

POLYGLOT 2009

A brief message from NZALT President, Adèle Scott

Once again it is great to share in the fantastic things that are happening in languages classrooms around the country (and in the countries our members have been visiting) through this publication. You will notice some changes to Polyglot in 2009, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Jasmine to the NZALT team. Jasmine is a fluent speaker of Spanish, is currently living in Spain and is a freelance journalist - what more could we ask for!

I was delighted to attend the award ceremony for two of the winners of the banner competition in Hawke's Bay recently (see photos). The ceremony also incorporated the inaugural Eunice Beveridge memorial award for French and Japanese which will be awarded each year alongside the NZALT student competition.

Contributions to Polyglot this year include great ways to use languages for communication using an ever-increasing range of tools. In my own working life, hardly a day goes by without one of my colleagues showing me a new gadget, online tool or website with the potential to increase the engagement of learners and teachers alike! I don't always have the time to check them all out but it's always good to be challenged to look at the way we do things - not to change for the sake of it but to apply a critical eye to see if we might improve what we are offering our students.

Across the regions our members have benefited from many activities organised or supported by NZALT. LangSems provide a wonderful chance to meet up with our national advisers and school support services advisers - we do appreciate your ongoing input and enthusiasm for languages programmes across the country. The Massey LangSem was aptly named Dawn of the New Curriculum as we wait with bated breath to see what the new day will bring. According to Wikipedia, the duration of the period between dawn and sunrise varies greatly with the observer's latitude, from a few minutes in equatorial regions to hours in polar regions. I imagine there will be times when we feel more polar than equatorial in relation to how the new learning area is being implemented, but these are also the times when the perseverance and resolve language learners are renowned for come into play. I urge you to hang in there and to keep the

Executive informed how things are going so we can represent you in the best possible way when it matters. I am reminded of a Japanese proverb:

あめふり じかた
雨降って地固まる

Literally, the proverb means after rain falls, the ground hardens; ie: difficulties and challenges can lead to greater strength than before they started.



Winner: Pictured are, from (top) left, the mother of the Japanese banner winner, the winner Alice, Matt Beveridge and Alice's teacher Nori Yamada. Behind them and pictured (left) is the winning banner.

Lastly, I would like to announce the establishment of a new award for NZALT Members. The Excellence in Teaching Languages Award will recognise the work of a member in the field of languages teaching in either the primary, secondary or tertiary sector.

The Excellence in Teaching Languages Award consists of a citation and a taonga and is open to all members of NZALT. The Executive invites you to become familiar with the nomination and selection criteria on the NZALT website. The deadline for submission of nominations for both this award and Life Membership awards is the end of February each year.

I wish you all a safe and relaxing break.

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