



HELP US COMMUNICATE WITH YOU!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee With Conrad

Join Conrad for a cup o' Joe *the third Wednesday of every month* at 9a.m. in the Parents' Lounge (beginning next Wednesday, November 16). Please bring your own mug -- he'll bring the Joe!

Parent French Classes

Parlez-vous le francais? Parent French classes are underway! Join Madame Louise on Thursdays, 5-6pm. Please bring a pen or pencil and paper!

Love & Logic Classes for Parents

Wednesdays at 5pm, beginning this *Wednesday, November 9.*

Beaujolais Nouveau

Parents, teachers and staff, join us December 2nd from 7 to 9pm in the SLLIS gymnasium for Beaujolais Nouveau! Wine and appetizers will be served, and live music will be played.

Suggested donation is \$10, and all proceeds from the event will benefit TFS music program and library.

It's Picture Time!

Say cheese! Please send your child to school in SLLIS dress uniform, including blazers (we'll have extras on hand), on the following day:

Monday, November 14

1A - Lorena
1B - Danielle
1D - Meghan
2A - Wilson
2B - Jennifer
3A - Sebastien

Tuesday, November 15

1C - Marie France
KA - Sally
KB - Sabrina
KC - Katie
KD - Adeline

Beep! Beep! Parking Reminder

The parking lot at the corner of Sarah & Papin IS available for parent parking *during drop-off and pick-up.*

Please DO NOT park in this lot between 9am and 3pm. Our students use this space for outdoor gym class.



Fall is the perfect time of year for walking!

Take a little walk to Roanne, France, with Madame Sonia...

These Clogs Are Made For Walking

November, 2010

I've learned some important cultural lessons here in the land of cheese and strikes:

1.) Americans are alone in our appreciation of peanut butter. 2.) The French do not wear clogs, nor do they support the wearing of clogs, unless you are a poor peasant. Women wear boots or Converse sneakers.

I'm generalizing, of course, but it's easier that way, and everybody does it.

The clog lesson is one I learned the hard way – that is, through the stares and comments of strangers wondering what could have compelled me to wear clogs.

Confused – what did I do wrong this time? – I turned to a highly-acclaimed French literary source, *Wikipédia*. The clog entry shed linguistic light on the roots of the French anti-clog mentality. And so I share it with you, gentle readers.

The French word for clog is *sabot*. Ever since the shoe gained popularity among factory workers in the Industrial Revolution, the French have associated clogs with the lower classes. Frustrated factory workers were prone to throwing their shoes, their *sabots*, into the machinery – intentionally damaging it – and this is how we came by the word *sabotage*.

The online Oxford English Dictionary mentions but does not support this story. Since I'm the omniscient narrator here, I'm accepting Wikipedia's explanation.

I arrived in France with my clogs, some sneakers, and a pair of boots. After a few weeks of fast walking, my boot soles needed repairing. I took them to the *cordonnerie*

and an unsmiling woman with rough hands told me it would take three weeks. No problem, I thought, I've got my clogs.

I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary at first, but before long my feet morphed into flashing arrows saying, "Hey, I'm not French! Ask me about my clogs!"

Incident 1: It all started when a French boy stopped mid-sentence, after glancing down at my feet, to tell me he thinks clogs are ugly. Shocked into silence, I recovered enough to ask, "Oh, and why's that?" He told me, simply, that they're peasants' shoes. He was wearing high-top basketball shoes and nylon sports pants, so I asked him if he plays any sports. He said no. I responded that we can all be dreamers.

That's a lie. I wish I had said that. In reality, I mumbled something about clogs being popular in the U.S. and how different people have different styles. But next time I'll be ready.

Incident 2: One morning on the train to Lyon, I was lounging with my legs propped up on the seat next to me, peeling an orange, when I heard a male's voice. It was 7:30 a.m. and this orange had a thin, fussy peel, so I didn't catch the complete comment. But I heard the words *beaux sabots* and detected a hint of sarcasm in the voice.

I looked up and observed the speaker: a young man in athletic pants, a sports jacket, and dress shoes, my age and not threatening in the least.

"Pardon?" I asked him to repeat his comment and pointed to the orange, suggesting that peeling one takes a great deal of concentration.

"I said, those are some nice clogs you're wearing." Again, that sarcastic tone.

I was not amused. I glared at him. In hindsight, perhaps I heard more sarcasm than was there, but I wasn't going to stand for this clog mockery again. "I don't get the joke. What's wrong with my clogs?"

"Nothing, nothing. It was just a way to start a conversation, really. You're not French, are you? So where are you from?"

I said nothing for a moment, then calmly replied, "No, I'm not French. I'm American. In America people wear clogs. And insulting people's shoes isn't generally a good way to start a conversation, wouldn't you say?"

He stared at me. I stared back. I moved my clogs back and forth like windshield wipers and dropped the orange peel, now a single, elegant swirl, onto my lap.

He shrugged. "I guess they're ok."

Clogs: 1. Un-smooth operator: 0.

This weekend I was a guest at a teacher's home in the beautiful countryside surrounding Roanne. I walked in and, seeing some clogs in the entryway, told her of my encounters with the clog antagonists. "That's ridiculous," she said. She told me that ten years ago she was wearing her pants tucked into her boots and people gave her strange looks.

Fashion is like an orange peel, twirling round and round, styles disappearing and then reappearing in different times and places. I hope that the next time those clog haters start to hate, they'll hear my voice and reconsider.

My boots are back from the *cordonnerie*, looking better than ever. But my clogs haven't lost their place in front.

IMPORTANT INFO

- Mondays are formal days at The French School.
- School begins at 8:40. The doors open at 8:15.
- Parents must make changes in the dismissal plans of their students prior to 2:00.
- Parking IS allowed on Papin St. during arrival and dismissal while the Commerce Bank lot is unavailable for SLLIS parking.
- AMIGOS Y AMIS ends November 18th (this semester).

IMPORTANT DATES

- 11/9 Love & Logic Parent Class, 5pm
- 11/10 Free screening of *The Lottery*, 6-8pm
- 11/11 NO SCHOOL - Veteran's Day
- 11/14-15 TFS School Picture Days
- 11/16 Coffee With Conrad, 9am
- 11/18 Parents' Assembly Soirée