

Find your inner dragon.



**MAY 7
2011**

RAMSEY CREEK PARK

12th Annual



6th Annual



BANGLADESH
CAMBODIA
CHINA
INDIA
INDONESIA
JAPAN
KOREA
LAOS
MALAYSIA
MYANMAR
PAKISTAN
PHILIPPINES
SINGAPORE
SRI LANKA
TAIWAN
THAILAND
VIETNAM

Miss Asian Festival Pageant
Dragon Boat Race
Live Music & Dance
Traditional Crafts
Cultural Displays
Food & Drink
Martial Arts Demos

Carolinan 
Asian-American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Mecklenburg County
Park and Recreation
*The Natural Place
To Be...*



www.charlottedragonboat.com • 1-866-YES-ASIA



MAY 7, 2011
RAMSEY CREEK PARK
CORNELIUS, NC



ABOUT THE FESTIVALS

WHAT

The **Charlotte Asian Festival** is an annual family-oriented event for the Asian and non-Asian community in and around Mecklenburg County and throughout the Carolinas. The festival highlights and celebrates Asian culture, diversity, ethnicity, roots and history. Authentic food and craft vendors, music, dance, entertainment, and the annual Miss Asian Festival Pageant are all key parts of this fun and festive cultural event.

The **Charlotte Dragon Boat Festival Race** is an exciting team competition and is the fastest growing water sport in the world. An important part of the Chinese traditional calendar, dragon boat racing originated over 2,300 years ago on the life-sustaining rivers of southern China. The Dragon Boat Festival Race also commemorates the death of Qu Yuan, a Confucian sage revered in Chinese history. The Charlotte race is an open competition to anyone 15 years of age or older.

WHEN

The 2011 festivals are Saturday, May 7, 2011. Heats for the dragon boat race begin at 9:00 a.m. Races will continue throughout the day. The Asian Festival opens at 11:00 a.m. and runs until 4:00 p.m.

WHERE

Ramsey Creek Park (18441 Nantz Road, Cornelius, N.C) is situated in a picturesque setting on the shore of Lake Norman. It is conveniently located near I-77's exit 28. Parking is available at the Palace Theatre on 17220 W. Catawba Road with shuttle service to the festival site. There is no onsite parking for attendees.

ORGANIZERS

The Charlotte Asian Festival and Dragon Boat Festival Race are organized by the Carolinas Asian-American Chamber of Commerce (www.caacc.com), Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation (www.parkandrec.com) and the Charlotte Dragon Boat Association. (www.charlottedragonboat.org).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the Asian Festival and Dragon Boat Festival Race has grown considerably in recent years. Both events draw visitors and participants from greater Charlotte and throughout the Carolinas. Overall attendance for the 2009 festivals was an estimated 6,000+ visitors and participants. Race participants are onsite throughout the entire day.

For more information, call 1-866-YES-ASIA or visit www.charlottedragonboat.com

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ASIAN COMMUNITY IN GREATER CHARLOTTE

In the 1960s, there were fewer than 200 Asians and only eight Asian businesses in Charlotte. Today, the Asian-American population in greater Charlotte has grown to around 70,000, representing over 15 countries of origin, and directly involved in hundreds of businesses. Various civic groups within the Asian-American community are actively engaged in reaching out to share, promote, enrich and contribute to the well-being of all citizens of this multicultural community we call home.

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN REPRESENTED IN GREATER CHARLOTTE:

Bangladesh	Myanmar
Cambodia	Pakistan
China	Philippines
India	Singapore
Indonesia	Sri Lanka
Japan	Taiwan
Korea	Thailand
Laos	Vietnam
Malaysia	

PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN

Asian Indian	30%
Vietnamese	27%
Chinese	12%
Filipino	6%
Korea	4%
Japanese	2%
Other Asians	19%

(2006 US Census)

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DRAGON BOAT RACE TEAM INFO

WHO CAN RACE

The event is open to everyone 15 years of age or older. You don't need to be a "seasoned" paddler to participate and enjoy this unique experience, as you will learn the basic techniques during the free practice sessions. We do encourage each organization to field its own team and we will do our best to match up unaffiliated individual participants to a team.

TEAM SIZE

A full Dragon Boat crew consists of 20 paddlers and one drummer. We will provide the steerer. Each team must have at least 8 female paddlers and should also consider 1-2 alternates.

REGISTRATION FEES

The team registration fee is \$750 for corporate teams and \$650 for non-profits (non-profits require a valid 501(c)3 certificate) if fee is paid in full by April 16, 2011. For registrations after April 16, 2011, the fee is \$850 and \$750 respectively.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

Each team will receive two practice sessions prior to the event with instructions on proper paddling and racing skills. These will be held typically during weekends. Team captains will be contacted for specific date and time.

PRIZES

Medals will be awarded to winning teams.

BENEFITS OF RACING

CULTURE: Dragon boat racing has been around for over 2,300 years and is an important part of Chinese culture and history.

FITNESS: You don't have to be a world-class athlete to race. Dragon boat racing is a great way to be outdoors and get a good cardiovascular workout.

TEAMWORK: Dragon boat racing is a terrific team sport. In fact, a "weaker" team that is well-synchronized will usually beat a stronger team that isn't.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: Dragon boat racing is a great way for people to come together for a common cause. All community groups are encouraged to participate.

COMPETITION: Once you are in the boat and on the water, you'll see just how much fun it is to compete with others.

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

CAROLINAS ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (www.caacc.com)

The Carolinas Asian-American Chamber of Commerce (CAACC) is the leading Asian organization in the greater Charlotte metro region. The Chamber's goals are to:

Foster cooperation and interaction within the Asian communities and between the community at large in Charlotte and the Carolinas for the betterment of commerce, culture and communication.

Promote, sponsor and support efforts to sustain our traditional heritages through excellence in business practice, education, volunteerism and public service.

The CAACC provides its members with:

- Workshops, seminars and conferences about trade and commerce
- Business networking and marketing opportunities
- Business consulting and promotion assistance
- International trade leads

MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION (www.parkandrec.com)

The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department is home to 210 parks and facilities located on more than 17,600 acres of parkland throughout Mecklenburg County. The department is also responsible for 27 recreation centers, 5 public golf courses, 3 indoor pools, 2 outdoor pools, 3 nature preserves, a public campground and disc golf course. For outdoor enthusiasts there are 33 miles of developed greenways and 147 miles of undeveloped greenways. Mecklenburg Park and Recreation is also responsible for 11 nature preserves.

CHARLOTTE DRAGON BOAT ASSOCIATION

The Charlotte Dragon Boat Association (CDBA) promotes, organizes and sponsors Dragon Boat racing events and was established to:

- Provide support for members to practice and train in dragon boating for fitness, enjoyment, and competition
- Promote team building, leadership, diversity enhancement, and cost-effective community sports and exercise
- Develop amateur athletes for national and international dragon boat competitions
- Provide education and instruction to the general public on dragon boating
- Foster, conduct, and assist in local, national, and international dragon boat competitions
- Maintain facilities and equipment for dragon boating instruction, practice, and competition
- Promote cross-cultural communications throughout the Charlotte community via dragon boat events

For more information about the Carolinas Asian-American Chamber, contact Roxanna Dimitriu at 1-866-YES-ASIA.

For more information about Charlotte Dragon Boat Association, contact John Chen at 704-621-6668.

EVENT ORGANIZERS

HISTORY OF DRAGON BOAT RACING

Dragon boat racing is based on an ancient Chinese tradition. Dragon boat racing began over 2,300 years ago on the life-sustaining rivers in the valleys of southern China as a fertility rite to ensure plentiful crops. The first participants were superstitious and held their own celebration on the fifth day of the of the fifth lunar month of the Chinese calendar (summer solstice). This time of year was traditionally associated with disease and death. The race was held to avert misfortune and encourage the rains needed for prosperity and the object of their worship was the dragon.

The most venerated of Chinese zodiac deities, the dragon of Asia has traditionally been a symbol of water. It is said to rule the rivers and seas and dominate the clouds and rains. The first races were meant to mock dragon battles staged in order to awaken the hibernating Heavenly Dragon. Sacrifices were made to the dragon sorcerers. Humans, the cleverest and most powerful of all beings, were the original sacrifices. Even much later, a rower or even an entire team that fell into the water would receive no assistance because it was believed to be wrong to interfere with the will of the gods. Over the years a second story was integrated to give the festival a dual meaning to the touching saga of Qu Yuan.

Chinese history describes the fourth century B.C. as the Warring States period; a time of shifting alliances and much treachery. In a kingdom called Chu lived a great patriot and poet by the name of Qu Yuan. He championed political reform and truth as essential to a healthy state. The King, who had fallen under the influence of corrupt ministers, banished his most loyal counselor, Qu Yuan, from the kingdom. Left to wander in the countryside, Qu Yuan composed some of China's greatest poetry. In it, he expressed both his fervent love for his country and his deep concern for its future. Upon learning of Chu's devastation at the hands of a rival kingdom, he leaped into the Mi Lo river holding a great rock in a display of heartfelt sorrow. The people loved Qu Yuan very much and raced out in their fishing boats to the middle of the river in a vain attempt to save him. They beat on drums and splashed their oars in the water, trying to keep the fish and water dragons away from his body. To honor his soul and to ensure it didn't go hungry, they scattered rice into the water. However, late one night, the spirit of Qu Yuan appeared before his friends and told them that the rice that was meant for him was being intercepted by a huge river dragon. He asked his friends to wrap their rice into three-cornered silk packages and to tie five colors of string about it to ward off the dragon. This tradition is continued to today, although now the dumplings are wrapped in leaves rather than silk. Today, dragon boat racing is the fastest growing water sport in the world.

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