

# **The Valdosta Daily Times**

## **OUR OPINION: Taiwan Comes to Valdosta**

September 29, 2007

— Thirty-five Taiwanese youths are scheduled to arrive this afternoon in Valdosta-Lowndes County. For the next few days, they will share dances and recreational activities from Taiwan as they learn of our area while performing in local schools and staying with area families. The Chung Cheng Middle School Folk Sport Troupe of Keelung, Taiwan, has traveled to Canada, Russia, Australia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, South Africa, Brazil, France, Germany. Now, the troupe will add South Georgia to their resumes as well as their lives and memories.

The Taiwanese troupe comes to Valdosta-Lowndes County thanks to the efforts of Serena Huang, a Taiwan native and founder of the Valdosta Asian Cultural Association. Through VACA, Huang has brought Asian culture to South Georgia by teaching school children her native dances and introducing the region to all types of Asian and international culture by inviting the region's diverse population to participate in the past Asian Cultural Experience and this year's Azalea International. These past local events have involved Valdosta-Lowndes County's international community while these cultural festivals have brought South Georgia media attention throughout the world.

With Azalea International, international dance groups from across the United States performed in Valdosta. Now, VACA brings actual Taiwanese residents to Valdosta, bringing an exchange of ideas, cultures and personalities.

The Taiwanese performers, who are all middle-school age, will learn as much about us as we will learn about them. If you meet these dancers, welcome them. On Tuesday evening, attend their public performance. Let us show these youths and the world what true Southern hospitality is.

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