) |
| “ | Torigny-sur-Vire (50) | v-g in <i>Place de l'Orangerie</i> , ± 150 |
| ” | Dinard (35) | <i>Foire à la brocante</i> , Esplanade de la Halle, 10h-18h, ± 50 |
| “ | Sourdeval (50) | v-g in the Salle at <i>Le Moulin Foulon</i> , ± 50 |
| W/e 10 th /11 th | Gorron (53) | monthly <i>brocante</i> , 9h-18h (see page 3) |
| Sun. 11 th | Bellou-en-Houlme (50) | v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ± 150 |
| Sun. 18 th | St. Meloir des Ondes (35) | v-g in the <i>Complexe Sportive</i> , ± 70 |
| “ | Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) | v-g/ <i>brocante</i> in Place du Marché; free entry |
| W/e 24 th /25 th | Betton (35, N of Rennes) | <i>Marché de Créateurs et Ateliers Créatifs</i> , at La Chaperonne, 9h30-17h, ± 50 |
| “ | Domfront (61) | v-g in <i>Foire des Rameaux</i> (see p.6) |

Visit www.brocabrac.fr and which is constantly updated with *brocantes* / *vide-greniers*, including any changes.

Special dates:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sat. 17 th | Saint Patrick's Day – celebrated in many towns & villages in France |
| Tue. 20 th | Spring Equinox |

Eating out

Over the coming months I am featuring places to go for that Special Occasion. This month:

Le Grand Cerf, 17-19 Avenue Aristide Briand, Ernée (53). Set in a former coaching house, this is a Logis 3* hotel and restaurant, run by Cedric Huard. Excellent standard, with a choice of menus - 16,20€ and 28,90€. Open every day, 11h30 to 14h & 18h30 to 22h, but closed in the evenings on Fridays and Sundays. For reservations call 02 43 05 13 09.

Brocante "Retro d'Irina"

Opened last October at 11 rue de Lassay in Couterne (61) this *brocante* is in the old *coiffeur* premises, and is managed by Irina Chemina, a Russian lady who has lived in France for 13 years. Open daily, from 15h to 20h. Tel: 06 79 28 59 51.

Fête des Pâques in Ceaucé (61)

Over this Easter weekend (Sat. 31st March, Sun. 1st & Mon. 2nd April) in Ceaucé, there will be several events: a concert on the Saturday evening, on Sunday is the *chasse aux oeufs* (Easter egg hunt).and on Monday the *vide-greniers*.

Something for all the family – *Nature en famille*

On Mon. 5th from 15h15 to 17h15, you can join in the *parcours d'orientation* in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61). With the aid of a map and compass you can learn to take your bearings and locate the beacons within the heart of the arboretum of the Château. Reservations accepted up to 11h30 on the day (more info from the Tourist Office: 02 33 37 85 66). Meet at the Château/Hotel de Ville, Allée Alois Monnet. Entry: 4,50€, children 2,50€ (min. age 7); family ticket (2 adults, 2 children): 11€. www.bagnolesdelorne.com.

Exhibition

Until 6th March, in *Espace Culturel du Houlme*, place de Gaulle in Briouze (61) you can see the works of sculptor Morgan. With a Master's degree in artistic treatment of iron at the Arnaldo Pomodoro Foundation in Italy, this artist creates and forges in the energy of fire - his objective to create works of art with natural materials. For more info e-mail centre.culturel.houlme@flers-agglo.fr

Bourse d'Echanges Auto Moto Miniature pub & collection

On Sun. 4th at Pontorson (50), organised by *Véhicules Anciens Pontorson*, in the Salle Polyvalente and outside: sale of parts for cars, bikes, trains, tractors, old caravans. Also *vide-garages*. Free placement (reservation necessary). 7h30 – 17h30. Visitor's entry: 1€

Foire Fleuri in Gorron (53)

On Sun. 18th this annual celebration of Spring takes place throughout the town, with most shops and businesses being open during the day. The children will take part in a 'floral disguises' procession with prizes to be won; there will also be a new event: *bar à jupes* (where people can choose various parts of a skirt to be custom-made), an exhibition of vintage vehicles, also new & second-hand cars; with entertainment by Celtic and Breton musicians. Also, on 16th, 17th & 18th there will be a '*destockage*' sale of clothes and shoes at the PIJ (opposite the *Bar des Sports*).

Brocantes in Gorron (53) and Le Teilleul (61)

On one weekend each month, there are 2 venues for this *brocante*. This month: on Sat. 3rd & Sun. 4th at Le Teilleul (4, route de Domfront); on Sat. 10th & Sun. 11th in Gorron (behind AXA, in the old furniture factory – look for the sign on the road). The French owners (who can speak English) do house clearances and there are always different things for sale at each of these venues. Open 9h to 18h.

Le Club Citroën de la Baie du Mont-Saint-Michel

On Sun. 4th, 7h-17h, in the *marché couvert* in Saint Hilaire-du-Harcouët (50), this Citroën Club will be celebrating 70 years of the 2CV and holding its 32nd *Bourse d'échanges* (sale of parts) in 3,000 sq.m of covered space. Free entry. www.clubcitroendelabaie.jimdo.com.

‘Phoenix Singles Group’

A message from John: If you find yourself on your own for whatever reason, life in rural France can be very lonely and isolating. Help is at hand! A new group has been formed to help. "Phoenix Singles Group" aims to bring people together through organising social events and get-togethers. The rest is up to you! There is no joining fee, only the costs of any meetings, etc. Please bear in mind this group is not a social club, it is intended to bring people together who are looking for a possible new partner. So - sign up for the chance to bring joy back into your life! If this appeals to you, please send your age, gender and nearest large town to phoenixsingles55@gmail.com

New owners in Champéon restaurant

‘Le Relais Saint-Médard’ in Champéon (53) has been taken over by Marie N’Nuyen and Nicholas Richard as an *épicerie* and restaurant. They propose both traditional and Asian dishes, to eat there or take away. Nicholas has previous experience working at *La Marjolaine* (Mayenne) and *le Relais du Gue de Selle* (Mézangers). They are open every day, from 7h30 to 20h on weekdays and to 23h at weekends.

Second-hand clothing sale in Mayenne (53)

On Sat. 17th (from 6h30 to 17h) and Sun. 18th (13h30 to 17h) in the Salle Polyvalente, rue Volney, Mayenne, this *bourse aux vêtements* has many a bargain, with good quality clothing, accessories and shoes.

Monthly Pub Quiz in Ceaucé (61)

The Bar du Marché in Ceaucé (02 33 30 04 28) are re-starting their monthly Pub Quiz. It will take place on the last Saturday (NOT Friday) of every month from 20h, with the first one on March 31st. The format will consist of several rounds, including music, pictures and maybe a silly game! As before, entry is free, snacks will be provided and there will be prizes for the winners (and losers)!

Art classes and workshops in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

The Fougerolles-du-Plessis Art Studio, run by Joe Morgan, offers an escape from the winter blues with weekly tutored painting sessions - fun, coffee and creative "me-time". Give it a try! Thursdays or Fridays, morning or afternoon. Ring Joe on 02 43 13 06 72 for a free sample session. All materials supplied.

Entertainment & Concerts

On Fri. 30th from 21h to 23h30 in the *Centre d'Animation* in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61): '*Printemps de la Chanson*' with Yves Jamait, Didier Grebot and Samuel Garcia, playing guitar, accordion, keyboard & drums. Tickets: 15€ (students and unemployed: 12€). More info from the Bagnoles Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66)

Piano recitals in Mayenne (53)

At the *Théâtre Municipal*, Place Juhel in Mayenne (by the Château) are the following 3 piano recitals. Tickets: 10€ for the 3 classical concerts. More info from the Mayenne Tourist Office (02 43 04 19 37):

♪ Fri. 30th at 20h30: Giorgi Luldashevi; ♪ Sat. 31st at 20h30: Nadejda Tsanova;
 ♪ Sun. 1st April at 16h : Romano Pallottin

Le Moulin de la Quentinière Pop-Up Cinema Night

Girls – on Wed. 28th at *Le Moulin de la Quentinière*, Désertines (53) you can have a great night out with your girlie mates, see a great film ("Bad Moms" – a brilliant comedy) have a tasty meal, rounded off with a little glass of vino – all for the bargain price of only 10€!! Seats are limited, so first-come, first-served. You can book your tickets through their website or Facebook page.

There are also plans for a pop-up cinema for little-uns, a Summer Fair and a Wedding Fair for September. You can become part of The Friends of Le Moulin on their Facebook page.

Café Gourmand in Gorron (53) – change of ownership

After many years at the helm, Amanda's successful business has been bought by Jessica, a French lady who has several years' experience in the catering industry. I know we all wish Amanda all the very best for the future, and as she and Eric will be staying in Gorron for the foreseeable future we will still see them around and about.

Cheese of the Month - *Saint Marcellin*

Nowadays, *Saint Marcellin* is made from cow's milk but in the 13th century it was made exclusively from goat's milk. Originating from the Dauphine region, east of Lyon, the cheese is mild, acidic and salty. It needs a long time to mature, developing from a fresh to a dry, ripe cheese. Although quite similar to *Banon* (without the chestnut leaves) *Saint Marcellin* is even creamier and the nutty & fruity flavour is complex. Good at any time as a quick lunch, an *entrée* or on the cheeseboard. It should be chewed a long time to release its full flavour. Good wines to drink with it: (red) *Châteauneuf du Pape*, *Côtes de Ventoux*.

Walking in Normandie

There are more than 3,000kms of GR (*Grande Randonnée*) walking routes in Normandie. You can pick up a '*topo-guide*' at a Tourist Office, or visit www.normandie-tourisme.fr/avoir-a-faire.

For example: "The Circuit of the Waterfalls" in Mortain (50). Here you will find the tallest waterfalls in the west of France. This is a 7km, quite challenging walk, and you could also visit *La Petite Chapelle Saint-Michel* and *l'Abbaye Blanche* nearby. For families with children, there is an easier circuit at 3.7km.

Craft sessions at *La Maison des Beaux Cadeaux*

At *La Maison des Beaux Cadeaux*, 8 Place de la Mairie in Gorron (53) will be the following craft groups in March and everyone is very welcome. For more info e-mail Anne Bush (bush.anne64@gmail.com), see the Facebook page, or call in to the shop!

📅 Thursdays 8th & 15th - Fabric Wreath Making: 30€ for both sessions. Those attending need to take, if possible, cutting boards, scissors (or pinking shears), fabric scraps if they would like to colour co-ordinate their work.

📅 Tuesdays 13th & 27th - Lace Making for Beginners, 14h to 16h30. 30€ for both sessions, includes use of board, bobbins and cottons. Refreshments also provided.

📅 Wed. 14th - Dolls House Club: 3€

📅 Thurs. 22nd - Blend your own Skincare: 25€. Price includes 4 products tailored to your own skin type.

📅 Fri. 23rd or 30th - Pampering Day

📅 Thurs. 29th - March Book Club - 3€

‘Pages’ Bookshop in Passais-la-Conception (61)

Suzanne McGregor would like to let her customers know that ‘Pages’ will be closed due to the school holidays from Tues. 27th Feb., and will re-open on Sat. 10th March. She also has slightly new opening times on Saturdays - from 10h30 until 16h. Tuesdays & Fridays remain from 09h30 until 16h.

Restored church bells in Andouillé (53)

The bells in this church were cast in Laval by M. Bunel in 1824. The larger bell (named Marie-Perrine) weighed 800kg, and the smaller bell (Jacqueline-Marie-Olympe) 326kg. They were moved to the new church in 1860. They are still in service, but urgent renovation works were necessary. Taking 15 days, the work included the addition of a striker to limit the strain on the belfry by the swinging of the bells, and the bell mechanism has been replaced by a dynamo.

Some weekly markets in the *Manche* (50)

| Day of the week | Location |
|-----------------|--|
| Mondays | Briquebec, Carentan, Saint-James, Torigni-sur-Vire |
| Tuesdays | Cherbourg, Ducey, Sourdeval, Villedieu-les-Poêles |
| Wednesdays | St Hilaire-du-Harcouët, La Haye Pesnel, Pontorson |
| Thursdays | Cherbourg, Coutances, Ger, Le Teilleul |
| Fridays | Brécéy, Les Pieux, Saint-Lô, Valognes |
| Saturdays | Avranches, Barneville-Carteret, Cherbourg, Granville, Mortain, Saint-Lô, Saint-Saveur-le-Vicomte |
| Sundays | Barenton, Pirou, Hauteville-sur-Mer |

(It is wise to double check before going, as these can change without notice)

Next month: the weekly markets in the Mayenne (53) *département*.

70th Foire Exposition des Rameaux in Domfront (61)

On 24th & 25th, from 10h to 19h in *l'Espace André Rocton*, there will be around 100 stalls in 2 halls, with fun-fair, *vide-greniers*, entertainment - and local companies and craftsmen to show you their work. Free entry. For more info go to www.ot-domfront.com

Latest 'phishing' scam in France

An e-mail scam claiming to be from tax authorities is doing the rounds, officials have warned. The *Direction Générale des Finances Publiques* have warned that an e-mail inviting users to download and install a 'new version' of *impots.gouv.fr* for Windows to receive a tax refund, is a 'phishing' scam which aims to convince people to give up important personal information by fooling them into believing they are responding to an official request.

It is said that tax authorities never ask for sensitive info about a person's tax affairs by telephone or e-mail.

If you receive such an e-mail, delete it immediately. If anyone has already downloaded any files, they should inform their bank immediately to stop any fraudulent payment from going out. Victims can also file a complaint with the police. They can also alert authorities to suspected scams at the website: www.internet-signalement.gouv.fr.

Change of ownership for the bar 'Le Central' in Domfront (61)

After 13 years, Sylvie and Gerard Lambert are retiring, and the popular bar-brasserie-PMU-tabac 'Le Central' at 1 rue Maréchal-Foch (on the main junction, near the *donjon*) is now being run by 19-year old Patrick Lin. On completing his studies, he joined his parents, Jiansheng and Liqin, at their bar in Evreux, learning from their experience, after which he moved to Domfront. He will not be making any changes to the bar at the moment. Opening hours: daily: 7h to 21h.

Steve's *Epicerie Anglaise* - 'Manges-tu?' - in Gorron (53)

Opened in December 2017 at 12 rue des Frères Lumière (behind the AXA office), 'Manges-tu?' sells a great selection of English foods – including vegetarian and vegan – as well as greetings cards and other items. It is open on Weds.: 10h to 12h, then Thurs., Fri. & Sat.: 10h to 16h. For more info tel: 07 50 22 39 83 and see their Facebook page. Steve also plans to open a tea room in the same building in the Spring.

Events in support of Cancer Support France Nord

On Sat. 24th: Quiz Night at Cancer Support France, route de Buais, Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). Doors open at 19h for a 19h30 start. Tickets: 9,50€ to include the quiz, cottage pie and fruit crumble. Max. 28 places available. Please order on nord@cancersupportfrance.org. Full payment is required when booking, and please advise if you need a vegetarian option. Should you need to cancel a refund will only be given if they can re-sell your ticket.

Expo de Tapisseries in Carrouges (61)

From 1st March until 29th April in the Château de Carrouges you can see beautiful tapestries created by Hélène du Vorsent. More info: www.ornetourisme.com

Sport & Leisure Activities

Course de Printemps (Spring race)

On Sat. 10th at the *plan d'eau* in La Ferté-Macé (61), this race is organised by *Jogging d'Andaine* and is open to all. The race starts at 14h, with different age groups at separate starting times. For more info and prior registration contact the La Ferté-Macé Tourist Office (02 33 37 10 97. (www.ornetourisme.com))

Tour de Normandie Cycliste

This takes place between 19th and 25th March. There are several stages, and on Fri. 23rd the 175km Stage 5 is from Villers-Bocage (14) to Bagnoles de l'Orne (61), where it will be good to watch their arrival.

Relaxation par la musique

Until 27th June in the Salle Vibrations in La Ferté-Macé (61), 30 rue Pierre-Neveu, l'Association Amlos offers Relaxation by Music sessions every Wednesday at 18h30. 11€ each session, 90€ for 10. Contact: 06 08 06 75 85; lydiaanimation@yahoo.fr

Golf Course : *La Freslonnière*

This course at Le Rheu (35, on the western edge of Rennes) is an 18-hole, 6,186 yard, par 72 course of high quality. Winding through the forest, the fairways are pretty tight, the banks of rhododendrons give this course a charm, protected from winds and there are many water hazards. Nearby, the splendid château that has been occupied by the Freslon family since the 13th century provides another pleasant surprise. Green fees: high: 60€, low: 46€. English spoken. Pets welcome. www.golfdelafreslonniere.com

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Yes, I'm back! And Australia was a lot warmer than here!!! However, there are quite a few things to do and events to enjoy this month in this area and I hope you enjoy all the information given here. As always, if anyone has enjoyed a restaurant or activity, and would like to share their experiences, please let me know and I will pass on the information to others.

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Events by the day (not including *vide-greniers*):

March 2018

| Date | Event | Place | Page |
|--|---|------------------------|-------------|
| Sun. 4 th | Citroën Club <i>bourse d'échanges</i> | St Hilaire-du-Harcouët | 3 |
| “ | <i>Bourse d'échanges</i> | Pontorson | 2 |
| Mon. 5 th | <i>Parcours d'orientation</i> | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 2 |
| Thu. 8 th & 15 th | 'Fabric wreath making' class | Gorron | 5 |
| Sat. 10 th | <i>Course de Printemps</i> (Spring race) | La Ferté-Macé | 7 |
| Tue. 13 th & 27 th | 'Lace Making for Beginners' | Gorron | 5 |
| Wed. 14 th | Dolls House Club | Gorron | 5 |
| Sat. 17 th | Second-hand clothing sale | Mayenne | 3 |
| Sun. 18 th | <i>Foire Fleuri</i> | Gorron | 2 |
| Thurs. 22 nd | 'Blend your own skin-care' | Gorron | 5 |
| Fri. 23 rd | <i>Tour de Normandie</i> cycle race arrival | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 7 |
| 23 rd / 30 th | 'Pampering Day' | Gorron | 5 |
| Sat. 24 th | CSF Nord Quiz Night | Notre-Dame du Touchet | 6 |
| 24 th & 25 th | <i>Foire Exposition des Rameaux</i> | Domfront | 6 |
| Wed. 28 th | Pop-up Cinema Night | Désertines | 4 |
| Thurs. 29 th | Book Club | Gorron | 5 |
| Fri. 30 th | ' <i>Printemps de la Chanson</i> ' | Bagnoles de l'Orne | 4 |
| “ | Piano Recital by Giorgi Luldashevi | Mayenne | 4 |
| Sat. 31 st | <i>Fête des Pâques</i> | Ceaucé | 2 |
| “ | Pub Quiz in the Bar du Marché | Ceaucé | 3 |
| “ | Piano Recital by Nadejda Tsanova | Mayenne | 4 |