

Association for  
Learning

**MANDARIN**

**汉语**

in Australia Inc

**ALMA NEWS**

**JUNE 2024**

## WHY WE EAT ZONGZI AND HAVE DRAGON BOAT RACES 粽子与赛龙舟的起源

This year's Dragon Boat Festival (端午节) falls on Monday June 10th.

The festival commemorates the death of Qu Yuan (屈原), a patriotic poet and government official of the ancient state of Chu in China more than 2,000 years ago. Upon hearing him falling into the river, people of Chu raced out in boats to try to save Qu Yuan but couldn't find him. To protect his body, they played drums to scare the fish away and dropped balls of sticky rice to feed the fish. This is said to be the origins of zongzi (or rice dumplings, 粽子) and dragon boat races (赛龙舟).

There are a number of dragon boating clubs in Canberra for older kids and adults. Since its introduction in 1990, dragon boating has become a successful sport enjoyed by all ages. Find out more information here: <https://www.dbact.com.au/home>.



Rice dumplings



Dragon boats seen in  
Canberra

## UPCOMING CHINESE FESTIVALS

- Dragon Boat Festival 端午节 – 10/6/2024 (Monday)
- Double Seventh Festival (Chinese Valentine's Day) 七夕 – 10/8/2024 (Saturday)
- Ghost Festival 中元节 – 18/8/2024 (Sunday)

Association for Learning Mandarin in Australia Inc (ALMA) 50 Ainsworth St, Mawson, ACT 2607  
A non-profit community organization "Helping Australian to learn Mandarin" ABN: 99 625 121 550  
Website: <https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/>

### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello all and welcome to our new ALMA members! 大家好，以及欢迎新会员的加入！

It has been a busy few months at the Early Childhood Centre with the installation of a new cubby house and the recruitment and onboarding of new staff.

The ALMA Committee welcomes Yun Shi (Norah) Chen, as the new Assistant Director. Norah understands the importance and benefits of a bilingual education and will continue the work with Director Annette Chemin in renewing their focus on the Mandarin programming at the Centre. Jian Lin (Annie) Liu, has also joined the team as an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) for the Preschool Room.

The CAECC has seen an improvement to enrolment numbers in the last quarter, however there are still some vacancies in the 2-3 year old cohort in the infant and toddler room. We hope to also increase the marketing efforts through our social media platform Facebook and would also appreciate ALMA members assist in spreading the word in order to fill these vacancies.

With the end of financial year just around the corner, the Committee will be commencing the budget cycle for the association and will be looking at investing in educational resources, staff training and development as well as managing the financial implications from recent government announcements regarding increase in pay for early childhood educators.

Lastly, as the temperature drops and winter is upon us, it's a timely reminder of the importance of ensuring all children and staff are protected against COVID and the Flu, with free flu vaccinations for children from 6 months to 5 years provided by the ACT Government.

Wishing everyone a warm and safe winter!

**Adelina Tan 陈莉娜**

**ALMA President**

### NEW ALMA MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Qi Jia and family
- Lydia Gan Lay Yen and family
- Zheng Ye and family
- Xinyu Jiang and family
- Ryan Gackle and family
- Wenjie Ji and family
- Laura Wellman and family

## CHINESE AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

It has been a bustling few months at the CAECC. We began our local walks to the Mawson Neighbourhood Oval. It was wonderful to see the children's curiosity and enthusiasm as they explored nature and expanded their learning beyond the classroom.



We have had several special events, including Hatching Chicks in March, a dental health session with Brusher Box and a reptile incursion with Canberra Reptile Zoo in April. In addition, we celebrated Mother's Day with an afternoon tea in May. We have Babara to provide music lessons to our children every Tuesday during school terms.

We reached out to families through a survey, encouraging their input on our learning environments. We have received and carefully considered much constructive feedback, and we are eager to begin implementing some of the ideas put forth by our families. We extend our gratitude to the families who took the time to complete the survey, and we kindly ask for continued patience and understanding as we strive to create a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for all children.

National Reconciliation Week commenced on the 27th of May, prompting us to reflect on the meaning of "reconciliation" at our staff meeting and to discuss how to incorporate Aboriginal history and culture into our learning invitations for the children.

Looking ahead to the next few months, we are excited to introduce positive changes to our documentation methods, placing a stronger emphasis on both the room program and individual learning and development.

We maintain an open-door policy and warmly welcome parents and guardians to share their feedback with us at any time.

**Norah Chen**

**CAECC Assistant Director**

## ALMA ACTIVITIES



### Mandarin Community Tutoring Project

ALMA coordinates this project, which is free and open to all adults who are learning Chinese or have learned the language in the past and would like to keep up their skills.

Learners are introduced to fluent speakers of Chinese who have volunteered to share their knowledge of Chinese language and culture. Tutor and learner then make their own arrangements to meet, usually one-on-one, once a week, at a time and place to suit both.

For more information about the project and how to get involved, as either a tutor or a learner, visit the Mandarin Community Tutoring page on the ALMA website: <https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/mandarin-community-tutoring.html>



### Mandarin radio program on community radio 2XX

We continue to produce and present this weekly bilingual program on Community Radio 2XX. Each program usually includes a short story, music and children's songs in Chinese, which are discussed in English and Mandarin. Parents or teachers are welcome to send in recordings of songs or short pieces by children for inclusion in the program. Hearing themselves on the radio is a great way to encourage children to speak and practice the Mandarin they are learning at home, preschool or school. We also welcome community announcements in Chinese. Just send a recording, with transcript if possible, to [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com).

To hear the program, tune into Community Radio 2XX on 98.3 FM every Friday evening from 7pm to 7.30pm. Or you can listen online, either live or later through the 'On Demand' link, at [www.2xxfm.org.au](http://www.2xxfm.org.au).



## OTHER NEWS

### **China in the World (CIW) at the ANU** 澳洲国立大学中华全球研究中心

CIW at the ANU has discussions and exhibitions about all things Chinese. Most events are free and open to the general public. Keep an eye on the CIW website for details (<https://ciw.anu.edu.au/>).

Upcoming events at the CIW (Building 188, Fellows Lane, ANU) include:

#### Social Credit: The Warring States of China's Emerging Data Empire

- Thursday 13 June 2024, 4pm
- Seminar Room, CIW, Fellows Lane ANU Acton, ACT 2601

A talk by Vincent Brussee, the author of a recent book of the same name. His work and insights have been featured in BBC World News, Foreign Policy, and the South China Morning Post.

#### China's Viral Villages: Digital Nationalism in Times of Crisis

- Friday 14 June, 1pm
- Online and/or Seminar Room, CIW

A talk by Florian Schneider, Chair Professor of Modern China at the Leiden University Institute for Area Studies. His research interests include questions of governance and political communication in China.

### **Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch** 澳中友好协会

#### Talk on China-US Comparisons

- Wednesday 3 July 2024, 7.30pm
- Catchpoles Room, Southern Cross Club, Jamison

#### Film Night: Sister 我的姐姐 (2021)

- Thursday 15 August 2024, 7.30pm
- Catchpoles Room, Southern Cross Club, Jamison

Further information: <https://acfs.org.au/events/>

**DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO ALMA NEWS?**

Please email items for the next newsletter to [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com) by 15 August 2024.