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## President's Letter

By Jean-Loup Baer

Your Association has been quite busy during the spring and summer months. Several articles in this issue are devoted to the events that we have hosted or sponsored.

Our activities were not limited to the local scene. This year Nantes hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> *Floralies Internationales*, one of the most prestigious floral horticulture shows in the world. We are extremely grateful to our member Frank Robinson, a Senior Landscape Architect in the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department, to have designed on his own time an exhibit that was built and shown in Nantes. Tom Waite, who joined our Board at the beginning of the year, was Seattle's "official" representative to the *Floralies* (cf. his report).

In addition to Tom, Ellen Taft, who has been active locally in the French Theatre, joined the Board a few months ago. Short bios of Tom, Ellen, and of Larry Laffrey who has been on the Board for 18 months and is our Corresponding Secretary and whom we "forgot" to introduce to you earlier, are included.

I would like also to give you some news of Tom Bennett, our Past President and Chair of the

Scholarship Committee. Tom had a successful open heart surgery at the beginning of July and is now resting at home. I am sure that I speak for all of you in wishing him a total recovery. We hope to see him soon at a Board meeting and at our next event.

In 2015, we will celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the twinning of Nantes and Seattle. It has been our custom to have delegations from each city come and visit each other's *ville jumelle* every 5 years. Although no dates have been cast in stone, in the past a Seattle delegation went to Nantes in early May and a Nantes delegation came to Seattle in early summer. Several of you have expressed interest in going to Nantes and in helping in the hosting and festivities that will accompany the Nantais's visit in Seattle. It is time to start to think seriously about the organization of this event and we'll have a preliminary meeting in September.

I am sure that many of you will be as surprised as I was to learn that Seattle is one of the hot spots for break dancing. There is a dance studio, the Massive Monkees that is world renown. They have won two world

## President's Letter *continued*

championships and have competed in top-notch national and international competition. Its non-profit arms, Massive Experience and Extraordinary Futures, organize after school programs with break dancing as a basic component to teach students not only dancing skills but also means to achieve their true potential.

The connection with the Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association is two-fold. First, a similar program exists in Nantes under the tutelage of "Back to Basics." Second, Hocine Jouini, who is from Nantes and was an intern in Seattle about six years ago, himself a superb break dancer ([watch http://vimeo.com/6800401](http://vimeo.com/6800401) and you'll be awed) now resides in Seattle and teaches at the Massive Monkees studio.

Both the Seattle and Nantes break dancing groups want to expand their collaboration by having exchanges of two or three students, approximately of high school age, and a teacher spending a week or so in the other city. Nantes and Nantes Métropole have already sponsored a Back to Basics member to come to Seattle and teach/participate in workshops at the Massive Monkees studio. Some Nantes dancers will come in April 2015 to participate in Seattle's Break Dancing Day. Naturally, the Massive Monkees would like to reciprocate.

The Board has met with Hocine and his colleagues to see whether we could help and cooperate. As part of our mission to facilitate cultural exchanges with Nantes, we want to support this project. The support can be both financial and pedagogical. For example, we could have a fundraiser for the Massive Monkees (ideas anyone?) and also tutor the students going to Nantes to improve their knowledge of the French language and culture. Do not hesitate to contact me if you are interested in this project.

So once more I call on you to volunteer. We have two important projects in the works and we can use a lot of help!



**Massive Monkees performed at the Picnic and Barbeque in July.**

## A Note from the Editor

By Alaina McCallum

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles to the latest edition of *Nantesense*.

It has been a wonderful experience assembling this newsletter. The Association has been involved in numerous of activities in recent months that have helped strengthen the ties between Seattle and Nantes.

I look forward to documenting the events in the coming year.

## New and Newer Board Members

Below are short introductions about Larry Laffrey, who joined the board nearly two years ago, and Tom Waite and Ellen Taft, who joined the Board earlier in the year.



**Larry Laffrey** joined SNSCA in 2010, and visited Nantes for a conference later that same year. Then the director of study abroad programs at Central Washington University, Larry sought to promote SNSCA scholarship opportunities amongst CWU's students of French. A lifelong international education exchange professional, having worked at several universities in the US and Canada, Larry moved to Seattle in 2012 and soon joined the Board.

**Tom Waite** is a practicing attorney at Thomas A. Waite Attorney at Law, PLLC. He practices contract and commercial as well as environmental law. He was an attorney on The Boeing Company Law Department for more than thirty years. He has lived in the City of Seattle most of his life.

Tom began studying French in 2001, and has continued doing so since then. As a member of the French-American Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest, Tom became aware of Seattle's sister city Nantes, France, and joined the Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association.



**Ellen Taft** first learned French at nine years old at Sacred Heart School, a French Catholic School. In college, she studied European History. In her 20s, she lived in Germany and the U.K. where she taught ESL. French History in general and the many revolutions is one of the reason she loves France. She is the former managing director of Le Théâtre Français de Seattle. As a former teacher, she is very interested in promoting the study of languages and cultural exchanges. Ellen feels strongly that learning French in school still has value, and believes that through its scholarship program, Seattle-Nantes is helping to promote and protect the study of French.

### Give to SNSCA using AmazonSmile

There is now a simple way to help support your favorite charity, such as SNSCA. AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your purchases to the charity of your choice when you make eligible Amazon.com purchases. Susan Hulbert created an account for Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association on AmazonSmile, so now your AmazonSmile purchases can help support SNSCA.

It is simple to use. Instead of going to Amazon.com to shop, go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). From this website, login with your same Amazon.com account. Everything, your shopping cart, wish list, etc., will remain the same.

Consider donating to SNSCA when thinking about doing holiday shopping from home.

## French Fest

By Margaret Johnson

SNSCA again participated in French Fest at Seattle Center this past spring. In recent past years, French Fest has been held in March in lieu of the Festal event of Bastille Day in the summer, and is meant to be a celebration of French-Speaking Cultures. The daylong event has the purpose of promoting and raising awareness of Francophone cultures and traditions to the residents of the Greater Seattle area.

This year participants listened to live music, watched dance performances, tasted international cuisine, learned from informative seminars and cooking demonstrations, played games, and enjoyed a day full of fun activities *en français!*

The SNSCA information booth was located in the upper level of the Armory, along with our *bouquiniste* for the sale of books to support our scholarships to study French. We enjoyed good traffic and exposure due to the nearby seminars that were being held throughout the day and the delicious smells of fresh French bread from the tasting contest nearby!

As always, a special note of thanks to our volunteers who help so tirelessly to prepare, setup, manage, and take down the booth and book stall. We so appreciate their efforts, and encourage all members to participate in the event or any others throughout the year as they are able to.



## Welcome New Members!

We welcome the following members who have joined the Association since the last newsletter:

Alexandra Baldwin  
Trevor McAlister-Day  
Helen Williams

Connor Jankowski  
Catherine Ploue-Smith  
Steven Ginsberg

Bethany Lidgard  
Yael Tellez-Rodriguez

Tamar Yanay  
Krista Sunde

## Scholarship Recipients

By Alaina McCallum

At the end of April, the Scholarship Committee conducted interviews for the Seattle-Nantes Scholars Scholarship, which supports students studying French at a Washington State university. The Committee was impressed with the selection of strong candidates who applied. After deliberation, the Committee presented Trevor McAllister-Day and Bethany Liggard with scholarships. Trevor, a graduate of Bothell High School, is an incoming freshman at the University of Washington. His intended major is linguistics. Bethany, a senior at UW majoring in French and linguistics, plans to pursue a career teaching French to high school students.

In late July, the SNSCA awarded Megan Herndon with the Goldmark Scholarship, which is for students studying in Nantes. Megan is a junior at the University of Washington where she majors in Communication and minors in French. In addition to her typical course load, she writes for *The Daily*, the UW newspaper, and provides campus tours. Currently, she is studying in Nantes with a group from the University of Washington. Her goal following graduation is to pursue a career in journalism or public relations.

In addition to selecting the recent scholarship recipients, the Scholarship Committee has been discussing new fundraising techniques, specifically regarding the use of internet as a tool.



## Nantes Park

A handful of members came to the Spring Cleanup of Nantes Park on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. The volunteers made a big dent in the weeds that cover the gardens of the pocket park. It was a beautiful day and the hard work of the volunteers was much appreciated.

In the autumn, a work party from Microsoft will participate in the United Way Day of Caring to give Nantes Park another weeding before winter.





Chantal Baldacci



## Potluck for Students from Nantes

By Margaret Johnson and Alaina McCallum

In April, SNSCA member Chantal Baldacci graciously opened her home for a visit with over twenty students from Lycée Talensac in Nantes. The students came to Seattle with their teacher, Isabelle Le Corguillé, and Nantes-Seattle President Mariette Cassourret. Also attending the potluck were members of the host families and French-speaking friends of the hostess.

The students came to stay with families to get a taste of American life, and to improve their English. Although they did not attend school, they did visit Auburn Mountainview High School during their stay, and toured many sights in Seattle including Pike Place Market, Pacific Science Center, and Ride the Duck. The students also enjoyed shopping in downtown Seattle.

During a conversation with Mariette, she expressed enthusiasm for getting youth involved in exchanges and the sister city relationship. There were forty students from Lycée Talensace who applied, but only twenty-three were selected to come to Seattle. Mariette believes that parents of American students participate in the homestays, because they are interested in having their children and they themselves go to Nantes.

Many members of SNSCA came to the event, and visited with the students, most of whom spoke English nearly all of the time! SNSCA President Jean-Loup Baer gave a short welcome to the students and an overview of the relationship of the *jumelage* between Seattle and Nantes. We plan to help out with future student visits as well and look forward to even more of our own members attending such events.



Jean-Loup, Mariette, Isabelle





## Trip to Nantes

By Tom Waite

In late April of this year, I traveled to France primarily to visit Nantes and see what Seattle's sister city is like. After traveling in southwest France for two weeks, I arrived in Nantes the second week in May. *Les Floralies Internationales*, a flower show that happens every five years in Nantes, had begun earlier that week.

I corresponded with Christine Renard, Nantes Métropole's person responsible for its sister city relations. She was kind enough to take me to *Les Floralies Internationales*, where I received a guided tour of the second largest flower show in Europe. While I am not a gardener, I appreciate the beauty of plants and flowers. *Les Floralies Internationales* amazed me with its size, far larger than the Northwest Flower and Garden Show, diversity, and beauty of the displays. I saw the Seattle display designed by Frank Robinson, a senior landscape architect for Seattle Parks and Recreation, on his own time. There were also displays from Durban, South Africa, another sister city for Nantes, New York, and Tokyo. The photos give an idea of the beauty and scope of *Les Floralies Internationales*.

While in Nantes for three weeks, I took an intensive course in French. Christine arranged a social afternoon with others in Nantes having connections to Seattle, as well as a luncheon with Mariette Cassourret, the president of the Nantes-Seattle-Jacksonville Sister City Association. Mariette twice hosted me at dinners while I was in Nantes, and also invited me to a Breton celebration held one Sunday in Nantes. The hospitality that I received was wonderful.

As many of you know from visiting there, Nantes is a charming and very green city with very warm and welcoming people. If you have plans to visit France, then I strongly suggest that you visit Nantes.



**Le Saumon « Sockeye »**

**Concepteurs:** Ville de Seattle

**Source d'inspiration:** Le saumon rouge est un animal totémique au moment de la reproduction, et un met favori dans la région pacifique nord-ouest des U.S.A.

**Sockeye Salmon**

**Creators:** City of Seattle

**Source of Inspiration:** Sockeye is a totemic animal of reproduction, and a favorite dish in the Pacific Northwest.



## Laurence Landois Reception at Room 104

By Alaina McCallum

On the rainy evening of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, SNSCA hosted a reception for Nantes installation artist and sculptor Laurence Landois to honor her exhibit, *On the Way*, on display at Room 104 Gallery in Pioneer Square. The reception provided a wonderful opportunity to welcome Laurence to Seattle, and SNSCA members enjoyed being able to view the art and mingle while enjoying wine and light appetizers.

*On the Way* was inspired by the Ballard woman, Edith Macefield, who refused to sell her century old house to the developers after being offered one million dollars. Edith's defiance forced developers to build around Edith's home and brought her international internet fame. It was Edith's internet fame that carried the story to Laurence across the Atlantic to Nantes.

Laurence's exhibit consisted of two parts. The first being a site-specific installation titled *HOME SWEET HOME*, a series of ten small replica wooden houses suspended from the ceiling at varying heights and trailing streamers beneath them. The second part was a series of ten drawings on graph paper using ink and Posca titled *WAY*, all architectural fantasies about the Macefield house.

It was delightful being able to welcome Laurence to Seattle with a reception and it was an excellent opportunity for SNSCA members to talk with the Nantaise artist. Thanks to Room 104 for opening up your gallery to us!



## ***La Reine Margot* at Seattle International Film Festival**

By Jean-Loup Baer

On the afternoon of Memorial Day, a dozen Seattle-Nantes members went to see *La Reine Margot* the film that we sponsored at SIFF this year. The movie was screened at the Egyptian and our SIFF correspondent had reserved adjacent rows for our members so that we could sit together.

*La Reine Margot* is a 1994 film that played in the USA in a slightly cut version. SIFF showed the full re-edited version (162 minutes) and one can surmise that the scenes that had been removed were the goriest ones, and there were plenty of those! A knowledgeable gentleman told us, on the side-walk after the film, that a romantic scene that was very Hollywood-like and that did not fit too well in the movie had been added for American audiences.

Due to the length of the film and the lateness in the afternoon, we did not gather together after the movie. We could have discussed the authenticity of the "history" (the movie is based on the novel of the same title by Alexandre Dumas). This was the tumultuous time of the massacre of the Saint-Barthelemy and of the French Catholic royalty with Margot's brothers François II, Charles IX, and Henri III succeeding each other rapidly and leaving no male heir. The throne then passed to their Protestant (converting, reneging, reconverting) cousin Henri, Roi de Navarre and Margot's husband, who became Henri IV.

Sponsoring a film at SIFF is a little bit of a hit-or-miss. Two years ago we sponsored *The Intouchables*, a superb film that was No. 1 at the box office in France for a few months. Last year, it was *Jeunesse* that in France would be called *un navet* (a turnip; I guess the English equivalent is "a lemon"). *La Reine Margot* has become a classic after receiving several César Awards, the French equivalent of the Oscar, and the quality of the cast and of their acting certainly justify these honors. The main goal of our sponsorship is to participate actively in a French cultural experience and publicize our existence to Francophile movie goers.





## The Annual Picnic and Barbeque

By Margaret Johnson

The Annual Picnic and Barbeque was held on Sunday, July 13, a beautiful, warm day in Seattle. New and old members and friends gathered in the cool air under the shady trees at Madrona Park, on the shores of Lake Washington, to visit and share experiences of their connections to Nantes and to France. Members of the Seattle world champion breakdancing group Massive Monkees along with Massive Experience and Extraordinary Futures also were invited and attended.

Following the barbecue, members enjoyed a breakdancing performance on the grassy lawn by Massive Experience, an afterschool break dancing group. Massive Experience, Extraordinary Futures, a non-profit fundraising arm and an educational consulting group, and Massive Monkees are working to establish and fund an exchange with a breakdancing group in Nantes. The inspiration for the exchange is largely inspired by Hocine Jouini, a Nantais living in Seattle, who is a member of the Massive Monkees and instructor for the Massive Experience.

The picnic was yet another memorable event for all, and we hope even more members will be able to join next year.



## Annual General Meeting

Once again, the Annual General Meeting will be held at North City Bistro and Wine Shop (1520 NE 177th St., Shoreline). It will be on Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. A social hour with appetizers will begin at 4pm. Come to mingle with members and friends for dinner, followed by a short business meeting, and a presentation by Tish Van der Muelen, a founding member and longtime president of the association who will speak about the history of the Goldmark Scholarship.

In the coming weeks, you can anticipate an email and information on the website with further details. You may also contact Margaret Johnson at [margaret.johnson@seattle-nantes.org](mailto:margaret.johnson@seattle-nantes.org).

## 35th Anniversary

SNSCA will celebrate thirty-five years of partnership with Nantes in 2015. On Tuesday, September 30th, a group of seven members met at the Greenwood Library to begin planning for the 35th Anniversary Celebration.

Jean-Loup Baer and Alaina McCallum are co-chairs of the 35th Anniversary Committee. The planning is still in its early stages, though we have a general idea for the dates. The Nantais will be the first to participate in the exchange. They will be in Seattle for a week during the month of April; the exact dates are not solidified. A delegation from Seattle will arrive in Nantes around June 20th. There are still many details that will come.



If you are interesting in either going to Nantes or helping in Seattle when the Nantais arrive, please join the next committee meeting on Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Northeast Library (6801 35<sup>th</sup> Ave NE) at 6:15pm. For further information, you may contact Jean-Loup at [jean-loup.baer@seattle-nantes.org](mailto:jean-loup.baer@seattle-nantes.org) and Alaina McCallum at [alaina.mccallum@seattle-nantes.org](mailto:alaina.mccallum@seattle-nantes.org).

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