

A Touch of China performance Jan. 30 at University of Redlands

By RACHAEL M. GUSTUSON
Special to the News Mirror

Half-price tickets available for Yucaipa-Calimesa residents

Bring a News Mirror and get in for \$5

"A Touch of China," featuring the visiting China Children's Art Troupe of Friendship, from Tianjin, China, will perform a two-hour musical performance in the Memorial Chapel at the University of Redlands on Friday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. Tina Tian, the principal of the Huaxia Chinese School in Riverside, who also teaches Chinese Language and Arts at Inland Leaders Charter School in Yucaipa, is instrumental in organizing the event.

The performance featuring China Children's Art Troupe of Friendship will celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Ox. The event will serve as a fund raising event for the Chinese School and the John W. North High School Band, which is planning a trip to Jiangmen City, China, in April, 2009.

"So, this visit of the children from China is not only a tremendous cultural exchange event, is also a great opportunity for us to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Ox," said Tian. "We have many prizes to be raffled off, using the entry tickets of the event. This is going to be a fun-filled evening of entertainment for families with children of all ages, adults, and seniors. We hope that many people will attend our event."

The China Children's Art Troupe is part of a venue of local and regional performers who will appear at the event Friday night. North High School Wind Symphony will be part of the two-hour extravaganza.



The "Touch of China" program

The China Children's Art Troupe includes nine to 11-year old children who are consummate performers being trained from a young age at the Cathay Future Art Center, one of the largest schools in China, offering the most categories of performing arts. Since 1995, children from this school have performed in over 60 countries. Last year, they visited seven major cities in Australia, and this year they are again visiting

the United States (Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, The Inland Empire) and Vancouver, Canada. "The University of Redlands has generously donated the use of their Memorial Chapel to us for free, since our Huaxia Chinese School of Riverside is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization," said Tian. "Furthermore, they have been most generous in helping us with the organization of this event, which, as it turns out to be, a major undertaking."

Tian is very interested in preserving and teaching Chinese culture and language. She wants to share that love with everyone. She teaches young Yucaipa residents at ILCS, where they recently showcased their newly developed language skills in a Christmas performance. Tina states that she is so proud of all her students in Yucaipa and across the Inland Empire.

"My husband and I have lived in Yucaipa for six years and we feel a strong affinity for our neighbors and friends in this region," she added.

Her school's mission is to include everyone of varying ethnic backgrounds who is interested in learning Chinese language, history, art, and culture. In addition, they strive to promote and enrich cultural activities in the local Chinese community and Inland Empire region; and to be an active and contributing member of our diversified society. They are a non-profit, non-religious, non-political, tax-exempt educational organization.

The Riverside Campus was begun in 2005 and offers Pin-Yin and simplified Chinese classes for children at different levels, bilingual classes and short-term adult classes. The classes are held on Saturday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The first two hours involve language instruction. The third hour is for enrichment pro-

grams in Chinese culture, such as Chinese cuisine, Chinese arts and crafts, children's poetry, games, folk songs, dancing, and Martial arts. The school has publicly recruited, selected and hired an excellent group of qualified bi-lingual teachers in Chinese and English.

"All of our teachers, with bachelor degrees or higher, have a strong commitment to Chinese teaching and can provide an excellent learning experience for our students," said Tian.

"A Touch of China" performance will be held on Friday night at 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Memorial Chapel, University of Redlands, 1200 E. Colton Ave. in Redlands.

For directions or information, visit them on their website, www.riversidechinese.org or email Tian directly at tina.huaxia@yahoo.com. You can also reach her at 213-9776.

The current pricing at the event on Friday is \$10 for adults, \$7 for pre-teens (seven - 13 years), high school and college students, and seniors 62+. Children six years and under are free. Tian and the Huaxia School staff anticipate a high attendance for the event.

Tina extends an offer to all of her Yucaipa-Calimesa community to bring in a copy of the News Mirror to the Memorial Chapel on Friday night, Jan. 30, and receive a special entry pricing of \$5.