

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY || 女人节

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IS CELEBRATED ON MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> EVERY YEAR TO SHOW RESPECT, APPRECIATION, AND LOVE TOWARDS WOMEN.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8<sup>th</sup> every year to celebrate women's various economic, political, and social achievements. This date is commemorated at the United Nations and considered a national holiday in many countries. This day represents women's struggle throughout history for equality in society. In most areas, it became an occasion for people to express love for the women in their lives, such as Mother's Day and Valentine's Day.

International Women's Day has been observed since the early 1900s, but it was not until 1910 that it was officially established at the International Conference of Working Women. Following this decision in 1911, more than one million people attended rallies worldwide to campaign for women's rights. In the past century, many strides have been made in pursuing equal rights but equality has not been fully reached.

Each year, various themes are established for this day of celebration. This year, the International Women's Day established the theme as "Connecting Girls, Inspiring Future." The UN has declared that the International Women's Day theme for 2012 is "Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty."



## THE HISTORY OF THE BALLAD OF HUA MULAN

The original story of Mulan is a Chinese poem titled 木兰辞 (*Mulan Ci*) or the Ballad of Mulan. The story is thought to have taken place in the Northern Wei Dynasty during the invasion by nomadic Mongolian tribes. The original ballad has been lost, but there remain many variations. The story was expanded into a novel during the late Ming Dynasty, a play in the Qing Dynasty, and has since been made into several movies. This poem, one of the first in Chinese history to support the notion of gender equality, has risen greatly in popularity as a folk tale. There is much debate as to whether the story is a historical account or simply a legend. Regardless, Mulan is thought to be one of China's most notable heroines, a wonderful example of filial piety, and a great inspiration to many Chinese women and girls.

Mulan's name in Chinese is 花木兰 (*Huā Mùlán*). Her name, Mulan, means "wood-orchid", and refers to the magnolia; her last name means "flower." Mulan was said to be skilled with many different weapons, including the sword. She practiced martial arts, such as kungfu, rode horses and shot arrows. When the Emperor began to draft soldiers, Mulan chose to enlist in her father's place. She joined the army fought for twelve years. She was offered twelve ranks as reward for her skill in battle but she turned down the titles to return home to her family and live a peaceful life.

## THE BALLAD OF HUA MULAN

*Ji-ji, again ji-ji,*  
Mulan faces the door, weaving,  
You can't hear the sound of the loom's shuttle,  
You only hear Daughter's sighs.

They ask Daughter who's in her thoughts,  
They ask Daughter who's on her mind.  
"No one is on Daughter's thoughts,  
No one is on Daughter's memory.

Last night I saw the army notices,  
The Khan is calling for a great force.  
The army register is in twelve scrolls,  
and every scroll has Father's name.

Father has no adult son,  
Mulan has no older brother.  
I wish to buy a saddle and a horse,  
and serve in Father's place."

In the East Market, she buys a steed,  
In the West Market she buys a saddle,  
In the South Market she buys a bridle,  
In the North Market she buys a long whip.

At dawn she bids farewell to Father and Mother,  
In the evening she camps on the Yellow River.  
She doesn't hear the sound of Father and Mother  
calling for Daughter.  
She only hears the Yellow River's flowing water cry *jian-  
jian*.

She goes ten thousand miles in the war machine,  
She crosses mountain passes if flying.  
Northern gusts carry sound of army rattles,  
Cold light shines on iron armor.

Generals die in a hundred battles,  
Strong warriors return after ten years.  
On her return she sees the Son of Heaven,  
The Son of Heaven sits in the ceremonial hall.

Merits are recorded in twelve ranks  
And grants a hundred thousand strong.  
The Khan asks her what she desires.  
"Mulan has no use for a high official's post.  
I wish to borrow a ten-thousand mile camel  
To take me back home."

Father and Mother hear Daughter is coming  
They go outside the city wall, supporting each other.  
When Older Sister hears Younger Sister is coming  
Facing the door, she puts on rouge.

When Little Brother hears Older Sister is coming  
He sharpens the knife, quick, quick, for pig and sheep.  
"I open the door to my east room,  
I sit on my bed in the west room,

I take off my wartime gown  
And put on my old-time clothes."  
Facing the window she fixes the cloudlike hair on her  
temples,  
Facing a mirror she dabs on yellow flower powder.

She goes out the door and sees her comrades.  
Her comrades are all shocked.  
Traveling together for twelve years,  
They didn't know Mulan was a girl.

"The male rabbit's feet kick up and down,  
The female rabbit's eyes are bewildered.  
Two rabbits running close to the ground,  
How can they tell if I am male or female?"

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### PLAYGROUP

BU-Dumpling Playgroups are for adopted Chinese children (ages 4-9) and their families. Through activities such as stories, crafts, and cooking, these children are exposed to Chinese culture and their families have a way to connect and network

Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center:  
38 Ash St, Boston, MA 02111

Mar 31, Apr 28; 10:30am – noon

### ABOUT US

**MIT China Care (MITCC)** and **Boston University China Care Fund (BUCCF)** are student-run organizations dedicated to creating life changing opportunities for Chinese orphans and locally adopted Chinese children.

Email us at [bu.mit.dumplings@gmail.com](mailto:bu.mit.dumplings@gmail.com)  
MITCC website: [chinacare.scripts.mit.edu](http://chinacare.scripts.mit.edu)  
BUCCF website: [bucsf.weebly.com](http://bucsf.weebly.com)