

Slither into the Year of Snake

By STEPHEN WATSON
Staff Writer

Back in December, when our Western culture was awaiting what some have called the "true" Millennium, preparations had already begun back in the East for the upcoming Chinese New Year: The Year of The Snake.

The Chinese calendar is a lunar calendar, consisting of 12 months, each of which comprises approximately 29-30 days. The calendar runs on a 60-year cycle. There are 12 animal figures, each of which is represented by each year. Each animal therefore is represented four times in a cycle. Much like our Western calendar, the Chinese calendar also has a leap year, on which an extra day is added.

The Chinese New Year always falls on the first day of spring, and thus is so referred to as the "Spring Festival." The concept of the Snake Sleeping In Winter brings to mind a sense of reserve in order to endure through a cold winter with ease and comfort. One might think that

such a vision would insinuate that the year ahead will be secure and prosperous, but one cannot have a prosperous year without the proper support and determination to ensure the desired state of well being.

Despite the cultural and social differences between the two celebrations, they are actually quite similar in terms of the ritualistic and traditional aspects behind

them. For instance, in both cultures, preparations are made prior to the event, which include decorations, food, drink, and even fireworks. The Chinese New Year, though, has certain quirks that make it unique. The food eaten during the celebration is typically seafood and dumplings, as opposed to the Western immersion in junk foods and snacks.

While we here in America wear pretty much whatever we want during our New Year, the Chinese culture tends to wear red, as it is a color aimed at warding off evil spirits. After dinner on the eve of the event, it is natural for families to engage in social activities such as board games, watching TV programs, and getting together to watch fireworks.

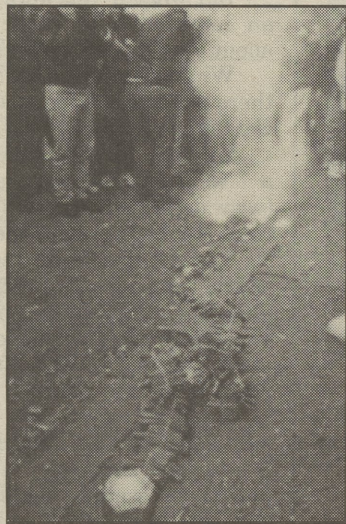
On the day itself, an ancient tradition, known as Hong Bao, takes place, which consists of married couples giving children and single adults money in red envelopes.

Similar to Western tradition, the Chinese also live by the saying "let bygones be bygones," and disperse of their negative feelings towards one

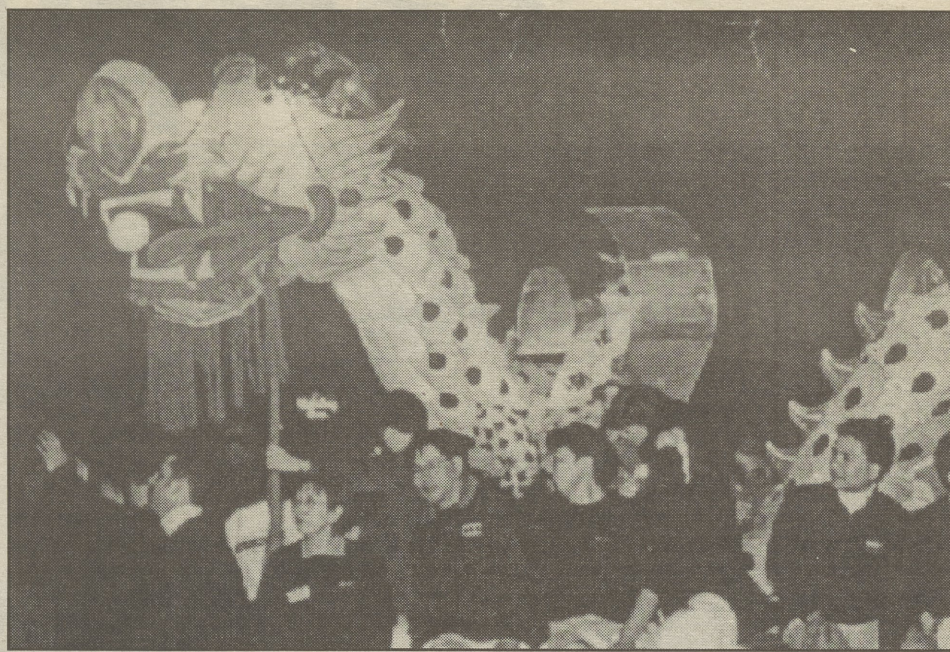
another.

The event closes with the Festival of Lanterns, which is comprised of many dances, songs and lantern shows. Putting all differences aside, the Chinese New Year has a universal message that anyone can agree with: peace and happiness for all.

On Jan. 23, Penn State Delaware County held a celebration in the Large



Firecrackers in the street are just one way the Chinese chase away the evil spirits as a new year dawns.



A dragon helps bring in the new year — the Year of the Snake in the Chinese calendar.

Conference Room of the Commons Building in honor of the upcoming Chinese New Year. The celebration was free and open to all students, faculty and the community.

It featured Chinese cuisine, games, music, guest speakers, and presentations. The festivities kicked off with an introduction by Dr. Shaoxian Yu, a career counselor here at Penn State Delaware County, who helped organize the event.

Following Dr. Yu, a handful of our Asian-American students [including our Asian-American Student Caucus (AASC) president], who also helped the event come together, spoke about their personal experiences with the Chinese New Year. It was very interesting to contemplate both the similarities and differences each family has in their celebration of this ancient Chinese tradition.

After all the guest speakers talked about their experiences, there was a dragon demonstration in which one person is at the head of a cloth, puppet-like dragon, another person in the back, and they move with the accompaniment of drums. The ending of this demonstration commenced the fun, food, and games.

Traditional Chinese cuisine, such as egg rolls, noodles, and rice, were served along with candies and cakes to complement the meal.

While some people were enjoying their meal, others were at the games tables trying to win Chinese prizes, including necklaces, bracelets, stuffed animals, and key chains. In addition to this, people were walking around the room pondering the beautiful arts, crafts, and puzzles.

Overall, it was a truly enlightening cultural experience and recognition of the Chinese New Year.

"[This was] a wonderful cultural event! Students expressed and animated their cultural values, the values of one of the world's oldest and greatest cultures," said Dr. Robert Ginsberg, professor of philosophy and comparative literature.

Samnang Bong, a sophomore nursing major, said, "I think that the celebration of the Chinese New Year is interesting, but it is opposite of my New Year (Cambodian) which takes place the whole week of which April 13th is included. The impact that I have is that it helps the campus experience other cultures that we have from different races of students."

Overall, everyone had similar sentiments about the experience, and it was enjoyed by all.

If anyone would like more information about the event or Chinese culture, they should contact Dr. Yu at (610) 892-1289, or visit him in his office on the 2nd floor of the Commons Building.

Dinner spots to take the one you love

By STACEY LAWRENCE
Staff Writer

Phone: (610) 853 0707.

Japanese cuisine

Hibachi Japanese Steak House and Sushi Bar is located in the Springfield Shopping Center, at 145 S. State Rd., Springfield. It is well known for its original form of preparing and presenting the food to the customer.

The first visit to this restaurant will entail some pleasant surprises. As you sit down at your seat, the first thing you will notice is that you and your date aren't the only ones sitting at your table. Unless arriving with a few other couples or a group of friends, you are likely to be sharing a table with another party. This will not be bothersome for very long.

The menu contains all types of Japanese and Chinese cuisine. Although there are some foods not easily recognized by the average customer (such as Linago Bento, \$15), the menu contains many of the staple Japanese foods with which we are familiar (chicken teriyaki, \$14.95; hibachi vegetables, \$9.95).

As you decide what you want to eat from the menu, you may look around and discover that the chef cooks the food right in front of customers. The entire entrée and all side orders are prepared on a metal cooking surface that is attached to the table.

While catching kisses from your sweetie at the table, you can also catch some shrimp in your mouth. As an added treat at the beginning of every meal, the chef throws shrimp at each customer.

If you are the daring type, go for it! Walk-in seating available.

Phone: (610) 690 4911.

Both restaurants provide great service to the customers, whether they be a couple or just a couple of friends. Eating out can give two people a chance to really talk and enjoy the food, the surroundings, and most importantly, each other.

As Valentine's Day approaches, those of us fortunate enough to have a significant other are beginning to imagine red roses, boxed candy and snugly teddy bears.

The problem arises, however, when a couple cannot decide on a romantic — but reasonably priced — restaurant. And how much is too much? Will the girl think less of the guy if he considers the price to be a major factor in where the couple spends their Valentine's Day celebration?

In an effort to make this Valentine's Day a little easier for the male population, I have composed a review of two local restaurants. Keep in mind that although this review is geared toward couples, these restaurants can be visited year-round and come highly recommended. Both restaurants contain extensive menus, reasonable prices and delicious cuisine. They are also centrally located and easily accessible by public transportation.

Italian fare

Castelli's restaurant & Bar is located on West Chester Pike and Eagle Road in Havertown. It has an authentic Italian style, from the handcrafted murals throughout the restaurant to the stunning marble tables.

The Italian cuisine ranges from favorites such as Traditional Italian Wedding Soup (\$3) and chicken parmigian (\$11.95) to specialty entrees such as stuffed flounder (\$17.95) and steak pizzaiola (\$19.95).

Overall, this restaurant lives up to the name of an authentic Italian eatery. It manages to thoroughly satisfy the customer, while leaving enough money in your pocket to leave a hefty tip.

Make reservations in advance, especially on the weekends.

Three restaurants to fit any mood this Valentine's Day

By DANIELLE ROSSI
Staff Writer

New Orleans Café
State and Jackson streets
Media, Pa. (610) 627-4340
Dinner hours: 5-11 p.m.
Monday to Thursday
Until midnight Friday and Saturday,
5-9 p.m. Sundays
Cuisine Type: Cajun
Price Range: \$36-\$63 (this includes two entrees, one appetizer, two glasses of wine or soft drinks, and one dessert to share)

Recommended: "Cashew chicken bourbon Orleans," tender chicken, garlic butter, cashews, onions, bourbon, and scallions served over rice (\$13.95)
Romantic Extras: Live Jazz and white chocolate cream pie for dessert

Tiramisu
528 S. 5th Street (corner of South Street)
Philadelphia, Pa. (215) 925-3335
Dinner Hours: 5-11 p.m.
Monday to Thursday
Until midnight Friday and Saturday,
3-10 p.m. Sunday
Cuisine type: New York style Italian
Price range: \$45-\$72 (this includes two dinner entrees, one

appetizer, two glasses of wine or soft drinks, and a tiramisu for sharing)

Recommended: "Chicken Marsala," boneless chicken sautéed in a white wine sauce with a hint of rosemary spices (\$13.95)

Romantic Extras: Take a midnight walk down South Street to Penn's Landing, (bring a coat) and of course, a famous tiramisu for dessert

Dilworthtown Inn
1390 Old Wilmington Pike
West Chester, Pa. (610) 399-1390
Dinner hours: 5:30-10 p.m.
Monday to Saturday
3-10 p.m. Sunday
Cuisine type: Historic French American Cuisine

Price Range: \$51-\$86 (this includes two entrees or one sharing entrée, two bowls of Dilworth's famous exotic mushroom soup, two glasses of wine or soft drinks, and one dessert for sharing)

Recommended: "Chateaubriand," beef tenderloin carved tableside with mushrooms (\$2.25)

Romantic extras: Atmosphere and what could be more romantic than your meal carved tableside! Service is fit for a King and Queen.