



STAPLES ORDERING:

RE: restricted items - for truly necessary items, please give Joel your request(s), procurement has established ordering these items through e-req's which Joel is now set up to handle. Please use the Staples catalog information when giving him the item #, etc.

NEW 2009 IRS MILEAGE RATE: (from Campus Announcements)

The IRS has released a new rate for personal car mileage. **Effective January 1, 2009**, the new standard mileage rate is **55 cents per mile for business travel**. This standard rate for business miles is based on the costs of operating a vehicle such as maintenance and repairs, tires, gasoline, oil, insurance, license and registration fees and depreciation or (leased payments). The new rate applies to State, Research Foundation and Stony Brook Foundation travel.

Submitted by: Rosalie Makarick/Admin



WINTER SOLSTICE - DECEMBER 21, 2008:

(<http://www.schooloftheseasons.com/celsolstice.html>)

Many of the customs associated with the Winter Solstice (and therefore with other midwinter festivals such as St Lucy's Day, Saturnalia, Hanukkah, New Years and Twelfth Night) derive from stories of a mighty battle between the dark and the light, which is won, naturally, by the light. Other traditions record this as the time a savior (the Sun-Child) is born to a virgin mother.

(<http://www.candlegrove.com/solstice.html>)

Native Americans had winter solstice rites. The sun image above is from rock paintings of the Chumash, who occupied coastal California for thousands of years before the Europeans arrived. Solstices were tremendously important to them, and the winter solstice celebration lasted several days.

In Iran, there is the observance of [Yalda](#), in which families kept vigil through the night

and fires burned brightly to help the sun (and Goodness) battle darkness (thought evil).

Winter solstice celebrations are also part of the cultural heritage of Pakistan and Tibet. And in China, even though the calendar is based on the moon, the day of winter solstice is called Dong Zhi, "The Arrival of Winter." The cold of winter made an excellent excuse for a feast, so that's how the Chinese observed it, with Ju Dong, "doing the winter."

The placement of Hanukkah is tied to both the lunar and solar calendars. It begins on the 25th of Kislev, three days before the new moon closest to the Winter Solstice. In fact, this year, the first night of Hanukkah occurs on Winter Solstice! It commemorates an historic event — the Maccabees' victory over the Greeks and the rededication of the temple at Jerusalem. But the form of this celebration, a Festival of Lights (with candles at the heart of the ritual), makes Hanukkah wonderfully compatible with other celebrations at this time of year. As a symbolic celebration of growing light and as a commemoration of spiritual rebirth, it also seems closely related to other observances.