

2008

Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration

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Chinese New Year is the longest and most important celebration on the Chinese calendar. This Chinese New Year begins on Feb.7, 2008 and ends at Feb.21, 2008. Chinese New Year ends with the lantern festival on the fifteenth day of the month.

At the Great Tao Temple, we had a big Chinese New Year Celebration this year. There was a ceremony for transmitting the Great Tao all day long and some people that were born in the rat, horse, rabbit, goat, and rooster zodiacs had to pray the “Annual Earth Guardian” to keep away unfortunate happenings. We celebrated with traditional activities, such as the activity where you can use the Chinese Calligraphy to write “lucky words” on a piece of red paper that is called “spring festival couplets.” There were also activities where you can make origami, the Chinese New Year Card, the Chinese lanterns, and an activity for Chinese chess. The adults especially like the Chinese tea gathering where they can relax and socialize. Then, we witnessed a magnificent lion dance. The performers also performed kung fu, using swords, knives, sticks, etc. After the lion dance, we sang Chinese New Year songs and did Chinese Riddle Guessing.

At Chinese New Year celebrations people wear red clothes, decorate with poems on red paper, and give children “lucky money” in red envelopes. Red symbolizes fire, which according to legend can drive away bad luck. The fireworks that shower the festivities are rooted in a similar ancient custom. Long ago, people in China lit bamboo stalks, believing that the crackling flames would frighten evil spirits and make them go away.

I love Chinese New Year, and I hope everyone has a wonderful year of the rat.