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Lamorinda Schools

SCHOOL CALENDAR table with columns for School Governing Board Meetings, Lafayette School District, and Moraga School District.

Far From Home "Sack Lunches to Suitcases"

By Tommy Miers

Tommy Miers is a 2009 Miramonte grad on his way to Chapman University; the following is the first in a series of columns sharing his experiences as he heads 'far from home.'

As the dog days of summer wind down, I watch from afar as the families in my neighborhood struggle to remove the "Swim Fast Max!" or the "Go Waves" engraved in their windows in yellow and green car paint.

the air. Instead of the freshman hazing, it's the freshman 15, instead of sack lunches it's a 3-foot mini fridge, and the idea of an "all-nighter" might not be completely related to school-work anymore.

Living in Orinda has undoubtedly prepared me for the academic rigors of college, but how could it ever prepare me for what is to lie outside of the classroom? It will be like nothing I have ever experienced before to wander into a Safeway and not know at least half of the families shopping inside.

Although it may seem like fear and uncertainties cloud the lives of my peers and I, now is more of a time for rejoice than

anything else. It started when we were young playing recreational soccer, baseball, and 7 a.m. swimming. It continued to build throughout tri-city dances and made the transition from AIM to Myspace to Facebook along with us.



"POWER of YOUTH" Writing Contest Announced

Submitted by Joan Stevenson

Students from throughout Lamorinda can win the chance to check out books on Opening Day on Nov. 4 at the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center and receive a POWER of YOUTH library card as part of a writing contest.

Student works from the contest, which is open to all local children, youth and teens, will be evaluated against others in the same grade division with one winner in each division.

The four age/grade divisions, themes and maximum word counts are:

- Kindergarten through Grade 2 (or up to age 7),

"Why I Like Libraries?" (maximum 250 words)

- Intermediate Grades 3-5 (or ages 8-10),

"Why I Like Libraries?" (250 words max.)

- Middle/Junior Grades 6-8 (or ages 11-13), "Why is the New Lafayette Library and Learning Center Important to Me?" (500 words max.)

- Senior Grades 9-12 (or ages 14+), "Why Are Libraries Important to Society?" (1,000 words max.)

Entries may be handwritten or typed, and should reflect grade-appropriate grammar, punctuation, and spelling. While prose and poetry are all accepted, the entry must relate to the theme. A panel of judges

will judge the essays based on Creativity, Originality and Relevance to the Theme. (Students should do their best, but misspelled words do not disqualify anyone - a well developed concept is more important than technique.)

Deadline for entries is Oct. 15. Please include the entrant's name, address, phone number and email address on the entry, and include the entrant's name on the back of each page in case pages become separated. Submit entries to the current Lafayette Library, the Lafayette City Offices or your school site office. (Not responsible for lost or late entries.) For more information, please call the Lafayette Library at (925) 283-3872.

Lafayette Illustrator and Author Launch Book at aMFA in Orinda

By Jean Follmer



"Beefy's First Lesson" illustrator Nancy Rosso and author Juandell Lens Brunner share their first book

Photo Jean Follmer

Author Juandell Lens Brunner flew in from Helsinki, Finland, to launch his first book at aMFA (Allison McCrady Fine Arts) in Orinda. Before his move to Finland, Brunner was a tennis instructor at Rancho Colorados Swim & Tennis Club in Lafayette. It was there that he met illustrator Nancy Rosso. "I've given tennis lessons to all of her kids," Brunner said. "I had wanted to write a book for some time, but the time wasn't there. I remember Nancy say-

ing she was an artist."

Brunner grew up in Florida and began playing tennis as a child. He encountered challenges along the way, but persevered. "I was told that tennis wasn't for blacks - it was for rich people. I'm glad I didn't believe it," Brunner said. Beefy's First Lesson is about a 6-year-old boy who hails from a tennis family and gets his first racket and lesson on his sixth birthday. Beefy happens to be black. "I wanted to write a book be-

cause when I grew up there were a lot of people that saw a lot of potential in me," Brunner said.

Nancy Rosso is the talent behind the beautiful hand drawings in the book. "I've been drawing all my life. I was the kid who sat in the back of the classroom and drew while the teacher was talking," Rosso said. A first book for Rosso as well, she was pleased to include her hand drawing in the book. Rosso said it would have been much easier to produce the photos digitally but they really wanted to incorporate art with the story. Rosso had a table set up for children to try their hands at authoring and illustrating. Children were invited to draw a series of pictures with captions that told a story of their choice; most stories centered on "what I did this summer."

Brunner and Rosso became acquainted with Angelina McKinsey of Martin Pearl Publishing and Beefy's First Lesson, the first of a series of books, was born. In conjunction with Martin Pearl Publishing, Brunner and Rosso generously donated 10 percent of proceeds to EFO, LASF or MEF. For more information, visit www.martinpearl.com.