

LSI ALHAMBRA
JANUARY 2012
VOLUME 12 ISSUE 1

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

JANUARY CALENDAR	1
CHINESE NEW YEAR IN TAIWAN	2
THE BIG STORM	3
CHINESE NEW YEAR FOOD	4
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	5
THE ROSE PARADE	5

January Calendar of Events

Happy 2012! This winter we would like to welcome a new Program Coordinator to LSI – Alhambra. Kim Gunby, who is originally from Santa Monica, CA, has a lot of experience working with international students. She especially enjoys teaching idioms because native speakers use idioms all the time, and they are fun! “I love meeting people and learning about other cul-

tures... and I’m happy to help students build their voices in English and succeed!” said Kim. She is very excited about working at LSI. “It’s an honor to be working with so many experienced teachers—I’m impressed with the commitment and organization here. It’s going to be a great year!”



Jan. 3rd - Orientation Day

**Jan. 11th - Lunch Social
(Location TBA)**

**Jan. 16th - MLK Day
NO SCHOOL**

**Jan. 20th - Tennis Practice
with Jose!**

**Jan. 26th - Movie Night
with Megan!**

Kim is also a professional musician. “Music is another form of language that enriches our lives,” explained Kim. She plays a variety of musical styles, primarily rock, and a variety of instruments—but right

now she is mostly focusing on bass guitar. Natural Hi-Fi is the name of her band. Come and meet Kim in her office at LSI – Alhambra!

Chinese New Year in Taiwan

By Mei

Chinese New Year is coming next month. When people walk down the street, they can feel New Year is in the air. All the stores are already decorated and are displaying a variety of New Year goods. People can hear lots of happy New Year songs from stores, radios and TV programs. People are not only delighted to welcome the New Year but also excited to discuss what they're going to buy and where they are going to travel. The New Year celebration in Taiwan happens before, after and during the New Year. We have many traditions around the New Year in Taiwan, such as cleaning the house, buying new clothes, and posting red banners. However, we have to follow them so we will be lucky for the next whole year.

People have to clean their houses inside out and post the red banners on the front doorframe before the New Year. When we put up these banners, we really feel the New Year's atmosphere. People will buy new clothes for themselves from head to toe. The most popular color people buy is red because they think red means good luck and happiness. People want to replace old things with new ones to greet the coming year. In addition, people wear red underwear when they gamble in cards and play mahjong during the New Year because they think it will give them a higher probability to win at gambling.

All the family members come home to get together with their parents. Mothers prepare the New Year Eve's dinner. Mothers cook a lot, more than what people can eat during New Year's Eve, in order to have leftovers. It is believed that leftovers represent your savings for the coming year. After dinner it is time for people to give red pocket money. There is no special rule about in giving red pocket money. It depends on each family's tradition. Most elder relatives and parents give kids red pocket money, or young people who have jobs give red pocket money to their parents and grandparents. After kids receive their red pocket money, they usually put it under their pillows. This action symbolizes that they will grow up healthy. Close to midnight, more and more people shoot off fireworks in the field and on the roof. Afterward the people say Gung-Hsi to each other. It's time to unveil the start of the New Year.

Although all temples are overcrowded during the New Year, most people still go to there to pray that everything goes smoothly in the following year. However people from different age groups will have a different wishes. For example, parents pray that their kids grow up healthy; students pray for good grades in order to go to a good school; young people pray for a good job and position; single people pray that they will meet a good spouse. People believe that it is good to tell God about their wishes so He can bless them.

The elder people think that if their married daughters come to their parents' house on the first day of the New Year, their parents will become poor. The married daughters usually go to their parents' house on the second day of the New Year. But some people do not follow this tradition; they still welcome their married daughters to come home on the first day of the New Year.

The 15th night of the New Year is the Lantern Festival. This is one of the biggest and most famous holidays in Taiwan. There are a lot of Lantern shows and riddle games all over Taiwan on that day. The theme usually depends on the year. For example, next year will be the year of dragon; there will be a variety of dragon images on lanterns. Many children and people carry their lanterns on the crowded and noisy streets. The Lantern Festival signifies the end of the New Year celebrations. After that, everything has to return to normal.

People appreciate that their ancestors left these New Year's traditions so they can enjoy themselves more during the New Year. The New Year celebration is the longest holiday every year, so it is a good time for family to get together. Whether people are planning to go out or stay at home, they will enjoy the holiday.



The Big Storm

By Peggy

It had never happened in my life. It was scary and unforgettable. However, it was such a good lesson about emergency planning for both government and individuals. It happened on Thursday November 30, 2011. It was a nice, sunny day but a bit windy. I went to bed early that night; however I awakened by strange sounds at midnight. It sounded like heavy rain. When I got up and looked through the window, I realized that it was not raining, but it was heavy wind instead. The wind was howling and trees were swinging. All of a sudden the street lamps blew out, and everything turned dark.

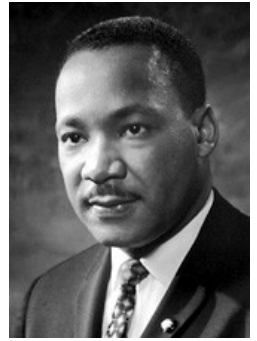
The first thing I saw the next morning was the damage in my apartment area. The plant plot had shattered but the plants and soil were intact. Branches and leaves were dispersed all over the ground. There was no electricity in my apartment. On my way to the school, I could see how the heavy wind had damaged my neighborhood. Trees fell on roads and houses, and knocked down the power poles everywhere. Roads were blocked and police were all around helping direct traffic. I even could not get to the bus stop, and I could not catch any buses to go to school. Then, I decided to return home, and I met the apartment manager who told me that the power outage would last for a couple of days. He also told me that the wind has a beautiful name: the 'Santa Ana Wind', and that wind speeds had been up to 70 MPH. Afterward, I went to the stores to buy candles and flashlights. There were so many customers buying generators, flashlights and candles. I heard the staff say, "We're out of generators," continuously, and the flashlights on the shelves were gone quickly. I saw one customer buy more than 10 powerful flashlights.

Actually, the Santa Ana winds were the heaviest winds in a decade. According to the news, the hurricane was carrying winds of up to 60 mph in L.A. and up to 140 mph on the mountain. Nearly 300,000 residents were without power. The San Gabriel Valley was especially hard hit by the power outages and the Pasadena area was strewn with fallen trees. The winds broke more than 30 power poles, knocked down 150 trees. Most of the residents were without power, and many homes were without water service. Pasadena had 200 damaged buildings, and four of them were declared 'unfit for habitation'. At least 450 trees along city streets were downed. The foothill cities in the north of San Gabriel Valley were hit hardest by the windstorm. Los Angeles county and several valley cities were declared states of emergency. Schools, post offices and libraries were closed. The cities set up a temporary command center in Santa Anita Park. Government and electricity companies were busy on moving trees and repairing the power poles. They prioritized the work based on emergencies and public safety.

On the next day on my way to school, I could easily see fallen trees had crushed cars, houses and apartments. I felt so sorry for the people who were involved. Some of my teachers and classmates were also affected by the wind; however they were luckier than me as they got back their electricity earlier. The storm left me in the dark for four days. Although I was worse off than my classmates, I was better off than many other people in the community. Some neighborhoods only got back their power after one week. I suffered from the darkness for four days, and I could not imagine how they endured the darkness for one week. In order to help out the residents, the Arcadia Community Center was open until midnight during this period. However, the Saint Marino and Arcadia libraries did not reopen until one week after the storm. Even today, more than two weeks after the incident, there are still many dead trees and branches on the street and cherry pickers are all around repairing the poles.

The Santa Ana winds were like a tremendous monster that stepped on Los Angeles and gave the foothills a big blow. Nevertheless, we learned something from this experience. It forced us to think about how we can manage the emergency risk. It makes me concerned about the lack of emergency preparedness by the government, and I wonder how they can handle this kind of natural disaster. It took them more than two weeks to repair the major damage. What if a bigger disaster happens? The government should learn from this experience and arrange the resources so we will be better prepared in the future.

Martin Luther King Day



By John

Martin Luther King Day is on January 16. Martin Luther King was born in 1929. King was a famous minister and the pastor of a Baptist church in Alabama. He received his doctorate in 1955. In 1957, King joined the Southern Leadership Christian Conference and organized protests against discrimination. Later on he was arrested and put in jail. In 1963, he participated in a march for civil rights in Washington D.C. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. He was assassinated on April 4th, 1968 while visiting Memphis, Tennessee.

The Rose Parade

By Level 6

The 2012 Tournament of Roses Parade will be held at 8:00 AM on January 2nd. This year's theme is "Just Imagine". The parade's Grand Marshal this year is J.R. Martinez, who is an actor, veteran, and speaker. The Rose Parade is going to be on Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena. The first parade was at the Valley Hunt Club in Pasadena in 1890. This is the 123rd parade. It has millions of fans all over the world.



Chinese New Year Food

Every country has traditional holiday feasts. In the United States, Americans have a turkey feast on Thanksgiving. In Taiwan, Taiwanese have a reunion dinner on Chinese New Year. Having the reunion dinner is very important to Taiwanese people. Chinese New Year is usually on January or February every year depending on the Lunar calendar. On Chinese New Year, people have a holiday from work, and they go home and have dinner with their family. This meal is a family gathering, since some of the members have left their families for work or school. The reunion dinner has a special significance in Chinese New Year.

What do we eat at the reunion dinner? Is there anything special or different from the normal dinner we usually have? When we eat the reunion dinner, we usually have pricey food that we won't eat on regular days and some foods which represent Chinese New Year. We eat these foods because of the shape, pronunciation, literal meaning and tradition. For example, *Nian Gao* are made of sticky rice and cooked in different ways. There are various kinds of savory and sweet *Nian Gao*, like sweet black sugar, red bean, taro potato, and pork. *Nian* in Chinese means year and *Gao* means high. If you eat *Nian Gao*, you will get a higher school score, work position, or even height. Likewise, different *Nian Gao* have different meanings. *Fa Gao* is one type of *Nian Gao* which means you will have prosperity in the future.

Another main dish is fish which means "leftover" because of the pronunciation. People believe that if you eat leftover, you will have a little more of everything, like money. Most importantly, we have to eat leftover fish until the first day of the New Year. People may have expensive mullet roe in their reunion dinner. Mullet roe is made of fish eggs which are dried salted for a period of time. For some special mullet roe, the price will be between US \$17 to US \$20 each 100 grams. Mullet roe is prepared in a special way. We have to soak it in Chinese white wine for 40 minutes to one hour, then take off the skin and put the roe into the oven for 3 minutes. It's done when we take it out from oven, then we to cut it into pieces. We like to eat it with green onion and white radish. It tastes as soft as cheese cake, but it is scented with wine.

Chicken means family, so we will eat a whole chicken to represent the whole family being together in Chinese New year. Dumplings represent gold because of their shape. Brown mustard greens also means long life because of their shape. In addition, any kinds of balls have the same meaning is having reunion. Not only the reunion dishes, but also the snacks and fruit have a special New Year meaning. For instance, apples means safety. Oranges means good luck. Dates mean good luck in every year. Pineapple means prosperity. Peanuts mean long life, and candy means you will have the sweetest New Year.

From the beginning of the Chinese New Year Eve, we have plenty of food on the table just like we do at Thanksgiving in the United States. Nowadays, people prefer eating reunion dinner in the restaurant rather than preparing hundreds of foods in the kitchen. No matter where we eat, or what we eat, we are together with the most precious family.

