

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Cats have 32 muscles on each eye to help them
ignore you!

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g), *brocantes* & *foires* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at www.brocabrac.fr in case of any last-minute cancellations ['61' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

W/e 4 th & 5 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	<i>Foire d'automne</i> – a HUGE v-g (2 kms!) on road from Saint Michel d'Andaines to Bagnoles de l'Orne, 6h-18h, ±300
Sun. 5 th	Dinard (35)	<i>brocante</i> in Place Crolard, 7h30-17h30, ±70
Sun 12 th	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, 7h-18h, ±150
“	Sourdeval (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> /v-g at <i>La Belle Epoque</i> , 454 Le Moulin Foulon, 8h-18h, ± 50
Sun. 19 th	Tinchebray (61)	v-g 'Saint-Loic', centre ville, 7h-18h, ±400

Vide-maisons (house clearances):

Sats. 4 th , 11 th , 18 th	St. Hilaire du Harcouët (50)	at 173 rue Lucien Lelièvre, 9h-13h
4 th & 5 th	Dompierre (61)	at route de la Pesnière, 9h30-18h
“	Ernée (53)	at 18 avenue de Paris, 10h-17h
“	La Ferté-Macé (61)	at 40 avenue de la Raillère, 10h30-18h

Plantes en Fête' - plant sale & exchange

On Sat. 11th & Sun. 12th from 10h-18h at the *Camping Municipal*, rue du Champ Passais in Domfront (61) is the 26th edition of this popular annual Plant Fair. Over 50 specialist exhibitors will be there with a great selection of plants, herbs and other vegetation. People can bring their plants and exchange, share and discover others. There is also garden decor and some great gardening inspiration. Food trucks and tea-room on site. Free entry and parking. Sorry, no dogs. More info at plantesenfete.fr or ot-domfront.com

Eating out : *Chez Fred*

‘*Chez Fred*’ at 119 rue des Vallées in Chantrigné (53) on the D33 between Ambrières-les-Vallées & Lassay-les-Châteaux, has 2 welcoming restaurant areas and provides a good 3-course meal (with one main *plat* offered but an alternative can be requested). The waitress speaks English and the food is well cooked with good portions. Tel: 06 51 20 66 06

Fete de l'Automne

On Sun. 5th from 9h to 18h in the Salle des Fêtes in Martigné-sur-Mayenne (53) there will be a local produce market, plant market, pumpkin & gourd sales, with entertainment, apple sales and craft exhibition. Free.

Les Jardins des Renaudies : Pumpkin Fair

On Sun. 12th, 10h-18h, at these lovely English-style gardens at Les Mézerais, near Colombiers-du-Plessis (53), is the 30th edition of the popular *Fête des Citrouilles* (Pumpkin Fair) where you can discover the 80 varieties of pumpkin in all shapes and sizes, grown here by their gardeners. There is a local produce & crafts market and sale of plants, pumpkins & gourds. There is also a museum of vintage machinery, the 10,000sq.m maize maze, music, sensory & tasting workshop, pony rides, face painting, entertainment and children's games. Entry: adults 5€; 5-16s 2€; under 5s free. Dogs are welcome on a lead. To check for any changes go to jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Gorron "Rose et Bleu"

On Sat. 4th, 8h to 18h, in the Place du Champ de Foire (near *La Poste*), Gorron (53), you can take part in this 4th edition of “*Gorron Rose et Bleu*” races in aid of the fight against all cancers. For the walks – there are 2 loops of 4 kms: » at 8h45: collective warm-up with music; » at 9h: start of the first 4 km loop; » at 10h: collective warm-up with music; » at 10h15: start of the second 4 km loop. Walking fee: 6€ per person (under 5s free). A *galette saucisse* is offered to all participants. For bikes and mountain bikes: various circuits are available – with a 9h start for a 35 km ride or a 65 km cycling tour. Prices as above.

There will be family activities in the same place: wooden games, face painting, line dancing, flash mob, etc. Food stalls on site. For registration contact julien.lepauvre@hotmail.fr

Guided visit of Fontaine-Daniel (53)

On Wed. 22nd, 10h-11h30, the Mayenne Co. Tourist Office invites you to a guided tour (in French) of this village of character. It is an unusual visit built around the famous ‘*Toiles de Mayenne*’ material factory established in 1806. You can discover the old Cistercian Abbey dating from the 13th century, with the cloister and the cellar – a remarkable stone vaulted room. Visit the chapel of Saint-Michel, stroll through the village streets and the allotments. Free time will be possible at the *Toiles de Mayenne* shop. Tickets: 10,50€ - reservation required at the Tourist Office (mayenneco-tourisme.fr): on-line, by e-mail, telephone (02 43 04 19 37 or at their Reception .

Fête des Marrons (Chestnut festival)

On Sun. 26th in Moulay (53, near Mayenne town) from 9h there will be a local produce and designer market, funfair, merry-go-round, games for children, roasted chestnuts, musical entertainment. There will be catering on site.

Gallery Hertrich is open for exhibitions

Michael Hertrich would like to say that his gallery at 7 Place Albert Christophle in Domfront (61) is now open from Wed. to Sat. 14h to 18h. Artists may contact him for possible representation and/or exhibitions. For more information please contact him on southsidemen@comcast.net, 06 85 72 12 96.

Water Colour Exhibition

This exhibition of paintings will be on Sun. 5th, 11h to 16h, in the Viking Bar in Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50). Food and drink can be purchased from the bar. For more info: jane.bicknell.art@gmail.com

Guided visit to a chocolate factory

On Sat. 18th and Fri. 24th at 1 Grand rue, Sainte-Suzanne (53): if you like chocolate, this is the visit for you! Charline's bean-to-bar chocolate factory opens the doors of its production laboratory located just behind the shop, for a sensory and educational immersion in the heart of the cocoa transformation process. Charline will take you through the key stages in the production of artisan chocolate. This is a tasty discovery of organic cocoa, local craftsmanship and chocolate creations. Tickets (3€) are available on line or at the Sainte-Suzanne Tourist Office. Each visit is limited to 15 people.

Cheese of the Month - *Bon Mayennais*

Producers of this cheese - *La Fromagerie Vaubernier* - have been in the heart of the Mayenne countryside since 1912 and they are one of the last independent producers of Camemberts in France. With 130 employees, the company makes 100,000 cheeses per day with the traditional recipe, after collecting 100 million litres of milk per year from 155 collection points (of which 5 are organic) within an area of 40 kilometers. Very popular in supermarkets, this cheese is also exported to 30 countries.

Beautiful residences of Sainte-Suzanne (53)

On Sat. 11th, 16h to 17h30, you can visit the beautiful residences of this town. Let yourself be carried away by the architectural universe of these buildings. The manor houses, built in the aftermath of the Hundred Years' War, stand side by side today with private mansions built in the 18th century for wealthy magistrates and nobles. On this special occasion, some of the owners will open their doors to reveal courtyards and pleasure gardens, sheltered by surrounding walls. Meet just before 16h in the courtyard of 'La Forteresse' in Sainte-Suzanne. Price: 6€, students & unemployed: 4€. More info: patrimoine.lamayenne.fr

Entertainment & Concerts

§ Sun. 5th, 15h to 16h in the Grande Salle du CIAP in Sainte-Suzanne (53) a concert for 2 violins around 3 composers of the 19th century. Experience the soul and emotion in the large panelled room of the Grande Salle in this pretty village known as the 'Pearl of the Maine'.

§ Tues. 7th at 20h in Espace Mayenne, 2 rue Josephine Baker, Laval (53): The Dire Straits Experience 'Shiver In The Dark'. This concert features covers of Dire Straits' greatest hits with former band member Chris White on stage accompanied by 6 internationally renowned musicians. More than 20 years after they disbanded, 'Shiver In The Dark' brings the band's soul back to life. Tickets: 46,50€ from espace-mayenne.fr or the Laval Tourist Office (laval-tourisme.com)

Harvest Festival Service

There will be a Harvest Festival service in the church in l'Epinay-le-Compte on Sun. 19th at 10h30. Also (advance notice): a Christmas Carol Service in the church in Epinay-le-Comte on Sun. 21st December at 16h. They will be led by Tim Peagam from Orne Christian Fellowship.

Voix d'Été concerts

The next concerts by the chorale *Voix d'Été* will be: on Sun. 5th at 15h in l'Eglise Saint-Martin in Avrilly (61) and on Sun. 26th at 15h in l'Eglise Saint-Hilaire in Ronfeugeraï (61).

Voix d'Été is a small friendly four-part choir of English, French and German singers. The choir started in 2010. They sing a varied programme of choral music (secular and sacred) ranging from the Renaissance (16th c.), Baroque (17th c.- early 18th), Romantic era (late 18th and 19th c.) and 20th century. They also sing popular songs by, for example, the Beatles, and folk songs from around the world.

Recently the choir has expanded, but they are still seeking to recruit new members, especially tenors. Why not go along and give them a try? Singing is good for the soul and is something that soothes stress as well as being enjoyable. The choir gives concerts at all times of the year and they raise money for charities through voluntary collections taken at their concerts. They practice every Tuesday afternoon 14h30 to 16h30 at the community hall at Dompierre (61). The practices are followed by tea and delicious homemade cake. For more information, please contact francoise.brison@cloud.com, tel. 06 41 39 89 43.

Autumn Open Day at the SPA de la Mayenne

On the weekend of 4th & 5th, at La Rivière, ZI des Touches, Changé (53) at this SPA (similar to the RSPCA) Open Day you can meet the residents. There will also be stalls selling flowers and second-hand goods to raise money for the animals – and, the highlight, the red carpet parade of their dogs. Free.

Hallowe'en Race 2025

Take part in an absolutely frightening race in Lassay-les-Châteaux (61)! On Fri. 31st – 3 races of 8km, or less, at 19h, 19h15 & 19h30. Night-time adult races, with surprises, in a spooky atmosphere! A frontal headlamp and disguises are compulsory! For info and registration with the Association '*Le Son de Vie*' (lesondevie.org) from 17h at the Bar le Brazza in Lassay-les-Châteaux or on TimePulse. Tickets: 14€. Food and drink on site.

Visit to the Recycling Sorting Centre

If you ever wondered how the plastic recycling is sorted, on Tues. 21st, from 13h to 18h30, you can go and discover the SPHERE sorting centre of Villedieu-les-Poêles. During the visit you will follow all the stages of the sorting process, from the arrival of the packaging on the sorting belt to its separation into different materials, before finally seeing it transferred into bales ready for recycling.

Leave from the *Musée du Château de Mayenne*, Place Juhel in Mayenne town, at 13h, returning at 18h30. Free, but prior booking is required (02 43 00 17 17). Suitable for all ages – 10 years and over. For more info: museeduchateaudemayenne.fr

Quiz Night in Perrou (61)

Sat. 18th at 19h is another of the popular fun Quiz Nights at *Le Bar Vintage* in Perrou with both French and English playing and lots of '*entente cordiale*'. Only 16€ per person which includes a welcome drink and a meal comprising *un plat* and dessert. Entries and enquiries to Lorraine Hunt. 06 02 20 58 03 and Michele Dupin 06 88 74 14 43. A great night out!

Road race in Oisseau (53)

On Sun. 5th you can go and stretch your legs with your family and friends! Meet at the Salle des Fêtes in Oisseau to join in this race which is suitable for everyone – beginners to masters. Organised by 'Oisseau Running'. Registration required at the Mayenne Tourist Office (mayenne-tourisme.com)

Advance notices for November and December (as there will be no Bulletin in November).

There will be a *Marché de Noël* (Christmas market) on Sun. 23rd November, 10h -18h in the Salle de Convivialité (near the Water Tower), 1 route de Savigny, Buais-les-Monts (50) with tombola, design competitions. Snacks and drinks on site.

The choir *Voix d'Eté* have 2 Christmas concerts: Sat. 13th December, 16h in the Salle Normand in Dompierre (61), and Sun. 14th December at 15h in La Ferté Macé church (61). The concert in La Ferté Macé Church is an opportunity for listening and singing many traditional French and English carols - a good start to your Christmas festivities

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And finally:

My friend's new car has a button for pretty much everything. There is even one that says "rear wiper". He's still afraid to try that one.

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That's all for this month. As mentioned above, there will be no Bulletin in November as I am away for the whole of October. But I should be 'back on track' for the December issue! Have a great October.

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

October 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Sat 4th	'Rose et Bleu' cancer walk	Gorron	2
W/e 4th & 5th	Open Day at the Mayenne SPA	Changé	4
Sun. 5th	<i>Fête de l'Automne</i> (Autumn Fair)	Martigné-sur-Mayenne	2
“	Concert for 2 violins	Sainte-Suzanne	4
“	Road race	Oisseau	5
“	Water Colour Exhibition	Notre-Dame du Touchet	3
“	<i>Voix d'Eté</i> concert	Avrilly	4
Tues. 7th	Dire Straits' 'Shiver In The Dark'	Laval	4
Sat. 11th	Visit to beautiful residences	Sainte-Suzanne	3
W/e 11th & 12th	<i>Plants en fête</i>	Domfront	1
Sun. 12th	Pumpkin Fair	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
Sat. 18th	Quiz Night	Perrou	5
“	Visit a chocolate factory	Sainte-Suzanne	3
Sun. 19th	Harvest Festival service	Epinay-le-Compte	4
Tues. 21st	Visit to recycling sorting centre	Villedieu-les-Poëles	5
Wed. 22nd	Visit a village of character	Fontaine-Daniel	2
Fri. 24th	Visit a chocolate factory	Sainte-Suzanne	3
Sun. 26th	Chestnut Festival	Moulay	3
“	<i>Voix d'Eté</i> concert	Ronfeugeraï	4
Fri. 31st	Hallowe'en Race	Lassay-les-Châteaux	5