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Nicole H. Chen performs the Dun Huang Fairy Dance at the China Night program organized by the Chinese Student Association. China Night was put on to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

China Night rings in Year of the Rat

CELEBRATION: Event featured martial arts exhibit, fashion show and authentic dinner

By Doug Irving
Student Activities Reporter

The Chinese Student Association welcomed in the Year of the Rat on Saturday at the Eugene Hilton.

The CSA sold out its 200 tickets to the event and the room was crowded with about 50 standing-room-only spectators.

China Night was an opportunity for the CSA to showcase the cultures of Taiwan and China. The show included the traditional Lion Dance, as well as martial arts and a fashion show.

"I wanted to see a little bit of the Chinese culture that I think we need to experience," said Elizabeth Weege, a sophomore majoring in environmental studies.

Wen-Li Tu, the president of the CSA, said the Chinese New Year is vastly different from its American counterpart. In China, the New Year celebrates the defeat of a monster that ate people. The people realized the monster "was scared of firecrackers and colored papers." Since then, the New Year celebrations have sought to scare off the monster.

The night's martial arts exhibition included Wu Shu and Tai Chi Chuan. The former is a gymnastic, aggressive martial art, while the latter is more meditative and subdued.

"The martial arts I thought were interesting, but a little repetitive," said Brandon Powers, a freshman majoring in English.

The \$9 entrance ticket to the evening's events also included a Chinese dinner of chicken and rice.

"We're just getting away from the dorm food," said Pili Villar, a freshman architecture major.

The event was held at the Hilton because the EMU Ballroom was already taken, said Tennyson C. J. Chen, vice president of the CSU.

The Hilton charged the CSU over \$3,000 for use of its property, Chen said. The funds came partially from the school, but mainly from fund raising.

The Year of the Rat will officially begin on Monday, Feb. 19.

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