

LONGMONT GOES LUNAR

Asian-Pacific Association of Longmont (A-PAL) hosts 2024 Lunar New Year Celebration

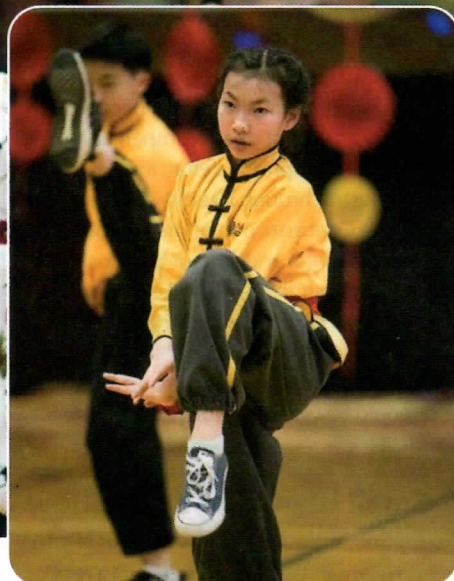
By **Alice Liu**

Date & Location:

Saturday, February 24, 2pm to 5pm
Silver Creek High School
4901 Nelson Rd, Longmont, CO 80503

Event is free and open to the public
www.apalconnect.org

Contact apalconnect@aol.com



Just when many in the Western world begin to abandon their New Year's resolutions, people across Asia gather to usher in the Lunar New Year. In Asian cultures, the Lunar New Year is the most important holiday of the year. Factories shut down, businesses close, and farmers' fields lie fallow as two billion people travel thousands of miles to celebrate with loved ones.

Unlike New Year's Eve festivities which last one night, the Chinese Lunar New Year begins on the second new moon after the December 21st winter solstice, and ends fifteen days later on the first full moon of the lunar calendar. 2024 is the "Year of the Dragon," signifying power, luck, and success.

Lunar New Year customs date back thousands of years, and vary from country to country. In modern times, with Asian people spread around the globe, customs are reimagined to encompass the growing diversity within Asian culture. In June 2023, Governor

Jared Polis signed a bill declaring the Lunar New Year an official Colorado state holiday, recognizing the value of Asian-Americans in Colorado and their contribution to Colorado's history.

According to founder, Rita Liu, A-PAL's mission is to introduce Asian culture to the public, and to create a convivial environment where Asian residents can contribute to their community while working with people of all ethnicities and backgrounds. With over 1,600 annual attendees representing over 90 cultural backgrounds, A-PAL's Lunar New Year celebration is a true cooperative effort, promoting multiculturalism across multiple platforms.

This year's attendees will be immersed in a broad range of experiences such as ethnic music and dance. Children can participate in interactive cultural and educational booths, robotics and virtual reality, and cultural games.

Live performances will feature the iconic Dragon Dance, one of the most

important Chinese Lunar New Year traditions, ushering in prosperity and good luck for the new year while driving away bad fortune. The lion dance team will follow up with a kung fu demonstration.

A fashion show will illustrate the historic influence of Chinese motifs—known as chinoiserie—in Western culture, while K-Pop dancers will show why Korean culture has risen to the forefront of the global music stage. Indian Bollywood (a fusion of "Bombay" and "Hollywood") dancing will blend the traditional with the modern, and Japanese taiko drumming, considered sacred since ancient times, will drive away evil spirits.

For the gourmands in the audience, there will be Asian food sampling.

A-PAL's Lunar New Year is a collaborative effort with the Longmont Multicultural Action Committee, City of Longmont, St. Vrain Valley School District, Silver Creek Leadership Academy, and A-PAL's many dedicated volunteers.