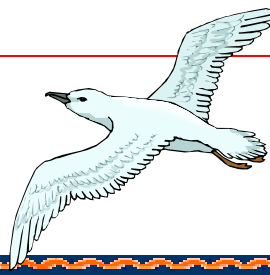


The Seagull



January 2007

Newsletter of Naval Officers' Spouses' Club of Okinawa (NOSCO)
www.noscokinawa.com

E. Biddle, Editor

Keep the Date

- January 7-10
Korea Trip
- January 17
Gift Shops Reopen
NOSCO Board Meeting
- January 19
Day of Pampering
- January 24
Vietnam Opens at the NFGS
- February
Cooking Demonstration
- March 14
The World of Japanese Quilting
- March 31
Annual Art Auction

It's the New Year...Let's Get Organized!

January is a great time to get organized. In fact, the National Organization of Professional Organizers (NAPO) has designated January as GO Month® (Get Organized Month). Here are some helpful tips to get your organizing projects off the ground in 2007!

Define Your Space

To prevent you from getting overwhelmed with your organizing mission, take a brief walk-through of your house and decide which areas give you the most stress or frustration. Once you've prioritized your projects, picture in your mind how you want the room/area to look once you've finished with it. Keep in mind how the area functions now and how you would like it to function for you once you're done. Write down your ideas and goals and tape them to the wall in your work room. If your project gets too overwhelming, having your goals down on paper will help get you back on track.

Designate Your Storage Areas

Once you've decided which items will be stored in specified areas of your house, you'll need to decide *how* these items will be stored. Will you be using a bookcase with baskets to hold the craft supplies, or an extra dresser? Making these decisions is all based on how you would get the most use out of it. If you prefer to have everything hidden away, you may want to use the dresser. If you are an "out of sight, out of mind" person, using the baskets or clear storage containers might be more useful.

Schedule Your Time

As those who have tried to tackle home improvement projects in the past know, you need to plan ahead. Sit down with your calendar and decide when you will start your project and give yourself a firm deadline as to when it will be completed. Scheduling it on your calendar will force you to devote uninterrupted time to your organizing project, rather than dealing with phone calls or hungry kids.

Getting Started

Now is the time to PURGE! Have trash bags and donation bins at the ready. Keep the pace brisk and be quick about your decisions. If you spend your time hemming and hawing about whether you need to keep a notebook from your school days, chances are much higher you'll quit your project before you finish. If you just can't make a quick decision, set it aside for later.

Common Pitfalls

Many people get excited about a new organizing project and run right out to the store to get all the bins, baskets and shelving they think they're going to need. Don't make that mistake! If you've tried to organize before, you've probably got several baskets and bins lying around that will make do until you can decide what you really need. Purge the room of all unnecessary items first, and then shop for what you really need.

Article Submitted by:

Stephanie Johnson

Have questions or comments about this article?

Email her at organizefabulous@yahoo.com

Day of Pampering

Sponsored by the Dental Coffee Group

Where: Cocok's-located on 23

When: Friday, January 19, 2007

Time: 10:00 am- Pedicure
11:30am- Lunch at Cocok's –
Dental Coffee Group will provide the lunch.

Cost: \$25 including Pedicure
(\$10 discount) Lunch, gift bags and door prizes

Deadline for reservation is January 12.

Please RSVP with payment to one of these following people: Space is limited to 20 appointments-so please respond quickly to secure your recliner.

Chris Morse	1800 Kishaba	646-8383
Ann Leonard	4069 Plaza	646-4777
Karina Dick	2221 Kirby Loop	
	Stearley Heights KAB	633-9053
Laina Bell	Tower 847	
	Apt. 804- Kinser	637-2693
Courtney Dental Clinic-		
	Deposit envelop located at Dental	
	Clinic Director's Door	

Deposit envelopes at each location.

Please contact Chris Morse at 646-8383 or morsechristine@hotmail.com if you have any questions. Directions and further information to follow.

FEBRUARY NOSCO EVENT PRESENTS

A

COOKING DEMONSTRATION

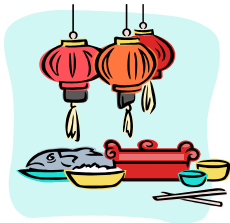
SPONSORED BY: 3D MED BN AND HOSPITAL COFFEE
GROUPS

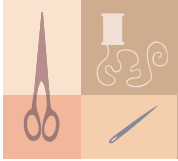
AT

PETER'S PLACE

(NEXT TO PLAZA HOUSE SHOPPING CENTER)

DETAILS TO COME!





NAVAL OFFICERS' SPOUSES' CLUB OF OKINAWA PRESENTS
THE WORLD OF JAPANESE QUILTING
WE WILL BE VISITING "HEARTLAND," A JAPANESE QUILTING SHOP
AND THEN GOING TO LUNCH AT "THE LOOP"

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2007

10:00 A.M.....MEET AT KADENA USO OR BUTLER OFFICERS' CLUB TO CAR POOL
10:30 A.M..... VISIT TO HEARTLAND QUILTING SHOP
11:45 A.M.....TRAVEL TO LUNCH
12:00 P.M..... LUNCH AT THE LOOP
1:45 P.M..... RETURN TO CARS
2:00 P.M..... DEPART

WE WILL HAVE GIFT BAGS FOR ALL AND DOOR PRIZES TO BE WON. LIMIT OF 20 PEOPLE.

PAYMENT WILL BE IN YEN ONLY: 1500
DEADLINE: MARCH 7, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT CARRIE WOOD 633-0389
RESERVE YOUR SPOT BY SIGNING UP AND PAYING THE FEE AT THE NAVY FLEET GIFT SHOP!!!

NAVAL OFFICERS' SPOUSES' CLUB OF OKINAWA
AND
KANDA'S ART GALLERY BOQ

PRESENT THEIR
ANNUAL ART AUCTION
MARCH 31, 2007
BUTLER OFFICERS' CLUB
(MARK YOUR CALANDERS TO BE THERE)

Message from our President:

Happy New Year to All!

I hope 2007 brings you all that you want and that your list of New Year's resolutions is smaller than mine. 2007 promises to have great things in store for NOSCO.

I am very proud to be a part of this organization. What a great group of members you are. Each and every month, we are able to fulfill our social and charitable mission because of your efforts. It is no small task, but you make it look easy.

I always feel that the New Year brings time of reflection, so I would like to acknowledge all the hard work of the following people:

The Navy Fleet Gift Shop Staff, the Navy Fleet Shop Volunteers, the NOSCO Board, and all your many sub-committees that make every event run smoothly, our Advisors, and each and every member. You each add to NOSCO and I thank you.

Ok, on to our schedule of what's ahead in January. Much of us are traveling to Korea this week with our *Travel Group*. Thanks Monica for all the hard work. It promises to be a great time, hope to see a lot of you there.

Our *January Event*, remember we have an event every month, is a Day of Pampering. The Dental Coffee Group has put together a great day. Thanks to all for the overwhelming response to this event. There are a few spots available, so check out the details in this newsletter.

The *Gift Shop* reopens on January 17, followed by our Vietnam Shipment opening on January 24. Don't forget to check out our website before heading to the shop for the latest shipment and special vendor information, www.noscokinawa.com. Currently, the shop also runs an announcement every Tuesday on Page 2 of the weekly Stars and Stripes, so check that out as well.

Looking back a bit, December brought to us our *First Annual New Year's Eve Party*. A huge thank you to our Second Vice, Stephanie Johnson, and her committee which included her recruited husband, mom and dad, for all your efforts. If you missed this event, definitely put it on the calendar for next year.

A special thanks to all you Navy Fleet Gift Shop **shoppers** and you know who you are. The shop had a very successful month of November and December (our short month), which means more money went to charity. What a wonderful thing.

Special acknowledgment to our Navy Gift Shop Buyer, Tina Wagner, for bringing to us such a great November Thailand shipment, and to our Merchandise Manager, Sara Sladacek, for spearheading our First Special Opening Sale Day on December 29th. This was a great success.

Ring in the New Year, NOSCO was happy to present the 1st Baby of the New Year at the Naval Hospital with a \$50 Gift certificate to the Kid's Cottage. Congratulations to these parents.

See you all in the New Year,
Laina Bell, NOSCO President



Navy Fleet Gift Shop

OPENING 2007 AT THE HOME STORE AND KID'S COTTAGE

We will be opening after the holidays January 17, 2007.

VIETNAM SHIPMENT

Vietnam shipment opens January 24, 2007.

GIFT REGISTRY

The Kid's Cottage offers a "Gift Registry" for the expecting mom to pick items she would most like to receive for the new bundle of joy. If you are expecting, drop by the Kids Cottage and get "signed up".

JEWELRY VENDORS AT THE HOME STORE

Boon's Jewelry January 17 -27

SHOPPING HOURS

Home Store: 643-7841
Wed. 10-6, Thurs.-Sat. 10-3
Kids Cottage: 645-8812
Wed.-Fri. 10-3, Sat. 12-2

Events and Things to Do

LEISURE TRAVEL

IACE Leisure Travel Office offers Discount Airfares around the world, Military Discounts, Group Discounts, Tours and Hotel Reservations, Visa Arrangements and Car Rentals. IACE also offers package tours to Hong Kong, Taipei, Singapore, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, Guam, the Philippines and other choice locations. Located in the Navy MWR Reservations Office in Building #3597 on KAB (next to Gate 4), Navy MWR's Leisure Travel Office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. To book your next flight or tour call 634-6244/6956, email IACE at okinawa@iace.co.jp or visit IACE on the web at www.iace.co.jp/english.

Army Community Group of Okinawa with the cooperation of the

American Women's Welfare Association, MOSC, KOSC and NOSCO
Will be sponsoring an ongoing Book Drive to Benefit the Ryukyu America Historical Research Society

Please help this project by donating English children's books and magazines such as National Geographic, Popular Science, New Yorker Magazine, etc. Used books or new books accepted. These books will be donated to rural villages in Okinawa to build library stocks of English books for children in efforts to increase cultural understanding between Japanese and Americans.

Look for collection boxes located in various gift shops/thrift shops, libraries and BX's on Kadena, Foster and Torii Station. Please direct inquiries to Wendy Lundgren 633-9075

Among other educational exchange programs the **Ryukyu America Historical Research Society** promotes educational programs which support

libraries located in remote parts of Okinawa in order to give those students equal opportunities to succeed in their educational endeavors. We hope that the collected books will raise the level of their interest and confidence in English as it is a universal mode of communication in this rapidly changing world and help develop Okinawa students and American students' ability to communicate and understand each others' culture and history.

THE NOSCO MAH JONGG GROUP

The group is looking for a few new members! The group meets every Tuesday morning from 10:00 a.m. to about 1:00 p.m. on Kadena. We take a break during play and have a pot luck salad lunch.

Never played Mah Jongg?? It's a very addicting game that is played with tiles, but is more like gin rummy. You can learn to play in one morning. Right now we are playing using the Chinese rules, but soon we are planning to try playing by the Wright Patterson Air Force Rules. The Officer's Club on Wright Patterson Air Force Base created a set of rules in about 1950 so that all military players could be using the same rules no matter where they were stationed. Come be a part of history and start NOSCO's branch of a very extensive game network.

If you want to learn a little about the game you can check out mahjongg@wrightpattersonowc.org or google "Mah Jongg" for many more sites. Please stop by if you are interested and see how it's played. You will be hooked, too!! E-mail Pam Caruso at PSCaruso@aol.com for more information.

Cultural Events

NOSCO Heading to Korea January 7-10, 2007 Trip is "SOLD OUT"

Thanks for the great response.
We are looking for your post trip updates and photos.
Email: biddlene@hotmail.com

Coming-of-Age Day January 8, 2007

The second Monday of January is Coming-of-Age Day, a national holiday to encourage those who have newly entered adulthood to become self-reliant members of society

Municipal governments host special coming-of-age ceremonies for 20-year-olds, since an "adult" in Japan is legally defined as one who is 20 or over. They gain the right to vote on their twentieth birthday, and they're also allowed to smoke and drink. But along with these rights come new responsibilities as well, and so age 20 is a big turning point for the Japanese.

OIWC

**(Okinawa International Women's
Club)**

Luncheon

January 9, 2006

**Visit our site at: www.freewebs.com/oiwc
for more information**

Yae Dake Cherry Blossom Festival January 20-21 Motobu Cho Yaedake 11:00 am Free

This is Okinawa Island's second highest eminence. The whole area is a natural preserve. Strolling along the paths through the forest, you'll see a wide variety of wild flowers like Okinawa Orchids. The road up the mountain runs 4 kilometers from the entrance off Prefectural road 84. Beginning in the middle of January, the more than 4,000 Taiwan cherry trees on Mt. Yae burst forth in bright pink blooms, and Japan's first cherry blossom festival of the year begins.

Nago Cherry Blossom Festival **January 26-28** **Nago City**

The festival itself has many highlights including all sorts of delicious food, games, rides, parades, folk music, concerts, folk dancers, flower displays, kimono shows, religious ceremonies and a beauty pageant.

A winding path of over 700 stone steps leads you up to the Nago Castle site. The path is lined with beautiful ishidoro or stone lanterns. About half way up the path you will find a Torii Gate and a Shinto Shrine providing a lovely place to rest and either take pictures or videotape the scenery.

Everywhere you look is a sea of color. The millions of pink blossoms make a gorgeous backdrop for all the colorful costumes, floats, paper lanterns and booth decorations. Even though the festival lasts only one weekend, the cherry blossoms are in bloom from two to four weeks.

If you decide to take part in this wonderful festival you should head north on Highway 58. You can follow the signs or just follow the traffic – you can't miss it. The earlier you leave, the lighter the traffic will be. If you leave after 10 a.m. you can expect the drive to last nearly two hours, especially if you go on Sunday. There is a fee for parking, but it should be easy to find and quite plentiful.

Ikebana Classes **with**

Sensei Keiko-san Robbins

(featured in *Okinawa Magazine*-April 2006)

At any of the following locations

Mondays—USO Kadena, 9:00am-12 noon

Tuesdays—USNHO, Conference Room C, 4-5:30 pm

Thursdays—USO Kadena, 9:00am-12 noon

Saturdays—USO Kadena, 9:00am-12 noon

New students welcomed each week.

\$60 per month includes flowers

Call Sensei at: 897-5015 for supply list and reservations



Hot stuff from our coffee groups

Dental Coffee Group

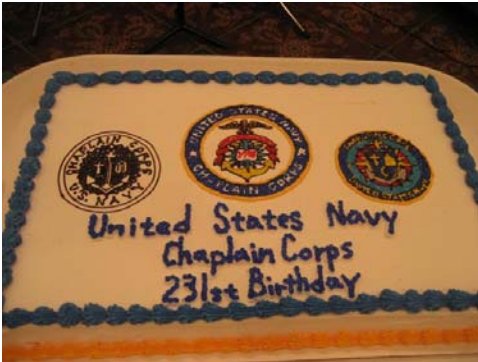
Ann Leonard hosted our holiday party this year at her home. It was a fun, relaxing evening with a fantastic feast of Philippine food prepared by Amy Hill. Everyone received a lovely gift from Ann, purchased at the gift shop, of course! Finally, we tried to remember those less fortunate by requesting that our members bring a toy for the Toys for Tots. Thanks to Ann for the wonderful evening.

Our next event will be Bunko hosted by Angie Pinkerton in January. We do not have the details yet but will let you know as soon as possible!

Do not forget that we are hosting the "Day of Pampering at Cocok's" on January 19th at the Cocok's on hwy 23. The last day to respond is January 12th but there are very limited spots left. The cost is \$25 (a significant savings) and includes a pedicure, lunch, gift bag, and door prizes! If you are interested, please contact Chris Morse at morsechristine@hotmail.com for further information. We are looking forward to seeing many of you there!

Chaplains Coffee Group

While the Chaplains' Spouses did not have a meeting in December they had a great party! We celebrated together at the 231st Chaplains Ball. In addition, to the dancing, we were honored by the Chaplains for our support and dedication as spouses with a piece of the official birthday cake. It was a wonderful night.



We have a full schedule for the next couple of months: January – Ikebana Demonstration, February – Sweetheart Dinner, March – Making Squash Photo Albums. Please plan to join the NOSCO group as we sponsor “The World of Quilting” on March 14, 2007.

USN Hospital Coffee Group

It's that time of year again, time to gather together and exchange those unwanted gifts (or items that have been lying around the house for far too long). Join us at the O'Connor home on Thursday evening, January 18, at 7:00 pm for the “gift exchange game”, it promises to be the highlight of your holiday season! (Ok, so maybe not the highlight, but at least a few good laughs will be had.) Bring a favorite appetizer and a sense of humor!

The Third Medical Group

The 3D Med BN Coffee group hopes that everyone had a wonderful holiday and that the New Year is a blessed one. January is a busy time for our coffee group. On 13 January, the McCue and McCoy families will be co-hosting an after holidays party for the 3D Med BN wardroom. So ladies, bring your husbands out to Margaritaville and your kids out for Cheeseburger(s) in Paradise and let's have some fun. On 20 January, Jamie Avery will be hosting our January Coffee Group event. Details will be coming. Finally, on 27 January, Ayessa and Charlie Toler will be hosting their Okinawa Wedding Reception.

Also, the 3D Med BN and Hospital Coffee Groups have teamed up for the February NOSCO event. It will be a very enjoyable cooking demonstration at Peter's Place next to Plaza House Shopping Center. Please remember to sign up to learn how to cook the great food we'll be eating.

FIRST ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

On December 31, 2006, NOSCO hosted its 1st Annual New Year's Eve Party at Tengan Castle. In the past, for the month of December, NOSCO has hosted a Couple's Holiday Party each year, but with everyone's hectic schedule at the holidays, we decided to go with New Year's instead. The Tengan Castle staff was fantastic. We were able to provide Poker to those who wished to play and also played a round of Let's Make a Deal.

We had several big winners for the many prizes. Congratulations to our two big

winner, the Beach's and the Butler's, who won an overnight stay at the Grand Mer hotel which included two massages and two breakfasts.

Special thanks to Stephanie Johnson for chairing this event, and to Sara Bailey for her help with registration.

FIRST BABY OF 2007!

Congratulations to our First Baby of the New Year, **Mia Frances Nash**, and to her parents, LtCol Christopher and Mari Nash. NOSCO celebrates this blessed event with them and honored them with a \$50 gift certificate to our Navy Fleet Kid's Cottage on Camp Lester.

Each baby born at U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa is given a "First Hugs on Okinawa" baby bib either in blue or pink from NOSCO. Also, each bib is accompanied with a coupon for the Kid's Cottage.

We are happy to welcome all the wonderful babies born to our military families.

2006-2007 NOSCO Board

Honorary President	Vacant
President	Laina Bell
1 st Vice President	Lissete Mize
2 nd Vice President	Stephanie Johnson
Secretary	Debra Bola
Treasurer	Sara Bailey
Parliamentarian	Melanie Hardy

Committee Chairs

AWWA	Shyla Hale
Consumer Affairs	Steve Emerick
Gift Shop Director	Vacant
Hospitality	Cindy Barrington
Membership	Paula Blivin
Publicity	Vicki Lane
Seagull Editor	Elizabeth Biddle
Ways and Means	Margaret Beaubien
Web Site Editor	Shannon GaNun

Coffee Reps

CTF76	Vicky Reed
CFAO	Vacant
Chaplains	Carrie Wood
USNDC	Mimi Brenyo
USNHO	Tami Cooper
	Angie Ehle
3 rd Medical	Andrea McCoy

Advisors

CTF76	Vickie York
CFAO	Vacant
Chaplains	Vacant
USNDC	Ann Leonard
USNHO	Cathi Cox
3 rd Medical	Debbie McCue

All contact information on website

Board News

SEAGULL

Elizabeth Biddle, Editor

As we look forward to February, we begin to think of romance. The editor of your newsletter is looking for the most romantic event, story or Etc. that your spouse did for you or you did for your spouse. Selected "Stories of Romance" will be published in our February newsletter. The only stipulation is that the story be true.

Let me hear from you!
biddlene@hotmail.com

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
FOR
NEWCOMERS' ORIENTATION
Cindy Barrington, Hospitality Chair**

We are looking for individuals who like to talk and love meeting new people. If this sounds like you...you may just be the right person to assist us at the Newcomers' Orientation NOSCO table. This is a weekly event held on Wednesday – all Navy and Marine families new to the island have to attend. Just think, you could find a new best friend or get reacquainted with a long lost friend. The job is easy and it takes less than one hour of your time.

Here's the drill:

- Setup is between 7:30 - 8:00am
- Pick up supplies (supplies, including answers to frequently asked questions) at the Chapel 1 Annex across the street from the Globe and Anchor. **(The Annex is the building connected to the church. Look to the left when you get into the fellowship hall and go to the second office. The BAG is hanging on the Coat Rack.)**
- Go to Globe and Anchor and set up table
- Greet, meet and inform 8:00 - 8:30 am
- Pack up and take supplies back to Chaplain Annex Office Coat Rack.

If you can help out, please contact Cindy Barrington at csbarrington@yahoo.com
Or 633-9661

**MEALS FOR NEW MOMS
Shannon GaNun, Coordinator**

A Great Benefit of NOSCO Membership
A Great gift to the new mother

The gift of a prepared meal during those first hectic weeks with a newborn is always appreciated. If you or another NOSCO member has just had or is about to have a baby, please let Shannon GaNun know. Don't count on the new mom to ask you! Often they are too busy and overwhelmed to ask for any help. You get the "ball rolling" by contacting Shannon who will organize a few weeks of meals to be brought to the family. Make sure you include the new mom's email, phone number, and address. If you are interested in volunteering to cook

meals, let her know and she will contact you regarding menu, timing etc.
(shannon@shannonganun.com or 633-1199)

**INTEREST GROUPS
/SCHOLARSHIP
Lissette Mize, First Vice President**

It is never too late to join an Interest Group. Below is a list of current groups. Simply email the coordinator and attend. You'll be glad you did.

Baby Lunch Bunch

Casey Daily (caseydaily@yahoo.com)

Bible Study

Katrina Pringle

(pringleko@oki10.med.navy.mil)

Board Gaming

Meghan Capp (meghan.capp@gmail.com)

Book Club

Kelly Reddy-Heffner

(reddyheffner@hotmail.com)

Cooking

Jen Denevan (jenniferdenevan@hotmail.com)

Dining Divas

Shyla Hale (srmhale@yahoo.com) and

Lissette Mize (colycal@yahoo.com)

Hiking/Geocaching

Kelly Reddy-Heffner

(reddyheffner@hotmail.com)

Playgroup

Tami Cooper (tnccooper@mac.com)

Quilting

Carrie Wood (gclcwood@oasis.mediatti.net)

Scrap Booking

Vicky York (reddahlia@hotmail.com)

Stamping

Paula Blivin (blivin000@yahoo.com)

Travel

Monica Butler (mkskoala2004@yahoo.com)

Don't see a group you want to join? Start your own!

2006-2007 EVENT PLANNING

Month	Coffee Group	Event
January	Dental	Day of Pampering
February	USNH/3rd Med	Cooking Class/Demo
March	Chaplains	Japanese Quilting
April	NOSCO	Art Auction
May	NOSCO	Scholarship Reception
June	NOSCO	End of Year Picnic



NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

NEW YEAR'S EVE: All around the world people celebrate the coming of a New Year and time with traditions from their country. Although the celebrations are not always held on the same day, they often include traditions of religious celebrations, costume parties, parades and with customs said to bring good luck and fortune in the New Year.

ECUADOR - In South America "Ano Viejo" is celebrated by creating a fake person or dummy. The scarecrow-looking person will be completely dressed and stuffed with old newspapers and firecrackers. The dummy is usually placed outside the home. He represents something that happened during the last year. At midnight each family lights the

dummy on fire. As the dummy goes up in smoke, the firecrackers also go off to add to the festivities. The old year is forgotten and the new year begins.

GREECE - In Greece, St. Basil fills the children's shoes with presents at midnight.

DENMARK - It is a good sign to find your door littered with a pile of broken dishes at New Years. Old dishes are saved all year to throw them at the homes where their friends live on New Year's Eve. Many broken dishes were a symbol that you have many friends!

JAPAN - People in Japan spend weeks planning for their New Year celebrations. They buy special food and make decorations for their front doors out of pine branches, bamboo, and ropes that are believed to bring health and long life. Fan ropes are also hung over the doors and roofs with seaweed or ferns to bring them happiness and good luck. Children receive "otoshidamas" which are small gifts with money inside. They also send New Year cards to their friends and hold forgetting-year parties to say goodbye to the old year. The Japanese also forgive friends and family for any misunderstandings and disagreements they may have had that year so they can make a clean start of the new year. On December 31st, bells are rung 108 times to chase away 108 troubles. The people all laugh after the gongs because laughter will drive away the bad spirits. With all the bad spirits gone and troubles and enemies forgiven, they enjoy a day of celebration.

In SPAIN, it is a tradition to serve everyone twelve grapes just before midnight on New Year's Eve. When the clock starts to chime everyone puts a grape in their mouth, and then another grape with each chime until all twelve chimes have struck and all 12 grapes are eaten. The New Year can't start until everyone has finished his or her grapes!

BAHAMAS NEW YEARS is celebrated in many countries with a parade. After spending many months creating colorful costumes, the Junkanoo parade is held in the Bahamas where thousands of people celebrate in the New Year's Festival. Prizes are given to the best, the strangest, or the most beautiful costumes.

In NEPAL there is a four day parade during the New Year celebration and in Greece people carry figures of apples, ships and stars.

In SYRIA AND LEBANON children parade door to door as well.

THAILAND'S parade is led by an honored woman and people march to the beat of drums and gongs. Dragons, elephants, buffalos and giants are popular parade costumes there.

IN OBERAMMERGAU, WEST GERMANY, the parade is very long and the parade leader carries a tall pole with a star on the top. He sings songs about the past year and dance to a band.

CHINESE New Year starts with the New Moon on the first day of the new year and ends on the full moon 15 days later. The 15th day of the new year is called the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade. The Chinese calendar is based on a combination of lunar and solar movements. The lunar cycle is about 29.5 days. In order to "catch up" with the solar calendar the Chinese insert an

extra month once every few years (seven years out of a 19-yearcycle). This is the same as adding an extra day on leap year. This is why, according to the solar calendar, the Chinese New Year falls on a different date each year. New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are celebrated as a family affair, a time of reunion and thanksgiving. The celebration was traditionally highlighted with a religious ceremony given in honor of Heaven and Earth, the gods of the household and the family ancestors. The sacrifice to the ancestors, the most vital of all the rituals, united the living members with those who had passed away. Departed relatives are remembered with great respect because they were responsible for laying the foundations for the fortune and glory of the family. The presence of the ancestors is acknowledged on New Year's Eve with a dinner arranged for them at the family banquet table. The spirits of the ancestors, together with the living, celebrate the onset of the New Year as one great community. The communal feast called "surrounding the stove" or weilu. It symbolizes family unity and honors the past and present generations.

A Good Laugh

LIPSTICK IN SCHOOL

According to a news report, a certain school in Garden City, MI was recently faced with a unique problem.

A number of 12-year-old girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the washroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror leaving dozens of little lip prints. Every night, the maintenance man would remove them and the next day, the girls would put them back.

Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. He called all the girls to the washroom and met them there with the maintenance man. He explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night.

To demonstrate how difficult it had been to clean the mirrors, he asked the maintenance man to show the girls how much effort was required.

He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it in the toilet, and cleaned the mirror with it. Since then, there have been no lip prints on the mirror. **THE MORAL OF THIS STORY:** There are teachers and then there are educators.