



EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris
Summer 2010



Author Christopher Buckley addresses the 90th anniversary gala dinner at the Hôtel de Pontalba, residence of the United States Ambassador to France.

The Library turns 90 with a birthday gala

The American Library in Paris began its tenth decade of service on June 1 with a formal anniversary gala dinner at the residence of the United States Ambassador to France.

Christopher Buckley, the American novelist and memoirist, entertained more than 120 guests with a sardonic review of some of his adventures as a vice-presidential speechwriter, a magazine hoaxer, and an author prone to proposing clunker titles for his books.

The 90th anniversary gala was hosted by United States Ambassador Charles H. Rivkin and his wife, Susan Tolson, and attended by trustees, authors, members, and friends old and new.

The ambassador thanked the guests “for keeping this great Paris institution thriving so that new generations can discover the power and beauty of the written word -- and the richness of the American literary tradition.”

William Torchiana, chairman of the board of trustees, declared, “today, ninety years after our founding in May, 1920, the Library remains a vital and thriving place. Last year we served nearly 75,000 visitors, averaged roughly 930 transactions a day, and had an audience of

over 3,300 for our evening programs... and, of course, we also have a great reading room where our users can come to just sit ... *and read.*”

Torchiana also publicly thanked “one American in Paris who has stepped forward, many times, to sustain us” — Gregory Weingarten, and his family’s Annenberg Foundation.

Charles Trueheart, director of the Library, read a selection of comments about the Library from its members. Their testimony, he said, reflected “two themes, beyond a love of books, or of reading, or of libraries. The themes are those of the familiar -- even the familial -- and the transcendent.” (These comments can be found on page 7 of this issue.)

As has become customary at the annual Library gala, several authors in the broader Library family were in attendance. Among them were the novelist Diane Johnson, who heads the Library’s writer’s council, which will be announcing plans in the fall for a produced his old friend Chris Buckley thusly:

“Some people imagine the way the world could be, and ask, Why not?”

Continued on page 6

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 15 June 2010

19h30-21h00

All members of the Library — and interested non-members, too — are invited to the Annual General Meeting of the American Library in Paris, Inc., a membership corporation organized under the laws of Delaware, operating as a foreign association in France.

Members of the board of trustees and the director will report on the activities of the Library since the last meeting and sketch prospects and plans for the year ahead. A slate of new and current trustees will be proposed for election or re-election to three-year terms: **Celestine Bohlen, Peter Fellowes, Nicolas ver Hulst, and Jean-Louis de Montesquiou.**

After the conclusion of Library business, please join us for a brief presentation by

Patrick Weil

*Directeur de recherches, CNRS
Founder and president,
Bibliothèques Sans Frontières*



LIBRARY NEWS

How it all came to bee

The third annual Paris Spelling Bee unfolded at the Library on May 30, with nearly thirty competitors from thirteen Paris schools vying for honors.

The competition for younger spellers ended when Tuli Bennett-Bose, 10, of the International School of Paris, correctly spelled *demarcate*. Niam Howley, 10, of the Institut de l'Assomption, was the runner-up among the "Gazelles" (CE2-CM2).

In the Cheetah (6ème-4ème) competition, Shannon Connelly, 13, of EABJM correctly spelled *serendipity* to win first prize. The runner-up was Cody Vance, 12, of College International Fontainebleau. Tough words that knocked out Cheetahs along the way included: *ingenue*, *peacenik*, *recalcitrant*, and *beleaguer*. Gazelles were felled by such words as *palatable*, *prescription*, *contiguous*, and *credentials*.

The winners received family memberships to the Library and all the contestants were awarded certificates, medals, and silver trophies.

The bee is co-sponsored by Gifted in France, a local association of English-language families, and the Library, and organized by volunteers led by Helen Sahin Connelly, Jude Smith Matisse, Cate O'Connor and Rose Burke, working with the Library's Naida Kendrick Culshaw.

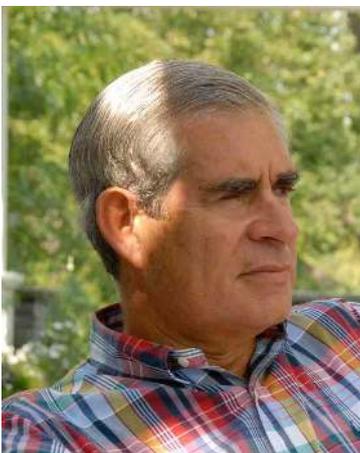


Summer hours

■ From **Thursday 15 July** through **Saturday 14 August**, the Library will operate reduced hours: **12h00 - 18h00**.

■ On **Tuesday 17 August**, the Library resumes its normal weekday hours of operation, Tuesday through Saturday from 10h00–19h00.

■ During July and August, the Library will not be open on Sundays. Sunday hours will resume beginning on **Sunday 5 September**.



Marshall Wais

A new president of the USA Foundation

Marshall I. Wais Jr., a former vice-chairman of the Library board of trustees, has been named president of the board of the directors of the American Library in Paris—USA Foundation. He succeeds George B. Dornblaser, Jr.

The USA Foundation is the U.S. entity that oversees the Library's endowment and provides a legal and professional link to the United States. Both the American Library in Paris, Inc., and its USA Foundation are incorporated in the state of Delaware.

A graduate of the University of Chicago and Harvard Business School, Wais spent his career in the steel industry and is the CEO of Marwais International LLC. He serves on the board of trustees of the University of Chicago and the board of governors of the American Hospital of Paris.

The other directors of the USA Foundation are J. Paul Horne, secretary; Karen Morris, treasurer; Dewey K. Shay; and, *ex officio*, the chairman and treasurer of the Library board of trustees, William D. Torchiana and Etienne Gorse.

The American Library in Paris

10, rue du Général Camou

75007 Paris France

01 53 59 12 60

www.americanlibraryinparis.org

Ex Libris is published four times a year, in March, June, September and December.

Spring appeal: Thanks!

The Library is grateful to all who so generously supported this year's spring appeal for donations. The appeal focused on how important regular support of members and friends is in ensuring the health of the Library as it celebrates its 90th year of service in Paris.

With more than half of the Library's income each year coming from gifts, grants and other contributions, gifts to the Library during appeals and throughout the year enable us to maintain and improve vital services and programs.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday 15 June 19h30

Annual General Meeting of the American Library in Paris. All members and guests welcome.

Wednesday 16 June 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Keri Walsh on the 'Letters of Sylvia Beach,' interviewed by Morgan Thomas.

Wednesday 23 June 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Screenwriter **Diane Lake** on the art of writing for the silver screen.

Wednesday 30 June 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Allan Massie on his novel, 'Death in Bordeaux.'

Thursday 1 July 19h30

Paris Writers Workshop@The Library

Biography and Memoir: Factual Truth versus Emotional Truth with **Sheila Kohler, Paula Butturini** and moderator **Clydette de Groot**.

Saturday 3 July 10h00-19h00

Used Book Sale all day at the Library.



Wednesday 7 July 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Ted Stanger on 'Sacrées Vacances.'

Saturday 7 August 12h00-19h00

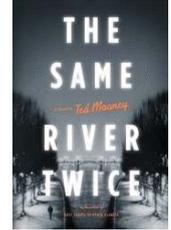
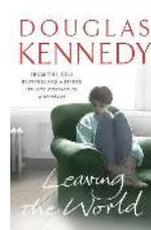
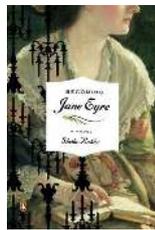
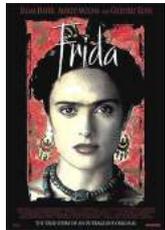
Used Book Sale all afternoon at the Library.



And coming in the fall...

Novelist **Douglas Kennedy** on 'Leaving the World' ... **Valentine de Ganay** and **Charles Quest-Ritson** begin a four-part series on French gardens ... Historian **Alistair Horne** ... **Peter Gibian** on John Singer Sargent ... Financier and former U.S. Ambassador to France **Felix Rohatyn** ... A new documentary on **Salvador Dali** ... **Alan Riding** on 'And the Show Went On: Cultural Life in Nazi-Occupied Paris' ... **Tilar Mazzeo** on Chanel No. 5 ... Novelist **Ted Mooney** on 'The Same River Twice' ... plus

- ◇ **Open House**
- ◇ **Evenings with an Author**
- ◇ **A Night at the Movies**
- ◇ **Talk about Art**
- ◇ **Writers on Writing**



Art on View



**The North Star Project:
Authors from the Americas
15 June-19 September 2010**

Shot in 2008 at Festival America, a biannual Paris literary festival honoring North American writers, the North Star Project offers portraits of twenty authors. Photographer Jérôme Eagland-Conquy

asked each subject two questions: Which idea, thought or image remains in your mind from your last book? And, which idea, thought or saying has guided you through life as did the north star for sailors? This intriguing exhibit offers their portraits, replies and samples of their work.

Brought up on four different continents, **Jérôme Eagland-Conquy** studied at the British Film Institute of London and The Art Institute of Fort-Lauderdale (photography) in Florida before moving to Paris in 1997. His work has been featured in numerous magazines including *Elle* and *Le Monde*. Visit his website for more details: www.jerome.conquy.book.picturetank.com

Book groups

In October, the Library will begin its sixth season of book groups. Topics will include:

- Mysteries
- Memoirs
- Strangers in a Strange Land
- Food
- Art History
- And more!

Registration will begin in September, with details announced in the Fall issue of *Ex-Libris* and in *e-Libris*. Each group will meet monthly, from October to December or January. Participation is free and limited to Library members. For questions, please contact Ann Mah (mah@americanlibraryinparis.org).

VOLUNTEERS

The Library could not operate without the help of dozens of volunteers who work closely with staff to manage key services and programs. Here are two exceptional cases of devoted and largely unheralded volunteering, for which all members of the Library are grateful.

DAN HUEHN

As the son of a librarian, Dan Huehn suspects that volunteering at libraries might be in his genes. When he and his wife, Laura, moved to Paris in July 2008, an ad in FUSAC brought them to the American Library in Paris. Not long after Huehn began volunteering, helping out in all areas of the Library, from shelving, answering phones at the circulation desk, setting up for evening programs, searching for duplicate copies and culling from the collection, and even breaking out the toolbox for the odd bit of handyman work, like hanging the display case on the front door. Huehn has also been instrumental in clearing the Research Center for its current renovation, as well as preparing boxes of used books to be shipped to the British wholesaler, Better World Books.



A graduate of Cornell University, Huehn works in the airline industry as a financial consultant for Société Internationale de Télécommunications Aéronautiques (SITA). In his spare time he enjoys running — he and Laura recently completed the Paris marathon — as well as traveling, reading books from the Library’s “excellent” collection on WWII history, walking Pekingese dogs Bailey and Benjamin, and hosting friends and family — since moving to Paris two years ago, the couple have had 41 guests in their Neuilly apartment.

Volunteering at the Library has been a wonderful chance to “be part of a team,” says Huehn, who donates about four hours a week of his time. “The American Library is a real multicultural gem for the city of Paris,” he says. “We volunteers get at least as much out of our efforts as we contribute.”

KATE PRICE

Kate Price has always loved the idea of Paris. “I wanted to come here since I saw ‘Gigi,’” says the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, native. After spending a college semester studying at New York University in Paris, she finally took the leap, moving to the City of Light in November 2009 to work as an au pair. A few months later, her love of books and kids sparked her interest in volunteering at the American Library.

Every Sunday, Price manages the Library’s children’s section, shelving, helping people locate books, and — her favorite activity — recommending titles to curious young readers. “It’s so rewarding and wonderful to have kids come back and say, ‘I loved this book!’” she says. She also coordinates the children’s story hour on Sundays, selecting a theme and reading aloud. Recently, she’s hosted afternoons on topics as diverse as fairytales, the creative arts, and even the Old West.

When she’s not working or reading — favorite authors include Roald Dahl, Alexandre Dumas, Jasper Fforde, and Louisa May Alcott “I read *Little Women* every year,” she says — Price won’t be found sitting still. An avid balletomane, she takes weekly classes at the Centre de Danse du Marais, and also attends regular dance performances. She also enjoys exploring Paris on foot. “You can learn so much about Paris by walking around and getting lost,” she says.

For Price, who offers six hours a week to the Library, the best part about her volunteer work is interacting with the kids. “They’re so bright,” she says. “I love helping them find books based on what they’re interested in.” Of course, like many members, staff and volunteers, she also cherishes the opportunity to be surrounded by books. “I love discovering new titles and rediscovering old favorites,” she says.



THE LIBRARY IS FOR CHILDREN

Summer Reading Club 2010 We are the World

Facts, fiction and fun
for a healthier, happier planet

Summer is almost here... Time to enrol in the Library's 12th annual summer reading program. This year's theme, "We are the World," includes recommended reading on human rights, global development, and ecology. **Here's how it works:** children **four years and older** may sign up at the front desk or in the children's room to pick up their "We are the World" Summer Reading Club Booklet. In this booklet, children record the titles and authors of all the books read this summer, and then come back to the Library to get stickers for each book they've read. In September, we'll have an end-of-summer party with food, fun and prizes to celebrate our reading accomplishments. In the meantime, join us for



Summer reading club kick-off!

We'll read and discuss books about global development and learn how to keep our earth clean and green. Children will learn about Mercy Lambong, an 8-year old from the Philippines, who the children's department has recently sponsored through the charity Save the Children.

Children will also be able to sign up for the summer reading club, to receive their "We are the World" reading club booklet and to keep track of their summer reading for a chance to win stickers and prizes.

Saturday 5 June, 15h00-16h00, ages 6+

Gifts of reading from Texas

Once again this year, the Library is the recipient — and its members the lucky beneficiaries — of a selection of books for young people that won recognition in Texas in the form of the Bluebonnet Award Reading List and the Texas Lone Star Reading List.

Among the Bluebonnet books joining our collection: "The Cabinet of Wonders," by Marie Rutkoski, "Down, Down, Down: Journey to the Bottom of the Sea," by Steve Jenkins, "Dying to Meet You: 43 Old Cemetery Road," by Kate Klise, "The Fantastic Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau," by Dan

Yaccarino, and "Squirrel's World," by Lisa Moser.

The Lone Star selection — for middle-school readers — is: "The Red Blazer Girls," by Michael D. Bell, "Graceling," by Kristin Cashore, "The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate," by Jacqueline Kelly, "The Season," by Sarah McLean, and "Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland," by Sally M. Walker.

These gifts to the Library every year are made possible by Lynn and Marvin Wurzer of Houston.

Acting for fun with Susan Murray

Join us for an acting workshop where we each create our own characters and get a chance to perform. The class will use ordinary objects as props for improvisational sketches created by the students.



Susan Murray has an M.A. in film studies and is a graduate of the National Shakespeare Conservatory and the Second City Training Center. Her acting credits include work for the New York Shakespeare Festival and Chicago's Second City. Susan taught actors in Miami and Chicago for fifteen years, and currently teaches all aspects of acting and vocal techniques. She offers private, customized classes. Contact her at act4susan00@yahoo.com.

Saturday 12 June, 15h00-16h00, ages 8+
(Space is limited to the first dozen signed up and ready to begin at the stated time. Please respect the age limit and be on time.)

Initiation to Indian dance with Shilpa Vaidya

Special guest Shilpa Vaidya will teach a choreographed class in Indian classical dance, mixed with contemporary Bollywood dance, to narrate an exciting story theme. Boys and girls welcome.

Shilpa Vaidya has trained in classical Indian dance forms since the age of 5. Shilpa has always extended the boundaries of classical dancing to include a free-style approach that explores music, yoga, storytelling, theatre and folk dances. She also gives private dance classes and recitals and interactive choreography for birthday parties. Contact shilpaa.vaidya@gmail.com



Saturday 26 June, 15h-16h for ages 6+

Reading aloud for the very young



Ages 1-3: Mother Goose Lap Sit. Thursdays 10h30-11h00 Drop in sessions: No sign-up needed. **17 June; 8 July; 19 & 26 August.**

Ages 3-5: Wednesday Story Hour. 10h30-11h30 and 14h30-15h30 Drop-in sessions: No sign-up needed.

THE ANNIVERSARY GALA



Continued from page 1

plans in the fall for a new Library literary prize honoring the best work each year about Americans in Paris.

Author Cullen Murphy of *Vanity Fair* magazine was called on to introduce his old friend Chris Buckley with a taste of his own satiric medicine:

“Some people imagine the way the world could be, and ask, ‘Why not?’ Christopher Buckley looks at the world the way it is, and says: ‘I’ve found a living.’”

Among the other authors on hand were John Baxter, Paula Butturini, Laura Furman, Douglas Hawes, Alice Kaplan, Ann Mah (the Library’s programs manager), and William Jay Smith, a former Poet Laureate of the United States.

In his remarks, Trueheart recognized several guests at the dinner for their contributions to the institution and to the gala. Among them was Marvin Wurzer, whose family in Houston every year gives the Library children’s books that have been awarded the Texas Bluebonnet and Lone Star prizes (see story page 5).

The director thanked three professional librarians for their continuing counsel to the Library – Betty Turock, a former board member and Rutgers University Library Science professor; Leslie Burger, director of the Princeton Public Library; and William Cagle, director emeritus of the Lilly Library at Indiana University. The latter two are now serving as Julia Peterson Dede Distinguished visiting Librarians at the American Library in Paris.

Trueheart and Torchiana both paid tribute to the chair of the anniversary gala, Shelley de Rouvray, head of the trustee development committee, and to Sarah de Lencquesaing, a former board vice-chairman and gala chairman, for their work on behalf of the Library.

At the close of the dinner, Trueheart proposed a birthday toast, noting that the American Library in Paris had “outlasted by many decades two other high-minded institutions established in 1920 – the League of Nations and Prohibition.”

Buckley, for his part, raised a glass to “the *quatre-vingt-dixième anniversaire de la bibliothèque américaine à Paris!*”

The next evening, by popular demand, Buckley appeared in the more informal setting of the Library’s Evenings with an Author series.

He read from his most recent book, “*Losing Mum and Pup*,” a memoir of his late parents, the New York social doyenne Patricia Buckley and conservative patriarch William F. Buckley Jr., and gingerly answered questions from the audience about the state of the Republican Party and the modern U.S. conservative movement that his father is credited with founding.



THE LIBRARY AT 90

The testimony of members: Heaven, home

From gala remarks by Charles Trueheart, director of the Library:

Not long ago, my colleague Samantha Gardner had the idea of asking our members what the Library means to them. I probably rolled my eyes, but my cynicism about this exercise was completely misplaced. We received a heartening response from quite a few people, and I want to share some of their comments.

I would ask you to note two themes in what I will read to you, two themes beyond a love of books, of reading, of libraries. The themes are those of the familiar -- even the familial -- and the transcendent. Here are a few of the comments.

- “I just wanted to let you know that I greatly appreciate you all being in Paris and providing a place for people like me to call home. You make Paris better.

- “Before moving to Paris last summer I worried that I might feel very lonely and isolated here. I did not know anybody and do not speak French. I might have felt unmoored here if a new acquaintance had not pointed out the American Library in Paris. My one-bedroom apartment on the other side of the Champ de Mars is very comfortable, but it is dark even on the brightest of days. I prefer reading on one of the sofas in the Library, which feels like home to me now.”



Gala photographs by David Bacher

Facing page Top, U.S. Ambassador Charles Rivkin (right) greets novelist Diane Johnson and Dr. John Murray. Center left, Regina and Gregory Weingarten and Virginie and Jean Perrette inspect the guest of honor's books. Below, Francoise Torchiana admires the ceiling with Christopher Buckley. Bottom, former U.S. Poet Laureate William Jay Smith is welcomed by Library director Charles Trueheart (c) and board chairman William Torchiana.

This page Above, the reception before the dinner. Bottom left, Buckley responds to his introduction by author Cullen Murphy. Bottom right, writers Ann Mah (l) and Laura Furman.

Following page The cover of the 90th anniversary gala program.

For a portfolio of gala scenes, please visit www.americanlibraryinparis.org and go to the gala page for a link.

- “My family and I have been members since 1998. My son has virtually grown up going to the Library ... It is like our second home, where he has learned to read, to volunteer, to feel confident and independent, relating to adults other than family members. He took his first acting class at the Library several years ago. Because of this wonderful opportunity he discovered acting to be something he really enjoys. He has gone on to make three films.”

- “You are our oasis in Paris.”

- “Some people go to church. I go to a library. In particular I go to the American Library in Paris because I prefer to read in English and because I get a similar feeling of awe as others do in a religious institution. I love to be surrounded by centuries of great minds and by serious people going about serious business. There is a delicious hush.”

- “I appreciate the freedom of being able to roam up and down aisles, investigating covers and thicknesses,

Continued on page 8



'OUR OASIS IN PARIS'

Testimony from members

Continued from page 7

opening to the first pages and reading a paragraph or two. Many libraries have closed stacks. Bah!"

• "This library has literally saved our family's sanity, and thank you for opening on Sundays!"

• "Je tiens à dire à quel point je suis enchantée d'avoir découvert la bibliothèque américaine. .. Pour un abonnement très raisonnable ma fille de trois ans choisit les DVDs, des livres et albums, et assiste à de remarquables animations. Alors qu'elle n'a pas de parents anglophones ma fille découvre l'anglais avec joie. La bibliothèque est bien une ouverture sur le monde, et l'accueil y est, en plus, particulièrement chaleureux."

• "It all started when I was a university student here many years ago, taking art history classes at the Ecole du Louvre. I lived with an elderly aunt in a small garret apartment. I struggled then with French, had no money and was homesick. One day I strolled into the ALP by chance and found my home. I had never been much of a reader before, but here I began to devour the books and could not get enough.

• "You have the best reference and nonfiction collection I'm aware of on this side of the channel. As a postgraduate student in political science who avoids translated books like the plague, this is the closest one gets to heaven on earth in France."

Well. Heaven on earth is a nice goal. But I would subscribe to the idea that the Library is a home, a meeting place, a common room, a temple of the mind, a haven for the silent act of reading and thought as well as for the noisy act of conversation and play. We have been doing this for ninety years.

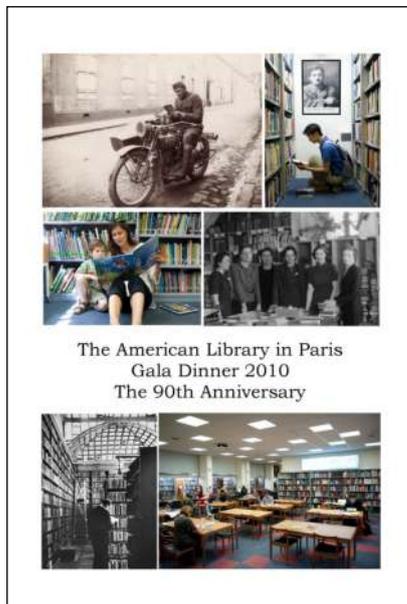
Behind the Library gala

The Library gala every year is a collaborative effort that begins in the autumn and involves many people.

Shelley de Rouvray, a trustee and chair of the board's development committee, served as gala chair for the 90th anniversary dinner, assisted by former trustee **Sarah de Lencquesaing** and trustee **Caroline de Navacelle**.

At the Library, development manager **Samantha Gardner** led a team of colleagues, including **Naida Kendrick Culshaw**, **Ann Mah**, and **Hélène Wiesenfeld**, as well as a team of volunteers, notably **Anne Hunt**, but also including **Dan Huehn** and **Laura Huehn**, **Mary Schmemann**, **Cecily Spiers**, **Christine Griffith**, **Jacqueline Nafziger**, **Danielle Megyeri**, **Kristen Ketron**, and **Phil Davis**.

The Library is also grateful for the assistance of **Elizabeth Detmeister**, **Daniel Dozier**, and **Yves Canovas** of the United States Embassy.



The American Library in Paris is grateful to the following sponsors for their generous support of the 90th anniversary gala dinner.

The Annenberg Foundation

Jean-Francois and Ishtar Méjanès

Alain and Shelley de Rouvray

SULLIVAN & CROMWELL LLP



AIRFRANCE



CHANEL

International Herald Tribune