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THE TENNESSEAN

Living

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Lion dancers leap onstage at Harpeth Hall

Taiwanese troupe brings drums, acrobatics, colorful costumes



Lion dancers of the Chinese Arts Alliance of Nashville.

By VIVI HOANG
Staff Writer

A mythical East Asian creature will soon nest briefly in Nashville, nearly 8,000 miles from home.

The lion — a brightly colored, acrobatic lion, that is — will be the highlight of an event Sunday at Harpeth Hall School. In several Asian cultures, lions are considered beasts of good fortune.

Hung-Shen Lion Dance Theater of Taiwan will present an evening of lion dance, drums, acrobatics and more

Sunday at Harpeth Hall as part of its 2006 U.S. tour. The group follows with a lion dance workshop the next night at Hadley Community Center. Both events are free.

"Most of the time they stop in, for example, D.C., New York, San Francisco, San Diego," said Jen-Jen Lin, director of Chinese Arts Alliance of Nashville, which is sponsoring the group. "They never stop somewhere in between. So this is very special."

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and the second week of May is Taiwanese-American Heritage Week. Asians make up an estimated 14 million people, or 5 percent, of the American population.

Lion dances frequently herald the new year and other traditional holidays, plus the opening of new businesses. So go for the good luck, stay for the spectacle. If the lion costumes with their winking eyes and Kool-Aid hues don't pull you in, then the dancers' athleticism surely will.

IF YOU GO

What: Hung-Sheng Lion Dance Theater

Where: Harpeth Hall School theater,
3801 Hobbs Road

When: 7:15 p.m. Sunday

Tickets: Free. For tickets, e-mail your name, phone number and the number of tickets you'd like to jojo_ChineseArts@comcast.net. You can pick them up at Wang's Enterprises at 1309 Third Ave. N., 256-7553. Walk-ins are also welcome, but please come early.

Contact: jojo_ChineseArts@comcast.net or 385-9341. Visit www.chineseartsalliance.org.

What: Chinese Lion Dance Master
Workshop

Where: Hadley Community Center gym, 1037 28th Ave. N.

When: 6:30-8 p.m. Monday, May 8

Tickets: Free. Sportswear required.

Contact: jojo_ChineseArts@comcast.net or 385-9341.
Visit www.chineseartsalliance.org.