



ALMA NEWS MAY 2018

Association for
Learning
MANDARIN
汉语
in Australia Inc

澳大利亞學漢語協會

The Dragon Boat Festival, also known as Duānwǔ Festival (端午节), is a traditional and important folk festival celebrated in China for over 2,000 years. Traditionally, Chinese people practice various customs thought to dispel disease and invoke good health.

In 2018, the Dragon Boat Festival falls on June 18 (Monday) based on the lunar calendar. China will have 3 days of holiday from Saturday (June 16) to Monday (June 18).

Some of the most traditional customs include dragon boat racing, eating sticky rice dumplings (Zongzi), hanging Chinese mugwort and calamus (two herbs), drinking a Chinese rice liquor called realgar wine, and wearing perfume pouches (small bags or sachets filled with fragrant ingredients). Dragon boat racing is the most important activity. It is said to originate from the legend of people paddling out on boats to seek the body of patriotic poet Qu Yuan (343–278 BC), who drowned himself in a river.

Zongzi is a kind of sticky rice dumpling made of glutinous rice filled with meats, beans, and other fillings. Zongzi are wrapped in triangular or rectangular shapes in bamboo or reed leaves, and tied with soaked stalks or colorful silky cords. Eating Zongzi is also related to Qu Yuan, as according to the legend, lumps of rice were thrown into the river to stop fish eating his drowned body.

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE CANBERRA CHINESE SCHOOL INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE THE DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL.

Time: 12pm-3:30pm, Sunday 3 June

Venue: TB Millar Hall in Radford College, 1 College Street, Bruce

Activities: 12pm-1.30pm: Food stalls and kids' fun activities: face painting, brush painting, calligraphy and paper cutting/crafting

1.30pm-3pm: Stage performance: Chinese dance, singing and martial arts

This is a FREE event and all are welcome.

For a poster of the event see the school website at <https://www.canberrachineseschool.net/>

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been another busy period for the ALMA Committee.

On behalf of the Committee, I have met with Mawson Primary School (MPS) on a number of occasions regarding the proposed new Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP). In summary, from kindergarten 2019 onwards, MPS will teach the Australian curriculum 50/50 in Mandarin and English, thus transitioning the MIP to a truly bilingual program. Of particular relevance to some families attending the CAECC, MPS has developed entry criteria for students from outside the priority enrolment area, which will effectively enable most students who attended the CAECC to demonstrate the commitment to bilingual education required for out-of-area entry into the MIP. In exchange, ALMA is assisting MPS in relation to securing Mandarin-speaking language assistants to work at the school.

The Committee is currently undertaking a very detailed a thorough analysis of the ALMA budget for the new financial year. As the CAECC generates most of ALMA's revenue and expenses, this process involves a detailed consideration of the CAECC's operating budget. The CAECC is operating in a more competitive environment than previous years: a number of new facilities have opened up in the local area (including the new centre at the Southern Cross Club) and the children born during the 'mini baby boom' that Canberra experienced some years ago have mostly reached school age. These factors have seen a decline in the enrolments and waiting list at the CAECC, and are consistent with trends reported in other childcare centres across the ACT.

Whilst the Committee is working hard to minimize the impact of the reduced revenue on families, and hope to keep fee increases in line with previous years, doing so may require some hard decisions over the short and medium-term. Nonetheless, I am confident that the Committee and CAECC Management team will be able to ensure that the in-room experience of children remains unaffected.

The only alternative would be to run the CAECC at a substantial operational deficit and draw on the retained earnings that have taken more than 34 years to build up, and which are ear-marked for physical and educational resource upgrades, maintenance and possible expansion plans.

In the meantime, the Committee is working with the CAECC Management team to develop a social-media marketing campaign for the CAECC, as well as search-engine optimization to allow the CAECC to attract more families at a lower cost than traditional advertising / marketing methods.

In relation to expansion, I am pleased to report that the ACT Government has re-commenced discussions with ALMA about allowing ALMA to expand (at its own cost) the CAECC. Our goal is to get approval to develop a 3rd room, allowing the CAECC to have a dedicated room for infants, toddlers and preschoolers respectively. Much will turn on parking and footprint issues, but the Committee is working steadily with the ACT Education Directorate and ACT Property Group to address their concerns related to possible expansion of the CAECC. However, those discussions have also resulted in a clear pathway forward for ALMA: to set up a second CAECC in the medium to long-term (if expansion of the CAECC is not feasible or agreed to by relevant stakeholders).

The Committee has also commenced preliminary discussions with one of the local Chinese language schools about jointly providing Mandarin-focused after school care programs in and around the ACT for school-aged children.

Finally, as the end of my second year as President of ALMA approaches, I am acutely aware of the need to ensure ongoing appropriate governance and oversight of ALMA's activities and the CAECC in particular. The current Committee has an amazing set of skills: two qualified accountants, a lawyer, a scientist, and an educational policy specialist amongst others.

Whilst ALMA runs a business – the CAECC, as with other community organisations, managing the association purely like a business is neither appropriate nor desirable. Incorporated associations operate on a collective management model, and for that model to work it requires people with a range of skills who understand the subtle nuances and differences between providing services to (and for) members and running a business strictly as a business, and who are prepared to work together as a team in the best interests of members.

Many of the current Committee members are nearing the time when their children will no longer attend the CAECC. As such, succession planning for the ALMA Committee is critical. What we need are new Committee members – ideally drawn from families with children in the infants and toddlers room at the CAECC or ALMA members who do not have children attending the CAECC – to join the current Committee to ensure a smooth 'handover' period over the next year or two occurs.

I intend to stand as President next year to ensure that the governance changes I have introduced can continue to benefit all ALMA Members. Being a Committee member can have its challenges, but is very rewarding. I have worked hard to ensure that all Committee members contribute, and that no one Committee Member is swamped with work. However, a Committee is not one person and hence I would like to ask you to consider becoming a part of the Committee.

With the CAECC operating in an increasingly competitive childcare market, if you have accounting or bookkeeping, HR, communications, marketing, advertising or publications relations

skills or expertise I would strongly urge you to consider joining the Committee.

I will be at the CAECC on Monday the 21st and 28th May from 3.00 pm to 4.15 pm if you would like to meet with me to discuss what being on the Committee is all about, and what we do.

Regards

Jaan Murphy

ALMA ACTIVITIES

ENRICHING CHINESE STUDIES IN CANBERRA SCHOOLS

ALMA has been collaborating with the Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) at the ANU to organise and administer this project since 2015.

The project links Canberra schools with students at ANU who have lived in China and/or are involved in Chinese language or China studies. The school then contacts a potential ANU mentor to discuss how they can contribute to the school's Chinese language, culture or history program – for example by giving a talk about experiences of living, studying or working in China and/or their own university studies or research connected to China. It is also possible for a mentor to form an ongoing mentorship/teaching relationship with a primary or secondary school. The benefits for the ANU mentors include a small honorarium for each school visit and the opportunity to develop their teaching and/or academic skills and links to the local community.

An ANU mentor has been visiting Mawson Primary School this year. In the first term, she mainly assisted with two Year 3 / 4 classes in the school's Mandarin immersion language program. Another mentor will visit Canberra High School this term to speak to Year 8 and 9 students about China and things Chinese with the aim of inspiring them to learn Mandarin. Telopea Park School has also contacted us about finding a mentor to help with their Chinese language program this term.

For more details of this project, email anuchinamentor@gmail.com

BILINGUAL RADIO PROGRAM

ALMA co-presents a Mandarin language program on community radio 2XX every Friday from 7pm - 7.30pm. The aim of the program is to promote the use and learning of Mandarin in the ACT and to inform the community, especially the Chinese speaking community, about local events and other information of interest. The program is presented bilingually, and includes a short children's story read in Mandarin and then discussed in both languages. We welcome recordings of children singing or speaking Mandarin for broadcasting during the program. Hearing themselves on the radio acknowledges the value of what they are doing and can be a powerful motivator to continue developing their Chinese language skills.

You can listen in to the program on FM 98.3. The station is also working to restore its 'listen back' system so it can be heard later on its website: <http://www.2xxfm.org.au/>.

For more information about the program contact Mandy on canberraalma@gmail.com

MANDARIN COMMUNITY TUTORING PROJECT

This ALMA project brings together fluent speakers of Mandarin and learners of the language who wish to further develop their knowledge of Mandarin and/or understanding of Chinese culture. The Mandarin speakers volunteer an hour or so a week to help the learners improve their Chinese language skills. In return they can practice their English skills, make local friends, and learn more about language teaching and learning. Over 30 people have registered for the project so far in 2018.

There has been a sudden surge of registrations by volunteer tutors, so if you are interested in developing your Mandarin language skills, please visit the tutoring page on the ALMA website for more information about the project and to download a registration form.

MAKING CANBERRA A MORE CHINA LITERATE AND CHINA FRIENDLY CITY

As noted in the February issue of ALMA News, ALMA is exploring ways to identify Canberra as a China friendly city – the best city in Australia for Chinese people to visit and study and invest in. We believe that this will benefit the ACT economy while also increasing demand for proficient speakers of Mandarin who understand Chinese culture. This thus fits in with one of ALMA's major goals – to encourage ACT students to start and/or continue to learn the language.

ALMA has had meetings with key stakeholders including Visit Canberra, Study Canberra, the Canberra Business Chamber and various areas of the ANU and a member of the ACT Assembly. All were supportive of our idea of coordinating and building on the many current initiatives to broaden and deepen engagement with China. Based on these discussions, ALMA has developed a proposal for a project to explore the scope, feasibility, benefits and costs of promoting Canberra as a China-friendly city. This project has been supported by the ACT branch of the Australia-China Business Council and submitted to Brendan Smyth, the ACT Commissioner for International Engagement, to forward on ALMA's behalf for consideration for ACT government funding.

A copy of the proposal can be downloaded from the ALMA website at https://learningmandarin.weebly.com/uploads/1/1/8/4/11842315/alma_cfc_proposal.pdf

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN ALMA'S ACTIVITIES?

ALMA is a local non-profit community organisation which relies on its volunteer committee to operate the Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre (CAECC) and to promote the learning of Mandarin and knowledge of Chinese culture and heritage more generally. The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Wilson Au-Yeung for his commitment over the last 18 months. Wilson is resigning from the committee due a move

overseas. We wish him and his family well as they begin this new adventure.

We welcome all ALMA supporters to become more actively involved in the Association by joining the Association or ensuring your membership is up to date. Membership is free for families at the CAECC while there is a small annual fee for others. Renewal forms and Applications for ALMA membership can be downloaded from the Membership page of the ALMA website. If you are unsure of your membership status, please email membershipsalma@gmail.com

We also invite you all to attend the ALMA AGM in October. You can meet the outgoing committee and other ALMA members, and hear what ALMA has achieved over the past year and our plans for the future. Copies of the Presidents' reports for previous years can be downloaded from the Home page of the ALMA website. If you would like to consider joining the committee, please contact us at any time to find out more. You can reach us at canberraalma@gmail.com.

CHINESE AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE (CAECC)

澳华幼儿教育中心新闻

From the Assistant Director Ms. Alyce Hawkins

The Association for Learning Mandarin in Australia (ALMA) is the Management Body and the licensee of this centre, which provides quality long day-care in a bilingual (Mandarin/English) and multicultural environment. The CAECC is situated adjacent to Mawson Primary School on Ainsworth Street in Mawson in the Woden Valley. It has an Infant/Toddlers room - accommodating up to 20 children, with ages ranging from 0 to 3 years of age, and a Pre-School room - accommodating up to 27 children, with ages ranging from 3 to 5 years of age.



The Centre's unique bilingual program involves immersing children in Mandarin and English throughout their day via play and planned experiences. The program focuses on the developmental needs and interests of the children, developing motor skills, language, social, cognitive and self-help skills. This information is gathered via the engagement between educators and the children through both small and large group experiences. Intentional Educator led learning is also included in the curriculum ensuring relevant Pre-School skills are being gained by children in preparation for school.

For more information, visit the CAECC website at: <http://chineseaustralian.weebly.com/>

Up Coming Events the CAECC will be celebrating/participating in include:

May:

- 26th National Sorry Day
- 27th - 3rd National Reconciliation Week
- 28th Reconciliation Day - Public Holiday

June:

- 5th World Environment Day
- 11th Queen's Birthday - Public Holiday
- 18th Dragon Boat Festival
- 21st Winter Solstice (Shortest Day of the Year) - PJ Day

July:

- 8th - 15th NAIDOC Week
- 27th National Tree Day
- 30th International Day of Friendship

OTHER CENTRE HAPPENINGS:

Both the Pre-School and Infant/Toddler outdoor areas have received new garden beds and the Pre-Schoolers have had their old one revamped. The Educators and Children have been planting seasonal appropriate veggies, fruits and herbs and have been enjoying looking after them and watching them grow. We look forward to reaping the rewards from their hard work.

CURRENT VACANCIES:

Infant/Toddlers (0 to 3 years of age): Monday to Friday

Pre-School (3 to 5 years of age): Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

For more details, contact the Director at panda3@netspeed.com.au or by phone at (02) 6290 1566

OTHER NEWS**INTERESTED IN WORKING IN CHINA?**

A former ALMA member is helping friends in China to open a large international kindergarten in Beijing. They are looking for up to 40 Australians with educational qualifications to work there. Successful applicants will be provided with air travel, working visa, accommodation and a good salary. There are also possibilities for short term placements for trainee teachers. The kindergarten will cater for kids up to 6 years old and provide classes from 8am to 5.30pm. Teachers will work with a specific class as the homeroom teacher.

Requirements: native speaker level English, suitable education qualification and some experience in kindergarten teaching. For more information contact Mimi at mzhang@iinet.net.au

LEARNING MANDARIN IN THE ACT AREA

Did you know there are now six Community Language Schools teaching Mandarin in the ACT area? They offer a range of programs and classes -

at weekends, in after-school programs and evening classes.

Most are for children from preschool to year 12, but some also offer classes for adults. Many have classes catering specifically for non-Chinese background students, and some allow parents to sit in on classes and learn alongside their children. One school (ASCC) is accredited with the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) to offer Year 11 and 12. One (TACA school) teaches traditional characters. Several also offer a range of cultural classes such as Chinese painting, kung fu and dancing. Check out their websites (see below) for details of venues, time and programs.

- FCCCI Chinese School
www.fcccichineseschool.act.edu.au
- Australian School of Contemporary Chinese (ASCC)
www.standardchineseschool.act.edu.au/
- Canberra Community Chinese School
<http://eaaschineseschool.org.au/>
- Queanbeyan Chinese School <http://qbnchinese.jimdo.com/>
- TACA Mandarin Language School 澳洲坎培拉台灣同鄉會華語學校 (see Facebook page)
- Canberra Chinese School
<http://www.canberrachineseschool.net/>

For more ideas about learning and developing your Chinese language skills – including online possibilities, see the ALMA website.

UPCOMING TALKS AT THE ANU THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST

19 May -20 May	9:30am-7:15pm Seminar Room A, China in the World Building (188), Fellows Lane, ANU	CIW Conference Culture and Political Change in Contemporary Taiwan
19 May	6:00pm-7:15pm Auditorium, China in the World Building (188), Fellows Lane, ANU	CIW Public Lecture Metal Politics: From Stage to Congress Presenter(s): Freddy Tshiong-tso Lim
31 May	4:00pm-5:30pm Seminar Room A, China in the World Building (188), Fellows Lane, ANU	ANU China Seminar Series The China Model: Beijing's Economic Statecraft Across Asia and Europe Presenter(s): James Reilly

For more information about CIW events: <http://ciw.anu.edu.au/events/>

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALMA NEWS WELCOME



Please email canberraalma@gmail.com.

NOTE: Decisions on publication remain at the discretion of the editor

For more information about ALMA and to see past ALMA newsletters visit our website at www.learningmandarin.weebly.com

INFORMATION

The ALMA website provides information about formal and informal Mandarin learning opportunities for both adults and children. ALMA's quarterly newsletter also lets members know about ALMA activities, other Chinese-related events, particularly in the ACT, and opportunities to learn more about Chinese culture and to hear and use Mandarin.