



# “Embrace China” —Extraordinary Performances in Jacksonville

■ By Mr. Jie Pan, Senior Staff Writer of JCA   📷 Gary Lau

The “Embrace China” Goodwill Mission of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese, serving as a messenger of the spring just as plum blossoms would do, has brought season’s greetings and warmth of the early spring to the Chinese and other Asian communities and their American friends in the northern Florida region after their successful shows in the Northeast US region and Miami. According to the ancient customs in China, the New Year’s celebrations will not end until the 15th of the January of the lunar calendar passes. They traveled long and far during the holiday season to present performance shows to the friends in local communities and to mingle with them in order to happily celebrate the Lunar New Year together.

The gala celebration started with the arousing dance “Red-Hot Start of a New Year” by the JCA’s Dance Troupe. It was followed by the excellent singing and folk music and acrobatic shows by such award-winning performing artists including singers like Qiao Jun, Qin Ke-ren, Zhang Chen (who is dubbed “Little Song Zu-ying in China), Geng Wei-hua, Cao Fu-jia and instrument performance musician Li Xin and acrobats like Zhong Yan and those from Sino-Elite Group. The audience was tightly grasped by the performances and they gave loud applause and children went up the stage to present flowers to the performers. Artists like Cheng Fang-yuan, Shi Zhan-ming and Chen Si-si were apparently touched by the enthusiasm from the audience and gave several encores. The audience noticed that the goodwill mission was not only a first-class art group, but also a highly efficient team with all members, from the art director to performers and to the sound technician, working in unison

for a common goal. Ms. Wu Jing, the “lark from military barracks,” impressed the audience with her spectacular singing and her additional role as the emcee. Zhang Qi, the “Queen of the Art of Faces Changes,” served as a stage technician together with Mr. Li Xin and others besides her stunning “face changing” magic. The gala celebration culminated in the splendid affectionate songs including “Paths of Beauty” by Chen Si-si, who is hailed as the “Number One Singer of the New-Style of Folk Songs” in China today and is well known at both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Her encore song “Tune of Dragon Boat”, showing strong local styles in central China, formed a dia-





logue between the hundreds from the audience and the star.

At the end of the show, people streamed onto the stage to chat with and to congratulate the performers and took photos together. Mr. Yu Han-hua, Chairman of Board of Directors of Tampa Bay Chinese School, said that this celebration is certainly one of the best he ever experienced during his more than twenty years in the States. Mr. Yu Bo-ren, Deputy Consul General from the Chinese Consulate General in Huston, commented that this is by far the best performance show by Chinese artists and most touching interaction between the audience and the performers during his two and a half years' stint as a diplomat.

In her blog article she created during the goodwill mission's busy trip in the Washington D.C. area, Chen Si-si, the folk song star wrote, "Next, we will travel to more cities and to happily sing and to celebrate the Lunar New Year with more Chinese and American friends so as to convey our affections and love for our fellow Chinese and their friends as well." Affections and feelings

for fellow Chinese and their friends, Lunar New Year celebration and homesickness, the indivisible unity among the Chinese the world over, have been the themes of the brilliant performances by the goodwill mission and their joint performers from the local areas. The message, resonating with the songs and applauses, was reaching the farthest corners of the earth.

A big and heart-felt "Thank you" to the "Embrace China" Goodwill Mission of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese!

Meanwhile, we express herein our deepest and sincerest gratitude for those JCA members, friends and sponsoring individuals and corporations for JCA whose selfless efforts and/or donations made this 2010 North Florida Lunar New Year Gala Celebration a tremendous success.

Finally, Happy Lanterns Festival of the Year of Tiger to you all!

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