

# NZALT REGIONAL ROUND-UP 2009

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## Auckland

By Catherine Linnen, NZALT Secretary and Auckland Regional Officer

The Auckland branch of NZALT held a well-attended AGM at the start of this year and the following were elected to office: President, Doug Anderson (St Kentigern College); secretary, Stephanie Mortimore (Rangitoto College); treasurer, Catherine Linnen (Waiuku College).

Catherine Linnen was nominated to replace Doug as regional officer.

## Events of 2009

- Meeting about new matrix.
- Professional development (PD) day for primary and secondary teachers in July, where topics such as new matrix, new assessment formats, curriculum and specific teaching strategies were covered.
- PD day for French teachers in July.
- There has been high attendance at PD days and meetings this year and NZALT Auckland has become a vibrant local organisation.

Japanese students visited the zoo as part of International Languages Week. They had to complete a Japanese worksheet with directions and questions to be answered along the way. The aim was to arrive at the Japanese garden in Auckland Zoo first. The first team there with all the correct answers won. It was kind of an 'Amazing Race' activity.

We collaborated with Auckland University of Technology (AUT) for the Japanese Speech Festival where we judged and provided prizes for the secondary part of the competition. The winners then had to give their speeches at the Taste of Japan Day held by the New Zealand/Japan Foundation. Doug and Catherine attended.

## Canterbury

By Jo Rittey, Canterbury/West Coast/Nelson Regional Officer

## Meetings

The Committee met at the beginning of the year and selected dates each term for our meetings. We were then able to give members advance warning.

This has worked well and we will do the same thing next year.



Top communicators: the winners of the Year 12 Japanese speech competition

## Langsem August 14

One hundred and thirty teachers from the region attended this very successful day. The Japanese and French sections were quite large with smaller numbers in German, Spanish, Chinese and Maori. The sessions were fairly language specific but many presenters are pitching at "all levels", to cover Year 7 and 8 as a few teachers came from intermediate schools. Riccarton Park is a great venue for a conference, but the downside is there are no computer labs or internet access. To this end, a separate IT day or weekend has been discussed to meet those needs. This was run successfully last year on a Friday afternoon and Saturday morning so we will try to replicate that.

## Certificates of Excellence

A total of 291 certificates of excellence were awarded to 23 schools in the region.

## Massey

By James Donaldson, Massey Regional Officer

## LangSem

This was a great success with about 50 delegates from New Plymouth to Hawke's Bay. The keynote speaker was Dr Paul Sulzberger from Victoria University who entertained with his linguistic study findings about language acquisition, comparing it to his grandson learning to ride a skateboard.

The rest of the day was full of useful ideas to help implement the 2007 Curriculum by using internet, video and computers to task-based learning. The day finished with Gunhild Litwin updating delegates on Ministry of Education developments. The NZALT AGM was also part of proceedings.

#### Senior Speech Contests

There have been numerous senior student speech contests around the region for Japanese. This is a good opportunity for students to showcase their NCEA speeches in front of native speakers.

#### PPTA Curriculum Days

These have been held around the region this term and have been an ideal time to network and see what other schools are doing. It was a productive day for most teachers, or at least time out to consider the changes ahead. A big thumbs-up to PPTA for some support!

#### Otago/Southland

By Kirstyn Mawdsley, Otago/Southland Regional Officer

The Otago/Southland branch has maintained its active nature and continues to meet twice a term and have various committee meetings in addition to these meetings as well.

We continue to run language camps for Japanese, French and German and also try to make the most of the variety of opportunities presented to our students, such as speech festivals, short film competitions and Language Perfect. In fact Otago Girls' High School took out the Language Perfect Vocabulary Olympics and Columba College and John McGlashan College won the Year 7-10 and Year 11-13 categories (respectively) of the Goethe Institut Short Film Festival.

In addition to this we have also had the following going on:

#### Langsem

Teachers from around Otago and Southland gathered in August for our Langsem. This was an exceptionally worthwhile day, which focussed on the revised curriculum and implementation thereof. Langsem allowed teachers to share resources, discuss intercultural teaching and learning and also look at how to motivate students in using the target language enthusiastically.

#### Japan Day

Dunedin's Year 12 and 13 students of Japanese had the opportunity to take part in Japan Day. This was an action-packed, fun, motivating

Amazing Race-style day organised by some of the Japanese teachers in town. It gave the students a chance to utilise their language skills and see Japanese "in action", with the tea ceremonies, judo lessons and finally the evening film.

We also had a visit from NZALT's very own president. Adèle Scott came by for a flying visit, but was able to see the Otago/Southland branch of NZALT in action. Adèle attended our regular meeting and heard our concerns about the lack of a language advisor in this region (with no appointment this is of ongoing concern), saw the appointment of a new regional officer (Kirstyn Mawdsley) and also heard feedback from schools on all of the fantastic activities carried out in the region for International Languages Week.

#### Victoria

By Philippa Doig, Victoria Regional Officer

It is a concern to me that membership numbers for Victoria are lower than in recent years and do not reflect the population of language teachers in the Wellington region. But those teachers who do participate do so enthusiastically and appreciate the support NZALT Victoria gives them.

The NZALT meeting on April 2 featured

- Draws for a Spanish CD and free membership of NZALT
- NZALT update
- Jocelyn Laine from ILANZ spoke about the native-speaker assistantship programme, supported by Sue Kano who spoke from her own experience of having a French assistant at her school. Language Perfect's Craig and Shane Smith demonstrated their software in a computer room.

More than 20 Wellington teachers attended this meeting with afternoon tea – many were not members of NZALT. I think all attendees thought it was useful and successful.

LangSem Diversity is Strength:  
Achievement for All

As an experiment we held LangSem on a Saturday, September 19. There are many advantages to having LangSem out of school hours: we are able to use a school as a venue, there are no problems parking, it's cheaper for schools that do not have to pay relievers, there's no relief for teachers to set, there are no lessons with senior classes missed. But we ended up with 70 teachers attending instead of the more usual 100-110 and I feel the next LangSem should return to a weekday in a non-school venue. Some teachers wrote on

evaluation forms that they would not have come during the week but clearly many teachers were not prepared to give up a Saturday, especially at the end of term 3. The date was driven by my absence overseas during May and June and I feel should return to earlier in the year in 2011.

For those who attended the day was successful.

Keynote speaker: Paul Sulzberger on The Neural Pathway to Learning Languages.

Secondary Plenary: Margaret Hardiman (Ministry of Education): Standards Curriculum Alignment.

Primary Plenary: Kate Ryan: Who does most of the talking in class? Strategies to get students using the target language.

Primary Plenary: Nicole Donaldson, Anne-Marie Hickson and Inka Helwig: Switch them on! Using e-learning to sustain the learning.

Round Robin section: Quickfire activities for Year 7 to Year 10. This was again very successful – teachers moved every 15 minutes to a room where a teacher demonstrated a five to 10 minute activity adaptable to any language.

I would like to thank the conveners of the specific sections: Noeline Grant (Primary and Intermediate), Chunrong Song (Chinese), Juliet Kennedy (French), Margaret Gallaher (German), Sharon Henry (Japanese), Nofo Lalau (Samoan) and Isaac Watts (Spanish).

Future plans

- Immersion days for Year 10 students in term 4 after the seniors have left. These will be run by the teachers who would like to participate and NZALT will support financially. Teachers who participate must be members of NZALT.
- Supporting the regional adviser for languages by providing afternoon tea at a cluster meeting. This would be an opportunity to promote what NZALT has to offer.
- To continue visiting the providers of teacher education to promote free membership to student teachers in their final year of study.
- To develop a Wellington committee for NZALT Victoria.

Waikato

By David Hall, Waikato/Bay of Plenty Regional Officer

This year has seen the familiar mix of activities for language teachers in the Waikato-Bay of Plenty region, from meetings about the new NCEA standards alignment, to camps and activities for students, to our ever successful LangSem Waikato.

Membership numbers have risen to 71 paid-up members – a new record for Waikato.

Language stickers

For several years now NZALT Waikato has circulated languages stickers to its members for International Languages Week – a gesture I know is greatly appreciated by members and by their students. This year we made these available for

purchase by languages teachers throughout the country. The project was efficiently overseen by staff at Support Services, University of Waikato. It is heartening to see a project started by members in our region has now spread further afield.



Language stickers: these were sold around the country during International Languages Week.

Langsem

LangSem Waikato, our biennial professional development day and long-standing tradition, took place at the Hamilton Airport Conference Centre on Friday, September 4, ably convened once more by Jeanne Gilbert. Angela Clemens and Iti Joyce presented the keynote address, entitled "Te Kotahitanga and learning languages", a fascinating insight into the melding of these two notions. Language sessions covered French, German, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese and Year 7-8 teaching. Aquila Books, ETI, Language Perfect and New Beginnings were on hand to interact with teachers. We appreciated the time and effort put into preparation of the day by all presenters.

Feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. Thanks go to Julie George of St John's College and Robert Aldridge from St Paul's Collegiate for their leadership of NZALT Waikato this year.