

NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

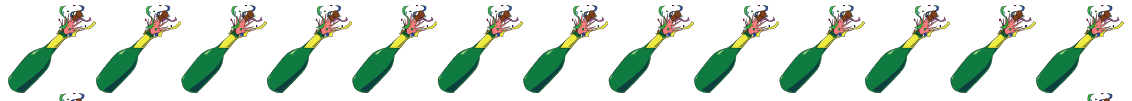
Esperanza Services is a non-profit organization that provides personalized, high quality supportive services and advocacy to underserved communities, especially children, adults, and families with special needs to achieve self-sufficiency with dignity, respect and compassion.

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The road of life has many twists and turns, but if you stay the course, great things await you.



So many of you enjoyed Christmas Around the World in our last issue; so we decided to bring you New Year's traditions around the world and how other parts of the world view the turning of the calendar page from December to January:

GREECE: January 1st is an important date in Greece because it is not only the first day of the New Year but it is also **St. Basil's Day**. St Basil was one the forefathers of the Greek Orthodox Church. He is remembered for his kindness and generosity to the poor. He is thought to have died on this date so this is how they honor him.

PORTUGAL: The Portuguese pick and eat twelve grapes from a bunch as the clock strikes twelve on New Year's Eve. This is done to ensure twelve happy months in the coming year.

In Northern Portugal children go caroling from home to home and are given treats and coins. They sing old songs or **Janeiro's** which is said to

bring good luck. **TIBET:** The Tibetan New year is known as **Losar**. The Tibetan people are followers of the Buddhists faith. Their leader is the Dalai Lama and when he dies his soul passes



into a new-born baby. Care is taken to find a boy at approximately the same time as the death of the lama. The boy is educated and takes up religious duties when he is old enough. The New Year is celebrated in late January or early February at the time of the new moon.

GERMANY: In Germany people would drop molten lead into cold water and try to tell the future from the shape it made. A heart or ring shape meant a wedding, a ship a journey, and a pig plenty of food in the year ahead.

People also would leave a bit of every food eaten on New Year's Eve on their plate until

after Midnight as a way of ensuring a well-stocked larder. Carp was included as it was thought to bring wealth.

KOREA: The first day of the lunar New Year is called Solnal. This is for families to renew ties and prepare for the new year. New Year's Eve: People place straw scoopers, rakes or sieves on their doors and walls to protect their families from evil spirit sin the new year.

AUSTRALIA: In Australia they celebrate the New Year on January 1. This day is a public holiday and many people have picnics and camp out on the beach. They have parties that start on December 31 and at midnight they start to make noise with whistles and rattles, car horns and church bells. To ring in the New Year. In Australia New Year is a day for outdoor activities such as rodeos, picnic races and surf carnivals.

BELGIAN: In Belgium on New Year's Eve everyone kisses, exchanges good luck greetings, and drinks toasts to absent relatives and friends. The cities, cafés, and restaurants are crowded with people who bid bye to the old year.



LAUGHING LOUNGE

Starting a Diet

Two girlfriends were talking at a New Year's Eve party. The talk got around to what their resolutions would be.

"I'm going to start a diet to get rid of all of these extra pounds I put on over the holidays," Kim said.

"Good!" Katrina exclaimed. "I'm ready to start a diet too. We can be dieting buddies and help each other out. When I feel the urge to drive out and get a burger and fries, I'll call you first."

"Great!" Kim replied. "I'll ride with you."



Employee of the Month

Congratulations to this month's Employee of the month Adam Vasquez for giving excellence a whole new meaning with his dedication, hard work and positive attitude. I once again had the privilege of interviewing our Employee of the month and this is what he had to say....

Chrissy: How do you deal with a difficult client?

Adam: I go off a reward system. So if they don't want to do something they know they need to do; I motivate them by telling them that if they get this done they'll get whatever it is they may have wanted or perhaps they wanted to go somewhere so we'll go

Chrissy: So how long have you worked for Esperanza Services?

Adam: Since April of 2008

Chrissy: So in that time you've been here, what would you say is your attendance record?

Adam: Perfect. I try never to miss a day.

Chrissy: So what motivates you to come to work when you may otherwise not feel like it?



Chrissy: What would you say is the biggest asset you provide Esperanza?

Adam: Keeping an open mind to the various needs of the different clients and realizing that they're all a different place in their lives and to be able to work with each client according to his or her needs.

Chrissy: What, if anything, do you feel Esperanza has given you to take with you after you leave?

Adam: The client actually. I think about how much our time with the clients mean to them and how disappointed they become when we do skip days with them. So I know that I'll let them down if I don't show up and I can't do that.

Adam: I've learned never to take life for granted. We don't realize how good we have things and we take our freedom and independence for granted. But then you see these clients who would give anything to be in our shoes and we realize how good we really do have it.

Chrissy: What is the biggest advice you'd give a new counselor in your field?

We can tell from his answers just how much Adam enjoys what he does here at Esperanza Services and how he does make a difference in his clients' lives. Congratulations again Adam!

Adam: To keep an open mind and learn how to manage your time because there will be days you'll feel overwhelmed between being out in the field, writing reports and everything else.

AROUND THE WORLD

THE SWEDEN CULTURE



Fun Facts

Did you know....?

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World compiled by ancient Greek historians are: The Great Pyramid of Giza, The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, The Statue of Zeus at Olympia, The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, The Colossus of Rhodes and The Lighthouse of Alexandria.



The Nordics, made up of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway, are amazing places in their own right. Each country has its own reason why you should visit there. For some this next trip might be a once in a lifetime opportunity and Sweden in particular is not going to let you down.

Sweden is the fifth largest country in Europe and the Sweden culture is as much of a part of Europe as any other country in the European Union. It's just that the culture here has been inspired and influenced by many different countries. Families and groups made their way to Sweden and in its history these people came from surrounding countries like France, Germany and Belgium. Eventually as the population has grown, different parts of the country are found to have mixed culture. The immigrants brought with them their own values and although those traditions may not be so obvious nowadays, each bit of history and value is warmly remembered. Today, the farming and cultivation of the land makes up a whole one/tenth of the country.

The mix within Sweden culture is evident through media such as magazines, newspapers, and TV – where the strong link with America is obvious. Other traditions may be seen with the food in Sweden. Inspiration has come from the different pallets of those foreigners that have settled in the country over the many years.

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THE ORIGIN OF NEW YEAR'S

New Year is the world's most popularly celebrated festival. Perhaps, everybody would like to know how these celebrations began, from where it originated and what is so important about the festival. Let's give you an insight to the origin of this grand event in a brief form.

Origin of New Year dates back to the era of emperors. They thought of celebrating a special day which should dot a day for beginning and end of the year. First New Year celebrations were noticed in Mesopotamia around 2000 years. It was celebrated at the time of Equinox in mid-March by the Egyptians, Persians and Phoenicians while Greeks celebrated it on winter solstice.

Ancient New Year Calendar

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As per the ancient Roman calendar New Year fell on March 1. This calendar just had ten months and March was the first month of the year. The calendar originated by the cycles of the moon, beginning in spring and ending with autumn planting.

Inclusion of Two Calendar Months

It was Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome who divided the year into twelve lunar months by adding the months of January and February. The New Year was shifted to January as it marked the beginning of the civil years in Rome. But this was not fully accepted by the people of Rome and they continued celebrating in the month of March only.

January 1- an Official Date of New Year Celebrations

The Roman emperor Julius Caesar officially declared January 1 to be a New Year in 46 B.C. Romans worshiped God Janus who had two faces, one looking forward and the other looking backward. The month of January was named after this Roman God and it gave an idea to the emperor to establish January as a gate to the New Year. It is said Caesar celebrated January 1 - New Year by ordering the revolutionary Jewish forces to route back.

People began New Year celebrations on January 1 after many years. They ritualized the beginning of the year by acting and re-enacting the world of the past before peace proliferated. People learned January as first month of the year and with this the tradition of following Julian calendar.

Abolition of Roman New Year Date

In the medieval period, pagan festivals were given more importance and March 25 was announced as the beginning of the New Year. March 25 was called the Annunciation Day as on this day Mary got the news that she should be impregnated. Later, the King of England ensured that Jesus' birth December 25 should be commemorated as New Year.

Gregorian Calendar

About 500 years later, Pope Gregory XIII abolished the old Julian calendar and introduced Gregorian calendar which comprised of a leap year after every four years to maintain balance between seasons and calendar. Finally, in 1582, Gregorian calendar was set to celebrate New Year on the first day of January.

Trivia Fun (Answers on page 4)

1. What's the smallest country in the world?
2. What's the smallest type of tree in the world?
3. What's the fastest passenger plane in the world?
4. What language has the most words?
5. Which fast food restaurants were established by Ray Kroc?

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A Look at Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr., (January 15, 1929-April 4, 1968) was born Michael Luther King, Jr., but later had his name changed to Martin. His grandfather began the family's long tenure as pastors of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, serving from 1914 to 1931; his father has served from then until the present, and from 1960 until his death Martin Luther acted as co-pastor. Martin Luther attended segregated public schools in Georgia, graduating from high school at the age of fifteen; he received the B. A. degree in 1948 from Morehouse College, a distinguished Negro institution of Atlanta from which both his father and grandfather had graduated. After three years of theological study at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania where he was elected president of a predominantly white senior class, he was awarded the B.D. in 1951. With a fellowship won at Crozer, he enrolled in graduate studies at Boston University, completing his residence for the doctorate in 1953 and receiving the degree in 1955. In Boston he met and married Coretta Scott, a young woman of uncommon intellectual and artistic attainments. Two sons and two daughters were born into the family. In 1954, Martin Luther King became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Always a strong worker for civil rights for members of his race, King was, by this time, a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading organization of its kind in the nation. He was ready, then, early in December, 1955, to accept the leadership of the first great Negro non-violent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, the bus boycott described by Gunnar Jahn in his presentation speech in honor of the laureate. The boycott lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, Negroes and whites rode the buses as equals. During these days of boycott, King was ar-



rested, his home was bombed, he was subjected to personal abuse, but at the same time he emerged as a Negro leader of the first rank. In 1957 he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to provide new leadership for the now burgeoning civil rights movement. The ideals for this organization he took from Christianity; its operational techniques from Gandhi. In the eleven-year period between 1957 and 1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action; and meanwhile he wrote five books as well as numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the entire world, providing what he called a coalition of conscience. and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", a manifesto of the Negro revolution; he planned the drives in Alabama for the registration of Negroes as voters; he directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his address, "I Have a Dream", he conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson; he was arrested upwards of twenty times and assaulted at least four times; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine in 1963; and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure.

At the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money of \$54,123 to the furtherance of the civil rights movement.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead a protest march in sympathy with striking garbage workers of that city, he was assassinated.

Answers to Trivia on page 3

1. Vatican City
2. Bonsai
3. Concorde
4. English
5. McDondalds

Esperanza would love to hear from you.

If you would like to contribute to the Esperanza Courier please send Chrissy Yacoub an email at cyacoub@esperanzaservices.com.

January 2010 Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1.	2.
3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
10.- Payday	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
17.	18.- Martin Luther King Jr. Day	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.
24.	25.- Payday	26.	27.	28.	29- quar- terly meeting	30.
31.						