



HDC NEWS



Window to a different culture

Her official job title is Mandarin Learning Assistant, but Guo Xiaoshuai – known as Selina to her primary and secondary classes at Karangahake, Paeroa, Netherton and Hikutaia – has taught far more this year than a foreign language.

She has provided a window to another culture, says Miller Avenue School teacher Jennifer Bedford. As well as learning Mandarin conversational and vocabulary basics, students at every year-level have sung Chinese songs, glimpsed some of the country's landmarks, learnt about Chinese food other than the kind in takeaway containers, and even handled Chinese money.

Add a dose of Selina's bubbly personality – "She's a great ambassador," says Jennifer – and the result is a cultural appreciation that's exactly what children may need for the future, as District and national trade links with China develop. Local college students already have an opportunity to be involved in annual exchange visits with Shanghai teens as part of Hauraki's sister city agreement with Jiading, and even many young children such as Jennifer's Year 2s and 3s have shown an aptitude for picking up Mandarin.

"It's quite hard, but I like it, especially the singing," says 7-year-old Kylie Harris. She practices her language skills with Miller Avenue school friends, and teaches a few words to her mum and dad.

Classmate Shyla Ganderton, also 7, enjoys lessons that highlight music or dance – aspects of Chinese culture that tie in with her ballet interest.

Selina is one of 70 Mandarin learning assistants working in New Zealand as part of a Chinese Government-funded

initiative set up in 2010 under the bilateral Fair Trade Agreement, to promote understanding and raise the quality of Chinese education in Kiwi schools.

While most of the learning assistants are based at urban schools, Selina was posted to the Ohinemuri Schools cluster through a Hauraki District Council economic development initiative. After spending 8½ years teaching English to Beijing teenagers, she was initially disappointed not to be based in Auckland.

"After two weeks, I was so excited. Everyone has been so friendly and welcoming. I'm very lucky to be here and to have experienced the real New Zealand culture."

Her one-year contract has turned into a year of opportunity, with her 6-year-old son and her mother joining her in Paeroa in April, and her father and her husband also visiting for a fortnight.

Son Li Yumo (Michael) has begun his schooling with three terms at Miller Avenue. He arrived speaking only a few words of English, but with a lot of support from staff and the encouragement of fellow pupils, he has become "a little Kiwi" who's now reluctant to return home.

Selina herself has missed other members of her family, though she'll miss her New Zealand friends and students when she goes back to China shortly. In particular, she has loved the challenge of teaching primary aged children for the first time.

Since her school in Beijing has now opened a primary department, Selina plans to start a fun Friday evening "English club" for the young students, led by her and Michael. "I hope we'll be



Selina leads children in an action song at Miller Avenue School

able to skype students here."

Miller Avenue Principal Kaye Ferguson says Selina's personal qualities have made her a perfect fit in a rural community. "She is very adaptable and has wanted to be part of school life. The family connection with having Michael here has been an added dimension."

Netherton School Principal Tracey Adams, the Ohinemuri cluster coordinator of the Mandarin learning programme, says all eight schools involved have enjoyed and benefited from Selina's teaching.

"Children relate well to people and their stories, and Selina has been warm and forthcoming with her experiences. She has helped students gain an understanding of life in China and of Chinese protocols, customs and traditions. This has been the central focus."

While all the children have been learning basic Mandarin like greetings, colours and counting, some have progressed to more depth. "As a cluster we are keen to continue this into 2015 and beyond," says Tracey. "We've been approved to have a learning assistant from China come into our community again next year. This will enable the Ohinemuri schools to build on current learning and to grow our children's ability to relate to others both in a local and a global setting."

Drain work just around the corner

Drains – most people don't worry about them in summer when they're not actually doing much in the way of drainage. However from January, Council will swing into its annual maintenance programme for more than 650km of land drains.

Our staff and contractors carry out weed spraying alongside drains, usually one spray a year except for some areas that need a second spray. Where vehicles can't get to, we use a helicopter to apply approved herbicides. Between March and June we clean the drains using excavators to remove weed and silt build-up. This maintains waterway capacity and prevents weed and debris from blocking floodgate and pump outlets to the main rivers of the District. A five year cycle is effective for most of the drains, although some need an annual clean due to faster build-up of underwater weed.

This drain maintenance provides for the efficient removal of excess runoff in storm events, and the management of water table levels, essential for the continuing pastoral productivity of the Hauraki Plains. Hauraki is one of the few District Councils in New Zealand which manages land drainage; this is usually an activity of Regional Councils. To give an idea of the scale, we maintain drains over an area of about 43,000 hectares in five drainage districts.

Much of our drainage network is within private property and we rely on the goodwill of owners for access to inspect, clean and maintain drains, although the Land Drainage Bylaw does empower Council to enter for these purposes. Notice of machine cleaning is given to property owners in advance, to allow the drain banks to be grazed off before drain cleanings are placed there.

It's important not to have buildings, fences, vegetation, stored materials (and rubbish!) getting in the way of access to the drains. We need at least 15m from the top edge of open drains to be clear to allow access for council staff, contractors, and machines. Dumped grass clippings or other greenwaste can cause their own issues when the rains come, restricting flows and interfering with the proper operation of pumps, floodgates and screens.



Kids, remember to book in this challenge

Registrations open on Monday for the fun school holiday programme at our District libraries. **Are you up for a challenge?**

Participants will have a month, from December 22 to January 23, to complete any two of the reading challenges offered and any four of the creative challenges. The free programme is aimed for 5 to 15-year-olds, and if you're going away, you can take the activities with you and still be in to win a 7 inch tablet!

Get more details from the Ngatea, Paeroa or Waihi Libraries.

PUBLIC NOTICES

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

PAEROA POST OFFICE BUILDING

Council is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the lease or purchase of the Paeroa Post Office building situated at 101 Normanby Road, Paeroa.

An information pack with details of the EOI is available from Council's Service Centre at William Street, Paeroa or by phoning the Property Manager, Dennis Lees on 07 862 8609.

All EOIs should be sent noted:

Attn: The Property Manager
EOI - Paeroa Post Office
Hauraki District Council
PO Box 17
PAEROA 3640

or hand delivered in a sealed envelope to the Paeroa Council Service Centre, William Street, Paeroa.

The closing date and time for the EOI is 2.00pm Friday 30 January 2015.

FREEDOM CAMPING BYLAW HEARING

The Hearing for submissions received on the Freedom Camping Bylaw Review consultation will be held at the Hauraki District Council Chambers, William Street, Paeroa on Wednesday, 17 December 2014 from 1.00pm.

The public may attend to listen to the Hearing proceedings. Only those persons that submitted on the above Draft Bylaw and indicated that they wished to speak in support of their written submission will be permitted to speak.

A Summary of Submissions document that includes a copy of all submissions received with a brief summary and staff comment for each submission is available to view at the Council offices in Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi.

PROPOSED TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE

Pursuant to the Section 11(e) of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974, notice is hereby given that for the purpose of the 22nd Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo Street March organised by Paeroa Pipe Bands Tattoo Committee it is intended to close the following roads to ordinary vehicular traffic for the period indicated hereunder. During the proposed period of closure provision will be made for ordinary vehicular traffic, which would otherwise use the road, to use alternative routes.

Period of closure: Saturday 14 February 2015, 5.15pm to 6.30pm.

Roads to be closed: Normanby Rd (SH2) from Victoria St to Mackay St; Princes St from Queen St to Arney St; Arney St from Princes St to Willoughby St; Willoughby St from Arney St to Hall St; Mackay St, PAEROA.

Alternative provision for ordinary vehicular traffic will be made with signs, cones and barriers to redirect traffic on detour.

It will be an offence under the above regulations for any person otherwise than under authority of an authorised permit to use the road for ordinary vehicular traffic during the proposed period of closure.

Any objections should be directed to Technical Services Business Unit Administration on 07 862 8609 or info@hauraki-dc.govt.nz by 9 January 2015.

KERBSIDE REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION

IN THE HAURAKI DISTRICT

CHANGES TO COLLECTION FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

Due to Thursday 25 December 2014 being Christmas Day, some collections scheduled for that week will be carried out a day later than normal. Some collections will not be affected.

Please see the schedule below showing the dates of your collection for the week of 22 to 26 December 2014.

Township	Collection Day	What to put out
Whiritoa	Monday 22 December (normal day)	Refuse and recycling
	Wednesday 24 December (extra collection day)	Bags and glass only
	Saturday 27 December (extra collection day)	Bags and glass only
Kerepehi	Wednesday 24 December (normal day)	Refuse and recycling
Ngatea	Wednesday 24 December (normal day)	Refuse only
Turua	Wednesday 24 December (normal day)	Refuse and recycling
Waitakaruru	Wednesday 24 December (normal day)	Refuse only
Kaiaua	Wednesday 24 December (normal day)	Refuse only
Waihi	Friday 26 December	Refuse and recycling
Waikino	Friday 26 December	Refuse and recycling
Karangahake	Friday 26 December	Refuse only
Mackaytown	Friday 26 December	Refuse only
Paeroa	Friday 26 December	Refuse only

Collection days will be back to normal starting 29 December 2014.

Whiritoa Extra Collection Days - These will be carried out on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 22 December 2014 to 31 January 2015. Collection days will be back to normal starting 2 February 2015.

LD Covers
Chief Executive
Hauraki District Council