

## The Sacred

**The Sacred** is about exploring a variety of religious traditions and spiritual beliefs from around the world. Unitarian Universalists accept different faiths and beliefs. We believe we grow spiritually by exploring different religions. We believe that we should be free to believe what we want, as long as no one is hurt by our beliefs. We believe we learn from other peoples' experiences . . . and so can you.

UU's believe that we can learn much from other cultures and from their celebrations, such as *Chinese New Year*, or what most Asian peoples call "The Spring Festival"—a very old celebration by Buddhists and Hindus, mostly in Asian countries. This year is ***The Year of the Ox***.



The Chinese New Year was first celebrated 2000 years ago, as a way to honor gods, ancestors, and other family members. People in many other Asian countries celebrate a similar holiday. And there are people in other countries (including ours!) also celebrate this traditional New Year.



People begin this celebration in early Feb. by cleaning houses—to get rid of bad spirits and bad luck! After that, families gather for a “reunion dinner” on Chinese New Year’s Eve. This is a very special dinner because it honors the importance of family. Entire generations gather, and enjoy many delicious traditional foods.



Jiaozi-dumplings



Tang Yuan-sweet  
rice balls



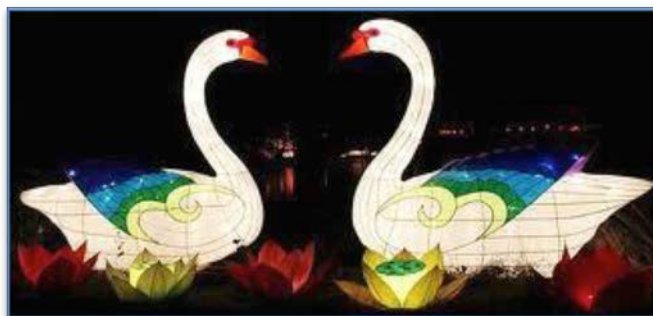
Chūn juǎn- spring rolls

Just like our Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations, people give each other gifts. Here, it is money in red envelopes (children get gifts from **every** adult in their family!).



The end of the CNY celebration is the Chinese Lantern Festival, which takes place under the full moon.

People hang lanterns along streets and around homes and carry them around parks and outside temples. People write positive phrases on the lanterns to ward off evil spirits and to bring good luck. Fireworks are set off to scare away evil spirits. Of course, all of this is fun too.



Some people decorate their lanterns with a riddles and offer a prize to the person who solves it.



## CAN YOU SOLVE THESE LANTERN RIDDLES?

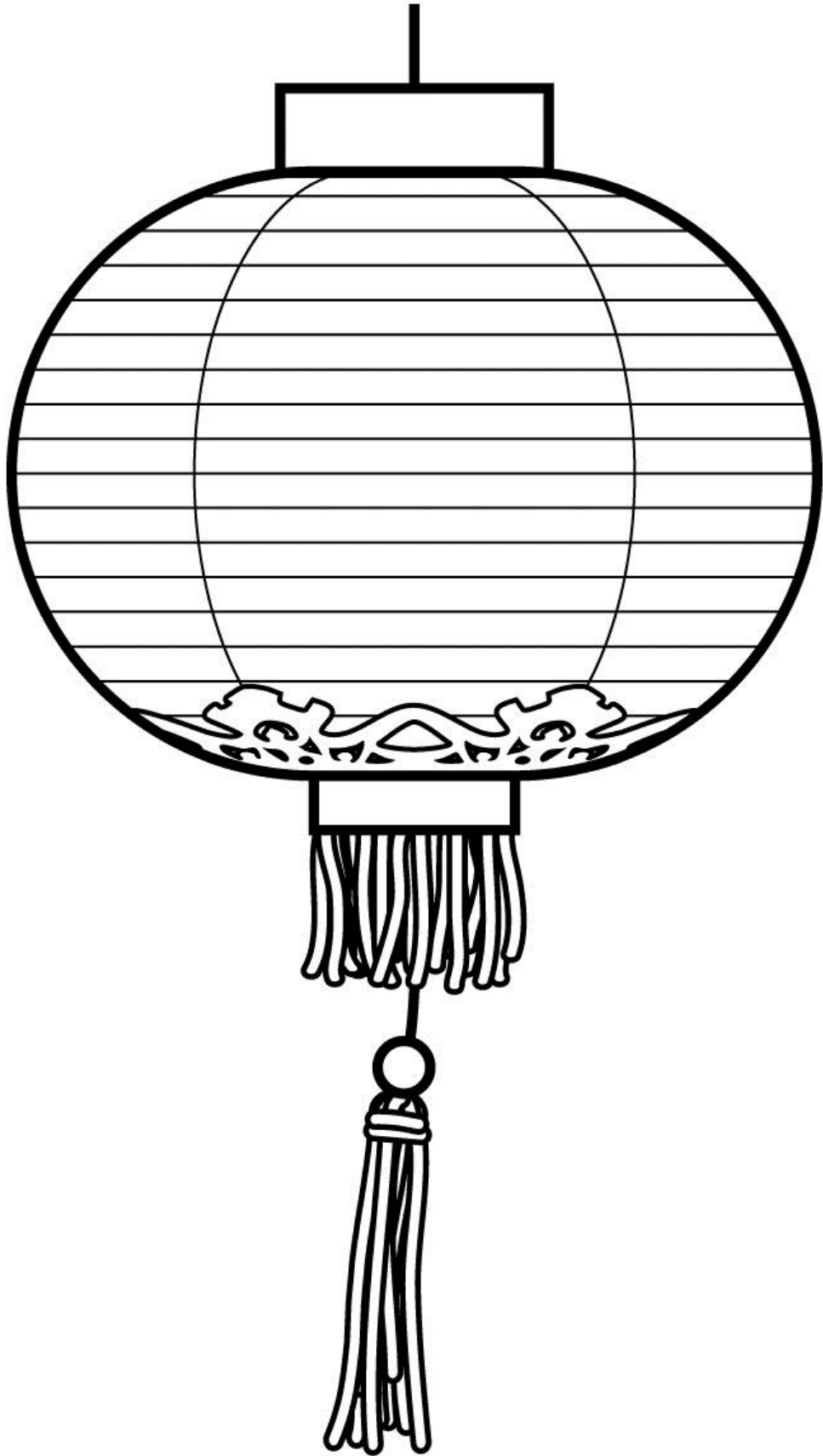
1. What's full of holes but still holds water?
2. What building has the most stories?
3. What does everybody do at the same time?
4. Why is a river rich?
5. What has one eye, which is always open, but cannot see?
6. When is your mind like rumped bed?
7. What kind of fish are the richest?

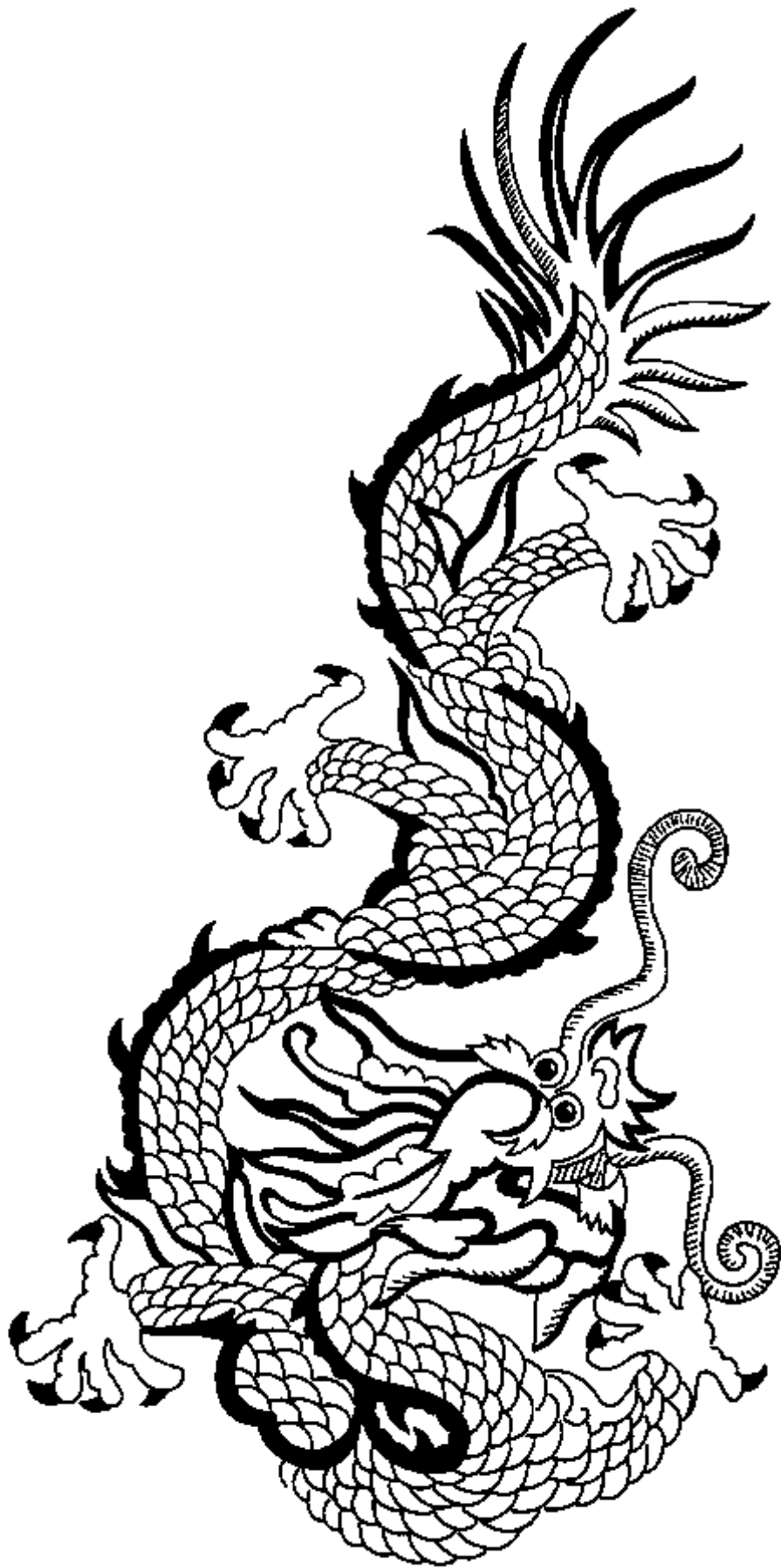
(Answers: 1—a sponge, 2—a library, 3-4—because it was two banks, 5—a needle, 6—when it's not made up, 7—goldfish)



A favorite part of the Lantern Festival is the Dragon Dance. Dragons are considered the symbols of Chinese culture, and are peaceful and kind. Men dress up in a l-o-n-g dragon costume, and march through the streets, making the dragon “roar.” The longer the dragon, the better luck to those who ‘shake hands’ with it. This marks the end of the New Year Celebration.







## ACTIVITES:

For local library hours and activities



### **Clinton**

563-242-8441

<https://www.clintonpubliclibrary.us/>

### **Camanche**

563-259-1106

<http://www.camanchepubliclibrary.org/>

### **DeWitt**

563-659-5523

<https://dewitt.lib.ia.us/>

### **Maquoketa**

563-652-3874

<https://www.maquoketa.lib.ia.us/>