Issue no. 232 November 2026

Bulletin !

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

Please note – there will not be a Bulletin in December as I will be away from home when I usually prepare it! But I have put details of some December events at the back of this issue.

Thought for the month:

Good friends are like stars. You don't always see them but you know they are there

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g)/*brocantes* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at *www.brocabrac.fr* in case of any last-minute changes. ['53' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]. [Traditionally, there are very few *vide-greniers* at this time of the year, but the *Marchés de Noël* (Christmas markets) are starting to appear! Here are a few in the area (more can be found on *brocabrac.fr* and Tourist Offices).

Sun, 8th &) Bellou-en-Houlme (61) monthly v-g/*brocante* at La Chevalerie, ±150
Sun. 29th)

Marchés de Noël (Christmas markets)

25th to 29th	Laval (53)	in Place du 11 Novembre, ±20
27th & 28th	Changé (53)	in Salle des Ondines: on 27th =16h30–22h (+ lighting of illuminations); 28th =10h–18h, with entertainment and a carousel.
Sun. 29th	Dol de Bretagne (35)	10h-18h in Salle Châteaubriant, rue Châteaubriand.

Other markets:

Sun. 1st	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61):	*Salon des Antiquaires / brocante,* in Communs du Château, Allée Alois Monnet, 9h-18h. Entry: 3€, ±50. Food and drink available on site.
Sun. 1st	Château-Gontier (53)	*Bourse d'échanges autos/motos* in Espace Saint-Fiacre, Parc Saint-Fiacre; 8h to 17h, ±150. Food available on site.

Eating out - *Bistrot de la Haie*

This restaurant, at 1 Place des Combattants de la Liberté in La Haie-Traversaine (53, between Ambrières-Les-Vallées & Mayenne) serves a good *midi* – with a choice between 2 entrées, 2 main dishes & 2 desserts: the 3 courses with a drink for 13,90€. Traditional French cooking, with also Algerian Berber couscous and veggie couscous. Open Mons to Fridays, 7h to 19h. Located next to the church with plenty of parking. Tel: 06 72 32 19 73

Christmas Pop-up Shop

From Tues. 17th to Sun. 22nd, 10h to 17h each day, in the old railway station in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) there will be unique handcrafted creations, handmade ceramics and fabrics for the home and garden. The perfect Christmas shop for finding gifts. Free entry. For more info contact Ms Lynn Williams (*williams.lynn@yahoo.fr*).

Christmas illuminations

From 28th November until 3rd January 2027, 17h30 to 23h – a celebration of 30 years of lights from the Illuminated Towns and Villages of the Orne. The Normandy countryside lights up! Explore enchanting villages and experience the magic of Christmas. Dozens of villages shine brightly, much to the delight of visitors! From La Sauvagère to Céaucé, passing through Beauchêne (once voted the 4th best illuminations in the whole of France), La Michaudière, St. Mars d'Egrenne and Rouellé, each village becomes a beacon in the Normandy night – a symbol of conviviality and celebration. For more info contact the Tourist Offices of Domfront or Bagnoles de l'Orne, also *www.villagesillumines.fr* .

" Veg'evenement 4 "

On Sun. 8th, 10h to 20h, at Bldg 13, 22 Place Albert Jacquard in Laval (53), the '*Veg'evenement'* returns! A day dedicated to conviviality and delicious food! A market place with artisans, creators, authors, associations, a food corner with savoury and sweet offerings, tastings, etc. In short, a wonderful promise of shared culinary delights to break down the stereotypes surrounding veganism. Free entry. *(veganmayenne.fr*)

Les lumières de Laval & Bal de Noël

From 21st November until 3rd January 2027 – the Laval Christmas lights will dazzle! The switch-on is on Sat. 21st, followed by a Launch Party Dance.

Also, the Laval Christmas Market is on from 25th to 29th in Place du 11 Novembre. The *Grande Roue* (Big Wheel) will also be lit up and start revolving!

Beaujolais Nouveau & Racket Sports evening

Fri. 20th, 19h to 21h30, at the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tennis Club Maxime Merlin, rue Plassard, organised by the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tennis Club, an evening to try out tennis, padel and pickleball – or simply to go and enjoy Beaujolais Nouveau accompanied by platters of cold meats & cheeses. Tickets: 10€. For more info & reservation: 06 79 35 76 14, or ask at the Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66).

Dinner cruise with Christmas Lights

On Wed. 25th & Thurs. 26th, 20h-22h, departing from 25 Quai André Pinçon in Laval (53): lulled by the magic of Laval's illuminations, you can enjoy a festive menu while cruising on the river Mayenne. A must-see experience of Laval's lights! Tickets: 58€ per adult (children under 12: 30€ – same menu as for adults but smaller portions). Menu: 'punch' & savoury canapés, salmon gravlax, classic duck parmentier, cheese platter, tiramisu dessert, red & white wine, still water & a glass of sparkling wine.

Or, for a more relaxed experience – a cruise without a meal:

On Wed. 25th to Sat. 28th, 16h45 to 18h, embark on the '*Vallis Guidonnis'* and set off to see the illuminations with a commentary by the captain (in French, but some English may be spoken). Tickets: 12€ per person (free for children under 2). Depart from the same place as above. More info & booking for these at the Laval Tourist Office (*laval-tourisme.com)*.

Exhibition of LEGO® in La Ferté-Macé (61)

This takes place on 7th & 8th, 10h to 19h in the Salle Rossolini, Blvd Hamonic, La Ferté-Macé. The association '*Indépendance Brick*', in partnership with the town of La Ferté-Macé, invites you to a weekend dedicated to the world of Lego®. Enthusiasts, families and the simply curious are all welcome to discover many original creations and share a friendly moment with the famous building bricks. There will be 35 exhibitors from different backgrounds, also a big raffle with many LEGO® sets to be won, a free treasure-hunt for children, a DUPLO® area for children up to 6 years and LEGO® building spaces for older children and adults to give free rein to their imagination. LEGO® sets will also be available for sale. A refreshment stand and food area will be provided by the Vélo Club of La Ferté-Macé (VCFM). Opening hours: on Sat: 10h to 19h; Sun: 9h to 17h. Entry: 3€; children ages 6 to 12: 1€; under 6s free. Part of the profits will be donated to Telethon and the League Against Cancer.

Salon Multicollection

Sun. 8th at 9h to 18h in the Communs du Château, Allée Alois Monnet in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) this is a meeting for collectors, organised by the *Association de Collectionneurs d'Andaine* (the Andaine Collectors' Association). This collectors' fair allows the buying, selling and exchange of postcards, stamps, cheese labels, antique toys, and unusual objects. Entry: 1€ (under 18s free).

Chorale 'Arc-en-Ciel du Bocage'

On Sun. 15th, 15h to 17h in the Chapelle Saint-Ernier in Céaucé (61) the voices of this choir will resonate. The '*Arc-en-Ciel du Bocage*' choir, whose choir-master is Richard Berry, will interpret about 20 religious and secular songs, classical or modern. Free, with a possible voluntary collection.

Piano concert at the Château

Fri. 27th, 19h to 21h, in the Château du Gué aux Biches, near Bagnoles de l'Orne (61, on the D325 forest road, west of the town) – a piano concert where Christophe Jourdain brings together well-known works and musical gems. The concert will begin with 40 minutes of music, followed by an apéritif in the dining room, and then a second 40-minute concert. Tickets are 15€. There is seating for a maximum of 35 people, so please contact the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office (*bagnolesdelorne.com)* if you would like tickets. Payment is on arrival.

The Viking Normand Male Voice Choir

Sat. 28th, 20h to 21h, in the church in Juvigny-Val-d'Andaine (61), this is an all-male voice choir under the musical and artistic direction of Cécile Perreto, exploring songs from around the world, including sacred songs and film scores. Tickets: 12€ (*helloasso.com)*

Randonnée du mardi (Tuesday walk)

Tues. 3rd, 14h to 17h, in and around Champsecret (61). Depart at 14h from the Carrefour (crossroads) des Auneaux. More info: *randonneursdomfrontais.sportsregions.fr.* No need for registration.

Randonnée du dimanche (Sunday walk)

Sun. 8th, 16h to 17h in and around Dompierre (61). Depart at 16h from the car park of the *Fours de la Butte Rouge.* No registration required. (More info as above)

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And finally:

If you always do what interests you, at least one person is pleased! (Katherine Hepburn)

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That's all for this month. Have a great November! As I say, there will be no December edition but please contact (or go to) any Tourist Office for many Christmas ideas and events.

Judy Skinner

e-mail: judithsk@free.fr

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

November 2026

Date	Event	Location	Page
Tues. 3rd	*Randonnée du mardi* (Tuesday walk)	Champsecret	4
7th & 8th	Exhibition of LEGO®	La Ferté-Macé	3
Sun. 8th	*Randonnée du dimanche* (Sunday walk)	Dompierre	4
‘‘	*Salon Multicollections*	Bagnoles de l’Orne	3
‘‘	*Veg’evenement 4*	Laval	2
Sun. 15th	‘*Arc-en-Ciel du Bocage’* choir	Céaucé	3
17th to 22nd	Christmas pop-up shop	Bagnoles de l’Orne	2
Fri. 20th	Beaujolais Nouveau & Racket Sports evening	Bagnoles de l’Orne	2
Sat. 21st	Switching-on of the Christmas lights	Laval	2
Wed. 25th	Dinner cruise on the river Mayenne	Laval	3
‘‘	Cruise past the Christmas illuminations	Laval	3
Thurs. 26th	Dinner cruise on the river Mayenne	Laval	3
Fri. 27th	Piano concert at the château	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Sat. 28th	The Viking Normand Male Voice Choir	Juvigny-Val-d’And.	4
‘‘	Cruise past the Christmas illuminations	Laval	3

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Advance Notice for DECEMBER 2026:

Chorale Vivace Christmas Concerts

“Come and celebrate the Christmas season with us as we present 3 concerts in December in the following churches:

- ♫ Brecé (53) – in l’Eglise Notre-Dame de l'Assomption on Sun. 6th December at 3pm
- ♫ Passais la Conception (61) – in l’Eglise Notre-Dame (centre of Passais) on Wed. 9th December at 8pm
- ♫ Domfront (61) – in l’Eglise Saint-Julien on Sun. 13th December at 3pm

Our programme features seasonal pieces in French, Latin and English, sacred and secular, traditional and modern. All concerts are free with a collection for local charities. For further info please contact LesleyThomson at *les.paul@wanadoo.fr*

(Continued over ...)

Some more events in December 2026:

Orne Christian Fellowship

There will be a Christmas Carol Service on Sun. 13th at 11h in Passais church (61) and there will be refreshments after the service.

Voix d'Été CHRISTMAS concerts

This year's Christmas concerts will consist of traditional carols both old and new, with audience participation encouraged. Their 3 concerts are:

1. Sat. 5th December at 3 pm in La Chapelle de Sacré-Coeur, Athis de l'Orne (61)
2. Sun. 6th December at 4 pm in l'Abbaye Sainte-Marie, Lonlay l'Abbaye (61)
3. **Community Christmas Carol Concert-** on Sunday 13th December at 3 pm in Église Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption, La Ferté-Macé (61). This concert is for people in the area to join together to celebrate the start of Christmas in a happy, fun and relaxed, traditional way. There will be mainly English and French carols, so something for everyone to sing-along to! We enjoy mince pies and mulled wine after the concert. Each year this concert gets bigger and more popular. All welcome!

General information on *Voix d'Eté Chorale*

" Voix d'Été is a small friendly four-part choir of English, French and German singers. The choir started in 2010. We sing a varied programme of choral music (secular and sacred) ranging from the Renaissance through to the present time. We have concerts in the summer and at Christmas-time. We are seeking to recruit new members, especially tenors. Why not come along and give us a try? We'd be pleased to see you. Singing is good for the soul and is something that soothes stress as well as being enjoyable. We raise money for charities through voluntary collections taken at our concerts. We practice every Tuesday afternoon 14:30 – 16:30 in the community hall in Dompierre. The weekly practices are followed by tea and delicious homemade cake. "

For more info on concerts or the chorale, please contact *francoise.brison@icloud.com, tel. 06 41 39 89 43.*

La Ferté-Macé (61) Christmas market

This will be held on Wed. 16th December from 14h around the town. For more info on this and any other Christmas markets in December, visit (or contact) a Tourist Office.