



Nantesense

Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association Newsletter • October 2026

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Letter from the President

By Susan Kegel

Happy Autumn! It has been a fun-filled summer for SNSCA and hopefully for all of you personally as well. We embarked this year on a significantly expanded calendar of events, with something happening every month and sometimes more than one thing. Our Annual General Meeting and Party, coming up on Saturday, October 24, is an opportunity for us to reflect on the accomplishments of the year and elect and re-elect board members. We'd love to hear your feedback, since we will be planning 2027 soon.

I can give you a sneak peak now! We are bringing another Nantes artist to Seattle for an exhibition in February at the Art Love Salon downtown. Christine Laquet was the artist-at-sea on the Schmidt Ocean Institute's research vessel last fall off the coast of Patagonia. Her practice bridges environmental inquiry, speculative thinking, and embodied experience. She will be presenting works from her time on board ship and others, video installations, and live painting. The opening is Tuesday, February 2 from 4 to 7pm, which is also la Chandeleur, so there will be crêpes! There will also be a closing reception on Friday, February 12.

And we do have one more event this year - a holiday party on Sunday, December 6, just for fun. Stay tuned for details on that.

See you at the party on Saturday, October 24!

Connect with Us

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Annual Bastille Day Picnic

By Alaina McCallum

In 2010, SNSCA hosted our 5th annual Bastille Day Picnic at Ravenna Park. Since then, we have mostly been at lakeside parks such as Madrona or Magnasun Park to celebrate *la fête nationale française*. However, this year, we decided to avoid the crowded beach access parks and return to Ravenna Park.

We gathered on Sunday, July 12 for a pleasant afternoon with good food and fun games. Andy and Susan Kegel made the event festive by decorating the shelter with French flags. Tom Redding and Susan Hulbert brought supplies for the grill, and members contributed side dishes and desserts to share. After eating, members enjoyed playing pétanque and giant Jenga. For added fun on Jenga game, a number was written on each of the 54 blocks corresponding to a trivia question about Nantes. How well do you know Nantes trivia?

Question 9: What is the signature ingredient in the gâteau Nantais?



Answer: Rum

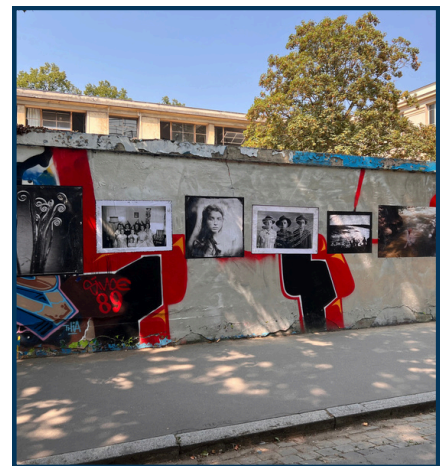
Scholarship Recipient Update: Study Abroad in Paris

By Sophie Biernacki, 2026 Dr. Thomas H. Bennett Scholarship Recipient

I am incredibly grateful to the Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association for the generous scholarship that made it possible for me to pursue an immersive academic experience in Paris during summer 2026. As a student of French and European Studies at the University of Washington, studying in Paris was a particularly meaningful opportunity to deepen my academic understanding while experiencing French language, culture, history, and society within the environment I study. Although a summer heat wave occasionally made moving through the city feel like a slow process, spending the summer in Paris was, as always, a great joy.

During my time in Paris, I took two courses that gave me entirely new ways of understanding and experiencing the city. Together, they encouraged me to look beyond Paris's most familiar landmarks and consider the written and unwritten histories embedded in its neighborhoods, communities, landscapes, and everyday spaces. Rather than viewing Paris simply as a collection of streets and buildings, I learned to consider how different communities have shaped the city through their presence, memories, and relationships with particular places. Living in Paris while studying these questions made the material especially meaningful because I could connect what I was learning in the classroom directly to the city around me.

My Environmental Memory course particularly challenged my assumptions about the relationship between cities and nature. I began to reconsider what constitutes “nature” in a densely populated urban environment and how human beings continuously shape, alter, and redefine the landscapes around them. Studying these questions while living in Paris allowed me to observe these ideas firsthand in the city's streets, parks, waterways, architecture, and other environments. I explored them further through two final projects: a short film focusing on the pigeon as an often-overlooked part of Paris's urban ecosystem, and a podcast episode examining questions of memory and place. These projects allowed me to approach my academic work creatively while applying the concepts I encountered throughout the program.



continuation of **Scholarship Recipient Update: Study Abroad in Paris**

This experience directly contributed to my academic goals as a student of French and European Studies and as someone pursuing an interdisciplinary education. It enabled me to move beyond learning about French culture and European history primarily through texts and classrooms and instead encounter them within the cultural and historical environments I study. It also strengthened my understanding of how language, place, history, memory, and community intersect. Most importantly, I returned to the University of Washington with new perspectives that I can carry into my remaining coursework and future academic pursuits. My time in Paris has changed the way I observe cities and cultural spaces, encouraging me to look beyond what is immediately visible and consider the histories, relationships, and communities that shape a place.

I am incredibly grateful to the Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association for supporting my education and helping make this experience possible. Your generous scholarship allowed me to study in Paris, broaden my academic and cultural horizons, and make meaningful progress toward my academic goals. I will carry what I learned from this experience with me throughout my education at the University of Washington and beyond.





Happy Hour at Obec Brewing

By Inger Tangborn

On August 16, SNSCA members enjoyed a relaxed, outdoor happy hour at Obec Brewing in Ballard. We prepared a cheese board, LU cookies, and other snacks for members to eat while they chose from Obec's drink options.

The event was also a perfect opportunity to welcome Kate Williams to the SNSCA board.



Welcome, Our Newest Board Member!



Upon expressing interest in joining the SNSCA Board, Kate Williams attended the August Board meeting as a guest. At the September SNSCA Board meeting, the motion to add Kate Williams to the Board was unanimously approved. We are delighted to have Kate as part of our team.

Here is an introduction from her!

I join the board with a career in international education. I run an international student exchange program, sending students abroad and hosting visiting groups, and have seen firsthand how lasting person-to-person connections change the way young people see the world.

I am excited to help deepen the ties between Seattle and Nantes, particularly through community events. Outside of work, I enjoy dancing, learning languages, and cooking.

Membership Update

We are excited to welcome the following new members to Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association:

- **Michael Kirkland**
- **Alec Moser**

It is through the contributions and participation of both new and longterm members that we are able to put on our programs throughout the year; we appreciate you! Membership renewals begin on January 1st. To learn about how to renew, visit: seattle-nantes.org/membership.

Nantes Park Cleanup

By Alaina McCallum

Our last Nantes Park cleanup was on Saturday, August 22nd. We were grateful to have a strong crew from A Cleaner Alki to accompany members Ellen Taft and David Asher in the effort to weed the flowerbeds and remove invasive plants.

SNSCA has been teaming up with A Cleaner Alki for a couple years now, and we are thankful and appreciative of the collaboration.

If you are in West Seattle, don't forget to stop by our pocket park along Admiral.



Seattle Sister Cities Street Fair

By Susan Kegel

Seattle has twenty sister cities on four continents! On September 20th, the sister city associations teamed up to put on a street fair at Lake Union Park, next to the new sister city signpost showing the distance to each of the cities in Seattle on sunset-colored signs; Nantes is 4,995 miles away. This free, family-friendly event featured food trucks, booths, live music, and dance groups.

Mayor Katie Wilson said a few words about the importance of sister cities to Seattle in promoting international relations and then she visited all the booths. She and her family learned all about how to solve the Rubiks cube at the Pécs booth, painted tribal rock art at the Mombasa booth, did origami at the Kobe booth, spelled their names in runes at the Bergen booth, and, of course, played pétanque at the Nantes booth.

Thank you to our partners at Seattle Pétanque Club, who set up a pitch next to our booth, explained the rules, and showed everyone how to throw *les boules*!





Upcoming Events

**Saturday,
October 24**
4-7pm

Annual General Meeting

Ellen Taft's house on Capitol Hill

Join us as we recap 2026. There will be food, drinks, music from Julien Thibault's band and a presentation by artist Suze Woolf.

**Saturday,
December 5**
11am-5pm

Alliance Française Joyeux Bazaar

Washington Hall, 153 14th Ave, Seattle

Come stop by SNSCA's booth at the holiday bazaar to enjoy the assortment of art, food, and music at the event. We will be selling ornaments, pocket microscopes, and art prints.

**Sunday,
December 6**
4-7pm

SNSCA Holiday Party

Susanna Plumb's house in Seattle

Mark your calendars and join us for a festive celebration! More details are to come.

Are you interested in practicing your theatrical skills in French?

On Sunday, October 25th from 2-4pm, **En:core Théâtre** is hosting a theater workshop in French at Studio33 in Bellevue.

Au cours de l'atelier différents exercices individuels et collectifs vous permettrons d'aborder les facettes du jeu théâtral (collaboration, attention, voix, prononciation, etc.). L'atelier est ouvert à tous les niveaux alors n'hésitez plus !



Register at
bit.ly/oct25atelier

SNSCA Board Members

OFFICERS

Co-President: Susan Kegel

Co-President: David Asher

Treasurer: Susan Hulbert

Secretary: Alaina McCallum

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

Judy Deignan

Bunny Schmidley

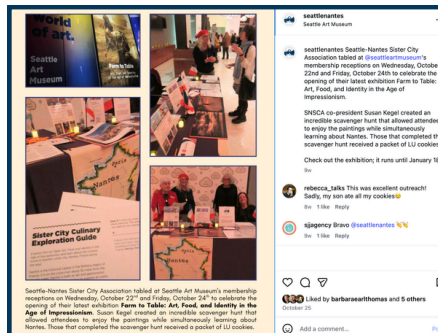
Inger Tangborn

Tom Waite

Kate Williams

Monthly Board Meetings

The Board convenes on the first Wednesday of the month. We are meeting via video conferencing. If you are interested in attending a board meeting, contact us at seattlenantessca@gmail.com.



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