

# Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France, with some things to see & do and some snippets of local info and advice.

## Thought for the month:

Don't ever save anything for a special occasion.  
Being alive is a special occasion.

[Alice Sloe]

Here's to 2022 being a better year!  
(Well, the only way is up!)

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Some *marchés*, *braderies* & *vide-greniers* are being held, with all safety measures in place (masks to be worn, social distancing, hand gel) but double-check beforehand, if possible, in case of cancellation, at [www.brocabrac.fr](http://www.brocabrac.fr). [ '35' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Sat. 1 <sup>st</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> etc	Cancale (35)	weekly <i>braderie</i> (also Tuesdays 4 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> )
Daily 1 <sup>st</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	Rennes (35)	<i>Grande Marché de Noël</i> , Pl. du Colombier, 10h-20h
Thurs. 6 <sup>th</sup> (& every Thurs.)	Rennes (35)	<i>Les Puces du Jeudi</i> , Place de la Liberté & around the <i>Halles Centrales</i> ; 8h-13h, ±50
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Sourdeval (50)	v-g at ' <i>A la Belle Epoque</i> ', Le Moulin Foulon, ±50
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Granville (50)	monthly <i>Marché d'Antiquités Brocante</i> , ±50

### New address for *Broc'n Laval*

Since November, this *Brocante / Antiquités / Dépôt-Vente* has moved from Ave. de Bretagne in Laval to 35 Blvd de l'Industrie, St Berthevin (53) near Laval (close to Leclerc and Leroy Merlin). Owner Hervé Gatel does house-clearance and also is a *dépôt-vente* (he can buy your items and sell them on, with commission). Open every afternoon, including Sundays, 14h-19h, and sometimes in the mornings. 07 72 07 06 58.

### Winter sales are starting in January

In Gorron (53), the weekend of 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> there will be entertainment in the town to celebrate the beginning of the Winter Sales. Many businesses and shops will be open on the Sunday also.

## Eating out - *Adana Kebab 6*

'*Adana Kebab 6*' recently opened in Gorrion (53) at 22b rue de la Mairie. As well as their specialities (tacos with goats cheese & honey or cheese & bacon) they serve sandwiches, burgers, chicken, couscous royal (on reservation), plate meals, and even home-made cheesecake. The owner, Melissa Kaymaz, explains that it is a family chain, with '6' in the name as she also has 5 other kebab shops (in Lassay-les-Châteaux; Ferrière-aux-Etangs, Athis-de-l'Orne, Ecouché and Ernée). Open Tues. to Thurs: 12h-14h & 18h-21h30; Fri. & Sat.: 12h-14h & 18h-22h30; Sundays: 18h-21h30. For reservations: 09 80 45 81 19.

### You can still enjoy the illuminations

Until 2<sup>nd</sup> January, there will still be illuminations in many villages: Beauchêne (61) [18h-20h], St Mars d'Egrenne (61) [from 17h30, Place de Bourg with *vin chaud* and *crêpes*]; Juvigny-sous-Andaine (61) at *La Michaudière* [17h30 to 19h with *vin chaud*, *brioche*s, wooden games).

### *Le Jardin Public* in Fougères (35)

Another chance to walk off the excesses of the season! Situated at the base of the château you can discover the secrets of these lovely gardens which offer a view on the medieval quarter and the château. There are actually 3 gardens - an English-style garden, a French-style garden with geometric forms, and a botanical garden - each with its own character. The gardens were formed in 1760, originally just a tree-lined walk, and were renovated in 1865 by *la Société d'Horticulture de Fougères*, with the idea of creating a natural, enjoyable space for the people of the town. You will also find picnic areas and there are often exhibitions on site.

### '*La galette des rois*' – a tasty tradition

A seasonal reminder that France celebrates Epiphany each year on the second Sunday after Christmas with the *galette des rois* – a traditional puff pastry cake filled with *frangipane*, a thick almond cream. This tradition traces its roots back to the Middle Ages when the last piece of the cake, often called the 'piece for the poor', was reserved and given to the first needy person knocking at the door. Inside is a little surprise – these days a *santon* (figurine) – and the person who gets the slice with *le santon* is declared the king and so crowned.

### *Les Retouches d'Ingrid* for repairs / alterations in Gorrion (53)

Ingrid Dessen, who used to own *Bout'Chou* in Gorrion, is providing a service of repairs and alterations for clothes and also curtains & cushions. The items can be left at the clothes shop '*Cassidy*' (on the main roundabout, opposite the *Bar de Sports*) with a note explaining the work required and a phone number. Ingrid, who speaks English, is also able to visit homes to take measurements or to collect any items for the work. She travels on her electric bike, so helping preserve the planet, and she is also helping to prolong the life of clothing and household fabrics. To contact Ingrid, tel/SMS: 06 95 82 00 78

### *Vente à la ferme* – sale of organic vegetables

At 17h to 19h on Fridays (7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> in January) at ‘*Les Jardins Ty-Bio*’, *La Ruelle* in Montaudin (53) you can purchase organic, local and seasonal vegetables from the farm. Tel: 06 99 86 53 41; *coopcircuits.fr* and on facebook

### 50 years ago – Maurice Chevalier died

1st January 1972 marked the death of French singer, actor and entertainer Maurice Chevalier. Born in Paris in 1888 he moved to Hollywood with the advent of talking films in 1928 and quickly impressed critics with his performance in *Innocents of Paris*. Over the course of his career he worked with Charlie Chaplin, Audrey Hepburn and George Gershwin, and was nominated for an Academy Award for *The Love Parade* and *The Big Pond*.

### Cancer Support France-Nord Coffee Morning

The CSF-Nord Coffee Morning will be at ‘*Le Patis*’ *Salon de Thé* in Landivy on Thurs. 20<sup>th</sup> starting at 10h. They will be holding a raffle and there will be a donation box for funds for Cancer Support France.

### Taking photos / videos of your valuables

A reminder that we are advised to take photos of our valuables in case of theft, fire or other damage for insurance identification purposes. However, unless you can prove that the item was actually in the insured house it may not be covered in any claim you make on your insurance policy. So, while taking the individual photos it is a good idea to make a video showing the items ‘in situ’ to use as proof ‘*au cas où*’ (just in case).

### Feeding the birds in winter

We can all help our feathered friends by providing food in winter. We may choose *un distributeur de graines* (seed dispenser) or *un support bloc/boules de graines* (fat ball/block support). A generic term for a feeder is *un nourisseur*, while a bird box is called *un nichoir*. Generic bird food is called *aliments pour oiseaux* – look out also for *un mélange de graines* (bird seed mix). Most of these products are widely available in garden centres and home improvement stores.

### Cheese of the Month – *Epoisses de Bourgogne*

This famously stinky cheese from Cote d’Or was named vice-champion at the 2021 World Cheese Awards - the *Perrière* version of *Epoisses* was only beaten by a Spanish goat’s milk cheese. The first *Epoisses* was made by monks in the *Abbaye de Citeaux* in the heart of Burgundy. It is said that Napoleon liked this cheese very much and ate it with *Chambertin* wine. Very popular at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but production almost stopped after WW2. It is one of the last cheeses to involve milk coagulation in France, and its fine-texture melts in the mouth with a mixture of salt, sweet, metallic and milky flavours. Ideal with any wine from Burgundy: a white *Pouilly-Fuissé*, a sweet wine such as a Sauternes, or *Marc de Bourgogne*.

## Entertainment & Concerts

[These events may be subject to cancellation due to current Covid rules]

Fri. 7<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in *l'Espace Culturel Colmont* in Gorron (53): '*Vivace*' - contemporary dance by the *Centre Chorégraphique National de Caen*, an evening of vivacious music and dance. For tickets and more info: [www.bocage-mayennais.fr](http://www.bocage-mayennais.fr), or from *La Maison de Bocage* in Gorron.

Sat. 15<sup>th</sup> at 17h in the *mediathèque* in Flers (61): a concert by the trio '*Vagabonde*' - with folk, Brazilian & Caribbean music. Free to all.

Sat. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 20h in the *Forum de Flers*, rue du Collège in Flers (61): *Ensemble Chorégraphique du Conservatoire de Paris*. Organised by *Scène Nationale 61* with neoclassic and contemporary dance. Tickets 25€ or 12€. [www.scenenationale61.com](http://www.scenenationale61.com)

Sat. 29<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in the *Theâtre Municipal* in Domfront-en-Poiraise (61): '*Scène Jazz*' organised by '*Trottoirs Mouillés*' and '*Jazz sous les Pommiers*': Jazz with the '*Theo Ceccaldi Trio*'. Tickets (from the Tourist Office: 02 33 38 53 97): adults: 15€ or 10€, children under 10: free. More info at [www.trottoirsmouilles.wixsite.com](http://www.trottoirsmouilles.wixsite.com)

### 'Celtic Flames'

On Fri. 28<sup>th</sup>, 20h30 to 23h – two Breton groups at the *Centre Culturel Juliette Drouet*, rue du Gué Meheu in Fougères (35): "O'Tridal" (folk, traditional & Breton music) with drums, guitar, flute & bagpipes; and "Plantec" (traditional electro breizh). Tickets: 5€ (under 18s free). No seats – standing only. More info: [www.centreculturel.fougeres-agglo.bzh](http://www.centreculturel.fougeres-agglo.bzh).

### *Coup d'Choeur* - '*En Scène*'

On Sat. 8<sup>th</sup> at 16h and 20h45 in the *Theâtre de Laval*, 34 rue de la Paix, Laval (53) – this is a brilliant, fun and musical evening with 150 singers. Tickets: 18€. More info at [www.coupdechoeur.org](http://www.coupdechoeur.org)

### 'The World of Queen' by 'Coverqueen'

[Date changed from 3 December] On Sat. 15<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in *l'Espace Mayenne*, 17 rue de Franche-Comté in Laval (53), tickets: 39€. More info at [www.worldofqueen.com](http://www.worldofqueen.com)

### Piano and violin recital in Mayenne (53)

On Sun. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 16h in the *Théâtre Municipal* in 7 Place Juhel, Mayenne (centre). Free. More info available from the Mayenne Tourist Office.

### Something you didn't know you didn't know . . .

French cows seem content with their lot and some even look quite pretty, but would you believe they go as far as to have their own dating website? The following site: [www.trouverlebontaureau.com](http://www.trouverlebontaureau.com) ('find the right bull') was set up to help French farmers find the perfect mate for their cows and so increase their herds. The site looks a bit like a traditional dating site except that all the profiles are of bulls.

### Exhibition : *La Grande Expo*

Until 30<sup>th</sup> January, this exhibition of painting and sculptures is daily (afternoons) at the *Majestic Gallery de Montsûrs*, 29 rue de Pont, Montsûrs (53). Free entry.

### Elliotts Boucherie in Gorron (53)

Lorraine and Daren will be taking a well-earned break and will be closed from Mon. 17<sup>th</sup> Jan., until Tues. 1<sup>st</sup> Feb.

### Legal requirements for driving in France

[With thanks to The Connexion for this advice]: All drivers in France must, by law, be insured – at the very least with Third Party Liability. Also, by law, you must have on you the following: your driving licence; proof of identity; insurance documents; car reg. docs/V5; GB sticker (if required); Crit'Air sticker (if travelling in a major city that requires a pollution sticker to be displayed); reflective high vis. jacket - one for each occupant of the vehicle; warning triangle; accident form ('*Constat Amiable d'Accident*' – also known as 'European Accident Statement') in case of an accident as this needs to be completed at the scene of the accident.

### For our feathered friends

Among the gardener's winter maintenance jobs are those related to animals resident or visiting the garden. In addition to putting up a bird box (in a sheltered spot, on tree trunks, sheds or walls) well before the nesting season begins, take the time to install a bird bath. It will need regular topping up and de-icing.

### *La nouvelle friperie* 'Back to the Style'

Newly opened at 56 rue du Pont de Mayenne in Laval (53), this shop has second hand (*friperie*) and vintage clothing, specially sourced by the owner, Florian Neves (who also has a boutique in Alençon) including 1980s/90s sportswear, colourful clothes (also in sizes XS to XXL) and some designer items. Opening on Weds. to Sats., 12h30 to 19h. For more info: @backtstyle; crushonapp.com/vendor/back-to-the-style, Facebook and Instagram

### Exhibitions – art where you don't expect to find it

Until 27<sup>th</sup> Feb., Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) is hosting an exhibition across the town. Has a hotel foyer become an exhibition hall? Or a business? A small museum? The Tourist Office? This concept brings the exhibition to many businesses, hotels, restaurants, places of leisure, where you can stroll around the works of art at the same time – paintings, sculptures, photos, ceramics. The opening hours depend on the location. For more info contact the Tourist Office: 02 33 37 85 66 or [www.culture.orne.fr](http://www.culture.orne.fr)

### In the footsteps of Picasso in Brittany

The beaches of Dinard (35) became famous in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A chic and wealthy clientèle built luxurious villas and delighted in the opening of a golf course and a casino. In summer 1922, Picasso settled in *Villa Beaugard* with his family. In around 50 paintings, such as "Family at the seaside" or "Two women running on the beach" he conveyed the exhilaration of a sunny summer by the sea.

## Sport & Leisure Activities

### 10<sup>th</sup> International Men's Tennis Tournament

This takes place from Sun, 9<sup>th</sup> to Sun. 16<sup>th</sup> at the *Complexe Tennistique Maxime Merlin* in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61). Organised by the *Tennis Club Bagnolais*, this is the first tournament of the season in France and welcomes around 60 professional players. Free. More info at [www.facebook.com/tennisclubbagnolesdelorne](http://www.facebook.com/tennisclubbagnolesdelorne)

### *Randonnée pedestre* (walk)

On Sun. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 14h in La Dorée (53), organised by *Randonneurs du Bocage 53*. Meet by 14h in Place de l'Eglise in La Dorée. (There may be a small charge for non-members).

### Badminton Tournament in Montenay (53)

On 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, this tournament - 'Badnight' - takes place from 19h on both days. More info at: 02 43 05 94 33 or [asombadminton.home.blog](http://asombadminton.home.blog)

### A local swimming pool (open depending on latest Covid rulings)

*Centre Aquatique* at rue des 5 Frères Robinet in La Ferté-Macé (61) is open all year, daily. There are areas for serious sports, for more relaxed swimmers and also zones for relaxation and resting. Also a slide, paddling pool, sauna & jacuzzi. For more info (entry times and prices, etc): 02 33 30 80 82, [www.CentreAquatiquePaysFertois.fr](http://www.CentreAquatiquePaysFertois.fr)

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And finally: How did we survive? Our mothers wiped our faces with spit and a hanky, not an antibacterial wipe!

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That's all for this month. A limited choice of inside events (as is usual for this time of year) but still a chance to get out & about and enjoy the area.

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