

STAMP SCOOP



YEAR OF THE HORSE

Happy New Year! As we welcome in 2014, we also ring in the Chinese New Year on January 31st. The festival of the Chinese New Year is as old as the ancient Chinese calendar itself, and was traditionally a time for Chinese families to honor their ancestors, deities, and households. During the globalization of the twentieth century, we in America began to share in China's New Year festivities.

As a social, religious, and imperial guide, the ancient Chinese calendar followed a 12-year zodiac that associated each year in its cycle with a different animal: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. Characteristics of each animal are thought to be reflected in individuals born in their year. Those born in the Year of the Horse are said to be lively, intelligent, capable, and warm-hearted. In what year were you born?

2014's Year of the Horse stamp – like its predecessors in the Lunar New Year series – includes original artwork by Kam Mak, a paper-cut design by Clarence Lee, and calligraphy by Lau Bun. It depicts Chinese drums typically played in New Year celebrations, with drumsticks painted red for luck.

Looking for more on the Chinese zodiac? Check out the May 2010 Lesson Plan under our Lesson Plan Archive at www.USPSConnection.com.

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