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Our current sponsors can be found on our website: -

www.cancersupportfrance.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S SPRING PONDERINGS *Submitted by Pat Lockett*

Looking back at my ponderings for this time last year, it was clear we were hoping for the start of a return to business as usual. One year on, and as Spring shows signs of the good weather to come, thank goodness we can say we are again making plans which have every chance of being fulfilled.

In March, the National Association held its Annual General Meeting in Cahors in the Lot Valley. I am grateful to the Lot Association for hosting us. An AGM is a great opportunity for reflection and we were able to celebrate many achievements despite the challenges that health restrictions brought.

The minutes of the AGM will be available soon but today, I would like to recognise the work of the members of the National Association and of the Bureau in particular. All deserve a huge thank you for ensuring our Associations receive the support they need to in turn support those touched by cancer. Our *raison d'être*.



A selection of images from the 2022 AGM held in Cahors, in the Lot Valley

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S SPRING PONDERINGS cont...

Dave Wilson (Nord) deserves a special mention as he has led Public Relations for three years; building a strong relationship with the Connexion Newspaper was just one of his achievements. Dave stepped down at the AGM and he has our sincere thanks. In fact, an AGM is a perfect opportunity to offer thanks to all who keep the National Association running smoothly. Please see my full report for more detail.

Many of you know the past year has been an especially tricky year for me personally. I want to thank members of the National Conseil for their care and support and for the good wishes I have received as I look to new horizons and assure CSF of my continued support in the future. Happy Easter to you all!

In closing, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the new National President, Sue Smith (Charente-Maritime).

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION INCOMING PRESIDENT'S SPRING MUSINGS

Submitted by Sue Smith



Firstly, I want to thank Pat not only for her leadership and direction of CSF National over the last few years but on a personal note, she has been a great support and is handing over to me in a way that should make the transition as seamless as possible. Pat will remain involved with CSF in various ways over the coming months and hopefully beyond.

Secondly, I am honoured to be President of this National Association. When one is touched by a health problem such as cancer it is the biggest thing in your life at that time - everything else becomes totally insignificant. In a world that has become increasingly uncertain in recent weeks, we cannot forget those individuals in our communities who are struggling and need our support. I know that everyone reading this newsletter has found the time to reach out in whatever way they can to help these people. You are all truly amazing.

I wish you all a peaceful and sunny springtime and look forward over the coming months to meeting many of you personally.

NATIONAL TRAINING NEWS submitted by Carol Quinlan, National Training Liaison Officer

Training for all of our volunteers and specifically for Active Listeners, has always been a cornerstone of the activities that CSF undertakes. In recognition of the difficulties many Associations have faced with training new Active Listeners over the last two years, a National organised ITC took place 30th/31st March and finishing on 28th April in Bergerac.

Carol Quinlan (Training Liaison) supported by Lynsey Burden (Charente Maritime) were charged with delivering the training sessions. Five Associations have reserved places, providing opportunities for not only the formal training but also the invaluable sharing of ideas, practices and the range of activities that take place across CSF.

A further National ITC may be offered later in the year if Associations identify there is a need. Additionally, the updating of the needs of existing trainers are being assessed, many of whom have had limited opportunities to provide any training activities. It is planned to develop a Training for Trainers which better meets the needs of our Associations and trainers.

The revision of the ITC materials is completed, with editing, proof reading and printing to shortly be completed.

The plan is to launch the package at a Trainer's Conference when completion dates are clear.

There has been some extensive development of online training materials within one or two Associations and it is hoped to explore this further with those Associations in the near future.

It is so good to be able to plan a training strategy for 2022/2023 with a reasonable degree of confidence that it will take place!

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS ROUND-UP

CHARENTE-MARITIME - Submitted by Sue Smith, President

We've had a pretty damp winter in Charente-Maritime but the sunny days have appeared here and there and our thoughts are turning not just to our AGM which is held every March, but to our future events.

Charente-Maritime celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and we have several social events planned. The first will be in Saint-Savinien on Saturday 18th June. Details will be available shortly.

We will also be recommencing our Drop-In coffee sessions with the first one at Twin Lakes Campsite, Souméras on Thursday 7th April from 10.30 – midday. We look forward to seeing many friends, old and new, and hope that many people will come along to find out just how they can help us and how we can help them.

Please see our Facebook page and web our page for details: -

www.facebook.com/csfcmm - www.charente-mar.cancersupportfrance.org/charente-mar-home

The poster is for a 'Drop In' event by Cancer Support France (Charente-Maritime). It features a blue background with yellow sunflowers and a yellow ribbon logo. Three speech bubbles contain the text: 'Fancy a one to one chat?', 'Want to talk something through?', and 'Something on your mind?'. The main title is 'CSF-CM Drop In' in large yellow letters, followed by the subtitle 'Pop in for a coffee, or just a chat, we'd love to meet you.' in blue. A box titled 'Our Next Drop In' lists the following details: Location: Twin Lakes Campsite, 17130 SOUMERAS; Date: Thursday 7 April 2022; Time: 10.30 - Midday. At the bottom, the CSF logo is repeated, and contact information is provided: 'Cancer Support France : Free confidential support for English-speaking people touched by cancer', 'National helpline 0800 240 200', and 'Website www.cancersupportfrance.org'.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Languedoc's AGM was held, via Zoom, on 17th February. During the meeting, two new Bureau members were elected:- Treasurer, Maggie Dobson and Secretary, Maud Ljungqvist.

Languedoc President, Jen Glayzer, offered her sincere thanks to the outgoing Treasurer, Tony Orsman, for his loyal service over the past six years, and to the outgoing Secretary, Jackie Keefe, who will continue to support Languedoc with its communications and administration for the time being.

Also during the meeting, the client support team expressed their thanks and appreciation to all of our Active Listeners for the way they have so creatively and tirelessly supported their clients throughout the pandemic.

DROP-IN DAYS RETURN

After a very long hiatus, our Drop-In Days re-started on 31st March. This monthly event has been a keystone of Languedoc's client support for many years and was sorely missed during the pandemic.

Held on the last Thursday of the month, Languedoc's Drop-In Days provide a safe social environment for people affected by cancer, whether as a patient, a carer for someone with cancer, or for those having lost someone close through cancer. They also offer an ideal opportunity for new clients to 'test the waters' and find out more about Languedoc and the services it offers.

On behalf of the Drop-In team, Alison Kane recently expressed her gratitude to Kath Orsman, who will be returning to the UK later this year. With her quiet, caring and vital presence, Kath has been the creative mainstay of the crafts table at Drop-Ins for many years.

TRAINING NEWS

Over the last two years, during which face-to-face training has not been possible, Languedoc has worked hard to maintain training for both Active Listeners and Active Volunteers. Great progress has been made in the development of online training materials and interactive online software, which have allowed this vital element of the Association to continue.

In 2021, the Training Team, headed by Lead Trainer and Training Administrator Karen Powell, undertook the following:

-

ON-GOING ACTIVE LISTENER TRAINING

Eight two-hour sessions took place online, covering the following topics:-

- Active listening skills practice
- BOX (making the most of our Active Listener information resources)
- Languedoc and personal boundaries
- Palliative care
- End of life
- Complementary therapies
- Client status assessment and case closure

One of these sessions was 'attended' and 'observed' by Carol Quinlan, National Training Liaison Officer. Another was 'attended' and 'observed' by the Training Coordinator of Sud de France. Both were interested in how our online training model could be used by other Associations.

ACTIVE VOLUNTEER INDUCTION TRAINING

Six Languedoc members and one observer from Sud de France attended a face-to-face Active Volunteer Induction Training session on 13th December 2021. All six Languedoc members attending this session have gone on to take up active volunteering roles, for which we are very grateful.

LANGUEDOC cont...

ONLINE TRAINING FOR LANGUEDOC AND OTHER CSF GROUPS, NATIONALLY

The Intensive Training Course for Active Listeners, the Induction for new Active Volunteers, and additional 'extension' modules for Active Listeners will continue to be run online in 2022, with the option of face-to face training as appropriate, using some of the materials developed for the online training.

TRAINING COORDINATOR STEPS DOWN

In July 2021, Anne Roberts stepped down from her role as Training Coordinator. Anne put a huge amount of effort not just into the Training Team, but also into the Association more widely, and she is greatly missed. Karen Powell is covering this role until we are in a position to recruit to it.

CRACKER FAIR

With the lifting of restrictions towards the end of last year, Languedoc was pleased to return to the Cracker Fair at the beautiful Abbaye de Valmagne, where it has successfully raised awareness and funds for the Association for several years.

As well as raising awareness of CSF among French and international visitors, it was good to meet up with members visiting our stand and to remind the Anglophone community that we are still active. A children's lucky dip, Christmas card sales, and a 'guess-the-number-of-beads-in-the-jar' game raised over €600 over the two days of the Fair.



LOT - Submitted by Anna Shackelford, President

LOT AGM

Our AGM in January took place at our new venue for AGMs, Bureau meetings and some events – we are lucky to have access to meeting rooms in the Espace Clément-Marot in Cahors, and we were very happy to welcome Juli Timms (right) as our new Secretary. The rest of the Bureau remains unchanged.

Juli spent all the school holidays in the Lot area from the age of 13, after her parents had bought a 'holiday home' here. In 2009, she left the UK and followed her parents with her husband and 2 young children to live and work permanently here in the Lot. The whole family have been members of CSF for many years and supporting where they can. Recently Juli finds that with the children growing up, with one already left home,



LOT cont...

she feels he has more time to offer CSF. Although still working, she is very happy to volunteer and be part of the CSF family – and we are glad to have her!

At the February Council meeting we thanked Cathy Ractliffe for the 5 years she has served as Secretary and presented her (right) with a pair of oleanders, which a little bird (Cathy’s husband) had told us she was hankering after.

DROP-INS UPDATE

We resumed our Drop-Ins on 23rd February with a guest speaker, Vikki Stevens who is a holistic therapist and reiki master. Vikki laid on a colourful table display, showcasing the arts of reiki, reflexology and Indian head massage, and gave a short session of each on willing volunteers.



Above:- Vikki displaying some of the information about her therapies



Our art group leader, Liz, finally got to go and visit her family in Australia – 2 small grandsons to get to know - so will be away until May. We were very lucky to have local artist Susie Home (below, by the doorway) stepped in during January and she will also be leading the group in March and April. Susie lives and works in the Lot having moved here in 2004. She studied Fine Art and Graphics at Ravensbourne and Croydon Art colleges in England, before a career in design and production within the publishing industry.



LOT cont...

ACTIVITY FOR LIFE

As announced in the last edition of Touchlines, Lot will be hosting this event, and the dates have now been confirmed as **8th – 11th September**. Cathy (former Secretary) and Rachel (Membership Secretary) plus their other halves are working on a route, and are hoping to maybe incorporate part of the *Tour de France* route which on 22nd/ 23rd July passes through the Lot from Castelnau-Magnoac in the Hautes-Pyrénées to Cahors (stage 19). How exciting! Further details will soon be available on the CSF website and the dedicated Activity for Life Facebook page; so keen cyclists get into shape and ready to sign up for the event!

PARIS & ÎLE DE FRANCE - Submitted by Pamela Combastet

We are thrilled to share an interview that was published on Thursday, 17th March in *Inspirelle*, the online weekly newsletter in English for Anglophones in France.

The article was written by Paris Île de France's National Rep, Robynne Pendariès, in the form of an interview between her and Active Listener Judy Lebowitz. It's entitled 'Cancer Support France: How an Active Listener can be your Best Ally'.

<https://inspirelle.com/cancer-support-france-how-an-active-listener-can-help-you-fight-the-disease/>

We are grateful to *Inspirelle* (<https://inspirelle.com>) for permission to share the article with Touchlines readers. Happy reading!

SUD de FRANCE - Submitted by Penny Parkinson, Secretary and Ian Salvage, Communications

The New Year started on an upbeat note with the Sud de France AGM held again in *L'Oliveraie*, a restaurant with seminar room at Carcassonne. Although numbers were down with 26 people in attendance and enjoying an excellent lunch, it was such a pleasure to be able to participate in this event in person rather than by Zoom. Jane Beck was elected unanimously to take over the reins as President and brings new ideas and her experience as a very active Active Listener (AL) to the rôle. Having lived in France for over 50 years (and thus being a fluent French speaker) she is looking initially to enhance Sud's visibility with hospitals/clinics and French associations. Dr Michel Grand, *Vice Président du Comité de l'Aude de la Ligue contre le cancer*, was warmly welcomed and gave an interesting talk about *La Ligue*, its history and its four major missions – research, prevention and screening, support for those affected by cancer, and wider publicity. It was almost 'business as usual'!

We also took the opportunity to bring our Statutes up to date and have changed our name! We are now simply Cancer Support France - Sud de France, having dropped the initial department numbers which for many years have not reflected our sphere of action. And we have a new co-opted member of the team, Ian, who is looking at communication and publicity.

After some cancellations due to COVID-19 at the start of the year, we are now running all our monthly events – that is 7 coffee meetings and 3 book events across the whole of the Sud area. Weekly visits have restarted at *Toulouse Oncopole*, a combined project with Gascony, to provide visible support to patients and staff. The team of 17 Active Listeners are in constant communication to ensure continuity of support.

We are continuing to build on our relationship with *La Ligue* and are improving communication with the medical teams at all levels. Our Tarn members have been invited to join the *Commission des Usagers* – Castres/Mazamet, an excellent example of recognition of the work of CSF.

As we move into a 'less-COVID restricted world', continuing constraints and a wariness amongst some people, makes ambitious forward-planning impossible. However, we are beginning to tentatively plan ahead with a Ceilidh, a *Bien-Être* day, a Summer Fair and quizzes in the pipeline. And of course, a celebration of 20 years of CSF! Do keep an eye on our Events Page on the website for all up to date news here :- www.sud-de-france.cancersupportfrance.org/events



Gaillac Drop-In, March 2022

VIENNE and DEUX--SÈVRES - Submitted by Jacquie Kelly, President

Despite the restrictions we have been living under during this difficult time, we have still managed to carry on providing support and will continue to do so.

BUREAU MEMBERS

There have been some changes to the bureau members and the current list is as follows:-

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| President – Jacquie Kelly | Vice President – Philip Buckle |
| Treasurer – Ann Codling | Secretary – Jane Wentford |
| Training – Clare Schmeider | Publicity – Darlene Hurrell |
| Admin – Steve Nicklen | |

MERGER

From 2022, Vienne has merged with Deux-Sèvres and we are delighted to welcome Carol, Dawn, Denise and Vinnie to our active listening team.

CATCHING UP

In August 2021, *CA Britline* featured an article about Vienne with the inspiring story of Jacquie’s sister, Linda. You can find the link to the article here: -

https://www.britline.com/blog/giving_hope_to_those_with_cancer_in_france.html

In November, our Active Listeners attended a training event to keep their skills up to date. It was a good opportunity to get to know our fellow Active Listeners from Deux-Sèvres and a further training event was arranged for February 2022.

VIENNE and DEUX-SÈVRES cont...

Also in November, some of the bureau attended an expo at *Futuroscope* in Poitiers for Voluntary Organisations in the Vienne. It was a very well organised event and we were delighted to be invited to attend.



A huge **thank you** goes to *Le Café* in Civray for their recent donation of €600 to our funds. Fiona Doyle accepting the cheque on behalf of Vienne from Keith and Laura Springham of *Le Café*



Jacquie, Jane and Steve from the Bureau, manning the stand at the *Rencontres du Bénévolat de la Vienne*.

2022 will see the 20th anniversary of CSF and we hope to have plenty of events to celebrate this and to raise funds - pandemic permitting.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Please accept my apologies for the delay in this quarter's Touchlines. You never know what will be around the corner; my corner involved a fall, breaking a hip and having a new one fitted. Thank you to all those who have given me great support and understanding during the past 2/3 weeks.

Happy Easter and good luck with all your plans for 2022. Margaret York



We remember our
Founding President,
Linda Shepherd
1953-2017

Also [Here](#) to Help...

Cancer Support France are proud to be in partnership, affiliated to or supported by the following associations and groups: -

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www.thebraintumourcharity.org



www.cancerresearchuk.org



www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk



www.targetovariancancer.org.uk



www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact your regional CSF branch. All telephone numbers and email addresses can be found on the back page of TOUCHLINES. *Ed.*

USEFUL INFORMATION

Association Siège Social

Espace Clément-Marot
Cancer Support France, Box 25
Place Bessières, 46000 Cahors

National HELPLINE

Telephone: 0800 240 200 (FREE from a landline)

(Your call is taken on an answerphone and is free from a landline - there is a short message in English - we will reply to you as soon as possible and normally within 24 hours)

Useful Contacts

President: Sue Smith
president@cancersupportfrance.org

Treasurer: Jean Winter
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E-mail: helpline@cancersupportfrance.org

Website: www.cancersupportfrance.org

forum.cancersupportfrance.org

CSF FORUM - Visit the CSF website and take a look at the FORUM, packed full of information and interesting conversations - maybe even meet new friends...

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

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touchlines@cancersupportfrance.org

Please send photographs as separate JPG files - NOT embedded in your editorial. Thank you.