



# THE SMILING LIONS OF 4-C4

Editor: Lion Linda Lopez-Wood

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## DISTRICT GOVERNORS MESSAGE

Vol. 1, Issue 5, NOV 2005

My fellow Lions,

We are approaching a wonderful season in which our District is very fortunate to see a sampling of the world in Holiday mode. From now through February, the multicultural aspects of 4-c4 will be displayed in all their finery and with the many aspects of the faiths they represent.

Our District is very unique as we are practically a small United Nations in and of ourselves. We have several Filipino based clubs that represent many different areas of the Philippines and countries in the Pacific Rim. We have two African American Clubs, we have 3 Latin based clubs that represent several different areas of the Hispanic community, all the way down to Central America. We have a very large and Chinese club, a very active Japanese club and a

very active LGBT club. We have 2 Italian based clubs, a New Century and 5 Leos (3 of which are primarily Chinese) clubs. The rest of our clubs are as pretty well mixed as the community itself is. We have many traditions that are being celebrated, including Hindu, Muslim, Israeli, and Kwanzaa during this season in our District. You will find many similarities in all of the practices of the different cultures and religions. Each one stresses thankfulness and community responsibility for our fellow human being on this planet. Each one strives for Peace on Earth.

As you go through the various articles about the different cultures that make up our district, please remember that as a Lion we are a large world wide organization. We are very fortunate to have the educational opportunity in



our District to know so much of the people of the world and their cultures and mores. Let us take this time to celebrate our unity through our diversity in this wonderful season of giving and joy.

Now on to another subject that is near and dear to my heart. In just two weeks, on December 3rd, we will have our **second** District-Wide Cabinet

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## VICE DISTRICT GOVERNOR AL RUSSELL MESSAGE



VDG AL AND LOVELY WIFE, LORETTA RUSSELL

At the Holidays, we often see more of our families. This month, I want to discuss families.

In Lions, there are many who choose to serve. It seems to run across generations, as in the case of my family as well as the family of our District Governor Eugene Chan. The Passion to Serve has been passed down from one generation to the next.

It is wonderful to see husband and wife teams join as new members. We certainly do not have to look far to see husband/wife teams in Lionism. It was our very own PDG Power Couple, Rudy and Elma Loreda, who recruited the San Mateo Charter President and

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# District Governor message continued from page 1

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Meeting and many great and wonderful things are going on. You will be hearing about the major projects in each club and the successful plans for the future of the District. We have a great report on Convention coming up from PDG Art Pignati. Raffle prizes for the Dec. 3rd Meeting will include 1ct Diamond Earrings, art work, a sports jersey, a bay cruise and much more! It's never been so much and the food will be served on real china with real silverware. Lion Helen is spoiling us!

However, please be sure your reservations are in to her in advance. Not only will it cost more at the door, but there **may not be any** extra breakfast and lunches to sell.

There will be some surprises at lunch as well. One of them will be that if you bring your 49'er game ticket with you to the District-wide Cabinet Meeting, we will be drawing the raffle

prizes for the Lions Clubs Day at the 49'ers. There are some great prizes here as well. This way you will not have to carry them through the fabulous Tail Gate Party we are having for 4-C4! Lion Mike Simonini is in charge of this. Then we will all go into the game and meet up with other Lions from all of the 7 other Lions Districts. 1500 Lions and their guests will be there on Sunday, December 4th to cheer the team on. Maybe every time they score we can do a great big ROAR and get some Lion luck for them!

If you do not have your tickets for the great ball game, please either call your club president to see if he or she still have any left, or call Lion Emil Kantola, Cabinet Secretary, at 650-892-0685. For \$40 you not only get into the game, you get the raffle which will have team wear, football jewelry for men and ladies, and special 49'er collectibles. The Tailgate

Party is another \$4.90—Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Chips, Nachos, Sodas, Water, Beer, Sweet Cakes—but no Turnovers! (10:30 AM to 12:30 PM) Between Watchtower and Gate E! Season Ticket Holders be sure to buy into the Tailgate Party, and Party with your fellow LIONS!

I know that I will see many of you during the day on Saturday and then again on Saturday night at the Foster City Lions Annual Abalone Dinner benefit for Lions Eye Foundation. This is always a very festive affair and if you have not bought your tickets yet, please contact either Lion Don Stanaway or Lion Roger as soon as possible. Yours in Lionism,

*Lion Eugene Chan,*  
*District Governor 4-C4*  
*2005-2006*

## VICE DISTRICT GOVERNOR MESSAGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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**Board Member Vhangeee and Nick Mesa** In fact the San Mateo Lions Club started with five couples as Charter Members.

We need to ask ourselves if there are those in our families who would be willing to join us in service to others, if only we would ask. Teaching our children and grandchildren the joy of serving others is a valuable gift to give during this season. I would encourage you to take members of your families along as you work in toy drives and other projects.

This is also a great time to invite guests to whom you have been talk-

ing about Lions and the many programs we do during the year. Prospective members become new Lions when we introduce them to Community Service opportunities.

Loretta and I wish you the joys of this Holiday Season found in every faith and tradition.

Happy Holidays!

*VDG Al Russell*

**Happy Holidays**





## TACOMA'S STORY BY LION GAIL WOOD

Ever since I became a Lion I have known about Canine Companions for Independence. This MD 4 Project was formed in 1983 and PDG Lion George Habeeb serves as its Trustee. My club regularly contributed to this organization, which trains and donates assistance dogs to the disabled and handicapped. What I didn't realize was that these dogs are also used in therapy. Then I met Tacoma.

In August of this year I was astounded to find myself in Eden Hospital in Castro Valley just coming out of a four day coma after being rushed to the ER with a severe case of pneumonia. As soon as I was able to walk again I was transferred to Laurel Grove Rehab right next door for breathing therapy so I could get back on my feet and go home. Needless to say, I was not in the best shape. I was groggy and weak and suffering from some of the symptoms of a stroke (although I hadn't actually had a stroke). One of my favorite Doctors called me "goofy", but he was right. He was making me see the reality of my physical and mental condition. That's another story.

Right after breakfast on my first Monday morning at Laurel Grove, three therapists descended on me for "intake" and started asking me all sorts of questions. I did my best. Then one of them, Barbara, asked me if I liked animals - dogs in particular. I said, "Sure, I've got a little red devil at home named Minnie Pearl and I really miss her". "Well" she said, "you're



**Lion Gail Wood, Canine Companion Pet Therapist Tacoma and her handler, Barbara Waldstreicher at Laurel Grove Rehabilitation Hospital, Castro Valley, CA.**

really going to enjoy Tacoma". "Who is that?" I said. "You'll see this afternoon in our therapy session".

That afternoon I slowly made my way to the Physical Therapy Gym on my walker, dragging my oxygen behind me and huffed and puffed my way to a chair. Barbara came over to me and said "Gail, this is Tacoma". I looked down into a pair of shiny dark brown eyes. She is a beautiful little black Labrador. "Hello, Tacoma". She looked at me, sniffed and laid her head in my lap. "Barbara, I feel better already!" I said. "That's what she does best. She makes you feel better, no matter what your condition is. This rehab center deals with all types of patients. Some are recovering from strokes, some, like

you, from respiratory disease, and some from surgery. Many are exhausted, in pain and depressed. She ALWAYS makes you feel better, just by being there." explained Barbara. And it was true. That afternoon, as all of us were put through our paces, Tacoma visited around at Barbara's commands and helped us out.

When Lion Linda visited me the next day, I made sure that it was at a time when Barbara and Tacoma would still be there. Sure enough, Linda and Tacoma hit it right off and she had to call Lion George on her cell phone to tell him all about it. We were visiting with one of "his dogs". Being

*(Continued on page 20)*



## CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas is a Holiday celebrated by Christians to honor the birth of Jesus Christ. Many dispute the validity of the date as the actual census referred to in the Bible occurred in what is now known as our August. It is believed, the early church merged the date the pagan ritual of the winter solstice in order to bring the early converts more easily into the church and begin to wean the away from pagan religious practices and more fully into Christianity. It was felt by the early church leaders that the symbolism of the date and celebration of the birth, which at that time no one was really sure of anyway, was more important. After all the wine and the wafer were symbolic of the body and blood of Christ, shouldn't a day be any less important in symbolic reference?

### Christmas in United States of America

Santa Claus was born in US in the 1860's he was named this as he had a white beard and a belly, so he was named Santa Claus as this was the Dutch word for St Nicholas, **Sintaklaas**. Although the Dutch had bought him with them in the 17th century, he did not become an important person at Christmas until the Novelist Washington Irving put him in a novel that he wrote in 1809. This first Santa Claus was still known as St. Nicholas, he did smoke a pipe, and fly around in a wagon without any reindeer, but he did not have his red suit or live at the North Pole, he did however bring presents to children every year. In 1863 He was given the name Santa Claus and bore the red suit, pipe, and his reindeer and sleigh. Now Christmas celebrations vary greatly between regions of the United States, because of the variety of nationalities which have settled in it. In Pennsylvania, the Moravians build a landscape, called a **putz** - under the Christmas tree, while in the same state the Germans are given gifts by Belsnickle, who taps them with his switch if they have misbehaved. Early European settlers brought many traditions to the United States. Many settled in the early days in the South, these settlers would send Christmas greetings



to their distant neighbors by shooting firearms and letting off fireworks. In Hawaii this practice is still in use as under the sunny skies, Santa Claus arrives by boat and Christmas dinner is eaten outdoors.

In Alaska, a star on a pole is taken from door to door, followed by Herod's Men, who try to capture the star. Colonial doorways are often decorated with pineapple, a symbol of hospitality. The boys and girls with lanterns on poles carry a large figure of a star from door to door. They sing carols and are invited in for supper.

In Washington D.C., a huge, spectacular tree is lit ceremoniously when the President presses a button and turns on the tree's lights.

In Boston, carol singing festivities are famous. The singers are accompanied by hand bells.

In Philadelphia, a procession called a **nummers parade** runs for a whole day with bands, dancers and people in fancy dress.

In Arizona, the Mexican ritual called **Las Posadas** is kept up. This is a ritual procession and play representing the search of Mary and Joseph for a room at the inn. Families play the parts and visit each other's houses enacting and re-enacting the drama and, at the same time, having a look at each family's crib. In parts of New Mexico, people place lighted candles in paper bags filled with sand on streets and rooftops to light the way for the Christ Child.

In Colorado, an enormous star is placed on the mountain, it can be seen for many kilometers around, while in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a star is lit in early

December.

In Hawaii, Christmas starts with the coming of the **Christmas Tree Ship**, which is a ship bringing a great load of Christmas fare. Santa Claus also arrives by boat.

In America the traditional Christmas dinner is roast turkey with vegetables and sauces. For dessert it is rich, fruity Christmas pudding with brandy sauce. Mince pies, pastry cases filled with a mixture of chopped dried fruit. For many, however, dinner is goose, duck or ham served with cranberry sauce, then plum pudding or pumpkin pie followed by nuts and fruit. The majority of Americans celebrate Christmas with the exchange of gifts and greetings and with family visits. For many, the day begins on Christmas Eve with the Midnight Mass or other religious services. At Christmas it snows in many states, so dinner is usually eaten indoors.

American homes are decorated with holly, mistletoe and branches of trees, most have a Christmas tree hung with electric lights, tinsel, baubles, and strings of popcorn and candy canes.

Polish Americans on Christmas Eve spread hay on their kitchen floor and under the tablecloth to remind them of a stable and a manger. When they make up the table for dinner two extra places are set up for Mary and the Christ Child in case they should knock at the door to ask for shelter.

There are two homes for Santa Claus in the United States one is in Torrington, Connecticut, where Santa and his helpers give out presents. The other home is in Wilmington, New York, where a village for Santa and his reindeer is located.

### Christmas in Mexico

Mexicans share many traditions with the Spanish. Their main Christmas celebration is called **La Posada**, which is a religious pro-

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# CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD CONTINUED

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cession that reenacts the search for shelter by Joseph and Mary before the birth of Jesus. During the procession, the celebrants go from house to house carrying the images of Mary and Joseph looking for shelter.

Santa Claus is not predominant, but the bright red suit is represented in the traditional flower of the season. This flower is the **poinsettia**, which has a brilliant red star-shaped bloom. It is believed that a young boy walking to the church to see the nativity scene showing the birth of Jesus had realized on the way that he had no gift to offer the Christ child so he gathered up some plain green branches as he walked in he was laughed at but upon placing the branches near the manger they started to bloom a bright red **poinsettia** flower on each branch.

The Mexican children receive gifts. On Christmas day they are blindfolded and taken to try and break a decorated clay **piñata** that dangles and swings at the end of a rope. Once the piñata has been broken, the children clammer to recover the candy that was inside the piñata. Those children who have been good also on January 6th receive a gift from the **Three Wise Men**.

Mexicans attend a midnight mass service which is called **la misa del gallo** or "the rooster's mass," and at the mass they sing lullabies to Jesus

## Christmas in China

The Christian children of China decorate trees with colorful ornaments. These ornaments are made from paper in the shapes of flowers, chains and lanterns. They also hang muslin stockings hoping that **Christmas Old Man** will fill them with gifts and treats.

The Chinese Christmas trees are called "**Trees of Light**." Santa Claus is called **Dun Che Lao Ren** which means "Christmas Old Man."

The non-Christian Chinese call this season the **Spring Festival** and celebrate with many festivities that include delicious meals and pay respects to their ancestors. The children are the main focus of these celebrations, they receive

new clothes and toys, eat delectable food and watch firecrackers displays.

## Christmas in the Holy Land

Christmas in the Holy Land where Christ is believed to have been born is often full of travelers come to celebrate Christmas. Here in a grotto there is a 14-pointed Silver Star on the floor is where the birthplace is supposed to have been. There are three Christmas Eves in the Holy Land. One on the 24th December celebrated by the Protestant and Catholic Churches. The second for the Greek Orthodox, Coptic (Egyptian) and Syrian churches. The third is the Armenian Church. At times, all three services are going on at the same time, but, in different parts of the church, as well as in different languages. For lunch they eat turkey, spiced with pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg and stuffed with rice, meat, pine nuts and almonds.

Early in the evening, members of the Protestant church groups would go around singing carols. On Christmas morning children would open their presents before breakfast. After breakfast Protestant people would go to church, and visit friends to wish them a happy Christmas.

The Catholic Church priests would come a bless water from which all members of the family would take a sip.

The member of the Greek Orthodox Church Epiphany is very important. They have a special church service at which a cross was dipped into water to bless it. People would take the water home with them drink three sips before eating anything.

## Christmas in Bethlehem

In Bethlehem the town where Jesus is said to have been born is the site of the **Church of the Nativity**, which is ablaze with flags and decorations on every Christmas. On Christmas Eve natives and visitors alike crowd the church's doorways and stand on the roof to watch for the dramatic annual procession. Galloping horsemen and police mounted on Arabian horses lead the parade. They

are followed by solitary horseman carrying a cross and sitting astride a coal-black steed, then comes the churchmen and government officials. The procession solemnly enters the doors and places an ancient effigy of the Holy Child in the Church. Deep winding stairs lead to a grotto where visitors find a silver star marking the site of the birth of Jesus.

## Christmas in India

Christians in India decorate banana or mango trees. They also light small oil-burning lamps as Christmas decorations and fill their churches with red flowers. They give presents to family members and baksheesh, or charity, to the poor people.

In India, the **poinsettia** is in flower and so the churches are decorated with this brilliant bloom for the Christmas Midnight Mass.

In South India, Christians put small clay lamps on the rooftops and walls of their houses at Christmas, just as the Hindus do during their festival called **Diwali**.

## Christmas in Ireland

Christmas in Ireland lasts from Christmas Eve to the feast of the Epiphany on January 6, which is referred to **Little Christmas**. Ireland's Christmas is more religious than a time of fun.

Lighted candles are placed in windows on Christmas Eve, as a guide that Joseph and Mary might be looking for shelter. The candles are usually red in color, and decorated with sprigs of holly.

Irish women bake a **seed cake** for each person in the house. They also make three puddings, one for each day of the **Epiphany** such as **Christmas, New Year's Day** and the **Twelfth Night**. After the Christmas evening meal, bread and milk are left out and the door unlatched as a symbol of hospitality.

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## DIWALI



Diwali is a five day **Hindu** festival which occurs on the fifteenth day of Kartika. Diwali means "rows of lighted lamps" and the celebration is often referred to as the Festival of Lights. During this time, homes are thoroughly cleaned and windows are opened to welcome **Laksmi**, goddess of wealth. Candles and lamps are lit as a greeting to **Laksmi**. Gifts are exchanged and festive meals are prepared during Diwali. The celebration means as much to Hindus as Christmas does to Christians.

### The Origin of Diwali

The ancient story of how Diwali evolved into such a widely celebrated festival is different in various regions and states of India. In the north, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar and the surrounding areas, Diwali is the day when **King Rama's** coronation was celebrated in **Ayodhya** after his epic war with **Ravana**, the demon king of Lanka. By order of the royal families of Ayodhya and Mithila, the kingdom of which Sita was princess, the cities and far-flung boundaries of these kingdoms were lit up with rows of lamps, glittering on dark nights to **welcome home the divine King Rama and his Queen Sita after 14 years of exile**, ending with an across-the-seas war in which the whole of the kingdom of Lanka was destroyed.

### How Diwali is celebrated all across India

#### The first day : Dhana Teras

The first day of Diwali is **Dhanatrayodashi** or **Dhanteras**. Doorways are hung with **torans of mango leaves** and **marigolds**. **Rangolis** are drawn with different colored powders to welcome guests. The traditional motifs are often linked with auspicious symbols of good luck. **Oil diyas** are arranged in and around the house. Because of these flickering lamps, the festival has acquired its name : **Dipawali** or **Diwali** meaning 'a rows of lamps'. On this day, people buy

something for the house or some jewellery for the women of the house. It is auspicious to be buy something metallic, esp silver.

#### The second day : Kali Chaudas

The next day or **Kali Chaudas** is also called **Chhoti Diwali**.

#### The third day : Diwali

On the dark new moon night, the entrances to all homes are lit up and decorated with rangoli patterns to welcome **Lakshmi**, the radiant consort of **Vishnu** and the **goddess of wealth and lustre**. **Lakshmi Puja** is performed on this day. Diwali is the last day of financial year in traditional Hindu business and businessmen perform **Chopda Pujan** on this day on the new books of accounts.

The day ends with a mega cracker bursting sessions. For 5-6 hours, every family burns fire **crackers** worth thousands of rupees. Popular fire crackers are sparkling pots, bombs, rockets etc.

#### The fourth day : New Year day or Bestavarsh

The day after the **Lakshmi Puja**, most families celebrate the new year by dressing in new clothes, wearing jewellery and visiting family members and business colleagues to give them sweets, dry fruits and gifts. Among the business communities of **Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh** and **Maharashtra**, Diwali is the festival when the new business year begins. All business establishments and families perform **minaret Pujan** or veneration of their books. Stock brokers do matureate trading or symbolic auspicious business deals to Diwali : Time to shop or start new ventures } Diwali, one of the longest

festivals in the Hindu year, is a time when everything in India comes to a standstill except family life, feasting and shopping. Diwali is considered auspicious for shopping, inaugurations of new homes, business deals or for starting any new ventures and projects.

### Diwali in Krishna Temples

In many **Krishna temples**, Diwali is celebrated as a day of feeding and venerating cows. In Nathdwar, for instance, there is a day-long feast for cattle called **Annakoot**. The reason for this special place given to the cow lies deep in the religious consciousness of Indians. The sacredness of the cow goes back to the myth of the **churning of the cosmic ocean by the gods**. Of the 14 'jewels' which the ocean gave to the gods, **Kamadhenu**, the celestial cow, was one. She was venerated as the mother of the universe. The celestial cow is also called **Surabhi** or **Nandini**, the giver of joy and plenty. A cow is the constant companion of **Krishna**.

In the south, Diwali has two more legends connected with it. The first legend again concerns the victory of good over evil. **Narakasura** the demon of hell, challenged Krishna to battle. After a fierce fight lasting two days, the demon was killed at dawn on **Narakachaturdashi**. To commemorate this event, people in peninsular India wake before sunrise and make imitation blood by mixing kumkum or vermilion with oil. After crushing underfoot a bitter fruit as a symbol of the demon, they apply the 'blood' triumphantly on their foreheads. They then have ritual oil baths, anointing themselves with sandalwood paste. Visits to temples for prayers are followed by large family breakfasts of fruits and a variety of sweets. The second legend is about **King Bali**, the benevolent demon king of the netherworld. He was so powerful that he became a threat to the power of celestial deities and their

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## Jewish Holidays this Season

### Rosh Hashanah is Jewish New Year

*Feast of the Trumpets Remembers World's Creation*

by David Johnson



On Monday night, Oct. 3, 2005, Jews will begin celebrating one of their most important religious holidays, Rosh Hashanah. It remembers the creation of the world. In He-

brew, Rosh Hashanah means the "head of the year." It is also called the Feast of the Trumpets. The blowing of a ram's horn, a shofar, proclaims Rosh Hashanah, and summons Jews to religious services. Oct. 3 marks the beginning of the year 5766 and the month of Tishri.

Jews used the ram's horn as a trumpet in Biblical times to announce the new moon, holidays, and war. Today, a variety of horns are used, including curved antelope horns.

#### Putting your spiritual house in order

While it does have its festive side, Rosh Hashanah is not one big party, as the New Year's celebrations on Dec. 31 tend to be. Rosh Hashanah is a time for personal introspection and prayer.

Jews may also visit graves. It is thought that the prayers or good wishes of the dead can help the living. By wishing each other well

and sending cards, people let friends know what happened in the past year and what plans lie ahead. Christmas cards and get-togethers fill a similar role for Christians.

Rosh Hashanah is part of a process of spiritual growth. The Hebrew month preceding it, Elul, is a time for charity, tzedakah. Rosh Hashanah falls on the first and second days of the seventh month, Tishri.

#### Food for thought

Traditional Jewish foods accompany Rosh Hashanah. Typically, a blessing will be said over two loaves of bread, known as challah. The round shape symbolizes a crown, a reminder of the kingship of God. Challah also stands for the circle of life, and the hope that our lives endure without end.

### DIWALI CONTINUED

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kingdoms. Intimidated by his expanding empire and taking advantage of his well-known generosity, they sent Vishnu as the dwarf mendicant Vamana, to dilute Bali's power. Vamana shrewdly asked

#### Diwali in South India

In the south, Diwali has two more legends connected with it. The first legend again concerns the victory of good over evil. Narakasura the demon of hell, challenged Krishna to battle. After a fierce fight lasting two days, the demon was killed at dawn on Narakachaturdashi. To commemorate this event, people in peninsular India wake before sunrise and make imitation blood by mixing kumkum or vermilion with oil. After crushing underfoot a bitter fruit as a symbol of the demon, they apply the 'blood' triumphantly on their foreheads. They then have ritual oil baths, anointing themselves with sandalwood paste. Visits to temples for prayers are followed by large family breakfasts of fruits and a variety of sweets. The second legend is about

King Bali, the benevolent demon king of the netherworld. He was so powerful that he became a threat to the power of celestial deities and their kingdoms. Intimidated by his expanding empire and taking advantage of his well-known generosity, they sent Vishnu as the dwarf mendicant Vamana, to dilute Bali's power. Vamana shrewdly asked the king for land that would cover three steps as he walked. The king happily granted this gift. Having tricked Bali, Vishnu revealed himself in the full glory of his godhood. He covered the heaven in his first step and the earth in his second. Realizing that he was pitted against the mighty Vishnu, Bali surrendered and offered his own head inviting Vishnu to step on it. Vishnu pushed him into the nether world with his foot. In return Vishnu gave him the lamp of knowledge to light up the dark underworld. He also gave him a blessing that he would return to his people once a year to light millions of lamps from this one lamp so that on the dark new moon light of Diwali, the blinding darkness

of ignorance, greed, jealousy, lust, anger ego, and laziness would be dispelled and the radiance of knowledge, wisdom and friendship prevail. Each year on Diwali day, even today, one lamp lights another and like a flame burning steadily on a windless night, brings a message of peace and harmony to the world.

#### Diwali : Time to rejoice and enjoy

Whatever may be the fables and legends behind the celebrations of Diwali, all people exchange sweets, wear new clothes and buy jewelry at this festive time. Card parties are held in many homes. Diwali, like Christmas, has become commercialized as the biggest annual consumer spree because every family shops for sweets, gifts and fireworks. However, in all this frenzy of shopping and eating, the steady, burning lamp is a constant symbol of an illuminated mind <>





# CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD CONTINUED

(Continued from page 6)

**St Stephen's Day**, the day after Christmas, is almost as important, with football matches and meetings going on. For children, the **Wren Boys Procession** is their big event. Boys go from door to door with a fake wren on a stick, singing, with violins, accordions, harmonicas and horns to accompany them. The reason for the ceremony is to ask for money 'for the starving wren', that is, for their own pockets.

Children often put out Christmas sacks instead of stockings. It is tradition to leave mince pies and a bottle of Guinness out as a snack for Santa.

Many Biblical Scholars believe that Joseph of Arimathea, the man who gave Jesus his tomb, traveled to northern Europe, then known as Gaul, and to what we now know as Scotland and Ireland, setting up churches for the founding of the "new" religion of Christianity shortly after the death and resurrection of Christ.

## Christmas in Italy

The Christmas season in Italy goes for three weeks, starting 8 days before Christmas known as the **Novena**. During this period, children go from house to house reciting Christmas poems and singing.

In some parts shepherds bring musical instruments into the villages, play and sing Christmas songs.

In the week before Christmas children go from house to house dressed as shepherds, playing pipes, singing and reciting Christmas poems. They are given money to buy presents.

A strict fast is observed for 24 hours before Christmas Eve, and is followed by a celebration meal, in which a light Milanese cake called **panettone** features as well as chocolate.

Presents and empty boxes are drawn from the **Urn of Fate** - lucky dip, which always contains one gift per person. By twilight, candles are lighted around the family crib known as the **Presépio**, prayers are said, and children recite poems.

At noon on Christmas Day the pope gives his blessing to crowds gathered in



the huge Vatican square.

In Italy the children wait until Epiphany, January 6, for their presents. According to tradition, the presents are delivered by a kind ugly witch called **Befana** on a broomstick. It was said that she was told by the three kings that the baby Jesus was born; she was busy and delayed visiting the baby.

She missed the Star lost her way and has been flying around ever since, leaving presents at every house with children in case he is there. She slides down chimneys, and fills stockings and shoes with good things for good children and it is said leaves coal for children who are not so good.

### **Submitted by Michela Sacchi**

On Christmas Eve the dinner is called **cenone** which is a traditional dish of eel. Christmas lunch is **Tortellini in Brodo** which is filled pasta parcels in broth, also served is **cappone** which is boiled capon, or roasts are served in central Italy.

Another famous cake is **pandoro** which originated from Verona.

## Christmas in Japan

Only 1 per cent of Japanese people believe in Christ. Even so, most Japanese people decorate their stores and homes with evergreens during Christmas.

They enjoy giving each other gifts, and this is the part they celebrate.

They have a priest called **Hoteiosha** who acts like Santa Claus. He brings presents to each house and leaves them for the children. Some think he has eyes in the back of his head, so children try to behave like he is nearby.

Among the Christian Japanese Christ-

mas is not a day for the family. They do not have turkey or plum pudding, rather than that the day is spent doing nice things for others especially those who are sick in hospitals.

Christmas for those in Sunday schools is the happiest day of the year. On Christmas Eve or Christmas night, the children put on programs that last for hours, they sing, they recite and they put on a drama of the day Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

## Christmas in Latin America

Christmas in Latin America known as **Las Posadas**, **Navidad** and **Día de los Tres Reyes**. Throughout the season are a lot of bright flowers and brilliant nights. They celebrate with holiday foods, songs. Those songs and foods eaten are greatly influenced by the different indigenous people of the region but all share the strong Latin influence dating from the arrival of Roman Catholicism hundreds of year's ago. Christmas is very much a religious holiday centered around the age-old story of the **Nacimiento**, Christ's Child.

Other Latin American cultures are [Mexican Christmas](#) and [Venezuelan Christmas](#).

## Christmas in Nicaragua

Christmas begins officially on December 6 in Nicaragua, but actual activities begin on December 16 with the performance of the lodging difficulties of Mary and Joseph. The home where lodging is found, supplies wine and food. Every home contains a manger scene. From December 16 until Christmas Eve Mass, prayer is held each evening in the home, followed by refreshments and the singing of carols. After Christmas Eve Mass, the Christmas dinner is consumed with only the adults in attendance.



## CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD CONTINUED

(Continued from page 9)

Christmas cards are exchanged which are white and plain.

Christmas Day is celebrated with much fun and eating, fireworks and dancing. The main streets of the town and cities are decorated and have loud-speakers broadcasting Christmas carols.

### Christmas in Philippines

The only Asian nation in which Christianity is the religion chosen by the people. Christmas celebrations start nine days before Christmas with a mass known as **Misa de Gallo**. At this mass the story behind the birth of Christ is read from the Bible.

The **Panunuluyan** pageant is held each Eve. A couple is chosen to re-enact Joseph and Mary's search for shelter.

Mass is held hourly on Christmas Day so that everyone can attend. Religious services include **pastore**, or play, based on myth of the birth of the Christ Child. The pastore closes with a star from the upper part of the church sliding down a wire and coming to rest over the church's Nativity scene.

Christmas celebrations may have evolved from old tribal customs mixed with other influences. Serenading **cumbancheros**, or strolling minstrels, end their performances by singing **Mali-gayang Pasko** to the tune of "Happy Birthday

## KWANZAA *Honoring the values of ancient African cultures*

by Holly Hartma

[ [Principles of Kwanzaa](#) | [The Seven Symbols](#) ]

The year 2005 will see the 40th annual [Kwanzaa](#), the African American holiday celebrated from December 26 to January 1. It is estimated that some 18 million African Americans take part in Kwanzaa.

Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, nor is it meant to replace Christmas.



It was created by Dr. [Maulana "Ron" Karenga](#), a professor of Black Studies, in 1966. At this time of great social change for African Americans, Karenga sought to design a celebration that would honor the values of ancient African cultures and inspire African Americans who were working for progress.

Kwanzaa is based on the year-end harvest festivals that have taken place throughout [Africa](#) for thousands of years. The name comes from the [Swahili](#) phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits of the harvest." Karenga chose a phrase from Swahili because the language is used by various peoples throughout Africa.

### **The Seven Principles (Nguzo Saba)**

Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa honors a different principle. These principles are believed to have been key to building strong, productive families and communities in Africa. During Kwanzaa, celebrants greet each other with "Habari gani," or "What's the news?" The principles of Kwanzaa form the answers.

### **Colorful Celebrations**

Families gather for the great feast of karamu on December 31. Karamu may be held at a home, community center, or church. Celebrants enjoy traditional African dishes as well as those featuring ingredients Africans brought to the United States, such as sesame seeds (benne), peanuts (groundnuts), sweet potatoes, collard greens, and spicy sauces.

Especially at karamu, Kwanzaa is celebrated with red, black, and green. These three colors were important symbols in ancient Africa that gained new recognition through the efforts of Marcus Garvey's Black Nationalist movement. Green is for the fertile land of Africa; black is for the color of the people; and red is for the blood that is shed in the struggle for freedom.

### **The Seven Symbols**

Celebrants decorate with red, black, and green as well as African-style textiles and art. At the heart of Kwanzaa imagery, however, are the seven symbols.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



# BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS

Buddhism is a path of practice and spiritual development leading to Insight into the true nature of life. Buddhist practices such as meditation are means of changing oneself in order to develop the qualities of awareness, kindness, and wisdom. The experience developed within the Buddhist tradition over thousands of years has created an incomparable resource for all those who wish to follow a path - a path which ultimately culminates in Enlightenment or Buddhahood.

Because Buddhism does not include the idea of worshipping a creator God, some people do not see it as a religion in the normal, Western sense. The basic tenets of Buddhist teaching are straightforward and practical: nothing is fixed or permanent; actions have consequences; change is possible. Thus Buddhism addresses itself to all people irrespective of race, nationality, or gender. It teaches practical methods (such as meditation) which enable people to realize and utilize its teachings in order to transform their experience, to be fully responsible for



their lives and to develop the qualities of Wisdom and Compassion.

There are around 350 million Buddhists and a growing number of them are Westerners. They follow many different forms of Buddhism, but all traditions are characterized by non-violence, lack of dogma, tolerance of differences, and, usually, by the practice of meditation .

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There are many special or holy days held throughout the year by the Buddhist community. Many of these days celebrate the birthdays of Bodhisattvas in the Mahayana tradition or other significant dates in the Buddhist calendar. The most significant celebration happens every May on the night of the full moon, when Buddhist all over the world celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha

*(Continued on page 21)*



# KWANZAA

The Principles of Kwanzaa			
Principle	Pronunciation	Meaning	Action
umoya	(oo-MOH-ja)	unity	building a community that holds together
kujichagulia	(koo-jee-cha-goo-LEE-yah)	self-determination	speaking for yourself and making choices that benefit the community
ujima	(oo-JEE-mah)	collective work and responsibility	helping others within the community
ujamaa	(oo-JAH-ma)	cooperative economics	supporting businesses that care about the community
nia	(nee-AH)	a sense of purpose	setting goals that benefit the community
kuumba	(koo-OOM-bah)	creativity	making the community better and more beautiful
imani	(ee-MAH-nee)	faith	believing that a better world can be created for communities now and in the future

The Seven Symbols of Kwanzaa		
Symbol	Meaning	Action
kikombe cha umoja	the unity cup	Celebrants drink from this cup in honor of their African ancestors. Before drinking, each person says "harambee," or "let's pull together."
kinara	the candleholder, which holds seven candles	It said to symbolize stalks of corn that branch off to form new stalks, much as the human family is created.
mazao	fruits, nuts, and vegetables	These remind celebrants of the harvest fruits that nourished the people of Africa.
mishumaa saba	the seven candles that represent the seven principles	A different candle is lit each day. Three candles on the left are green; three on the right are red; and in the middle is a black candle.
mkeka	mat	The symbols of Kwanzaa are arranged on the mkeka, which may be made of straw or African cloth. It symbolizes the foundation upon which communities are built.
vibunzi (plural, muhindi)	ear of corn	Traditionally, one ear of corn is placed on the mkeka for each child present.
zawadi	gifts	Traditionally, educational and cultural gifts are given to children on January 1, the last day of Kwanzaa.



## MUSLIM HOLIDAYS

### RAMADAN also known as EID-AL-FITR

We have just finished the High Holy Days of the Muslim Faith of **Ramadan**. It began on October 5, 2005 and ended on Nov. 4, 2005. Their Festival of Sacrifice (Eid al Adha) will be on Jan. 10, 2006. Their New Year will occur on Jan. 31, 2006. It will be their Year 1427.

**Eid al-Adha**, or the Feast of Sacrifice, commemorates Abraham's willingness to obey God by sacrificing his son. Lasting for three days, it concludes the annual Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. Muslims worldwide sacrifice a lamb or other animal and distribute the meat to relatives or the needy

**Muharram**, January 31, 2006. The month of Muharram marks the beginning of the Islamic liturgical year. On the tenth day of the month, many Muslims may observe a day of fasting, known as Ashurah.

Read on to know more about these Festivals.

by **Holly Hartman**

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Islam uses a lunar calendar—that is, each month begins with the sighting of the new moon. Because the lunar calendar is about 11 days shorter than the solar calendar used elsewhere, Islamic holidays "move" each year. In 2005 Ramadan will begin on Oct. 5.

For more than a billion Muslims around the world—including some 8 million in North America—Ramadan



is a "month of blessing" marked by prayer, fasting, and charity. This year Ramadan precedes Christmas and Hanukkah. But while in many places these holidays have become widely commercialized, Ramadan retains its focus on self-sacrifice and devotion to Allah (God).

### Why this Month?

Muslims believe that during the month of Ramadan, Allah revealed the first verses of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. Around 610 A.D., a caravan trader named Muhammad took to wandering the desert near Mecca (in today's Saudi Arabia) while thinking about his faith. One night a voice called to him from the night sky. It was the angel Gabriel, who told Muhammad he had been chosen to receive the word of Allah. In the days that followed, Muhammad found himself speaking the verses that would be transcribed as

the Qur'an.

At many mosques during Ramadan, about one thirtieth of the Qur'an is recited each night in prayers known as *tarawih*. In this way, by the end of the month the complete scripture will have been recited.

### Fasting

Muslims practice *sawm*, or fasting, for the entire month of Ramadan. This means that they may eat or drink nothing, including water, while the sun shines. Fasting is one of the Five Pillars (duties) of Islam. As with other Islamic duties, all able Muslims take part in this from about age twelve.

During Ramadan in the Muslim world, most restaurants are closed during the daylight hours. Families get up early for *suhoor*, a meal eaten before the sun rises. After the sun sets, the fast is broken with a meal known as *iftar*. Iftar usually begins with dates and sweet drinks that provide a quick energy boost.

Fasting serves many purposes. While they are hungry and thirsty, Muslims are reminded of the suffering of the poor. Fasting is also an opportunity to practice self-control and to cleanse the

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## JEWISH HOLIDAYS THIS SEASON

(Continued from page 8)

Challah is sometimes baked with a ladder on top in recognition that only God decides who climbs up or down the ladder of life. Forming challah in the shape of a bird is also done. The Torah says that God will protect Jerusalem in the same way a bird hovers.

Apples dipped in honey are another Rosh Hashanah tradition. It symbolizes the hope for a "sweet year" ahead. Honey is spread on challah. Tzimmes, a mixture made from carrots, cinnamon, yams, prunes, and honey, is also traditional.

Sephardic Jews—those of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern origin—serve a whole fish as a wish for prosperity, fertility, and good luck for the coming year. Some Jews also present fruit baskets covered to hide the contents, symbolizing that no one can know what the new year will bring.

### Determined by the new moon

Rosh Hashanah observances vary. Orthodox Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah for two days. Reform Jews often observe it for only one day. In Biblical times the moon, not the calendar, determined dates for festivals. Witnesses watching the sky proclaimed the new moon. Since Rosh Hashanah falls on the first day of the month, people living far from Jerusalem did not have time to learn the exact date. Even those living near Jerusalem could miss the festival if



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wit-

### Days of Awe

After Rosh Hashanah and before Yom Kippur are ten days known as the Days of Awe, or Ten Days of Repentance. They offer a chance for spiritual renewal and repentance before Yom Kippur, which is to atone for sins between man and God.

Some Orthodox Jews hold a live fowl over their heads as atonement for sin. The fowl is killed and given to the poor. Instead of an actual bird, some Jews use a bag of money symbolizing the price of the bird. This is the ancient custom of *kapparot*, or atonements, and is practiced during the afternoon before Yom Kippur begins.

### A confession, a special meal

During the afternoon prayers on the day before Yom Kippur, a *viddui*, or confessional, is said. It is repeated during Yom Kippur.

Yom Kippur requires a fast of about 25 hours. The final meal before is a somewhat festive occasion, including soup, chicken, and *challah*, traditional Jewish bread. Salty foods, which may make fasting more difficult, are generally avoided. Participants are advised to drink

nesses did not arrive on time. So, two days were set aside for observance so everyone would have time to participate.

### What is Yom Kippur? *Jewish 'Day of Atonement' considers spiritual well-being*

by David Johnson

Yom Kippur, which in 2005 begins at sundown Oct. 12, and lasts until sundown Oct. 13, is one of the most serious Jewish holidays. Jews who do not regularly observe other holidays often make an exception for Yom Kippur, which occurs on the tenth day of the Hebrew month of *Tishri*. Yom Kippur observances can vary. Some non-Orthodox Jews might not follow the following outline exactly.

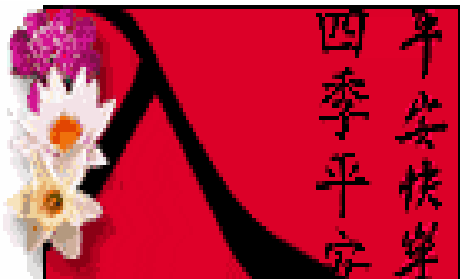
This is judgment day. Many Jews practice repentance, say prayers, and give charity to obtain God's forgiveness for any sins made in the past year. Yom Kippur is the culmination of a process that began a month earlier, during the Hebrew month of *Elul*. It follows Rosh Hashanah and the New Year's activities.

(Continued on page 16)



## Chinese New Year *The Year of the Rooster*

by Holly Hartman



Chinese New Year is the longest and most important celebration in the Chinese calendar. The Chinese year 4704 begins on Jan. 29, 2006.

Chinese months are reckoned by the lunar calendar, with each month beginning on the darkest day. New Year festivities traditionally start on the first day of the month and continue until the fifteenth, when the moon is brightest. In China, people may take weeks of holiday from work to prepare for and celebrate the New Year.

### A Dog Year

Legend has it that in ancient times, Buddha asked all the animals to meet him on Chinese New Year. Twelve came, and Buddha named a year after each one. He announced that the people born in each animal's year would have some of that animal's

personality. Those born in dog years tend to be loyal, kind, and generous. They will work to right wrongs and are able to keep secrets. Bill Clinton, Shirley MacLain, Benjamin Franklin, and Jane Goodall were all born in the year of the dog.

### Fireworks and Family Feasts

At Chinese New Year celebrations people wear red clothes, decorate with poems on red paper, and give children "lucky money" in red envelopes. Red symbolizes fire, which according to legend can drive away bad luck. The fireworks that shower the festivities are rooted in a similar ancient custom. Long ago, people in China lit bamboo stalks, believing that the crackling flames would frighten evil spirits.

In China, the New Year is a time of family reunion. Family members gather at each other's homes for visits and shared meals, most significantly a feast on New Year's Eve. In the United States, however, many early Chinese immigrants arrived without their families, and found a sense of community through neighborhood associations instead. Today, many Chinese-American neighborhood associations host

banquets and other New Year events.

### The Lantern Festival

Chinese New Year ends with the lantern festival on the fifteenth day of the month. Some of the lanterns may be works of art, painted with birds, animals, flowers, zodiac signs, and scenes from legend and history. People hang glowing lanterns in temples, and carry lanterns to an evening parade under the light of the full moon.

In many areas the highlight of the lantern festival is the dragon dance. The dragon—which might stretch a hundred feet long—is typically made of silk, paper, and bamboo. Traditionally the dragon is held aloft by young men who dance as they guide the colorful beast through the streets. In the United States, where the New Year is celebrated with a shortened schedule, the dragon dance always takes place on a weekend. In addition, many Chinese-American communities have added American parade elements such as marching bands and floats



# JEWISH HOLIDAYS THIS SEASON

(Continued from page 14)

plenty of water and to brush their teeth before the fast begins. Those who usually drink a lot of caffeine are advised to start cutting down days before to avoid the headache associated with caffeine withdrawal.

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The Days of Awe, or Ten Days of Repentance, are the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It offers a chance for spiritual renewal and repentance before Yom Kippur, which is to atone for sins between man and God.

## Candles and a blessing

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Two holiday candles are blessed and then lit. This signals the beginning of Yom Kippur. There is no more eating or drinking. Other prohibitions are: no bathing, no using creams and oils, no wearing of leather shoes, and no sexual relations. There are exceptions. Children who have not yet had their bar or bat-mitzvah, pregnant women, and people who are sick or infirm may eat or drink as needed. Some Reform Jews might not follow these prohibitions precisely.

A series of prayers is said during Yom Kippur. The *Kol Nidrei* is the first prayer, and should be recited before sunset. It is written in Aramaic, an ancient language. The *Maariv* is an evening service and includes the *viddui*.

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## Prayers for those who have died

In the morning, the *Shaharit* begins the day. It is similar to other morning services but includes additional poems, known as *piyutim*. Next is the *Yizkor*, a memorial prayer for those whose parents have died. Those with parents still living leave the main sanctuary while it is being said. The *Musaf* is the longest service of the year. It contains two parts: one which recounts the temple service, and the second describes the ten Jewish wise men tortured to death by the Romans.

## Locking of the gates of heaven

Most synagogues take a break following the *Musaf* to allow worshippers to take a rest. In the afternoon, the *Minhah*, which includes the reading of the Book of Jonah, takes place. It is the briefest Yom Kippur service. It is followed by the *Neilah*, meaning "locked." It refers to the locking of the gates of heaven. The congregation stands during the *Neilah*. At the end of the afternoon service, the *shofar*, a ram's horn, is blown. Today various types of horns are used.

Families "break the fast," when they return home and eat a

light meal often prepared in advance. This usually includes dairy products. Bagels and lox, noodle kugel, juice, and coffee are apt to be included.

## Hanukah, the Festival of Lights

by Holly Hartman

Hanukkah, the "Festival of Lights," starts on the 25th day of the Jewish calendar month of Kislev and lasts for eight days and nights. In 2005 Hanukkah begins at sundown on December 25. With blessings, games, and festive foods, Hanukkah celebrates the triumphs—both religious and military—of ancient Jewish heroes.

Hanukkah is a relatively minor holiday in the Jewish year. In the United States, however, its closeness to Christmas has brought greater attention to Hanukkah and its gift-giving tradition. Amid the ever-growing flood of Christmas advertising, it may seem especially fitting that the Hanukkah story tells of Jewish culture surviving in a non-Jewish world.



## The Hanukkah Story

Nearly 2,200 years ago, the Greek-Syrian ruler Antiochus IV tried to force Greek culture upon peoples in his territory. Jews in Judea—now Israel—were forbidden their most important religious practices as well as study of the Torah. Al-

(Continued on page 17)





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though vastly outnumbered, religious Jews in the region took up arms to protect their community and their religion. Led by Mattathias the Hasmonean, and later his son Judah the Maccabee, the rebel armies became known as the [Maccabees](#).

After three years of fighting, in the year 3597, or about 165 B.C.E., the Maccabees victoriously reclaimed the temple on Jerusalem's Mount Moriah. Next they prepared the temple for rededication—in Hebrew, Hanukkah means "dedication." In the temple they found only enough purified oil to kindle the temple light for a single day. But miraculously, the light continued to burn for eight days.



### The Menorah

The lighting of the menorah, known in Hebrew as the hanukiya, is the most important Hanukkah tradition. A menorah is a candlestand with nine branches. Usually eight candles—one for each day of Hanukkah—are of the same height, with a taller one in the middle, the shamash ("servant"), which is used to light the others. Each evening of Hanukkah, one more candle is lit, with a special blessing.

The menorah symbolizes the burning light in the temple, as well as marking the eight days of the Hanukkah festival. Some say it also celebrates the light of freedom won by the Maccabees for the Jewish people.



### The Dreidel

Long a favorite Hanukkah toy, the dreidel once had a serious purpose. When the Syrians forbid study of the

Torah, Jews who studied in secret kept spinning tops—sivivons, or dreidels—on hand. This way, if they were found studying, they could quickly pretend that they had only been playing.

Outside of Israel, a dreidel has the Hebrew letters "nun," "gimel," "hay," and "shin" on its four sides. These letters stand for "Nes gadol haya sham," which means, "A great miracle happened there," referring to Israel. An Israeli dreidel has the letter "pay" rather than "shin." This stands for "poh," meaning "here"—"a great miracle happened here."

The Hebrew letters also represent [Yiddish](#) words that tell how to play the dreidel game. Each player starts with the same amount of candies, chocolate coins (gelt), or other tokens, and puts one in a pot. Players take turns spinning the dreidel, waiting to see which letter lands face up. Nun is for "nisht," nothing—do nothing. Gimel is for "gants," whole—take the whole pot. Hay is for "halb," half—take half. Shin is for "shtetl," to put in—add to the pot. The game ends when a single player wins all the tokens.



### Hanukkah Foods

Many traditional Hanukkah foods are cooked in oil, in remembrance of the oil that burned in the temple. In the United States, the most widespread Hanukkah food is latkes, or potato pancakes, a custom that may have developed in Eastern Europe. In Israel, the favorite Hanukkah food is

sufganiya, a kind of jelly donut cooked in oil. Israelis eat sufganiyot for more than a month before the start of Hanukkah.

Eating dairy products, especially cheese, is another Hanukkah tradition. This is done in memory of the Jewish heroine [Judith](#), who according to legend saved her village from Syrian attackers. Judith fed wine and cheese to the Syrian general Holofernes until he became so drunk that he fell to the ground. She then seized his sword and cut off his head, which she brought back to her village in a basket. The next morning, Syrian troops found the headless body of their leader and fled in terror.





**Thanksgiving History** by **Damon Goldsmith**  
*From fall feast to national holiday*

**The First Thanksgiving**

The first American Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1621, to commemorate the harvest reaped by the Plymouth Colony after a harsh winter. In that year Governor William Bradford proclaimed a day of thanksgiving. The colonists celebrated it as a traditional English harvest feast, to which they invited the local Wampanoag Indians.

Days of thanksgiving were celebrated throughout the colonies after fall harvests. All thirteen colonies did not, however, celebrate Thanksgiving at the same time until October 1777. George Washington was the first president to declare the holiday, in 1789.

**A New National Holiday**

By the mid-1800s, many states observed a Thanksgiving holiday. Meanwhile, the poet and editor Sarah J. Hale had begun lobbying for a national Thanksgiving holiday. During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln, looking for ways to unite the nation, discussed the subject with Hale. In 1863 he gave his Thanksgiving Proclamation, declaring the last Thursday in November a day of thanksgiving.

In 1939, 1940, and 1941 Franklin D. Roosevelt, seeking to lengthen the Christmas shopping season, proclaimed Thanksgiving the third Thursday in November. Controversy followed, and Congress passed a joint resolution in 1941 decreeing that Thanksgiving should fall on the fourth Thursday of November, where it remains.

**How the Turkey Got Its Name**

There are a number of explanations for the origin of the name of Thanksgiving's favorite dinner guest. Some believe Christopher Columbus thought that the land he discovered was connected to India, and believed the bird he discovered (the turkey) was a type of peacock. He therefore called it 'tuka,' which is 'peacock' in Tamil, an Indian language.



**The First Thanksgiving Feast**

Though the turkey is actually a type of pheasant, one can't blame the explorer for trying.

The Native American name for turkey is 'firkee'; some say this is how turkeys got their name. Simple facts, however, sometimes produce the best answers—when a turkey is scared, it makes a "turk, turk, turk" noise.

**Turkey Facts**

- At one time, the turkey and the bald eagle were each considered as the national symbol of America. Benjamin Franklin was one of those who argued passionately on behalf of the turkey. Franklin felt the turkey, although "vain and silly", was a better choice than the bald eagle, whom he felt was "a coward".

- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than 45 million turkeys are cooked and eaten in the U.S. at Thanksgiving—that's one sixth of all turkeys sold in the U.S. each year. American per capita consumption of turkeys has soared from 8.3 pounds in 1975 to 18.5 pounds last year.

1. Last year, 2.7 billion pounds of turkey was processed in the United States.
2. In 1995, retail sales of turkey reached approximately \$4.4 billion. They are expected to reach \$4.7 billion in 2000.
3. Age is a determining factor in taste. Old, large males are preferable to young toms

(males) as tom meat is stringy. The opposite is true for females: old hens are tougher birds.

4. A turkey under sixteen weeks of age is called a *fryer*, while a young *roaster* is five to seven months old.

5. Turkeys are the only breed of poultry native to the Western Hemisphere.

6. Turkeys have great hearing, but no external ears. They can also see in color, and have excellent visual acuity and a wide field of vision (about 270 degrees), which makes sneaking up on them difficult. However, turkeys have a poor sense of smell (what's cooking?), but an excellent sense of taste.

7. Domesticated turkeys cannot fly. Wild turkeys, however, can fly for short distances at speeds up to 55 miles per hour. They can also reach speeds of 25 miles per hour on the ground.

- Turkeys sometimes spend the night in trees.

- Turkeys can have heart attacks: turkeys in fields near the Air Force test areas over which the sound barrier was broken were known to drop dead from the shock of passing jets

The ballroom dance known as the Turkey Trot was named for the short, jerky steps a turkey makes.





## Remember your sisters from a sister

### PASSING OF LION BOB ROSE

With love to all my sisters...

A young wife sat on a sofa on a hot humid day, drinking iced tea and visiting with her Mother. As they talked about life, about marriage, about the responsibilities of life and the obligations of adulthood, the mother clinked the ice cubes in her glass thoughtfully and turned a clear, sober glance upon her daughter.

"Don't forget your Sisters," she advised, swirling the tea leaves to the bottom of her glass." They'll be more important as you get older. No matter how much you love your husband, no matter how much you love the children you may have, you are still going to need Sisters. Remember to go places with them now and then; do things with them. And remember that

"Sisters" also means your girlfriends, your daughters, and other women relatives too. You'll need other women. Women always do."

'What a funny piece of advice!' the young woman thought.

'Haven't I just gotten married? Haven't I just joined the couple-world? I'm now a married woman, for goodness sake! A grownup. Surely my husband and the family we may start will be all I need to make my life worthwhile!

But she listened to her Mother. She kept contact with her Sisters and made more women friends each year. As the years tumbled by, one after another, she gradually came to understand that her Mom really knew what she was talking about. As time and nature work their changes and their mysteries upon a woman, Sisters are the mainstays of her life. After almost 50 years of living in this

world, here is what I've learned:

Times passes.  
Life happens.  
Distance separates.  
Children grow up.  
Love waxes and wanes.  
Hearts break.  
Careers end.  
Jobs come and go.  
Parents die.  
Colleagues forget favors.  
Men don't call when they say they will.

BUT Sisters are there, no matter how much time and how many miles are between you. A Sister is never farther away than needing her can reach.

When you have to walk that lonesome valley, and you have to walk it for yourself, your Sisters will be on the valley's rim, cheering you on, praying for you, pulling for you, intervening on your behalf, and waiting with open arms at the valley's end. Sometimes, they will even break the rules and walk beside you. Or come in and carry you out.

My mother, sister, daughter, sister-in-laws, and "girlfriends", bless my life! The world wouldn't be the same without them, and neither would I.

When we began this adventure called womanhood, we had no idea of the incredible joys or sorrows that lay ahead. Nor did we know how much we would need each other. Every day, we need each other still.

Pass this on to the women who help make your life work. I just did...

Dear Lion Linda, Just in case you have not receive the sad news:

Bob Rose of Redwood City Sunrise passed away. Lion Bob was a charter member of the first East Palo Alto Lions Club and transferred to Redwood Sunrise when the EPA Lions disbanded in the sixties. He was recognize by PDG Ray during the new East Palo Alto Charter Day dinner.

Also, the son of Past Zone Chair Lion Laura Warner of Menlo Park Live Oaks Lions passed away last week; almost to the same day as his father, the late Lion David Warner, several years back. Ironically, both father and son died of brain tumor and at the same age. Our condolence to Lion Laura.

Evangelina Santos





## Tacoma continued from page 4

*(Continued from page 4)*

Newsletter Publisher, she told me we HAD to have an article about my experiences. So here it is. With pictures.

They kicked me out of Laurel Grove on Friday, because I had more than recovered enough to go home. But before I left I had plenty of time to talk to Barbara Waldstreicher, Tacoma's handler and "mother", about the program. She obtained Tacoma from Canine Companions after a grueling set of interviews, personal references and being on a waiting list. After she was approved, she was "matched" with Tacoma (their personalities had to be suited) and her training began. Two weeks of lectures and another two weeks in the field getting used to handling the dogs in all sorts of situations. The Graduation Ceremony is impressive, with the new handlers being called up and being presented with their dogs by the people who had raised them from pups.

In my opinion as a patient, Laurel Grove is most fortunate to have Barbara and Tacoma on their staff of physical therapists. Tacoma is so popular with the patients that she has a journal of her own. Everyone is invited to write something about his or her experiences with rehab and with her. Here are some excerpts:

".....What a special little friend you are! You never stop encouraging us patients with your love. You were such a welcome buddy when you came up on the mat and laid with me as I tried so hard

to complete the exercises. .... God sent us all a little angel of love and inspiration!....." Debbie, 10/03

".....When I came here Aug. 1st I was so scared and felt so alone. I missed my own two dogs at home, and couldn't sleep well without them breathing next to me.

Four days later your mommy let me keep you for the day. You climbed on my bed, I held you, we slept and for the first time I REALLY slept. I could hear you snoring and you made me laugh. I always heard of dogs like you but never, never thought I would be lucky enough to meet one, let alone take naps with one!

....."Kathryn, 08/03

".....When I was doing my leg exercises on the mat, Tacoma came up and laid on my shoulder and fell asleep. I was able to do my exercises much better with Tacoma there in my arms. Thank you Tacoma, and Barbara and all.....Betty 12/02

".....Dear Tacoma: You are the NICEST per...er...dog I have ever met. (And Barb ain't too bad either)!.....XXXOOO Dave 08/04

".....Where do these dogs come from? Are they born just like any other puppy, then weaned, and raised, and trained and graduated with a nifty blue jacket ready to go to work? Cannot be! Tacoma is obviously a very special gift to all who need her and she has the very good sense to bring Barbara along to help.....Gail 08/05

Although my illness and the recovery process have been difficult at times, I am very pleased, as a Lion, to have been able share some of the experience with Tacoma, a remarkable dog from a remarkable Lions Project. I'm all better now.

As Lions, if you have not yet supported this wonderful program, please consider it now. Therapy dogs fill a great need not only in a rehabilitation setting but also in hospitals, nursing homes and other extended care facilities. The work they do as companions and assistance dogs to the handicapped and disabled has saved lives and made many lives easier by improving the quality of live of many individuals that would otherwise lead a more limited existence.



Tacoma, Pet Therapy Dog with Canine Companions at Laurel Grove Rehabilitation Hospital, Castro Valley Ca.



## BUDDHISM CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 11)*

over 2,500 years ago. It has become to be known as Buddha Day.

Below are some of the current holidays or “holy days” for Buddhist during this season.

### Loy Krathong (Festival of Floating Bowls)

At the end of the Kathin Festival season, when the rivers and canals are full of water, the Loy Krathong Festival takes place in all parts of Thailand on the full moon night of the Twelfth Lunar month. People bring bowls made of leaves (which contain flowers) candles and incense sticks, and float them in the water. As they go, all bad luck is supposed to disappear. The traditional practice of Loy Krathong was meant to pay homage to the holy footprint of the Buddha on

the beach of the Namada River in India.

### The Elephant Festival

The Buddha used the example of a wild elephant which, when it is caught, is harnessed to a tame one to train. In the same way, he said, a person new to Buddhism should have a special friendship of an older Buddhist. To mark this saying, Thais hold an elephant festival on the third Saturday in November.

### Bodhi Day (Enlightenment Day)

Bodhi Day honors the enlightenment of Siddhartha Gateman -- the Buddha. Buddhists observe the importance of this event by celebrating Bodhi Day usually on the eighth of December. The day is observed in many ways, including prayer, meditation and teachings.

### Buddhist New Year

In Theravadin countries, Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Laos, the new year is celebrated for three days from the first full moon day in April. In Mahayana countries the new year starts on the first full moon day in January. However, the Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. As for example, Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese celebrate late January or early February according to the lunar calendar, whilst the Tibetans usually celebrate about one month later.

## MUSLIM HOLIDAYS CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 13)*

body and mind. And in this most sacred month, fasting helps Muslims feel the peace that comes from spiritual devotion as well as kinship with fellow believers.

### Eid al-Fitr

Ramadan ends with the festival of Eid al-Fitr, which in 2005 occurs on November 4. Literally the "Festival of Breaking the Fast," Eid al-Fitr is one of the two most important Islamic celebrations (the other occurs after the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca). At Eid al-Fitr people dress in their finest clothes, adorn their homes with lights

and decorations, give treats to children, and enjoy visits with friends and family.

A sense of generosity and gratitude colors these festivities. Although charity and good deeds are always important in Islam, they have special significance at the end of Ramadan. As the month draws to a close, Muslims are obligated to share their blessings by feeding the poor and making contributions to mosques.

Don't forget to join us at the ballgame!  
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