

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AATF ANNUAL CONVENTION IN SAN JOSE

The 83<sup>rd</sup> annual AATF Convention, July 2-5, 2009 at the Doubletree Hotel in San Jose, California had as its theme, "L'Éducation et ses défis." It actually began a day early with a pre-convention excursion to Monterey, including a visit to the Monterey Institute of International Studies, organized by Michel Gueldry. Nearly 40 teachers spent the day visiting the institute and this charming locale.

The AATF Executive Council spent two days deliberating and doing the Association's business before the convention began. They met on June 30 and July 1. Prior to a working dinner on June 30, the group stuffed the convention bags.

The convention opened officially on Thursday, July 2. AATF President Marie-Christine Koop welcomed attendees, and then she introduced the dignitaries, Pierre-François Mouri-

er, *Consul général de France à San Francisco*, Denis Turcotte, *Délégué du Québec à Los Angeles*, et Jean-Pierre Cuq, *Président de la Fédération internationale des*

*Professeurs de Français (FIPF)*. After their welcoming remarks, Michel Robitaille, *Président-Directeur-Général du Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques* and AATF Honorary Member, gave the plenary address entitled "Pour que rayonne la francophonie

des Amériques." After the opening session, nearly 100 *congressistes* and guests attended the Welcome Luncheon.

Sessions and workshops began in earnest following the luncheon and continued throughout the next two and a half days. Two semi-plenary sessions were organized, one by Jean-Pierre Cuq, President of the FIPF, and the other a round table on *littérature jeunesse*, organized by the Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques, featuring Francophone authors Nicole Cage-Florentiny (Martinique), Martine Noël-Maw (Saskatchewan), Françoise Lepage (Ontario), and Johanne Gaudet, *Directrice général de Communication-Jeunesse*. To close the opening day, participants were able to get a first look at the Exhibit Hall (find out more about our exhibitors on the AATF Exhibitor Web page at [www.frenchteachers.org]) during a wine and cheese reception co-sponsored by the AATF and, as they have for many years, by the Cultural Service of the French Embassy in Washington.



AATF members enjoying the Welcome Luncheon.

In the evening, attendees were treated to a showing of *Entre les murs*, winner of the *Palme d'or* at the Cannes Film Festival. The film was presented by Catherine Pétilion, *Attachée éducative à l'Ambassade de France à Washington*, and new Honor-

ary Member, who also presented a workshop the next day on using the film in the classroom.

Day 2 was a full day of sessions and workshops, many highlighting the theme of the convention. During the lunch break, many members participated in the fifth annual *Dictée* organized by Marie-Simone Pavlovich, herself a finalist in *la Grande Dictée* run by Bernard Pivot. Winners were announced at the beginning of the AATF Delegate Assembly (see page 41). Following a busy day, participants were treated to another film, this time from Quebec. *Babine* was presented by Yanick Godbout, *Directeur des Relations gouvernementales et Affaires publiques à la Délégation du Québec à Los Angeles*.

Guest speakers included Alain Braun, *Université de Mons-Hainaut*, Jean-Pierre Cuq, *Président de la FIPF*, and Manfred Overmann, *Université des Sciences de l'Éducation de Ludwigsburg (Allemagne)*. Other special sessions and meetings included numerous exhibitor and commission sessions, as well as meetings of the National French Contest Administrators and *Société honoraire de français* sponsors (see the complete program on the AATF Web site).

Day 3 of the convention was equally busy. In addition to many sessions, there was a morning coffee break in the exhibit hall where lucky attendees won valuable prizes at the exhibitor raffle. The raffle was expertly organized by AATF Vice-President Sister Mary Helen Kashuba with help from fellow Vice-President Steven Daniell as announcer. Be sure to check out the Exhibitor Web page on the AATF Web site at [www.frenchteachers.org] as well as the list of con-



vention sponsors (see page 20).

In the afternoon, the AATF Assembly of Delegates met to ratify the decisions of the Executive Council. An important initiative to reorganize the AATF regions was passed (see page 24), and the final portion of the meeting was devoted to break out sessions on leadership, recruitment, and chapter business.



At the Awards Banquet (L. to R.): AATF Past-President Margot Steinhart, Jean-Pierre Cuq, President of the FIPF, AATF President-Elect Ann Sunderland, Executive Director Jayne Abrate, New Honorary Member Yanick Godbout, AATF President Marie-Christine Koop

AATF CERAN Lingua Outstanding Chapter Officer Award which was received by Amy deGraff, President of the Virginia AATF Chapter (see page 12). She will enjoy a one-week stay in one of the CERAN Lingua programs. Intercultural Student Experiences again sponsored the ISE Language Matters Award which was given to Beth Pierce

(see page 10). The award includes a cash prize, and ISE representative Tanya Gajewski was on hand to make the presentation. We also were delighted to recognize Anne Jensen, Region IX Representative and Local Committee Chair, as well as Local Committee members, Pat



Local Committee Chair Anne Jensen

was magnificent. In short, the 285 participants were able to enjoy 95 sessions and 3 workshops, 25 exhibit booths, numerous guest speakers, and several unique excursions. The AATF would like to thank the staff members who helped make the convention such a success, Administrative Assistant Darla Phoenix and Amy Hanson (who unfortunately had to cancel her participation at the last minute but was instrumental in preparing the convention) who helped us throughout the process of planning and running the convention. AATF staff members were aided in their work by all the members of the Executive Council, the personnel of the Doubletree Hotel, and our now-familiar AV technician Mike Hankins. Finally, the Local Committee worked tirelessly to ensure a memorable convention. The AATF would like to thank the speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors (see page 20) without whom the convention could not have happened.



The American Society for the French Academic Palms held a dinner during the convention.

Nearly 100 members participated in the Awards Banquet (see the complete list of honorees on page 33). Following dinner, we welcomed three new honorary members (see page 34), Felino Martinez Alvarez, Yanick Godbout, and Catherine Pétilion, honored Outstanding National French Contest Administrators, and recognized our outgoing Executive Council members, Region III Representative David Graham, who will finish his second term in December, Christopher Pinet, Editor in Chief of the *French Review*, who will finish his fourth term on June 30, 2010, along with Managing Editor Wynne Wong, who will finish her term at the same time. Among the numerous award recipients were JoAnn Chiet, Rodney Taylor, Barbara Barnett, and Linda Quinn Allen who received the 2009 AATF Dorothy S. Ludwig Excellence in Teaching Awards (see page 23). This award is sponsored by former AATF Region I Representative and Honorary Member Robert Ludwig who provides a cash award for the recipients which they receive in addition to a year's complimentary membership in the AATF and a one-year subscription to *Le Français dans le monde*. This year, we awarded for the third time, the

Nakashima, Clotilde Gres, Muriel Von Stein, Anne-Marie Lemoine, Helene Chan, Barbara Vinolus, and Jacqui Kandell, whose help was invaluable in making the convention a success.

Those who did not have early departures were able to take advantage of the final half-day of sessions and workshops. The last official activity of the convention was the departure on Sunday of 20 participants on an excursion to San Francisco and California wine country.

The weather



A group of 20 AATF members and their guests visiting San Francisco.