



Purple Lotus Chronicles

Purple Lotus Buddhist School

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School News

New Year

Jocelyn Lai, Ricardo Wu, Karen Choy

On November 11th, Mr. Dale and Mr. Albert took Tracy, Helena, Kent, Peter, Sofia, Sheng, Jennifer, Jocelyn and Ricardo to the San Francisco Opera to see Macbeth. Surprisingly, most of the audience composed of high school students didn't necessarily wear formal dress. The three-hour long opera mesmerized many first-time opera attendees with its luminous and vast stage complete with intricate lighting.

On November 17th some students went to Seattle to receive the empowerment from Grand Master Lu.

Our very own Book Club began in November with the National Novel Writing Month Contest, which altogether, reached over a twenty-



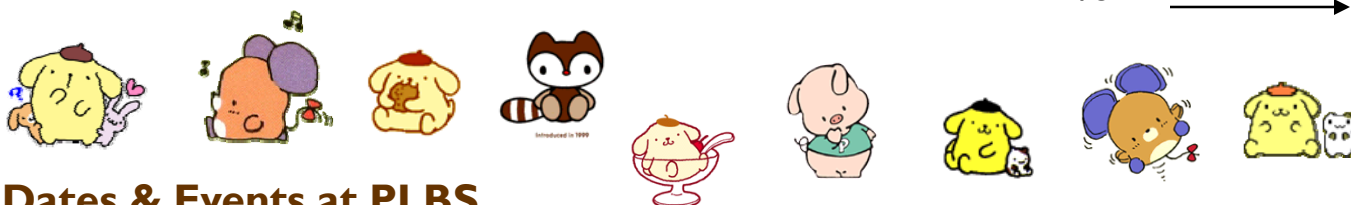
five thousand-word count by the deadline, November 30th! Leonard Chan wrote the most, followed by Juan Carlos Ng, Karen Shum, Henry Choy, Ernesto Ng, Jonathan Chen, David Cheuk, Amber Everett, Annie Ching, Winnie Chan, Alex Tang, Kent Lim, and Karen Choy. Mr. Albert Tsang, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Brent Schaeffer and Mr. Dale DeBakcsy assisted

this long process with encouragements and writing tips.

This past year's Thanksgiving was once again celebrated with the traditional hot pot dinner, followed by two movies, *Surf Up* and *Harry Potter Order of Phoenix*, which many staff members, such as Master Lian Zi, Reverend KC and Coach Wang, stayed with us to watch.

On December 14th, the last day of school before the break, Student Council planned a winter party for all the students. Student Council members spent much of their break times and even Friday movie times to paint and decorate the stage. This involved making a faux Purple Lotus Common Room with hand-cut snowflakes that many students participated in making, streamers, a fireplace, window looking out to the snow (rare in California) and purple Grandfather clock. The party began with a few games including foot tag, charades, and musical chairs. The students had a great time bonding. Dinner was pizza, juice, soda, and garlic bread. Stu-

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Dates & Events at PLBS

1/11 Trip to Chabot Space & Science Center to the Black Holes presentation and Astronomy display
1/19 Field trip to San Jose Tech Museum to see Body Worlds 2
1/26 SAT I

1/27 Community Service at Ken Ito's Japanese senior center, followed by learning taiko drums in the gymnasium
1/31 End of 3rd 6-week period (90 student days)

Holidays/Birthdays:

1/10 Francisco
1/15 Shakyamuni's Enlightenment
1/18 Sofia
1/21 Martin Luther King Day
1/23 Ernesto

2/2 Groundhog Day
2/7 Chinese New Year
2/12 Lincoln's B-day
2/14 Valentine's Day



World News Russian Police Beat Anti-Putin Protestors Before Arresting Them

Information/picture taken from Reuters,
Correspondent Dennis Pinchuk
Karen Choy



Russian riot police beat opposition activists on the Nov 25th with batons and their fists before detaining nearly 200 people (of the 500 activists at the march) at the protest rally against President Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Riot police also detained Boris Nemtsov and Nikita Belykh, leaders of the Union of Right Forces (SPS) party who are both

Opposition leader and chess legend Garry Kasparov was jailed for five days Saturday after a protest at the "Dissentors' March" in Moscow, a week before parliamentary elections

running in a December 2 parliamentary election. However, Nemtsov claims his detention was a violation of Russian law, which forbids police from detaining candidates. "Putin has total disregard for the country's constitution and laws," Nemtsov said, "He is afraid the people will find out the truth and so he hides behind the riot police."

"They [Kremlin chiefs] have started a war with the people," Tamara, 72, who took part in the march,

"Putin is very bad -- look at the poverty in the country. Pensioners are forced to rummage in the dustbins."

Putin, the former KGB spy has vowed to step down as president next year after his second consecutive four-year term in office. However, Putin will use the pro-Kremlin United Russia party to preserve influence after he steps down, running as the party's top candidate in the December election.

"We are ruled by the United Russia gang. They have taken away the elections," said Lyubov Chilenko at the march.

World News French President comes to the USA

Information/picture taken from CNN
Ricardo Wu

Nicholas Sarkozy, the President of France, came to Washington on the 20th of November. He is the first French President to visit the United States in eleven years. Nicholas Sarkozy came to the United States to prove that he is a loyal ally to the United States. On Wednesday he had a meeting with Congress, and talked about improv-

ing their relationships between United States and France. After the accident of September 11, the French had gone against the United States to go to war with Iraq, and United States has taken this as a betrayal action. However, Sarkozy agrees with George Bush over the Iraq war issue. And now, these attempts to seek a closer alliance with the Bush administration have drawn criticism in France. French opposition Socialists criticize Sarkozy for being like the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, whom critics accused of being too uncritical of Washington in the

buildup to the Iraq war. In a interview with the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*, Pierre Moscovici, the French Socialists' spokesman on international affairs, said that Sarkozy is playing a dangerous game and risks putting France in a position where it would be unable to have any critical dialogue with the United States.



Top: Nicholas Sarkozy Picture Credits to CNN



University of California at Berkeley officials now have the legal right to move the tree-sitters who live up on a grove of oak trees. In that area, the officials of the university had planned to cut down many of the trees to build a \$125 million sports center to train its athletic sports team. It has almost been a whole year since the tree-sitters' protest, and it will be difficult to find a solution to the situation.

In the next court case, tree-sitters will be arguing that the sports center will be damaging to the environment and way too big, but UC officials will argue against it, believing the new center will give

more space to the athletics compared to the "eighty-four-year-old Memorial Stadium." If they are going to remove the trees, UC Berkeley official promises to "plant three new trees for every one felled."

Earlier in the sixties, Berkeley was a large city for hippies and student protesting, but lately the tree-sit protest hasn't made much excitement on the campus. "Unfortunately, a lot of people are detached," said Jerlina Love, a graduate student who supports the sitters. Even without the support of others, the tree-sitters will continue to protect the trees if they are endangered. They are making the most of the sitting,

Local News Berkeley's Tree-sitters Face Eviction (Nov 23rd)

Information/picture taken from CNN
Jocelyn Lai

but are worried too of the future outcome.



Evicting the residents of this tree house overlooking Cal's Campanile Tower may not be easy.

Picture Credits: CNN

On November 10th, we had another Disaster Tara Homa at the Temple. Disaster Tara congratulated us, saying that we diminished the next earthquake's effects by fifteen percent, mainly due to: our effort in preparing the ceremony with offerings; our doing of three good deeds; and-- least of all-- our concentration in the ceremony. Within two months we will hold another Disaster Tara Homa, and Disaster Tara hopes that we will be able to accomplish forty more good deeds by January of next year. Go Go!



Through Master Samantha's speech before the Vajrasattva bardo in December, we learned of the words passed down from Vajrasattva, a very

Buddhism Good Deeds & the Words of Vajrasattva

Karen Choy

important bodhisattva whose Repentance mantra is crucial for making up lost credit in the meditation and for repenting for harmful actions, criticism, or thoughts. Vajrasattva reminded us that, when dedicating meditation or ceremonies, we must remember to dedicate towards this: "In the act of wrong doings, immediately recognize your wrong doings, and change yourself for the better."



Health Safe Cosmetics, Anyone?

Information from Safe Cosmetics Organization
Karen Choy

Lead in Lipstick

Lab tests show 61% of 33 top-brand lipsticks tested contained between .03 to 0.65 parts per million (ppm) levels of lead. Lead, which is linked to infertility and miscarriage, causes learning, language, and behavior problems. Lead does not break down in the body, but builds up over a lifetime of exposure. Unfortunately, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration does not have a limit on lead in lipstick. One-third of

the lipsticks exceeded the 0.1 ppm FDA lead limit for candy – a standard established to protect children from directly ingesting lead. Expensive brands are no safer, according to a test which showed L’Oreal, Cover Girl and Christian Dior with the highest lead levels.

Phthalate in Fragrance Products

Dr. Shanna Swan, a professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Rochester, has in a recent study,

found changes linking high phthalate levels with feminized genitals in baby boys. The changes, which occurred at phthalate levels, have been measured in about one quarter of women in the United States. Phthalate can be found in fragrance products.

1,4 dioxane in baby shampoo

Researcher David Steinman found carcinogenic 1,4-dioxane in more than a dozen popular brands of baby shampoo and children’s bubble bath, including Sesame character brands. 1,4 dioxane is a probable human carcinogen and a



Photo Credits to:
Totally-natural.com



clear-cut animal carcinogen. The FDA does not require 1,4 dioxane, a contaminant produced during manufacturing, to be listed as an ingredient.

Featured Iguanas fall from trees with cold snap

Information/picture from Associated Press

KEY BISCAWAYNE, Fla. *Fri Jan 4* - How cold was it in South Florida this week? So cold the iguanas fell from the trees.



The cold-blooded reptiles go into a deep sleep when the temperature falls into the 40s. Experts said their bodies basically shut off and they lose their grip on the tree.

But it isn’t sudden death: Experts said the reptiles perk up when the temperatures rises. The iguanas turn a gray hue in the meantime.

Miami Metrozoo offi-

A black spiny-tailed iguana in Miami in 2006.

cials said the night cold causes the most drops.

"The worst part of the cold comes in the evening, and they literally just shut off," said Ron Magill, communications director for Miami Metrozoo. "Their bodies shut off and they lose their grip on the tree, and they start falling."

Temperatures hit the high 20s and low 30s this week in Florida during an unusual cold snap. While many of the iguanas will wake up, they

could face death if low temperatures persist. Iguanas can sustain cold for between four and 10 hours before they have to wake up, Magill said.

"The populations have expanded so drastically (that) when we do experience a really good cold snap, it will kill off a lot of them," said Kenneth Krysko, a herpetologist at the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida. "It is a good thing. They’re not native, and they’re considered a nuisance."



Local News

Levee breaks as storms pummel West Coast

Information for Associated Press



FERNLEY, Nev. *Sat Jan 5* - A ruptured levee sent a frigid "wall of water" from a rain-swollen canal into this high desert town early Saturday, flooding hundreds of homes and forcing the rescue of more than a dozen people by helicopter and boat.

To the west, a dangerous layer of heavy snow covered the Northern California mountains as rain and wind from the third storm in as many days hit the West Coast. Hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses in California, Oregon and Washington remained without power Saturday.

No injuries were reported in the flood in Fernley, about 30 miles east of Reno, after a section of the Truckee Canal up to 150 feet long broke soon after 4 a.m. As many as 3,500 people were temporarily stranded and more than 100 had gathered Saturday afternoon at a shelter set up at a high school.

"In some places folks had to deal with 8 feet of water," he said. "Firefighters were in chest-deep water making rescues."

By afternoon, the Truckee River water flowing into the canal was diverted upstream, said Ernie Schank, president of the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District. As the water receded, Fernley Mayor Todd Cutler said

he had reports of damage to at least 300 to 400 homes.

Avalanche warnings were posted for the backcountry of the central Sierra Nevada and flash flood warnings were in effect for many areas of Southern California, where large swaths of hillsides had been denuded by the fall's wildfires.

As much as 9 feet of snow was possible in the Sierra by Sunday.

The National Weather Service recorded wind gusts up to 165 mph on mountaintops northwest of Lake Tahoe on Friday.

"If you take the wind gusts, the snowfall and all of it together, it's definitely one of the biggest storms we've experienced in a number of years," said weather service meteorologist Scott McGuire.

Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski declared a state of emergency for Umatilla County because of wind damage.

As the storm moved east, white-out conditions and up to 4 feet of snow were forecast in the Colorado mountains. High wind overturned a tractor-trailer rig in Colorado Springs, briefly closing Interstate 25. Later, multiple accidents closed eastbound I-70 just east of Vail.

In the south, residents of Orange County canyons that were stripped by wildfires last fall — making them susceptible to mudslides — nervously watched weather reports to learn when they might be hit by the fierce wind and heavy downpours forecast for the area.

About 3,000 people in four canyons had been told to leave their homes by 7 p.m. Friday, Orange County fire Capt. Mike Blawn said. However, there was no indication how many obeyed, and mandatory evacuation orders were later lifted.

In one of the four canyons, Modjeska, thick mud coated roads Saturday as Gene Corona, 72, wore hip boots and a raincoat as he used a shovel to repair erosion in a channel he had dug to carry water away from his home.

"I made the rounds last night, every hour on the hour, whenever stuff started breaking through," he said. "I saved my house. It's my home, and insurance doesn't cover mudslides."

More than 450,000 homes and businesses from the Bay Area to the Central Valley were in the dark early Saturday, down from more than 1.6 million the day before. It could be days before all the lights are back on, Pacific Gas & Electric officials said.



SAT & ACT Updates

Collegeboard.com

ACT

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
February 9, 2008	January 4, 2008	January 5-18, 2008
April 12, 2008	March 7, 2008	March 8-21, 2008
June 14, 2008	May 9, 2008	May 10-23, 2008

SAT

2007-08 Test Dates	Test	Regular Registration Fee Deadline	Late Registration Fee Deadline
January 26, 2008	SAT & Subject Tests	December 26, 2007	January 4, 2008
March 1, 2008	SAT only	January 29, 2008	February 7, 2008
May 3, 2008	SAT & Subject Tests	April 1, 2008	April 10, 2008
June 7, 2008	SAT & Subject Tests	May 6, 2008	May 15, 2008

Test Name	Jan. 26, 2008	May 3, 2008	June 7, 2008
Literature	X	X	X
U.S. History	X	X	X
World History			X
Math Level 1	X	X	X
Math Level 2	X	X	X
Biology E/M	X	X	X
Chemistry	X	X	X
Physics	X	X	X

Language: reading only	Jan. 26 2008	May 3, 2008	June 7, 2008
French	X	X	X
German			X
Modern Hebrew			X
Italian			X
Latin			X
Spanish	X	X	X



dents began to open their Secret Santa presents, something Student Council recently instigated and hopes to preserve in the years to come. No one can forget the thoughtful gifts they received, ranging from candy to stuffed bears to comedic singing performances. It was all a very touching and heartwarming moment that made many of us choke back our tears of happiness. As we got ready for the movie of that night, *Final Fantasy Advent Children*, Student Council served its ninety chocolate-chip cookies, all of which were homemade, along with chocolate cocoa.

During the winter break, the school had a large hot pot party on December 26th, where the Masters and international dharma brothers and sisters joined. Saint Nick popped in for a surprise and asked some of the students to be his helpers to pass out his presents to everyone there.

In the following days, ceremonies ensued. A master named Lian Wen Shang Shi came from Vancouver, and many other monks, nuns, dharma brothers, and dharma sisters came from other places such as Canada, New York, Taiwan, Panama, Malaysia, and many more. The first three (27th, 28th, and 29th) days consisted of Emperor Liang Repentance with lots of great homage (bowing and kneeling). The 30th was



the Ksitigarbha bardo deliverance ceremony. The monks and nuns sang and lead our dharma brothers and sisters and students through the ceremony. Many of the people did all the great homage. Amazing, considering that this hefty feat is none to easy to complete. Also, many graduates, previous students, and summer campers came to visit. It was great seeing everyone and catching up with each other!

New Years Eve was the big day for performances! In the morning and afternoon, Master Samantha taught us all how to do a water ceremony. There were many offerings that needed to be prepared, items needed for the ceremony to work, and sets needed to actually do the ceremony. She taught what each offering meant, how to cleanse and bless the water ceremony set, and how to do the dedication. It was a long process, but very much worth the effort!

Afterwards, everyone was rushing around to clean up the cafeteria and set it up to get the New Years Eve Party ready. Students helped clean and ate a quick meal. Right after, they had to change into performance clothes and do a quick rehearsal. The night lasted shortly with all the performances: student performances, performances of the zither (a Chinese instrument), Chinese choir, and Chinese dances. There was even a special performance from Mr. Albert Tsang and Mr. Dale DeBakcsy. With Mr. Dale's skillful piano playing and Mr. Albert's talented voice, the performance of "Angels," followed by "You Raise Me Up" was spectacular, earning the well-deserved cheer.



Also, our Japanese dance teacher Ken Ito lead a brilliant taiko performance with his friends, one of which was, to our surprise, an energetic elderly lady! As New Years Eve was coming to an end, Master Samantha went on the stage to sing. We then began the tradition of passing out balloons with New Year resolutions inside them. We counted down from ten together and as the clock struck twelve, we popped the balloons to get our resolutions, followed by cake, fireworks, and passing out red envelopes to one another.

At the end, a few of the dharma brothers and sisters prepared a documentary of Master Samantha and the Purple Lotus Society. Reverend Stella read the words aloud, and it quickly brought tears to many people's eyes.

At last, it is a brand new year everyone! Do you have any resolutions? May this year bring happiness to all of us and let's all work together to make it a good year!

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 & Ricardo Wu

WE WANT YOU!

If you would like to share with others what you're interested in, or enjoy giving information to the public, then you're more than a perfect match for joining the newsletter! With just a small handful of members, more help would be appreciated. So come and join!



If so, please contact Jocelyn Lai at:
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