

DIVERSITY AT WORK

September 2007

(for interest/information purposes only)

Aboriginal Spirituality: Genuuqwiikw The season of mountain trails where the marmots and mountain goats are. The fall hunt for game begins.

September 1: Parkash (Sikhism) first Parkash commemorates the installation of the Adi Granth, the Sikh Scriptures' first edition, in the Golden Temple by the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, in 1604 E.C.

September 3: Janmashtami (Hinduism). Celebrates the birthday of Krishna. According to the Hindu Epics, Krishna was the eighth incarnation of god Vishnu. His purpose was to destroy the demon Kansa who was responsible for the increase of evil in the world. Hindus hold all night vigils in the temples and celebrate at midnight.

September 3: Labour Day (Canada, USA) On June 29th, 1894 the U.S Congress voted Labour Day as a National Holiday to honour working people's contribution of labour. The day is celebrated with parades, picnics, and speech

September 8: Paryushan-Parva (Jainism). The holiest time of the year, is marked by fasting, worship of the Jina and celebrated for eight days concluding on Samvastari, which is dedicated to introspection, confession, and penance, especially for the Shvetambara sect.

September 13-14: Rosh Hashanah (Judaism). The Jewish New Year, (5767), and the anniversary of the creation of the world, begins at sundown the previous day, which “ushers in the Days of Judgement for all mankind”. According to tradition, the first human being, Adam was created on this day. The New Year begins at sunset before the first day of Tishri in the Hebrew calendar and lasts for two days.

Rosh Hashanah is a time of introspection when Jews examine their relationship with God. During this period, prayers are said for God's forgiveness, a good year, and a long life. The Ten Days of Penitence begin on Rosh Hashanah (the Day of Judgment) and end on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). During these days, God decides who will die and who will live in the coming year.

On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, special dishes are prepared. Many of the dishes contain honey, which symbolizes the desire for a sweet year. A special bread and many fruits are also included in the meal.

September 13: Ramadan (Islam). This is the holiest period in the Hijri Islamic Year and begins at the sighting of the new moon. This is the month of fasting during which Muslims who are physically and mentally able, do not eat or drink from the first sign of dawn until the first sign of sunset. During this time, Muslims spend more time on prayers, introspection, repentance and charity works. Special nightly prayers are held in the mosques, where Quran is recited daily to help the attendees remember the message and the word of Allah as it was delivered to Prophet Muhammad. This month is also the time for family gatherings and visits to friends. Special meals which include dates, milk, sweets with honey and various cultural dishes are shared in homes and at mosques.

September 15: Ganesh Chaturthi (Hinduism) it is in honour of one of the Hinduism's major deity, Ganesh, the elephant-headed god. He is known as the “remover of all obstacles” and is invoked at the beginnings of all new undertakings. Processions celebrating the god take place in Ontario, Canada.

September 15: Dashalakshani-Parva (Jainism). Celebrated by the Digambara sect and lasts ten days, each day dedicated to a virtue: humility, honesty, purity, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-restraint, asceticism, study, celibacy and detachment.

September 15: Keiro no hi (Japan). Known as Feast of Lanterns by the Japanese Buddhists. Prayer services are held to remember their ancestors, food is offered to them, all houses are lit with lanterns and lanterns are floated down rivers or the sea to guide their spirits back to the other world. In Japan, it is a national holiday to honour the elderly.

September 21: International Day of Peace (UN) is observed each year on the third Tuesday of September. Its observance coincides with the opening of the regular session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. In 1981, to commemorate and strengthen the ideals of peace both within and among all nations of the world the General Assembly proclaimed the International Day of Peace and invited all Member States, non-governmental organizations and individuals to observe the Day in a manner that reflects the United Nations' commitment to keeping peace among peoples and nations.

Although peace is commemorated by various organizations and groups on other dates, the International Day of Peace is the only official commemoration declared by the United Nations. At United Nations Headquarters, the Day is marked each year with a special ceremony near the Peace Bell. The Bell, cast from coins donated by people from some 60 countries, is a gift to the United Nations by the United Nations Association of Japan. The Peace Bell is located in the West Court Garden on the front lawn of the UN Secretariat building.

September 22: Yom Kippur (Jewish). The Day of Atonement is the holiest and the most solemn of all days in the Jewish year. It is believed that once you atone for your mistakes, you can be “one” with God. Jews do not work this day and fast from sunset to sunset.

September 22-Oct 7: Oktoberfest (German). In 1810, King Joseph Maximilian of Bavaria, decided to celebrate his marriage with princess Theresa of Saxonie in royal style and chose the now famous Theresienweise. Originally it was meant to be a simple horse race event, but the Bavarian character quickly took over, and it became a happy gathering of cheerful beer drinkers. The Oktoberfest attracts approximately 7 million visitors each year and lasts for two weeks. It is also celebrated by various Germanic communities in North America and enjoyed by most.

September 23 : Mabon (Wicca). This celebrates life's encapsulation as a seed to survive the cold, barren winter and the Harvest of the Vine, which as wine symbolizes the goddess' power to transform youth's sweet nectar into old age, wisdom and spiritual maturity.

September 25: Harvest Moon Festival (China, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan) The festival is celebrated with family reunions, moon gazing and eating of moon cakes. In Vietnam, it is called “Trung Thu”. On that night children form a procession and travel through the streets with bright lanterns, singing and dancing to the beat of drums. In Korea it is called “Chusok”. It is observed by paying homage to ancestors and expressing gratitude for rich crops.

September 26 : Ksamavani (Jainism) This is the Day for Universal Forgiveness, and it falls on the second day of Ananta-Chaturdsi (Festival of Ten Virtues which is a 10 day fast and meditation period for Digambara sect. On Ksamavani, Jains ask for forgiveness of others for wrongs committed during the previous year, and likewise forgive those who caused them suffering.