



COLORADO SPRINGS
CHINESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE
科泉市中華文化協會

茶葉香談

秋 FALL

TEA LEAVES

Fall 2016

Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute

www.cscii.org



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Chinese Proverb

"Live until old age, learn until old age."

活到老，学到老。

CSCCI 2016

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秋

Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival in Three Words: Family, Moon, and Mooncakes

By Debra Bellas-Dow

The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival, falls on the 15th day of the eighth month of the Chinese lunar calendar. This would be in September or early October in the Gregorian calendar.

HISTORY

Appreciating the Moon

There are many stories about the origin of the Mid-Autumn Festival. The ancient Chinese, as well as many other ancient cultures, observed the movement of the moon, understanding the close relationship with the position of the moon and the changes of the seasons and the impact of agricultural production.

HAN UPRISING

At the end of the Yuan Dynasty, the Han people's resistance wanted to overthrow the rule of the Mongols. The military counselor of the Han people's resistance army, Liu Bowen, orchestrated the plan to right a message "Uprising on the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival" and have the message put in the mooncakes. These mooncakes were then sold to the other Han people. Since the Mongols did not eat mooncakes, this plan was a great success against the Mongol rulership which freed the Han people from their rule. From then on, the Chinese ate mooncakes every Mid-Autumn Festival to commemorate the uprising (although this is not as well known today).

ROMANTIC LEGEND

It is important to note, there are many versions of the famous love story of Chang'e and Hou Yi. This story is told to the Chinese children about a pretty lady on the moon. During the Mid-Autumn, children try to see the lady's shape on the moon.

The story starts where there were ten suns in the sky. It was too hot for the plants and people to survive. A hero named Hou Yi, using his bow and arrows, saved everyone by shooting down nine of the suns. The Queen Mother of the West, gave Hou Yi a bottle of a magic water. It could make him immortal and allow him to go to heaven. However, Hou Yi did not want to drink the magic water, he wanted to stay with Chang'e, his pretty wife. Hou Yi asked his wife to keep the elixir safe for him.

The story goes, one day while the Hou Yi was out hunting with his students, another student named Pang Meng pretended to be sick and did not go with the group. Instead, Pang Meng went to Hou Yi's house to steal the elixir. Chang'e knew she could not defeat Pang Meng, so she drank the magic elixir. The elixir made her fly higher and higher until she reached the moon. It is said she did become immortal.

Hou Yi was very sad when he received the news about Chang'e, he placed a table under the moon, had food prepared and put on the table in hopes Chang'e could come back to stay with him.



Chang'e

Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival in Three Words: Family, Moon, and Mooncakes

By Debra Bellas-Down

MOONCAKES

The Moon Cake is the special food of Mid-Autumn Festival. It is a round pastry with sweet fillings such as nuts, egg yolk, mashed red beans, black sesame. Today, many moon cakes are filled with fruit-flavors, coffee-flavors and there are even ice cream moon cakes.

During the Festival, people not only enjoy eating these special little cakes, they are given as an offering to the moon to give thanks of gratitude.

Making and sharing mooncakes is one of the hallmark traditions of this festival. In Chinese culture, a round shape symbolizes completeness and reunion.

Sharing and eating these traditional mooncakes among family members during the week of the festival symbolizes the completeness and unity of families.

In some areas ofna, the senior person in the household would cut the mooncakes into pieces and distribute them to each family member to signify family reunion.

Even today, Chinese people regard the festival as an important day for family reunion. People from far away will try to come back home for the family gathering. The most important activity.



Lantern Festival 2016

by: Debra Bellas-Dow

The Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute was pleased to have a booth on May 28th at the Annual Lantern Glow Festival which is held at the Pikes Peak International Raceway. The air was filled with lively music, vendors provided fun food to eat, other vendors were present sharing their wares. The CSCCI enjoyed sharing the story about the Lantern Glow Festival, how it relates to Chinese history and culture.

When the sky darkens, it was wonderful to see people writing their hopes and dreams for the future on each lantern. Some groups had made camp fires to hold their lanterns over the flames to assist the lanterns to take flight. It is a wonderful experience to watch the crowd growing with excitement as the lanterns flew up and lit the night sky.

The lantern Festival can be traced back to China around 2000 years ago. Being celebrated on the last day traditionally of the Chinese most important festival, Spring Festival. The lantern Festival falls on the first full moon of the Chinese calendar, celebrating the return of spring and symbolizing the reunion of family.

As China is a vast country with a long history and diverse cultures, Lantern Festival customs and activities vary traditionally. Traditionally, some of the activities during the Chinese Lantern Festival are, setting off fireworks, guessing riddles written on lanterns, eating (tangyuan) dumplings, lion dances, dragon dances and walking on stilts.

Lion dances are performed at important Chinese events, especially at the lantern Festival. The Ancient people regarded the lion as a symbol of bravery and strength, believing the lion will ward off evil. Lighting and appreciating lanterns is the main activity of the festival. Lighting lanterns is a way for people to pray that they will have smooth futures and express their best wishes for their families.



Clay Fest

by Mark Wong

"Wouldn't it be cool if we had a competition for potters? A kind of pottery Olympics?"... Me and my big mouth. I was a brash young upstart renting studio space at the Business of Art Center, fresh out of college, when I uttered these words to the director of the BAC (since transformed from the Business of Art Center to the Manitou Art Center.) She liked the idea enough to mention it to a couple of other potters and in the summer of 1991 the first Clayfest hit the streets- well actually one street- Canon Avenue in front of the Commonwheel co-op was closed off and the good, clean, dirty fun was inaugurated. I missed that first one -family obligation- but I was hooked by the second and joined the Clayfest's committee (A Bunch of Potters) to help plan the third.

By 1996 the 'fest was rolling high with potters coming from all over to compete for prizes donated by company's promoting their wares and bought with the entrance fees for joining the competitions Bleachers from the baseball field were moved to accommodate the onlookers. We awarded winners with potters wheels, tons of clay, kilns and ware racks. It wasn't sustainable. Company's balked at giving away products that lasted a lifetime (no repeat business there); participants balked at the entry fee; and we were alarmed at the turn in the spirit of the event which got a bit nasty with so much loot on the line. To combat this we started raffling off the top prizes with a ticket given to all the paying participants. We even waived the entry fee and survived on donations and grants for a bit. Our prizes dwindled and so did the pool of participants. In 2007 the funding dried up with the economy and our focus had to change.

At every 'fest we took a break in the middle for lunch. Sometimes we had demonstrations but even so there was always a long line of potters' wheels sitting idle. A few brave souls would ask and we'd always say "yes" and give them some clay. By the time the lunch break was over, the wheels were full of neophytes trying their hand and disappointed that they had to go back to watching. This inspired a shift in the focus of the Clayfest. Now we do lessons.

Free lessons are given to all who would try with expert instruction and firing available. A portable kiln was incorporated as well. The clay and teachers are paid for with an empty bowl event every year and supplemented with firing fees. The budget is a tightrope of a shoestring but we manage to pay for our needs every year. We also joined the What If Festival and now have a steady stream of pots from there to fire at the 'fest two weeks later. Our annual celebration of clay is almost here. The Clayfest will take place at Soda Springs Pavilion in Soda Springs Park in Manitou Springs. It will run from 10- 4pm on Saturday and Sunday September 24th and 25th. We will have a kiln running both days for any who would decorate and fire their pottery from the What If Festival. Blanks from professionals will also be available to decorate and fire for a small fee (\$5.00).



Mission Statement

The CSCCI is committed to fostering understanding of Chinese culture by promoting opportunities for events, networking, travel, education and services available to the people of Colorado Springs.

Become a Member

Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute

To become a member, please complete the information below and send the form with your check or money order to:

Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural
Institute
PO Box 2625
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-2625

Membership Benefits:

- Discount ticket pricing for all events and activities
- Free Quarterly Newsletter
- E-mail reminders to all our future events
- and More....

Membership Application

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Annual Membership

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- _____ Non-profit organization (up to 20 members) \$450
- _____ Silver Patron \$150
- _____ Gold Patron \$250
- _____ Platinum Patron \$500

Dinner Menu

核桃蝦	Walnut Shrimp
芦笋牛肉小炒	Beef and Asparagus
罗勒炒鸡丁	Basil Chicken
清炒小白菜	Shao Bai Tsai
酸辣汤或馄饨汤	Hot and Sour Soup / Wonton Soup
甜点: 豆沙月饼	Dessert: Red Bean Mooncake

Upcoming Asian Holidays

Mid-Autumn Festival
September 15, 2016

Upcoming Asian Cultural Events

CSCCI Moon Festival Banquet*
September 18, 2016
8850 N Union Blvd

*Register online at www.cscCI.org

CSCCI Moon Festival Banquet

By Jiaying Peng

Every autumn, the Chinese celebrate the Moon Festival, also known as the Mid-Autumn Festival. This holiday celebrates a significant aspect of Chinese culture and history: the importance of family.

It is tradition that every year during the Mid-Autumn festival, families gather together to share a meal together, no matter the distance. During this holiday season in China, the train stations, bus stations, and airports are swarmed with people trying to return home for a family feast.

Though it is not a family dinner, the CSCCI hosts a Moon Festival banquet annually around this holiday at a Chinese restaurant. This year, the dinner will be held at the Shangri La Chinese Restaurant on September 18th from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

Not only will this banquet feature traditional Chinese entrees, for dessert, guests can enjoy a mooncake, the symbol of the Mid-Autumn Festival for many.

The cost of this six course meal is only \$28 for non-members and \$25 for members. Sign up for this banquet soon at www.cscCI.org.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

