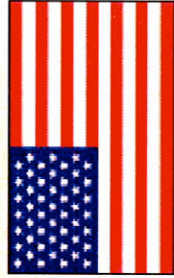
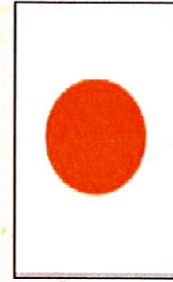


**Many Faces, Many Places**

# One New Life



**2005**



**A Cultural Calendar of Franklin County's New Americans**

# Many Faces, Many Places One New Life 2005:

## A Cultural Calendar of Franklin County's New Americans

Created and produced  
by the

Four Rivers Charter Public School 8th Grade

### About the Center For New Americans:

The Center for New Americans is a community based non-profit adult education center providing the immigrant, refugee, and migrant communities of Pioneer Valley with the education and resources to learn English, become involved members of their new communities, and ultimately obtain the tools necessary to secure economic stability and independence.

Also available:



*A Little More Than Just People: A book of monologues of community cultivators from Franklin County*



# Acknowledgements

Four Rivers Charter Public School would like to acknowledge the supporters of this project. First and foremost, we would like to thank the staff and volunteers at the Center for New Americans, who provide an amazing service in our community. Their belief in this project has sustained our own work.

**Susan Schwartzkopf**, director of the Greenfield CNA, who tirelessly supported our efforts throughout the process. Susan's compassion and resourcefulness are inspiring;

**Elaine Kenseth**, who donated her time and portrait taking wisdom to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade;

**Mike Tillyer**, who generously lent the use of his camera;

**Bob Aller**, who presented his slide show of immigrants and offered his professional critique;

Bussarakum Humphrey, Thailand  
Jampa Dhondup, Tibet  
Andrew Stenson, Great Britain  
Suman Ralik, India  
Vera Sofronovic, Moldova  
Sonia Lindop, Peru

**Susan Durkee**, who provided her expertise on portraiture to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in art class;

**Jim Ayres**, director of the Franklin County CNA sites, who offered our class a historical context of CNA ;

The **employers and schools** of the New Americans, who help make opportunities available;

and **John Preston**, who helped us to make the initial contact with CNA.

## The new Americans featured here:

Thomas Ryu & Sarah Kim, South Korea  
Pablo Montes, Mexico  
Francia Wisniewski, Colombia  
Ai Okumura, Japan  
Tatyana Sankova, Uzbekistan  
Qun Xie, China

We dedicate this calendar to all new Americans.

# About this Project

For some, America is indeed an opportunity, yet for others it is a disappointment. Throughout our study of new Americans we have learned how vital language is to one's happiness and how hard it is to start one's life over in a strange culture and leave behind one's family and friends. After reading a book about a Korean immigrant family called *A Step From Heaven* (by writer An Na), and researching the different countries of origin of the calendar's participants, we interviewed adult immigrants.

In our interviews, we learned about their sorrow, strength and hope and tried to reveal that in their portraits. Bob Aller, one of our visiting experts, said that "writers make up for what photographers lack", thus our physical descriptions are included to try to capture some of the essence we saw in the interviews. Each page also features a geographical description to show the physical personality of this earth in its astonishingly diverse forms.

Four Rivers Charter Public School believes that certain virtues of character are important for our students to carry on throughout life. There are no clearer examples of these virtues than in the lives of the people featured in this calendar. They have demonstrated the virtue of *perseverance*; to learn a new language in a new culture; to work second and third shifts and then attend classes before going to sleep; and to raise children in a foreign culture. Such is their *integrity* that many of them are able to support their families in both Franklin County and their native countries. Most obvious to us, however, is the *courage* that they exemplify in their daily lives, having left all that they know behind them to start anew. It is to these people that this calendar is dedicated.

-The students who made this Calendar-

*Amanda*

*Justin*

*Samuel*

*Rhiannon*

*Alexa*

*Andrew*

*Hillary*

*Amasa*

*Lucas*

*Kassidy*

*Kyle*

*Alexander*

*Katherine*

*Dovrah*

*Christin*

*Paul*

*Janice*

*Zachery*

*Danielle*

*Julia*

*Johnathan*

*Christopher*

*Nathan*

*Simon*

*Zak*

*Jacob*

*Austen*

*Nichole*

*Usha*

*Sarah*

*Daniel*

*Colton*

*Caleb*

*Sam*

*John*

Great work!

## Francia Wisniewski

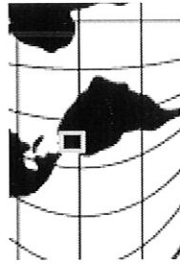
Francia has midnight black hair. It is short and it frames her face beautifully. Her complexion is flawless, like creamy mocha ice cream. Francia has the most shocking brown eyes. If you looked into them too deeply you might sink in and never come back.

Francia is good hearted and wants to make everyone happy. She is gentle, like freshly cut grass in the warm afternoon sun. When she walks into the room, Francia gives a feeling of home. Everything becomes peaceful and all worries cease when she is near. Her voice is calming, like a soft leaf brushed across the skin. Francia's warm smile is inviting. She is like wind over a summer meadow.

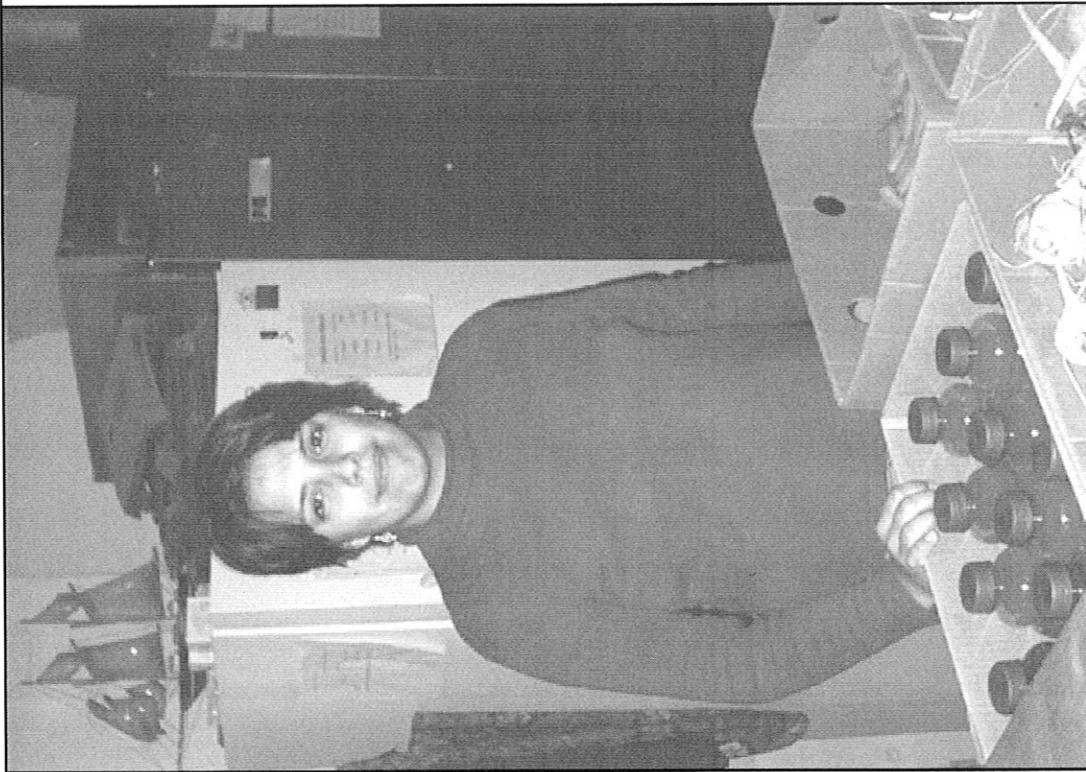
*"Seasons here are beautiful; we don't have snow back in Columbia, but sometimes I feel sad because I have been so involved in American culture that I feel afraid to lose my roots and traditions. I don't belong to either cultures, I'm like a mix of American and Colombian."*

## The Amazon River Colombia

The Amazon River begins in an ancient lake high in the Peruvian Andes. There it is paid homage by various tributaries like worshippers to a snake god, and it becomes a rumbling, serpentine force. Coursing rapidly in the first part of its long journey through Colombia and Brazil, it eventually becomes an immense, slow moving waterway meandering more than 3,000 miles through the basin. It empties with a mouth that gapes over 205 miles across, discharging into the Atlantic. The Amazon River follows its own path.



**Francia**  
Cali, Colombia  
Assistant Coordinator  
F.C.A.C. Family Network and  
Greenfield Food Pantry



# January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Last quarter Moon	4	5	6 Epiphany Christmas	7 Christmas (Uzbekistan)	8 New Year's Day
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 New Moon	18	19	20	21	22
	Martin Luther King Day Full Moon			Inauguration Day		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31	Republic Day (India)			
		Full Moon				

Notes:



**Jampa**  
Samdup, Chungpo, region of Tibet  
Buddhist monk, Stone Quarry worker

## Jampa Dhondup

Jampa's expression shows that he is tranquil, like the majestic Himalayas. He always smiles, showing bright white teeth, like the snow capped mountains. His voice is soft and fluid, a cool mountain stream easing its way between two Tibetan peaks. Jampa knows hard work, his hands are callused; they are a mountainous range of weathered flesh. Life as a Tibetan monk has not been easy for him. Jampa is like a tree high on a slope resisting a bitter wind, because of what he has had to endure. Jampa's religious garb consists of three colors, gold, maroon, and vermilion. Together they form a rainbow in a valley of ice.

*"I enjoy being in the U.S. because back in Tibet, I wasn't as free to practice my religion. Here I am free to be a Monk."*

## Mount Qomolangma Tibet

Mount Qomolangma is one of those mountains that always amazes people and puts them in awe of the highest limits of altitude. From a distance, this great towering beast of rocks looks like a chunk of coal dipped in flour. Its snow capped peaks give a chilly feeling in one's eyes and hands. Qomolangma is treated as a god by the people who have experienced the wrath of the intense weather conditions around it. The sunken valleys surrounding the great mountain are shadowed over by its enormously tall and wide figure, which seems to enlarge over time.





# February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 African-American History Month starts	2 Groundhog Day Last quarter Moon	3	4	5
6	7 Valentine's Day	8 New Moon	9 Ash Wednesday	10 Islamic New Year	11	12 Constitution Day (Mexico)
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 President's Day Makha Bucha Day (Thailand)	22	23 First quarter Moon	24 Flag Day Full Moon (Mexico)	25	26
27	28					
Notes:						

## Suman Ralik

Suman's dark hair is pulled back over her shoulders, like the curving shadows in an ancient forest. Suman is very kind and expresses warm compassion even to strangers. Her eyes are dark brown, like the bark of trees. She wears a traditional dress the colors of a hidden blue lake, and she is calm and welcoming. Her sentences are filled with laughter and joyfulness, even though a fire destroyed her workplace and an important opportunity. Thousands of miles away from her home, Suman feels gratitude for being able to be here, even joyous. She is the embodiment of optimism.

*"Back in India, my job was a house wife. I came to America so that my children could get an education. I also came here because I like America, I like this country. Here I work in a laundry. I like everything about America."*

## The Thar Desert India

The Thar desert is light brown like dead grass in the late fall. The sand ripples like a lake on a windy day. The desert is hot like a blazing bonfire on a cold summer's night. The Thar desert is insulated and mysterious. There are camel footprints running over the sand look like little trees that have been pulled out of the ground. The villages suddenly appear like a lion pouncing on prey. It's dunes are like formed hills. The desert is lush as a river, but is also dry as the air right before a monsoon. The Thar Desert is a home to residents, a route for some, and an adventure for others.



**Suman**  
Bidhal, India  
Homemaker  
and Former laundry worker



# March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Sam'l Independence Day (South Korea)	2	3 Hinamatsuri Doll Festival (Japan) Last quarter Moon	4	5
6	7 Women's Day (China, Moldova, Uzbekistan)	8	9	10 New Moon	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day First quarter Moon	18	19
20	21 Palm Sunday Noruz (Uzbekistan) Spring Equinox	22 Juarez Day (Mexico)	23	24	25 Purim Good Friday Full Moon	26 St. Patrick's Day (Colombia)
27	28	29	30	31 Maundy Thursday		
Easter Sunday						

Notes:



Pablo  
Santa Apalonia Teacalco, Mexico  
Restaurant worker  
China Gourmet

## Pablo Montes

Pablo is quiet like an empty room. He has a pleasant face. He is well-dressed and his hair is combed with a shine, like a smooth silk sheet. When he talks about his family in Mexico, his eyes look sad. Pablo is quiet when he speaks, as if he doesn't want anyone else to know what he's saying. He is very polite and is very hard working. You can tell that his job means a lot to him. His smile is bright like a kid who just got a new toy. When you see him smile, it's almost like electricity; it makes you want to smile too.

*"I came to this part of the country because my friend and I work at the China Gourmet, like I worked a restaurant back in Mexico.*

*I do not think that there is anything in my home country that is the same in America. I love America, but I love my home country more. I have to work harder in America than I did in Mexico."*

## Popo Volcano Mexico

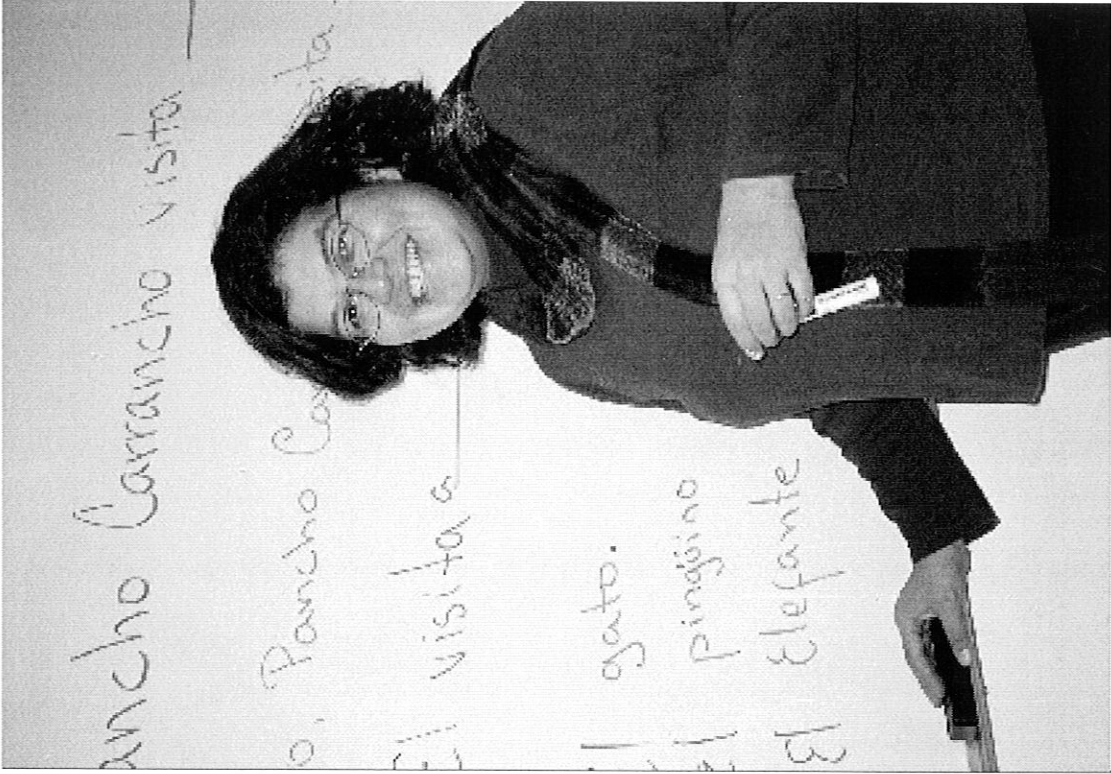
Popo is a volcano in Mexico. It's like the devil's den. The top of the mountain looks like an open mouth that gets so mad that it breathes out smoke. When it is at rest, Popo looks like it's just another mountain. It's cold with bright colors. Two craters on the side of this volcano make it seem like there are two evil eyes always glaring down on the surrounding towns. If you tilt your head sideways, Popo looks like a face trying to push it's head out of the ground.



# April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Daylight Savings begins	Arbor Day (South Korea) Ching Ming Festival(China)	12	13	"Chakeri" Memorial Day (Thailand)	New Moon	Last quarter Moon
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		Songkron Day (Thailand)	New Year's Day (Thailand)	Pan American Day	Income Tax Due First quarter Moon	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
				Mohammed's Birthday	Earth Day	Passover begins
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
					Nature Day (Japan)	Passover ends
Full Moon						

Notes:



**Sonia**  
Lima, Peru  
Spanish Teacher  
Four Rivers Charter Public School

## Sonia Lindop

Sonia's velvety voice reminds one of cool wind whispering through a pine forest. It is easy just to listen to the sound of Sonia's voice; how it carves words the way wind carves snow drifts. Her big smile is reassuring, as though nothing bad could happen to you while she is near. Like a valley between two mountains, Sonia is calmness. Her experience of growing up in Lima seems to have taught her how to be strong yet gentle. Sonia has an inner radiance glowing from her light brown skin that is as real as sunlight.

*"Leaving my friends  
and home town was  
very hard. I grew up in  
Lima, and every one in  
my generation left to  
find a better life."*

## Andes Mountains Peru

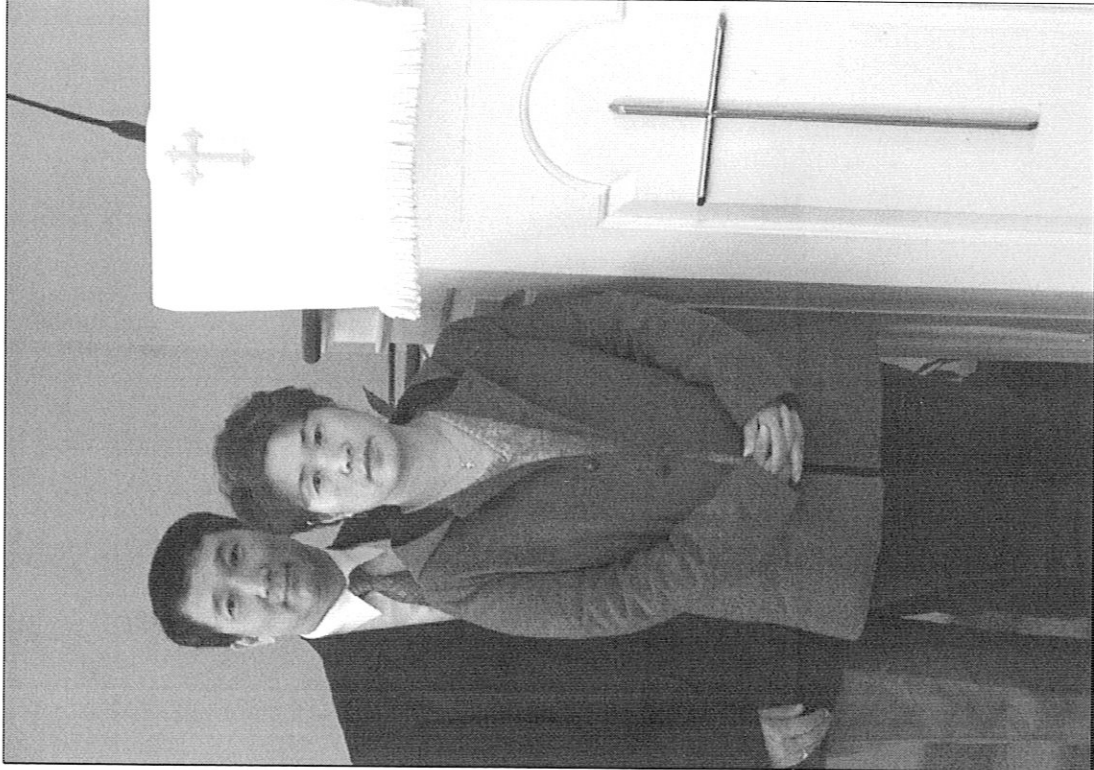
The Andes Mountains inspire wonder. The serrated white blades of the Andean peaks cut sharply into blue sky like a church steeple. Mountain climbers make pilgrimages to them from thousands of miles away. It is cold, quiet and breathless in their high altitudes. Ancient peoples lived in the eastern regions for thousands of years. The Andean foothills are soft and brown like the shoulders of the Ucumari bear, and the Manu cloud forests beneath are as green as the gecko. The Andes can't just be looked at, for they shine as brightly as the sun.



# May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
May Day Last quarter Moon		Constitution Memorial Day (Japan)	Youth Day Citizen's Day (China) (Japan)	Children's Day (Japan, South Korea) Cinco de Mayo (Mexico)		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Mother's Day New Moon	Victory Day (Moldova) Ploughing Ceremony (Thailand)	Mother's Day (Mexico)				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	First quarter Moon					
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Buddha's Birthday	Full Moon					
29	30	31				
	Memorial Day Last quarter Moon					

Notes:



Thomas and Sarah (Husband and Wife)  
Seoul, South Korea  
Pastor (Thomas)  
Greatness Life Korean Church

## Thomas Ryu and Sarah Kim

Thomas Ryu is like an ocean, he is calm and gentle. He has rich, short, coal black hair. His eyes glimmer kindness, the way the early morning sunlight is reflected off the surface of the sea. His face is a tanned white like beach sand, feeling soft between your toes. Thomas Ryu's voice is like a trail of footprints, imprints in the sand. It sounds patient and informative. His posture shows strength, it is tall, tall and proud of his position, as a cliff does over hanging the sea. Sarah Kim is a snowfall; she is silent and full of life. She has a gentle smile like a peaceful flake falling to the ground, her teeth showing white. Sarah's skin is as soft as the swift brush of a hand throwing snow from its surface. She has a hidden laugh the way the wind secretly blows the snow off the trees. Thomas Ryu and Sarah Kim are like a snowfall over an ocean.

*"We like living here because it is quiet. We moved here because we have a sister who lives here. Our friends were sad that we were moving."*

## Ice Grass South Korea

Ice grass is not really grass at all; it looks like frozen, translucent string. It forms from moisture freezing under the soil after long, soaking rains on Hallasan Volcano. Emerging from the ground in slender tentacles, ice grass is more delicate than glass. It is cold and clear like the Arctic Ocean. It pops up through the soil like tubeworms on the ocean floor, but its life is preciously short, for it disappears as soon as sunlight strikes it. Ice grass can only be seen in the cold mountains of Korea.





# June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 New Moon	7	8 Children's Day (China)	9	10	11
12	13	14 Flag Day	15 First quarter Moon	16	17	18
19	20	21 Summer Solstice	22 Full Moon	23	24 Peasant's day (Peru)	25
26 Father's Day	27	28	29 St. Peter's Day, St. Paul's Day (Peru and Colombia) Last quarter Moon	30		

Notes:

## Vera Sofronovic

Vera Sofronovic is like a well wrapped candy. She makes people smile and she makes them happy, but in order to get to the sweet, calm, cheerful personality you have to unwrap the package. Vera has short brown hair and her brown eyes hold a novel of life. Perhaps they will tell you about her sadness in leaving her home town or the joy she feels being able to study and make a living here. As she tells this story, her hands will be left folded in her lap, like a cuddling kitten, and her voice will be soft and relaxing.

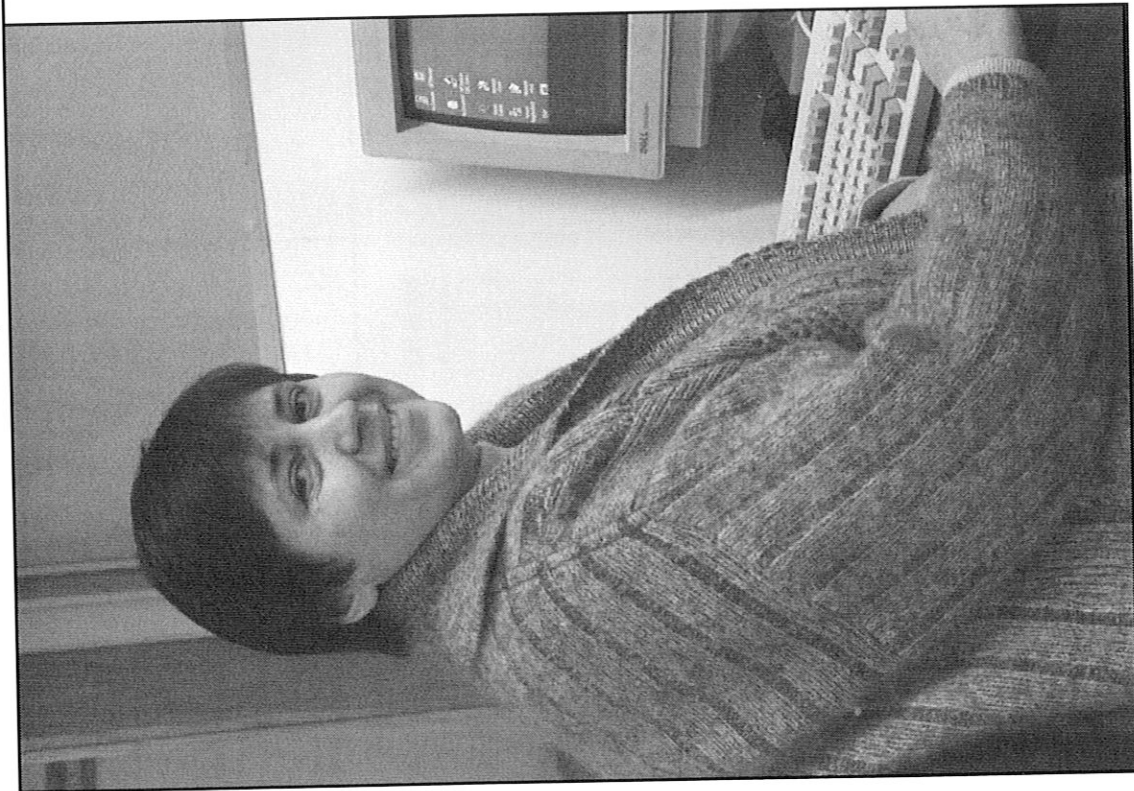
*"My Moldovan town is almost the same as the one I live in in America. It is a little bit different because there are more jobs, stores and money. I like that here I can get a job, and go to school and earn more money."*

## The Dniester River Moldova

The Dniester river, known as the Nistru in Moldova, rises on the north side of the Carpathian Mountains and empties into the Black Sea. To the eye the Dniester delta is a fairyland surrounded by reed beds and lagoons, a sanctuary to migrating birds and rare mammals. Mysterious flooded forests line the banks of the river, and in its emerald meadows, nesting among white lilies, live majestic creatures like the Glossy ibis and the Great heron. Overlooking the estuary is a fortress dating back to the 1400 and 1500's, as if to say that humans have felt the river delta's beauty for hundreds of years.



Vera  
Moldova  
Full Time Student  
Center for New Americans



# July

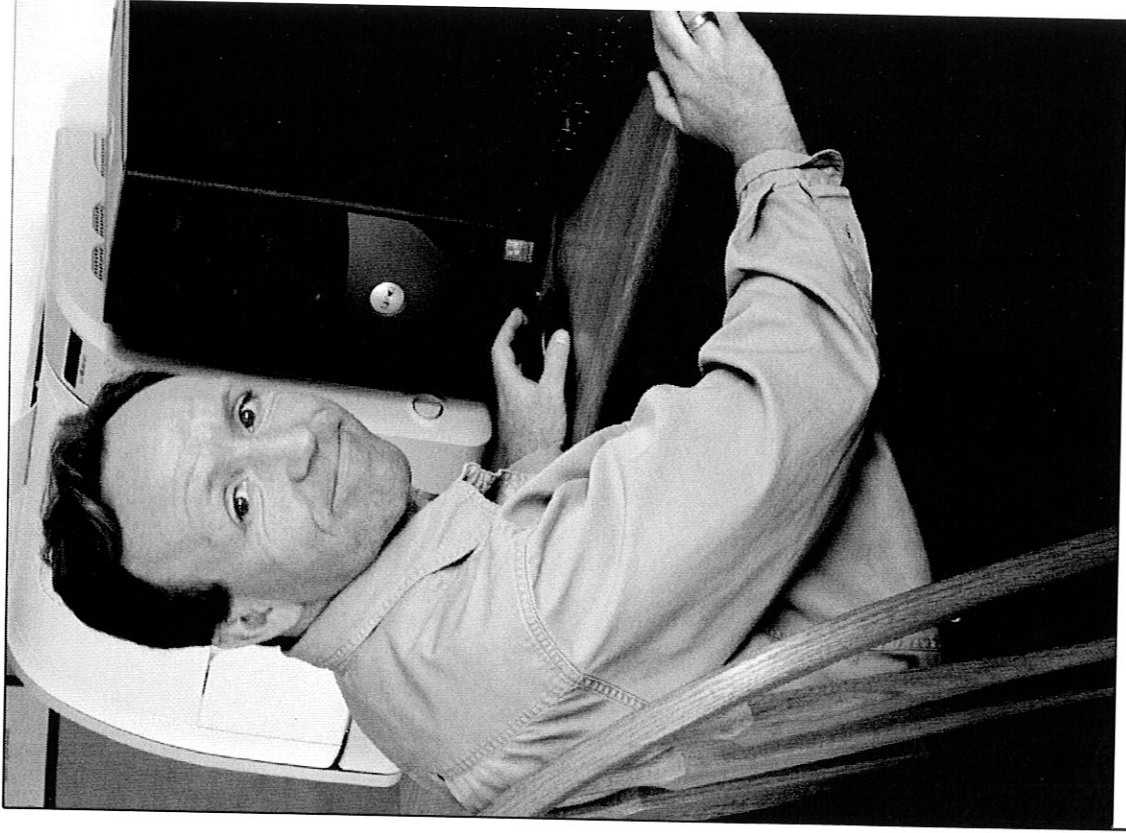
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Independence day	5	6 New Moon	7	8 Mid Year Day (Thailand)	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 First quarter Moon	22	23
	Sea Day (Japan)	Asanha Bucha Day (Thailand)	Buddhist Lent (Thailand) Independence day (Colombia)	Full Moon		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				Independence Day (Peru) Last quarter Moon		St. Rosa of Lima (Peru)

Notes:

# August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Founding of People's Republic of China	2	3	4	5 New Moon	6
7 Battle of Boyaca (Colombia)	8	9	10	11	12 Birthday of HM Queen (Thailand)	13 First quarter Moon
14	15 Independence Day (India) Liberation Day (Korea)	16	17	18	19 Full Moon	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Last quarter Moon	27 Independence Day (Moldova)
28	29	30	31			

Notes:



## Andy Stenson

Andy Stenson has a calmness to him, despite the torrential demands of working with technology. His voice is briny and lilting. Andy has wavy, colorful hair like driftwood and his eyes are a deep blue like the night sky. His eyes twinkle like the sun's reflection on the water in the morning, and it makes one smile. It is evident from talking with Andy that his journey to America has been a fulfilling one for him. He has an optimism about his life that is admirable, given how far from home his travels have taken him. His skin is as tan as a the glow of a brilliant sun, reflected by the rocks. He is characterized by a solid assurance about life that is very reassuring. Andy is gentle as the soft feathers of a seagull in the calm ocean wind.

*"It's a pretty cushy  
existence.*

*I never felt like I moved  
here, I just came for a  
while and never went  
back to England.*

*I try to go back at least  
once a year."*

## White Cliffs Of Dover England

Walking along the white and green paths a breeze of salty air is present. From a bird's eye view the cliffs look like a giant white cake with a green glaze. Lighthouses and paths line the cliff tops. The cliffs glimmer in the bright sunlight like sugary frosting. The namesake of a popular WWII song, the cliffs are a major attraction in Dover. Due to erosion the cliffs have become dangerous. The waves of the English channel are washing away the bottom of the cliff creating chalky and muddy beaches.



Andy  
Stratford-Upon-Avon, England  
Technology Teacher  
Four Rivers Charter Public School

# August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Founding of People's Republic of China				New Moon	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Battle of Boyaca (Colombia)					Birthday of HM Queen (Thailand)	First quarter Moon
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Independence Day (India) Liberation Day (Korea)				Full Moon	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
					Last quarter Moon	Independence Day (Moldova)
28	29	30	31			

Notes:

## Qun Xie

Qun Xie works the second shift at Judd wire. She still smiles though. Her eyes, like canoes, tell of her journey from thousands of miles away. Her hair shines like a wet stone, and her voice is soft yet clear, like water on a river's edge. Qun's favorite holiday is the festival of the moon, or "zhong qui jie", based on a legend about a goddess who dances on the surface of the moon when it is at its maximum brightness. Qun has a brightness to her, and she is firmly rooted in herself, moving with the quiet power of a river's current.

*"In America, the people are nice and very beautiful. It is very quiet here, much quieter than my homeland."*

## The Yangzi River China

The Yangzi, known as "Changjiang" in China, simply means Long River. It is a beautiful flow of water that carves its way through eight provinces, beginning in Tibet and emptying into the Yellow Sea. It looks serene and wise, as the third longest river in the world must be. It is an important asset to China. Many valuable supplies are transported along its glossy surface through rough gorges and towering cliffs, and it is the country's major commercial waterway. Looking at the Yangzi river, one feels safe and at peace.



Qun  
Canton, China  
Machine operator  
Judd Wire Inc.



# September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Independence Day (Uzbekistan) Presidential Address (Mexico)	2	3 New Moon
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Elder's Day (Japan)	16	17
18 First quarter Moon	19	20	21	22 Autumn Equinox	23	24
25 Festival of the Moon (China) Full Moon	26	27	28	29	30	
25 Last quarter Moon						

Notes:



# Tatyana Sankova

Tatyana is calm like a deep dark forest. Her smile is soft and gentle just like the last leaf slowly floating down from a tree. She keeps her hands clasped in her lap like a hibernating bear hunkering down for the winter. Tatyana's voice is so small and peaceful it is reminiscent of a powdery snowfall. Her eyes are the clearest purest color of blue, just like a flowing brook winding through the trees. Tatyana's hair is golden and fine, like pine needles cushioning the forest floor. Her posture is curved like rounded rocks sitting in the pathway. Tatyana is calm like a deep dark forest.

*"I am a Christian.  
Where I come  
from, the religion is  
mostly Muslim. In  
Uzbekistan, it was  
hard to be a Christian,  
but here it is easier."*

## The Aral Sea Uzbekistan

The Aral Sea is where the night sky goes in the day, and the stars gather on the bottom as tiny grains of sand. Its water looks deeper than the meaning in a good poem, and colder than black ice. The wind sweeps up the broken glass surface, rushing towards the dustpan cliffs on the horizon, turning around for another lap around the world when the water gets to the hazy purple rocks. The sea seems fearsome. Its endless blue liquid is like the lid on Pandora's Box, not to be lifted, not to be explored. It seems undiscovered, like the back of a child's closet past bedtime when its door is left wide open. Though the sea is dark and deep, it is shrinking. It has dwindled from being the fourth largest sea to the eighth largest sea. The midnight quilt is beginning to lift, bringing day on all of the Sea's weaknesses and secrets, like a bowl of soup being slowly ladled away.



**Tatyana**  
Farogana, Uzbekistan  
Student at Greenfield Community College  
and Homemaker



# October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 National Foundation Day (Korea) New Moon	4 Beginning of Ramadan Rosh Hashana	5	6	7	8 Armed Forces Day (Korea) National Day (China)
9	10 Columbus Day Sports Day (Japan) First Quarter Moon	11	12	13	14	15 Battle of Angamos (Peru)
16	17 Full Moon	18	19	20 Yom Kippur	21	22
23	24 Last Day of Sukkot	25 First Day of Sukkot	26	27	28	29
Chulalong Korn's Day (Thailand) Daylight Savings ends Lailat Ul Qadr	30 Halloween	31				

Notes:



**Bussarakum**  
Kosumpisai, Thailand  
Teacher's Assistant  
Center for New Americans

## Bussarakum Humphrey

Bussarakum works at the Center for New Americans computer lab. She is hard working, and she has learned English very well. She wears traditional dress to show pride in her heritage. Her voice carries the sound of satisfaction. When Bussarakum talks about her hometown in Thailand, even her hands are happy. One can hear her culture in her accent. With delicate gestures her fingers describe the falling of snow and traditional Thai dancing. Bussarakum's eyes are as dark and round as plums picked from a tree in summertime, and her voice is like wind rustling through the leaves. She is self respect.

*"I love the colorful  
leaves on the trees  
in the fall and how  
the snow covers them  
in the winter. In  
Thailand, leaves do  
not change colors and  
there isn't any snow."*

## The Mekong River Thailand

As though painted from the brush of a celestial hand, the Mekong River is a potent, murky water dragon coursing through South East Asia. Originating in the Tibetan plateau, it spills 2600 miles through China, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam where farmers, fishermen, and others have made their livelihood on the rich sediment of its delta for hundreds of years. The Mekong's tributaries spread like mighty claws across forests and valleys. To make the most of its untapped resources, hydroelectric dam projects may threaten to displace some of these lifestyles while providing weak economies with the chance to harness its mythical power.



# November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Notes:



**Ai**  
Gifu, Japan  
Student  
Greenfield Community College

## Ai Okumura

Thousands of miles away from her home, Ai's outgoing nature has brought her to Franklin County. She is now a student in America asking many questions and smiling with eyes that light up her face. It is easy to talk with Ai because her curiosity alone can maintain conversation. She is quick with a laugh and shows command of the language. Her voice has a richness of sound that is reminiscent of a cello; deep and expressive. Ai faces important decisions about her next step in life, yet she moves with a certainty that speaks of resourcefulness. Her spirit is strong.

*"In Japan, my friends  
think I am lucky  
because I get to go to  
college in America,  
back there, people  
think the colleges here  
are all good."*

## The Inland Sea Japan

The Inland Sea, Seto-naikai, is about as long as Massachusetts and separates three of Japan's main islands. The sea is wreathed with industrial cities and ports, and it looks like sand castles built by children. The waters are dotted with more than 950 small islands. The water turns red once a year because of an excess of plankton. The Seto-naikai is revered by the Japanese, and in its waters it also has the iconic Otorii Gate, a red shrine built on the banks of the Miyajima island.



# December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 Birthday of HM King (Thailand)	6	7	8 New Moon Immaculate Conception Day (Colombia, Peru, Moldova) First quarter Moon	9	10 Human Rights Day Constitution Day (Thailand)
11	12	13	14	15 Full Moon	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23 Emperor's Birthday (Japan) Feast of Radishes (Mexico) Last quarter Moon	24 Christmas Eve
25	26 Hanukkah Begins	27	28 Winter Solstice	29	30	31 New Year's Eve New Moon

Notes: