

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 75th ANNUAL AATF CONVENTION IN BOSTON

Over 500 attendees gathered in Boston for the 75th Annual AATF Convention. Everyone enjoyed the excellent selection of sessions and workshops, the special events and activities organized for members, and the historic setting. The Park Plaza Hotel, where the AATF also met in 1988, was celebrating its 75th anniversary as well. The Executive Council met for the two days preceding the convention. A special thanks go to the FIAP



Outgoing AATF Region II Representative and Boston Local Committee Chair Joyce Beckwith receiving a plaque commemorating her work on behalf of the AATF from Jean-Pierre Piriou.

Jean Monnet which sponsored an Executive Council luncheon and the French Library and Cultural Center for the reception it organized.

The Convention began on Thursday with an opening Plenary Session. Corinne Trang, author, culinary critic, and Visiting Professor at Drexel University (PA), spoke on the cultural influences of French cuisine throughout the world. Her remarks are reprinted on page 15. We offer special thanks to TV5 for sponsoring the keynote speaker.



AATF Region VII Representative Ann Sunderland with the two National French Contest winners from her region: Clara Peterson (left) and Melanie Jacobson (right).

Following the opening session, nearly 100 members attended the Welcome Luncheon where, seated by region, they could meet with others members from their chapter or region. Participants were greeted by Chantal Manès, *Chef du service de Coopération universitaire, linguistique et éducative* at the French Embassy in Washington, and Frédéric Martel, *Attaché culturel* at the French Consulate in Boston.

We were also pleased to welcome a number of other guest speakers and dignitaries to the Convention, many of whom gave sessions. Among these were Marc Champeau, *Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec*; Marie-Lise Boulais, *Association canadienne des professeurs d'immersion*; Jean-Denis Côté, *Université Laval*; Lucie Couture, *Association québécoise des*

enseignants de français langue seconde; Martine Defontaine, *Secrétaire générale, Fédération internationale des professeurs de français*; Susan Forward, President, and Nicole Thibeault, Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers; Robert Laliberté, *Directeur général de l'Association internationale des études québécoises*; Elaine Leary, French Library and Cultural Center; Annie Monnerie-Goarin, *Alliance Française, Paris*; and Louise Savoie, *Vice-présidente de la Commission Amérique du Nord de la FIPF*.

Thursday evening our Exhibitors welcomed attendees to examine their products and services followed by a Wine and Cheese Reception co-sponsored by the AATF and the French Cultural Service. The Exhibit Hall was full, and we thank all those Exhibitors who joined us. In particular, we would like to thank the French Government Tourist Office and Heinle & Heinle, sponsors of coffee breaks throughout the meeting. Visit the AATF Web site at [<http://www.frenchteachers.org>] to learn more about those companies which exhibited in Boston.

Local Chair, **Joyce Beckwith**, did a wonderful job putting together a terrific local committee. She also organized a clambake on Thursday evening. Most significantly, she organized and supervised the stay of the fourteen *Grand Concours* *lauréats* who won a trip to Boston. The students visited Boston, Sa-

lem, and Plymouth and were recognized at the Awards Banquet. On Friday evening at the close of the afternoon sessions, attendees were treated to an *avant-goût* of the 2003 convention in Martinique with a presentation by Valérie Vulcain of the Martinique Tourism Board in New York and a performance by Carole Alexis and *les Ballets Mozaik*. Friday evening, many *congressistes* attended the Bastille Day Celebration sponsored by the French Library.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning, *congressistes* were able to participate in 78 sessions, 13 Commission

meetings, 6 workshops, and 17 Exhibitor sessions. At the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening, the AATF was pleased to honor



French *Consul général* in Boston, Stéphane Chmielewsky, speaking at the Awards Banquet.

many members who have contributed significantly to AATF activities, including inducting three new Honorary Members (see page 13), three outstanding teachers (see November issue), and two National French Contest Administrators (see page 5), as well as the fourteen *Grand Concours* winners (see page 6). Afterward they were entertained



From right to left: Charlotte Dietz from ETrav, former AATF President Gladys Lipton, and AATF member Kaye Presley who drove all the way to Boston to attend the convention, with one of her students.

with traditional Franco-American music by Josée Vachon. Her performance was in part sponsored by Bernard Petit Video.

In short, a wonderful time was had by all. We look forward to welcoming participants next summer at the 76th Annual AATF Convention in Martinique.



From left to right: AATF staff member April Cole, Local Committee Members Janel Lafond-Paquin and Stephen Kiley, and AATF staff member Rosalba Correa.