



# MILWAUKEE

## FRENCH IMMERSION FOUNDATION

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Spring 2014

### 35th Anniversary Fête Showcased the Past, Present, and Future at MFIS

**What a fête it was.** An estimated 350 people braved January's bitter cold to help Milwaukee French Immersion School celebrate 35 years of thinking globally and learning locally. The evening event, co-sponsored by the Milwaukee French Immersion Foundation (MFIF) and the Milwaukee French Immersion School (MFIS) PTA, featured food, games, arts and crafts, singing and lots of laughter and reunions.

Highlights from the evening included French songs performed by K4 and K5 students; a special presentation of the first ever L'esprit de MFIS Award, given to Mme. Michelle Sment for her many years of service to the school; and a dedication of the auditorium to honor Mme. Virginia McFadden, former MFIS principal.

In addition to parents and staff, more than 50 alumni, seven dignitaries and 26 prospective families joined the festivities. In the days leading up to the anniversary event, camera crews from Fox 6's "Real Milwaukee" and Milwaukee Public TV's "¡Adelante!" were on site to film MFIS students doing what they do best: having fun speaking French! The school was also featured in [OnMilwaukee.com](http://OnMilwaukee.com) and [JSOnline.com](http://JSOnline.com).

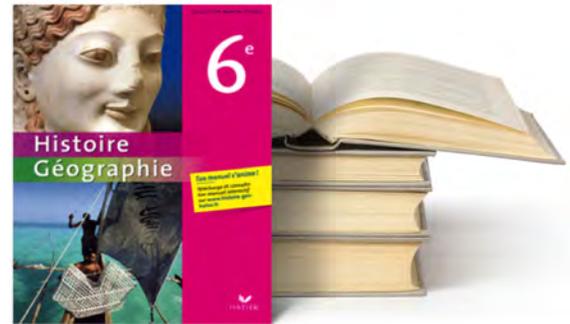
Thank you to all who made the evening a success. This was a great way to showcase MFIS's longstanding history within the community and a fun way to highlight our unique program and attract new students!



# 35

## YEARS

*of thinking globally  
& learning locally*



**MFIF granted \$2,000 in funds for the purchase of textbooks to support the French Immersion program at Milwaukee School of Languages.**

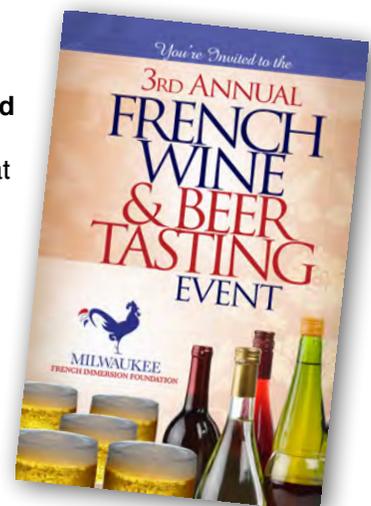
30 Social studies textbooks, Histoire Géographie, for the 6th grade are in the process of being ordered. The remaining funds will be utilized to purchase textbooks for a new French philosophy class, which will be offered next year as an elective.

**Save the Date**

### MFIF 3rd Annual Wine Tasting

**Where:**  
Ray's Wine and Spirits  
tasting room at  
8930 W. North Avenue,  
Wauwatosa

**When:**  
April 26, 2014,  
at 6 p.m.



## Visit from French Cultural Attaché

On February 20, 2014, Denis Quenelle, cultural attaché at the French Consulate of Chicago, visited MFIS as part of a day-long tour of Milwaukee. Among other things, the Consulate partners with schools and communities to advance French language learning and culture in the United States.

As part of this mission, the consulate provides French language teachers with professional development opportunities and administers exchange programs designed to put French educators in K-12 American schools.

In order to take advantage of the educational opportunities that the Consulate offers, MFIS is seeking a seal of quality, "Label FrancÉducation." Meeting with M. Quenelle was one of the first steps toward this goal. While M. Quenelle was at MFIS, he toured the school, observed several of our classes in action, and met with parents Daniel Elko and Cyrille Thenot. M. Quenelle was impressed with MFIS and said he looks forward to forging a relationship between MFIS, MSL, and the French Consulate.

During his presentation at MFIS, M. Quenelle discussed one of the exciting professional development opportunities available to French language teachers, the Stage Pédagogique de Courte Durée (SPCD). An SPCD is a training grant aimed at helping teachers perfect their skills in methodologies for teaching French language and culture, and a special training program is offered for teachers working in French immersion programs. The training program lasts two weeks and takes place in France. This opportunity has been communicated to MFIS and MSL teachers.

Anne LePlae, executive director of the L'Alliance Française de Milwaukee, was instrumental in setting up this meeting. Mme. LePlae and the Alliance have been gracious partners as MFIS and MSL seek to build awareness in the Milwaukee-area education community. The synergy that MFIS, MSL, MFIF, and Alliance have developed in a few short months has been remarkable, culminating in M. Quenelle's introduction to MFIS.



## Focus on New Board Members

*Stephen Bjork is a CPA at Komisar Brady & Co., LLP*  
My wife Jen and I



live in Enderis Park in Milwaukee. We have two sons, Ian a 6th grader at MSL and Spencer who is in 3rd grade at Milwaukee German Immersion School.

I have served nearly six years with the German Immersion Foundation as treasurer. Even though my children are in the German immersion program, I want to continue serving the Public School Immersion Education Model. It is a model that educates all children to compete in a global marketplace, and immersion education gives children the perspective of looking at ideas and issues from multiple perspectives.

*The Foundation was started by parents and we need more parents to be involved. If you've hesitated about getting involved, talk with us or send us an email at [info@frenchimmersionfoundation.org](mailto:info@frenchimmersionfoundation.org) and find out where your talents can be put to use.*

**[frenchimmersionfoundation.org](http://frenchimmersionfoundation.org)**

### MFIF Board Members

Jason Pilmaier, President  
Gina Dee, Vice President  
David Guthery, Vice President  
Stephanie Wesselowski, Treasurer  
Russell Morgan, Secretary  
Lori Banks  
Delara Chaoui  
Stephanie Purvis  
Cara Thenot  
Dan Elko  
Stephén Bjork  
Vickie Hudson  
Kathryn Gaudreau



## Current MFIS & MSL Families Hosting Amity Language Models



*Special thanks to the families currently hosting the French-speaking language models who intern at MFIS and MSL this semester. Host families are instrumental to the success of this program. They offer language models the opportunity to learn about U.S. culture and English language, and make it financially possible for them to participate. Without host families, we could not make this happen.*

### **Lori and Rodney Banks (Joshua and Olivia)**

Lori and Rodney and their children, Joshua (8) and Olivia (6), host language model Laurianne Cotte. Originally scheduled to host Ms. Cotte for one semester, the Banks immediately bonded with Laurianne and asked if she could remain in their home for the entire school year. The Banks are very active volunteers at MFIS and in their community; Laurianne can be seen often helping out with them. Joshua and Olivia look to Laurianne for help with French homework and love Friday movie nights with her.

### **Susan Smieja & Tim Baldwin (Amelia)**

Susan, Tim, and Amelia (8) host language model Laurine Lengàl. Like the Banks, they too bonded with Laurine and offered to host her for the entire school year even though they originally committed to one semester. Susan and Tim are busy working parents but love to make time for camping. They've welcomed Laurine into this family tradition, and have taken her camping even in the cool fall months of 2013.

### **Susan Klumb (Aria)**

Susan and her daughter, Aria (13), are repeat host families! After hosting a young man from France last year, they decided to see what it would be like to add a young lady to the family. They host Lauréline De Franceschi. Susan works as an e-commerce business specialist and Aria attends MSL. Lauréline is fully immersed in the Klumb family's love of entertaining friends at their home. They love when she is in charge of cooking the family meals on Tuesday nights.

### **Stephanie Purvis & Ted Kraig (Delano, Elijah, Emerson)**

Stephanie, Ted and their sons, Delano (14) Elijah (12) and Emerson (8), graciously offered to host language model Alex Thomas for the winter/spring semester. With four men in the house, what's one more?! Alex interns at MSL (where Elijah attends so they are able to walk to school) together. This is the second time the Purvis/Kraig family has hosted a language model. Since all three boys have participated in the French language immersion program, the family fully supports the Amity program and appreciates the opportunity to have a native French speaker living in their home.

### **Kelly & Duke O'Keefe-Boetther, (Nolan)**

For the second time, Kelly, Duke, and Nolan (an MFIS 5th grader) have opened their home to a language model. The family enjoys learning about Senegalese cuisine & culture from Michel Pontarec. Duke, a high school football coach, has introduced Michel to the game as well as to other American sports. Often, Kelly, Nolan, and Michel can be found "vegging" out on the couch watching the *The Voice*. They fully expect to see Michel audition next year with his gift for singing!

## Amity Host Family Information Open House

Curious what it would be like to host a French-speaking language model in your home but not ready to take the plunge? Come meet past host families and current language models and bring questions! Coffee and light snacks will be served.

**Where:** *Milwaukee School of Languages 8400 West Burleigh (Enter at front doors.)*

**When:** *Wednesday, April 2, 5 p.m.–7 p.m.*



## YES! We need you!

As we grow as an organization, and more importantly, as our children grow and move through the grades, we are always looking for people to join us. Share with us just a bit of your time and you will have contributed to bettering the Milwaukee French Immersion experience.

### **Join a committee.**

Plan an event, write a newsletter article, interview Amity Language Model candidates, staff a table at an event. These are some of the things we do to help keep the Foundation running. Please join us – email [jpilmaier@frenchimmersionfoundation.org](mailto:jpilmaier@frenchimmersionfoundation.org) to learn more!

# African Dance Comes to MFIS

Thanks to MFIS parent Kelcey Kalumbula and a \$3000 grant from MFIF, MFIS students are receiving African dance instruction. Patrice Nassalang, a native of Senegal and founder of Jam Ak Jam Dance Company, teaches the classes entirely in French! The idea behind the classes was to increase MFIS students' exposure to Francocentric arts. The African dance class has done this and more. Not only are the kids exposed to an art form from French-speaking Africa, they also get an extra hour of physical education each week. Dance is hard work!

So far the reception has been fantastic. K5 teacher Mme. Meyer posted on Facebook, "African dance class is sooo awesome! The kids get a good workout and it is taught in French!" Better still, in the homes of MFIS students, parents have been treated to excited children demonstrating all the dance moves that they learned in class. As one MFIS parent remarked on Facebook, "[My daughter] made me dance everything she did today! She loves it!" Mme. Bianchi was particularly grateful to MFIF for providing the funding to allow MFIS staff to attend the Pan-African Community Association Annual Gala in November, where much of the groundwork for the African dance program was laid.

