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Welcome to the USA Chapter's first Newsletter!

Through the efforts of our Newsletter Committee, chaired by Sue Moss, we are going to attempt to get something into your Inbox the first of every other month.

The Newsletter's objective is to keep us connected, informed and to build community.

Many thanks to our Past President, Reneaux Collins, who suggested we begin a newsletter. It was on the honey-do list of suggestions, and it is a good one. The Newsletter is your newsletter, so I welcome any suggestions and submissions. They should be sent to Courtney Hamm at courtney.hamm@ialf.com.

In this edition, we have a recap of the New Orleans meeting, as seen through the eyes of Rod Firoozye of California and Randy Kessler of Georgia; a report on the "competitive" gumbo making excursion at the New Orleans Cooking School; a preview of the upcoming Athens Meeting from my European counterpart, Alberto Perez Cedillo; and some insider information of the places to go for some fun with Fellows while in Athens from an insider source.

Finally, we take the time to recognize our many sponsors who helped make our meeting in New Orleans a success.

Please let us know what you like and what you want to see in your newsletter.

Best,

Peter Buchbauer

USA Chapter President

IAFL USA Chapter
Highlights from New Orleans

New Orleans, Louisiana – home of Jazz music, Mardi Gras festivals, and Creole cuisine, was the latest host of the IAFL's annual meeting. From boat rides in the swamp to late night parades, here are the highlights from NOLA:

Wednesday Night, Welcome Reception: After tons of wine bottles and food at Emeril's, our good friend and great guy, Michael Gouriet, somehow felt like he should pick up the substantial bill for all of us. That was a lot of wine and quite a bill ... thanks Michael!

Thursday, Cajun Swamp Tour and Cocktail Reception: At the Bayou, saw lots of nice locals. Ron and Rod got to play with a small alligator during our tour and learned that you better not mess with your voodoo doctors. See:

Friday, Mardi Gras Parade: We learned that our French Fellows sure know how to find great Eggs Benedicts and Bloody Marys. Thank you Alice Meier Bourdeau for showing us Ruby Slipper. After a great lunch at Cochon and to-go cups full of beer, Richard West was carrying his and decided to throw it in a public garbage can. After getting heckled by a crowd chanting “no, no, no,” we discovered that trying to throw away perfectly good beer in New Orleans is a crime against humanity. Later that night, several of our fellows ended up at the Blue Nile and relished the sweet tunes of Kermit Ruffins.

Saturday, World War II Museum Tour and President’s Dinner: During a personal tour of the WWII museum, we learned how tabasco sauce almost never came about – the horror! Thank you, Jay Fishman, for the tour and amazing insight. See:
<https://www.wearethemighty.com/articles/how-a-world-war-ii-general-survived-being-hit-in-the-head-by-a-katana/>

Thank you to Fellows Rod Firoozye and Randy Kessler for sharing their stories and photos with us!





An afternoon at the New Orleans Cooking School with a healthy dose of competition

The IAFL held its annual US meeting in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. Little did we know that Mardi Gras was not a one-day event but instead spanned two weeks of celebrations throughout the city. Of course, New Orleans invites, maybe even demands, a healthy dose of day drinking and in the spirit of our host city, we started the day at a very local dive bar, The Golden Lantern. It

was a true hole in the wall with cheap drinks and Jello shots, which may or may not have been slurped down, we will neither confirm nor deny.

Thereafter, properly lubricated and ready for our cooking competition, we sauntered over to the New Orleans Cooking School, stopping to watch numerous floats get driven by us under police escort on their way to their starting lines for the day.

Upon arrival, we sat at tables with the friends we hoped to cook with while we listened to a brief and interesting presentation on the history of New Orleans cuisine.

As for who we ended up cooking with, the best laid plans, yada yada yada. These plans did not work out for the flexible, fun, and spirited among us as we were divided into different groups than the folks we planned to cook with as a way of expanding friendships and comradery. Well, all except one non-compliant table who refused to assimilate their team with others. Without identifying the members of this group, for purposes of this recap, let's just call them the Stuffed Shirts. 😊

Each group was assigned a table and each table was provided with the exact same ingredients, except for the Stuffed Shirts, who were surreptitiously provided with an additional ingredient. All the teams were tasked with preparing authentic New Orleans Gumbo. Some teams had thick Gumbo, some had thin Gumbo, some were more fatty and others were leaner but all in all we had lots of fun meeting new people, trying everyone's gumbo, and mastering a classic New Orleans dish.

Sadly, however, justice is blind and the Stuffed Shirts took home the bragging rights of best Gumbo. And, admittedly, it was pretty damn good.



Winning team who shall remain nameless



Thank you to our amazing sponsors of the New Orleans meeting! We appreciate your support.



Get Excited For Greece!

From Alberto Perez Cedillo, President of the IAFL European Chapter

First, I would like to say thanks to Reneaux Collins and Karon Bales for a wonderful conference in Mardi Gras New Orleans, an amazing experience in a rich and fascinating city. I look forward to returning the favour in Europe in May, by welcoming all our American Fellows to Athens, the city of Athena goddess of wisdom, the cradle of democracy, philosophy, court speeches and advocacy as we know it today. Athenian culture is one of Europe's greatest legacies and our visit to the city comes at a time when democratic institutions and a free and open society need to be celebrated and cultivated more than ever.

The historic Grande Bretagne Hotel on Syntagma Square will be the perfect venue for the event. It has every facility available and it will also be the centre of the Educational Programme that will be inspired by the vices and virtues of the Olympian Gods. Julia Pasche, Mark Harper and James Stewart have put together a Programme that ranges from 'Ancient Athenian Marriage Law' to 'Succession Regulation' and the 'Oracle of Delphi- trying to look into the future of family practice and procedure'.

First and foremost, we will be celebrating being together again! We will be sailing across the blue waters of the Saronic Gulf, visiting archaic temples, eating locally produced pistachios in Egina Island, swimming in the crystal clear waters of Moni Island, guided trips to the acropolis and its museums, dinner in the labyrinthine bougainvillaea-festooned streets of Plaka and culminating in the President's Dinner by the beach where we will all have the chance to learn how to dance like the Greek Islanders.

Over 230 participants have already signed up. Please come and join us: the IAFL Athens Conference is waiting for you!

IAFL USA CHAPTER ATHENS RECOMMENDATIONS

Rich with history, diverse, and vibrant, Athens, Greece will host the IAFL's next European Chapter meeting. After a long day of touring the Acropolis, a UNESCO World Heritage site, visiting the city's ancient market spaces and lively museums, and enjoying the morning's education programs, be sure to check out the IAFL USA Chapter's recommendations for unwinding in the mythic Mediterranean city:

Jazz bars:

1. Jazz In Jazz, located at Deinokratous 4, Athens 106 75 Greece

With an extensive whiskey menu and a taste for jazz music, this cozy, candle-lit bar brings the charm of New Orleans to the heart of Kolonaki.

2. Witzwort, located at 15 Fon Vaik, Alimos, Attica, 174 55 Greece

A fabulous, old-style bar hidden in the residential area of Alimos proves to be a favorite amongst the locals. Transport yourself back to the '70s with your favorite cocktail at this cozy, hidden gem.

Dive Bars:

1. Bios, located at 84 Pireos street, Center, 104 35, Athens

This rooftop cocktail bar, with a legendary view of the Acropolis and the Athenian skyline, is perfect for a breezy Spring night under the stars.

2. Six Dogs, w/garden, located at 6-8 Avramiotou Street, 105 51, Athens

A bar, cultural center, and night club – all in one – is home to an amazing secret garden in the middle of Athens. Enjoy a cocktail or draught beer with their popular goat cheese and truffle oil bagels and stay all night to hear the laid-back groovy music turn into an underground techno hot spot.

3. Briki, located at 6 Dorileou Street, 11521, Athens

Escape the city center to visit this small, cozy café-bar that houses a great DJ at night or their famous coffee, served in a traditional Briki, during the day.

Food:

1. Argoura, located at 49-51 Aglissiloau Tzitzifies, Kallithea 176 75

Enjoy an assortment of high-quality seafood and shellfish by local chef Nickos Michael. Don't miss his legendary eggplant with smoked eel or his orzo with razor clams in this charming, cozy gem. Don't forget your reservation!

Thank you to Fellow Haroula Constandinidou for her recommendations.



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