**The Standard Article**

**Rooster clocks in with bonus time**

We are just days from the Year of the Rooster. (You can also call it the year of the cockerel, or simply the year of the chicken. The Chinese name is not gender specific and essentially means poultry.)

This will be a Fire Rooster year, the first since 1957. It will also be a leap year – which means it will have a 13th month.

The 12 moons of the Chinese year represent actual lunar cycles from one new moon to the next. These add up to 354 days (in fact, 354.375 days). So a Chinese year is around 11 days shorter than a 365-day solar year. In order to keep the year in tandem with the seasons, an extra month is inserted into the calendar around every three years. That is why the exact date of Lunar New Year varies at some point between January 21 and February 20 in the modern Western calendar.

(By contrast, the Islamic calendar year sticks to the lunar cycle. So the current Islamic year – 1438 – began on October 3, 2016 and ends on September 21 this year.)

The leap month varies. In this Year of the Rooster, the leap month will be after the sixth moon, which is from June 24 to July 22. The coming “leap sixth month” is from July 23 to August 21. The normal seventh month starts on August 22.

I send my best wishes to everyone for this extra-long Year of the Rooster.