Mood of Mid-Autumnprevails

People of different ages tell their feelings, mories of festival

Tomorrow is the traditional Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, which falls on the 15th day of the lunar calender's eighth month.

The full moon, which is perfectly round, symbolizes harmony and unity. The festival is a time for family reunions.

The significance of the centuries-old tradition remains, even though many young people are becoming less interested in the festival.

China Daily staff reporters ***YU NAN, JIN BO, CHEN ZHIYONG*** *and* ***LIU JUN*** *asked various people for their views about the festival.*

Shi Shuyu, 54, middle school teacher in Beijing

The Mid-Autumn Festival ranks second — inferior only to the Spring Festival.

All family members should return home that day, no matter how busy they are.

I always prepare a feast of great-tasting food.

My son and daughter used to bring a box of moon cakes or flowers when they returned home from their universities.

After my daughter left to study in the United States, I finally understood the old Chinese saying, "On festive occasions, more than ever, we think of our dear ones far away."

But we're fortunate as the Internet and telephones shorten that distance. We can hear from, and see, each other any time.

I think tomorrow our home phone will be busy, as I will chat about so many things with my daughter.

Wan Hesong, 30, editor at China Radio International

We have a great plan for this year's Mid-Autumn Festival: We are going to drive a jeep to Bashang, a wonderful grassland about 500 kilometres north of Beijing.

The grassland borders North China's Hebei Province and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

We have heard many stories about, and seen numerous pictures of, autumn in Bashang, which is covered with a dense forest and pristine grassland.

After riding horses and playing at the lakes, we will sit under the full moon, drink wine, eat moon cake with fresh fruit and listen to our favourite music.

We might even study the brilliant stars and try to learn their names.

Sure, we will miss our family members who live outside Beijing. But we are going with good friends. There will be some interesting stories.

We will take several cameras with long lenses, and a digital video camera. I hope we will preserve our memories of the trip.

Hou Liang, 23, editor at a network centre affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Sciences

For me, the Mid-Autumn Festival is a common day, and I don't know when the holiday will be held.

I have been away from my parents since childhood, and have gotten used to it.

When I was young, I liked celebrating festivals because family members would get together, and I could have new clothes to wear and delicious food to eat.

As I grow older, traditional Chinese holidays are less appealing to me. I have always worried about things like college entrance examinations, my career and girlfriends. Too many worries have drained my passion for holidays.

When I was a college freshman, one night my cousin asked me to his home for dinner. After enjoying the meal, I learnt it was the Mid-Autumn day.

Although the holiday carries little weight in my heart, I think the custom of eating moon cake should be kept to differentiate the day and add colour to life.

As the holiday approaches, I am reflecting on my life. I believe I am old enough to accomplish something. My dad and mum and grandparents are ageing and deserve my support.

Also, I am thinking about marriage.

Su Xiujin, 22, graduate of the Department of International Trade at the University of International Business and Economics

The Mid-Autumn day is special because everyone misses their homes. People at home feel the importance and warmth of their families, and people away from home think of their families.

The most impressive Mid-Autumn day for me was the one shortly after I started college. It was a rainy afternoon as I walked to class. I was depressed at the thought of spending the holiday alone.

Unexpectedly, some friends from my hometown invited me to a party. We ate and drank a lot. We were in high spirits. After that, we lay down in a meadow, enjoyed the moon and chatted.

It was my first Mid-Autumn day away from home. When at home, I didn't care much about the holiday, but dad and mum always remembered the day. They always bought moon cakes.

I was happy too, and ate the moon cakes. It was the only chance I could eat moon cakes.

I like the custom of eating moon cakes, even though it will make me feel homesick.

There should be no discussion about carrying on this custom. It is like the Chinese language — deeply rooted in our minds — which can never be explained.

Nowadays, most moon cakes do not taste very good; they are too sweet.

I believe most Chinese still eat moon cakes.

I also care about the moon on this special night, and take time to note whether it is round. An incomplete moon makes me sentimental and feel regret.

For students, spending the holiday with students from home will be better than anything else.

We can chat about home, reminisce, relax and not feel homesick.

This year, I am attending a new university as a postgraduate. I want to invite others from my town to a party.

Wang Jiuding, 45, electrical engineer in Beijing

The festival is more important for farmers; it is a festival to mark the harvest after hard work throughout the spring and summer.

Chinese farm families usually celebrate the end of the harvest with a big feast.

But in today's modern society, the Mid-Autumn Festival is not the day we harvest during the year. I usuait my bonus at the end of thr.

I don't liko against Chinese traditiod waste a good chance for aly party.

Although eaning of Mid-Autumn Fesas changed, it is a good chfor the family to gather.

My daugh busy with her high school ss, and I will be happy to ene round moon and deliciouon cakes with her.

File photo

Famous tale: C'e flying to the moon with her r is a favourite Chinese paper-lotif.

Ji L/7, attorney in Beijing

I don k all young people in large c ignore the Mid-Autumn Fe.

I rem r the first Mid-Autumn Fe I spent in Beijing when I a freshman at the Beijing ess Institute.

I wer t with classmates. We sang lanced to forget we were ho k. We also cried.

Only ving home can you underst the importance of family a e Mid-Autumn Festival.

I like g moon cakes, especiall h bean paste and yolk fill

Alth I will diet, I think the fest ill be an exception. Eating cakes on that day will hel feel like I am sharing som g with my family. It will als my way of sending best wi to my parents and elder si hey live in Qingdao, of East a's Shandong Province.

Moon festival's myths, traditions

Chinese people love festivals. And there are many festivals in China.

The Mid-Autumn Festival is one of China's more interesting holidays.

The festival, also referred to as the "August Festival" or "*zhongqiu jie*," is China's second-largest festival. Lunar New Year is the biggest festival.

People traveling can at Mid-Autumn Festival find affection in the full moon.

Traditionally, it was a festival to celebrate the harvest of fruit, vegetables and grain.

There was abundant food, and it was a time to relax, eat and celebrate.

The tradition of enjoying the moon, eating moon cakes and reuniting with family for a meal dates back to the Zhou Dynasty (c. 11th century-256 BC).

There are many beautiful legends about the moon; the most popular being the tale of Chang'e, a legendary beauty who flew to the moon.

According to the story, 10 suns were scorching the earth. A hero, Hou Yi, shot down nine of the suns, saving the Earth.

The Queen Mother of the West rewarded Hou Yi with the elixir of life. Hou Yi gave his wife, Chang'e, the elixir.

One day, when Hou Yi was out, a wicked man, Feng Meng, threatened to hurt Chang'e unless she

Chang'e swallowed the elixir. She immediately flew into the sky. She managed to grab her favourite pet, a white rabbit.

Concerned about her husband, Chang'e decided to land on the moon because it was close to the earth. From that day, Chang'e has ruled over the lunar kingdom.

Hou Yi was sad when he realized his wife was gone. He looked into the sky, and was surprised to see the moon was extremely round and bright. He noticed a swaying figure near the moon, which resembled Chang'e.

While sad, the legend adds romance to the festival.

Nowadays, family dinners are the centre of the Mid-Autumn day. Most families mark the day with rich feasts.

Families traditionally gather to celebrate and enjoy the full moon.

Takarazuka will stun Bjingers

By CHEN JIE
China Daily staff

Beijingers better get ready for a spectacular show. The all-female Takarazuka Revue Co, which has delighted fans worldwide with gorgeous costumes, dazzling lights, pretty performers and spectacular dances, is returning to Beijing.

The company last appeared in the capital in 1999.

Performances will be held at Century Theatre beginning today. The show closes on September 22.

In the first half of each show, audiences will see the company's new production "Butterfly Lovers" directed by company president Shingi Ueda.

The show is based on the ancient Chinese love tragedy involving Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, which has inspired various performances in various mediums throughout the world.

Although Takarazuka combines theatrical elements from Chinese classics with Western music, the shows remain popular in Japan.

"The Takarazuka version is expected to bring the old story something fresh with Japanese styles," Ueda said.

Koju Tatsuki and Nagisa Aki will play Liang and Zhu.

"Last week, our performances in Shanghai won much acclaim. I hope Beijing's audiences will also like us," Tatsuki said.

The show's second half features "Southern Cross," a Caribbean-influenced song-and-dance performance. Tatsuki and Dan Rei play the lead roles.

Musical revues in Japan date back to 1910, when all-female troupes were similar to French revues.

Takarazuka was founded in 1913 by Kobayashi Ichizo, president of Hankyu Railways, to boost travel on the line and business in the city of Takarazuka.

The troupe took its name from the city.

Takarazuka's performances typically consist of musical adaptations of fairy tales, and various song-and-dance numbers. Women play all roles.

Love scenes that were implied rather than acted out were deemed more or less acceptable in Japan, which until recently frowned on kissing in public.

In Japan's male-dominated history, otokoyaku, or actresses who play male roles, represented a vicarious way for young women to live out fantasies of strength and power.

But audiences really v d romance — pure, old-fashioned, fai e romance.

Takarazuka gives t what they want: Clear-cut stories nance and spectacle, but lacking c behaviour and passion.

Thousands of teen girls y each year to join the company. On or 50 new students are admitted karazuka's school.

These students, duri e two-year programme, study actin ging, dancing and music.

The students after the ear choose whether to perform as koyaku or musumeyaku (female ro

The students are plac h one of the company's six troupes a eir graduation.

Takarazuka's six tro re: Flower, Moon, Star, Snow, Cosr nd Special Course. Each troupe ha t 80 members.

Each troupe perfo ne run in Takarazuka and in Toky year. They play at theatres throu the world during the rest of the ye

The Moon troupe vi Beijing in 1999. This time, the mber Star troupe is in China. They ned by four members of the Special e troupe.

File photo

Dazzling stars: Koju Tatsuki (left) and Nagisa Aki perform in "Southern Cross."

WHAT'S ON

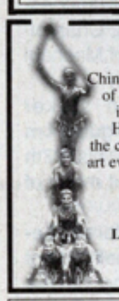
Acrobatic Show

Chaoyang Theatre is a theatre which specializes in acrobatics all the year round. Many top acrobatic artists from all over the country are invited to perform for the Chinese and foreign tourists.

Venue: Chaoyang Theatre, 36 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District, Beijing

Time: 7:15 pm, nightly **Telephone:** 6507-2421, 6507-1818

China National Acrobatic Circus



China National Acrobatic Circus was the first State-level acrobatic troupe of New China and has won lots of gold medals in various well-known international acrobatic contests in places such as Monaco, France, Hungary, Russia and Italy. Now the star-studded cast are exhibiting the charm and elegance of the most professional comprehensive acrobatic art every night. Integrating superlative juggling, unicycling, balancing and jumping through hoops with the finest ancient Chinese dancing, the award-winning variety show will amaze you at every turn.

Time/Dates: 19:15 - 20:30, every evening
Location: Universe Theatre, 10 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District
(100 metres north of Poly Plaza)
Tel: 6502 3984, 6502 2649, 6416 9893 Fax: 6500 2743

Kung Fu Show

Hidden Dragon, Crouching Tiger

The 90-minute performance displays dazzling skills of mysterious Chinese kung fu in a hero-plus-beauty story. Fifty kung fu masters amaze the audience with bare-handed practice, one-to-one competing and weapons practice.

Time/dates: 19:30, nightly
Venue: Xin Rong Theatre (16 Baizhifang Road, Xuanwu District)
Presented by Beijing Detian Shunyi Culture Development Co., Ltd.
Tel: 8354-0774, 8354-0775

CONCERTS

Anniversary music: James Last, known around the world as the Gentleman of Music, and his orchestra will bring a non-stop dancing, easy-listening sound for their first tour to China. The tour coincides with the festivities being held in Beijing in honour of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Germany.
Time: 7:30 pm, October 2
Place: Workers' Gymnasium
Tel: 6501-7084, 6590-3399, 6554-6666

Mid-Autumn Festival Concert: A concert entitled "Music under Moonlight" will be held on the traditional Chinese "Moon Festival" at the Forbidden City Concert Hall.

The concert will feature famous musicians and music played on some famous instruments. Renowned violinist Lu Siqing will play Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" violin concerto on priceless Stradivarius and Guarneri violins.
Time: 7:30 pm, September 21

WAN FUNG ART GALLERY
Tel: (8610)6523 3320

- **Modern Figure Paintings**
  West Hall September 20 ~ 29, 2002
- **The Charm of Beijing's Hutong**
  East Hall September 20 ~ 29, 2002

Place: Forbidden City Concert Hall
Tel: 8736-1238

EXHIBITION

Jurassic park: More than 100 "dinosaurs" from the United States are on show at Zizhuyuan Park.

The creatures are made from a lifelike material and fitted with special audio facilities which provide true-to-life sound effects. Adding to the realism, many have motors that enable them to move. The dinosaurs are being displayed on open lawns, in forests and rock hills.
Time: 9 am-6 pm until October 16
Place: 45 Baishiqiao Lu
Tel: 6842-0055

BRIDGE (By Phillip Alder)

Today, we look at the third mnemonic letter used by Dave Huggett in his Bridge Plus magazine article on Count Your Tricks. When defending, always keep in mind your target: the number of tricks you need to defeat the contract.

Most of my students err on this deal, primarily because they play too quickly. Sitting East and defending against four hearts, what would you do after partner leads the spade two?

First, review the bidding. South's opening bid showed 21-22 points. You have 12 points, and there are seven in the dummy. So, partner has nary a knave! (By the by, two no-trump is the best opening bid with that South hand. It is too strong for one heart, but not strong enough for two clubs.)

Next, analyze the opening lead. Clearly, partner has led a singleton.

At this point, most Easts immediately return the spade three. West ruffs and shifts to a club, but declarer wins and plays a trump. East takes his ace and leads another spade, but declarer ruffs high, draws the missing trump, and claims.

East is unrealistic in hoping West can overruff South on the third round of spades. East should have considered his target. Four tricks were needed, not three. East had to organize his club ruff before giving West his spade ruff. At trick two, East should have shifted to the club eight. Declarer will win in the dummy and play a heart. But East wins with his ace and leads the spade three. West ruffs and, reading East's card as a suit-preference signal, returns a club. East's ruff defeats the contract.

North
♠ Q J 10 8
♥ J 10 7 6
♦
♣ Q J 7 3

West
♠ 2
♥ 8 3
♦ 10 8 6 3 2
♣ 10 9 6 5 2

East
♠ A 9 7 6 4 3
♥ A 4
♦ K J 9 5
♣ 8

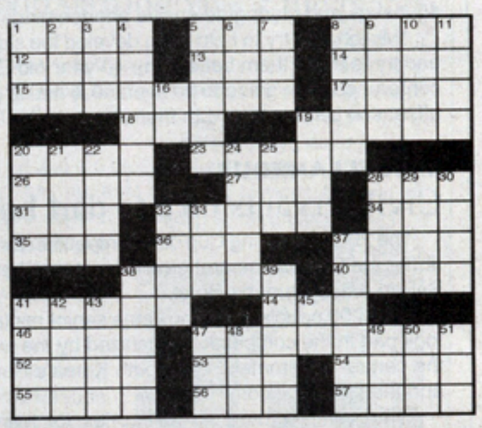
South
♠ K 5
♥ K Q 9 5 2
♦ A Q 7
♣ A K 4

Dealer: South
Vulnerable: North-South

South	West	North	East
2 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

Opening lead: ♠ 2

CROSSWORD (No 6700)



ACROSS
1 Talk big
5 Ticket info
8 Car import
12 Freeway clogger
13 Impress greatly
14 Urge
15 Insisted on
17 Willowy
18 Pair
19 Cul-de-sac
20 Long look
23 Flat broke
26 Employed
27 Theorem ender
28 Mins. and mins.
31 Detective's cry
32 Batters
34 Dog days mo.
35 Singer - Torme
36 Khan
37 Sect
38 Ring-shaped island
40 Lagers
41 Takes it easy
44 Author - Rand
46 "Fernando" group
47 Firefly catcher (2 wds.)
52 Dessert cart items
53 Some MDs
54 Mystique
55 Rain hard
56 Aussie jumper
57 Mo. bill

DOWN
1 Naughty
2 Feel sorry about
3 Cash dispenser
4 Spurred on
5 Toxic gas
6 Be in debt
7 Take vows
8 Suitably
9 Eurasian range
10 Allot
11 Lazily
16 Frat letter
19 Sums up
20 Pacific island
21 Arthur - of tennis
22 Strong fervor
24 On even terms
25 Underwater shocker
28 Tow
29 Decide, as a jury
30 Mil. officers
32 Picture borders
33 In time gone by
37 Large blossoms
38 Make - - tuck
39 Cowboy gear
41 Reindeer herder
42 Stage award
43 Film director - Ferrara
45 Attention getter
47 Dugout VIP
48 Soldier's addr.
49 Project
50 Sofa end
51 Lab animal

Solution to No 6699

C	E	O		M	E	O	W		S	I	T	E
R	U	B		A	N	N	E		I	C	O	N
U	R	L		R	E	D	E	E	M	I	N	G
D	O	I	L	Y		E	D	A	M			
		G	A		I	C	Y		E	M	I	R
I	V	E		E	L	K		T	R	A	D	E
B	A		R	A	E		B	U	S		E	E
I	N	N	E	R		S	I	B		A	S	K
S	E	A	L		L	E	O		N	V		
		A	K	I	N		A	M	I	N	O	
D	I	R	T	Y	P	O	O	L		D	O	W
N	O	T	E		P	R	A	M		L	P	N
A	C	E	D		Y	A	K	S		Y	E	S