

Singapore - New Year Celebration with Care Recipients

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Sunday, 18 January 2009 00:00



On January 18, the Tzu Chi Singapore branch hosted 266 care recipients in a celebration of the coming Chinese New Year, which fell on January 26 this year. In addition to free haircuts and lunches, festive performances were staged to entertain the attendees. Volunteers also presented gifts for the care recipients to take home.

Performances on stage included songs by members of the Tzu Chi Collegiate Association, martial arts demonstrations, and sign-language songs presented by members of an association for the deaf. The most special show was put on by members of the Youth Buddhist Chapter, who used recycled buckets, cooking spatulas, and an erhu, a traditional Chinese musical instrument, to create a musical performance. The ingenuity of the group was highly admired and attracted a lot of notice.

At the end of the performances, volunteers presented red envelopes (traditional Chinese New Year gifts containing cash) to the care recipients and wished them a happy new year.

Some care recipients brought with them their bamboo coin banks and donated the money saved to Tzu Chi to help other needy people. One of them, 80-year-old Chen Zhao-xing (陈兆兴), had been receiving assistance from Tzu Chi for over a year. He said that he had developed a habit of dropping some coins into his bank every day. He felt good that at his age he could still give what little he had to help others.

Another care recipient who brought her bamboo bank to the party was Mrs. Liu. Her husband had been paralyzed by a stroke four years earlier, and Mrs. Liu had to stay home and take care of him. Since she could not go out to work, the family was in serious financial difficulty. Upon learning of their situation, Tzu Chi volunteers began visiting and caring for the family. To repay their kindness, Mrs. Liu saved money in a bamboo bank she received from the Tzu Chi office. She said that every time she put a coin in the bamboo bank, the clink of the coin reminded her to be grateful for the help of others. "Others help us, so we should do what we can to help others too," she said.

Source: Tzu Chi Quarterly Spring 2009