Ringing in the new year
International organization collaborate for annual festivities

Andrea Ferrão
andreaferrao96@gmail.com

Our university is swamped with cultures from all around the world. According to collegefactual.com, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette ranks 1317th in terms of diversity and is on par with the national average.

In fact, the International Student Council on campus is so vast that they serve as an umbrella to various other culturally diverse student organizations on campus that include Chinese Students and Scholars Association, the Vietnamese Student Organization and Malaysian Indonesian Singaporean Students Organization.

Chinese New Year, which is also called the Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival, falls on Jan. 28. CSSA is hosting the 2017 Lunar New Year Gala on Feb. 4 to celebrate. This celebration is one of the biggest and most important traditional festivals in China that doles out an official week-long public holiday for families to celebrate the beginning of the year. Every year, CSSA hosts a gala and welcomes students all over campus to be a part of their festivities.

Asked what’s different this year, CSSA Vice President Clara Chong said, “Unlike the previous years, this year’s gala would be a collaboration between three student organizations on campus.”

Some of the few traditional celebrations during this week-long event include firecrackers, dragon dances and a reunion dinner, which is one of the most significant and magnificent meals of the year. Of course, exchange of gifts plays a pivotal role in the festival. The most common gift is the Red Envelope, which is usually complete with money and gifted to young children in the hope of passing on good luck (and money).

Additionally, this is the year of the rooster or chicken, according to the Chinese 12-year repeating animal zodiac cycle, which basically has an animal and its attributes represent each year. The color “red” is believed to be auspicious, and it wards off misfortune and bad luck. This is why if you attend the gala, you’ll see a lot of students wearing red.

The Lunar New Year’s event is the perfect time to witness CSSA’s biggest celebration, which will include various performances such as singing, dancing and instrumentals from students and special guests within the three organizations. Keeping the gift-giving tradition in mind, there will also be a variety of raffles throughout the event. Please check out their event on Facebook or see their event poster for future details. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.