

### 2017 RBC Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival

Over 2000 GTA Residents Enjoyed the Light-up Celebration on Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>



On Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, the Lantern Festival in the Year of Rooster, 2017 RBC Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival Light-up Celebration took place at 1500 Birchmount Road. Over 2000 Torontonians gathered to celebrate this Chinese traditional festival together.

More than 500 handmade Qinhuai lanterns in the shape of water lilies, monkeys, rabbits, dragonflies, lions, crabs..., and about 300 Chinese red lanterns were hanging from the ceiling of hallways and entertainment rooms. The themes designed for 2017 RBC Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival included: the pond under the moon, the house guarded with lions, Chinese traditional sports, Jiangsu scenery photography exhibition, Chinese traditional arts and crafts, the wall of lucky red envelopes and so many more.

The Fifth Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival Light-up Celebration officially started around 6 pm. In front of the four giant Qinhuai Palace Lanterns, all the VIP guests pressed the button to light up all the colorful lanterns, and drew the eyes of the golden and silver lions to wake them up. With Lion Dance delighting the celebration for all, the VIP guests sent the best wishes to everyone, and then visited a special photo exhibition to see the beautiful scenery of Jiangsu.

Meanwhile, some visitors took photos with the large Qinhuai Lanterns shaped like a Rooster, Phoenix, Dragon, Lion, Elephant; some joined the arts and crafts workshop on the main stage, and the others enjoyed the family fun games with their children, such as Chinese and English riddles, ring toss, archery and more. Everyone had great time with a variety of entertainment.





In the cafeteria, people were lining up early to taste an array of multicultural themed cuisine and Qinhuai style food, including Nanjing Salted Duck, Five Fragrance Egg, Pork Joint Stewed with Rock Sugar, Smoked Fish, Salted duck gizzard, Steamed Taro with Sugar, Yuan Xiao, Osmanthus Rice Cake, Beef with Bean Noodle Soup, Yangzhou Fried Rice, Ten Veggies Dish, etc.

Exclusively sponsored by Royal Bank of Canada, the 2017 RBC Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival is organized by Ontario-Jiangsu Friendship Association (OJFA), Jiangsu Provincial Overseas Exchange Association, Jiangsu Provincial Oversea Chinese Affairs, Canada-China Strategic Development Association and HSK Toronto Centre, sponsored by Howard Johnson Hotel and Kootoo.ca, and venue sponsored by Bond Education Group.

On behalf of Dr. Julia Li, the President of OJFA, Dr. Charlotte Ge said that the annual Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival was a unique Chinese style celebration with great significance that became more and more popular each year in the GTA. This celebration is considered a showcase event that offers an opportunity for people to experience Chinese traditional culture. In order to encourage more guests with multi-cultural backgrounds to enjoy this event together, the Committee provided bilingual services of all important information and even prepared bilingual riddles.

Dr. Ge mentioned the fifth annual Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival will hold two sub-events in February and June in order to celebrate the Chinese New Year and Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confederation. The celebrations have two special meanings: First of all, the 2017 Lunar New Year (the Year of Rooster) is the first official Spring Festival since the Canadian government proclaimed it on June 1st, 2016. Secondly, 2017 is the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, and there will be a variety of celebrations in diverse communities across the country; OJFA will improve the influence and add more attractions of the Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival to strengthen the ties between Ontario and Jiangsu.

She emphasized 2017 RBC Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival was a huge success because of all the volunteers' creativities, great efforts and hard work, as well as the support from both countries' governments.

As the representative of Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival committee, Dr. Ge expressed sincere thank-you to people who sent congratulatory letters, including: Premier Minster Justin Trudeau, Consul General of The Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto Xue Bing, Senator Victor Oh, MP Salma Zahid, MP Geng Tan, MP Arnold Chan, MP Shaun Chen, Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, Director of Jiangsu Provincial Overseas Exchange Association Wang Hua, Mayor of Toronto John Tory, Chair of Toronto's Economic Development and Culture Committee Michael Thompson, and Scarborough Community Councillor Chin Lee.

The Committee thanks all the dedicated contribution and support from the sponsors, communities, media, Bond student volunteers and different universities' alumni volunteers. May the Toronto-Qinhuai Lantern Festival will be even greater and more attractive in 2018!

