

Fireworks pullout by firms to cost \$8.5m

Alice So

Taxpayers will have to chip in HK\$3 million and the Hong Kong Tourism Board HK\$5.5 million for New Year countdown celebrations after its two main sponsors dropped out.

Sun Hung Kai Properties and Henderson Land Development have withdrawn their sponsorship after supporting the annual event for the previous four years.

Tourism Board executive director Anthony Lau Chun-hon revealed yesterday just how much the firms' decision will cost everyone.

"Total cost of the event is HK\$8.5 million. Unfortunately, negotiations over sponsorship failed this October — as [the two firms] declined to sponsor the event for the very first time," Lau said.

He did not say how much the two developers contributed in previous years, and refused to comment on their reasons for pulling out.

"The show is key to boosting tourism by showcasing the beauty of our nightscape to the world, via hundreds of international media outlets," Lau said.

"We will strive to look for more potential sponsors to continue the legacy amid a funding crisis."



Anthony Lau, inset, said the firms' decision means HK\$8.5 million must be found.

This year, viewers can expect longer pyrotechnic displays and a more dazzling skyline for the December 31 show, which will last four minutes, about 30 to 40 seconds longer than last year.

Tourism Board director of events and product development Mason Hung Chung-hing said: "Since the Chinese zodiac is the dragon in the forthcoming Lunar New Year, the theme of the show for 2012 is *Soaring Dragon with a Happy Heart*."

Hung said "a golden dragon" will circle around the facade of Two IFC before taking to the sky — symbolizing the hope that our living standards and economy will soar next year.

"The public may make a wish on a shooting star every 15 minutes, starting from 11 pm, sparking excitement and a festive atmosphere leading up to the countdown," Hung said.

The fireworks display will be launched from the rooftops of 10 skyscrapers, lighting up the sky with shooting stars in four different colors to symbolize good wishes for career, health, fortune and love.

The show is set to generate advertising revenue of HK\$130 million.

The total number of tourists this month is likely to hit four million, an increase of about 14 percent on last year.

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Cold cat no angel when it comes to festive family fun

GEORGINA NOYCE ANIMAL ANTICS



The angel — standing just 15 centimeters high on her tiny bare feet — has been safely tucked away in a box in a cupboard for the past 12 months.

She only comes out at Christmas, so when she appeared on the floor, with no effort from me, I was rather puzzled.

Does she know the date, even from her dark, little box?

Picking her up and smoothing out her feathered wings, I put her aside, assuming my husband had been getting the decorations out.

He swore he had nothing to do with it so, with a stern look, I asked the culprit to step forward.

Three dogs looked at me curiously, waiting for the punchline.

A few hours later, returning to the same room, the angel was gone from the shelf where I had placed her. In the center of the floor was a long, bedraggled strand of silver tinsel.

Suddenly, a Christmas light turned on in my head: Jade the cat, unhappy at the cold, was once again bored and finding her own amusement.

That poor angel moved around the house silently and unseen. I never

caught Jade with her or saw her when I was hiding the angel on shelves, or under the books and finally in my handbag.

Within a matter of hours, however, the still serene little angel would appear somewhere different, her feathered wings becoming a little more ruffled each time.

Finally, I put her away in a drawer and shut it tight until Christmas Eve, when once again she will grace the top of our tree.

I'll leave it until later to work out how I'm going to protect the meter-high decorated tree and the long-suffering little angel from a cat that climbs 15m trees in the garden with ease.

I am assured that Jade will grow out of her whimsical and kittenish behavior.

But for now, I will have to deal with a cat that can create more trouble than a house full of two-year-old children on a sugar high.

Georgina Noyce is an equestrian judge, and has a menagerie of adopted four-legged waifs and strays. gnoyce2009@gmail.com

Attention please, welcome to YHKCC Airlines...

Organized once a year to celebrate different cultures, the YHKCC International Night 2011 marked a huge success on December 10, 2011, and created an unforgettable delight for all.



(From left) Mr. Ray Purvis, Dr. Nick Miller, Mr. Dion Chen, and Mr. Evans Mendonca kicked off the opening ceremony.

With "YHKCC Airlines" as the theme of the night, the International Night 2011 of the YMCA of Hong Kong Christian College (YHKCC) kicked off with traditional lion dance after guests of honor Mr. Ray Purvis, CEO/General Secretary of YMCA of Hong Kong, School Supervisor of YHKCC; Dr. Nick Miller, Principal of Australia International School, Singapore; Mr. Dion Chen, Acting Principal of YHKCC; and Mr. Evans Mendonca, Chairman of PTA dotted the lions' eyes.

In the opening ceremony, Purvis said, "It is a wonderful experience to go around and enjoy the food, the costumes and the cultures from various countries. YMCA of Hong Kong is thrilled to be part of the sponsoring body of YHKCC. We look ahead to the future of the educational and the

growth opportunities for your students; we also look ahead to be able to grow on the foundation that has been laid."

As an annual event, the YHKCC International Night carries on the core values of the YMCA, aiming to bring a family and community feeling to YHKCC, and let everyone experience the school life there.

"Following the success of last year's International Show, we have added one more identical show at night in addition to the evening show, so that more parents and students can enjoy this wonderful show," said Dion Chen, Acting Principal of YHKCC.

The International Show features dance performances from different countries including China, France, India, Korea, Nepal and many others, and many talented singers and musicians from countries such as Africa, the Philippines and USA, showcasing an international variety to the audience. What is more, the show celebrated the multi-cultural student body through the unique YHKCC Ethnic Fashion Show.

"In order to bring students carnival excitement, we have also introduced various activities at International Food and Bazaar, including face-painting and funny photo-retouching booths, and many other stores offering a variety of lovable items. There are also 24 food stalls in the playground, providing international cuisines from all over the world."

Organized for the fifth year, the arrangement of the International Night has changed a lot. "We have used themes like cruise and steam train; using flight as a theme is fun with all the flight attendants and cabin decorations. The organizing committees started preparing the show in September. I would say this is a very successful night; I am glad to see everyone respect each other and integrating well. I can see the students are all committed and enthusiastic in their areas. To my students, you are perfect!" said Chen.

As a Philippine Culture Showcase performer and "In-flight Service Manager, student



(From left) Francis Fernandes Patrick Chalm, Sim Emily Loret, Patricia Sarenas, and Dion Chen in front of the "plane".



Patricia Sarenas thinks the International Night is definitely one of the highlights of the entire school year. "The best thing is that all the performances are student-generated; we take care of everything including the costumes."

To Sim Emily Loret, Irish dancer and choreographer, the show is a great way to show different cultures. "Students come from different countries and they miss their homes a lot; here is a good chance to show off their cultures," said Sim.

"Everyone comes in together as a community, and that makes the International Night extraordinary. It happens every year, and it gets better and better," said "cabin crew" Francis Fernandes Patrick Chalm. "Different talent express their emotions at the event, and it is joyful to see the mix of different languages."