

# MITESOL Messages



A publication for Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

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## President's

### Corner

by Jean Holther

Even though many of us are on summer break, the work of MITESOL goes on. One of my responsibilities is being the liaison with our affiliate partner, the Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic (ATECR). This year, ATECR chose to focus on their summer workshops and did not send a representative to the Michigan area. Although we missed the opportunity to get to know and work with a teacher from the Czech Republic, we understood the importance of their need to focus on the summer program in which several Michigan people participated. We are hoping to set up email pals with Czech Republic and Michigan teachers through the contacts made at the summer program.

ATECR is an active affiliate with 734 members in a country that is smaller than Michigan. Although the population is nearly the same (the Czech Republic population is 10,286,470 while Michigan is at 9,817,242), the membership numbers are not nearly so balanced. MITESOL presently has only 229 members. We know there are several hundred more ESL professionals and para-professionals in the state, but we are not reaching them with our message of professional

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## International Teamwork Made it Happen!

*1999 ATECR/MITESOL Summer Courses for English Teachers in the Czech Republic*

by Sandra Hagman

Each year MITESOL's affiliate partner in the Czech Republic, ATECR, plans courses to be held during summer vacation as an opportunity for Czech English teachers to participate in professional development. ATECR selects experienced Czech teacher trainers to develop and coordinate the summer courses at various sites throughout the country, assisting with publicity and other administrative responsibilities. During the past year Sandy Hagman coordinated a new initiative in cooperation with Jana Dvorakova and Marta Chroma of ATECR to facilitate MITESOL's participation in three ATECR summer courses.

The goals of these three unique summer courses included: strengthen the English language skills of the Czech participants; model teaching and learning activities that Czech teachers can use in their classrooms; and provide resources and engage Czech

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## Fall Conference to have Professional Development Theme

by Alan Headbloom

The 1999 fall conference promises to be the highlight of your professional year, and this will be one event you won't want to miss. Set in Ann Arbor for a crisp fall weekend, the conference will offer attendees access to this great university town, its shops, and restaurants, without the usual Saturday crush of football fans (the Big Ten's Maize and Blue have the weekend off).

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## From the Editor

by Betsy Morgan

This newsletter is chock full of impressive things our members have been doing! Several of your colleagues have gone or are going overseas representing various interests. Others have been hard at work getting MITESOL business done at the local and state level.

In this newsletter, you'll find *Czech It Out*, a column devoted to the Summer Programs ATECR offered and at which MITESOL was strongly represented. Since we didn't have room for the great pictures Sandy Hagman provided, we have put them on the website (<http://mitesol.org>), as well as the biographies of the MITESOL representatives. Pictures of our ATECR colleagues are there as well. You'll also find *SIGNificant News*, which offers articles from your SIG representatives or members. Kim Wate has been able to capture in writing the spirit and purpose of the Regional Groups: if you weren't sure what these groups were supposed to be doing, read Kim's article.

Below is a new column: Bragging Rights. This column highlights significant professional activities by MITESOL members. Know of anyone who should be included? Send their name and phone number: we'll do the rest!

## Bragging Rights

**JoAnn Aebersold**, MITESOL Past President, taught in TESOL's Summer 1999 Academy and is on her way to Argentina on a four-month Fulbright where she'll be teaching research and teaching methodologies.

**Sara Tipton**, MITESOL Past President, is going on a one-year Fulbright to teach at the University of Presov, in Presov, Slovak Republic.

**Betsy Morgan**, MITESOL Past President, gave the plenary address "Learning from Our Mistakes" and a workshop "Testing Listening and Speaking: What to Consider" at Peru TESOL in Lima, Peru, July 31-Aug. 2.

**Susan Eggly**, **Sandra Hagman**, and **Sara Tipton**, MITESOL members, spent the 4th of July holiday in the Czech Republic, teaching in the ATECR Summer Program in Frydlant, Humpolec, and Brno, respectively.

**Bruce Morgan**, MITESOL Past President, gave two workshops, "Evaluating Writing" and "Administration of an IEP" at Peru TESOL in Lima, Peru, July 31-Aug. 2.

**Susan Eggly** will present the plenary address "ESP: An International Perspective" and a workshop "ESP: From Theory to Practice" at TESOL FENAPIUTE Ecuador, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, Sept. 23-25.

**Claire Bradin Siskin**, MITESOL's Communications Coordinator, is now a TESOL CALL author!

### Editor's Guidelines

*The Newsletter Editor reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication to enhance clarity or style. Submissions may also be shortened to fit available space. The author will be consulted if changes are substantial. Potential changes in content will be verified before publication.*

## Fall Conference to have Professional Development

*Theme (cont'd from p. 1)*

The conference focus will be on Professional Development, and activities will be geared toward making you ready for the challenges which will accompany us into the new millennium. Getting us into that mindset will be our invited plenary speaker, Laraine Kaminsky. A native of South Africa, Ms. Kaminsky has a background in TESL and went on to found MALKAM Consultants, Ltd. in Ottawa, Canada. Her company focuses on language and cross-cultural training for the workplace and boasts an impressive list of international business clients. She will tell her own story of how she developed her core skills into a successful enterprise in the very competitive marketplace of Canada's capital city.



Laraine Kaminsky

Attendees will be encouraged to assess their own skills and needs for their current jobs as

well as to think about how they see themselves working in the future.

With the focus on professional development, the conference will offer attendees many attractive options. Popular sessions will be repeated for those who find conflicting offerings. Concurrent sessions will run for 60 and 90 minutes to give additional time for audience-speaker inter-action. An open session will be available for participants to browse publisher exhibits and poster sessions. Special Interest Sections will offer panel presentations on current hot topics in their areas. Photocopying will be available for those wishing to take home special materials such as bibliographies or colleague notes. Professional development counselors will be available to chat with individuals about training and development needs for future employment opportunities. And MITESOL will make available, at cost, simple business cards for members who are just entering the profession or those between careers. The Call for Proposals will have already hit the MITESOL website and your mailboxes by the time you read this notice. Registration forms will be on their way by the end of August. We look forward to seeing you in Ann Arbor this fall. Come to be inspired about your career. Come to hear what top professionals are doing around the region; to network with other midwestern teachers, materials writers, and administrators; and come to recharge your professional juices. You can bet your career on it!

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## MITESOL Regional Groups

### *Description/Function Proposal*

*Prepared by Kimberly Wate, Regional Activities Coordinator*

I. Introduction:

One of the purposes of MITESOL is to “provide information, ESL inservice workshops, consultations, and other support services in cooperation with school administrators and teachers in other fields of instruction.”

One of the services offered by MITESOL is “offering local education and networking opportunities through regional meetings held throughout the State.”

II. A. From the above stated, the Regional Groups have been established to:

1. Be outlets for groups of local professionals to meet for collaboration, encouragement, and networking in an informal setting.
2. Be contact points for professionals who are not currently involved in MITESOL.
3. Be advocates for marginalized and/or undertrained ESL personnel/programs within the region to develop professionally through involvement in MITESOL.
4. Bring to the Executive Board comments/concerns/issues from the grassroots.
5. Bring to the Regions comments/concerns/issues from the Executive Board.
6. Provide data to the Membership Director for purposes of surveys, directories, etc.

B. Regional Groups will offer regional meetings a minimum of twice a year. Such meetings will not conflict with the MITESOL Fall Conference or the MITESOL Spring Professional Development Seminars.

C. Regional Groups will cooperate with SIGs as needed in gathering professionals for the purposes of networking and educating within regions.

D. Regional Meetings will not administer a registration/attendance fee, local programs will be asked to volunteer facilities and refreshments, and “speakers” will not receive a stipend.

E. Regional Groups will maintain a spirit of service and collaboration toward professional ESL activity, and will comply with the purposes and philosophy of MITESOL for all meetings/projects.

III. Region Leaders should:

- Network within regions
- Organize meetings
- Maintain a regional profile (contact list of names, programs, and other information)
- Welcome new MITESOL members (after initial welcoming from Membership Coordinator)
- Collaborate with Membership Coordinator and SIG Leaders when necessary
- Report to the Regional Activities Coordinator
- Attend one Board Meeting per year

## International Teamwork

(cont'd from p. 1)

participants in English language activities and discussions about American and British culture.

In late June five MITESOL teachers gathered in Prague for the launch of summer courses coordinated by colleagues from our partner affiliate, ATECR. The MITESOL teacher-trainers joined ATECR and British teacher-trainers to staff courses at the three regional sites in the Czech Republic. Susan Eggly (accompanied by her husband, Joe) and Liz England worked with Jirina Babokova, Director of Studies for the course in Frydlant. Sandy Hagman and Jeannie Lorenger were assigned to Humpolec where the course was directed by Mirka Sudokova (former ATECR/MITESOL representative to TESOL '96 in Chicago). Sara Tipton represented MITESOL in Brno, working closely with Jarmila Fictumova (ATECR/MITESOL representative to TESOL '97 in Orlando).



Participants in Frydlant, Czech Republic

professional expertise during the week-long residential courses. In efforts to broaden support for this project, Sandy met with U.S. Embassy-Prague Cultural Attaché Deborah McGeehon and, later, with Damon Anderson at the USIA offices in Washington D.C. As a result, ATECR received some funding to assist with expenses, including the accommodation and travel of the American teachers while they were in the Czech Republic. USIS in Prague also generously

Although a proposal was put forth early this year to the TESOL Professional Development Committee for support of this joint international initiative by two TESOL affiliates, funding from TESOL was not made available. Recent communication from the Professional Development Committee indicates that TESOL may consider support of some future project.

Among the various ATECR summer courses held in the Czech Republic, the three with MITESOL teachers offering American studies were "sold out" first, thanks to the great efforts of Jirina, Mirka, and Jarmila, our Czech colleagues who were directors of study for the three sites. The very positive evaluation of all three courses by the participants made this an extremely rewarding experience for everyone concerned. Hopes are that the overwhelming success of this year's ATECR/MITESOL summer project may provide a basis for similar cooperative ventures in the future.



From left to right: Liz England, Sara Tipton, Deborah McGeehon, Sandy Hagman, Jeannine Lorenger, and Susan Eggly

MITESOL supported this project by providing some of the materials used for teaching American cultural topics. The MITESOL teachers paid their own international travel expenses and donated their

provided textbooks for all 115 Czech participants. The summer courses for English teachers in the Czech Republic are financially supported in large part by the British Council as well as by participant tuition.



# SIGNificant News

## K-12 SIG

### Endorsement Update

by Laura Gogola

The ESL endorsement to a Michigan Teaching Certificate is one step closer to realization. Members of MITESOL met together with other stakeholders to prepare the examination required in all areas of teacher certification in Michigan.

Representing the teacher training institutions were Cathy Day and Betsy Morgan of Eastern Michigan University, Leslie Grant of Central Michigan University, and Marc Rosa of Wayne State University. Sandra Hagman, Southfield PSD (Public School District), and Jackie Moase-Burke, Oakland ISD (Intermediate School District),

represented the interests of MITESOL. Nancy Shewe, Ann Arbor PSD, Laura Gogola, Berkley PSD, Sherry Meyer, Van Buren ISD and Elana Izraeli, West Bloomfield PSD brought their experience as practitioners in the public schools. Nancy also represented the Michigan Education Association. Jesus Solis, a long time consultant in the Office of Bilingual Education, represented the Michigan Department of Education.

The State Board of Education gave the actual writing of the examination to a professional test development corporation, National Evaluation Systems, Inc. They used the endorsement standards (developed by MITESOL) to write specific statements of required competencies. In December of 1998 this committee reviewed these competencies one by one, rewriting, elimination, and

adding. The private corporation then took the revised competencies, and wrote multiple choice test questions based on the competencies.

The committee reconvened in May of 1999. They reviewed the draft 100 questions developed by the professionals. Debate centered on the relevancy of the questions to the competencies, and the credibility of the answers provided. The resources of all members of the committee were called upon. Where one person might claim total ignorance, another was an expert.

The next step is the writing the final draft and field-testing the examination for reliability and validity. The committee is to reconvene to review the results in the fall of year 2000. If all goes well, the certification examination will be ready by Fall of 2001.

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## Post-Secondary SIG

### Searching for the truth : A brief report on declining foreign student enrollments in the U.S. (part II)

by Don Staub

In the previous issue of *MITESOL Messages*, the first half of this article addressing the issue of declining enrollments of international students in the U.S. focussed on whether or not there is an actual decline and possible causes. In this issue, the second half of this article will examine some of the ways that schools are

combatting decreased numbers from overseas.

A number of schools sensed a changing trend in worldwide economics and student enrollments and were able to take proactive stances against declining numbers. For those that were caught off guard and forced to think on their feet, a variety of tactics have been suggested (in no particular order) to maintain or increase foreign student enrollment numbers.

- **Make financial concessions to current students to ensure that they are able to complete their programs.** Many schools see that showing their concern to students who are already taking classes as a critical first step. The accommodations are varied: deferred tuition, loans, scholarship,

suspended tuition increases, re-classification of visas to allow students to work.

- **Increase relations with foreign student alumni.** Some schools have well-established networks with foreign student alumni. An increasing number of schools who don't are coming to understand the benefits of word of mouth advertising from their international alumni. Steps being taken include: Establishing alumni organizations outside the U.S., paying alumni to recruit, asking alumni to help at recruiting fairs, publishing newsletters for international alumni.
- **Utilize recruiting agents.** Although this is an issue which causes considerable debate at some schools, there are many schools

## *Nominations Open for MITESOL Leadership Positions*

*By Sandra Hagman*

In anticipation of the general membership meeting and elections to be held at the MITESOL Fall Conference on October 16, 1999, the Nominations Committee announces a call for nominations of persons to stand for election to positions on the MITESOL Executive Committee and Advisory Board. Members are encouraged to refer to the 1999 MITESOL Directory for a complete overview of the MITESOL organizational structure (page 1) and the schedule of elected and appointed positions (page 60).

Participating in MITESOL as a board member is a significant opportunity for developing both personal and professional leadership skills among great colleagues. Nominations of friends and colleagues are welcome, and MITESOL members may volunteer themselves for nomination. Nominations for either elected or appointed positions should be made by contacting Sandra Hagman, MITESOL Past President and Nominations Chair. Further inquiry about the posted positions is encouraged! **The deadline for nominations this year is September 20th.**

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Candidates will be contacted and asked to provide a one-paragraph biographical statement that includes their qualifications and reasons to serve. The Nominations Committee will then prepare a ballot that includes all declared candidates to be voted on at the Fall Conference business meeting. There will also be space on the ballot for write-in candidates.

MITESOL Executive Committee (EC): Persons identified as candidates for EC positions are MITESOL members who have demonstrated their interest and commitment to service in MITESOL and the field of English language education through their participation in professional activities. The seven members of the Executive Committee serve as voting officers in the organization and are elected by the entire membership. The EC meets six times per year, usually in conjunction specified Advisory Board (AB) members involving a particular focus topic. At other times, much information, discussion, and functional matters for decisions on behalf of the organization are handled efficiently by regular email communication among EC and AB members. The following Executive Committee positions are posted for election in 1999:

**Vice-President:** Duties include chairing professional development activities, specifically the statewide fall conference and the spring professional development workshops. This position is a three-year commitment as the person serves one year each as Vice President, President and Past President. When assuming the role of President, this person takes responsibility for general leadership and supervision of association responsibilities and affairs; monitors the need for involvement of the organization in sociopolitical concerns; and functions as liaison with ATECR, our Czech

partner. As Past President, this person is designated TESOL liaison and chair of the Nominations Committee, including orientation of new board members.

**Treasurer:** Duties include maintaining financial accounts and records, preparing reports (Quicken software is provided) and bringing fiscal issues to the attention of the Executive Committee. The term of service is two years.

**Communications Coordinator:** Duties include oversight of the MITESOL Messages newsletter publication, the MITESOL website, and the MITESOL email distribution list by working with the volunteer editors appointed to handle those functions.

MITESOL Advisory Board (AB) : Advisory board members are elected or appointed.

*Elected positions.* This year there are two elected positions open for persons to serve as non-voting members the MITESOL Advisory Board; both are representatives for special interest groups (SIGs) as described below. (Refer also to the MITESOL Directory, page 30.) SIG Reps are elected by members of their respective interest sections at SIG meetings scheduled during the day of the fall conference. SIG Reps are responsible for organizing a meeting or activity for their interest section at conferences, submitting articles for MITESOL Messages, communicating as needed with others on the Membership Committee, and attending three meetings of the Executive Committee/Advisory Board to represent the interests of their SIG. The two openings this year are:

**K-12 SIG Representative:** The K-12 SIG focuses on English language development, content area instruction, and support services for students at all levels of K-12 education, including bilingual education.

**Workplace and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) SIG Representative:** The Workplace and ESP SIG focuses on site-based English language development with work-related applications and/or specialized training for non-traditional ESL learners/clients. This includes school-to-work programs, vocational ESL (workplace), corporate programs, tutorial services, intercultural training, and *consulting*.

*Appointed Positions.* Persons appointed by the President with review by the Executive Committee serve for two years in a non-voting capacity and attend three meetings annually. Members are encouraged to volunteer for these specialized tasks according to their talent, interest, and time available for service.

**Email List Editor:** Maintain email distribution list and post appropriate messages for distribution to MITESOL members on a timely basis.

**Membership Information Manager:** Maintain database of membership records (FilemakerPro software is provided) in order to make information readily available as needed for the timely functions of the organization. Tasks include providing address labels, updating membership renewals, and assisting with preparation of the MITESOL Directory.



## **Post-Secondary SIG**

*cont'd from p. 6*

who rely on the added numbers brought in by recruiters.

- **Develop 2-2 programs.** The increased quality of educational institutions in many countries, coupled with the cost of a full four years of American college putting higher education out of reach for many international students, some institutions are establishing programs whereby the students study two years in the home country and then complete their degree at a partner school in the U.S.

- **Strengthen ties with local community colleges.** While enrollments at four year colleges have declined, numbers of foreign students attending two-year colleges has increased dramatically. By fostering closer relations between the local community college, many universities are needing only to go down the road to recruit international students.

- **Increase recruitment efforts in areas not traditionally focussed upon.** Some recruiters are turning some of their efforts away from the Far East and aiming them at areas such as Africa, where few students come from to study in the U.S.

- **Diversify IEP offerings.** By setting up programs that specifically tend to the needs of students in a variety of departments and colleges around the campus (e.g. for Arts & Sciences students), the IEP makes itself more visible, and is therefore able to increase support from the university at large when it comes to issues such as securing more funds for recruitment even though numbers are down.

Schools facing decreased numbers in their seats come this fall have a variety of solutions that they may try. Of course, few if any

recruitment efforts are going to turn up immediate results. What is ultimately required, regardless of student numbers, is a long-term, sustained recruitment effort — not only by the IEP, but the institution as a whole. The above suggestions should not be considered as one-shot deals. Virtually all of them must play a role in the long-term recruitment plan of the institution.

## **Contextualizing Grammar Instruction**

*by Mary Loewe*

Hello everyone! Here are some ways I have found to incorporate grammar instruction into the reading class. When choosing the reading, determine what grammar structures are either suggested by the reading or used extensively in the reading by the author. Some authors might make use of simile and metaphor, while some fantasy literature might suggest assignments that require the use of unreal conditional. One of the easiest prereading assignments is to give the students a journal assignment to write at home that requires the use of the target structure. Then have them discuss their writing the next day in small group. This can also be reversed, having them discuss before they write. If the grammar requires explanation, you may conduct a mini-lesson in small group or for the entire class as they need to use it.

While reading the story, the students may keep a double entry journal. Have them divide their paper in half lengthwise. On the left side of the page, they copy some sentences that they

found particularly difficult or interesting exactly from the text. On the right side, they write down in their own words why they chose that sentence.

An "after reading" activity is to ask the students to answer questions about the text and support their answer by quoting exactly from the text. One question might be to choose three adjectives that describe a certain character. They must justify their answers by quoting from the text. They then discuss their answers in small group and come to a consensus about which adjectives are most appropriate.

If you see the need for more overt instruction, you could scramble sentences from the text for the students to unscramble (or have them do it for each other!), have students simplify complex sentences from the text or combine sentences that you have already simplified, or have students search out and underline sentences in the text that have the target structure. They can discuss their choices in small group.

These are just a couple of ways to take grammar instruction from the reading itself. The key is to let the reading suggest the structure to be studied and to create examples and exercises, as they need to use them, from the text itself.

By the way, if you have ideas for articles for this column, contact me at 616-553-0432 or [mary.loewe@wmich.edu](mailto:mary.loewe@wmich.edu).

## *Workplace and ESP SIG*

by Pamela Bogart

The English for Specific Purposes (ESP) SIG grew out of the blossoming array of Michigan English as a Second Language practitioners who teach outside the K-12 and adult education classroom contexts. Many of these practitioners in literacy councils, private consulting firms, workplace education projects and refugee resettlement programs work in contexts with few (or no) other ESL specialists. Many are not ESL specialists on paper, but certainly are in practice. Hundreds are "professional" volunteers. Precisely because of the broad diversity of ESL contexts in which they teach or design programs, ESP practitioners share a number of common threads. ESP practitioners are always in the process of curricular development. We are often entrepreneurs, running a business or a nonprofit program. We need to hire qualified instructors or recruit and train committed volunteers. We are often working in partnership with other institutions in formal contracts and informal referral networks. We often address not only ESL issues, but job skills development, housing, health and other human service issues.

In December 1998, a group of 60 ESL practitioners, mainly from adult literacy programs, came together for the first time at a conference sponsored by the Michigan Adult Learning & Technology Center and Washtenaw Literacy with funding from the Michigan Department of Education. Participants shared curriculum, program design and marketing strategies. Many of these practitioners were not yet MITESOL members, but concluded that membership in the MITESOL ESP SIG might provide an ongoing community of professional resources by networking similar programs across the state. Dozens of ideas for effective networking emerged from the conference, and the MITESOL ESP SIG has been preparing a forum in which to implement many of these ideas. This ongoing development has been made possible with technical support from the Michigan Adult Learning & Technology Center this spring.

ESP practitioners have suggested that the ESP SIG expand access to the following professional networking tools:

- MITESOL membership (externally-funded scholarships for first-year membership)
- Semiannual calendar of upcoming ESL events
- ESP section of MITESOL website, expanded ESP e-mail group
- Regional and topical ESP Resource Contact Lists
- Additional regional inservices
- Scholarships to attend inservices & conferences
- Special ESP newsletter
- Remote ESP Office Hours staffed by ESP members

Several of these items are obviously already available, such as MITESOL membership, and the role of the ESP SIG is to spread the word about these resources. Other items are being developed by ESP SIG members. This year's state conference on October 16, 1999 at the Sheraton Inn in Ann Arbor will provide ESP SIG members a key opportunity to gather as an even more diverse group than the one in December to use and to shape the ESP networking and professional development resources that MITESOL provides.

## *President's Corner*

*cont'd from p. 1*

affiliation leading to the benefits of growth and networking. We are working with Special Interest Groups and Regional Groups to reach out in the state. We need your ideas too!

We also need your active participation in MITESOL. Right now the treasurer and some regional group leaders positions are open. There are other ways to become active too. One is to volunteer to work on a committee for a workshop or conference and another is to attend board meetings. As always, board meetings are open to all members. Check our web page for dates.

MITESOL is one of over 1000 organizations sponsoring "One Day in Peace" January 1, 2000. This global network extends to over 130 nations and is working towards a single day when there is no war, no fighting anywhere in the world. Edward Asner said, "As they used to say 'What if they gave a war and nobody came?' How worthwhile if they declared a day of peace and everybody came." One Day in Peace information, including such things as kids for peace, free peace sticker designs and global meditations, can be found on the web at <http://www.oneday.net/>. You can also read the newsletter NEWS! For the PEACE ON EARTH MILLENNIUM at [www.CountUP2000.com/news](http://www.CountUP2000.com/news)

My year as president is quickly coming to a close and I want to thank you for your support during the past two years. I look forward to seeing you at the fall conference October 16 in Ann Arbor.

## Czech It Out: ATECR Summer Courses

### ATECR Summer Course in Brno

By Sara Tipton

Maturita 2000 Summer School took place July 3-9, 1999 in Brno, Czech Republic, sponsored by The British Council, ATECR, USIS and MITESOL. The Director of Studies was Jarmila Fictumova. This was the third such national course organized for secondary school teachers, and the focus was on British and American Studies as well as on test construction, literature and methodology. The course was designed to help teachers prepare students for and to improve administration of Maturita, the school-leaving examination that all students must pass before completing secondary school.

There were 22 participants, all women and most with advanced English speaking skills. One group of teachers was made up of "gymnázium" teachers, meaning they teach in secondary schools designed to prepare students for university study. The other group consisted of teachers from business, technical and vocational secondary schools.

Perhaps some further explanation of the Maturita exam is needed. After much prompting from EFL educators, the Czech Ministry of Education mandated that the English portion of the Maturita exam for 2000 should be more communicative than previous versions; half of this exam is given nationally, and the other half is developed by each secondary school. The Ministry had promised that guidelines would be forthcoming to help EFL educators around the country prepare for these changes. So, the course participants came to the workshop with great anticipation, hoping that the instructors had these new guidelines. These teachers were eager to get working on the changes in the exam and to learn how to better prepare

their students for passing it. As a result, participants were disappointed to learn that only cursory guidelines were available on the national part of the exam, so the course focused on how they could construct better exams for the half their schools were responsible for.

These dynamics set a serious and professional mood for the course. The trainers were Mesa Canková, Vira Vémolová and Debora Zemenová, all Czech teacher trainers who had taken part in previous courses. Andrew Tollet, who currently teaches at the Faculty of Education in Plzen, taught British Studies, and MITESOL representative Sara Tipton from Wayne State University taught American Studies. In these culture studies, Andrew and Sara covered politics, traditions, education, leisure/entertainment, food and the media. We all stayed together in a very comfortable student hostel and ate together in the University dining hall, so discussions continued informally.

### ATECR Summer Course in Frydlant

By Susan Eggly & Liz England

Frydlant was the Northern Bohemian village that hosted two MITESOL members and an enthusiastic spouse. Liz England, Susan Eggly and her husband, Joe Eggly, participated in the teacher training course at an agricultural school in this picturesque village near the German and Polish borders. The theme of the course was British and American studies. 45 Czech K-12 ESL teachers studied aspects of education, government, daily life and geography of England and the United States. These classes were followed each morning by methodology classes taught by four excellent Czech ESL trainers. In the afternoons, Czech, British and American trainers taught classes on various aspects of English as well as provided games and informal conversation. In the evenings, the trainers took turns leading a cultural activity. Because the course was taught in early July, Liz and Susan took the opportunity to celebrate U.S. Independence Day, with personal reflections on freedom, a rap song, games and prizes, a rousing rendition of "This Land is Your Land," and finally, s'mores and sparklers around a campfire. The Czech participants lost no time in bringing out guitars and songbooks, and as the sun set over the mountains, the voices of three cultures joined together in song.

Jirina Babakova, the course director, and the four Czech trainers organized an excellent course, which included a field trip to the nearby mountains, a concert in the Frydlant Castle, and a final party at a local restaurant. The intercultural exchange was rich, as many of the Czechs had received little exposure to US language or culture. By the end of the week, teachers and participants felt like old friends, and promised to return next year to renew the friendship and learning.

The courses went from 8:30-12:30 and 3:00-6:30, two 90-minute sessions in the morning and two in the afternoon with a break for lunch and rest in between. There was also time for a terrific walking tour of Brno organized for all, as well as opening, closing and July 4th parties, where participants presented Sara with a bottle of champagne to celebrate the day. On the final evening, nearly everyone gathered around the piano to sing everything from Moravian folk songs to "Bridge Over Troubled Water."

This course was successful and professionally rewarding due to Jarmila's fine leadership as well as to the lively discussion and exchange that resulted from trainers and participants living together and being so genuinely interested in sharing the love of travel, culture and teaching English.

## ATECR Summer Course in Humpolec

by Jeannine Lorenger and Sandy Hagman

### Jeannine's thoughts:

The teacher training seminar in Humpolec was the most positive experience I've had as a USIS English Teaching Fellow. Don't get me wrong — I don't mind giving speeches to unknown groups of people with unknown expectations, but teaching a group of teachers who were eager to absorb as much new information as they possibly could was both invigorating and rewarding from start to finish. Who can describe the feeling you get when a participant tells you, "Well, you've finally convinced me of one thing: group work is worthwhile!"

I was impressed by the professionalism and good humor of all the other trainers, too. I look forward to continued contacts with them in the coming year, both personally and professionally. This was absolutely a win-win situation — the trainers as well as the participants went away happy and richer for having shared this experience together.

### Sandy's thoughts:

If you're lucky in your life as a visitor or teacher in another country, you have some memories created when you cross paths and share time with unforgettable people. Snapshots of memory remain imprinted and you keep coming back to those feelings when somebody asks, "Well, how was your trip?" Perhaps I'd say:

- Wouldn't you know there would be a heatwave in central Europe that week! I wondered where have all the 10,000 residents of Humpolec had gone for the 4-day holiday week-end. At least the pubs were open at night! What fun it was to go off to the pubs with fellow teachers

to sample Bernard beer, the famous local brew. Czech beer really is the greatest!

- We all stayed in the dorm of a secondary level agricultural school. I think they put me in a room on the fourth floor so I would lose some weight walking up and down the stairs so often! Breakfast, lunch, and dinner brought us together in the cafeteria. The trainers moved around for each meal, chatting with participants. And the participants were wonderful folks! People I would really like to meet again next year, but then I know I can't really recreate this chemistry another time. These are teachers from many different cities who readily joined in to get to know each other while they learned new ideas for English teaching. They all teach English to kids ages 10 to 15. Lucky kids to have teachers like these!

- We eight trainers — the ATECR Czech teacher-trainers, Mirka, Nada, Milena, Ondrej, Sarka, with Annie from British Council and Jeannine and Sandy from MITESOL/USA. — met daily to share experiences about our classes, discuss our lessons, and divide up the tasks as we worked together. We had an incredible team of people who hit it off from the start and worked well together all week long. From early morning till late at night, I was inspired by the long hours of creativity and hard work put in by our Czech colleagues as they prepared extensive lessons on English teaching methodology and classroom activities. (I resolved to put more creative energy into my own teaching when I go back to the high school in the fall.) We were all grateful to have a copy machine and computer in the teacher prep room! (Also, coffee, tea, cookies...) Mirka's little yellow Skoda car arrived and left crammed to the roof with boxes of books and teaching supplies,

plus me and my luggage. Stoic little car! During the course, we used it to go off to the market to buy snacks and party supplies.

- American studies topics included the American family, the U.S education system, U.S. geography, American cultural values, immigration and diversity. For one of the evening activities, we learned about American baseball including the rules, the songs, and the positions on the field. The whole big bunch of us went out to the school soccer field to play a wonderfully chaotic softball game (bat and ball also carried in my suitcase along with the marshmallows and sparklers). As designated coaches with our Detroit Tigers and U of M baseball caps, Jeannine and I were umpire and pitcher. Everyone played and laughed and got confused about who was on which team and what to do with the ball. Those who didn't bat or play the field gathered up branches with dead leaves and made up cheers jumping up and down on the sidelines. What spirit! Nobody cared about keeping score.

- Singing for learning English, singing for fun. Cassettes, CDs on the boom box, then bring out the guitars! I experienced an unexpected patriotic catch in the throat during our Fourth of July presentation on American history, customs, land, and music. Red, white, and blue decorations, popcorn, making s'mores with marshmallows and graham crackers carried in our suitcases, sparklers, fireworks, a bonfire, and singing songs around the fire until after midnight. Joining in when the songs were in English. Listening to 50 Czechs singing their own folksongs and getting to know each other - all of us as friends and fellow learners. That night was the best memory of all.



## MITESOL Past President Addresses Peru TESOL

And so it was, on Thursday July 29, my two children (ages 4 and 1), my husband and I boarded a flight to Lima, Peru. The President of Peru TESOL, Liliana Nunez, met us (by then it was close to 1 am!) and took us to our hotel.

After a day of rest and preparation, on Saturday, July 31, we were at the *Colegio Champagnat*, a short walk away. Liliana declared the conference open, and I was introduced to the more than 600 conference attendees. I then presented Liliana with a plaque that MITESOL had sent with me, which read: "Michigan TESOL sends warmest greetings and congratulations to Peru TESOL on its 8<sup>th</sup> annual conference July 31-August 2, 1999, Lima Peru." Liliana, in accepting the plaque, declared "No one has ever recognized our accomplishments before." I then went on to deliver "Learning from Our Mistakes," a presentation that Cathy Day and I had worked on for the

Seattle TESOL Convention. The Peru teachers seemed to find relevance and meaning in the content, I'm happy to report. Later in the conference, Bruce and I each gave workshops, and did some recruiting for our universities at a special "school fair" time slot.

There were presenters from several countries, I was surprised to learn. The majority were from the US and Peru, with a few from Japan. Topics ranged from the computerized TOEFL to grammar techniques to how children learn language: an incredible variety reflecting the extensive expertise and interests of Peru TESOL members. I was very impressed with the organization of the conference, and the zeal of the conference attendees.

I was honored to have been invited to deliver the plenary address at Peru TESOL, especially by someone who had once been a student of mine in my pre-Michigan days at the University at Buffalo.

Liliana is also the one who asked me 10 years ago how to start a TESOL affiliate. I am simply amazed at how much Peru TESOL has been able to do in only 10 years. I'm sure Liliana has much to do with it—in fact, her membership has just re-elected her for 2 more years as President!!

More importantly than being honored, perhaps, is the experience of going overseas, no matter for how long (we were only there 8 days—the conference and then four days of checking out Inca ruins in the highlands). Not knowing any Spanish to speak of, I was constantly thankful that so many of the Peruvians in shops, restaurants, hotels, and simply on the streets, spoke English. The taxi drivers actually apologized (in English) that they couldn't speak English! I was reminded how lucky we are in this country to have so many things to take for granted: drinking water from virtually any faucet; personal safety; and traffic that doesn't scare the heck out of you. I was also reminded what it means to be foreign, an experience an ESOL teacher has to have and has to renew every now and then. I was pretty dependent on other people in important communications (we got stuck in Cusco when our flight never materialized, so we definitely needed local help to finally get us on a chartered military cargo plane to get back to Lima!)

It was simply a wonderful time, and I certainly encourage anyone who hasn't been overseas, or who hasn't been in a long time, to look into opportunities to go and be the foreigner (again). It is energizing to meet professionals in the field from other countries.



Liliana Nunez, President, Peru TESOL; Betsy Morgan, Past President, MITESOL



## Board Talk

*[The Executive Committee has requested that each newsletter include a summary of its meetings in a regular column in order to keep the membership informed of the issues that are of present concern to our organization. Ed.]*

Three executive board members attended TESOL in NYC and reported on workshops they attended which had relevance for MITESOL. Specifically, Jean Holther participated in the Midwest Regional meeting and pointed out the financial benefits of hosting a Midwest regional conference. Alan Headbloom attended a leadership development program and proposed further exploration by the board as to how a similar program might be useful for new MITESOL board members.

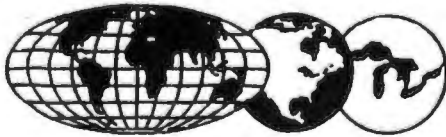
The board discussed ways of announcing open board positions. Presently, they are posted on the website, announced by email and in the newsletter. The board is working on a more effective way to enlist people who volunteer for various MITESOL projects.

The theme of the April Board Meeting was communication. Apropos of this, Claire Bradin introduced MITESOL's new website consultant, Molly Feeny, and reminded the board that this will be her last term as MITESOL webmaster. Thanks to Claire, we now have clear protocols for our website and email listings. Sandy Hagman reported that MITESOL's website is now linked to the TESOL site. Elizabeth Berriman, MITESOL's email list keeper, reported that there were currently 147 members on the MITESOL listserv.

Lisa Rumisek announced that Michigan Adult Learning and Technology (MALT), an agency of the Michigan Department of Education, has committed to fund at least \$4,000 for MITESOL memberships for non-profit adult ESL practitioners in Michigan.

The next MITESOL directory will be printed at the end of March 2000. The directory is only sent to current MITESOL members.

We welcomed Pamela Bogart, our new ESP SIG representative, who joined us for the afternoon session in order to meet the board.



**MITESOL Messages**

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