New Year's Celebrations Around the World

by Tomoko Okada

The New Year's celebration is the most important and happiest holiday of the year for many cultures. In this holiday, people get together to say goodbye to the old year and welcome the New Year. For example, the traditional Chinese New Year celebration lasts three weeks. This is one of several interesting and special activities and events that take place around the world. Many people make New Year's resolutions. From January 1st to the middle of September, many cultures in the world celebrate their new year.

Chinese New Year -- January 29, 2006

This year begins the Year of the Dog. People born in the Year of the Dog possess the best traits of human nature. They have a deep sense of loyalty, are honest, and inspire other people’s confidence because they know how to keep secrets. However, Dog people are somewhat selfish, terribly stubborn, and eccentric. They care little for wealth, yet somehow always seem to have money. They can be cold emotionally and sometimes distant at parties. They can find fault with many things and are noted for their sharp tongues. Dog people make good leaders. They are compatible with those born in the Years of the Horse, Tiger, and Rabbit.

Islamic New Year: 1427 H. (31 January 2006)

Muslims do not traditionally “celebrate” the beginning of a new year, but do acknowledge the passing of time, and take time to reflect on mortality.

Muslims measure the passage of time using the Islamic (Hijrah) calendar. This calendar has twelve lunar months, the beginnings and endings of which are determined by the sighting of the crescent moon. Years are counted since the Hijrah, which is when the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Madinah (approximately July 622 A.D.).

Jewish New Year: Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, September 23 - October 2, 2006

The Jewish High Holy Days are observed during the 10 day period between the first day (Rosh Hashanah) and the 10th day (Yom Kippur) of Tishri, the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the most important of all Jewish Holidays and the only holidays that are purely religious, as they are not related to any historical or natural event. Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is celebrated the first and second days of Tishri. It is a time of family gatherings, special meals and sweet tasting foods. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day of the Jewish year and is observed on the tenth day of Tishri. It is a day of fasting, reflection and prayers.
Facts and questions about Family Housing

In this monthly column, we address questions about living in UVic Family Housing, as well as supply information, ideas and tips about regulations, personnel, and the general "nuts & bolts" of life on Lam Circle.

This month, our information comes from Campus Security.

Campus Security has started a new program for families in Family Housing. UVic employees are being asked to donate their previous month's bus passes to the Family Centre so that families can use them for free admission to local rec centres (Gordon Head, Crystal Pool, Oak Bay Rec, etc.). Each pass is valid for one free admission. Children under 5 are free. Please see us at the Family Centre to pick up your pass. Quantities are limited, and the pass is only good for one month (for example, December's old passes are only good for admission during the month of January).

Family Housing Classifieds

FREE! Lee from Coastal Displays Plus has donated a fax machine, HP colour printer, large computer monitor, and speakers. Anyone interested in these free items should contact the Family Centre at 472-4062.

FREE! There is a large new collection of free clothing and other items donated from Campus Security. Please come check them out at the Family Centre!

Participants Invited!

Are you the parent of a child between the ages of 2.5 and 5 years? How well do young children understand the perspective of others? How well are you children able to understand symbols, like maps, numbers, and signs? Do children with Developmental Disorders like Down syndrome differ in their ability to understand these concepts?

A study at UVic is trying to answer these questions and we would appreciate your help by volunteering 20 minutes of your time to the study. If you and your child are interested in participating, or would like more information, we would be grateful to hear from you! Please contact: Katie Winters, Phone: (250) 882-0512, kwinters@uvic.ca

Farewell to Sonya Chandler

As many people already know, Sonya Chandler was elected to the Victoria City Council in November. The Family Centre said good-bye to her on December 16th, when thirty people got together to say their thank yous and good byes. Sonya’s warm friendliness touched many people’s lives, and we will continue to feel her caring spirit in the years to come. Thank you Sonya for all you did!

Our Family Suggests...

In this recurring column, we will hear about activities and events suggested by residents of Family Housing. Is there something that your family likes to do? Send us your recommendations!

Thanks, Jason, for this suggestion on getting started with a musical instrument.

Music Lessons at UVic

Our son had been asking us for quite some time about taking up the violin. He seemed a bit young so we said let’s wait a year. Well, he persisted and we began to look into lessons. At the same time, we were concerned that the public schools have so little in the way of music programs, and many are no longer offering band and strings in elementary school. Of course we weren’t surprised to discover that the going rate for private lessons at the Conservatory of Music is about $25 per half hour, plus instrument rental (about $17 per month). This now seemed to be out of the question. Then a friend suggested looking for a student music teacher at the UVic Department of Music. We did, and our son has now been playing violin for two years. It is wonderful how these young people can teach, and the rate is very reasonable. Plus, we only have to walk across campus to get to the lesson!

If you are interested in finding a student music teacher, call the Department of Music at 721-7903, or go over to the music building (MacLaurin) and look at the notice boards -- music students often post something when they are looking for students.

Thank you!

…to the Graduate Student’s Society for their generous donation to the Emergency Family Fund.

… to the Engineering Department’s Co-op and Practicum Office for their monthly support of our food bank and Family Fund!

…to the staff of all seven departments in the Faculty of Social Sciences for their generous donation to our food share program!

…to the School of Earth & Ocean Sciences, the Division of External Relations, and the UVic Bookstore for donations of Christmas hampers.

Community Notice

The Family Centre is hiring a new director! The deadline for applications will be the end of January, and the hiring process will begin in early February. We need two Family Housing representatives to volunteer to be on our hiring panel. If you are interested in having a say in choosing the new director, please call Andrea at 472-4062.
Food Matters

Don't forget about the Family Centre Food Share Program. Any families needing non-perishable food items are welcome to check out our Food Share Shelf. There's lots of new items!

You can also purchase GOOD FOOD BOXES (fresh produce!) for $5, $10, or $15 from the Family Centre. Money is due by Wed, Jan 11, and pickup is Thurs Jan 19 between 12pm & 5.

International Students & Families Potluck Dinner

International student families hosted the 2005 Winter Celebration Potluck Dinner on December 22nd. This special event was organized in consultation with the International Exchange & Students Services. From December 23 to January 3rd, all food services on the UVic campus were closed, leaving many students in the dormitory feeling isolated and lonely. The members of "Culture Club" on Tuesday afternoons cooked a Halal turkey and potato salad for the potluck. In spite of the stormy weather, over 70 people participated in this potluck. This function assisted the individual students in networking with many families particularly from similar cultural backgrounds.

Orzo and Green Pea Soup

This is a simple and delicious soup that doubles easily, and makes great leftovers to put into kids' lunches! From the Moosewood Low Fat Favourites cookbook.

Garlic Broth:
1 large whole head garlic (about 20 cloves)
1/4 cup miso
3 cups water
3 cups vegetable stock
1 tsp dried thyme
6 cups Garlic Broth
1/2 pound orzo (about 1 1/3 c.)
2 cups frozen green peas
grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

For the Garlic Broth, preheat oven to 400 F. Cut off the stem end of the garlic head, break it into cloves, and peel. Bake the garlic on an unoiled pie plate for 15 to 20 minutes, until golden but not browned. In a blender on high speed, puree the roasted garlic, miso and water until smooth. Combine with the stock and gently heat.

Start the Orzo & Pea Soup by adding the thyme to the warm garlic broth.

Meanwhile, in a separate pot of boiling water, cook the orzo until al dente, about 5 minutes. Drain. Add the orzo and peas to the broth. Simmer until the peas are tender but still bright green, about 1 minute.

Serve hot, topped with grated cheese if you wish. Serves 4-6.

Children's Corner

Oh, to Be..

"Oh, to be an eagle
And to swoop down from a peak
With the golden sunlight flashing
From the fierce hook of my beak.

"Oh, to be an eagle
And to terrify the sky
With a beat of wings like thunder
And a wild, barbaric cry.

"Oh...But why keep dreaming?
I must learn to be myself."
Said the rubber duckling sadly
On its soapy bathroom shelf.

--Richard Edwards

Prayer for Earth

Last night
an owl
called from the hill.
Coyotes howled.
A deer stood still
nibbling at bushes far away.
The moon shone silver.
Let this stay.

Today
two noisy crows
flew by,
their shadows pasted to the sky.
The sun broke out
through clouds of gray.
An iris opened.
Let this stay.

--Myra Cohn Livingston

New Year Thoughts Through Poetry

The Dream Keeper

Bring me all of your dreams,
You dreamers,
Bring me all of your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue-cloud-cloth
Away from the too-rough fingers
Of the world.

--Langston Hughes
Family Centre Programs

Check our website for full program descriptions: http://web.uvic.ca/family-centre/

Family Centre Cooking Co-operative
Every third Monday of the month from 7 pm. Join a group of adults to share the cost and effort of making healthy, freezable meals for their families. We will work toward completing at least four meals per participant during each co-operative meeting. Some menu ideas are casseroles (fruit, jams, jellies, vegetables), vegetarian or meat burritos, lasagna, curries. Other ideas and suggestions are welcome!

It will be about a 3 hour time commitment, and cost between $12-20 per meeting (depends on the cost of menu items).

You will be taking home at least four freezeable meals that will feed a family of 4-6 people. Pre-registration for this program is necessary to ensure adequate supplies. Email or phone the Family Centre to register and indicate your menu preference. Interested people can contact the Family Centre or email Shannon at jonesesan@hotmail.com.

Storytime & Playgroup
Tuesdays, 10am to 12pm.

International Community Kitchen
Tuesdays 4 to 6pm. Tuesday evenings at the Family Centre is a time for international students and their families to gather and spend time cooking and eating together. Every week it is a new recipe from a different country which means we all get to learn about each others cultures and flavours! Please stop in and join us or if you would like, phone ahead to the Family Centre with your recipe ideas.

Playgroup
Wednesdays, 10am to 12pm.

Breakfast Club
Wednesdays & Fridays, 7:30 to 9am. Stop in on your way to school or work for a warm breakfast and lively conversation.

After-School Club
Thursdays, 4 to 5pm.

Knitting Night
Second & Fourth Friday, 7 to 9pm. (Contact Family Centre for January dates.) Calling all knitters and handworkers! Come and chat and work on projects in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. Also open to people with little or no knitting experience. This group will show you all you need to know to get started on a project! Just come on by the Family Centre.

Ladies’ Running Group
Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:30am. We meet outside the Family Centre and jog for 25 - 45 minutes. All ages and fitness levels welcome. Please contact Heather at 384-1396 if you have any questions. Walkers welcome! If you aren’t a runner but would like to meet and walk at the same time as the runners please call Sam at 477-9624.

Super Saturday Mornings
Saturdays, 9:30 to 11am. Calling all school-aged kids! Lisa Kishkan joins us on Saturday mornings to offer a program for school-age children. She will be presenting a fun, educational activity each week exploring a variety of topics. Everything from arts and crafts to science and nature will be experimented with!

Parents please note: This program is designed for school-aged children ONLY! It is NOT a parent participation program - children are asked to attend on their own. Parents please use discretion as to your child's readiness to attend this type of program. If you have questions please contact the Family Centre.

Community Programs

Swan Lake Event
Press Conference With Anna, Saturday, Jan 28, 2006
Be a member of the "Press Conference" and interview Ms. Anna Hummingbird, the smallest bird living in Victoria. Find out how these birds feed, survive the winter and fly better than a helicopter. Displays and crafts for ages 5 and up. Drop-in program, donations appreciated.

PLACE: Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Road, 1 - 3 p.m.

Social Justice Film Series & Public Dialogues
Monday January 16, 2006, film begins at 7pm (Limited seating so get there early!) at the Graduate Student Lounge (IQ Bistro)
FREE ADMISSION and FREE POPCORN!

This film series presents The Fourth World War (Big Noise Films, 2004): Shot on the frontlines of struggles spanning five continents, this film is the untold human story of grassroots people who resist being annihilated in the current global conflict. After the 75-minute screening, there will be guest speakers and audience dialogue.

News & Views Needs Your Contributions!
We welcome submissions of all kinds -- send us your thoughts, opinions, suggestions, stories, poems, recipes, tips or ideas! The email is fcnews@uvic.ca, or you can drop your submission off in the envelope on the board outside the Family Centre.

DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER: Jan 20