



A Publication of  
Orchard and Solano  
Parks, UC Davis

# THE PARK MESSENGER

February 2009

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### Orchard Park Office Hours:

Monday ~ Friday:  
8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.  
1:00 p.m.—4:30 p.m.

### Solano Park Office Hours:

Monday ~ Friday:  
8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.  
1:00 p.m.—4:30 p.m.

### Special points of interest:

- February 16 is a University Holiday. Both Park Offices and all campus offices will be closed. Contact the On-Call RA for any immediate housing needs.
- More questions about Student Housing? Please visit the AskMe! link on the Student Housing website.

## Chinese New Year

Submitted by Bonnie Weeks from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_New\\_Year](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_New_Year)

### Mythical Beginnings

According to tales and legends, the beginning of Chinese New Year started with the fight against a mythical beast called the Nian or "Year" in Chinese. Nian would come on the first day of New Year to devour livestock, crops, and even villagers, especially children. To protect themselves, the villagers would put food in front of their doors at the beginning of every year. It was believed that after the Nian ate the food they prepared, it wouldn't attack any more people. One time, people saw that the Nian was scared away by a little child wearing red. The villagers then understood that the Nian was afraid of the color red. Hence, every time when the New Year was about to come, the villagers would hang red lanterns and red spring scrolls on windows and doors. People also used

firecrackers to frighten away the Nian. From then on, the Nian never came to the village again. The Nian was eventually captured by Hongjunlaozu, an ancient Taoist monk. The Nian became Hongjunlaozu's mount.

### Good luck

1. Opening windows and/or doors is considered to bring in the good luck of the New Year.
2. Switching on the lights for the night is considered good luck to 'scare away' ghosts and spirits of misfortune that may compromise the luck and fortune of the New Year.
3. Sweets are eaten to ensure the consumer a "sweet" year.
4. It is important to have the house completely clean from top to bottom before New Year's Day for good luck in

the coming year. (However, as explained below, cleaning the house *after* New Year's Day is frowned upon).

5. Some believe that what happens on the first day of the New Year reflects the rest of the year to come. Asians will often gamble at the beginning of the year, hoping to get luck and prosperity.
6. Wearing a new pair of [slippers](#) that is bought before the New Year, because it means to step on the people who gossip about you.
7. The night before the New Year, bathe yourself in [pomelo](#) leaves and some say that you will be healthy for the rest of the new year.

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# Chinese New Year

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## Bad luck

1. Buying a pair of shoes is considered bad luck amongst some Chinese. The word "shoes" is a homophone for the word for "rough" in Cantonese, or "evil" in Mandarin.
2. Getting a hair-cut in the first lunar month puts a curse on maternal uncles. Therefore, people get a hair-cut before the New Year's Eve.
3. Washing your hair is also considered to be washing away one's own luck (although modern hygienic concerns take precedence over this tradition).
4. Sweeping the floor is usually forbidden on the first day, as it will sweep away the good fortune and luck for the new year.
5. Saying words like "finished" and "gone" is inauspicious on the New Year, so sometimes people would avoid these words by saying "I have eaten my meal so that it disappeared" rather than say "I have finished my meal."
6. Talking about death is inappropriate for the first few days of Chinese New Year, as it is considered inauspicious.
7. Buying books is bad luck because the word for "book" is a homonym to the word "lose".
8. Avoid clothes in black and white, as black is a symbol of bad luck, and white is a traditional Chinese funeral color.
9. Foul language is inappropriate during the Chinese New Year.
10. Offering anything in fours, as the number four (4), pronounced *sì*, can sound like "death" in Chinese.

## 'Baby Signs' Favor Kids' Intellectual Growth in School - March 31, 1999

Submitted by Yalina Soto - from an article of Susanne Rockwell, UC Davis News Service

Children who as babies learned to communicate through the use of simple gestures for such words as hat or flower -- known as "Baby Signs" -- appear to have intellectual advantages even as they grow older, shows a preliminary study.

The children who learned the gestures as infants and who were later tested as 7- and 8-year-olds, were shown to perform significantly better on standard IQ tests than those who hadn't learned the gesturing, say Linda Acredolo, UC Davis psychology professor, and her collaborator, Susan Goodwyn, a California State University, Stanislaus, professor.

The results from the follow-up study showed that the baby signing had far more long-lasting effects than the researchers anticipated.

"Not only do the gestures promote language and intellectual skills, and family relationships in infancy and toddlerhood, they also can serve children's intellectual growth into elementary school," Acredolo says.

One possible explanation for the finding is that early brain stimulation builds intellectual and neurological foundations that carry through in children when they reach school age, Goodwyn says.

The researchers did the follow-up study to earlier work on baby gesturing to evaluate the effect of the gestures on language and cognitive development. Their earlier work resulted in the 1996 book "Baby Signs: How to Talk with Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Talk" (Contemporary Books).

The researchers have presented their findings periodically at child development meetings around the country.

# Farewell Solano Park

Submitted by Aisha Goodman

My family moved to Solano Park three and a half years ago, in August. I had pieces of a quilt that I planned to make for a friend. My daughter was just under a year. I made olives and bread and shared them and their recipes with acquaintances at the playground. A woman taught me how to put the pieces of my quilt together and I completed it. I walked with friends around Davis, and around the Arboretum, our children in strollers. We shared

food and company at potlucks. We gathered wild weeds and domestic fruits. We talked about birth, death, life, and culture. My baby became a child, and since then we've had another baby.

We're getting ready to move on. In three and a half years of people always coming and going, my family has gone from feeling new, to feeling like veteran Parkers. We thought we would be here longer, but my husband has been writing his final papers

and has been offered a job near Chicago. I have loved the daily chats at the playground, watching the children play and grow, growing a garden, and the chickens. I have loved sharing recipes, knitting, silk scarf painting, trying to learn sundry phrases in Arabic or Mandarin, and how to make steamed dumpling dough, and dolmas.

I have enjoyed living at Solano Park, and look forward to the next adventure. Pleasant journeys wherever you go.

# Shopping Cart Blues in Solano Park

By Shawna Stevens

While I was doing dishes last week, I looked out my kitchen window and saw a grocery store shopping cart underneath it. I thought this was an odd place for one. The squirrel perched in the cart's child seat looked just as confused. We've recently had an explosion of grocery store shopping carts popping up all over Solano Park, including one with a plastic car attached to the front for kids to ride in. For many residents the shopping carts are an eyesore and are quickly becoming a nuisance as the numbers increase. The problem is they don't belong in Solano Park and the people who abandon them here are committing a crime.

Many residents who do not have cars may have found this an easier way to cart groceries home versus schlepping all those grocery bags onto a bus. And once the carts arrive at Solano

Park, many residents find them useful for transporting groceries and other items from their car to their apartment. What many people don't realize is that they are actually stealing when they take one of these carts home- it is actually against California state law to remove them from store premises. And many grocery stores are eager to get their carts back, which may cost on average around \$150-\$200 a piece. The more carts that are missing, the more it costs store managers to replace them, and it can eventually lead to a rise in retail prices on the items the store sells in order for them to regain their loss. Who wants to pay even more for a gallon of milk than we already do?

Solano Park will not be the final resting place for an abandoned cart. Local stores have contracted out a company to pick up stolen carts and return

them to their respective "homes". When we see the carts, Park personnel will call to have them picked up and frustrated residents are encouraged to do the same. Let me also remind residents that each RA has a large cart which can be checked out for unloading groceries, moving, or just hauling other heavy items. Let's work together to keep our home safe and looking good. I'm sure many residents agree that we don't want the Parks to look like a store parking lot!

**Contact number for shopping cart removal: (530) 908-3917. Please be specific about the location of the cart (building number and complex). The company does not remove carts from Rite Aid or SaveMart.**

# Community Programs

## Playdough Time!

Let's make playdough from scratch and then spend the afternoon playing with it! We can make the playdough any color you like with glitter options as well. If you have any questions please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899. See you there!

When: Monday, February 2 at 4pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

## Chinese New Year



Happy New Year everyone! We are now in the year of the Ox or Yi Chou. People born under the influence of the Ox are kind, caring souls, logical, positive, filled with common sense and with their feet firmly planted on the ground. The Ox is the sign of prosperity through fortitude and hard work. We will be celebrating the New Year with a potluck. Please bring a main dish to share with your neighbors as you come to the community center to either celebrate or learn more about the holiday.

When: Tuesday, February 3 at 6pm  
Where: Orchard Park Community Center

## Lunar New Year Potluck

Celebrate the upcoming year of the Ox. The Lunar New Year festival begins this year on Jan 26. We will have our annual Solano Park Lunar New Year party on February 3. Dress up if you like, and bring food and friends. If you have questions, please ask Aisha Goodman at 681-6897.

When: Tuesday, February 3 at 6pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

## Origami-Heart

Make beautiful & easy 'Origami-Hearts' to decorate Valentine's Day Cards or simply add them to your window decorations for the month. For questions please call Shakeela at 297-7451.

When: Thursday, February 5 at 4pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

## Farewell Potluck for Aisha the RA

As many of you have already read, Aisha Goodman will be leaving the RA position as of February 12th. On Tuesday, February 5th we will be saying thank you to Aisha and her partner Corey (who led the Solano Park Neighborhood Watch program) for their many contributions to the Solano Park community. We hope that you will please join us for a potluck and bring a favorite dish to

share. As always, please bring your own plates and utensils. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Franck at 754-7524.

When: Thursday, February 5 at 6pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

## Take Time to Walk

Overindulged during the holidays? Time to walk it off!! Meet at the Community Center every Friday of this month at 10am, weather permitting, for a brisk hour-long walk. Kids in strollers are welcome. If you have questions call Yalina Soto at 756-3670.

When: Fridays, February 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 10am  
Where: Meet at the Orchard Park Community Center

## Valentine's Day Cards

Let's make cute Valentine's Day Cards to show your love and to say how much your family means to you. Bring some photos of yourself with your family or friends to create your own cute card. For questions please call Shakeela at 297-7451

When: Wednesday, February 11 at 4pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

## Toddler Activities

Join us at the community center to play on the toddler gym mats,

## Community Programs

color, play musical instruments, bean bag toss, and have story time. Call Bonnie Weeks for questions at 204-8539.

When: Thursday, February 12  
at 10:30am  
Where: Orchard Park  
Community Center

### Valentine's Day Craft

Let's make something special for someone you love. I'll provide a special Valentine's Day craft as long as you bring your creative fingers! I'll also supply hot chocolate to sip on while we work. If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899.

When: Thursday, February 12  
at 4pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler  
Community Center

### Valentine's Day Dance Party

We are going to celebrate Valentine's Day with some Latin Music at the Community Center. It's a good way of meeting your neighbors and learn some Latin music moves. Call Yalina for more information at 756-3670.

When: Friday, February 13 at  
8pm  
Where: Orchard Park  
Community Center

### Pancake Breakfast

This was so much fun the last time; we're going to eat

pancakes again. Bring a good appetite and come in your pajamas if you want. We'll be having a good start to our day with a hot breakfast.



When: Saturday, February 21  
at 9am  
Where: Orchard Park  
Community Center

### Breakfast Potluck

Let's spend a morning together eating and reconnecting with neighbors after the holidays. Bring a breakfast dish to share and I will provide juice, milk and hot beverages. If you have any questions, please call Shawna Stevens at 757-7899.

When: Saturday, Feb 21 at  
9:30am  
Where: Melvin Fassler  
Community Center

### Cooking with Kids



Kids! Come let's make some yummy 'Easy Pizza'. I'll provide some healthy veggie toppings and you can do the rest. Please come with a grown up helper. For questions please call Shakeela at 297-7451.

When: Saturday, February 21  
at 3:30pm  
Where: Melvin Fassler  
Community Center

### Bike, Trike, Scooter, and Stroller Parade

Join us at the Community Center to decorate whatever transportation you have and let's have a parade!! We will decorate them with balloons, feathers, streamers, etc. Then we will parade to the big playground. If you have any questions, call Yalina at 756-3670.

When: Saturday, February 28  
at 1pm  
Where: Meet at the Orchard  
Park Community  
Center



## Monthly Maintenance Tips

By Orchard and Solano Park Maintenance

Apartment Heating Issues:

- If you have problems with your heater after hours (after 4:30pm or on weekends) please contact your RA for assistance. They will come to your

- apartment and re-light your heater or get you a portable heater to use until repairs can be made.
- Also, please make sure that you have nothing stored on top of your

- heater as this is a fire hazard.
- Try to keep toys and other items from going under the heater.

## Physical Activity, Fitness, and Health Study for Sedentary Women

Submitted by Mary Ellen Rivera

USDA, ARS Western Human Nutrition Research Center invites healthy, non smoking women, ages 42 – 52, and who are currently physically inactive, to participate in a 7-month physical activity research study.

The purpose of the study is to determine the health benefits of regular physical activity

programs. We will work with you to achieve a goal of being physically active for 60 minutes each day. Participants must be willing to come to the WHNRC on the UC Davis campus to participate in regular weekday physical activity, initially with frequent study visits and ending with 1-2 visits per week. Also, women must not be taking

hormone contraceptives or replacements, anti-depressants, or medications for weight loss,

The study includes compensation for your time and effort. For more information, call (530) 752-5177, and Press #3. Also, visit our website: [www.ars.usda.gov/pwa/davis/whnrc/nutrition](http://www.ars.usda.gov/pwa/davis/whnrc/nutrition)

## Holidays and Anniversaries

### Black History Month (USA 1926)

February was chosen to recognize Black history, because both Abraham Lincoln (US president who freed slaves after the Civil War) and Frederick Douglass (an African American who worked to end slavery) have birthdays in February.

### February 1—National Freedom Day (USA)

Commemorates ratification of the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution by President Abraham Lincoln, abolishing slavery.

### February 2—Groundhog Day (USA)

Old belief that if the sun shines on Candlemas Day, or if the groundhog sees his shadow when he emerges on this day, six weeks of winter will ensue.

### February 16—President's Day (USA)

Originally honoring Presidents Lincoln and Washington for the proximity of their birth dates, this day now honors all presidents who have served the United States.

### February 22—Quinquagesima Sunday

### (Switzerland, France, Luxembourg)

The Sunday before Ash Wednesday, this is the beginning of the Quinquagesima season. For many early Christians, this was the beginning of the fast before Easter.

### February 23—Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

According to legend, it was this night lord Shiva, the great Hindu god of destruction, danced the Tandava, his celestial dance. Fasts and prayers mark the day. Pilgrims throng Shiva shrines where special celebrations are held.

# Calendar of Events

## February 2009

*\*\*All residents are welcome to attend all programs, regardless of location. All events held in the Community Center unless otherwise noted.\*\**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <u>Playdough Time</u> MFCC 4pm	3 <u>Chinese New Year</u> OPCC 6pm  <u>Lunar New Year</u> MFCC 6pm	4	5 <u>Origami Heart</u> MFCC 4pm  <u>Farewell Potluck for Aisha</u> MFCC 6pm	6 <u>Take Time to Walk</u> Outside the OPCC 10am	7
8	9	10	11 <u>Valentine's Day Cards</u> MFCC 4pm	12 <u>Toddler Activities</u> OPCC 10:30am  <u>Valentine's Day Craft</u> MFCC 4pm	13 <u>Take Time to Walk</u> Outside the OPCC 10am  <u>Valentine's Day Dance Party</u> OPCC 8pm	14
15	16  HOLIDAY  BOTH PARKS OFFICES CLOSED	17	18	19	20 <u>Take Time to Walk</u> Outside the OPCC 10am	21 <u>Pancake Breakfast</u> OPCC 9am  <u>Breakfast Potluck</u> MFCC 9:30am  <u>Cooking with Kids</u> MFCC 3:30pm
22	23	24	25	26	27 <u>Take Time to Walk</u> Outside the OPCC 10am	28 <u>Bike Parade</u> Outside OPCC 1pm

