Help for the Holidays

by Kate Thomas, Reference Librarian

Don’t look now but the holidays are rapidly approaching. Will you be ready? If you’re clueless about what to give, what to cook or bake, how to decorate or entertain, the next few months can be extremely stressful. However, the resources available at the Thousand Oaks Library and Newbury Park Branch can be a big help in relieving some of that stress.

Holiday cookbooks are a great place to start when planning the holiday meal. The library has many seasonal cookbooks. You might want to begin with Chuck Williams’ Thanksgiving and Christmas (641.568) for traditional fare. To add to that special beef meal, a recipe for cranberry horseradish sauce is included. To keep all family members happy, Moosewood Restaurant Celebrates (641.568) includes both vegetarian and vegan menus. The Essentials of Roasting (641.71) has all the information you need to keep your turkey moist. Joan Nathan’s Jewish Holiday Cookbook (641.5676) has hundreds of recipes, representing both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic traditions from all over the world. Check out Angela Medearis’ A Kwanzaa Celebration: Festive Recipes and Homemade Gifts from an African-American Kitchen (641.59296) for recipes and gifts for Kwanzaa. To really get you in the mood, Festive Table (641.568) can help you create a tree trimming and fondue party. If you didn’t make fondue in the 70’s, get some help with Ilana Simon’s 125 Best Fondue Recipes. Each recipe has a tip, make ahead idea and suggestions on what else to serve.

Next get out your baking gear and start baking. If you need some help, many people consider Baking Illustrated (641.815) the best instructional book on baking. Or, when your neighborhood group invites you to their annual cookie swap, pick up Baker’s Field Guide to Christmas Cookies (641.8654) and wow them with your pecan butter balls and sugarplums.

For something more old-fashioned, try making a gingerbread house. Gingerbread for All Seasons (641.8653) has great pictures and instructions for the construction phase. The creative baker might even try making a gingerbread castle. Check out Making Great Gingerbread Houses (641.8653) for designs of castles, lighthouses and even a treehouse.

The 642.4 area of nonfiction has beautiful books on entertaining. For example, if you’re looking to do a holiday dessert buffet, try Martha Stewart’s Menus for Entertaining (642.4). For an overall elegant look, check out Gourmet’s Holiday (642.4). Christmas Crafts and Entertainment (745.5941) will help the savvy hostess make a great impression with beaded ornaments and decorated trees.

Some of the most cherished gifts are the ones that people make themselves. If you love working with fabric or textiles, Christmas Crafts (745.5941) will help you create the stocking and then make something to put in it!

If you’re hoping to make a special gift for a teacher or a dog-lover, you’ll find a special teacher gift basket and dog bones in It’s in the Bag: Tasty Gifts in Crafty Sacks (641.5973) and Gifts of Good Taste (641.568).

Holiday traditions are important because they provide stability and solidify relations between the genera-

(continues on page 3)
November and December in the Northern Hemisphere are two months of the year in which the bright days grow shorter and the dark nights grow longer. This is a traditional time in many cultures for rest and storytelling. And how wonderful for us that so many holidays fall during this season! November 1 brings Diwali, the Indian festival of lights, as well as the Mexican Day of the Dead. This year the end of Ramadan falls on November 3, when Eid-al-Fitr celebrations cap this period of fasting. Thanksgiving, a favorite American holiday, is on November 24.

There are many children’s books that celebrate these days. For preschoolers, Nancy Luenn’s *Celebrations of Light: A Year of Holidays Around The World* is a good introduction to some of these holy days and festivals. Rumer Godden’s *Premlata and the Festival of Lights*, a short work of fiction involving Diwali, is suitable for the primary grades.

The library has items in both Spanish and English on the theme of Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. A good short introduction is Luis San Vicente’s *The Festival of Bones/El Festival de las Calaveras*, a bilingual book which has poetry, instructions on how to build an altar, and even recipes for two treats, pan de muerto and sugar skulls.

A pair of good books on Ramadan and Eid-al-Fitr are Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith’s *Celebrating Ramadan* and Mary Matthews’ *Magid Fasts for Ramadan*. *Celebrating Ramadan* is a nonfiction book which follows one young boy and his family in the United States through the holy month of Ramadan. It has many photographs that illustrate the events and the people who celebrate them. *Magid Fasts for Ramadan* is a short story about what happens when a boy who is really too young to join in the month long fast does so anyway against his parents’ wishes.

Most of us enjoy the traditional American Thanksgiving feast. Alison Jackson’s *I Know An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Pie* is a humorous book about eating way too much during Thanksgiving. *The Thanksgiving Crafts and Cookbook* by Nancy Hathaway has some fun ideas for decorations as well as a yummy recipe for Indian Pudding. In addition to these types of books, there are many that have to do with the history and personalities associated with Thanksgiving. *Squanto and the First Thanksgiving* by Teresa Celsi is an Early Reader that a person just beginning to read may enjoy on their own.

December brings more holidays, among them the old Roman feast of Saturnalia on December 17 – 23, Christmas on December 25, and beginning December 26, both Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

*Squanto and the First Thanksgiving* is the title of a Young Adult novel by Paul Fleischman. He uses the “ancient Roman holiday on which masters and slaves trade roles” to build the story of William, an Indian captive turned printer’s apprentice in 1681 Boston. This is an intriguing look at multiple cultures and multiple lives.

There are a multitude of children’s books about Christmas, like Gary Soto’s *Too Many Tamales*. Read it and find out what happens to the tamales and Maria as she searches for her mother’s lost wedding ring. Another excellent book is Barbara Robinson’s *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. It will leave you laughing. Music, movies, food – there are children’s materials on these and many other aspects of this holiday. Visit the library and talk to our staff for additional good suggestions.

(continues on page 3)
The Thousand Oaks Library System has recently added these materials to its collection:

**FICTION**

- **The Holding** (Fiction) by Merilyn Simonds
- **Fallen** (Fiction) by David Maine
- **Murder Never Forgets** (Mystery) by Diana O’Hehir

**NON-FICTION**

- **Blowing My Cover: My Life as a CIA Spy** (Biography) by Lindsay Moran
- **Beyond the Gray Flannel Suit: Books from the 1950s that Made American Culture** by David Castronovo
- **Global Mobile: Connecting Without Walls, Wires or Borders** by Fred Johnson
### November 2005

#### Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**November 2005**

- **1** Wee Ones and Toddlers storytimes for ages 18-36 months. TOL at 10:15am and 11:00am. Thru Nov. 15.
- **2** Friendly Book Disc., 7:30pm, TOL. "My Sister’s Keeper" by Jodi Picoult.
- **3** Perfect for Preschoolers storytimes for 3, 4, & 5-yr. olds. TOL at 10:30am & at 1:30pm. Thru Nov. 17.
- **4** Used Book Sale 6 - 8:30pm, NPB. Sponsored by Friends of the Library.
- **5** Used Book Sale 10am - 3pm NPB. Sponsored by Friends of the Library.
- **8** Wee Ones and Toddlers storytimes at TOL; 10:15 & 11:00am Storytime is Fun-Time! for ages 3-5; 1:30pm at NPB, storytime for fun-loving preschoolers. Thru Nov. 8.
- **9**
- **10** Perfect for Preschoolers storytimes at TOL: 10:30am & at 1:30pm. History Book Disc. Group, 7:00pm, TOL.
- **11** LIBRARIES CLOSED
- **12** Veterans’ Day
- **13** Shopping on the Net. Free Internet program helps you be a savvy online shopper. TOL at 7:00pm
- **14** Shopping on the Net. Free Internet program helps you be a savvy online shopper. TOL at 7:00pm
- **15** Wee Ones and Toddlers final storytime of the series at TOL; 10:15 & 11:00am
- **16** Shopping on the Net. Free Internet program helps you be a savvy online shopper. NPB at 10:15am. Perfect for Preschoolers final storytime of the series for 3, 4, & 5-yr. olds. TOL at 10:30am & at 1:30pm.
- **17** Shopping on the Net. Free Internet program helps you be a savvy online shopper. NPB at 10:15am.
- **18** Perfect for Preschoolers final storytime of the series for 3, 4, & 5-yr. olds. TOL at 10:30am & at 1:30pm.
- **19**
- **20** Wee Ones and Toddlers final storytime of the series at TOL; 10:15 & 11:00am
- **21**
- **22**
- **23**
- **24** LIBRARIES CLOSED
- **25** LIBRARIES CLOSED
- **26**
- **27**

**TOL** = Thousand Oaks Library (Grant R. Brimhall Building) • 805-449-2660

**NPB** = Newbury Park Branch Library • 805-498-2139 • www.toaks.org/library

---

**The Oakleaf**

Thousand Oaks Library System • Volume 5, Number 6 • November/December 2005

Director of Library Services: Stephen R. Brogden

**Thousand Oaks Library** • 805-449-2660
1401 E. Janss Road • Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

**Hours:**
- Monday - Thursday: 10:00am - 9:00pm
- Friday: 10:00am - 6:00pm
- Saturday: 10:00am - 5:00pm
- Sunday: 1:00pm - 5:00pm

**Newbury Park Branch Library** • 805-498-2139
2331 Borchard Road • Newbury Park, CA 91320

**Hours:**
- Monday - Wednesday: 12:00pm - 9:00pm
- Thursday - Friday: 10:00am - 6:00pm
- Saturday: 10:00am - 5:00pm
- Sunday: CLOSED