

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AATF ANNUAL CONVENTION IN QUEBEC CITY



Following two days of Executive Council meetings, including an evening spent stuffing *mallettes*, the 78<sup>th</sup> annual AATF convention officially opened on Thursday, July 7 at the Hilton Hotel in Quebec City. Those who had carefully perused the May issue of the *French Review*, devoted to French-speaking Canada and for which the AATF received a subsidy from the *Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec*, read the welcome letters from Jean-Paul L'Allier, mayor of Quebec City, and Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, *Vice-première ministre et Ministre des Relations internationales du Québec*, which were reproduced in the convention program. AATF President Margot Steinhart welcomed attendees to the convention, and Christopher Pinet, Editor in Chief of the *French Review*, introduced keynote speakers Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow, journalists and authors of *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong* and *Les Français aussi ont un accent*, who provided their insights on the evolution of the French language in the world. The opening session was followed by a Welcome Luncheon, attended by over 200 people, at which the guest of honor was Mme France Hamel, representing Mme Gagnon-Tremblay. She welcomed the AATF to Quebec City and delighted the audience by announcing that the six scholarships provided by the government of Quebec to AATF members in honor of the 2005 convention would be continued in 2006. In addition, the ISE Year of Languages Award was presented to Mimi Hagedorn (KY) (see page 31). Chapter President Maureen Motsinger accepted the award on behalf of Mimi who was unable to be present and read her acceptance remarks. An afternoon of breakout sessions culminated in the reception, co-sponsored by the AATF and the Cultural Service of the French Embassy in Washington, marking

present to publicize their products and services to attendees.

Already more than 150 AATF members



Left to right: AATF Executive Director Jayne Abrate, artist Paulette Foulem-Girardin, AATF President Margot Steinhart

and their guests had had the opportunity on Wednesday evening to experience a pre-convention evening of dining and dancing at a *Cabane à sucre*, an excursion organized by Jumpstreet Tours. On Thursday evening, *Voyages Tour Étudiant* treated 200 participants to a visit of the *Côte de Beaupré* with stops at the *Basilique Ste. Anne de Beaupré* and dinner at an historic mill. *Voyages Tour*

the opening of the exhibit hall. Companies and schools from the U.S., Quebec and the rest of Canada, France, and the United Kingdom

*Étudiant* also sponsored one of several coffee breaks for attendees.

Friday and Saturday were devoted to the majority of the sessions and workshops on topics ranging from cinema, literature, teaching techniques, business French, assessment, and professional development to advocacy, promotion, and recruitment (The complete program can be found on the AATF Web site). Special recognition should go to Region I Representative Myrna Delson-Karan who organized a session with *québécois* authors Denise Boucher and Michel Garneau, co-sponsored by the FIAP Jean-Monnet and the *Union des écrivains du Québec* (see page 16) as well as the first AATF Book Club session which was devoted to the literature of Quebec. Region III Representative David Graham organized a music round table featuring singer Danny Boudreau, lyricist Roger Tabra, and Dominica Merola (see page 44 for information on the performers' Web sites). Other special sessions and meetings included a promotion Swap Shop organized by Joyce Beckwith, Chair of the AATF Commission for the Promotion of French, Regional Round-ups with the nine AATF regional representatives, sessions by AATF Past-Presidents Jean-Pierre Piriou, Gladys Lipton, and Rebecca Valette, exhibitor sessions, commission sessions, as well as meetings of graduate students and new teachers and sponsors of the *Société honoraire de français*. Organizational meetings throughout the convention also involved the chapter presidents, National French Contest Administrators, chairs of the twelve AATF commissions (see page 32), and a *French Review* Editors' Luncheon, presided by Editor in Chief Christopher Pinet.



The AATF Executive Council



As is traditional at AATF conventions, members of the American Society for the French Academic Palms enjoyed a luncheon, presided by its President, Jean-Pierre Piriou.

At the end of the day on Friday, participants had the opportunity to compete in a *dictée* organized by Marie-Simone Pavlovich and David Lebel. Winners, announced at the Delegate Assembly on Saturday, received books. (See the list of winners on page 28.) Also on Friday evening, the *Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec (MRIQ)* and the *Université Laval* sponsored a reception for attendees, held at *l'Observatoire de la capitale*. Special thanks to Yanick Godbout, *conseiller à la Direction États-Unis du MRIQ*, for his help in organizing this convention as well as to both Yanick and Francine Blackburn from the *Université Laval* for organizing the reception. Two groups of participants also attended an evening theater workshop sponsored by Jumpstreet Tours.

Exhibits remained open all day Friday and until noon on Saturday. Many exhibitors donated wonderful prizes, including materials, scholarships, stays and excursions

which were awarded in a Saturday morning raffle, expertly coordinated by AATF staff member Amy Hanson, with help from Jennifer Ramirez, who also ran the AATF Exhibit Booth and handled public relations photos. Thanks to Region II Representative Jean-Pierre Berwald for performing announcer duties.

Throughout the day on Friday and Saturday, bus tours took participants on a two-hour visit of the city. Jumpstreet Tours, which sponsored these tours, has donated the proceeds which will fund two scholarships for AATF members to return to Quebec in 2006 (see preliminary announcement page 28).

Saturday afternoon, the official AATF delegates met at the annual Delegate Assembly to ratify decisions made by the Executive Council. In addition to announcing winners of the *Dictée*, special guest at the Assembly was Jorge Rodriguez Iglesias, from the University of Havana, Cuba. He spoke to the delegates about the teaching of French in Cuba.

The culminating event of the convention was the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening. (See the list of honorees on page 42.) In addition, we welcomed four new Honorary Members (see page 27) and recognized our outgoing Executive Council members. Those who did not have early return flights were able to enjoy a number of sessions and workshops on Sunday morning. Finally, the last official activities of the program on Sunday, July 10, were the

noontime departures of an afternoon tour of the *Île d'Orléans* and a three-day visit to the Saguenay region organized by the *Université du Québec à Chicoutimi*. Special thanks to Pierre Lincourt and Éric Renald for their work on this excursion.

The AATF would like to express its gratitude to Paulette Foulem-Girardin. An Acadian artist, born in Caraquet, New Brunswick, Paulette graciously allowed us to use her painting, *Métis*, as the emblem of the convention. The image captured the theme of the

convention, "Le Français: langue de la diversité," and was used on the program cover, *mallettes*, and souvenir T-shirts.

Each evening, participants were able to stroll through the streets of Quebec, taking in outdoor concerts of the *Festival de musique*, dining out, enjoying street performances, shopping, and reveling in the Francophone atmosphere of this historic city. In short, 850 participants, including 70 Canadian teachers attending a summer program sponsored by the University of British Columbia which offered two scholarships to AATF teachers (see scholarship winners on page 35), were able to enjoy 194 sessions and workshops, more than 70 exhibits, guest speakers from the Joint National Committee for Languages, the *Association internationale des études québécoises*, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, *l'Association canadienne des professeurs d'immersion*, the *Commission Amérique du Nord*, and the *Association des professeurs de français des universités et collèges canadiens*, as well as several exciting excursions. The AATF would like to welcome Administrative Assistant Darla Macaluso who made it through her first AATF convention unscathed and managed to stay on top of all the many details and the paperwork, and demonstrated the public relations skills necessary to ensure a successful convention. AATF staff members were aided in their work by the wonderful personnel of the Hilton Quebec, CORPAV Audiovisual Services, *Poitras Services de décoration*, and Mendelssohn-Livingston transportation and customs services. The AATF would like to thank the speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors without whom the convention could not happen, and especially the government of Quebec for their support of this event.



Left to right: Sylvie Lachance, Secrétaire adjointe à la Francophonie canadienne; Ginette Chenard, Directrice États-Unis, MRIQ; AATF Executive Director Jayne Abrate; Yanick Godbout, Chargé des affaires éducatives aux États-Unis, MRIQ; France Hamel, Députée à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec; AATF President Margot Steinhart.

