

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the Month

To anyone out there who's hurting, it is not a sign of weakness to ask for help, it's a sign of strength

[President Obama, Feb. 2015]

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 ['53' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Mon. 1 st	Le Pas (53)	v-g in Place du 11 Novembre, 8h-18h, ±70
“	Fougères (35)	<i>vide-maison</i> at 14 rue du Gen'l Chanzy, 9h-18h30
Sun. 7 th	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150
“	Avranches (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> , Place Valhubert, ±30
“	Dinard (35)	monthly <i>brocante</i> , Place du Marché, 9h-18h, ±30
“	Montsûrs-St.Cénéri (53)	v-g in Place du Champ de Foire, 8h-17h, ±70
“	La Haie-Traversaine (53)	v-g at the <i>base de loisirs</i> , 9h-18h, ±150
“	Montigné-le-Brillant (53)	v-g in centre ville, 9h-17h, ±300
Mon. 8 th	Rives d'Andaine (61)	v-g in the town, 8h-18h, ±150
“		v-g in <i>Fête de la Nature</i> et du jeu (see page 6)
W/e 13 th /14 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	v-g in <i>Foire des Andaines</i> , route du Hippodrome. The Big One – 2.5kms long! ±2,000
Sun. 14 th	Vautorte (53)	<i>Puces de couturiers et loisirs créatifs</i> (see page 3)
“	St Jean-des-Bois (61)	v-g in the town, 8h-18h, ±70
“	Montflours (53)	<i>vide-jardins</i> in <i>Fête du Printemps</i> (see p.6)
Sun. 21 st	Granville (50)	<i>Marché d'Antiquités Brocante</i> in Cour Jonville, ±30
Sun. 28 th	Genêts (50)	v-g in the streets, 8h-17h50, ±150
“	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g/ <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150

Special dates

Sunday 1st *Fête du Muguet* (see page 2), also *Fête du Travail*

Sunday 8th *Victoire 1945* (Armistice Day)

Thursday 18th *Ascension*

Monday 29th *Lundi de Pentecôte*

Eating out – “*Ô Fées Tout*” in Levaré

Not tried yet by myself, but many people have recommended this new restaurant, on the main road through Levaré (opposite the car park). Open 12h to 14h for a very good 3-course lunch (14€). They open also from 06h and serve a continental breakfast.

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.

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. Plenty of areas for a picnic.

On Sun. 7th will be the *Fête du Printemps* (Spring Fair), 10h to 18h, and you can also watch - or take part in - the ‘Painters in the Gardens’ where both professional and amateur artists can spend the day producing their masterpieces from anywhere in the gardens. Set up for the artists at 9h, entry for the public at 10h. Entry to the gardens: 6€, children 3€. More info at: www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

Cancer Support France Nord events

Monthly Brunches: Weds. 10th & 24th at the Salle des Fêtes in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). Doors open at 10h, last orders at 12h30. Vegetarian option available.

Quiz Night: Fri. 5th at the bar ‘*Le Viking*’ in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). Teams of 6, but if you are unable to make up a team, no problem, do go and take part. Price: 3€ per person. Quiz starts at 20h. They look forward to seeing you.

Spring Fayre: Sat. 13th, 10h to 16h, in the Salle des Fêtes, Notre-Dame du Touchet. There will be a variety of stalls: crafts, cakes, gifts and lots more. Refreshments will be served all day in the tearoom.

For more info on these events, go to: nord@cancersupportfrance.org

[Please see the Advance Notice section on page 7 for a June event.]

Festival Ateliers Jazz

From Sat. 13th to 20th at 20h30 in the Salle Sociocultural in Meslay-du-Maine (53) there will be jazz concerts nightly by different well-known and popular groups. For more info: www.festivaljazz-meslay.com. Entry: 15€

Puces des couturiers et loisirs créatifs

Sun. 14th, 9h30 to 18h, at the Salle Polyvalente in Vautorte (53) this is a market for dressmakers and also items for creative leisure.

They say, we say – and why

“*J’ai un chat dans la gorge*” (lit. “I have a cat in my throat”). English equivalent: “I have a frog in my throat”. Swallowing a frog is just about imaginable but how could a cat get lodged in someone’s windpipe, obstructing them from speaking clearly? No one knows, but it is probably a 19th century confusion with a word meaning both cat and fur ball.

A ‘Sunday of Character’ in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61)

Sun. 28th, 15h to 17h – in this quarter of Bagnoles de l’Orne, near the château, you can discover the existence of lovely houses from *La Belle Epoque* (the turn of the century) such as *Le Chalet Suédois* or *La Villa Matignon*. More info from the Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66)

Visit *l’Arbre Brasserie* (*l’Arbre Brewery*)

On Wed. 3rd & Thurs. 4th, 14h30 to 15h30, at La Noë Plaine, Bagnoles de l’Orne (61), lovers of artisanal beer can discover this brewery in the heart of the town. A guided tour (in French) will show the different stages of production of this local beer, ending with a tasting! (Min. 3 people, max. 20 people). Tickets: 3€. More info & redservations from the Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66)

Bar de la Plage re-opens in La Ferté-Macé (61)

This bar/restaurant at the edge of the *plan d’eau* (lake) in La Ferté-Macé has new owners, Jacky and Sandie Lesage. They will be open every day from 10h to 20h (10h to 23h in July & August). They serve a lunch, snacks, drinks, ice creams and crêpes. They also sell tickets for the mini-golf course. On Sat. 13th there will be a concert of popular music by the group ‘*Fertois 314*).

Cheese of the Month – *Sainte-Maure de Touraine*

This log of semi-soft, ivory-coloured goat’s cheese from the *département* of Indre et Loire (37, south of the river Loire) is one of the classic French cheeses. It has been celebrated as one of the Touraine’s regional gastronomic treasures for several centuries. The curd is moulded into logs then left to drain naturally. After being un-moulded, the cheese is salted, sprinkled with ashes and a rye straw is inserted as a guarantee of origin. It is a good addition to a cheese-board, but may also be enjoyed finely sliced with aperitifs. Goes well with white wines from the Loire Valley – Vouvray and Sauvignon Blanc, Fumé Blanc, Sancerre.

Something you didn’t know you didn’t know . . .

Norman names: When he became King of England, William The Conqueror’s census for his 1086 Domesday Book included the names of barons who followed him to England. British family names thus traceable from this include Baskerville (from Bacqueville), Percy (Percy-en-Auge) and Neville (Neuville). The Disney (as in Walt) family name comes from Isigny.

Entertainment & Concerts

Wed. 3rd, Thurs. 4th & Fri. 6th at 20h30 in the Cathedral in Laval (53): “*Printemps de l’orgue*” – classical organ recitals. Free, with a collection. More info at the Laval Tourist Office (02 43 49 46 46, www.laval-tourisme.com)

Sat. 13th at 21h in the *Centre d’Animation et du Congrès*, 12 ave. des Thermes, Bagnoles de l’Orne (61): the group ‘Kavkaz’ – 5 talented musicians, with varied instruments, play music and songs from the majestic regions of the Caucasus, mainly Georgia. Tickets: 15€ (students & unemployed: 13€) available from the Tourist Office.

Sun. 7th at 12 noon – ‘Great Gorrion Street Party’ to celebrate the coronation of King Charles. Music provided by Ann and Les of Musicnights, hot food provided by ‘Route 66’, and afternoon teas, hot drinks & cakes served by ‘*Une Tasse de Bonheur*’. You can now order your cream teas / afternoon teas by sending us a message or popping in to No. 1, Rue Corbeau Paris, Gorrion (53), tel: 06 28 23 26 86.

Sat. 20th – ‘Musicnights May Party’ with Ann & Les. Starts at 19h until late (in their Disco Barn). Expect 60s/70s/80s Soul, Motown, Disco music all played on delicious vinyl! These are regular monthly FREE events. Bring your own drinks and snacks (collection jar for donations, however small, for running costs, thank you). Enchante, 5 Grappay Charpentier, Brecé (53) R.S.V.P.: ann@enchantefrance.fr; text: 07 86 81 80 95

Organ concerts in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61)

Organised by *Les Amis de l’Orgue de Sainte Madeleine de Bagnoles de l’Orne*, concerts at 9 Place de l’Eglise in Bagnoles de l’Orne:

♪ Sun. 7th, 17h to 18h15: violin, and organ with 2 – 4 hands. Violin recital by Ouliana Lioubytska, organ by J-C Duval (head organist at the church). Prog.: Bach, Mozart, Cérambault, Charles Gounad. No reservation needed. Free, with collection.

♪ Mon. 29th, 17h to 18h15, recital with organ and ‘organetto’. Music from the Middle Ages to the 20th century: Hildegard Van Bingen, Bach, Moondog, Buxtehude, Correa de Arauxo. No reservation needed. Free, with a collection.

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 & world music songs with simple group harmonies and developing & improving vocal techniques (e.g. breath, pitch, projection, tone).

7 week course at HeartSong Normandie in Mortain (50) starting Tues. 2nd 19h-20h30. Booking essential. More info: www.heartsongnormandie.com; helloheartsong@gmail.com

Lest We Forget

The World War II Museum, at 18 rue de la Place in Quineville (50, SE of Cherbourg) is open daily, 10h to 19h, from April until 1st Oct. You will find hundreds of objects, clear explanation panels and it is accessible for everyone. From occupation to invasion - the entire chronological course of the Second World War in Normandy, in over 1,000 m² of modern space. You can wander through a reconstructed Occupation Street with its shops, dwelling houses and with the sounds of the period. www.memorial-quineville.com

Presentation of an electric aeroplane

On 12th & 13th, 14h to 19h, at the Aerodrome de Bruyères Couterne, in Rives d'Andaine (61) you can discover '*Le Velis Electrique Adma*'. To take a flight in it (on reservation): 100€. More info: www.aeroclubdandaines.com

Vide-Grenier and Art Exhibition

On. Sun. 14th, 9h to 17h, in the Salle des Associations, rue Moroge (near *la Poste*) in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53), Joe Morgan and his Studio Artists present their first exhibition since Covid. A large collection of recent works to just admire or buy if you wish.

Next English film in Gorrion (53) cinema

The next English (VO) film in Gorrion cinema will be on Tues. 9th (as Mon. 8th is a public holiday): 'The Lost King', (drama) - directed by Stephen Frears, with Sally Hawkins, Steve Cougan, Harry Lloyd.

* "In 2012, after having been lost for over 500 years, the remains of King Richard III were discovered beneath a car park in Leicester. This film is the life-affirming true story of a woman, Philippa Langley, who refused to be ignored and who took on the country's most eminent historians, forcing them to think again about one of the most controversial kings in England's history."

The film starts at 20h and tickets (5,50€) are available at the cinema (beside the church) from 19h30 on the night. (Note: the '*Bar de la Mairie*' at the bottom of the hill will not be open, as Tuesday is their closing day). [It might be advisable to check on www.gorrion-cinemas.fr before setting off in case of any last-minute changes].

The theft of an ancient church bell

In March, a bronze church bell (*une cloche*) weighing 600kg and set on a granite block near the front door of the church in La Haye-Pesnel (50) was stolen. Cast in 1793, it was one of a pair of bells in the church that was badly damaged during the Revolution. Classed as a *Monument Historique* in 1944, it carried a Revolutionary inscription. The price of bronze is currently around 6.3 euros a kilo, which is not a lot but seems to have been enough to make it worthwhile for the thieves.

Avon May Party and Scentsy May Party

Two events at Enchante, 5 Grappay Charpentier, Brecé (53). For more details contact Ann Taylor, 07 86 81 80 95 (France); (0044) 7808 726822 (UK):

Sat. 27th, 15h-17h: 'Avon May Party'. Free beverages and nibbles. Go and browse the new catalogue, try samples & products and collect your orders.

Sat. 27th, 15h-17h: 'Scentsy May Party'. Go and explore the world of fragrances, including wax warmers, diffusers and more. Free samples and goody bags.

Exhibition of vintage vehicles

On Sun. 28th, 9h30 to 12h30, at Place du Marché Couvert in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) by the Tourist Office, organised by the *Assoc. Bagnoles Moteurs Classiques*: "Cars & Coffee" presents a gathering of sports and prestigious vintage vehicles. Free entry.

Fête du Printemps & vide-jardins

Sun. 14th, 9h-18h, in Place de la Sergenterie in Montflours (53) – *vide-jardins* (sale of garden items), sale & exchange of plants, botanical walk & entertainment.

Mayenn' Bière Festivale

Sat. 6th, 11h to 20h, in Saint-Jean-sur-Mayenne (53), organised by *Brasseurs Mayennais*, you will find a presentation and sale of local regional beers, with concerts and entertainment. Free entry.

Jazz evening in Villaines-la-Juhel (53)

Thurs. 25th at 20h30 in the College St-Nicholas in Villaines-la-Juhel (53): Jazz with the Matthieu Donarier Trio: (saxophone), Manu Codjia (guitar) and Joe Quizke (drums), with an evening of inspired jazz!. More info: 06 07 47 49 89. Free.

Weekly Meditation and Mantra Sessions – singing for wellbeing

Every Tuesday morning from 10h30 to 11h30 – Meditation and Mantra sessions at HeartSong Normandie in Mortain (50). Meditate and sing simple, soulful songs, chants, mantras and sound meditations from around the world to uplift, relax, bring joy and nurture your wellbeing. No experience necessary. 1-2-1 sessions and private group bookings are also available. Booking essential - to book your place contact Ema and Peter at HeartSong Normandie.

For further details: helloheartsong@gmail.com; <https://www.heartsongnormandie.com>

Fête de la Nature et du jeu

On Mon. 8th, 9h to 18h, at the *terrain des sports* (sports ground) in Larchamp (53) – *vide-greniers* with local produce market, games & entertainment. Free entry.

Sport & Leisure Activities

Parc de Loisirs (leisure park) in Gorrion (53)

For its 20th season, this popular leisure park in Gorrion still offers 7 *accrobranche* circuits (tree zip wire courses, available for children over 4 years). There is a new *parcours* (circuit) 12 metres in height. Also new this year: the laser run - a type of biathlon with a foot race and the laser gun. Swin golf, foot golf, golf archery, paintball, hire of kayaks & trail bikes and a new exterior basketball court, are also available. www.parcloisirscolmont.wixsite.com

Judo Club des 2 Vallées

Every Monday in Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) are French-run courses of judo (beginners judo, jujitsu, taïso and the new cross training). The first 2 sessions are free. For the venue contact: 06 19 80 32 89 (French spoken) or judoambrieres@gmail.com

Advance notice for June

Sat. 17th June at the Salle des Fêtes in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50): an ‘Apéro Evening’ in support of Cancer Support France Nord. Music by Jon & Annie, Adrian, King & Byrne and Nigel Orange. Tickets: 8€, includes provision of an *apéro* and a drink. There will be a bar plus additional snacks. Please do not take your own drinks or food. For more info and to book your tickets please email: nord@cancersupportfrance.org.

+ + + + +

And finally:

I got knocked off my bike by a council lorry preparing the road for cold weather. “Why don’t you look where you’re going?” I shouted through gritted teeth.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

That’s all for this month. Just a reminder - as I need to keep my personal distribution list up to date (as you can imagine, with over 300 names on the list!) if I don’t hear from a reader for over a year (i.e. 12 issues) I tend to delete their name, as people leave the area, change their email address, etc., without letting me know (which happens a lot). So, do please keep in touch once a year or so (which most of my readers do). Then you will be kept on my list! Thanks.

Judy Skinner

e-mail: judithsk@free.fr

Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

May 2023

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Page</u>
Wed. 3 rd	' <i>Printemps de l'orgue</i> ' organ recital	Laval	4
W/e 3 rd /4 th	Visit <i>l'Arbre Brasserie</i>	Bagnoles de l'Orne	3
Fri. 5 th	CSFN Quiz Night	Notre-Dame du Touchet	2
Sat. 6 th	<i>Mayenn' Bière Festival</i>	St-Jean-sur-Mayenne	6
Sun. 7 th	Violin and organ concert	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
“	<i>Fête du Printemps</i> (Spring Fair)	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
“	Great Gorrion Street Party	Gorrion	4
Mon. 8 th	<i>Fête de la Nature et du jeu</i>	Larchamp	6
Tues. 9 th	English film : 'The Lost King'	Gorrion	5
Wed. 10 th	CSFN Monthly Brunch	Notre-Dame du Touchet	2
12 th & 13 th	Presentation of an electric aeroplane	Rives d'Andaines	5
Sat. 13 th	Concert by 'Kavkaz'	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
“	CSFN Spring Fayre	Notre-Dame du Touchet	2
13 th to 20 th	<i>Festival Ateliers Jazz</i> (jazz concerts)	Mesley-sur-Maine	2
Sun. 14 th	Art Exhibition & <i>vide-greniers</i>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	5
“	Dressmakers & creative leisure market	Vautorte	3
“”	<i>Fête du Printemps et vide-jardins</i>	Montflours	6
Sat. 20 th	Musicnights May Party	Brecé	4
Wed. 24 th	CSFN Monthly Brunch	Notre-Dame du Touchet	2
Thurs. 25 th	Jazz with the Matthieu Donario Trio	Villaines-la-Juhel	6
Sat. 27 th	Avon May Party & Scentsy May Party	Brecé	6
Sun. 28 th	A 'Sunday of Character'	Bagnoles de l'Orne	3
“	“Cars & Coffee” vintage cars	Bagnoles de l'Orne	6
Mon. 29 th	Violin & organ recital	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4