



<The Chinese New Year Festival in France>

The Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year is also known as the Spring Festival and is considered the most important traditional Chinese holiday. The celebration for this holiday can occur either in January or February. For the year 2006, the celebration was on January 29. But for 2007, however, it will be on the 18th of February. 2006 was the year of the dog, but 2007 will be the year of the boar. The Chinese New Year celebration lasts for a total of fifteen days. During these fifteen days, there are festivities such as the lighting of fireworks and dances in which people line up and walk in huge long dragon and/or lion costumes. The final event that closes the Chinese New Year celebration on the fifteenth day is the Lantern Festival.

Historically, the Chinese New Year has been celebrated ever since China's first dynasty, the Xia, which began in the year 2205 BC. In ancient Chinese legend, there was a man-eating creature by the name of Nian. The creature lived in the mountains and was known to invade people's homes. When the people realized that Nian couldn't stand loud noises along with the color red, they scared it away by setting off fireworks and loud explosions, as well as using red in their decorations. These were the customs that started the first Chinese New Year celebrations, and that's why even to this day people wear the color red during the celebration to keep away malevolent spirits and bad luck.

Written by Joel Rivera



<The Chinese New Year festival in Hong-Kong>

New Student Organization: KSA

Warm welcome to the newest student organization on campus, the Korean Student Association (KSA). Despite the name, the Association is open to any students at MU who want to take a greater role in the University's social life and help newly-arrived international students adjust. Members of all cultures are encouraged to help out. The KSA was begun in the beginning of October 2006, and its KSA members try to have a more "active school life, share information, work together, and help each other", as KSA president Youngkyu Terry Kim explains. The Association especially tries to help new international students with school life, and tries to prevent any problems that might arise in the new environment. "We hope that this organization will help Korean students, both new and current students, to become more confident in themselves with support while they are away from their families at home and also to help them make new friends," adds Youngkyu Kim. The group also is set up to create greater understanding of the Korean culture in the University, as well as to learn about the many other cultures on campus. It will try to encourage international students' greater participation in cultural activities, as well as organize activities in the future. The KSA now has about fifty members, and seven chair members. It is working on a fun website which it hopes to unveil in the beginning of 2007.



<The members of the Korean Student Association from left top Terry, Jun-il, Woo-suk, Andy, Yong-woo, Sel-ah, Seung-ho>

We wish you great luck, and expect to hear great things from the new organization!

To contact the KSA for more information,
e-mail to ksa_mu@hotmail.com.

Written by Ana-Maria Maier

COME, COOK & TASTE

Here is a deal: no need to find a restaurant for some unexplored food, no need to pay for gas and tip; just show up to a cooking class and enjoy tasting food of other countries. Cooking class is held every other month, sponsored by International Students Office.

One experienced chef is invited to a cooking class every time this takes place. Last November 10th, Andy Chang, one of many Korean students of MU, performed Inari Sushi & Miso soup making to attendants. This sushi was different from regular sushi most people imagine. It uses Inari as a cover, which is made up of fried tofu, and does not contain any raw fish. Instead, a certain amount of rice marinated with vinegar, salt, sugar, and sesame seeds are covered with Inari. Even if you don't like raw fish fan, you will fall in love with your first bite of Inari. Attendees even had an opportunity to try rolling the rice into an appropriate size and put it in the Inari. Inari was so easily ripped that elaborate handling was necessary. Everyone was happy with their own unique Inari Sushi. Believe it or not, three of these Inari Sushi have almost the same number of calories as one bowl of rice. Doesn't this sound tempting to you? You better catch the upcoming cooking. Don't forget to check the schedule at the ISO. Adios!

Written by Il-Han Park

Alternative Spring Break Trips

For many college students in America, spring break is a time to have fun and party at a popular, sunny vacation spot with their friends. Although this can be a lot of fun, some students chose to take part in what are known as "alternative spring break" trips, or "alternative breaks." Alternative breaks are when a group of students dedicate their vacation days to helping people in need. The students stay at an organization that is helping the community, and they help them with their work for the week.

Last year, I went on an alternative spring break trip to Kentucky in the Appalachian Mountains with 4 Madonna students. We stayed at a camp with students from 9 other colleges and universities from around the country. During the day, we were assigned to groups and then we would drive out to a person's home in the mountains that needed to be repaired. My group helped an elderly woman by painting her house, tearing down her old patio, and repairing her front porch. We did a great job, and she was very grateful. This trip (and all of the alternative spring break trips I have gone on) was unforgettable. It was a lot of fun, I got to meet many interesting people, I got to learn about Appalachian culture, and I got the satisfaction of doing good work.

This year, Madonna is hosting 5 alternative spring break trips that you can choose from. We are going to Chicago to work with the homeless, South Carolina to work with youth, San Francisco to work with the elderly, Kentucky (the trip described above), and Mississippi to work with hurricane Katrina victims. If you are interested in any of these trips, please contact me!

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ISO Event Calendar

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|-------------------|--|
| February 14 (Wed) | International Festival Noon-4pm |
| February 23 (Fri) | Coffee Time 1pm - 2:30pm Sponsored by Korean Local Church |
| March 16 (Fri) | Cooking Class |
| March 24 (Sat) | Field Trip: Lansing (Michigan State University Campus) |

Would you like some coffee?

Have you ever joined in "Coffee Time" which was already held a couple of times in the fall semester? If not, you have missed a good time. But you have another chance, because the International Student Office (ISO) is planning to have this meeting, "Coffee Time," every third Friday at 1 p.m. in the Colonnade Lounge.

You may ask "People are having a cup of coffee at that time?" Yes, of course! Also, there are some other kinds of foods, for instance, Kim-bab; Korean style rolls, Inari sushi, japchea; oriental noodles with vegetables or beef, Mung-bean pancake, and some desserts. It looks like a small casual snack bar. All these foods are donated by Korean Presbyterian of Metro Detroit, Korean Catholic Church, and Ward Presbyterian Church.

In addition to the food, ISO staff present picture slide shows which are about previous ISO activities, such as the welcome party, cooking class, field trips, and coffee time. It shows the events for people who missed them and helps them decide whether to join next ones. For example, in the last Coffee Time, Mr. Choi, who teaches Taekwondo at Kil's Taekwondo at the Livonia branch, introduced Taekwondo and showed the self-defense in emergency situations on the street with this assistant, Jeff. Coffee time is a good opportunity for learning new things.



At the coffee time, you can also make new friends. This gathering is helpful for brand new students to adapt to the campus life. Coffee Time is for all of the international students at MU who need time to relax and to reduce the stress from studying. Remember to stop by the Colonnade Lounge every third Friday from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and have fun. See you all at the next Coffee Time!

For further information, contact Grace and Joy.

Written by Hanna Gu

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We always welcome new members!