

International Bulldawg Newsletter

February 2007

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Welcome from the Center

Aretha Jones – Cook Associate Dean and Director

Since 1926, in the United States of America, we have observed National African American History Month. It is also known as "Black History Month". Each year there is a national theme associated with the month of February. The theme for national Black History Month 2007 is "From Slavery to Freedom: Africans in the Americas". The Holmes Cultural Diversity Center has planned several programs centered around the national theme. We would like to have our international students participate in as many of these programs and events as possible. This is a great opportunity to learn about African culture, African Americans and their universal connections. Come join us in celebrating Black History Month. We are looking forward to learning and sharing with you!

Spring Festival

Written by Yuan Xue

The Spring Festival is the most important festival for the Chinese people and is when all family members get together, just like Christmas in the West. It falls on the first day of the 1st lunar month, often one month later than the Gregorian calendar. It originated in the Shang Dynasty (1600 BC- 1100 BC) from the people's sacrifice to gods and ancestors at the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one.

Traditionally, before the New Year comes, people completely clean the indoors and outdoors of their homes, clothes, bedclothes as well as all their utensils. Then people begin decorating their rooms featuring an atmosphere of rejoicing and festivity. All the door panels will be pasted with Spring Festival couplets, highlighting Chinese calligraphy with black characters on red paper. The content varies from house owners' wishes for a bright future to good luck for the New Year. Also, pictures of the god of doors and wealth will be posted on front doors to ward off evil spirits and welcome peace and abundance.

People attach great importance to Spring Festival Eve. At that time, all family members eat a luxurious meal together. In recent years, the Spring Festival party broadcast on China Central Television Station (CCTV) is essential entertainment for the Chinese both at home and abroad. According to custom, each family will stay up to see the New Year in.

On New Year' day, people extend greetings to their parents and friends. Then each child will get money as a New Year gift, wrapped up in red paper. People in northern China will eat jiaozi, or dumplings, for breakfast, as they think "jiaozi" in sound means "bidding farewell to the old and ushering in the new". Southern Chinese eat niangao, New Year cake made of glutinous rice flour. As a homophone, niangao means "higher and higher, one year after another."



Visiting students from China, South Korea and Japan

Contributed by Molly Watkins

In January and February of this year, the English as a Second Language Center is hosting international students from universities in three different countries for short-term American Language and Culture programs. Students from South Korea's Catholic University of Daegu, Japan's Meisei University,

Special Days for the Month

February 2007						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

- Feb. 4 Sri Lanka Independence Day**
- Feb. 14 Valentine's Day**
- Feb. 15 Chinese New Year Presentation**
- Feb. 16 Chinese New Year (Spring Festival)**
- Feb. 16 Lithuania Independence Day**
- Feb. 17 International Valentine Dance Party**
- Feb. 23 International Movie**
- Feb. 24 Estonia Independence Day**
- Feb. 27 Dominican Republic Independence Day**
- Feb. 28 African Night**

English as a Second Language Students



and China's Beijing Institute of Technology are spending four weeks living and studying on the Mississippi State University campus while participating in various cultural activities. While visiting the campus, students attend 20 hours of language classes per week in order to improve their English language skills. In order to supplement the classes, all of the students receive American student conversation partners. These MSU student volunteers spend time each week talking with the international students and introducing these students to more informal aspects of American culture." An interesting part of the program is blending American students, short-term international students, and students who have been studying at the ESL Center year-round. The diversity that these groups bring to MSU is exciting," said Jason Messina, American Language and Culture Programs Coordinator. Students also get the opportunity to participate in a variety of cultural activities. Students travel to Atlanta, Memphis, Tupelo, and Nashville for cultural trips, attend theatrical events, celebrate holidays like Valentine's Day and the Chinese and Korean New Years, and go to basketball games. Experiencing American culture is an essential part of the program. "We've been running short-term American Language and Culture programs for over 20 years," explained Molly Watkins, manager of International Education. "We are excited to share Mississippi State University with students from around the world."



Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, officially the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Sinhalese: ශ්‍රී ලංකාව) is an island nation in South Asia, located about 31 kilometers (18½ mi) off the southern coast of India. It is often popularly referred to as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean. It is home to more than 20 million people. A strategic naval link between West Asia and South East Asia, Sri Lanka has been a centre of Buddhist religion and culture from ancient times, though a fifth of the population follow other faiths - notably Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Sinhalese people form a majority of the population (74%). Famous for the production and export of tea, coffee, rubber and coconuts, Sri Lanka also boasts a progressive and modern industrial economy. The natural beauty of Sri Lanka's tropical forests, beaches and landscape, and rich cultural heritage make it a worldwide famous tourism destination. (*wikipedia*)



Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic, (Spanish: República Dominicana, IPA [reˈpuβlika dominiˈkana]) is a country located on the eastern two-thirds of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, bordering Haiti. Hispaniola is the second-largest of the Greater Antilles islands, and lies west of Puerto Rico and east of Cuba and Jamaica. A legacy of unsettled, mostly non-representative rule lasted for much of the 20th century; the move towards representative democracy has improved vastly since the death of military dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in 1961. Dominicans sometimes refer to their country as Quisqueya, a name for Hispaniola used by indigenous Taíno people meaning "high land", referring to the highest portion of the Hispaniola Island. The Dominican Republic is not to be confused with Dominica, another Caribbean country. (*wikipedia*).



Estonia

Estonia (older English spelling Esthonia), officially the Republic of Estonia (Estonian: Eesti or Eesti Vabariik), is a country in Northern Europe. Estonia has land borders to the south with Latvia and Russia to the east. It is separated from Finland in the north by the narrow Gulf of Finland and from Sweden in the west by the Baltic Sea. Estonia has been a member of the European Union since May 1, 2004 and of the NATO since March 29, 2004. Along with Finnish, Hungarian and Maltese, Estonian is one of the few official languages of the European Union that is not of Indo-European origin. (*wikipedia*).

Events and Announcements

Valentines Day- Feb 14

Saint Valentine's Day falls on February 14. It is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each other; sending Valentine's cards, candy, or Donations to Charities, often anonymously. It is very common to present flowers on Valentine's Day. The holiday is named after two men, both Christian martyrs named Valentine. The day became associated with romantic love in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished.

Chinese New Year Presentation – Feb. 15

The association of Chinese Students and Scholars is presenting a historical perspective on the Chinese New Year Celebration. 2007 is the year of the pig. Program starts at 1:00pm at the Library Auditorium. Everyone is invited to join.

Chinese New Year Dinner and Cultural Show – Feb. 16

The Association of Chinese Students and Scholars present a cultural night filled with music and dances from China. The show will be followed by a delicious authentic Chinese meal. The program will be held at the Wise Center Auditorium from 6:30 pm – 10:00 pm on Friday. All are welcome to attend.

Valentines dance – Feb. 17

Memorial Hall from 7:00pm – 10:00 pm on Saturday, Feb. 17. The ESL Center, World Neighbors Association, Student Association, Papa Johns and the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center are sponsoring this program. Admission is free for everyone. Join us for an evening of dance, fun and friendship.

International Movie – Feb. 23

To commemorate the Chinese New Year HCDC will show a Chinese Movie. This will be at the McCool Auditorium from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Admission is free and open to all.

African Night – Feb. 28

The African Student Association in commemoration of Black History Month is putting up their first African night on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at the Palmeiro Center, Griffis Hall from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm. An African cultural show will be presented followed by an African meal. African Associations from the University of Memphis and the University of Mississippi will also be participating in the show. Please join the students to learn more about the unique African culture and continent. Admission is free and open to all.



Lithuania

Lithuania, officially the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuanian: Lietuva; official — Lietuvos Respublika), is a country in northern Europe. The largest of the three Baltic States situated along the Baltic Sea, it shares borders with Latvia to the north, Belarus to the southeast, Poland and the Russian exclave of the Kaliningrad Oblast to the southwest. Lithuania has been a member state of the European Union since May 1, 2004. (*wikipedia*).

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