

THE PRESS

A NEWSPAPER OF
GENERAL CIRCULATION
IN LORAIN COUNTY

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58th Year, No. 4 Copyright © 2008

January 23, 2008

Middle School student lets her angelic voice be heard

AVON

By Rebecca Turman

Carina Chavez has sung her way to angel status.

Chavez, a seventh-grader at Avon Middle School (AMS), was recently accepted into the Cleveland-based Singing Angels group. According to its Web site, singingangels.org, Singing Angels was founded in 1964 and is a non-profit organization "dedicated to youth development through the highest level of artistic achievement in the performing arts."

"The Singing Angels have been featured on national and international television, have performed four times at the White House and have appeared in concert with a host of superstars, including Bob Hope, Kenny Rogers, Wayne Newton, Celine Dion, Eartha Kitt, Cathy Rigby, BJ Thomas, and the U.S. Army Band," the Web site says.

For Chavez, singing has always been something she's loved to do.

"I probably started singing when I was about 5," she said.

Chavez was inspired to join Singing Angels after watching a classic choir performance, she said, adding that her mom told her the Singing Angels was a local group she might be interested in joining.

"So I decided to try out," she said. "I was a little nervous."

During the audition, Chavez said, "They had you sing a song of your choice a cappella, and they had you come up to the piano and match pitches and check your range."



Carina Chavez, a seventh-grader at Avon Middle School, recently became a member of The Singing Angels.

Chavez chose to sing "Memories," from the musical "Cats."

"I just really like that song, and I was told my voice sounded good singing it," she said, adding that her AMS choir teacher Susan Vance-Koch helped her rehearse the song.

Chavez tried out on Jan. 5, and less than a week later, she found out that she had made it into the Singing Angels Training Chorus.

According to Singing Angels Music Director Charles Eversole, the group has two choruses—the Training Chorus and the Performing Chorus. The

Training Chorus is geared toward new members, such as Chavez. The purpose of the Training Chorus is to train new members and then consider them for the Performing Chorus "after an evaluation of their musical skills and progress," the Web site says.

Training Chorus members have the chance to showcase their talents during two concerts, Eversole said, whereas those in the Performing Chorus have four performances throughout the year.

There will be opportunities for Chavez to move up from the two-part Training Chorus to the four-part Performing Chorus, Eversole said.

"We promote (singers) every summer based on how many performers come back," Eversole said.

While singing in the AMS Choir, Chavez said she sings an alto part, but in the Singing Angels, she sings soprano.

A spot in the Training Chorus requires a lot of practice. Chavez and about 100 of her fellow Singing Angels practice "every Saturday from 11:30 (a.m.) to 2 p.m. at the Masonic Temple in Cleveland," she said.

Though Chavez had only had one practice at the time The Press interviewed her, she said being a Singing Angel has been great so far.

"It's an amazing experience," she said. "You learn a lot. In the Training Chorus, they provide you with music theory classes. I'm going to sign up for it. The directors are very nice, and they have lots of energy and we have a lot of fun in there."

Practices are just gearing up for the Training Chorus, but Chavez is excited for her first performance with the group, which will be held on May 18 at the Playhouse Square.