Celebrate Chinese New Year!

Gung Hay Fat Choy!

The Lunar New Year dates from 2600 BC, when the Emperor Huang Ti introduced the first cycle of the zodiac. Because of cyclical lunar dating, the first day of the year can fall anywhere between late January and the middle of February. This year, it falls on February 9, 2005 - Lunar Year 4703...the year of the Rooster.

The sign of the Rooster indicates a person who is hard-working, confident and unwavering. This means Roosters can really crow about their own accomplishments!

Traditionally in China, doors are painted red and firecrackers are lit to scare off a horrible creature named Nian (a Chinese word meaning 'year'). Scaring away the old year and welcoming in the new is just one of many Chinese New Year customs. Red envelopes filled with lucky money are given away, incense is burned and markets sell cakes, pastries, new lunar calendars, peach blossoms, mandarins and dozens of other festive treats. But, most importantly, Chinese New Year is the time to wish family, friends and relatives good fortune in the year to come.

In Victoria, you can experience Chinese New Year in Canada's oldest Chinatown on Sunday, February 13th. Victoria will host a number of exciting events in the heart of Chinatown throughout the day. Experience the dramatic Lion Dance, dine on special Chinese New Year delicacies, take in the colourful decorations and music, and take walking tours of the area to learn the secrets and splendors of Victoria's rich Chinese history.

Valentine's Day

Every February across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones on February 14th, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday? The history of Valentine's Day is shrouded in mystery, but it contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men -- his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons. According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that he fell in love with a young girl -- who may have been his jailor's daughter -- who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure. It's no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France.
Garden Workshop by Sonya Chandler

Last fall there seemed to be many people interested in growing their own food, but many of you have very little space and there are limited plots in the Community Garden. So we have been talking about having a workshop on Gardening in Small Spaces. This workshop will focus on using what little space you have to grow things for your family to eat. It will include gardening in containers, raised beds, window boxes and in small yard spaces. Instruction on how to create these growing spaces, as well as what to plant to get the best results will be covered. Please call the Family Centre if you would be interested in attending this workshop – the cost will be minimal or free and it will likely take place in March or April.

February Potluck

Friday February 18 - Potluck at the Family Centre! Come and join friends and neighbours and enjoy a feast! Please bring a dinner item to share. (Because the space at the Family Centre is so limited we are going to be hosting future Potlucks at the Childcare Complex – watch News & Views for announcements!)

The Good Food Box

Don't forget about the Fruit and Veggie Box program! This is an awesome and inexpensive way to get healthy food into your life. Boxes are $5, $10 and $15 each and all come with a variety of fresh fruits and veggies! Deadline for your order is Wednesday February 9th and pick up is Thursday February 17th.

Feast in the New Year

Probably more food is consumed during the New Year celebrations than any other time of the year. Vast amounts of traditional food is prepared for family and friends.

On New Year’s Day, the Chinese family will eat a vegetarian dish called jai. Although the various ingredients in jai are root vegetables or fibrous vegetables, many people attribute various superstitious aspects to them: Lotus seed - signifies having many male offspring, Ginkgo nut - represents silver ingots; black moss seaweed - homonym for exceeding in wealth; dried bean curd - homonym for fulfillment of wealth and happiness; bamboo shoots - term which sounds like "wishing that everything would be well"; fresh bean curd or tofu is not included as it is white and unlucky for New Year as the color signifies death and misfortune.

Other foods include a whole fish, to represent togetherness and abundance, and a chicken for prosperity. The chicken must be presented with a head, tail and feet to symbolize completeness. Noodles should be uncut, as they represent long life.

In south China, the favorite and most typical dishes were nian gao, sweet steamed glutinous rice pudding and zong zi (glutinous rice wrapped up in reed leaves), another popular delicacy.

In the north, steamed wheat bread (man tou) and small meat dumplings were the preferred food. The tremendous amount of food prepared at this time was meant to symbolize abundance and wealth for the household.

Children's Corner

Valentine’s Jokes

Knock, knock!
Who’s there?
Jimmy.
Jimmy who?
Jimmy a little kiss?

Knock, knock!
Who’s there?
Olive.
Olive who?
Olive you!

Calling all knitters and other handwork creators! We are hoping to start a children’s knitting circle in our home after school every second Friday. Come with a project you are working on, or if you are a new to knitting, we can teach you. If you are interested, call Lisa at 381-6680.

by JofanyaKane
age 8

Use Your News & Views

This newsletter belongs to you, the Family Housing community. It can provide an opportunity to tell your story in the community profile, list items for sale in the classifieds, start a column or announce activities. I would like this newsletter to reflect the varied perspectives of our community – our rich diversity makes us unique in Victoria. Next month, all submissions will be put into a monthly draw for prizes. Bribery? Or just gentle encouragement? Please submit!
No Kidding Coming Soon!
It’s that time of year again! Remember last year? The bag piper? The ice cream for breakfast? The big celebration (250 people attended this fun event last year) to honour families as a valuable part of the UVic community? Well our annual April Fools Day celebration, “No Kidding,” is happening again this year on April 1st. We are in the planning phases so if you have any suggestions or would like to volunteer to help, please contact the Family Centre! Otherwise, mark your calendars now for the biggest and best event of the year on April 1st 2005. No Kidding!

Public Health Nurse Visit
February 2nd from 10-11 at Playgroup our community Public Health Nurse, Jane, will be attending to talk about immunizations (general childhood, chicken pox, flu, etc). Please bring all your questions and your child’s Immunization passport! Also bring any other questions you may have for the nurse regarding child safety, breastfeeding, postpartum depression, community resources, childhood illnesses, food choices, vision and dental concerns, or any other concerns you may have.

LIFE Seminar
Dr. Allison Rees of LIFE Seminars presents “Sidestepping the Power Struggle”
February 15th to April 12th, 2005
Tuesday Evenings – 7:00 to 9:30
At Spectrum Community School
- Understanding Temperament
- Stages of Maturing
- Bewildering Behaviours in Both Parent and Child
- Effective Discipline
- Love, Limits and Consequences
- Teaching Responsibility
- Dealing with Triggers
- Why Children Act so Immature
COST: $130 (please contact Sonya at the Family Centre if you would like to attend but can’t afford it. We may be able to help!)

Family Housing Classifieds

Free clothes
We have been given all of the clothing items from UVic lost and found! There are coats and jackets, lots of mitts and gloves, hats and scarves and even a couple pairs of pants! All free!

For Sale:
Almost brand new futon couch (seriously great condition) $75. All proceeds to support the Family Centre Community Kitchen Project! Call the Family Centre for info.

Free
To a family who needs it: 1 bed and a lazy boy in good shape have been donated by a community member to be given to a family who could use them. Call the Family Centre for more info!

CINEKIDS
This February the Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival is bringing back one of its most popular events – CineKids. Junior filmmakers can bring their whole family along and get in touch with their inner screen star. CineKids takes place at the Student Union Building, UVic, on Saturday, February 13th from 12:00 – 4:00 PM. The Vic Independent will offer kid-centric programs including Let’s Make a Movie, acting, editing, animation and much more. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Admission: Beginning January 20th, tickets for movies & animation workshops will be available at Bolen Bookstore, or in person or over the phone at the Festival Office at 808 View Street (389-0444). They can also be purchased at the door of the event. Individual activity tickets can only be purchased on February 13th by showing your CineKids film or animation ticket. Movie Screening: $5.00 per person per movie Duration: approximately 90 minutes Animation Workshop: $5.00 per person. Duration: 2 hours Activities: With the purchase of a $5.00 CineKids film ticket or animation workshop the activities are $1.00 per activity per participant. Programs offered: Mini Let’s Make a Movie, The Magic of Editing, Scare Your Mom! SFX Make-Up, Step Into The Spotlight, Did You Hear That, Write ON, Camera Techniques.
Grad Centre Welcomes Families by Stacy Chappel

Many students living in family housing know about the GSS family video night. But they may not be aware of the family friendly features we offer at the Graduate Student Society.

Family Video Night
Each month the GSS hosts a free family video night. Parents come along with kids, and often hang out with other moms and dads while the kids watch a feature film on our big screen TV. In January we had Mary Poppins, which had the kids doing the "step in time" dance number with great enthusiasm. Popcorn is free for everyone who comes, and sometimes there are other little treats too. Anyone who wants to can slip into the restaurant and order food or drinks to enjoy during the film, but it is not required to buy anything.

Kids Menu, relaxing environment, at IQ Bistro
The IQ Bistro has a children's menu available upon request, and there are also highchairs for the little ones. The kids can get chicken wings and you can have something a bit more enticing, like a portabella burger or our fresh homemade soup! We're right across the street from family housing, fully licensed, and reasonably priced. The lounge is open for hanging out, too, not just for paying customers. So if you find yourself needing a break when running around campus, or wanting to escape when it's not your turn to "do bedtime", feel free to pop in and relax or study.

Change Tables & breastfeeding
We all think it is great that the dad's change table got installed first in our building, and we are getting a mom's change table installed soon. (Meanwhile, moms, take advantage!) The whole building is also (of course) breastfeeding friendly, and there are lots of comfortable couches to give mom some comfort.

Health Plans
Graduate students have a health plan through the GSS, and can opt in spouses and children for a fee. Students who already have a plan through their work or their spouse can opt out of the plan by providing proof of their other coverage.

GSS is the voice of grad students. We can provide support when you face problems and advocacy when you need something changed at UVic. For example, we helped convince UVic to allow students to stay in family housing for four months after graduating – we knew grad students didn't want to move their families the week after defending their thesis. The Grad Centre has free meeting rooms for graduate student events. We also fund travel bursaries through the Faculty of Grad Studies which can help you attend conferences. We are a democratic organization with an elected executive and grad student reps from every department. Elections come up in March, so contact us if you are interested in getting involved. If you have suggestions for the GSS, either on student or student family issues, please don't hesitate to come by or contact me at 472-5163, or gssmgr@uvic.ca.

Stacy Chappel is the new Executive Director of the GSS. She is also a mom and lives in family housing.

Introducing New Volunteers
Hi! My name is Andrea Cormier and I've been volunteering at the Family Centre as the Toy Librarian for almost 2 years. This spring, I'll also be helping out with planning for the April Fool's Day Breakfast Event. Come and see me with any ideas about the event or library!

Hi, my name is Sascha and I am a third year Registered Nursing student. I will be at the Family Centre from January through until April doing a practicum. I am looking forward to meeting everyone.

Hi everyone! My name is Janine Gerrits, a third year nursing student at UVic, and I will be involved with playgroup on Wednesday mornings. I'm interested in learning as much as I can about healthy babies and toddlers, as I intend to pursue a career in child care and special care nursing. I have a massive extended family with many kids of all ages and I love them all. I look forward to meeting you.

Upcoming Advisory Meeting
Next Family Centre Advisory Committee Meeting:
**Monday Feb 7th from 3 - 4:30 pm** at the Family Centre.

The Advisory Committee is a group of interested folks from on and off campus who help guide and support the Family Centre. Having members of student families attend is really appreciated.

Family Centre Liaison Recognized
Barb Whittington, the Facility Liaison to the Family Centre has won the "YOU CAN! IT'S ALL IN YOUR ATTITUDE" Award for the 8th annual Women's Network Conference (due in part to her awesome work with the Family Centre over the years). It is the 8th annual Women's Network Conference and you are invited to attend the conference on Wednesday Feb 18th! Please visit the Family Centre or the website for more info or to register. (If you would like to attend, but cannot afford the $10 registration fee, the Family Centre may be able to help – talk to Sonya!)
http://web.uvic.ca/womensnet/

Where is our mailbox?
The mailbox at the entrance to Lam Circle off Finnerty has been removed without warning. We will try to find out why this action was taken and report back in next month's News & Views.
Calendar Events

**Community Kitchen**
Tuesdays 5:30 to 7pm, February 8 & 22.
Community Kitchen is a group that gathers to cook together to make food for their families and learn new recipes! This group is growing but we still have room for you! Currently we run every second Tuesday from 5:30-7pm since this is a time that works for those families who are coming, but if you would prefer an earlier time like 3-5 or 4-6 (so you could take a meal home to your family) we could arrange this too! Please drop in or call the Family Centre and let us know!

**Playgroup**
Tuesdays & Wednesdays. A time for parents and children to visit and play with friends and neighbours.

**Storytime**
Tuesdays, 10 to 11am. Volunteer mom Christine makes storytime fun with crafts, activities, and of course, stories!

**Breakfast Club**
Wednesdays & Thursdays, 7 to 8:30am. Stop in on your way to school or work for a warm breakfast and lively conversation!

**Homework Club**
Thursdays, 4 to 6pm. Join Kaitlin, Young, Billy and Anna for games, crafts and lots of laughs!

**February 24** - Cool Science II with Whitney and Ingrid. Cool Science was a great success so we are planning a second event. Come learn about how COOL SCIENCE can really be!

**Knitting Night**
Fridays Feb 11 & 25, 7 to 9pm. Calling all knitters and handworkers! Come and chat and work on projects in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.

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**Swan Lake Program**
February 27, 1 - 3pm. Funny Bones
Tickle your funny bone at this family drop-in program, where you will match bones, put skeletons together or play the Mystery Bone Challenge. Local animal bones will be on display, and bring in bones to be identified by the “bone guys.” Suitable for ages 5 and up.

At Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Road. Contact Ann Scarfe at 479-0211.

**Wizard of Oz**
Four Seasons Musical Theatre
Sat & Sun, Feb 5 & 6, 2pm, Isabel Reader Theatre, 1026 Goldstream Ave., Langford. $7-$9. 478-0329.
A chance to see a unique new musical adaptation of an old classic.

**Public Library Programs**
The Extreme Earth
Saturday February 26, 10:30-11:15 am - Nellie McClung Branch
Saturday February 26, 2:30-3:15 pm - Central Saanich Branch
Come join the Science Venture gang to explore the Earth. We will look at wild and wacky weather, explore volcanoes, learn about earthquakes and make something to take home. For 6-10 year olds. Registration begins February 12.

**Victoria Art Gallery Exhibition**
The French Masters: Masterworks of 19th Century - French Realism & French Drawings from the National Gallery of Canada
December 4, 2004 until February 20, 2005
Masterworks of 19th Century French Realism and French Drawings are two separate exhibitions from the National Gallery of Canada that, combined, present over three centuries of French drawings and paintings by some of France’s most prestigious and celebrated artists. These exhibitions are only presented together in Victoria. The extraordinary collection of works includes artists: Callot, Le Brun, Watteau, Fragonard, David, Delacroix, Géricault, Degas, Puvis de Chavannes and Redon. A Special Exhibition fee applies to this exhibition.

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*Please remember to use our website! Our current hours are posted and there is a message board! Trade recipes or child care swaps... post wanted (you need it) and offered (you need to get rid of it) ads...*

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10-12: Playgroup at Complex B (Health Nurse visit) | 7-8:30: Breakfast Club  
1-3: Drop-in  
4-6: Homework Club | 12:30-1:30: Free noontime concert | Four Seasons Theatre presents  
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Wizard of Oz |
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| 3-4:30: Family Centre Advisory Committee Mtg. | 7-8:30: Breakfast Club  
10-12: Playgroup at Complex B | 7-8:30: Breakfast Club  
1-3: Drop-in  
4-6: Homework Club | 12:30-1:30: Free noontime concert | 7:00: Knitting Night | GINEKIDS  
Victoria Chinese New Year Parade |
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| 28  |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Deadline for ordering  
Good Food Box | Pick up Good Food Box at Family Centre | | | | | |