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OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNER OF EXPO 2010 SHANGHAI

Expo's fond farewell
Extravaganza draws to a colorful climax after record number of visitors
By WANG ZHENGHUA
CHINA DAILY

SHANGHAI — The curtain dropped on Expo 2010 on Sunday night with a heart-warming closing ceremony attended by a host of world leaders.

Since its opening in May, more than 73 million people — a record for the extravaganza — visited displays by 189 countries during the half-year culture and technology showcase that provided snapshots of the world to Chinese and foreign visitors.

Premier Wen Jiabao praised Expo on Sunday as a "splendid event" that "truly brought together people around the globe."

Shanghai achieved its goal of bolstering the economy and cemented its reputation as an international financial center and a city of world stature as China, still basking in the glow of its successful staging of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, showcased its mounting political and economic clout.

The closing ceremony brought a formal end to a journey that started in December 2002, when Shanghai won the bid for the cultural gala. From that moment on, numerous swatches and officials raced against the clock to give the world the 184-day wonder.

The Expo, with the theme "Better City, Better Life", displayed a number of global cultural treasures including the bronze chariot and horse sculpture from China's Warring States Period (475-221 BC), the statue of Athena

Denmark's famed "Little Mermaid" sculpture, a rooftop cable car ride above a replica Alpine meadow at the Swiss pavilion, and entertainment courtesy of Canada's Cirque du Soleil.

The Shanghai extravaganza had added a glorious chapter to the event's history, Wen said in an address to Sunday's Expo Summit Forum on Urban Innovation and Sustainable Development.

He noted that it was the first time that Expo was hosted by

A new world beckons
As the showcase ends, villagers tell Qian Yanfeng in Shanghai how it has helped them better understand modern life.

As a bonus for working part time with his local water resources bureau, Huang Xiaoler was given two choices in mid-October: a free three-day trip to Expo 2010 Shanghai or a 500-yuan (\$75) rebate on his water bill.

The rice farmer, who earns just 700 yuan a month, made the decision with little hesitation.

Many of his neighbors in Nanchang county have never left their native Jiangxi province, let alone China, and Huang believed that visiting the world's fair would broaden his knowledge and experience of the world.

It was a motivation shared by thousands, if not millions of people from the Chinese countryside who have flocked to the sprawling Expo since it opened its doors on May 1.

COVER STORY

Hong Kong film star Jackie Chan (center) and Olympic 110m hurdle gold medalist Liu Xiang (in red), together with volunteers and performers, attend the closing ceremony of the World Expo in Shanghai on Sunday night.

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Working for somebody else simply wasn't my cup of tea.

Lexie Morris, Founder of Lollipop Bakery, and A-Lister

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