

Multilingual Association of Regina

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Indu Jaiswal: President's Message



May and June of the 2008 - 2009 school year represent the last months of this school year during which Heritage Languages are taught under the MLAR umbrella. As our current Newsletter covers the period ending in June, a review of the year seems appropriate.

2008-2009 has been a very busy and event-filled year for the MLAR Board, Staff and Membership, as there were 3 special reasons for this. First, this is the year that marks the milestone of 30 years of service in support of Heritage Languages and related cultures in the Regina area community. Second, recognition of the International Day for Heritage Languages took on special significance along with MLAR's 30th anniversary, requiring special efforts to celebrate and publicize these two events. The third was the decision to prepare a Heritage Language Teachers' Daybook for distribution to all Heritage Language instructional staff, planned as one of the highlights of the MLAR 30th anniversary commemoration.

To summarize some of the key activities during school year 2008-2009: the first event was the School Principals' meeting held on September 2, 2008 to prepare for the launch of the new school year.

On November 22, 2008, MLAR held an Open House at Balfour Collegiate for the very specific purpose of celebrating and making the public aware of MLAR's 30th Anniversary. It was a very well attended event highlighted by an on-stage display of the colors and cultural dress and talent of representatives of several of the Heritage Language school groups.

Then on December 1st 2008 MLAR held its AGM (Annual General Meeting) for the election of new MLAR Board Members. Results: elected for 2-year terms, Indu Jaiswal as President; Raphael Hwang as Vice President, re-election of Board Member Nasim Ahmed, and election of 2 new Board Members, Maskel Minni and Faith Ene.

Treasurer Ved Arora and Secretary Senthil Damodharan, and Board Members Mary Kolitsas and Tin Nguyen remained for the 2nd year of their 2-year term; Girma Sahlu retained the position of Past President. The AGM also recognized 3 out-going Board Members whose 2-year terms had expired: Vice President Tito Roman and Board Members Cornelia Taschow-Graupe and Toshiko Charrier.

February 21st was International Heritage Language Day. MLAR and SOHL together sponsored another Open House at Balfour Collegiate. This very successful event included on-stage performances by seven different Language Groups, as well as expressions of appreciation by Audrey Roadhouse, Tony Harras, Michael Cassano, Rhonda Rosenberg and Raphael Hwang.

The annual Teachers' Workshop was held on March 13 and 14 of 2009. Highlights were presentations by Facilitators Dave Gorrie and Louise McCullough of the Regina Public School System, on the topics of "Structuring Learning Environments for Language Learning" and "Effective Lesson Planning". Based on evaluation comments, it was very well received by participants. The Heritage Language Teachers' Daybooks prepared by MLAR were also distributed to principals and teachers at this workshop.

The last major event sponsored by MLAR this school year was the Teacher Award Night May 11. A report on this event is the focus of the rest of this edition of MLAR's Newsletter which I know you will enjoy.

MLAR 30th Anniversary Awards Night



MLAR Board Members **Ved Arora** and **Tin Nguyen** were Co-Masters of Ceremony for this special event held at the Travelodge Hotel on May 11th, 2009.

Although MLAR has held an annual Heritage Language Teachers' Award Night since 1998, as 2008-2009 marks the 30th anniversary of MLAR's existence, this year's Award Night was extra special.

Cake-Cutting Opening Ceremony

The evening was launched by a Cake-cutting ceremony, President Indu Jaiswal doing the honors.



MC's Ved and Tin then introduced a number of special invited guests which included the following:



Darren McKee, who is Assistant Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, brought greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and thanked MLAR for the invitation to attend this special event.



Bob Friedrich, a long time supporter of Heritage Languages and currently a Board Member of SaskCulture, brought greetings and best wishes on behalf of SaskCulture. Bob was one of the 3 judges who made the selection of 2 teachers from the nominees provided to MLAR for the Teacher Awards this year.

Other Special Award Night Guests



Tony Harras, Past President of both MLAR and SOHL and now Board Member of SOHL brought greetings and congratulations from the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages and pledged continued support of MLAR's efforts and activities.



Michael Cassano, President of the Regina Multicultural Council (RMC) congratulated MLAR on achieving 30 years of service to Regina's multicultural-multilingual community and also pledged his organization's continued support of MLAR's efforts and activities.



Sharon Yuzdepski, Humanities Unit, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education was one of the 3 judges, along with Bob Friedrich and Severa Malinao, who reviewed the nominees for Teacher Awards for 2009. She later made reference to the process, saying it was a hard choice as all nominees submitted could have qualified for awards.



Volunteer helpers that evening included Faith Ene helping Senthil Damodharan with the raffle of door prizes donated by the following: SaskCulture, SaskTel, SaskEnergy, Access Communications, Leader-Post, SOHL, RMC, as well as individual donors Jim Leskun, Ved Arora and Indu Jaiswal.



Pictured to the left are Doctor Jim Leskun and wife Manju who with Maskel Minni helped with registration and door prizes raffled during the fine Buffet Dinner following addresses by special guests. Thanks to all donors and volunteers for making events like this year's Award Night both possible and entertaining.

Entertainment by Heritage Language Schools

Besides the entertainment provided by the raffle of door prizes, additional entertainment was provided by groups from 4 Heritage Language Schools with membership in MLAR: the Regina School of Chinese Studies, the German Language School, the Salvador Allende Latinamerican Spanish School, and the Greek Language School. This made for enjoyable and relaxing entertainment. Photos of the performers can be seen on the following pages.



Colorful Dance by Regina School of Chinese Studies



Play in German and English by German Language School



Instrumental Music by Latinamerican Spanish School



Dance by Mythos Group, Greek Language School



MLAR Honorary Life Membership Award

Armand Martin, a long time supporter of Heritage Languages and of MLAR is presented with the first award of the evening, an Honorary Lifetime Membership Award.

Mary Kolitsas, MLAR'S co-chair of the Professional Development Committee,



introduced Sharon Yuzdepski (see guest introductions above) who made reference to the selection of the Teacher Awards about to be presented, saying that it had been a difficult task for the judges to make their selection.



Olga Santander of the Salvador Allende Latinamerican Spanish School was then called upon to provide information about their Award Nominee, giving the reasons why she had been nominated by their group to receive an award.



Nelida Ramirez on the right, received the **New Teacher Award** for 2008-09. She is the Latinamerican Spanish language principal. Congratulations Nelida



Petros Aiginitis, principal of the Greek Language School provided background information about their nominee for the Teacher Awards, indicating that in spite of her young age, she had been teaching Greek for their school for a total of 5 years already, besides her involvement in many other cultural activities.



Varvara Georgoulis of the Greek Language School, 3rd from the right is pictured holding the **MLAR Long-Term Teacher Award** for this year 2008-2009. Congratulations Varvara

Award Night Closing Ceremonies

As part of a closing ceremony “thank you” and based on comments made earlier by MC Ved Arora, bouquets were given out on behalf of the spouses of various MLAR Board Members in recognition of their support of the activities of the MLAR Board and its various Members.



Bouquet presented by Indu to Santosh Arora



Bouquet presented by Indu to Michelle Nguyen
Spouse of Volunteer Board Member Tin Nguyen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All heritage language groups who plan to use Balfour or Campbell Collegiate facilities should make their requests for classrooms, days of the week, and hours known to MLAR ASAP via e-mail, so arrangements can be negotiated with each Collegiate for 2009-2010. Those who have not yet done so, please contact MLAR office as soon as possible. MLAR must also obtain permits from the city of Regina, so this is important.

Don't forget the annual **Principals' Meeting** to review various matters regarding the new school year. DATE: Monday August 31st, 7:00 pm at the Travelodge. South Albert St.

The entire video series on **“The Effective Teacher”** used by Facilitator Dave Gorrie at the March 14th 2009 workshop is now available. Previewing of the first two of 8 videos by Principals/Teachers will take place in the office boardroom at 2144 Cornwall Street on **October 14th at 7:00 pm**. If interested, please e-mail your name and position to MLAR. Plans are to issue a Certificate to persons who take time to preview all 8 videos. Dates of planned previews for the other videos will be announced later.

Tentative plans are to hold a first Teachers' Workshop on November 13 and 14, 2009. More details will follow at a later date.

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SaskCulture Inc., Saskatchewan Lotteries, Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages, Saskatchewan Education.



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Special thanks to young Neil Leskun who volunteered to be the photographer for Awards Night and provided all photos for this edition of the quarterly MLAR Newsletter.