



EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris
December 2012

What the survey said

The Library invited more than 5,000 people, members and non-members alike, to take a survey in October, and the response was beyond our hopes and expectations. Fully 17 percent of our 2,600 members completed the brief questionnaire on line, as did 13 percent of another 2,500 individuals on our electronic mailing list who aren't members but, for example, attend our free evening programs. A typical on-line survey is fortunate to have a quarter of that response, and it's an indication of an engaged Library community. Thank you! For more about what you told us, please turn to page 2.

Announcing the Library book prize

The American Library in Paris is inaugurating an annual book prize recognizing outstanding new English-language books about France and the French-American encounter.

The American Library in Paris Book Award, which includes a cash prize of \$5,000, will be chosen by a jury of authors selected by the Library's Writers Council, chaired by novelist and essayist Diane Johnson.

The award is supported by a grant from the Florence Gould Foundation. It will be announced and presented at a ceremony in Paris every October, beginning in 2013, in the presence of the winning author, who will also give a reading and workshop for the membership.

"The distinguished tradition of books in English about France began as long ago as James Fenimore Cooper, and includes Edith Wharton, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein and many other great American writers," observed Johnson.

"The American Library's substantial yearly prize recognizes a notable new contribution to what is practically a literary genre in itself: Americans and France. This is great."

Library director Charles Trueheart made the announcement about the prize in late October, first at the

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Save the dates

8 December 2012

Winter Wonderland: A family celebration of the holidays, all day at the Library. See page 7.



20 January 2013

Barack Obama's swearing-in and second inaugural address — a screening with refreshments in the reading room.

3-4 April 2013

Word for Word of San Francisco performs "You Know When the Men Are Gone" by Siobhan Fallon.



Mark Leialoha

6 June 2013

Joyce Carol Oates is guest of honor and speaker at the Library's annual fundraising event, the Gala Dinner.



INSIDE THE LIBRARY

Director's notes

The membership has a word with the Library

As part of a strategic planning process led by the Board of Trustees, in the past year the Library organized focus groups of members, as well as non-members, to explore our effectiveness and solicit new ideas. A survey in October, one for members and one for non-members, has given us much more information to work with: a trove of data and an outpouring of anonymous commentary.

The demographics of the 458 members who took the on-line survey are worth keeping in mind. Only 10 percent were under thirty years old, and 38 percent were over 60. Three quarters were female (84 percent female in the case of non-members). Even though we know we have a strongly bilingual membership with many bi-national marriages, fully 60 percent of the member respondents speak French and English at home; 52 percent were born in the United States and 15 percent in France.

Of member respondents, a quarter live in adjoining suburbs; the top Paris arrondissement of respondents is the 15th, followed by the 7th, the 16th, the 5th, the 11th, and the 14th.

We learned that 83 percent of survey-takers visit the Library at least once a month, of whom 21 percent do so at least once a week. We learned that 77 percent consider our membership fees good value; 19 percent consider them expensive. (The figures are roughly reversed, not surprisingly, for non-members.)

Only one in five of our members

surveyed know that all the Library's membership revenues cover only a quarter of the cost of operating the Library, and half don't know whether the Library receives any government subsidies. It doesn't.

A remarkable 29 percent of member survey takers and 69 percent of



non-member survey takers are using an e-reader already. Would they pay extra to have the Library provide e-books? Of members, 31 percent responded yes.

One of the surprises from the survey were the numbers of members who attend evening programs — very few and very rarely. More than 6 in 10 member respondents said they never attend a program. The most avid attenders by age group are over 60 and the least are under 30. There's a message there about our programming choices.

Another message is that, given the

heavy attendance by non-members at evening programs, charging €10 for non-members might be an option; 36 percent of members like this idea. We're considering it. There was strong sentiment for asking those attending evening events for contributions. Asked about another revenue option under consideration, 27 percent said they would pay €1 per night to borrow a DVD — common practice in many public libraries in the United States.

There was heartening news for the current and future health of the Library, in that 98 percent of members said they would recommend membership to a friend. Solicited for complaints about the Library, 84 percent said they had none. The most noticeable response to a list of complaints we offered, *The Library doesn't have the materials I need*, was chosen by only 10 percent. More than in other categories, the under-30 respondents, who were not numerous but use the Library heavily, also said the Library's hours didn't suit them (13 percent) and that it was often crowded (6 percent).

In the written comments on both surveys, much in the way of praise, encouragement, concerns, and criticisms bubbled up. The staff and the trustees will be discussing them and acting on them.

Again, thank you to all who took the survey. We plan to poll our membership, and our potential membership, on a regular basis.

Charles Trueheart

Ex Libris

The newsletter of the American Library in Paris is published four times a year, in March, June, September and December.

To receive *Ex Libris* by post, please contact the Library

The Library is closed
Monday **24** December
Tuesday **25** December
Monday **31** December
Tuesday **1** January 2013

LIBRARY NEWS

The appeal is irresistible!

Donations to support the American Library, through sustaining memberships or gifts, are essential to our continued health. Giving allows the Library to continue offering collections, services, programs, and facilities to hundreds of people every day. Members already have received in the mail our Fall Appeal, with testimonies of a few of our donors, very satisfied and generous customers of the Library. Please consider becoming a donor, or continuing or increasing your support. Thank you in advance.

The best present in the whole world

There's really no better holiday gift than an annual membership to the American Library in Paris — a gift that gives pleasure, variety, and enlightenment year-round. Please inquire about a special membership gift certificate. And consider wrapping the certificate in a Library tote bag (12€). The bright red is an ideal holiday color! And then you might consider filling the tote bag with used books from our everyday sales.

Art on View

“Hopperesques”

Images from the celebrated artistic work of **Edward Hopper** recreated and repopulated as mini-stage sets: An original exhibition by **Christopher Clark** and **Virginie Pognaud**. On view at the Library from **11 December 2012** to **3 February 2013**.

Coming in February: **Blacks in the American Civil War** — A special exhibit at the Library.



Is there a young author in your house?

The American Library in Paris is proud again this year to be the organizer of the Young Authors Fiction Festival, in collaboration with the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI).

The Fiction Festival aims to strengthen community among English-speakers in the Paris area through the art and craft of storytelling. The Fiction Festival is open to

all students ages 5 to 18 in the greater Paris area who write in English. It offers a wonderful opportunity for educators to encourage creative writing among their students.

SCBWI-France authors will be on hand to offer tips to young authors at the culminating Festival Celebration at the American Library on **Friday 7 June 2013**. At the celebration we honor all participating authors and

burgeoning storytellers as well as announce the finalists.

Deadline for submissions to the Fiction Festival is **1 April 2013** — no fooling. An announcement will be e-mailed to schools and teachers who have participated in the past, as well as those who have expressed interest.

If you'd like to receive the electronic announcement, please send an e-mail to yaff2013alp@gmail.com



Laura McNeill appointed assistant Board secretary

Laura H. McNeill has been appointed assistant secretary of the Board of Trustees. In this volunteer, non-voting position she records the proceedings of the board and assists the secretary, Luis Roth, in his duties.

A graduate of Oberlin College, with degrees from the Fletcher School of Law and

Diplomacy and New York University School of Law, McNeill clerked for a federal judge and practiced law as a white-collar criminal litigator in Washington before moving to Paris in 2007 with her husband, Mark, a lawyer with Shearman & Sterling, and their three children. She is a chef-in-training at Le Cordon Bleu Paris.

AUTHORS AT THE LIBRARY

Mary McCarthy remembered

The life and work of Mary McCarthy, novelist, essayist, and long-time Paris resident, was celebrated at a special centennial symposium October 16 at the Library, sponsored by the Library's Writers Council.

The reading room was transformed into a small stage set where ten of McCarthy's friends and admirers offered anecdotes, reminiscences and insights. The guests included her granddaughter and new literary executor, **Sophie Wilson**, and her former literary executor, **Margo Viscusi**, **Laura Furman**, **Frances Kiernan**, **Robert Pounder**, **Vincent Giroud**, **Lily Tuck**, **Cees Nooteboom**, and **Claude** and **Ivan Nabokov**. Messages about McCarthy were also read from those who could not attend: **Molly Haskell**, **Robert Silvers**, **Thomas Mallon**, **Rosamond Bernier**, **Carol Brightman**, **Reuel Wilson** (McCarthy's son), **Eve Stwertka**, **Alison West**, **Frances FitzGerald**, **Dixie Sheridan**, and **Brenda Wineapple**.

The proceedings were professionally filmed by **Steve Murez** and will be available for viewing on the Library website shortly.



Steve Murez

Laura Furman at the McCarthy symposium

BOOK AWARD

Continued from page 1
Mary McCarthy Centennial Symposium at the Library in Paris (see above), and then at a reception for American friends and supporters in New York (see below).

"The Florence Gould Foundation has done so much to further French-American understanding and to assist historic American institutions in Paris," said Trueheart. "We're grateful for what its enthusiastic support of the prize will mean for the Library – and for fine writing about France."

Trueheart also announced the addition of six new members to the Writers Council. The four most recent Library gala speakers – Laurent de Brunhoff, Christopher Buckley, Scott Turow, and Sebastian Faulks – as well as Alice Kaplan of Yale University and novelist Lily Tuck are the new members of the council, joining Johnson, Julian Barnes, Laura Furman, Mavis Gallant, Adam Gopnik, Philippe Labro, and William Jay Smith.

Book-length prose works originally written in English, including but not limited to fiction, history,

biography, current issues, travel, politics, cooking, and art, are eligible for the award. Eligible books for the initial prize will have been published between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013.

The prize is administered by the Library, and the screening process will be overseen by Johnson, Trueheart, and trustee Clydette de Groot.

The jury for the 2013 American Library in Paris Book Award will be announced in January. Details about eligibility and award deadlines are available on the Library's website, under the "About the Library" tab.

The American Library's friends in New York



Anne Swardson

Paul LeClerc at the Library reception in New York

Friends and supporters of the American Library in Paris gathered at the University Club in New York on October 25 to hear from **Paul LeClerc**, former president of the New York Public Library and currently director of Columbia's European Global Center in Paris, familiarly known as Reid Hall. LeClerc, a Voltaire scholar, spoke about the historic ties between the United States and France with particular reference to libraries. He cited three U.S. ambassadors in Paris who made a difference: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Felix Rohatyn. The Library will host LeClerc again in early February in Paris, when he will speak at the annual reception thanking all of its recent donors.

The New York gathering also heard from Director **Charles Trueheart** about the new American Library Book Award (see article page 1), and also from the evening's host, **Marshall Wais**, president of the board of the Library's USA Foundation, and **Mary Lee Turner**, the new chairman of the board of trustees. Also on hand were the French cultural counselor in the United States, **Antonin Baudry**, and writers **Lily Tuck**, **Christopher Buckley**, **Anne Korkeakivi**, **Tilar Mazzeo**, **Louis Begley**, **Anka Muhlstein**, **Rick MacArthur**, **Pauline Metcalf**, **Simon Van Booy**, and **Paula Deitz**.

THE RESEARCH CENTER

Ask away!

The ins and outs — and questions and answers — of reference

Every member of the Library is invited to visit the recently reorganized Reference Services area to the left of the front entrance, and ask us something — anything. The reference manager, Kim Lê Minh, collections manager Simon Gallo, and occasional volunteers treat your inquiries seriously — and they know how to answer questions other than “Do you have this book?”

From index cards to digital gateway

The advent of online search engines and catalogs and the shift to electronic resources could have heralded the early retirement of reference services professionals. But in reality this media revolution has turned them into information experts, trained in the identification and evaluation of sources found on the Internet, and familiar with research tools beyond such favorites as Google and Wikipedia. Not everyone has the ask-a-librarian reflex (especially digital natives), yet Library users will certainly increase their chance of identifying more relevant material when requesting staff assistance.

User education, remote access

Training users in making the most of the Library’s discovery tools is crucial, especially since they have the freedom to use our databases remotely. Whereas both our online catalog and article databases are user-friendly, there are always tricks to improve or refine your result list. Bibliographical instruction and information literacy workshops are offered to student groups.

The best baguette in Paris?

While most of the questions directed to our reference desk involve resources from our collection, a lot of email requests, particularly from non-members, concern information about France, or sources accessible in France only. Recurring questions from American residents include genealogical investigations of French roots, or prac-

tical information about Paris (travel, daily life). The American Library in Paris remains one of the main access points for books and information for non-French-speakers.

Research: e-content vs. print

This is the main challenge facing reference services in the current information environment. Some research tools such as indexes are being replaced by more powerful, faster search engines. Some journals choose to release their print and electronic versions at a delayed interval, to secure print subscriptions. Cost considerations are leading libraries to pool their resources. In the coming months, we will be shifting many reference materials to the general nonfiction circulating collection.

Mapping resources

Whenever we are not able to provide a resource, we will find it elsewhere. Librarians *love* networking and sharing resources! Part of our catalog is available on SUDOC, the French online catalog for university and specialized libraries. We make our collection available beyond our community via the Interlibrary Loan service.

Drop by!

We would like to anticipate your needs. Please tell us what you would like to see in the way of your future reference services and resources. You may reach the reference desk by phone: 01 53 59 12 66 or by sending a message to alparis@americanlibraryinparis.org



TEENS

Except as indicated, all teen and children's programs require a reservation. These are popular programs, and space is limited.

It's easy to to reserve a spot: call 01 53 59 12 69 or send an email to the youth librarian, Celeste Rhoads, at rhoads@americanlibraryinparis.org

Participation is always free for Library members. Bring your Library membership card! *Non-members are required to pay 10€ per session at the front desk.*

Why not join the Library? To learn more, please visit the website.



The Hunger Games (or, Distopi-what?)

Book talk and movie screening

Saturday 14 December from 19h00-21h30
Ages 12+

Take a study break with the kids from District Twelve. Join us for a screening of the first installment of **The Hunger Games**, followed by a discussion comparing the book and the movie. This movie is rated PG-13 and is 142 minutes long. Everyone is welcome to come in and try our Hunger Games trivia challenge, available now from Celeste Rhoads, the youth librarian. Snacks will be served.

Creating Mythology *with young adult author* **Amy Plum**

Friday 25 January from 19h00-21h00
Ages 12+

Meet young adult author Amy Plum for a short reading and Q&A, and then let Amy lead you through some creative writing exercises designed to help you build your own mythological world.

Amy Plum is the author of the Die for Me series, a young adult trilogy set in Paris. The first and second book, *Die for Me* and *Until I Die*, are international bestsellers, and have been translated into seven different languages. The third book, *If I Should Die*, will be released in May 2013.

Amy grew up in Birmingham, Alabama before venturing further afield to Chicago, Paris, London and New York. An art historian by training, she can be found on most days either daydreaming or writing (or both) in a Parisian café. The American Library in Paris will be giving away copies of Amy's first book *Die for Me* to the first three teenaged Library members should sign up for this workshop by email.



Letters About Literature deadline: 8 December at midnight!

The Letters About Literature contest, a national phenomenon in the United States organized by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress in Washington, returns to Paris for the second year. The competition is open to students in grades 4-10 (CM1-Seconde). For more information and full submission guidelines, see the contest page on our website. Writers of the winning letters selected by the American Library in Paris will each receive a **one-year family membership** to the Library, as well as a book bag full of surprises. Deadline for submissions is **8 December** at the stroke of twelve.

CHILDREN

Time Travel on the Self-Express

with **Aliss Terell and Tracy Coutrix**

Saturday 26 January from 12h00-13h30

Ages 9-12

Imagine your future through the eyes of your favorite superhero or a character you admire from a book or movie: to have fun, make the right choices, and feel good about yourself.

Tracy Coutrix holds a Masters in Counseling Psychology from New York University with an interest in career counseling, communication development, and improving self-esteem. She has been working with children, adolescents, and adults for many years.

Aliss Terrell is a performing artist, writer, and teacher specializing in creativity. A Fulbright Scholar who studied at the University of Saint Petersburg, Russia and received her Masters from the Sorbonne, she has been coaching teens and preteens for years. Sign-up is required.

We Heart Valentine's Day!

Saturday 9 February from 15h00-16h30

Ages 6+

Valentine's Day is on its way! Come in for the Library's annual Valentine's Day celebration and enjoy an afternoon of stories, crafts and holiday games! We'll learn



all about the history and traditions surrounding this charming holiday, we'll read some great new books and then you'll be able to design and create cool valentines for your own family and friends. There will be stickers, stamps and hearts galore! Parents welcome! No sign-up necessary!

***It's a Winter
Wonderland!***

***Saturday 8 December
Events throughout the day
No sign-up required***

Join us for an all-day seasonal celebration, now held at the Library, featuring activities for all ages, including a special winter Mother Goose lap-sit, card-making and other crafts, wintertime Story Hour and a visit from Santa, and an evening of caroling.

11h00-11h30: Wintertime Mother Goose Lap-sit (ages 1-3) A festive winter lap-sit in the Children's Library featuring seasonal songs and rhymes for the very young. Each child must be accompanied by an adult lap!

12h00-13h30: Winter Crafts (ages 5+)
The Library will provide all the supplies you need to make holiday cards and gifts for friends and family, along with other seasonal crafts to take home and enjoy. Help will be on-hand, but parents are welcome to assist little ones. Join us in the Children's Library for winter crafts fun!

15h00-16h30: Winter Story Hour and a visit from Santa (all ages!)
Join the youth librarian and volunteers in the reading room as we read some great winter tales and holiday classics. Following the story hour, participants will have the opportunity to visit with Santa and his elves.

17h00-18h00: Winter Caroling
Children, teens and adults welcome! Join us in the reading room and get your voices ready to sing some classic seasonal tunes. Refreshments will be provided.

It takes a village to throw a Halloween party

A huge thank you goes out to the fabulous cast and crew (see below) who helped make Halloween 2012 another huge success at the Library. Over 300 people attended the all-ages Halloween party this year and another 150 visited our second annual Haunted Library extravaganza featuring literary villains and creepy tableaux straight out of your favorite books. Thank s to all for helping to put together such a wonderful community event!

Carole Black, Marcia Lèbre, Maggie Wurzer, Poitr Duzskiewicz, Christel Prestige, Marchelle Malone, Solveig Haugen, Sophie Wilson, Liz Gomes, Clarence Tokley, Louise Denyer, Celine Montaudy, Elizabeth Zicari, Mika Kaski, Juliette Assant, Gillian Duffy, Gabriela Griffith, Marina Vernick, Thomas Cessou, Katie Rose, Xavier and Isabella Montessori, Emma Newman, Julian and Shannon Connelly, Sophie Wilson, Alana Juric, Laetitia Nail, Alex Toutounji, Alexandra Lawson, Jennifer Bennitt and Jack Lewis.

—**Celeste Rhoads**

CALENDAR



Tuesday 4 December 19h30

Evenings with an Author
Peter Behrens introduces *The O'Briens*, an Irish immigrant family in the changing landscape of 20th-century North America.

Wednesday 9 January 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Timothy Smith exposes *Cooper's Promise*, his new novel about an Army sharpshooter-turned-CIA pawn.

Saturday 12 January 19h30

Akeelah and the Bee Pizza Night with the Paris Spelling Bee team - come enjoy the film!

Wednesday 5 December 19h30

Does the euro have a future? A panel discussion with **Philippe d'Arvisenet** of BNP Paribas, **Martin Roesch** of the German Embassy, and **James Hertling** of Bloomberg News. *In cooperation with WICE.*



Sunday 20 January 17h-19h

The Library screens the Presidential Inauguration in the reading room. A family occasion with refreshments.

Tuesday 22 January 19h30

Elizabeth Milovidov hosts a program for parents about teens and social media.

Tuesday 29 January 19h30

Evenings with Gardens.

Amy Larue lectures on the creation of Paris's parks under Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann.

Tuesday 11 December 19h30



Thirza Vallois and **Jeanne Salvato** discuss the Cornell Reading Project's 2012 book selection, *The Life Before Us* by Romain Gary (1975), with an excerpt from the movie version, *Madame Rosa*.

Wednesday 30 January 19h30

Sylvia Beach Reimagined: Lisa Reznik brings Shakespeare and Company's founder to life in her new short film, *Left Bank Bookseller*, and **Cynthia Morris** casts her in her new novel, *Chasing Sylvia Beach*.



Wednesday 12 December 19h30

Evenings with an Author.

Percival Everett, author of *I Am Not Sidney Poitier*, *Wounded*, *Assumption*, and more than 20 other books, offers a preview of his forthcoming work, *Percival Everett* by **Virgil Russell: A Novel**.



Wednesday 20 February 19h30

Evenings with an Author **Tracy Metz** presents *Sweet and Salt: Water and the Dutch*.

Wednesday 27 February 19h30

Evenings with an Author

Fred Coleman tells the true story of a Resistance couple who rescued hundreds of Jewish children in *The Marcel Network*.

Saturday 5 January

Sunday 6 January

Monthly all-day used book sale at the Library.

The American Library in Paris

10, rue du Général Camou
75007 Paris
01 53 59 12 60

www.americanlibraryinparis.org

