

Historical and Cultural Presentations from the Hoffman Estates Sister Cities Commission

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Coco Chanel

Mademoiselle Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel (1883-1971) continues to influence the way women dress and her fashion concepts are to be found in many of today's top fashion designers - be they French, Italian, or American. Chanel believed women could be elegant and sophisticated yet informal, regardless of the occasion. She believed that being well-dressed is about timeless style, not the latest trend.

Coco Chanel was one of the earliest of "liberated" women and she believed wearing comfortable clothing is not a male prerogative and to prove her point, she put women in pants and blazers. Certain trends attributed to her are the "little black dress" and costume jewelry - two design ideas that no woman can be without. Women are still wearing blazers and pants!

The 20th century's most influential designer, and one of the most influential women of all time, was presented by Annette Baldwin, Chicago-area historian, actor and lecturer. Annette charmed the audience with her lively historical portrayal of Coco Chanel bringing to life the story of Coco Chanel's rise to fame and her fashion theories and innovations, including the creation of her most famous fragrance, Chanel No. 5. She was also candid about Chanel's competitors and the men in her life.

Ms. Baldwin's historical characterizations, lectures, and Readers Theater productions have been presented to scores of libraries, historical societies and museums, including the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian, Washington, D.C., professional associations, state and national conventions, colleges and universities, Chautauqua's and community organizations in nearly 200 cities across 19 states. Ms. Baldwin's portrayal of Coco Chanel was inspired by a former career in fashion promotion at Marshall Field's.

The program was presented to the community by the Hoffman Estates Celebrations and Sister Cities Commissions, and the Schaumburg Township Public Library. There was no charge for the program, but attendees were encouraged to donate food items or a monetary contribution to our local food pantries. Light refreshments were served during the program consisting of mini-

croissants, brie, various spreads, jams, and Orangina. Door prizes were awarded to six lucky attendees.

French Evening - 2015

On the evening of Thursday, April 30th the Hoffman Estates Sister Cities Commission hosted their 18th Annual Soirée Française, or French Evening. Guests attending the fundraiser at the Stonegate dined upon a délicieux four course meal, prepared by Chef Patrick Guat and Chef Pascal Herbert, of L'Amandier School in Angoulême, France. The night's events also included silent and live auctions to raise funds for the commission's exchange program with students in Hoffman Estates' sister city, Angoulême, France.

When the French Evening began nearly 20 years ago, appetizers were served for the event. Since then, the dinner has expanded into a four course meal. This year's meal started with a plate of spring vegetables, slow cooked eggs and country bacon. The poisson, back of cod roast served with garlic cream that followed the starter was très bien. The chefs impressed the guests with an entrée of lacquered pork belly with sweet spices, broccoli puree, and potatoes Darphin. After the entrée, apple tart tatin with crispy caramel and mascarpone chantilly was served for dessert. Between courses the guests enjoyed bread rolls that were baked and prepared by students at Harper College under the direction of Chef Pili Rios.

The Commission would like to extend their warmest thanks to Chef Patrick and Chef Pascal for an excellent meal. Assisting them in the kitchen was Stonegate Executive Chef Jesse Aguayo, as well as Jill Russell, Patrick Stewart, and Shannon Quinn-Lasota, instructors at the Elgin Community College culinary program. However, it takes more than six people to prepare a four course meal for 180 guests; Jill Russell enlisted the help of more than a dozen current and former ECC students in the preparation of the dinner. Without the generosity and talent of each of these culinary artists who worked for two days to prepare the food, the dinner would not have been possible. Many thanks to all of them.

Before dinner was served, guests had the opportunity to bid on baskets, gift certificates, gift items and sports memorabilia in a silent auction. Many of the items enhancing the baskets, and all of the gift certificates and gift items were donated by local businesses. Donations to the auction were given by local hotels, restaurants, salons, a cooking school, a winery, a dance studio, fitness centers, Harper College, the Park District, the Elgin Symphony, the Sears Centre, and others. A complete list of the donors can be found on this website. The commission is extremely grateful to the local businesses for their generous support and asks that community members support the businesses in turn by patronizing them when possible.

In addition to the silent auction, guests also participated in a live auction led by the Sister Cities Commission, Chairperson, Mrs. Lillian Mosier. The two highest bidders in the live auction will receive a dinner prepared and served in their homes by Chef Patrick and Chef Pascal when they next return to Hoffman Estates from Angoulême. The chefs volunteer their time to prepare these dinners so the funds raised in the auction may support the commission and its programs. The commission is especially grateful to Chef Patrick and Chef Pascal for the work they do in and out of the kitchen for the Sister Cities program.

The Commission would also like to recognize its members who work tirelessly for many months to secure the donations and to assemble the baskets for the auction; set-up the banquet room on the day of the event; and provide support and oversee the dinner on the night of the event. *Merci Beaucoup!*

French Evening - 2013

The Sister Cities Commission held its 16th Annual French Evening on Thursday, April 18, from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at The Stonegate Conference & Banquet Centre located at 2401 W. Higgins Road. This special evening, "Soirée Culinare – Discovering French Delicacies," showcased the flavors of France prepared by our guest chef from Angoulême, France, Chef Patrick Guat, and his students from L'Amandier School. In addition to a fine three-course meal, French wine and Pineau Charentes, a regional liqueur of our sister city, were served.

Food Tasting Festival - 2013

The Village's second annual International Food Tasting Festival took place on Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013 at the [Stonegate Banquet and Conference Centre](#).

Approximately 20 restaurants provided sample-sized world cuisine, with food ranging from French and Italian to Chinese, Mexican, Pakistani and more. The event hosted a variety of exciting food demonstrations throughout the evening from renowned chefs, including Chef Patrick Guat from L'Amandier School in Angoulême; [Gale Gand](#), a Chicago-based pastry chef, cookbook author, winner of the 2001 James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Pastry Chef and host of the Food Network show "Sweet Dreams"; and Viktorija Todorovska, Ambassadrice Armagnac à Chicago.

The cupcake competition between culinary students from [Elgin Community College](#) and [Harper College](#) returned. Hoffman Estates-based [Tate & Lyle](#) provided scholarship money to winners.

The event was co-sponsored by [Tate & Lyle](#), [Silesia](#), the Sister Cities Commission and the [Stonegate](#).

French Chef Visits Hoffman Estates - 2013

The Sister Cities Commission invites you to experience a week of culinary events presented by visitors from Angoulême, France, the Village's sister city. Chef Patrick Guat, chef instructor at L'Amandier School, and two culinary students from Angoulême will arrive in Hoffman Estates in October to offer cooking classes and demonstration dinners. This is an exciting opportunity for residents to experience a wide variety of French food at each of the ticketed events, as each event will be devoted to a different theme. The events scheduled for Chef Patrick are as follows:

- **Tuesday, Oct. 25** -- "Bordeaux: Food and Wine with Chef Patrick" for up to 40 guests at L'Eiffel Bistrot and Creperie at The Arboretum, 100 W. Higgins Road in South Barrington. The event is co-sponsored by Frank Ferru of L'Eiffel Bistrot, J&L Charlemagne and Lillet, and is from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The all-inclusive price includes an aperitif, a classic five-course French dinner, wine with dinner, an after dinner drink, tax and gratuity. Advanced reservations required. Contact L'Eiffel Bistrot at 847-428-4783 to reserve your place for this event. Ticket price: \$75 per person.

- **Sunday, Oct. 30** -- "Children's Cooking Class," for up to 20 children, ages 12 to 15, at the Village Hall, 1900 Hassell Road. The class will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The theme will be "Sweet and Savory French Desserts." In addition to preparing and sampling the desserts, each child will receive a chef's apron. Advanced reservations required. Call 847-781-2606 to reserve your child's place for this event. Ticket price: \$15 per participant.
- **Monday, Oct. 31** -- "Four-Course Prix Fixe French Dinner" for up to 125 guests at Elgin Community College (ECC) Spartan Terrace Restaurant, 1700 Spartan Drive in Elgin. This is a new event and a new venue for the Commission, and will begin at 6 p.m. Chef Patrick and his two students will prepare a French dinner with students from ECC in conjunction with the Food Production IV restaurant class. Advanced reservations required. Contact the ECC box office at 847-622-0300 to reserve your place for this event. If you have a preference to be seated with other guests, please advise the box office when making your reservation. Ticket price: \$40 per person plus tax.

French-Indian Fur Trader Presentation - 2012

To celebrate French history and culture, the Village's Celebrations and Sister Cities Commissions, along with the Schaumburg Township District Library, sponsored a program featuring storyteller and naturalist, Andy Talley. Andy hails from Crystal Lake, and is a naturalist and interpreter in museum, forest preserve district and conservation district settings. Andy helps adults and children experience history via his entertaining and educational programs. At the Village Hall on Saturday afternoon, June 1, 2012 Andy brought to life the French-Indian fur trader. The entire community was welcome to attend and light refreshments were served.