

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

There is something about the outside of a horse
that is good for the inside of a man

(Sir Winston Churchill)

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g), *brocantes* & *fêtes* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at www.brocabrac.fr in case of any last-minute cancellations ['53' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Wed. 1 st	Le Pas (53)	v-g in Place du 11 Novembre, 8h-18h, ±150
W/e 4 th & 5 th	Changé (53)	<i>vide-maison</i> at 3 Les Fontaines (Technopole) rue Albert Einstein, 9h-18h
Sun. 5 th	Saint-Fraimbault (61)	v-g in 4 rue St Denis, 8h-18h, ±50
”	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150
“	Combours (35)	v-g in parking of <i>terrain d'honneur</i> , route de Lourmais, 9h-18h, ±250
“	Pleurduit (35)	<i>braderie du centre-ville</i> , 9h-17h, ±250
“	Montigné-le-Brillant (53)	v-g in rue du centre, 8h30-17h, ±300
Wed. 8 th	Rives d'Andaines (61)	v-g at Place Roland Flechard, 8h-18h, ±150
W/e 11 th /12 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	v-g in <i>Foire des Andaines</i> , route St Michel to Bagnoles; 8h-18h; ±300
Sun. 12 th	Fougerolles du Plessis (53)	v-g in the village (see also page 3)
Sun. 26 th	Ernée (53)	v-g & local market, in parking of Salle de Cosec, rue des Mirettes, 9h-17h30, ±70
“	Landéan (35)	v-g in Salle Megalithes & car park, 1 Place de la Longue Noe, 8h-18h, ±150

Special dates / public holidays:

Wed. 1 st	<i>Fête du Muguet</i> (see page 2), also <i>Fête du Travail</i>
Wed. 8 th	<i>Victoire 1945</i> (Armistice Day)
Thurs. 9 th	<i>Ascension</i>
Sun. 19 th	<i>Pentecôte</i> (Pentecost)
Mon. 20 th	<i>Lundi de Pentecôte</i>

Eating out - *May'Breizh*

May'Breizh is a recently-opened restaurant and *traiteur* (local products supplier) at 4 rue du Prieuré in St Ellier-du-Maine (53: not on the main road but a bit off the beaten track – hopefully there are signs now to help you find it!). Generous portions, very friendly people & nice decor, and they also have a small *épicerie* for the locals. They have an extensive website www.maybreizh.com. Contact: contact@maybreizh.com; tel: 02 43 13 36 02

Fête du Muguet (Lily of the Valley)

On 1st May it is traditional to offer friends and family *le muguet* to bring luck and joy. This tradition was started in 1561 by King Charles IX - but some say only the sprigs which have 13 flowers bring the best luck! *Le muguet* came to France from Japan in the Middle Ages.

May 1st is the only day when people are allowed to sell *le muguet* in the streets without having the authority to operate as a business.

Cocktail tasting and workshop cruise

Fri. 10th from 19h to 20h30, the spirit masters of *Rhum Evasion* welcome you on board to share their cocktail science. While cruising down the river, you can taste 2 cocktails and they will then show you how to re-create them during an introductory workshop. Board the boat at the Laval river stop (near the Square de Boston) 15 minutes before departure. Tickets: 35€ per person; more info & reservation at the Laval Tourist Office (02 43 49 45 26) required 48 hour in advance.

Les Jardins des Renaudies

At this lovely 3.5 ha floral park at Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53), as well as 400 rhododendrons & azaleas, 350 hydrangeas, 133 varieties of roses and many other plants & flowers, there is a museum showing life on a farm in the 1920s and vintage farm equipment.

On Sun. 5th, 10h to 18h, will be the *Fête du Printemps* (Spring Fair) where there will be a baker baking his bread, exhibitions, local and craft market, games for young and old, at 11h a guided tour; 'Painters in the Gardens' where you can watch artists at work; pony rides, music during the day with David Luka; picnic tables; refreshment bar and Alison's Tea Room. Dogs are welcome on a lead. Entry: 5€, children 6–16s: 3€, under 6s free. More info at: www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Cancer Support France Nord events

Quiz Night on Thurs. 2nd at the bar *le Viking* in Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50). Teams maximum of six - if you are unable to make up a team no problem, do go and take part. €3 per person. Quiz starts at 20h.

Brunch days: Wednesdays 8th & 22nd. Please do go and join them at the Salle des Fêtes, Notre-Dame-du-Touchet. Doors open at 10h, last orders at 12h30. Vegetarian option available.

For more info go to nord@cancersupportfrance.org

Mayenne 'Bière festival No. 4

Sat. 4th, 11h to 20h in Saint-Jean-sur-Mayenne (53): 4 local brewers will be present with a wine bar and alcohol-free bar, for those who don't drink beer. A meal can be available with local produce, and there will be music during the day. Games for children. Free entry. More info from the Mayenne Tourist Office: www.mayenne-tourisme.com

Art Exhibition in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

Joseph Morgan is holding an art exhibition on Sun. 12th featuring work by local artists. The event will be held in the Salle des Associations on rue Moroge, between 9h and 17h.

On the same day the village is hosting its annual *vide-greniers*, and people wishing to reserve a space can do so at 06 32 82 01 27 (French) or k8collins@aol.com.

Buffet Dance in La Baroche-sous-Lucé (61)

On Sat. 25th from 19h to 24h will be a Buffet Dance, organised by the *Comité des Fêtes* of La Baroche-sous-Lucé (SE of Domfront), held in the Salle des Fêtes. The meal will consist of a *kir*, cold buffet, desert, cheese & coffee, and music will be provided by the celebrated accordionist Thierry Lesimple. Go along and join them for what is sure to be an enjoyable evening. They look forward to seeing you there. Tickets - Adults 20€, under 12s: 16€ - available from Sue Crossman, tel: 06 04 15 57 43.

23rd Salon des Vins et des Produits du Terroir

On Fri. 3rd (17h-22h), Sat. 4th (10h-20h) & Sun. 5th (10h-18h) this is an exhibition of wines and local products at l'Espace Mayenne, 2 rue Joséphine Baker in Laval (53). The aim: to put producers in direct contact with consumers – and profits from the show help disabled or disadvantaged people in Mayenne. There will be over 60 winegrowers from all regions of France, with also other products: *foie gras*, honey, biscuits, cheese, oysters, cold & preserved meats. A trolley can be available to transport your purchases to your car. More info from the Laval Tourist Office (www.laval-tourisme.com)

Cheese of the Month - Babybel

Since 2022, an established production line of Babybel was reinvested to produce a vegan cheese. Around 500 tonnes have been produced in their factory in Evron, compared with the Babybel classic of which, worldwide, 5 million are produced every day! For the vegan Babybel the main markets are the USA, Canada and the UK. Also, the company Bel is one of the 55 enterprises in France that have reduced their water consumption since 2008 - from 30m² to 20m² per tonne of cheese made, and they are aiming for 16m² in the future.

Tuesdays Water Colour Workshop

Yes – you can splash the paints . . . play with the inks . . . scribble with pastels! It's tea, coffee 'n tuition, all inclusive price: 25€ per person. All welcome. Tues. 14th May: 1pm to 3.30 pm. If it doesn't move – paint it! Still life at Jane's Studio, Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50). For more info on this and other monthly workshops – June: calligraphy; July: Pastels – e-mail jane.bicknell.art@gmail.com

Entertainment & Concerts

Voix d'Eté concert

Voix d'Eté will be giving a concert at the chapel at Lignou (61, 7 miles south of La Ferté Macé, near Couterne) at 20h30 on Sat. 18th. This is a free concert and there will be a voluntary collection for the chapel. Music will include works by Faure (2024 is the centenary of his death), Schubert, Byrd, some traditional songs, Gorecki and the Beatles, amongst others.

Voix d'Eté is a small chamber choir based in Dompierre that was formed in 2010 and is currently directed by Jim Percival. The choir has performed many concerts over the years and supported various charities. It performs a variety of sacred and secular music from the medieval era to the present day.

The choir meets on Tuesday afternoons at 14h30 finishing at 16h30 in *le salon communautaire* at Dompierre (61) and there will be tea & cake after the rehearsals. New members in all four voice parts (soprano, alto, tenor & bass) are currently needed urgently. Why not go along on a Tuesday afternoon to give it a try. For details please call Françoise Brison: tel: 02 33 64 38 09

Perle Bleue - Oriental and Flamenco Dance Show

On Wed. 15th at 20h30 in the Salle Polyvalente, Place Hercé in Laval: 50 dancers from Andaluna Danse with an evening of dances from southern Spain to Morocco. Tickets: 10€, under 12s: 5€. Doors open at 19h45. More info on facebook: Andaluna Danse, or at andaluna.danse@gmail.com

Organ recitals in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

Organised by *Les Amis de l'Orgue de Sainte Madeleine de Bagnoles de l'Orne*, these recitals are at 9 Place de l'Eglise in Bagnoles de l'Orne:

♪ Sun. 5th at 17h to 18h15 - a recital by Alain Bouvet, head organist at the Abbey of Saint-Etienne in Caen. Programme: Grigny, Bach, Mozart. Free, with a retiring collection.

♪ Wed. 22nd at 17h to 18h15 - concert with 2 and 4 hands. Programme includes: Nivers, Balbastre, Telemann, Walther, Mozart, Kellner. Free, with a retiring collection

Peintres dans la rue (Artists in the streets)

On Sun. 26th, 9h to 19h30, in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) organised by *Rencontres Artistiques d'Andaine*, you can watch – or take part in – this competition. Open to all, whatever level, age or technique. The paintings produced during the day will be exhibited at the hall of the *Centre d'Animation et de Congrès*. To register, go to the Communs du Château, Allée Aloïs Monnet (from 9h on the day, *salle sud*). Free.

'Cars & Coffee' : exhibition of vintage vehicles

On Sun. 26^h, 9h30 to 12h30, at Place du Marché Couvert in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61, by the Tourist Office) organised by *l'Assoc. Bagnoles Moteurs Classiques*: 'Cars & Coffee' presents a gathering of sports, prestigious and vintage vehicles. Free entry.

Sport & Leisure Activities

Swimming pool open in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

This heated (between 26°C & 28°C) outside pool will be open from 18th May until 3rd September. Located at the Sports Complex, avenue de la Ferté-Macé, in Bagnoles de l'Orne. More info at www.bagnolesdelorne.com

Pétanque competitions in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

On Mondays 6th & 20th, organised by *Le Pétanque Bagnolais*. at Blvd Lemuet (behind tennis courts). Open to all. Registration between 13h30 & 14h25. Matches begin at 14h30. 5€ per person.

Le Marché aux Fleurs (flower market)

Sun. 5th, 10h to 17h, in Place du Général Leclerc, La Ferté-Macé (61) this is for gardeners and lovers of flowers. You can stroll around, buy new plants and learn other techniques – with flowers, bushes, vegetables, small tools, seeds and garden décor. More info from the Tourist Office: www.lafertemace.fr

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And finally:

A man took 2 stuffed dogs to the Antiques Roadshow. “Ooh!” said the presenter, “this is a very rare breed, do you have any idea what they would fetch if they were in good condition?”

“Sticks.” the man said.

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That's all for this month – with music, fêtes, dancing, markets - lots of activities in the run up to summer! As always, Tourist Offices have many more ideas for outings and activities. Have a great May.

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

May 2024

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Thurs. 2 nd	CSF Nord Quiz Night	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	2
3 rd / 4 th / 5 th	<i>Salon des Vins & Produits</i>	Laval	3
Sat. 4 th	Mayenne Biere festival	Saint-Jean-sur-Mayenne	3
Sun. 5 th	<i>Fête du Printemps</i>	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
“	Organ recital	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
“	<i>Marché aux fleurs</i>	La Ferté-Macé	5
Mon. 6 th	<i>Pétanque</i> competition	Bagnoles de l’Orne	5
Wed. 8 th	CSF Nord Brunch	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	2
Fri. 10 th	Cocktail tasting cruise	Laval	2
Sun. 12 th	Art Exhibition and <i>vide-grenier</i>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	3
Tues. 14 th	Water Colour Workshop	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	3
Wed. 15 th	Oriental & Flamenco Dance	Laval	4
Sat. 18 th	<i>Voix d’Eté</i> concert	Lignou	4
Mon. 20 th	<i>Pétanque</i> competition	Bagnoles de l’Orne	5
Wed. 22 nd	CSN Nord Brunch	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	2
“	Organ recital	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Sat. 25 th	Buffet Dance	La Baroche-sous-Lucé	2
Sun. 26 th	Artists in the streets	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
“	‘Cars & Coffee’	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4