Announcing:
The Second North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad, Spring 2008!

We need your help!

Host a contest in your city in 2008 or 2009:
We need help administering contests across the country. Get your university or institution involved!

Help us design problems for the contest:
We need challenging computational linguistic problems. Can you design interesting and challenging problems for advanced high school students? Please contact us if you have an idea for a computational linguistics problem.

Join a committee:
We need help organizing outreach, finding sponsors, administering the contest, etc. Join a committee!

Contact us:
Lori Levin (lsl@cs.cmu.edu), General Chair
Tom Payne (tpayne@uoregon.edu), General Chair
Dragomir Radev (radev@umich.edu), Program Chair and Coach

About NACLO

What is NACLO?
The North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO) is a day-long contest for high school age participants. The contest contains challenging, puzzle-like problems that focus on aptitude for linguistic analysis and logical and computational thinking. Try the sample problems at http://www.namclo.org or on the reverse.

Goals of NACLO:
• Increase the size and diversity of the pool of future scientists in our field.
• Identify talented high school students and help them get the background that they need for higher education in HLT and linguistic fields.
• Get the scientific study of language into high school curricula

NACLO 2007:
Nearly 200 high school aged students from 14 different states participated in the 2007 contest. Eight winners will be representing the USA at the ILO in St. Petersburg, Russia (http://www.ilolympiad.spb.ru/). Help us increase these numbers in 2008!

http://www.namclo.org

Proudly sponsored by:
Try your hand at this sample problem. More problems at www.namclo.org.
(This problem was graciously provided by Ivan Derzhanski, and first appeared at the 33rd Traditional Olympiad in Linguistics and Mathematics held in Moscow in 2002).

Hmong

Hmong Daw (which belongs to the Hmong Mien language family, along with several other Hmong languages) is spoken by approximately 165 thousand people in south-eastern China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and some other countries.

In the 1960s Shong Lue Yang, a peasant from the Hmong Daw nation (also known as White Miao), invented an original writing system for his native language. This writing system is still in use alongside a Roman-based alphabet created by Christian missionaries.

Here are several words and phrases in the Hmong Daw language written in Shong Lue Yang’s script and the missionaries’ alphabet, as well as their English translations:

1. ᱪ  mıạ  ṭųŋ kev ntsuas no degree
2. ᵧorrh hauv inside
3. ᵧstituição raug raws cai legal
4. ᶎ>Password hloov mus transfer
5. ᶎe qhua guest
6. ᶎăŋ ᶎăŋ ᶎăŋ yog los nag it is raining
7. ᶎęŋ kwv yees guess

In the missionaries’ alphabet the letter w stands for a specific vowel. The letters g, s and v at the ends of the syllables aren’t consonants; instead, they denote the so-called tones (specific ways of pronouncing the vowels).

1. Write in the missionaries’ alphabet (and explain):
2. Write in Shong Lue Yang’s script (and explain):

9. ᵧũŋ bird
10. ᵧvê lobster
11. ᵧ thùŋ speak
12. ᵧewnętr dizzy
13. hluav ash
14. li cas how?
15. neeg ntse smart, wise
16. yawg grandfather