

From the Editor's Laptop



Happy Lunar New Year 2006: Gone To The Dogs

Happy Lunar New Year to everyone! You may or may not know it, but the Lunar New Year started on Jan. 29, and it marks the beginning of the Year of the Dog. For those born on the Dog years of 1970, 1982 and 1994, 2006 should be your lucky year! There are many communities that celebrate Lunar New Year, most notably the Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Japanese communities. Check your local city's calendar for Lunar New Year celebrations in your area.

The actual New Year celebration lasts 15 days with the last day marking the most exciting celebrations, such as the Dragon or Lion Dance and the Lantern Festival, where children and adults carry lit lanterns at night. The New Year also brings with it plenty of traditional "Things To Do". Typically, red envelopes of money are given to children by parents and relatives. Chrysanthemums, kumquat plants and peach blossoms are lucky decorations. And eating candy or sweets will symbolize a sweet year ahead. However, getting haircuts, buying shoes and pants, and breaking objects such as glass are considered unlucky, so tread lightly!

So from all of us here at PM Monthly, Happy Year of the Dog to all of you! May 2006 bring you luck, happiness, and prosperity!



Commentary

Japanese Valentine's for the Guys Commentary by Shawn "Shank" Honnold

Valentine's Day had always been a source of anxiety for me while in America. When I was in elementary school, we made big paper "mailboxes" that hung from the front of our desks. When the teacher said, "go" the students strolled around the classroom slyly dropping their handmade, or Disney-themed, cards into their favorite classmate's self-decorated paper pouch. I would be sweating bullets by the time I got close to the cutest girl's desk. Then came time to pull your cards out and count them. That was the ultimate popularity gauge.

When I got older, it only got more strenuous. Chocolate just seems so cliché. So there I was roaming the mall aimlessly searching for the perfect gift, calling restaurants for reservation availability, the dreaded solo mission to Victoria Secrets. Uggggghh. To be honest, I don't even like shopping for myself. Then I came to Japan, and I was surprised to discover that men don't have to give women anything at all! Instead, women give gifts to men! Relief!

Valentine's Day in Japan first emerged in 1958, when a Valentine's fair was held by Japanese confectionaries in department stores. However, it didn't become wide-spread until the 1970's, with teenage girls giving chocolate to the boys they had a crush on, and OLs (office ladies) giving giri-choko, or obligation chocolate, to their male counterparts in their company. A recent Japan-Guide poll shows that 67% of women celebrate Valentine's Day. Although statistics vary between singles and couples, I will give you some approximate figures. Food's-Foo Japan reports that about 15% of women "love" to celebrate the holiday, with 52% saying that they "reasonably agree" with it. On the otherhand, 25% of women "don't care", 3% are "against it", and 5% "wish the holiday would just go away". I guess it's safe to say that most women support the holiday, but I wonder if its true support, or some latent feelings of giri (innate sense of duty).

So, I figured that there were a bunch of women roaming shopping districts in a panic over what to get their boyfriends and husbands, lost in Marui Department Store's men's sections and scouting

date spots in Roppongi Hills. However, 76% of all women give chocolate as a gift to that special someone, with Godiva topping the pack. Cookies came in second at 13%. While I was developing an ulcer over the "perfect gift", all my girlfriend here had to do was stop by See's Candies on her way home from the gym? This seemed a little too convenient. In America, a QuestionPro Research study showed that, ". . .56% of all women polled want a romantic dinner and to hear the words "I love you." Jewelry and flowers came in third and fourth, respectively. You can see where a man in America may have some more difficult decision making to do than a woman in Japan.

However, the Japanese website E87 did a survey of their own that might be indicating some changes. When asked what they will buy their significant other this year, 29% of women responded that clothing would be their best bet. Chocolate and other sweets came in second with 23%. Amazingly, 17% said leather goods and 4% of guys are only gonna be lucky enough to get a handkerchief.

In the end, I was only briefly relieved from my whole Valentine's Day anxiety. White Day is just around the corner on March 14th. Men are to reciprocate their Valentine's gift with white chocolate, marshmallows, or some other white present. Now I spend each March wandering Shibuya and Harajuku for the perfect all white gift. Chocolate is starting to seem not so cliché after all.



Asian American Actress Receives Prestigious Awards

HOLLYWOOD --The Screen Actors Guild held its 12th Annual Award Show on Sunday, Jan. 29, in Los Angeles, CA. Amongst the talented television and film actors and actresses being showered with awards that night, Asian American actress Sandra Oh was honored the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) award for best female actor in a drama series for her work on "Grey's Anatomy." Oh has been seen in such films as "Sideways" and "Under the Tuscan Sun", but her performance as a hospital intern on ABC's hit show has garnered her most recognition.

In her acceptance speech, Oh acknowledges her fellow Asian American actors and proclaims that she dedicates and shares this award with them. She proceeds to advise Asian Americans to "have courage and keep shining." During the press conference after receiving the award, Oh commends "Grey's Anatomy" for its conscious effort to incorporate a degree of diversity within the show. She stated that one of the reasons why she loves working on the show is because she enjoys the fact that she is part of such a multi-cultural and diversified cast of actors and actresses.

Weeks before receiving the SAG award, Oh attended the 2006 Golden Globe Awards where she received the award for best supporting role in a television series. Oh proves to be one of the few, famous Asian Americans trying to inspire other talented Asian Americans who are struggling to find a place in the competitive world of film and television. But because of her most recent success, Oh can be considered a good role model who is helping to make the presence of Asian Americans in the media more visible and recognized in society today.

-- April Joy Limayo



PMX 2006 COMING SOON!

Watch this space!
We'll be making major announcements
about PMX 2006 very soon!
Until then, stay tuned!



PMX Veterans' and Other Upcoming Events in Los Angeles for January:

- 2-15-06:
Lemon Drop Kick @ Anarchy Library - Downey
- 2-18-06:
Dig Jelly @ The Dig in Hollywood
- 2-22-06:
Lemon Drop Kick @ The Blue Cafe - Long Beach
- 2-23-06:
Lemon Drop Kick @ Zen Sushi - Hollywood



PMMonthly Call For International and Local Writers

Do you want to write articles for a monthly newsletter on Asian pop culture throughout the world? Topics can be about, but not limited to: Japanese/Korean animation/manga, Asian cinema, internet/console gaming, cosplay, music trends (Japanese/Korean/Chinese/Filipino musicians), fashion trends (Japanese/Korean/Chinese-inspired exported to another country), and Japanese animation events outside of the U.S. If you live in the following cities, we want to hear from you: San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Vancouver, Seoul, Beijing, Hong Kong, Manila, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, London, Berlin, Rome, Paris, and Sydney. All articles must be written in English and cut and pasted into email. Photo attachments are allowed. Please note that the readership age of this newsletter are people aged 14-35. Writers of accepted articles will receive a by-line (credit) in the newsletter. This opportunity is perfect for a journalism student or anyone who just wants to write! If you're interested, please send email with a very short writing sample or clip (link to previously published articles) to asianamerican@pacificmediaexpo.com.

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asianamerican@pacificmediaexpo.com.

PMMonthly Newsletter Staff:
Paula Angeles (Editor/Writer)
Garland Gee (Copy Editor)
Amirah May Limayo (Writer - L.A)

PMMonthly February Contributors:
April Joy Limayo
Shawn "Shank" Honnold - Tokyo

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

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