***HAWAII***

Hawaii is a U.S. state and the only U.S. State that is in Oceania. It is the last state that joined the United States, becoming a state on August 21, 1959. It is the only state made only of islands. Hawaii is also the name of the largest island. The capital and largest city of Hawaii is Honolulu on the island named Oahu. Hawaii is known as the "Aloha State". Aloha is a Hawaiian word that has many meanings like welcome, hello and goodbye. Aloha also means love and care. The different meanings are brought together in the term "Aloha Spirit" to describe the friendly people of Hawaii. Hawaii is an archipelago, a long chain of islands. There are eight main islands and many small islands and atolls. They are the tops of underwater volcanos. The main islands are Niihau, Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Lanai, Kahoolawe, Maui and Hawaii. The first people of Hawaii were Polynesians. They came to the islands sometime between 200 and 600 AD. Captain James Cook is given credit for discovering the islands for the Europeans in 1778. Others may have been there before him. Captain Cook named the islands the Sandwich Islands for the fourth Earl of Sandwich, John Montague. Kamehameha I was the first king of Hawaii. He united the separate small Hawaiian kingdoms into one large kingdom in 1795. In 1893, American soldiers stopped Queen Liliuokalani from leading Hawaii when American business people took over the government and made their own laws. She was the last monarch of Hawaii. She also wrote the original words of the song called Aloha Oe. The American business people made Hawaii into a republic for a short time. The new leader, Sanford Dole was called the President of Hawaii. In 1898, the United States of America took over the government and made Hawaii into a territory. In 1959, Hawaii became the fiftieth American state.

***CHINESE NEW YEAR***

Chinese New Year, known in China as the Spring Festival and in Singapore as the Lunar New Year, is a holiday on and around the new moon on the first day of the year in the traditional Chinese calendar. This calendar is based on the changes in the moon and is only sometimes changed to fit the seasons of the year based on how the Earth moves around the sun. Because of this, Chinese New Year is never on January 1. It moves around between January 21 and February 20. The Chinese New Year is of the most important holidays for Chinese people all over the world. Its 7th day used to be used instead of birthdays to count people’s ages in China. The holiday is still used to tell people which "animal" of the Chinese zodiac they are part of. The holiday is a time for gifts to children and for family gatherings with large meals, just like Christmas in Europe and in other Christian areas. Unlike Christmas, the children usually get gifts of cash in red envelopes (hongbao) and not toys or clothes. Chinese New Year used to last 15 days until the Lantern Festival on the year’s first full moon. Now, it is a national holiday in the Republic and People’s Republic of China, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia. It is also celebrated in some parts of Thailand. In some places, only the first day or three days are celebrated. In the PRC, nearby weekends are changed to create a 7-day-long "Golden Week". The traditional new years in Vietnam (Tet) and in Korea (Korean New Year) are almost always on the same day as Chinese New Year but are sometimes different. The Japanese New Year used to work the same way but has been very different since some changes in the 19th century. Losar and Tsagaan Sar, the traditional Tibetan and Mongolian new years, are very close to the Chinese New Year but different ways of thinking about the moon’s changes and adding months can make them happen weeks apart from the Chinese festival.