

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2004



While 2004 is the Year of the Monkey in Chinese astrology, the ubiquitous dragon was the main character during a story at the event.



Above: During a demonstration of the Chinese martial art of Kung Fu, attendees try some balancing exercises; here, Ian McIntyre, 11, far right, and others practice standing on one leg.

Left: A student of Chinese culture and language for decades, Richard Fidler of Traverse City shows how to make the Chinese character for horse.



Shen "Ties" Walker, 10, colors a dragon mask to take home, one of three crafts children could do.

Herald photos by Carol South

## New year, old culture

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of the food, my dad makes it all the time."

The library's Youth Services department created the Chinese New Year's celebration. They began planning it months ago, putting it together with lots of ingenuity and volunteer help. They also coordinated a display of kites for the community meeting room for this month, enhancing the cultural atmosphere.

"We were very happy with the program, it was not a high cost but had a lot of volunteer help and excellent presenters," said Bernadette Groppuso, Youth Services Coordinator for the Traverse Area District Library. "We try not to repeat our programs, it keeps us fresher than doing the same things over and over again. Keeps our creative juices flowing."

Groppuso noted that staff targeted youth over age ten deliberately, creating an

exciting event that would lure this age group from their other commitments. The library's Summer Reading Club also serves that age group and has excellent attendance every year, indicating to staff that this age group was interested in special programs.

"We do programming for that age, but it is hard to get them in, they are very scheduled these days," she said. "It is not that they are under served, they are just very busy."

The event began with a demonstration of the Chinese marital art Kung Fu, given by Vicki Parzych of Rapid City. Parzych and her assistant and student, Jason Hughey, 14, showed the basic 20 moves of Kung Fu and then demonstrated a variety of kicks, upper body strikes and blocks.

"Everything you do in Kung Fu, you use one of those 20 body stances," Parzych said. "Kung Fu is a very contact sport."

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**Dick Fidler,**  
retired teacher on the vastness of the Chinese language.

Dick Fidler of Traverse City has immersed himself in the study of Chinese culture and language for more than three decades. A retired science teacher, Fidler discussed the principles of the yin-yang symbol, a philosophy that says in every light there is some darkness and in every darkness there is some light.

"These ideas from China have kind of gotten planted in American's heads, too," he noted.

Fidler also demonstrated how to cast an oracle for the New Year, a typical ritual among the Chinese.

"Fortune telling is very important to the Chinese," he noted, using a reproduction of a 2,500 year old

text to interpret the six coin tosses. "They also might do it whenever there's a crisis in their lives."

After the presentations, students could eat or complete a variety of crafts. At one table, Fidler guided students through the basics of making common Chinese symbols. Showing them how to precisely hold their paintbrush and dip the ink, students were soon making symbols for horse, tree, forest and one-digit numbers.

"You need to know at least 2,000 characters in Chinese to be literate," noted Fidler, on the vastness of the Chinese language. "Proper names are hard."

## TC HAPPENINGS

*Things to do, places to go, people to see*

### High school talent show

A talent show will be held at Traverse City Central High School tonight. Performances will range from bands playing original music and lyrics to vocalists doing covers of well-known songs, dancers, comedy and more. Showtime is at 7:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium. Tickets are \$4 at the door. For more information, call 933-5839.

### Picture this exhibit

The Dennon Museum Center will host "Photography at the End of Art: A Brief History," from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday. This introductory lecture on the art of photography is in conjunction with the museum's "The Thing Itself: Daguerreotype to Digital" exhibit. Included in museum admission, \$4 for adults, \$2 for children. For more information, call 995-1055.