

Talent(ed) teen to open Rich Little's local show

By Sheila Landry
Of the Emerald

When three-year-old Suzanne Price began crooning to the country tunes playing from tapes in her father's pick-up truck, her dad had no inkling that his little shotgun songstress would be singing her way to stardom in less than a decade.

Price, now 14, began singing on stage at age 10 and steadily developed her talents to include dancing, composing and playing instruments. She has gained a large enough following to keep her booked with more than 35 West Coast concerts a year, but none of these gigs can compare to the one she has lined-up this Friday night at McArthur Court as the opening act to comedian Rich Little.

"I've always wanted to be a singing star as long as I can remember," says the Talent, Ore., high school freshman. "I feel very privileged to have this opportunity. I keep counting the days, hoping Friday gets here soon." Price adds in a poised voice that muffles the vague undertones of a gushing girl.

It was this poise that attracted Rich Little to the young singer's talent as he viewed video tapes from auditions held last September in the EMU Ballroom to find an Oregon band with a strong lead singer to open his forthcoming show, which will be his first performance in this state.

The competition was hot and heavy as Rich Little staff members James Elliott and Warren Williamson Jr., who conducted the two-day series of auditions, were treated to a wide array of Oregon talent ranging from hard rock to country tunes last September.

But Williamson says that when they returned to Beverly Hills to show Little the tapes, "without hesitation" he chose "The Suzanne Lee Price Show," which includes her back-up band of four veteran musicians, "The Copple Brothers."

In a telephone interview on Friday, Little said he didn't choose Price's show because he has a particular fondness for country music. "I just thought Suzanne was so poised and talented for her age. She's a very entertaining performer with a wonderful stage presence."

Although Price is somewhat shy offstage with an endearing politeness not always present in young teenagers, onstage she is a bundle of exuberance with a voice that can bring the house down.

She says it is the audience that brings out her confidence. "The audience is different each time you perform," she says. "It's my job

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Suzanne Price

Courtesy photo

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