

# Bulletin !

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

## Thought for the month:

All of us could take a lesson from the weather.  
It pays no attention to criticism

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g) and *brocantes* in this area - but double-check beforehand, if possible, at [www.brocabrac.fr](http://www.brocabrac.fr) as they can be subject to cancellation ['53' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

|                                       |                           |   |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Sat. 1 <sup>st</sup>                  | Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)  | <i>vide-maison</i> at 13 rue du Douanier Rousseau, 9h-17h                                     |
| W/e 1 <sup>st</sup> / 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Mont-Dol (35)             | <i>vide-maison</i> (house clearance) at 6 les Guérets, 9h-18h                                 |
| “                                     | Domfront-en-Poiraise (61) | in <i>Foire des Rameaux</i> , v-g in Espace Rocton, 11 rue du Champ Passais, 10h-18h, ±70     |
| Sun. 2 <sup>nd</sup>                  | Dinard (35)               | <i>brocante</i> in Place du Marché, 9h-18h, ±50   |
| “                                     | Ernée (53)                | v-g in Super U car park, les Semandières, 9h-18h, ±300  |
| “                                     | Dol-de-Bretagne (35)      | <i>braderie</i> in Salle Châteaubriand, 9h-17h, ±70   |
| “                                     | La Haie-Traversaine (53)  | v-g, in the town, ±70   |
| Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup>                 | Rennes (35)               | ‘ <i>Les puces de jeudi</i> ’ monthly <i>brocante</i> in Les Halles Centrales - La Criée, ±50 |
| Sun. 16 <sup>th</sup>                 | La Pellerine (53)         | v-g & local produce market, rue du Maine, 8h-18h, ±70   |
| Sun. 23 <sup>rd</sup>                 | Barenton (50)             | v-g at 405 rue de la Liberation, ±30  |
| “                                     | Parigné (35)              | v-g in Salle des Sports, 8h30-17h30, ±150   |

## Special dates

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Friday 7 <sup>th</sup>  | <i>Vendredi Saint</i> (Good Friday)    |
| Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>  | <i>Pâques</i> (Easter Sunday)          |
| Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> | <i>Lundi de Pâques</i> (Easter Monday) |

### Eating out : ‘*Oh Rendez-vous*’ in Ernée (53)

The newest restaurant in Ernée has opened its doors this week: "*Oh Rendez-vous*" at 4 place Mazarin, is the brainchild of Morgane Lancelin, the manager, and Marc-Antoine Vaillant, her partner. This is the 4th restaurant they've opened. The premises can accommodate up to 40 people, and will offer traditional cuisine with a *menu ouvrier* (worker's menu) at lunchtime from Tues. to Fri., with up to 3 choices of starters, main courses & desserts. as well as a seasonal menu during the week and at weekends (including Fri. & Sat. evenings), [www.facebook.com/restaurantohrendezvous](http://www.facebook.com/restaurantohrendezvous); 09 88 43 39 14

### Cancellation of a coming event

The Clothes Swap for charity on 8<sup>th</sup> April in Fontaine-Daniel has had to be postponed until a later date. Hopefully a new date will be in the May Bulletin.

### *Eoire des Rameaux* in Domfront (61)

On the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 73<sup>rd</sup> edition of this festival takes place at rue du Champ Passais in Domfront where, as well as the *vide-greniers* and ‘Escape Game’ on both days, there will be other activities, including a demo of cooking with *poiré* on the Sat. at 16h. A funfair, artisans, exhibition, and 2 food trucks (one with vegetarian food on the Sat.) will be on site. Entry free.

### Cancer Support France Nord - events

Monthly Brunches: On Weds. 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> at the Salle des Fêtes in Notre-Dame du Touchet. Doors open at 10h, last order at 12h30. Vegetarian option available.

Coffee Morning: from 10h to 12h30 on Thurs. 27<sup>th</sup> (please check that date with them) at ‘Le Patis’, 6 rue du Patis, Landivy (53) with a large selection of cakes - gluten-free, vegan and savoury options available. They will also be holding a raffle, so do go and join them for a fun morning. For more info: [nord@cancersupportfrance.org](mailto:nord@cancersupportfrance.org)

### *Les Jardins des Renaudies: chasse aux oeufs* (Easter egg hunt)

On Sun. 9<sup>th</sup> & Mon. 10<sup>th</sup> at these pretty gardens at Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53), 14h to 18h, children are invited to search for Easter pictures around the gardens, where 2,000 pictures are hidden. They are then given Easter Eggs depending on how many pictures they find! Also, all children under 12 will be given a sachet of chocolate. Meanwhile, adults can enjoy the daffodils, narcissus, camellias, magnolias and other plants in the park. Dogs are welcome on a lead. Entry: 6€; 6-16s: 3€; under 6s free. [www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr](http://www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr)

### Something for all the family – *le base de loisirs*

This outside leisure area at La Ferté-Macé (61) has an overall area of 65 hectares – of which 26ha. is water, and also 2,400 metres of walking/cycle paths – and it is accessible all year. Dedicated to family activities in the open air, there are children’s games, activities and picnic areas - ask at the Tourist Office (02 33 37 10 97) if the other seasonal facilities are available yet (kayak hire, *pétanque* pitch, pedalos, archery, swimming in the lake with a small sandy beach, etc). Access and parking is free.

### *Parc de la Colmont in Gorron (53)*

From Sat. 9<sup>h</sup> a new season of activities is offered in the Parc de la Colmont: tree absailing (*parcours en hauteur*), swin-golf, paintball, laser-game, kayaking, and you can hire bikes for use in the Parc. More info in the *Acceuil* hut in the Parc, at 06 63 63 86 44, or visit [www.parcloisirscolmont.wixsite.com](http://www.parcloisirscolmont.wixsite.com)

And now for something completely different . . .

A new enterprise '*Normandie Afrah*' (*Afrah* means Happy Festivities' in Arabic) has opened near Lonlay-l'Abbaye (61) - a 100m<sup>2</sup> showroom for the hiring of wedding outfits & accessories for European or Oriental weddings & events. At '*La Couverie*', near Lonlay-l'Abbaye, Didier Pellerin, from La Ferté-Macé (61) and his Moroccan wife Nawal, have restored a farm and in the showroom are, for hire, oriental wedding thrones, handbags, jewellery, saris, veils, jewellery, furniture and table & room decorations. Nawal also offers advice and help with the organisation of weddings, *soirées*, birthdays and any events. To make a rendez-vous, phone 06 21 39 50 47 (not sure if any English spoken); or *instagram: normandieafrah*.

### Beware of toxic caterpillars – recently spotted in this area

A reminder that parents and pet owners should beware of dangerous pine processionary caterpillars (*chenilles processionnaires*) as their protective hairs contain a toxin that can cause severe skin irritation and can kill animals. In Spring, brought out by the warmer weather, the caterpillars have left the pine trees and are marching nose-to-tail across woods and open lands to find a new nest. Previously confined to the south of France, they are now to be found in the north and can cause severe damage to pine trees. Gardeners can use black sunflower seeds, sunflower hearts and suet to lure predators such as the great tit, coal tit and great spotted cuckoo which will eat hundreds of caterpillars a day. The *Mairies* have requested to be told of any sightings in your local area.

### Cheese of the Month : *Crottin de Chavignol*

Also known as just *Chavignol*, this is probably the most famous cheese of the Loire Valley and has been produced since the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the village of Chavignol, near Sancerre. It has a natural rind which ranges from pale ivory to almost black. Made exclusively from goats' milk, it can be eaten at various stages of the maturing process – after 8 days it has a strong nutty taste, after 5 weeks it becomes dry with a richer flavour. 16 million cheeses are made annually. Great as a starter (grilled in a salad with wine vinegar) and on the cheese-board. Recommended accompanying wine: a white *Sancerre*.

### Another *chasse aux oeufs* (Easter egg hunt)

On Sat. 8<sup>th</sup>, the Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) Tourist Office organises a *chasse aux oeufs* for children between 2 and 12 years. Starting at 10h30 in front of the château, near the fountain. Go to the *parc du château* for this colourful event. At the end you will be able to receive – chocolate! Tickets: 1€, reservation needed at the Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66). Children must be accompanied by an adult.

## Entertainment & Concerts

Sat. 15<sup>th</sup> at 20h in l'Eglise Notre-Dame de la Ferté-Macé (in La Ferté-Macé, 61): a concert by 'Veni Vidi Canto'. This 12-voice choir sings *a capella* (unaccompanied) with an eclectic repertoire – traditional songs (Norwegian, Basque, Kenyan); contemporary (Queen, Radiohead). Free entry, with a collection towards the restoration of the church.

Sat. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 20h30 in the Espace Colmont in Gorron (53): 'Céline'. Has Céline Dion come to Gorron? No, but a very good impersonator – 'Costic' – promises a very entertaining evening. Tickets: 25€, under 14s: 20€, available on [weezevent.com](http://weezevent.com)

Sat. 29<sup>th</sup> at 18h at the Manoir de la Chaslerie, Domfront (61): a concert with *Le Lys de Madrigaux* (instruments & voice) with contemporary and English baroque music. Entry 16€ in support of l'Assoc. 'Pour un sourire d'enfant' ('For a child's smile'). Reservations at the Domfront Tourist Office (02 33 38 53 97 or by Helloasso.

## Pop Rock Group Singing Workshops

Singing is for everyone – we all have a voice and can all enjoy the many benefits of singing too! Complete beginners are very welcome - even if you think you might be tone deaf. We really can all sing! Absolutely all singing levels and abilities are welcome in their fun, friendly and supportive group singing workshops. You will sing a selection of pop, rock and world music, songs with simple group harmonies and developing and improving vocal technique (e.g. breath, pitch, projection, tone). There is no need to read music, no nerve-racking solo singing and all songs will be taught by ear.

In recent workshops they have sung songs from the 1960s to the present day - including hits by ABBA, Simon & Garfunkel, Adele, The Clash, The Beatles, Rag 'n' Bone Man, The Cranberries, David Bowie and Imagine Dragons, to name but a few.

Upcoming singing workshop groups:

6 week course: at Enchanté, 53120 Brecé, starting on Monday 27 March, 10h30 – 12h

7 week course: at HeartSong Normandie in Mortain (50) starting on Tues. 25/4, 19h–20h30

7 week course: at HeartSong Normandie in Mortain (50) starting on Thurs. 27/4, 14h–15h30

Booking is essential for all of their singing workshops. For further details: [helloheartsong@gmail.com](mailto:helloheartsong@gmail.com); <https://www.heartsongnormandie.com>

## A new mosaic on the *Basilique* in Pontmain

To celebrate the 150 anniversary of the building of the basilica in Pontmain (53) – which is a must-see, also for its amazing stained-glass windows – a new 3m x 3m mosaic has been installed beneath the main door archway (*le tympan*). It was created by Marie-Noël Garrigou, who began it in 2017 but sadly passed away before it was finished (two of her pupils completed it on her behalf). To make the mosaic, millions of pieces of marble and glass were used. The virgin, who has been depicted over the doorway since 1940, has had her dress and diadem re-gilded.

## Emergency contact numbers

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>18</b>  | <b>Emergencies ('Urgences').</b> This number connects you to the <i>Sapeurs Pompiers</i> (fire brigade) but they deal with medical emergencies and should be the first port of call in life-threatening situations. |
| <b>15</b>  | <b>Samu</b> – for other urgent medical call-outs  |
| <b>17</b>  | <b>Police / Gendarmes</b>   |
| <b>112</b> | <b>Universal European Emergency Services</b> – from all phones including mobiles  |

### Emmaüs in Mayenne is to be enlarged

Re-sited in 2020 in the old Lidl premises, within a year the building proved to be too small! A large extension of 300m<sup>2</sup>, an extension of 50% of the existing area, will be added on the side for crockery and bric-a-brac and also to enable more space for the sorting. The work is expected to be finished by the end of July.

### *La Guinguette*’ restaurant at Montflours is still closed

This lovely, ideally sited restaurant, on the side of the river Mayenne in Montflours (53), has been empty for the past 2 years. The two international chefs who took it over did not stay. The *Conseil départemental* is seeking a food truck to be on site for this year’s tourist season, as it is very popular walkers, cyclists and horse-back riders and along the river.

### English film in Gorron (53) cinema

The next English (VO) film in Gorron cinema will be:

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>:** 'Creed III', directed by Michael B Jordan, with Michael B Jordan, Tessa Thompson, Jonathan Myers.

– “After dominating the boxing world, Adonis Creed (Michael B Jordan) has been thriving in both his career and family life. When childhood friend and former boxing prodigy Damian (Jonathan Myers) resurfaces after serving a long sentence in prison, he is eager to prove that he deserves his shot in the ring. The face-off between former friends is more than just a fight. To settle the score, Adonis must put his future on the line to battle Damian - a fighter who has nothing to lose”.

The film starts at 8pm and tickets (5,50€) are available at the cinema (beside the church) from 7.30pm on the night. As always, the '*Bar de la Mairie*' at the bottom of the hill serves pre-film refreshments, including a plate of cheese and/or meat with a glass of wine/beer, for 8€. [It might be advisable to check on [www.gorron-cinemas.fr](http://www.gorron-cinemas.fr) before setting off in case of any last-minute changes].

And finally:

The salesman at the furniture store told me the sofa would seat 5 people without any problems. Then it occurred to me – I don't think I know 5 people without any problems.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

That's all for this month. I hope you have a wonderful Easter and that we all have a 'Spring' in our steps!

*Judy Skinner*

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