

ZigZagZine

Issue 2

CREATING, THINKING, IMAGINING

Jan./Feb. 2008

Chinese New Year: The year of the rat

by Jessica Chase

Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is a celebration that originated in China around 221 BC. Today, it's celebrated as a public holiday in many places besides China – anywhere there is a large population of people of Chinese heritage.

This year, Chinese New Year is on February 7. It falls on a different day each year, because the date corresponds to the new moon in either late January or February. Celebrations traditionally last fifteen days, ending on the night of the full moon, but in China the public holiday lasts for only three days.

The traditional Chinese calendar is formed from a cycle of 12 years, each with an animal name. The animal names form the Chinese zodiac. For example, if you were born in 2001, the year of the snake, it is said that you will have the personality and qualities of that animal. 2008 is the year of the rat, which is the start of the twelve-year cycle. Those born under the year of the rat are said to

have great ambitions, and to be hard-working and clever. They are also said to always stand by their friends. If you were born in 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, or 1996, you were born in the year of the rat.

After the year of the rat comes the year of the ox; then tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey,



dog, and boar. To find out which animal is associated with the year you were born, you can enter your birthday at www.topmarks.co.uk/ChineseNewYear.

Chinese New Year is celebrated with big parades in the two biggest Chinatowns in the U.S., in San Francisco and New York City. You can find out the dates for parades at: chinatownparade.org/events.

Other ways to celebrate include making *nian gao*, a sticky rice cake (see recipe at tinyurl.com/2zbkzo), painting doors and windows red as a sign for good luck, and watching the dragon parade.

One of the traditions of Chinese New Year is giving children small red envelopes called *leisee* with small amounts of money inside. The symbols on the front are for good luck in the coming year.

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Happy New Year!

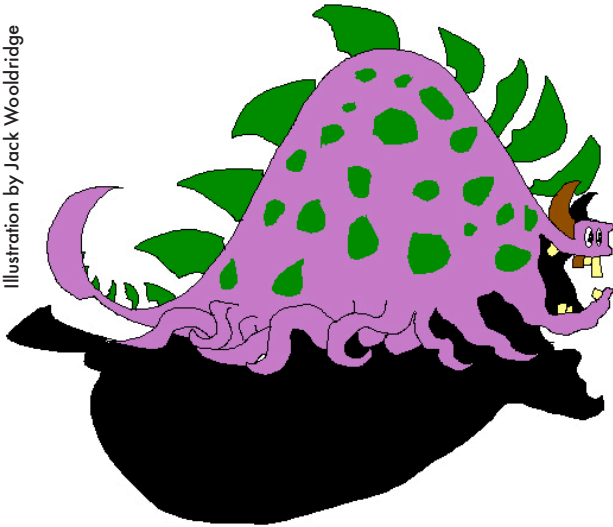
We have a pretty short issue this time because of the holidays, but I hope you'll still enjoy it!

We'd love to have more articles, stories, poems, and artwork in our next issue. If you'd like to contribute to our March/April issue, see page 2 for details. In the meantime, you can check out our Web site at zigzagzine.com. — Jessica Chase, Editor

The Urgle Eats the Teacher

by Jack Wooldridge

Illustration by Jack Wooldridge



When I took my Urgle to school again
Miss Wonkle went red in the face
How are we supposed to work, she roared
With that THING taking up all the space?!

Never fear, ma'am, my Urgle is trained
He won't eat you or do anything vile.
I explained as my teacher was eaten alive
My Urgle sat back and then smiled

He's never done that before. I said
That was bad, boy, very bad!
How did eating a teacher get into
your head?

I find your behavior quite sad.

My Urgle had a strange look on his face
He spat out Miss Wonkle on the wall
And may that be a warning to all Urgles around
Teachers don't taste good at all!

Nanofiction

by Kaizen Betts-LaCroix

A nanofiction is a 55-word short story that, like a regular story, needs a setting, a conflict, a resolution, and at least one character. The title must be seven words or less.

They Tried Again, They Failed Again

When 18G6hu4R needed to be tested, Therese, Edmond and Fanette volunteered to go, but now it wasn't looking good. Injector needles full of intercellular poison just weren't enough to fight the thousands of *Escherichia coli*. "I think it's time," said their dispatcher. And they popped into their tiny pod, and zoomed out the patient's mouth. *zzz*

CONTRIBUTE!

We accept stories, poems, articles, and artwork from kids and teens. The deadline for our March/April 2008 issue is February 15.

If you'd like to see your work in ZigZagZine, please send submissions to info@zigzagzine.com.

Check out our Web site zigzagzine.com for details!



Clip art by Phillip Martin, www.philipmartin.info/clipart