

Longmont wishes for Happy Year of the Rooster

City celebrates Chinese New Year in style

By Karen Antonacci

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Members of the Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu Association perform the Lion Dance at the Chinese New Year celebration at Silver Creek High School in Longmont on Saturday afternoon, (Jonathan Castner / For the Times-Ca Lions covered in fringe shimmied their way into the Silver Creek High School gym Saturday afternoon, keeping time with the beating drums and clashing symbols ' tongues and bushy eyebrows.

The lion dance kicked off the 2017 Chinese New Year festivities that featured dance, music, crafts and food.

Performers with the Boulder-based [Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu Association](http://www.shaolinhungmei.org/) operated the lion costumes. (http://www.shaolinhungmei.org/) The performer operatir legs would sometimes cause the creature to rear up by jumping on the shoulders of the performer that operated the back two legs.

The Asian-Pacific Association of Longmont (<http://www.apalconnect.org/>) and the Silver Creek Leadership Academy (<http://www.silvercreekleadership.academy>, sponsors to put on the free event.

Chinese New Year, which is called the Spring Festival in China, is a 15-day celebration that marks the end of winter. This year is the Year of the Rooster and started A Chinese song and fashion show followed the lion dance.

Qi Zhou, a woman from Broomfield, performed in the fashion show in a traditional silky Chinese sheath dress called a qi pao or a cheongsam. Zhou said she didn't she was wearing but she is a fashion designer and works on blending eastern and western styles for a modern look.

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Zhou said she and the other women in the fashion show practiced the fluid movements with silk parasols once a "We wanted to show the beauty in Chinsse traditions and so we used traditional clothes and authentic movement said. "The umbrellas are from the southeast region of China."

Jo Zhou, no relation to Qui Zhou, also performed in the fashion show. The Longmont native said she thought the Creek was a great way for people to experience the Chinese culture.

The Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu Association performed more demonstrations and students from the [Bohua Chir](http://www.dreamschool.com/bohua/) (<http://www.dreamschool.com/bohua/>) performed dances.

Silu Wang, a 5-year-old student at Bohua Chinese School who lives in Superior, said she really liked dancing and a sparkly bright green dress with gold accents.

Wang's mom, Zhiman Guo, said the little girls danced a song about a pond and the girls wore green to symbolize pads on the pond.

"I'm so proud of her. Today, she was the youngest on the stage," Guo said, adding that Wang had been practicing the dance since September.

Violin students from the Flatirons Strings Academy played Chinese musical pieces and the Gu Fuen demonstrated Tai Chi moves, even pulling Longmont Mayor Dennis Coombs and Silver Creek High Finnestead into the lesson.

To round out the performances, [Denver Taiko members performed](http://www.denvertaiko.org/a) (<http://www.denvertaiko.org/a> Japanese drumming.

Outside the gym, children excitedly ran between tables and booths demonstrating crafts and skills l



brush painting. One table sold the traditional red envelopes associated with Chinese New Year. Abby Jin, 6, concentrated hard on using chopsticks at one of the tables to drop Fruit Loops one-by-one, Shirley Meng, said they come to the celebration every year. "I'm Chinese, so I think she is good at using the chopsticks because we've been letting her do it since Meng said. "It's an awesome party with the (lion) dance and all the kids' activities."

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Cathy Li, 15, of Broomfield, prepares with the other members of Bohua Chinese School troupe, before their dance performance Saturday at the Chinese New Year celebration at Silver Creek High School in Longmont. (*Jonathan Castner / For the Times-Call*)



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Diane Shimamoto and the other members of Denver Taiko, perform Saturday at the Chinese New Year celebration at Silver Creek High School in Longmont. (*Jonathan Castner / For the Times-Call*)

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