

le Cocorico



AATF of CNY

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President - Jennifer Kostolecki
presidentaatfcny@gmail.com

Vice President/Contest Administrator -
Denise Mahns
grandconcoursaatfcny@gmail.com

Secretary - Jolene Bennett
secretaryaatfcny@gmail.com

Treasurer - Sarah Woodward-Jones
treasureraatfcny@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor -
Elizabeth Ait Oumessaoud
cocoricoaatfcny@gmail.com

Chers Collègues,

Many of us are feeling refreshed after our mid-winter break. After a couple of months, you may be sticking to those New Year's resolutions and others may have abandoned them already. My feelings, choose a resolution you know you can stick to, your AATF of CNY membership. As a chapter, we are only as good as our membership and we need YOU to maintain our strength. If you have not done so already, I encourage you to renew your membership to receive all of the benefits: reduced rates for the Grand Concours, eligibility for our AATF of CNY Scholarship, reduced rate for our workshops, and etc. From the National Organization, you will receive the National Bulletin, the French Review, access to numerous grants, travel scholarships, advocacy information, the list goes on and on.

If you are not a member already, please consider becoming a member of our Chapter #34, AATF of CNY. There is also the opportunity of purchasing a gift membership for a fellow colleague. Just go to:
http://store.frenchteachers.org/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=1
AATF has a special if you are able to recruit 2 new members, you get your membership for FREE.

Our chapter is currently focusing on recruitment. So, please consider a membership, or renewed membership to receive all of the additional benefits and pick a New Year's Resolution you can stick to.

Amitiés,
Jennifer Kostolecki
Présidente
AATF of CNY

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Comme un chef: French Film Night

March 28th, 2018

6:30 PM

Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville

Community Room

The AATF of CNY is proud to announce its annual film night, scheduled for March 28th, 2018. We have partnered with the Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville, a splendid new facility located at 5110 Jamesville Road, DeWitt, NY 13078. Starting at 6:30 PM, French teachers, French students, French-speakers and Francophiles of all ages are welcome to enjoy the film *Comme un chef*. Light refreshments will be provided and discussion will follow the film.

Comme un chef is the story of a young man, Jacky, who dreams of creative cooking in the vein of his mentor, Alexandre, a veteran chef played by Jean Reno. Alexandre is in need of new ideas for his famed restaurant, the Cargo Lagarde, before the critics arrive to decide his fate. This "comédie culinaire" from 2012 is rated PG-13.



Check out the trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cf2Nk3Ld8Og> and please join us on March 28th!

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LSF & Music at JD Middle

By Ellen Kotzin

A fun activity we use in my French 6th grade classes at Jamesville–Dewitt Middle School is LSF (French sign language). I began teaching the French alphabet while doing the signs. I was encouraged to do this a few years ago when I couldn't directly speak to a student's parent who was deaf. But why not learn some sign language and also FRENCH too! There are slight differences in the alphabet.

My classes enjoyed that but I had an idea which kicked it up a notch for FRENCH WEEK. There is a Youtube channel called HAUTE LES MAINS where they sign songs in French to some popular tunes. I had my two 6th grade classes learn to do the signs for SUR MA ROUTE by BLACK M (United Kids Version). They loved it and I filmed it! I then thought that to make this even more meaningful, I had the school perform parts of it with the kids so my classes could send the video they made to Collège Giroud in Vendres, France. So various teachers from the building areas danced to the music as my students signed in French. Their pen pals were able to see what an American school looked like and also kids their own ages.

Here is the video!

<https://tinyurl.com/LSFkotzin>



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French Canadian Culture at Watertown

By Ann Elyse Foltz



Bonjour to my French colleagues!

I taught an interesting set of French Canadian cultural lessons in January that I thought would be of interest to you. In our 8th grade AIM teaching material, the students have learned about Moncton, Nouveau Brunswick. The material included a lesson on "Le Grand Dérangement", which is the sad period of Canadian history during which 12,000 Acadian men were forced from their homes by the British and shipped to Louisiana. The Acadian region includes parts of Nouveau Brunswick, Nouvelle Écosse, et l'Île du Prince Édouard.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (an American poet) wrote a beautiful epic ballad entitled "Évangéline" commemorating this period of history and telling the story of a young Acadian woman who lost her fiancé in Le Grand Dérangement and spent the remainder of her life searching for him. The poem is very long, but I selected portions of the poem to read out loud in class, and I was amazed at the magical spell that descended on the students as I read the poem. They were entranced by the love story and the grief of the Acadian women and children whose husbands and fathers were taken from them. We also listened to a song written by Annie Blanchard, a Canadian singer, based on the poem by Longfellow. There are several versions of it available on Youtube. I found one that had beautiful line-drawn illustrations of the time period, with photographs of the Acadian region in the background.

The following day, my students were able to participate in a virtual field trip which I had set up through Jefferson-Lewis BOCES, funded by a grant which Watertown's Superintendent of Education, Stacy Edgar, had obtained for us. The virtual field trip was one offered by the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) and the name of the program was Jean-Paul LeFranc, French voyageur. The kids had a lot of fun learning about the roles of the French voyageurs as they paddled from Montréal to the fur trading post of Grand Portage in Minnesota.

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The presenter was dressed in typical voyageur dress and he interacted with the kids as they discussed what he was wearing and why. He was standing in front of a large birch bark canoe, which he also explained to the students. He selected different students to play the roles of members of the expedition, including the cook, the steersman, and the fur trading company representative. He made the students laugh a lot!

I tied the two lessons together by having the students fill in a map of North America. They had to color in the French speaking areas of the Acadian settlers and of Québec, and also trace the route that the voyageurs took from Montréal to MN and back, and the route from Acadia to Louisiana. The students also read a recipe in French for *soupe maison acadienne traditionnelle* (aka split pea soup) and I brought in a crockpot full of split pea soup so the students could all try a little. Most of the students loved it, but there was some dramatic rushing to the water fountain, as would be expected in any 8th grade classroom. I let the students know that split pea soup was such an important staple of the French Canadian diet that it was even used as an insult to caricature all French Canadians, as they would soon observe in the film they were to watch.

I wrapped up this unit by showing "The Rocket" (the aforementioned film- the career of hockey player Maurice Richard) to the students and having them pay careful attention to which characters in the film spoke English and which ones spoke French. The students discovered that the factory managers, the policemen, and the hockey managers and coaches all spoke English, while the factory workers and many of the hockey players spoke French. The students were surprised to learn that at that time in history, the higher paid jobs went to English speakers. My students generally think of French as a language of prestige- of international politics, diplomacy, and fashion and art. They have a hard time understanding why French Canadians were treated as lower class citizens, and why Maurice Richard had to fight so hard to defend his countrymen and his language.

As a whole, I think this has been a successful series of lessons on French Canadian culture. I highly recommend all of the resources I have used!

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Facebook Group Alert: French Teachers in the US

By Elizabeth Ait Oumessaoud

In November, my English teacher friend Aurelie came with 24 students from Brignoles, France to stay in Vestal. She was absolutely fascinated with how the American style of education worked and was in and out of as many classes as she could fit into our busy schedule during the 10 days they were here. She thought American teachers were incredibly creative and she introduced me to a FB group called **French Teachers in the US**. I have to say, my life has never been the same! Who wants to recreate the wheel? Not me! This group is absolutely wonderful. In order to join, you have to fill out a form with your school district, email, what you teach, etc. to be approved. They follow a semi-strict set of guidelines for members, but all in all, it's a forum for questions, lesson sharing, photos, and an awesome place for you to be a French teacher and share with other French teachers from all over the country! I've benefited from this group for numerous French Club meetings, have gotten ideas for music, and have been exposed to current events that are 100% relatable to what I'm doing in the classroom. So, if you have a Facebook account and want to be inspired, search the group and join as soon as you can! You'll be grateful you did! :)

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My NYSAFLT Experience: How A Language Conference Opened My Eyes to Language In the Classroom

By James Corl



It was a sunny day in Niagara Falls. The sun beat down on the ground on a surprisingly warm fall day. As I made my way to the conference center, nervous was an understatement. You see, months before, I had been accepted to speak at 100th Annual NYSAFLT Conference. It is nerve wracking under any situation, but I had an extra reason to be anxious; I had only turned fifteen three months before, and was about to speak to teachers and other professionals in the field.

As I walked in, there was a great buzz around my father and I. Language teachers, from all over the state, were walking back and forth, from the main conference room and back. As we checked in, my dad reassured me that he would be back soon with the rest of my family to help prepare for my presentation, in the early afternoon. Until then, I would attend the opening meeting which was for all attendees, and then pick one of the many workshops to attend.

Once we parted, I found myself at a table of vibrant teachers from across the state. One was a Spanish from the Southern Tier, and another taught French. He was from the Rochester

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area. I felt right at home with a vivid conversation filled with our experiences, methods, and what we hoped to learn at the conference that day.

Soon enough, the meeting started. The executives of the NYSAFLT organization talked about how things were going at the executive level. A duo of teachers talked about how advocacy efforts at the local and state level were going.

The pinnacle of this opening session was the keynote speaker, Greta Lundgaard. She talked about how even though NYSAFLT has been going strong for 100 years, and that much has been accomplished in the field of foreign languages, the work will and must continue, even after the energy, passion, and excitement begin to fade after this conference. After a rousing ending, along with a standing ovation, we were dismissed to go to the exhibit hall.

However, before moving to the hall, I met with some of executives of NYSAFLT. I am deeply indebted to them, as they made sure that all my needs were taken care of, and any questions I had were answered. I had only communicated with them via email, so it was very nice to put a face to the name. As we visited, I told them how much of an honor it was to be presenting here, and they wished me good luck.

In the exhibit hall, there were many different resources in the field of language learning. It was a language learning paradise! Some booths were offering new textbooks, demonstrating why you should purchase their product, and not their competitors. Some booths displayed travel options for students, so they could acquire the language and use it in a meaningful context abroad. Many of these programs were also coupled with volunteer opportunities, to help broaden students' horizons about the world around them.

The final group of exhibitors included national language teachers' associations. This included AATSP (American Association of Teacher of Spanish and Portuguese), ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), and the AATF (American Association of Teachers of French). In fact, I am writing this article on the advice of the AATF's representative, who wanted me to write about this experience :).

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I relished this time, talking with professionals from all over New York about language acquisition, travelling to foreign countries, and even my love of language learning which started when I began French in 7th grade. I even learned some slang; the expression "¿Que lo que?", or "what's up", in Spanish. It's only used in the Dominican Republic, and my friend, who recently immigrated from there, was so surprised and enthused that I used some Dominican slang. I even ran into some teachers from my school district!

After the break, I headed to a wonderful seminar on oral proficiency focusing on how it can be achieved through formulaic questions, or memorized phrases and responses. I thoroughly enjoyed the presentation, as there were many similarities with my presentation, and the handouts were excellent. Coincidentally, the presenter knew my grandpa, as they had taught together at the same college. What are the odds?

Before I knew it, it was time to break for lunch. As I did in the morning, I found a lively group to sit with. One was a teacher from the Adirondacks, who taught Spanish. She even grew up in the country of Spain! Another teacher was born in Haiti, and was trilingual, speaking Haitian Creole, French, and English. Finally, another teacher I sat with also taught French, but taught it for an IB program (International Baccalaureate®, a series of courses comparable to the AP program), and also taught a class for the New York State Seal of Biliteracy.

Before I knew it, it was time to break for lunch. As I worked on my second piece of chicken (I am a big eater), I began focusing my attention more on my own presentation, now only about 45 minutes away. My family would be arriving soon, and my thoughts turned to the overall execution and attendance of the seminar.

I wondered how many people would end up coming. Would there only be a few in attendance? Many teachers? I thumbed through the program, and realized that I was in the same time slot as many other great presentations. One was a roundtable discussion with the executives of NYS AFLT, on how to expand upon the realm of foreign languages in schools across New York. Another dealt with a project-based approach to learning a new language.

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As lunch wrapped up, I immediately went to my presentation room to start setting up. Sure enough, my family was waiting for me, eager to start setting up. My mom had recently bought some international centerpieces, which we set those up at our welcome table. My dad helped me organize all of my handouts into neat, sharp folders to be distributed as well. The final touch to the table was something I created myself; my language binder. Whenever I had accomplished something in regards to language learning, I put it in this binder, the day it was completed/published, and it was placed in special page protectors. Some of the things I included were: brochures from the language club I started in 8th grade, charts marking the growth from the Festival of Nations I sponsored from the language club, and my five published articles on language learning.

After beginning to learn Italian in 7th grade, there was an informal club for those who wanted to learn foreign languages at my school. We were all friends, but the languages spanned from Russian, to Japanese, and more common languages like Spanish. The next year, I established a Language Learners Club, so even more people could learn foreign languages through the club. We feature guest speakers from foreign countries, certain days (ex: French Day), and learn about culture through food and videos.

Once our table was set up, we had approximately 30 minutes until my presentation started. I started my computer, and I went through my presentation one final time, making sure that everything that I wanted on my Prezi was there. Once I finished it, all I could do was wait until teachers found their way to my seminar.

Soon enough, in what seemed like a second later (but was actually 15 minutes later), two graduate students found their way into my presentation. They explained to me that they had been looking forward to my presentation all day and they came early to talk with me about my perspective on language learning.

As the time passed, more and more seats filled up. Each person grabbed a manilla folder, giving a thorough look over its contents. By the time 1:30 strolled around, over thirty seats had been filled. I was ecstatic! As much as I would have liked to share that enthusiasm, I kept a level head, and started my presentation.

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My family sat in the back of the room, and as I started talking about my background and passions, I realized that both my mom and dad were crying their eyes out. I knew that they were just extremely proud, and I had to quickly turn to the rest of the audience before I got too distracted.

My presentation was titled, "Say Goodbye to Shy: A Student's Perspective in the Classroom". Accordingly, I spoke about how I learned Italian to proficiency by myself (as a 7th and 8th grader), and how those same principles can be applied to the classroom to make students more proficient.

A major point from my presentation was making everyone feel awkward, as all students do when speaking a foreign language. Due to this awkwardness, kids tend to shy away from speaking, as it is too "risky" and "embarrassing"; hence the title, "Say Goodbye to Shy". But how would I go about showing this group the same uncomfortable experience that language students go through every day?

When preparing for the presentation, I knew I wanted to incorporate a foreign language that the majority of the teachers did not speak. I thought about my first second language, Italian, but I realized that it was too close to other Romance languages like Spanish and French. So, I chose Mandarin Chinese, as it is very different from any Romance languages, and it is very rare to see it taught in Central New York.

With my Mandarin Chinese, I created a "Chinese Survival Guide", with translations of several helpful words, like "Hello", "My name is...", and "I would like". By having students speak from the very beginning in their target language, it builds confidence in their target language, and boosts overall motivation for learning the language.

Using the "Chinese Survival Guide", I had teachers talk with one another, solely in Chinese. As Chinese conversations fluttered throughout the room, my confidence grew. It appears as if many teachers were genuinely enjoying my presentation, and that only reassured me. I learned a ton from the teachers as well, because they gave me new insights, improvements, and other measures that could make the process much more effective for their students. A win-win!

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As the presentation went on, I became more loose, more confident, and more bold. My family, who were bulging out to me at the beginning, faded into the crowd as a whole. I talked about one of my favorite resources, Italki, and how it helps you find language partners for any language you want, anywhere you want! For example, if you wanted to find a French speaker from Nantes, France, I could guarantee that over thirty members of Italki would appear.

Next, I went on to discuss what I call the "Communicative Progression". My main approach to language learning is called the "Communicative Approach", so the progression deals with how to get students out of their shells and speak their target language. Starting with a friend, and ending with a native speaker, confidence and self-esteem is built each step of the way.

Finally, I featured another language "hack" that I call the "Cut and Consolidate", where the amount of vocab is reduced, in hopes that students will know the smaller group of words better. If a student has 65 words to memorize, some time and energy may be spent that may be unnecessary, with certain words, like "pedestrian", or "crosswalk". However, if 15 of these words are cut out, in favor of more useful terms like "train station", "ticket booth", and "round trip ticket", I believe that the new group of 50 would be much easier to remember and more relevant to the student.

Finally, the workshop was concluded with some question and answer with the audience. I talked about why I chose Italian as my foreign language, and the happy memories of people, the food, and culture that I have with the country. We also talked about what I planned to do with my languages, and future plans for college. I was happy to receive applause from the audience at the conclusion.

As I signed off on professional development sheets (my baby sister thought the teachers wanted my autograph), I talked with many of the teachers, and they thanked me for my work, and the insight I brought them within the hour. We talked about additional things I may do in the future, and some even wanted to track my progress in the language learning field. I also networked a little, and made several great connections with many that I am making inroads with today.

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My family then approached me, and told me what a great job I had done. As we walked out, I was recognized as "the kid presenter" by many different teachers. It was the greatest feeling of the entire conference.

Without this experience, I would not have the same level of confidence that I have today. If I didn't present, I wouldn't have met the CEO of a fantastic language learning company, which I am now an advisor to for matters pertaining to the operations of the business. Without this exposure I wouldn't have the courage to present to a class of graduate students at the University of Indiana at Pennsylvania, which will be occurring in the spring.

And finally, with all the people I met and encountered, I would not have as much energy and enthusiasm that I have now for language learning and the foreign language profession. I was energized throughout the day, from the keynote speaker, to the congratulations I received from the many teachers who attended my presentation.

I would like to thank every single language teacher who read this article. Without your support, motivation, and enthusiasm for world culture and language, I would not be where I am today. Keep up the fantastic work, inside and outside the language classroom, and I hope to be back here at *Le Cocorico* very soon!

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Visages

To meet some of the great teachers in our area AATF chapter, we like to feature members in this newsletter to introduce them and to highlight their accomplishments to our members. In this issue, I have been asked to highlight myself, to introduce myself to the readership.

My name is Elizabeth Ait Oumessaoud and this is my very first issue as Editor of Le Cocorico newsletter. I'm so excited to undertake this leadership role in our chapter and I look forward to the opportunity to piece together the great things that are going on in your classroom and in the surrounding communities.

I'm a French teacher at Vestal High School – my tenth year! I've loved every minute of those ten years, too! I teach grades 9-12, advise the French Club, coordinate the French Exchange program with le Lycee Raynovard in Brignoles, France, as well as head the Green and Gold chapter of The National Honor Society.

Both of my degrees are in French language and literature, Le Moyne College for my Bachelors (shout out to my fellow 'Phins!) and my Masters from SUNY Binghamton. While I started my college career in Biology, I couldn't have made a better decision than to switch to French my sophomore year at LMC. Here we are, 2018 and no regrets!

Cultural connectivity is very important to me and my family. I met my husband, Kous, while studying abroad in Tours, France. We couldn't communicate in English, so lucky for me, I had lots of practice in French! Being able to connect with someone from a different background, race, language, and religion allowed me to become the person and teacher that I am today. We have a 4-year old son, Aksil, with whom we speak French pretty much exclusively. My family is a great example of how foreign language can make the world smaller and bring people together.

If you were to ask my son what mommy does, he would say, "Open people's minds and teach French." (Coached, much?! :p) When it comes to what I love to teach – geography and anything Francophone! Opening the world to my students is such a valuable experience for all involved.

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Vestal is part of the International Baccalaureate program, so I'm always incorporating skills and lessons that play to our school's vision and mission statement aligned with the IB program, which "aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect." I love being a French teacher and IB enriches my craft!

This March, I'll be traveling to France for a 2-week homestay in Brignoles. My favorite part of traveling would be when the students see the Eiffel Tower for the first time. It seems cliché, but the way their faces light up makes me so happy!

Some of my other favorites:

French dessert: Mille-feuille

French city: Tours

French music: Big Flo et Oli, Louane, Maitre Gims, there are so many!

French movie: Bataille d'Algers

French word: Depends on who you ask - I'd say **alors**, my students would say **n'est-ce pas?** !

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Calendar of Events - Printemps 2018

February 24 - March 25

Le Grand Concours
Grades 7-12 (levels 01-05)

March 28

Film Night - Comme un Chef

March 5 - 11

National Foreign Language Week

April 1

AATF of CNY Scholarship Deadline

April 14

AATF of CNY Spring Workshop

May

LECNYS Spring Celebration

July 18 - 21

AATF Convention - Martinique

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Our Advertisers



"What I most enjoyed about the workshop is that I spent 2 weeks speaking only French and learning new things. I feel recharged and up-to-date on many aspects of *la France actuelle*." Betsy Nickerson, French teacher at the Wheeler School in Providence, R.I., spent the last two summers with us in France at our annual immersion program. Her comments are typical of those teachers who take the time to be totally immersed in French culture.

Your total involvement in French culture and language is bound to have a positive impact on your lesson plans and in the way in which students and parents perceive you as a teacher. Principals will be impressed with your efforts; parents & students will sense your confidence about representing France today.

Each summer our workshop is held in a different region of France. In 2018, rendezvous à Lyon, 15-26 juillet. Venez nous rejoindre! Program, cost and details at www.frenchtraveler.com; request a free brochure from us at trips@frenchtraveler.com. Vous ne serez pas déçu.