

On August 1 -3, the Taipei Youth Folk Sports Group graced Raleigh and Kernersville with their amazing and professional level Chinese folk sports and their adorable charm. The Triangle was the first stop on their 5-city tour of the United States. They also performed in NYC, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco through August 12.

After 31 hours of flying and stopping in Los Angeles for a half day, the Group arrived at 7:00 AM in RDU airport on the morning of August 1. Twenty six youth ages 10 to 14 years from three different schools, their three coaches, a conditioning and dance coach, and 8 other administrators traveled in this delegation. The highest ranking was Mr. Ching Ji Wu 吳清基, Commissioner of Taipei City's Department of Education.

They were greeted by six TACAS members at the RDU airport. James Su 蘇燕次 and Chuang HuiJin 莊惠瑾, Theresa Boudreaux, Joanne Shang, Lanchien Tallant, Susan Sy, YihShin Tan were hosts for the visit. Theresa and Cyndy did most of the planning.

On their first day, the group performed in two informal shows at the Exploris children's museum in downtown Raleigh for 250+ people, attended a Durham Bulls baseball game, and had a late dinner at Mr. Wok's Buffet. There, the TACAS officers officially welcomed them and gave them each a present of a Taipei-NC T-Shirt with a special design.

On their second day, the Taipei Youth Group performed for 405 Brier Creek Elementary school students ages 5- 11 years old. Without any instruction, the kids clapped at every trick and nudged their friends "Can you believe that?"

Next, the group stopped for barbecue in Greensboro before traveling by bus to Kernersville. Mayor Curtis Swisher greeted the group and declared August 2 Taipei Folks Sports Day in Kernersville. That the evening, the Taipei youth Group performed for 250 people at a free local performance and presented three additional dance performances that included contemporary music with the traditional Monkey King story.

That night, Dr. Frank Chen, a member of the Greensboro Chinese Association, treated the entire group to an extravagant Chinese buffet in Greensboro. Ms. Amy Lin, director of the TECO cultural center, who had attended the performance had dinner with the group as well.

On their final day in the Triangle, the Taipei Youth Group gave their fifth performance in three days at the Olive Chapel elementary school in Apex. The school's administration invited the News & Observer, Apex Herald, and NBC-17 news. The Taipei Youth spent about 20 minutes teaching Olive Chapel students how to jump rope as a group, use the yoyo, and kick the shuttlecock.

"It was my best day at school ever," said an Olive Chapel student. "They were soooo good at what they do. I know I have to work hard to be that good at anything."

By Cyndy Yu (余貽萊)