

Chandler Children's Choir takes center stage at 2016 celebration of Chinese New Year

By Susie Steckner

Singer Audrey Burnett lights up when she talks about the upcoming Chinese New Year celebration. She likes the variety of performances, the colorful costumes and the significance of the celebration to her family.

This year, she's excited to add one more "like" to her list: her role as soloist.

Audrey is one of three soloists performing with the Chandler Children's Choir on Saturday, Feb. 13. The young singers—Audrey, 12; Kate Xie, 8; and Elizabeth Lee, 7—and their choir will perform *Cai Diao*, a Chinese folk song full of playful riddles.

The group's founders say the girls are eager to take part in the Chinese New Year celebration, for which practice sessions are now underway at Desert Cross Lutheran Church in south Tempe.

"I like doing the solos a lot," Burnett said. "And it's really fun to sing to a big audience like that. But I like everything about the show."

This is the third year that the choir has performed at the Chinese New Year show, currently held at Mesa Arts Center. The community choir, in its eighth season, performs at venues and special events throughout the East Valley.

It serves nearly 140 children and teens, and includes a broad mix of singers, including many Chinese families.

"We have a very diverse choir," said West Chandler resident Aimee Stewart, the choir's



co-founder and artistic director.

"Singers come from around the East Valley, from different neighborhoods, schools, cultural backgrounds."

"Just like the many voices in our choir, this diversity blends together to make one beautiful sound," she said.

The Chinese New Year show gives singers the chance to celebrate different cultures but also tackle a challenging song, Stewart said.

Cai Diao, or The Riddle Song, is fast and fun with plenty of tongue twisters. The choir's second song, *A Day in Spring*, is slower and lyrical, with a melody about springtime, friendship and music.

Jing Lee, who has three children's-choir singers, says she appreciates the choir's commitment to performing songs from different cultures. She's also seen her daughter Elizabeth's confidence grow through the relationship, giving her the courage to try out for solo roles.

Xie, another young soloist, is looking forward to performing at the celebration.

"I like singing Chinese songs," Xie said. "Last year the song had a story. This year, there are riddles. It's fun."

Cindy Lin has two daughters performing with the choir, including soloist Audrey.

"I am Chinese, and it is great to see my kids enjoy the Chinese holiday," Lin said. "Performing in the local Chinese New Year event is almost like a holiday tradition for them."

The Chinese New Year show will be held at 7 p.m. at Mesa Art Center's Ikeda Theater in downtown Mesa. Information: www.chandlerchildrenschoir.com.

FURNITURE REPAIR AND RESTORATION
SPECIAL ATTENTION TO FAMILY HEIRLOOMS

Armand's

- ANTIQUE RESTORATION
- REPAIRING AND GLUING
- PET DAMAGE REPAIR
- SEAT CANING AND WEAVING
- CLOCK CASE DAMAGE
- OUTDOOR TEAK RESTORATION
- PICK UP AND DELIVERY
- SINCE 1977 - MEMBER BBB of AZ

(480) 969-7777

ArmandsFurniture.com CALL OR TEXT: (602) 989 6601

HOME REMODELING

CAFARELLI CONSTRUCTION

Residential since 1974

Licensed • Bonded • Insured

Interior & Exterior • Kitchen & Bath • Room Additions

Dedicated to the Beauty of Your Home

480-839-4452

ROC Lic. #088929

READY TO START A PROJECT?
Contact us today!

(602) 818-7925

Licensed and Bonded
ROC 295146

PERFECT CHOICE
Custom Painting LLC

480-461-4300

AutoNation

Let Terry find you a
NV-2500 or NV-1500, NV-3500

SHAMROCK ROOFING SERVICES

Specializing in residential reroofing and repair

Quality workmanship and outstanding customer service

SHINGLES • TILE • SHAKES • FOAM AND FLAT

24 years experience #ROC244568 C-42 Bonded and Insured

480-888-6648 shamrockroofing@live.com

FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED
SINCE 1984

PAYNE & SONS

ROOFING & CONSTRUCTION
WWW.PAYNESONS.COM

Contact us for a FREE evaluation

480-988-9250

SEE OUR REVIEWS ON:
HOME ADVISOR **BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU A+ RATING**

TRI CERTIFIED INSTALLER
LICENSED, BONDED & INSURED
ROC: 194202 ROC: 138549B