

Cultural Celebrations and Holy Days Through December 2006

Special Notes:

This calendar is produced by Face To Face in collaboration with the City of Fort Collins Human Rights Resource and Education Office. If you have information for the calendar, please contact the HRO office 970-224-6046.

BAHAI : The dates refer to the Bahai day which begins at sunset on the preceding day and ends at sunset on the date listed.

BUDDHISM: Holy Days are synchronized with the phases of the moon; thus they vary from year to year according to the Gregorian calendar.

CHRISTIANITY: Some Holy Days have the same date each year; others vary from year to year.

HINDUISM: The dates change each year, based on the Lunar calendar.

ISLAM: The dates are based on actual sightings of the crescent moon.

JUDAISM: All Jewish holidays begin at sundown the day before the date listed and end at sundown on the date listed.

For additional information, please contact:

Bahai: Colleen Conway, caconway@uswest.net

Buddhism: Heruka Buddhist Center, 970-482-7613

Tibetan: Rocky Mountain Shambala Center, 970-881-2184

www.rmshambala.org

Zen: Ed Wydallis, 970-493-5875, wydallis@qwest.net

Hinduism: Indian Student Association, ias@lamar.colostate.edu

Islam: Muslim Student Association, msa@lamar.colostate.edu

Judaism: Hillel at CSU 970-491-2080, Congregation Har Shalom 970-223-5191

Kwanzaa: Black Student Services, CSU, 970-491-5781

General Calendar Information:

www.fcgov.com/humanrights

www.holidayfestival.com

www.interfaithcalendar.org

www.ocrat.com/ocrat/chargif/zodiac.html

June 2004

June **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered (GLBT) Pride Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.

June 3 **Corpus Christi** (Christian), in honor of the Eucharist.

- June 14** **Flag Day (USA).**
- June 20** **Father's Day (USA).** The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Having been raised by her father, after her mother died, she wanted her father to know how special he was to her. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910. In 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June.
- June 19** **Juneteenth** is an African American celebration that honors the day in 1865 when slaves in Texas and Louisiana finally heard they were free, two months after the end of the Civil War. June 19, therefore, became the day of independence for thousands of African Americans.
- June 22** **Summer Solstice** is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and occurs on or around June 22.
- June 25** **Midsummer Eve Festivals** (Northern Europe). Pagan in origin, celebrated at the height of the brilliant northern summer before the first harvest, this has always been one of the most popular festivals in Northern Europe, especially in Sweden.
- June 27** **GLBT Pride Day (USA).** This event grew out of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, when patrons of a gay New York nightclub, The Stonewall Inn, resisted police attempts to raid the club. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.
- July 2004**
- July** **Khao Pansa** marks the beginning of the Buddhist Lent. It is the preferred day for Buddhist men in some countries to be ordained as monks. It is celebrated in the full moon of the eighth lunar month.
- July 4** **Independence Day (USA).** The Declaration of Independence was signed on this day in 1776. This document proclaimed the independence of the thirteen colonies from allegiance to the British Crown and the dissolution of all political ties with Great Britain.
- July 9** **Martyrdom of the Bab** (Bahai). School and work are suspended
- July 27** **Tisha B-Av**, the Fast of the Ninth of Av, is a Jewish day of mourning that commemorates the many tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people, primarily the destruction of the 1st and 2nd Temples in Jerusalem. This is a day of fasting and traditional mourning practices are observed.

August 2004

- August 3** **National Night Out** (USA) begun in 1998, is a fun and low-key way to fight crime by meeting your neighbors through a barbecue, ice cream social or any other function. For more information on Ft. Collins Neighborhood Night Out events call the Neighborhood Resources Office 970- 224-6145.
- August 14-15** **Crow Fair** is the largest encampment of teepees in the U.S. It is a week long celebration of Native Culture with a pow wow, parades, contests, and entertainment. Crow Fair takes place at Crow Agency in Montana on the third weekend of August each year.
- August 14-15** **Santa Fe Indian Market** is over 70 years old and is the largest and most prestigious gathering of Native artists from across the U.S. It is held the third weekend in August. Thousands of tourists and art collectors visit the Market to see and buy the best of Native art, sculpture, jewelry, and other items. Artists are accepted by invitation only. There are a number of Pueblo Feast days which are open to the public. Check the website for dates and protocol: www.santefe.org
- August ??** **Raksha Bandhan**, (Hinduism). In the days when gods warred with demons, the sister of Indra, (the King of the Heavens), tied a silken bracelet or charm (a rakhi) around his wrist. Because of this rakhi, it is said that the King won back his heavenly abode from his enemies. In the north and west parts of India, this event is called Raksha Bandhan; in the area around Delhi, it is called Salone. But all over India, it represents the tying together in bonds of affection and protectiveness of brother and sisters.

September 2004

- September** **National Hispanic Heritage Month**. The Proclamation for the United States of America to celebrate the contribution of Hispanics to our communities and country started with the observance of Hispanic Heritage Week (public law 90-498, approved September 17, 1968, 90th Congress.) It wasn't until August 17, 1988 that the 100th Congress authorized the designation of National Hispanic Heritage Month. For a schedule of local events call CSU El Centro Student Services 970-491-5722.
- September 6** **Navajo Nation Fair** is held in Window Rock, Arizona, within the lands of the Navajo Reservation. Festival-goers from the large reservation, as well as members of other tribal groups, gather together for this event.
- September 6** **Labor Day** (USA and Canada). The first Monday in September is celebrated with picnics and parades honoring workers in the two countries.
- September 16-17** **Rosh Hashanah** is the Jewish New Year and is the beginning of the High Holidays. It is the anniversary of the completion of creation, about 5760 years ago. At Rosh Hashanah services, the Shofar (ram's horn) is sounded announcing the New Year and awakening Jews to remember God's commandments. The 10

days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are called the Days of Awe. This is a time of reflection, remembrance, prayer, and repentance.

September 16 Mexican Independence Day commemorates the 1910 revolution which ended dictatorship. The Independence Day festivities in Mexico begin at midnight on the day of the holiday. At that time, in villages, towns, and cities all over Mexico, the people gather at the "zocalo" or public square. There is a feeling of excitement in the air. Red, white and green banners, Mexico's national colors, are hung from buildings and lights are strung from street posts. There are bands playing and people throw confetti and wave flags. At midnight the president (or in small towns a local public official) reads the "Grito de Dolores" of Father Hidalgo (Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the organizer and principal leader of the rebellion against the Spaniards), which was first presented in 1810. The people chant the "Grito" after the president. He then rings the independence bell. As soon as this happens fireworks light up the sky and the dancing and singing continues. For a schedule of local events call CSU El Centro Student Services 970-491-5722.

September 19 International Day of Peace was first observed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1982.

September 21 Autumnal Equinox or the first day of Fall occurs on or around September 21.

September 22 National Native American Day (USA). Although not an official government holiday, most American Indian organizations and tribes do observe this holiday.

September 25 Yom Kippur (Judaism), the Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day of the year. It is a day of fasting and prayers for forgiveness.

September 25 Oktoberfest, locally sponsored by Eyeopeners Kiwanis, is modeled after Oktoberfest in Germany. The blending of the German Oktoberfest with Americanized style has been a happy one. Pageantry, brew, bratwurst, and entertainment comprise this annual event, held in Old Town Fort Collins.

September 30- Sukkot (Judaism) or the Feast of Booths is an eight-day harvest festival, a joyous time of

October 1 thanksgiving. Many Jews build little "huts" (or "sukkahs") in their backyards and eat meals there to commemorate the huts Jews built in the wilderness during their 40-year journey after leaving Egypt (also harvesters lived in huts).

October 2004

October Boun Ok Pansa marks the end of Buddhist Lent. It is at the end of the rainy season.

October 8 Columbus Day (USA) recognizes the encounter of the New World in 1492 by Christopher Columbus.

- October 8** **Simchas Torah** (Judaism) is a day of rejoicing in Torah, the book of God's law. On this day, the last chapters of the Torah are read, completing the year's reading. And on this day, the first chapters are also read, beginning the cycle again.
- October 11** **National Coming Out Day (USA)**. On October 11, 1987, half a million people marched on Washington for gay and lesbian equality. This was the second such demonstration in our nation's capitol and the first display of the NAMES Project Quilt, remembering those who have died from AIDS. One measure of the march's success was the number of organizations that were founded as a result including the National Latino/a Gay and Lesbian Organization (LLEGO) and AT&T's GLBT employee group, LEAGUE. The momentum continued four months after this extraordinary march as more than 100 gay, lesbian, and transgendered activists from around the country gathered in Manassas, VA, about 25 miles outside of Washington, D.C. Recognizing that the GLBT community often reacted defensively to anti-gay actions, they came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out and chose the anniversary of that march on Washington to mark it. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.
- October 12** **National Indigenous People's Day**. In 1992, drums from across the USA and time zones coordinated ceremonies and observances at 12 p.m. to celebrate and honor 500 years of resistance and the survival of North American Indigenous people. From that day to the present Native Americans observe October 12 as Indigenous People's Day, not Columbus Day.
- Oct 15-Nov 13** **Ramadan** is the holiest period in the Islamic year and is held during the entire 9th lunar month of the year. This was the month in which the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It is a time during which almost all Muslims over the age of 12 are expected to fast from sunup to sundown.
- October 20** **Birth of the Bab** (the Gate of God, Bahai), the forerunner of Baha'u'llah. School and work are suspended.
- October 31** **Halloween** (USA), the evening before All Saints or All-Hallows Day, is informally observed with masquerading, pumpkin carving, and "trick or treat" gathering.

November 2004

- November** **National Native American Month**. For a schedule of local events call CSU Native American Student Services 970-491-1332.
- November 1** **Día de los Muertos** (All Saints' Day) is a national holiday in Mexico and is also celebrated in parts of the USA. Mexicans regard this annual holiday as a happy occasion that reunites them with the souls of loved ones. This two-day celebration honors the souls of dead children on November 1 and honors the souls of older relatives and friends on November 2. Families decorate tombs in the graveyard and home altars with toys, favorite foods, flowers, bread figures,

incense burners, and elaborately fashioned candlesticks. On the morning of the second day people gather in graveyards and serenade the spirits with brass bands and mariachi music. The dead are never forgotten because once a year they are honored during this annual holiday.

- November 1** **All Saints' Day** is a Christian holiday observed in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, which commemorates all the saints and martyrs who do not have a dedicated special day. It is obligatory for Roman Catholics and is also known as All Hallows Day.
- November 11** **Veteran's Day** (USA) is in honor of veterans of the armed services and in commemoration of the armistice that ended World War I in 1918. In 1954 it was renamed from Armistice Day and given the added significance of honoring veterans of all wars.
- November 12** **Birth of Baha'u'llah**, the Prophet founder of the Bahai faith. School and work are suspended.
- November 14** **Eid al-Fitr** (Islam) is the first day following Ramadan. It is a time of rejoicing. Houses are decorated and Muslims buy gifts for relatives.
- November 24** **Diwali** (Hinduism) is the prettiest festival celebrated in India, a five day Festival of Lights to celebrate Rama and Sita's homecoming in the Ramayana. It signifies the victory of good over evil. The festival is the time for family reunion. Women indulge in making all kinds of sweets and children enjoy themselves with fireworks. It is a custom to have a bath at dawn, wear new clothes, the lighting of oil lamps and bursting of firecrackers. The first day is Dhan Trayodashi; the second day Naraak Chaturdashi; the third day is Lakshmi Poojan on which people worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and businessmen keep their shops shut as a symbol of protecting wealth. The fourth day is Bali Pratipada. The last day is Bhaubeej, when the sister asks the Lord for the well-being of her brother, who is her Protector. In return, the brother bestows the sister with gifts. For a schedule of local events call CSU International Student Services 970-491-5917.
- November 25** **Thanksgiving** (USA). The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by people of the Wampanog Tribe and the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony in 1621.
- November 26** **Day of the Covenant** (the Feast of the Appointment of the Center of the Covenant, Bahai) celebrates the day that Baha'u'llah's son, Abdu'l-Baha, became the Center of the Covenant.
- November 28** **Ascension of Abdul-Baha** (Bahai).

December 2004

- December 1** **World AIDS Day** has become an annual day of recognition of AIDS—to remember those who have died, to acknowledge the need for continued commitment to care for those who are HIV/AIDS positive, and to support the research to find a cure. For a schedule of local events call Northern Colorado AIDS Project 970-484-4469.
- December 8** **Bodhi Day** celebrates the Buddha's enlightenment in 596 BCE.
- December 8-15** **Hanukkah** (Judaism) or the Festival of Lights is an eight-day festival recalling the war fought by the Maccabees in the cause of religious freedom and the rededication of the Temple after recapturing it from the Syrians. Each evening candles are lit on the "menorah" (candleabra), adding one candle each night. Hanukkah is a time for playing games ("dreidel" or a spinning top is a popular Hanukkah game) and singing, for visiting and for giving gifts. Originally a minor Jewish holy day, it has become more important in recent years.
- December 10** **International Human Rights Day**, established by the United Nations in 1948, commemorates the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- December 12** **Our Lady of Guadalupe Day** (Mexico) is a major celebration in Mexico that honors the "Dark Virgin of Guadalupe", the Republic's Patron Saint. The "Dark Virgin" is comparable to the European "Virgin Mother."
- December 16-24** **Las Posadas** (Mexico) includes processions and parties reenacting Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem.
- December 21** **Winter Solstice** or the first day of Winter occurs on or around December 22. This is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- December 25** **Christmas** (Christian) is the day associated with Jesus' birth. Celebrated on December 25 by Western churches and on January 7 the following year by Eastern Orthodox churches.
- Dec.26-Jan.1** **Kwanzaa** is an African-American holiday started by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an African world scholar, in 1966. It is based on the agricultural celebrations of Africa called "the first fruits" celebrations which are times of harvest, gathering, reverence, commemoration, recommitment and celebration. Therefore, Kwanzaa is a time for achievements, reverence for the Creator and creation, commemoration of the past, recommitment to cultural ideals and celebration of the good. Kwanza, a Swahili word, means "first". Kwanzaa, spelled with the double vowel at the end of the word, refers to the holiday.
NOTE: Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday, not a religious one, thus available to and practiced by Africans of all religious faiths.
- December 31** **New Year's Eve**.

January 2005

- January 1** **New Year's Day** is observed in all countries of the world that follow the Gregorian calendar.
- January 6** **Epiphany**
- January 7** **Eastern Orthodox Christmas** is celebrated as "Christmas" in the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church.
- January 14** **Makara Sankranti** (Hinduism, date approximate) heralds the coming of longer days. It is a time for family reunions, for giving of charity and for bathing in rivers.
- January 17** **Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday** commemorates the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who was born on January 15, 1929. One of the world's best known advocates of non-violent social change, King was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in December of 1964. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, and remains a symbol of the struggle for civil rights. For a schedule of local events call CSU Campus Activities at 970-491-6444.
- January 21** **Eid al-Adha** (the Feast of Sacrifice or Day of Sacrifice) occurs during the 12th month of the Islamic year. This is the season of the Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca). It recalls the day when Abraham intended to follow the instructions of God and sacrifice his son Isaac.
- January 25** **Tu B'Shevat** (Judiasm) is the New Year of Trees.

February 2005

- February** **Black History Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Black Student Services 970-491-5781.
- February 2** **Candlemas Day** (Christian, Wiccan & Pagan) is a purifying ceremony to let go of the old and bring in the new (with the light.) In Christianity the day commemorates when Mary took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem 40 days after his birth. It has also long been a day for weather predictions: "If Candlemas be fair and clear, two winters you will have this year," leading to the celebration of Groundhog day which originated in Germany.
- February 2** **Groundhog Day** (USA and Canada) is based on an old belief that if the sun shines on Candlemas Day, or if the groundhog sees its shadow when it emerges from its den, we will experience six more weeks of winter.
- February 2** **El Día De Candelaria** (Mexico) marks the official end of the Christmas season.
- February 8** **Nirvana Day** commemorates the death of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha.

- February 8** **Shrove Tuesday** (Christian) the last day before Lent. Many people celebrate this day or days prior to it by having carnivals such as Mardi Gras held in France and Louisiana and by festivals in Germany and Latin America. In England it became known as "Shrove Tuesday" because people went to church to "shrove" or "confess" their sins.
- February 9** **Tet**, the Vietnamese New Year, is a contraction of the words "Nguyen Dan Tiet" or the "festival of the first day of the year." Based on the Lunar calendar, Tet marks the beginning of the spring season and lasts three or more days.
- February 9** **Chinese New Year**, based on the lunar calendar
- February 9** **Lent** (Christian), a period of fasting and prayer, begins on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before Easter Sunday.
- February 10** **Al-Hijra/Muharram** (Islam) is the Muslim New Year, beginning the first of the lunar month.
- February 14** **Saint Valentine's Day** (USA, Canada, Europe and Latin America) is based on the exchange of gifts that convey affection and love. The history of this holiday cannot be identified with any one origin with certainty. One version of the story tells of a priest named Valentine who would secretly marry people forbidden to wed by law. The Emperor believed that he could form a larger and stronger army if men remained single and had no family ties. Valentine was arrested and beheaded on February 14. Because he was a champion of love, he became known as the patron saint of lovers.
- February 21** **President's Day** (USA) was originally in honor of Presidents Washington and Lincoln and now serves as a reminder of the contributions of past and present presidents.
- February 25** **Holi** (Hinduism) is a spring festival. It is a carnival-like celebration featuring bright colors, bonfires and pilgrimages. It is dedicated to Krishna or Kama, the God of Pleasure.
- Feb.26-Mar.1** **Ayyam-I-Ha** (Intercalary Days, Bahai) The four days of the year (five days in leap year) which fall between the eighteenth and nineteenth month of the Bahai Calendar. These days are set aside for hospitality, gift-giving, and service.

March 2005

- March** **Women's History Month** is to recognize women of all races, ages, cultures, ethnic traditions and ways of life. Women are honored who have participated in history by living and sharing their lives with others, and by so doing, have contributed to our shared history. For a schedule of local events call CSU Office of Women's Programs and Studies 970-491-6384 and The Women's Center 970-484-1902.
- Mar.2-20** **Period of Fasting**, a time when all healthy adult Bahai's fast from sunrise to sunset. This fasting period ends at sunset on March 20th which is the beginning of the Naw Ruz (New Year's) Celebration.
- March 8** **International Women's Day** commemorates the 1908 women's march in New York City for suffrage and against child labor.
- March 13** **Vasant Panchami** (Hinduism) celebrates spring, or basant, and Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of learning and the arts. This is the time some children begin learning the 50 letters used in the Sanskrit alphabet.
- March 17** **Saint Patrick's Day**, the national holiday of Ireland, is the anniversary of the death of Patrick, an Italian slave who converted the Irish people to Christianity in the fifth century.
- March 18-20** **Denver March Pow Wow** is the oldest and one of the largest in the country. It is held the third weekend in March. Located in the Denver Coliseum, it is an opportunity for people to see hundreds of dancers from throughout the USA and Canada compete for honors in a multitude of categories. Native arts and crafts vendors are stationed around the coliseum perimeter, offering unique items from as far away as Alaska, real maple sugar from the Ojibwe Nations, handmade birch bark baskets, quill and bead work, fine jewelry, and much more. It is a rare opportunity for those in this area to experience the diversity of the Native American people. The Denver March Pow Wow is officially observed as the beginning of the yearly pow wow season.
- March 20** **Palm Sunday** (Christian) is recognized seven days before Easter Sunday and is the beginning of Holy Week.
- March 21** **Naw Ruz** (Bahai) is the New Year, a celebration of hospitality and rejoicing. Work and school are suspended.
- March 21** **Spring Equinox** or the first day of Spring occurs on or around March 21.
- March 24** **Holy Thursday** (Christian, also called Maundy Thursday) remembers the Last Supper. The term "Maundy" was derived from the old Latin name for the day, "Dies Mandatum" – "the day of the new commandment".
- March 25** **Purim** (Judaism) or the Feast of Lots recalls the defeat by Queen Esther of the plan to slaughter all of the Persian Jews, circa 400 BCE. During Purim, the Book

of Esther is read in the synagogue service. It is a joyous holiday during which gifts of food, carnivals, and plays are customary.

March 25 **Good Friday** (Christian, also called Holy Friday) commemorates the execution of Jesus by the Roman army of occupation.

March 27 **Easter Sunday** (Christian) celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.

March 27 **Eastern Orthodox Easter.**

March 31 **Cesar Chavez Day** was declared a Colorado state holiday in recognition of the valuable contributions of Chavez. The day symbolizes the ongoing struggle for the rights of farm workers, as reflected in the nonviolent and equitable attributes of Chavez. The festivities provide awareness and knowledge for the community through the arts, food, and educational experiences. For a schedule of local events call CSU Campus Activities 970-491-6444.

April 2005

April 1 **April Fool's Day**

April 1 **Mesha Sakranti** (Hinduism, date approximate) is the vernal equinox and the beginning of the new year in the Hindu solar calendar.

April 2 **Annual CSU Pow Wow** is usually held the first week of April. Sometimes it is a Traditional Pow Wow, sometimes a Competition Pow Wow, always fun, and our contribution to the celebration of the Native American culture to the Northern Colorado area. For a schedule of events call CSU Native American Student Services 970-491-1332.

April 8 **Vesak** is the Buddha's birthday. In some traditions, it celebrates the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.

April 9-17 **TBGLAD** (Transgender, Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian Awareness Days). For a schedule of events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342.

April 14 **Baisakhi** (Bangladesh; Hindu, Sikh). The Solar New Year (time approximate) is a day traditionally meant for people to cleanse spiritually in the river, and then go to the temple to worship.

April 14-24 **Asian Fest.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Asian/Pacific American Student Services 970-491-6154.

Apr.21-May 2 **Ridvan** means paradise. For 12 days, Bahai's celebrate the period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah resided in a garden in Baghdad. During this period Baha'u'llah, proclaimed his mission as God's Messenger for this age.

April 21 First Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.

April 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.

- May 2 Twelfth Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.
- April 22** **Earth Day**, first observed in the United States in 1970, reminds people of our environment and how our habits affect our environment. For a schedule of local events call COPIRG 970-491-7847.
- April 24** **Passover** or Pesach is held each Spring to recall the Jews' deliverance out of slavery in Egypt, circa 1300 BCE. It is a celebration of freedom. The first two nights of Passover a ritual Seder meal is eaten and the story is retold and passed down from generation to generation. The holiday lasts eight days during which time no bread or leavened food is eaten.
- May 2005
- May 1** **May Day**
- May 5** **Cinco de Mayo** commemorates a battle that was won on this day in 1862 during the years that the Mexicans were struggling to drive foreign armies from the country and become an independent nation. In the USA this day is celebrated in the *fiesta* spirit. There are parades, foods, musical events and dances. For a schedule of local events call CSU El Centro Student Services 970-491-5722.
- May 5** **Yom HaShoah**, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is a secular rather than religious holiday established by the Government of Israel. There are a variety of memorial observances both in Israel and the USA.
- May 8** **Mother's Day**. In 1872, Julia Ward Howe (who wrote the Battle Hymn of the Republic) suggested this day be dedicated to peace. Mother's Day meetings were held yearly in Boston Massachusetts on this day. In 1907 Ana Jarvis began a campaign to establish a National Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May. It took four years and in 1911 it was proclaimed a national holiday. Countries celebrating Mother's Day are the USA, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia and Belgium.
- May 12** **Israel Independence Day** (Yom Ka'atzmau'ut) celebrates the day on which modern Israel became an independent state-May 14, 1948.
- May 23** **Declaration of the Bab** (Bahai). Siyid'Ali-Muhammad declared Himself to be the Bab, or the Gate of God, on May 23, 1844. This date marks the beginning of the Bahai faith, the Bahai Era (B.E.) and the Bahai calendar. School and work are suspended.
- May 26** **Corpus Christi** (Christian), in honor of the Eucharist.
- May 29** **Celebration of the Ascension of Baha'u'llah** (Bahai). School and work are suspended.
- May 30** **Memorial Day** (USA) was first observed in 1868 to honor the dead of the Civil War. It has come to include lives lost in all wars.

June 2005

- June** **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered (GLBT) Pride Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.
- June 13** **Shavuot** (Judaism) celebrates the giving of the Torah, God's gift to the Jewish people, which is a guide for how to live in this world. It occurs seven weeks after Passover.
- June 14** **Flag Day** (USA).
- June 19** **Juneteenth** is an African American celebration that honors the day in 1865 when slaves in Texas and Louisiana finally heard they were free, two months after the end of the Civil War. June 19, therefore, became the day of independence for thousands of African Americans.
- June 19** **Father's Day** (USA). The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Having been raised by her father, after her mother died, she wanted her father to know how special he was to her. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910. In 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June.
- June 21** **Summer Solstice** is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and occurs on or around June 22.
- June 25** **Midsummer Eve Festivals** (Northern Europe). Pagan in origin, celebrated at the height of the brilliant northern summer before the first harvest, this has always been one of the most popular festivals in Northern Europe, especially in Sweden.
- June 26** **GLBT Pride Day** (USA). This event grew out of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, when patrons of a gay New York nightclub, The Stonewall Inn, resisted police attempts to raid the club. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.

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- July 4** **Independence Day** (USA). The Declaration of Independence was signed on this day in 1776. This document proclaimed the independence of the thirteen

colonies from allegiance to the British Crown and the dissolution of all political ties with Great Britain.

July 9 **Martyrdom of the Bab** (Bahai). School and work are suspended

August 2005

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September 2005

September **National Hispanic Heritage Month**. The Proclamation for the United Staes of America to celebrate the contribution of Hispanics to our communities and country started with the observance of Hispanic Heritage Week (public law 90-498, approved September 17, 1968, 90th Congress.) It wasn't until August 17, 1988

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October 2005

- October** **Boun Ok Pansa** marks the end of Buddhist Lent. It is at the end of the rainy season.
- October 4-5** **Rosh Hashanah** is the Jewish New Year and is the beginning of the High Holidays. It is the anniversary of the completion of creation, about 5760 years ago. At Rosh Hashanah services, the Shofar (ram's horn) is sounded announcing the New Year and awakening Jews to remember God's commandments. The 10

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- October 10** **Columbus Day** (USA) recognizes the encounter of the New World in 1492 by Christopher Columbus.
- October 10** **National Indigenous People's Day.** In 1992, drums from across the USA and time zones coordinated ceremonies and observances at 12 p.m. to celebrate and honor 500 years of resistance and the survival of North American Indigenous people. From that day to the present Native Americans observe October 12 as Indigenous People's Day, not Columbus Day.
- October 11** **National Coming Out Day** (USA). On October 11, 1987, half a million people marched on Washington for gay and lesbian equality. This was the second such demonstration in our nation's capitol and the first display of the NAMES Project Quilt, remembering those who have died from AIDS. One measure of the march's success was the number of organizations that were founded as a result including the National Latino/a Gay and Lesbian Organization (LLEGO) and AT&T's GLBT employee group, LEAGUE. The momentum continued four months after this extraordinary march as more than 100 gay, lesbian, and transgendered activists from around the country gathered in Manassas, VA, about 25 miles outside of Washington, D.C. Recognizing that the GLBT community often reacted defensively to anti-gay actions, they came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out and chose the anniversary of that march on Washington to mark it. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.
- October 13** **Yom Kippur** (Judaism), the Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day of the year. It is a day of fasting and prayers for forgiveness.
- October 18** **Sukkot** (Judaism) or the Feast of Booths is an eight-day harvest festival, a joyous time of thanksgiving. Many Jews build little "huts" (or "sukkahs") in their backyards and eat meals there to commemorate the huts Jews built in the wilderness during their 40-year journey after leaving Egypt (also harvesters lived in huts).
- October 20** **Birth of the Bab** (the Gate of God, Bahai), the forerunner of Baha'u'llah. School and work are suspended.
- October 25** **Simchas Torah** (Judaism) is a day of rejoicing in Torah, the book of God's law. On this day, the last chapters of the Torah are read, completing the year's reading. And on this day, the first chapters are also read, beginning the cycle again.

October 31 **Halloween** (USA), the evening before All Saints or All-Hallows Day, is informally observed with masquerading , pumpkin carving, and “trick or treat” gathering.

November 2005

November **National Native American Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Native American Student Services 970-491-1332.

November 1 **Día de los Muertos** (All Saints’ Day) is a national holiday in Mexico and is also celebrated in parts of the USA. Mexicans regard this annual holiday as a happy occasion that reunites them with the souls of loved ones. This two-day celebration honors the souls of dead children on November 1 and honors the souls of older relatives and friends on November 2. Families decorate tombs in the graveyard and home altars with toys, favorite foods, flowers, bread figures, incense burners, and elaborately fashioned candlesticks. On the morning of the second day people gather in graveyards and serenade the spirits with brass bands and mariachi music. The dead are never forgotten because once a year they are honored during this annual holiday.

November 1 **Diwali** (Hinduism) is the prettiest festival celebrated in India, a five day Festival of Lights to celebrate Rama and Sita's homecoming in the Ramayana. It signifies the victory of good over evil. The festival is the time for family reunion. Women indulge in making all kinds of sweets and children enjoy themselves with fireworks. It is a custom to have a bath at dawn, wear new clothes, the lighting of oil lamps and bursting of firecrackers. The first day is Dhan Trayodashi; the second day Naraak Chaturdashi; the third day is Lakshmi Poojan on which people worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and businessmen keep their shops shut as a symbol of protecting wealth. The fourth day is Bali Pratipada. The last day is Bhaubeej, when the sister asks the Lord for the well-being of her brother, who is her Protector. In return, the brother bestows the sister with gifts. For a schedule of local events call CSU International Student Services 970-491-5917.

November 1 **All Saints' Day** is a Christian holiday observed in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, which commemorates all the saints and martyrs who do not have a dedicated special day. It is obligatory for Roman Catholics and is also known as All Hallows Day.

November 3 **Eid al-Fitr** (Islam) is the first day following Ramadan. It is a time of rejoicing. Houses are decorated and Muslims buy gifts for relatives.

November 11 **Veteran's Day** (USA) is in honor of veterans of the armed services and in commemoration of the armistice that ended World War I in 1918. In 1954 it was renamed from Armistice Day and given the added significance of honoring veterans of all wars.

November 12 **Birth of Baha'u'llah**, the Prophet founder of the Bahai faith. School and work are suspended.

November 24 **Thanksgiving** (USA). The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by people of the Wampanog Tribe and the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony in 1621.

November 26 **Day of the Covenant** (the Feast of the Appointment of the Center of the Covenant, Bahai) celebrates the day that Baha'u'llah's son, Abdu'l-Baha, became the Center of the Covenant.

November 28 **Ascension of Abdul-Baha** (Bahai).

December 2005

December 1 **World AIDS Day** has become an annual day of recognition of AIDS—to remember those who have died, to acknowledge the need for continued commitment to care for those who are HIV/AIDS positive, and to support the research to find a cure. For a schedule of local events call Northern Colorado AIDS Project 970-484-4469.

December 8 **Bodhi Day** celebrates the Buddha's enlightenment in 596 BCE.

December 10 **International Human Rights Day**, established by the United Nations in 1948, commemorates the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

December 12 **Our Lady of Guadalupe Day** (Mexico) is a major celebration in Mexico that honors the "Dark Virgin of Guadalupe", the Republic's Patron Saint. The "Dark Virgin" is comparable to the European "Virgin Mother."

December 16-24 **Las Posadas** (Mexico) includes processions and parties reenacting Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem.

December 21 **Winter Solstice** or the first day of Winter occurs on or around December 22. This is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

December 25 **Christmas** (Christian) is the day associated with Jesus' birth. Celebrated on December 25 by Western churches and on January 7 the following year by Eastern Orthodox churches.

Dec.26-Jan 2 **Hanukkah** (Judaism) or the Festival of Lights is an eight-day festival recalling the war fought by the Maccabees in the cause of religious freedom and the rededication of the Temple after recapturing it from the Syrians. Each evening candles are lit on the "menorah" (candleabra), adding one candle each night. Hanukkah is a time for playing games ("dreidel" or a spinning top is a popular Hanukkah game) and singing, for visiting and for giving gifts. Originally a minor Jewish holy day, it has become more important in recent years.

Dec.26-Jan.1 **Kwanzaa** is an African-American holiday started by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an African world scholar, in 1966. It is based on the agricultural celebrations of Africa called "the first fruits" celebrations which are times of harvest, gathering, reverence, commemoration, recommitment and celebration. Therefore, Kwanzaa is a time for achievements, reverence for the Creator and creation, commemoration of the past, recommitment to cultural ideals and celebration of the good. Kwanza, a Swahili word, means "first". Kwanzaa, spelled with the double vowel at the end of the word, refers to the holiday.
NOTE: Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday, not a religious one, thus available to and practiced by Africans of all religious faiths.

December 31 **New Year's Eve.**

January 2006

January 1 **New Year's Day** is observed in all countries of the world that follow the Gregorian calendar.

January 6 **Epiphany**

January 7 **Eastern Orthodox Christmas** is celebrated as "Christmas" in the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church.

January 10 **Eid al-Adha** (the Feast of Sacrifice or Day of Sacrifice) occurs during the 12th month of the Islamic year. This is the season of the Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca). It recalls the day when Abraham intended to follow the instructions of God and sacrifice his son Isaac.

January 14 **Makara Sankranti** (Hinduism, date approximate) heralds the coming of longer days. It is a time for family reunions, for giving of charity and for bathing in rivers.

January 16 **Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday** commemorates the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who was born on January 15, 1929. One of the world's best known advocates of non-violent social change, King was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in December of 1964. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, and remains a symbol of the struggle for civil rights. For a schedule of local events call CSU Campus Activities at 970-491-6444.

January 29 **Chinese New Year**, based on the lunar calendar

January 29 **Tet**, the Vietnamese New Year, is a contraction of the words "Nguyen Dan Tiet" or the "festival of the first day of the year." Based on the Lunar calendar, Tet marks the beginning of the spring season and lasts three or more days.

January 31 **Al-Hijra/Muharram** (Islam) is the Muslim New Year, beginning the first of the lunar month.

February 2006

February **Black History Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Black Student Services 970-491-5781.

February 2 **Candlemas Day** (Christian, Wiccan & Pagan) is a purifying ceremony to let go of the old and bring in the new (with the light.) In Christianity the day commemorates when Mary took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem 40 days after his birth. It has also long been a day for weather predictions: "If Candlemas be fair and clear, two winters you will have this year," leading to the celebration of Groundhog day which originated in Germany.

February 2 **Groundhog Day** (USA and Canada) is based on an old belief that if the sun shines on Candlemas Day, or if the groundhog sees its shadow when it emerges from its den, we will experience six more weeks of winter.

February 2 **Vasant Panchami** (Hinduism) celebrates spring, or basant, and Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of learning and the arts. This is the time some children begin learning the 50 letters used in the Sanskrit alphabet.

February 2 **El Día De Candelaria** (Mexico) marks the official end of the Christmas season.

February 8 **Nirvana Day** commemorates the death of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha.

February 13 **Tu B'Shevat** (Judiasm) is the New Year of Trees.

February 14 **Saint Valentine's Day** (USA, Canada, Europe and Latin America) is based on the exchange of gifts that convey affection and love. The history of this holiday cannot be identified with any one origin with certainty. One version of the story tells of a priest named Valentine who would secretly marry people forbidden to wed by law. The Emperor believed that he could form a larger and stronger army if men remained single and had no family ties. Valentine was arrested and beheaded on February 14. Because he was a champion of love, he became known as the patron saint of lovers.

February 20 **President's Day** (USA) was originally in honor of Presidents Washington and Lincoln and now serves as a reminder of the contributions of past and present presidents.

February **Holi** (Hinduism) is a spring festival. It is a carnival-like celebration featuring bright colors, bonfires and pilgrimages. It is dedicated to Krishna or Kama, the God of Pleasure.

Feb.26-Mar.1 **Ayyam-I-Ha** (Bahai, Intercalary Days). The four days of the year (five days in leap year) which fall between the eighteenth and nineteenth month of the Bahai Calendar. These days are set aside for hospitality, gift-giving, and service.

February 27 **Shrove Tuesday** (Christian) the last day before Lent. Many people celebrate this day or days prior to it by having carnivals such as Mardi Gras held in France and Louisiana and by festivals in Germany and Latin America. In England it became known as "Shrove Tuesday" because people went to church to "shrove" or "confess" their sins.

March 2006

March **Women's History Month** is to recognize women of all races, ages, cultures, ethnic traditions and ways of life. Women are honored who have participated in history by living and sharing their lives with others, and by so doing, have contributed to our shared history. For a schedule of local events call CSU Office of Women's Programs and Studies 970-491-6384 and The Women's Center 970-484-1902.

March 1 **Lent** (Christian), a period of fasting and prayer, begins on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before Easter Sunday.

Mar.2-20 **Period of Fasting**, a time when all healthy adult Bahai's fast from sunrise to sunset. This fasting period ends at sunset on March 20th which is the beginning of the Naw Ruz (New Year's) Celebration.

March 8 **International Women's Day** commemorates the 1908 women's march in New York City for suffrage and against child labor.

March 14 **Purim** (Judiasm) or the Feast of Lots recalls the defeat by Queen Esther of the plan to slaughter all of the Persian Jews, circa 400 BCE. During Purim, the Book of Esther is read in the synagogue service. It is a joyous holiday during which gifts of food, carnivals, and plays are customary.

March 17 **Saint Patrick's Day**, the national holiday of Ireland, is the anniversary of the death of Patrick, an Italian slave who converted the Irish people to Christianity in the fifth century.

March 18-19 **Denver March Pow Wow** is the oldest and one of the largest in the country. It is held the third weekend in March. Located in the Denver Coliseum, it is an opportunity for people to see hundreds of dancers from throughout the USA and Canada compete for honors in a multitude of categories. Native arts and crafts vendors are stationed around the coliseum perimeter, offering unique items from as far away as Alaska, real maple sugar from the Ojibwe Nations, handmade birchbark baskets, quill and bead work, fine jewelry, and much more. It is a rare opportunity for those in this area to experience the diversity of the Native American people. The Denver March Pow Wow is officially observed as the beginning of the yearly pow wow season.

- March 21** **Naw Ruz** (Bahai) is the New Year, a celebration of hospitality and rejoicing. Work and school are suspended.
- March 21** **Spring Equinox** or the first day of Spring occurs on or around March 21.
- March 31** **Cesar Chavez Day** was declared a Colorado state holiday in recognition of the valuable contributions of Chavez. The day symbolizes the ongoing struggle for the rights of farm workers, as reflected in the nonviolent and equitable attributes of Chavez. The festivities provide awareness and knowledge for the community through the arts, food, and educational experiences. For a schedule of local events call CSU Campus Activities 970-491-6444.
- April 2006**
- April 1** **April Fool's Day**
- April 1** **Mesha Sakranti** (Hinduism, date approximate) is the vernal equinox and the beginning of the new year in the Hindu solar calendar.
- April TBA** **Annual CSU Pow Wow** is usually held the first week of April. Sometimes it is a Traditional Pow Wow, sometimes a Competition Pow Wow, always fun, and our contribution to the celebration of the Native American culture to the Northern Colorado area. For a schedule of events call CSU Native American Student Services 970-491-1332.
- April 8** **Vesak** is the Buddha's birthday. In some traditions, it celebrates the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.
- April TBA** **TBGLAD** (Transgender, Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian Awareness Days). For a schedule of events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342.
- April 9** **Palm Sunday** (Christian) is recognized seven days before Easter Sunday and is the beginning of Holy Week.
- April 13** **Holy Thursday** (Christian, also called Maundy Thursday) remembers the Last Supper. The term "Maundy" was derived from the old Latin name for the day, "Dies Mandatum" – "the day of the new commandment".
- April 13** **Passover** (Judaism) or Pesach is held each Spring to recall the Jews' deliverance out of slavery in Egypt, circa 1300 BCE. It is a celebration of freedom. The first two nights of Passover a ritual Seder meal is eaten and the story is retold and passed down from generation to generation. The holiday lasts eight days during which time no bread or leavened food is eaten.
- April 13** **Baisakhi** (Bangladesh; Hindu, Sikh). The Solar New Year (time approximate) is a day traditionally meant for people to cleanse spiritually in the river, and then go to the temple to worship.

April 14 **Good Friday** (Christian, also called Holy Friday) commemorates the execution of Jesus by the Roman army of occupation.

April 16 **Easter Sunday** (Christian) celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.

April 16 **Eastern Orthodox Easter.**

April TBA **Asian Fest.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Asian/Pacific American Student Services 970-491-6154.

Apr.21-May 2 **Ridvan** means paradise. For 12 days, Bahai's celebrate the period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah resided in a garden in Baghdad. During this period Baha'u'llah, proclaimed his mission as God's Messenger for this age.

April 21 First Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.

April 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.

May 2 Twelfth Day of Ridvan. School and work are suspended.

April 22 **Earth Day**, first observed in the United States in 1970, reminds people of our environment and how our habits affect our environment. For a schedule of local events call COPIRG 970-491-7847.

May 2006

May 1 **May Day**

May 3 **Israel Independence Day** (Yom Ka'atzmau'ut) celebrates the day on which modern Israel became an independent state-May 14, 1948.

May 5 **Cinco de Mayo** commemorates a battle that was won on this day in 1862 during the years that the Mexicans were struggling to drive foreign armies from the country and become an independent nation. In the USA this day is celebrated in the *fiesta* spirit. There are parades, foods, musical events and dances. For a schedule of local events call CSU El Centro Student Services 970-491-5722.

May 5 **Yom HaShoah**, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is a secular rather than religious holiday established by the Government of Israel. There are a variety of memorial observances both in Israel and the USA.

May 14 **Mother's Day.** In 1872, Julia Ward Howe (who wrote the Battle Hymn of the Republic) suggested this day be dedicated to peace. Mother's Day meetings were held yearly in Boston Massachusetts on this day. In 1907 Ana Jarvis began a campaign to establish a National Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May. It took four years and in 1911 it was proclaimed a national holiday. Countries celebrating Mother's Day are the USA, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia and Belgium.

May 23 **Declaration of the Bab.** Siyid'Ali-Muhammad declared Himself to be the Bab, or the Gate of God, on May 23, 1844. This date marks the beginning of the Bahai

faith, the Bahai Era (B.E.) and the Bahai calendar. School and work are suspended.

May 29 **Celebration of the Ascension of Baha'u'llah** (Bahai). School and work are suspended.

May 29 **Memorial Day** (USA) was first observed in 1868 to honor the dead of the Civil War. It has come to include lives lost in all wars.

June 2006

June **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered (GLBT) Pride Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.

June 2 **Shavuot** (Judaism) celebrates the giving of the Torah, God's gift to the Jewish people, which is a guide for how to live in this world. It occurs seven weeks after Passover.

June 14 **Flag Day** (USA).

June 15 **Corpus Christi** (Christian), in honor of the Eucharist.

June 18 **Father's Day** (USA). The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Having been raised by her father, after her mother died, she wanted her father to know how special he was to her. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910. In 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June.

June 19 **Juneteenth** is an African American celebration that honors the day in 1865 when slaves in Texas and Louisiana finally heard they were free, two months after the end of the Civil War. June 19, therefore, became the day of independence for thousands of African Americans.

June 21 **Summer Solstice** is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and occurs on or around June 22.

June 25 **Midsummer Eve Festivals** (Northern Europe). Pagan in origin, celebrated at the height of the brilliant northern summer before the first harvest, this has always been one of the most popular festivals in Northern Europe, especially in Sweden.

June 25 **GLBT Pride Day** (USA). This event grew out of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, when patrons of a gay New York nightclub, The Stonewall Inn, resisted police

attempts to raid the club. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.

July 2006

July **Khao Pansa** marks the beginning of the Buddhist Lent. It is the preferred day for Buddhist men in some countries to be ordained as monks. It is celebrated in the full moon of the eighth lunar month.

July 4 **Independence Day (USA)**. The Declaration of Independence was signed on this day in 1776. This document proclaimed the independence of the thirteen colonies from allegiance to the British Crown and the dissolution of all political ties with Great Britain.

July 9 **Martyrdom of the Bab** (Bahai). School and work are suspended

August 2005

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October Boun Ok Pansa marks the end of Buddhist Lent. It is at the end of the rainy season.

October 2 Yom Kippur (Judaism), the Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day of the year. It is a day of fasting and prayers for forgiveness.

October 7 Sukkot (Judaism) or the Feast of Booths is an eight-day harvest festival, a joyous time of thanksgiving. Many Jews build little "huts" (or "sukkahs") in their backyards and eat meals there to commemorate the huts Jews built in the wilderness during their 40-year journey after leaving Egypt (also harvesters lived in huts).

October 9 Columbus Day (USA) recognizes the encounter of the New World in 1492 by Christopher Columbus.

October 9 National Indigenous People's Day. In 1992, drums from across the USA and time zones coordinated ceremonies and observances at 12 p.m. to celebrate and honor 500 years of resistance and the survival of North American Indigenous people. From that day to the present Native Americans observe October 12 as Indigenous People's Day, not Columbus Day.

October 11 National Coming Out Day (USA). On October 11, 1987, half a million people marched on Washington for gay and lesbian equality. This was the second such demonstration in our nation's capitol and the first display of the NAMES Project Quilt, remembering those who have died from AIDS. One measure of the march's success was the number of organizations that were founded as a result including the National Latino/a Gay and Lesbian Organization (LLEGO) and AT&T's GLBT employee group, LEAGUE. The momentum continued four months after this extraordinary march as more than 100 gay, lesbian, and transgendered activists from around the country gathered in Manassas, VA, about 25 miles outside of Washington, D.C. Recognizing that the GLBT community often reacted defensively to anti-gay actions, they came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out and chose the anniversary of that march on Washington to mark it. For a schedule of local events call CSU GLBT Student Services 970-491-4342 and the Lambda Community Center 970-221-3247.

- October 15** **Simchas Torah** (Judaism) is a day of rejoicing in Torah, the book of God's law. On this day, the last chapters of the Torah are read, completing the year's reading. And on this day, the first chapters are also read, beginning the cycle again.
- October 20** **Birth of the Bab** (the Gate of God, Bahai), the forerunner of Baha'u'llah. School and work are suspended.
- October 21** **Diwali** (Hinduism) is the prettiest festival celebrated in India, a five day Festival of Lights to celebrate Rama and Sita's homecoming in the Ramayana. It signifies the victory of good over evil. The festival is the time for family reunion. Women indulge in making all kinds of sweets and children enjoy themselves with fireworks. It is a custom to have a bath at dawn, wear new clothes, the lighting of oil lamps and bursting of firecrackers. The first day is Dhan Trayodashi; the second day Naraak Chaturdashi; the third day is Lakshmi Poojan on which people worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and businessmen keep their shops shut as a symbol of protecting wealth. The fourth day is Bali Pratipada. The last day is Bhaubeej, when the sister asks the Lord for the well-being of her brother, who is her Protector. In return, the brother bestows the sister with gifts. For a schedule of local events call CSU International Student Services 970-491-5917.
- October 24** **Eid al-Fitr** (Islam) is the first day following Ramadan. It is a time of rejoicing. Houses are decorated and Muslims buy gifts for relatives.
- October 31** **Halloween** (USA), the evening before All Saints or All-Hallows Day, is informally observed with masquerading, pumpkin carving, and "trick or treat" gathering.

November 2006

- November** **National Native American Month.** For a schedule of local events call CSU Native American Student Services 970-491-1332.
- November 1** **Día de los Muertos** (All Saints' Day) is a national holiday in Mexico and is also celebrated in parts of the USA. Mexicans regard this annual holiday as a happy occasion that reunites them with the souls of loved ones. This two-day celebration honors the souls of dead children on November 1 and honors the souls of older relatives and friends on November 2. Families decorate tombs in the graveyard and home altars with toys, favorite foods, flowers, bread figures, incense burners, and elaborately fashioned candlesticks. On the morning of the second day people gather in graveyards and serenade the spirits with brass bands and mariachi music. The dead are never forgotten because once a year they are honored during this annual holiday.
- November 1** **All Saints' Day** is a Christian holiday observed in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, which commemorates all the saints and martyrs who do not have a dedicated special day. It is obligatory for Roman Catholics and is also known as All Hallows Day.

- November 11** **Veteran's Day** (USA) is in honor of veterans of the armed services and in commemoration of the armistice that ended World War I in 1918. In 1954 it was renamed from Armistice Day and given the added significance of honoring veterans of all wars.
- November 12** **Birth of Baha'u'llah**, the Prophet founder of the Bahai faith. School and work are suspended.
- November 23** **Thanksgiving** (USA). The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by people of the Wampanog Tribe and the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony in 1621.
- November 26** **Day of the Covenant** (the Feast of the Appointment of the Center of the Covenant, Bahai) celebrates the day that Baha'u'llah's son, Abdu'l-Baha, became the Center of the Covenant.
- November 28** **Ascension of Abdul-Baha** (Bahai).

December 2006

- December 1** **World AIDS Day** has become an annual day of recognition of AIDS—to remember those who have died, to acknowledge the need for continued commitment to care for those who are HIV/AIDS positive and to support the research to find a cure. For a schedule of local events call Northern Colorado AIDS Project 970-484-4469.
- December 8** **Bodhi Day** celebrates the Buddha's enlightenment in 596 BCE.
- December 10** **International Human Rights Day**, established by the United Nations in 1948, commemorates the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- December 12** **Our Lady of Guadalupe Day** (Mexico) is a major celebration in Mexico that honors the "Dark Virgin of Guadalupe", the Republic's Patron Saint. The "Dark Virgin" is comparable to the European "Virgin Mother."
- December 16-23** **Hanukkah** (Judaism) or the Festival of Lights is an eight-day festival recalling the war fought by the Maccabees in the cause of religious freedom and the rededication of the Temple after recapturing it from the Syrians. Each evening candles are lit on the "menorah" (candleabra), adding one candle each night. Hanukkah is a time for playing games ("dreidel" or a spinning top is a popular Hanukkah game) and singing, for visiting and for giving gifts. Originally a minor Jewish holy day, it has become more important in recent years.
- December 16-24** **Las Posadas** (Mexico) includes processions and parties reenacting Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem.

December 21 **Winter Solstice** or the first day of Winter occurs on or around December 22. This is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

December 25 **Christmas** (Christian) is the day associated with Jesus' birth. Celebrated on December 25 by Western churches and on January 7 the following year by Eastern Orthodox churches.

Dec.26-Jan.1 **Kwanzaa** is an African-American holiday started by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an African world scholar, in 1966. It is based on the agricultural celebrations of Africa called "the first fruits" celebrations which are times of harvest, gathering, reverence, commemoration, recommitment and celebration. Therefore, Kwanzaa is a time for achievements, reverence for the Creator and creation, commemoration of the past, recommitment to cultural ideals and celebration of the good. Kwanza, a Swahili word, means "first". Kwanzaa, spelled with the double vowel at the end of the word, refers to the holiday.
NOTE: Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday, not a religious one, thus available to and practiced by Africans of all religious faiths.

December 31 **New Year's Eve.**