

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 24, 2009

OX CHASES RAT AT THE DRAGON BALL

(TORONTO) – The largest Chinese New Year celebration of its kind, the annual Dragon Ball, was held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre South Building on January 24, 2009. More than 1,200 patrons joined in the celebration as they welcomed the Year of the Ox.

“This year’s Dragon Ball is certainly a milestone event as we are celebrating the gala’s 20th anniversary,” said Jim Ritchie, Senior VP of Sales & Marketing of Tridel Corporation, who also chaired this premier fundraising gala in 1997 and 2002. “It took our organizing committee eight months to prepare for tonight and we have 300 volunteers on duty to bring it to life.”

Attended by the likes of Lieutenant Governor David Onley, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, senior corporate executives, community leaders and other dignitaries, the Dragon Ball offers the best of the best – lavish decoration painstakingly assembled by volunteers; the most unique auction items; the exquisite cuisine offered during the grand reception, dinner and midnight buffet; talented performers coming from across Canada.

“When we were planning for the first gala in 1990, we wanted to use a special occasion where we can unite the community for a worthy cause – to build a culturally-appropriate facility for Chinese seniors,” explained Dr. Joseph Wong, Founder and Chair of the Yee Hong Foundation. “We wanted to make the gala really special so people would come back year after year.”

Come back, they did. Over the past 19 years, the Dragon Ball has raised close to \$16 Million for Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care. The dream of building a Yee Hong Centre became a reality in 1994 and within a decade three more centres would be built.

Dragon Ball 2009 provided many highlights:

- Fresh oysters and clams, sushi, traditional Peking duck, suckling pig and dim sum were part of the RBC Financial Group Grand Reception menu. There was also a Martini Bar.
- A 4-course dinner featuring a Red Tuna Sashimi Salad, Double-Boiled Bouillabaisse Soup, the most tender Roasted Duck Breast with lotus leaf-wrapped rice, and a special dessert designed by Dufflet Pastries.
- The entertainment, sponsored by TD Canada Trust Music, showcased a wonderful lineup of performers – a 20-piece orchestra (The Canadian Sinfonietta), a 40-member youth choir (Young Singers), and a lion dance involving 10 lions (Sunny Tang Performance Troupe) and renowned Canadian tenors (Destino).



**Dragon Ball 2009
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DRAGON BALL 1990-2009

- BMO Financial Group brought traditions to life with the arrival of the God of Fortune handing out ‘*Fei Chun*’ (good wishes written on red paper) and “*Lai See*” (lucky money in red packets) to the patrons.
- Close to 200 one-of-a kind silent auction items, including A personal plane ride over Toronto’s sky, A night out with a Super Bowl Champion, and abundance of dining and leisure experience packages.
- A live auction that showcases a Hermès “Tandem” Timepiece with 40 diamonds and a luxurious “Best of China Tour for Four” donated by Tour East Holidays;
- A Grand Raffle Draw for a brand new Lexus IS 250, a 7-Day Wonders of Peru package, a rare painting and a gym membership.
- During the program, BMO Financial Group and Sing Tao Daily were honoured for their continued support in all 20 Dragon Balls. Tridel’s President, Mr. Leo DelZotto, was also presented the Golden Achievement Award for his contributions to Yee Hong and the community.

“Unquestionably, this is one great party,’ said Flora Chong, the gala’s Co-Chair and a member of the Yee Hong Foundation Board, “but ultimately our goal is to raise as much money as possible for the 15,000 seniors and their families served by Yee Hong each year. It’s all about the seniors.”

The Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care is a non-profit organization dedicated to delivering high quality and culturally appropriate services to seniors in the Greater Toronto and the surrounding areas. Our mission is to enable seniors to live life to the fullest – in the healthiest, most independent and dignified ways. The Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation is the fundraising, communications and public relations arm of the Yee Hong family. The Foundation raises all necessary funds to cover the operation expenses of the services and programs offered by the Yee Hong Centre.

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