



October 2019 Newsletter

Alliance Française-Lansing October Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Conversation Café at the café in Schuler's Bookstore in Meridian Mall 3:00- 4:30 PM	4	5
6	7 East Lansing Public Library French Club 7:00-8:00 PM	8 AF-Lansing Conversation entre amis. Chez Sullivan 6:30	9	10 Conversation Café at the café in Schuler's Bookstore in Meridian Mall 3:00- 4:30 PM	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 Conversation Café at the café in Schuler's Bookstore in Meridian Mall 3:00- 4:30 PM	18	19
20	21 East Lansing Public Library French Club 7:00-8:00 PM	22	23 AF-Lansing Conversation entre amis. Chez Sullivan 6:30	24 Conversation Café at the café in Schuler's Bookstore in Meridian Mall 3:00- 4:30 PM	25	26 AF-Soirée Chez Sullivan 6 :30
27	28	29	30	31 Conversation Café at the café in Schuler's Bookstore in Meridian Mall 3:00- 4:30 PM	November 1 La Toussaint	

Nominations for the Alliance Française-Lansing Board of Directors

Autumn brings change and that's no less true for Alliance Française. It's time for term changes for half our board. Vice President, Josie Wojtowicz., Treasurer, Brian Kelly, and At Large Director, Darcy Greene, have served two years and are ready to let others have the opportunity. You may recall that our chapter alternates voting for half the board each year so that we have continuity. Remaining on the board are Co-Presidents, Gaelle Cassin-Ross, Yasmina Bouraoui, and Secretary, Nancy Kelly. We will be appointing someone to fulfill the remaining year of the other At Large Director term for Amy Shepard who had to step down.

Currently the Nominating Committee is Gaelle, Yasmina and Nancy. We would LOVE to have a non-board member volunteer to serve with us as we get into the fall voting season. Would you please consider helping? Email one of us and we'll get you started.

Want to fill a board member position? It is a very informative and rewarding way to see AF become what you want it to be! Our Chapter is open to new initiatives and activities. Getting involved in leadership helps the entire chapter.

Know someone who would like to serve? Nominations are due by October 31, and the vote will be Dec 14th at the Annual Meeting and Christmas Celebration. Would you like to take the AT Large half term to replace Amy Shepard? Just let us know.

The committee will have a Zoom Meeting (on-line) date TBA. Questions? Call Nancy, 517.749.9615

Soirée : Halloween, La Toussaint

It is October, the month of falling leaves, carved pumpkins on the porch and Christmas decorations in the stores with the month ending with children visiting neighbors and hoping to get candy. As Alliance Française has done for the past three years, the October soirée promotes a Halloween theme and members are encouraged to come in costume – or at least masked. (The hosts will have extra masks available.)

The first day of November is La Toussaint. Since La Toussaint is a religious, political and school holiday celebrating All Saints Day in France, we thought we might create a tableau on which members could write the names of Alliance Française members and friends who they would like us to remember.

In France, mums are the flowers of La Toussaint and cemeteries are resplendent honoring memories of those who have died. (Mums are considered mainly as a cemetery flower in France. It is not a flower or flower arrangement to take to someone's house!)

The Food Section: Josie's Cassoulet Recipe

The Cassoulet Legend

"During the 100 Years' War Castelnaudary (just a little west of Carcassonne) was placed under siege by the English army. After some time, the hungry townspeople came together to combine their stores into a communal dish for the entire town and their soldiers; one person brought white beans, another some pork, lard and sausage, yet another some leftover pieces of confit duck... All was put together in a large dish and into the baker's oven. The Cassoulet of Castelnaudary was born! Today, this typical southwestern French dish is fiercely loved and served in many local restaurants. The best, are of course, the homemade ones that have been cooked, as tradition requires, in a wood burning stove (look for signs declaring: 'Cassoulet fait maison au four à bois')."

(I took this information on the legend from our bike company (Detours in France) information.

When Randy and I were on a biking adventure along the Canal du Midi in June of 2018, we had many chances to sample different Cassoulet recipes. I managed to eat it practically every time a restaurant offered it on the menu. The dish gets its name from the pot it's usually baked in, the cassole, which is often shaped like a wide inverted cone to insure the greatest amount of luscious crust. We've been told that all cooks have their own special recipe. Last year we made cassoulet for an Alliance soirée. I had several requests for the recipe. Here is the one Randy

and I used. We cooked it on the stove top and not in the oven. Also, we used canned beans rather than dried beans. The recipe was given to us by Ed Ponist. Thanks so much, Ed.)

Cassoulet Recipe

Ingredients:

2 cups chicken stock
1 lb pork, cubed
1 lb chicken, cubed
1 lb lamb, cubed
1 lb duck, cubed (or sub another 1 lb of cubed chicken). That's what Randy and I do.
1.5 lbs of a combo of Polish and Italian sausage
4 thick bacon slices
6 cans or more of various kinds of high quality beans, including plenty of white beans
A large can of tomato paste
1 cup of white wine
1 bay leaf
1 tsp salt, and pepper to taste
1 T lard or half lard half olive oil
2 tsp thyme
1 tsp basil
1 tsp chopped garlic
½ cup chopped celery
1 cup chopped onion
2 leeks

Directions:

In a heavy casserole type pot (with a cover) start frying the bacon, add the lard. When the fat is hot brown add the pork cubes then remove them. Next, brown the lamb and remove. Do the same with the duck and/or chicken. Cut the sausages into chunks and sauté them and remove them. Take out the bacon and save for later. Then add to the casserole the wine, tomato paste, bay leaf, salt, pepper, thyme, basil, chopped garlic, celery, and onion. Reserve the leeks for later. Sauté for a bit then add 2 cups of chicken stock.

THEN add your meats but not the sausage. Simmer for 20 minutes. THEN add your sausage. Simmer low heat for 20 minutes. THEN add the beans. Slow cook simmer uncovered for another 20 minutes. THEN add the leeks and cook for another 15 minutes.

Your cassoulet is done! Place the crispy bacon on top. Serve with plenty of crusty French bread and red wine.

Gauge the amount of beans by the size of your casserole. Times are given but use your judgment. As you can see cooking goes from less fragile to more and more fragile. You don't want to overcook because then you end up with mush.

*The Food Section is going to be a regular feature in the AF-Lansing newsletter. Each month there will be a new recipe – YOUR recipes! (otherwise, it will be one of my recipes – and I only know how to make four dishes...) It could be a recipe for a dish that you bring to the soirée, a recipe for French pastry, a family recipe given to you by your grandmother's sister-in-law... **Please** share your favorite recipes. Send a file to Mark: quaipasteur@gmail.com.*

Les feuilles mortes (The Autumn Leaves)

poetry by Jacques Prevert

Oh! Je voudrais tant que tu te souviennes
des jours heureux où nous étions amis
En ce temps-là la vie était plus belle
et le soleil plus brûlant qu'aujourd'hui
Les feuilles mortes se ramassent à la pelle...
Tu vois je n'ai pas oublié
Les feuilles mortes se ramassent à la pelle
les souvenirs et les regrets aussi
et le vent du nord les emporte
dans la nuit froide de l'oubli
Tu vois je n'ai pas oublié
la chanson que tu me chantais.

C'est une chanson qui nous ressemble
Toi tu m'aimais
et je t'aimais
Et nous vivions tous deux ensemble
toi qui m'aimais
et que j'aimais
Mais la vie sépare ceux qui s'aiment
tout doucement
sans faire de bruit
et la mer efface sur la sable
les pas des amants désunis

Les feuilles mortes se ramassent à la pelle
les souvenirs et les regrets aussi
Mais mon amour silencieux et fidèle
sourit toujours et remercie la vie
Je t'aimais tant tu étais si jolie
Comment veux-tu que je t'oublie
En ce temps-là la vie était plus belle
et le soleil plus brûlant qu'aujourd'hui
Tu étais ma plus douce amie...
Mais je n'ai que faire des regrets
Et la chanson que tu chantais
toujours toujours je l'entendrai

C'est une chanson qui nous ressemble
Toi tu m'aimais
et je t'aimais
Et nous vivions tous deux ensemble
toi qui m'aimais
et que j'aimais
Mais la vie sépare ceux qui s'aiment
tout doucement
sans faire de bruit
et la mer efface sur la sable
les pas des amants désunis.

(Jacques Prévert, chanson interprétée pour la première fois par Yves Montand en 1946, musique: Joseph Kosma. *Johnny Mercer wrote the American version and called it « Autumn Leaves »*)