

## **GM Chinese Club Set to Celebrate Its New Year**

## by Jim Stickford

If you want to ring in the new year, you still have a chance.

The General Motors Chinese Employees Resource Group (CERG) will be celebrating the Chinese New Year (this year is the Year of the Horse) on Tuesday, Feb. 18, at the San Marino Club, 1685 Big Beaver Road in Troy, beginning at 5:15 p.m.

"We hold different events, mainly for GM's Chinese employees," said CERG president Bernard Wong. "We have social events, career development events, mentoring and the like. And our members also hold social events, such as celebrating the Chinese New Year, which is based on a lunar calendar."

Another important CERG function, Wong said, is to help promote GM products among metro Detroit's large Chinese population.

All too often, Wong said, Detroit's Chinese population associate quality with foreign cars.

"The hardest thing to overcome is word-of-mouth," Wong said. "Someone's cousin said he bought foreign and had no problems with his car and he then urges all his friends and relatives to buy that foreign brand. Wordof-mouth is a very potent selling tool, especially in a tight-knit community like ours."

Wong's official title at GM is manufacturing integration architect.

He's originally from Hong Kong and has been working for GM for more than 20 years. He said the people at CERG enjoy holding social events for the many Chinese GM employees.

"This year's Chinese New Year was actually on Jan. 31," Wong

said. "That's early, but the Chinese New Year is based on a lunar cycle, so the New Year is different from year to year."

> "The hardest thing to overcome is word-of-mouth."

> > -Bernard Wong, GM

He said the event at San Marino's will feature both American and Chinese food. After all, Wong said, many of the attendees will be guests of CERG members, so there has to be food for them.

But the club hasn't neglected Chinese food, either. There will be Chinese fried rice, egg rolls and Chinese noodles.

"There will also be a traditional Chinese 'lion's dance,'" Wong said. "And we will have other traditional dances from the different ethnic groups in China as well.

"Remember, China is a large country with many different ethnic groups and they all have their own cultural dances. We want to celebrate that as well."

While the Chinese New Year started on Jan. 31, Wong said, it's not uncommon for the celebration period to last two or three weeks, so they can have the New Year celebration on Feb. 18.

To buy a ticket, interested parties should contact Wende Zhang at 586-298-2058 or Guanghui Cai at 248-464-5689. Reservations must be made by Feb. 14.

