

School

Young author touches hearts

By Cheryl Rondeau

With a last name like Lipman, some may find irony in seventh grader Bradon Lipman's first published book, "My Puzzling Smile." Born with a cleft palate, a condition sometimes referred to as a hair lip, the book outlines the young author's experience with being different.

Brandon, a former Laurel Oak Elementary student, was the featured guest author during the school's Bring a Book, Bring a Friend Fun-raiser, Nov. 9, at the Olde Cypress Country Club.

With the assistance of his mother, Karen, Brandon wrote his book when he was in kindergarten to explain to classmates that his physical appearance doesn't make him different than anybody else.

"I wanted to tell the kids in my class about my experiences," he explained. "They were all shocked that I would take the time to do that."

Brandon says he wants to reach out to more kids to let them know that it's okay to be different.

"I was so happy when a girl with an eye deformity said she read my book and it made her feel better," he recalls.

He believes he could impact millions of people with his story and he even plans to write another book for teenagers on how they can get along with other people whom they may not know much about.

Each school year, Brandon gives each student in his class a book at no cost so they can understand where he is coming from.

"Books are worth a million bucks," he said.

Authors seem to run in the family. Brandon's mother Karen Lipman wrote, "Don't Despair, Cleft Repair," years ago, to assist other parents and family members dealing with cleft palates. Approximately 700 babies are born each year with a cleft palate and her book shares the heartfelt story of her family's experience.

"My mom's book shows the happy side, not the depressing side," Brandon explained.

The Lipman's books have been distributed as far away as Beijing and Australia. Brandon says the goal of the long-distance publica-



Local young author Brandon Lipman signs his book for Virginia Amoroso during the Bring a Book Fun-raiser, Nov. 9.

tions, available in hospital waiting and delivery rooms, is to educate people on cleft palates.

This is the second book signing for Brandon and he hopes to continue to do more in the future.

"My goal is to cover the earth

"My mom's book shows the happy side, not the depressing side..."

BRANDON LIPMAN

with my books," he said.

That's a good goal, says Bring a Book organizers.

Four years ago, several volunteer moms brainstormed the event into reality by inviting school and the community members to replenish the LOE library with new books, while at the same time providing a social gathering for residents and community leaders to get to know each other.

"This has continued to grow over the years," said Karen Clawson, one of the Bring a Book founders. "We've even been contacted by other Collier schools to help them generate community support for their own Bring a Book event."

Admission to the event was to bring a book and bring a friend. This year's donations reached nearly \$8,000 in funding and books for the LOE media center.

"When kids are given great books to read — they read them," explained Clawson.

According to PTA member Lu Ann Wyss, books need to be replaced every five to seven years.

"The books are taken home, read and re-read, and eventually become worn out, lost, or outdated," she said.

Wyss said that the focus for the Bring a Book event is on the children and that their academics depend on the library.

Each book that is donated will be inscribed by LOE students with a special bookplate.

Still time to hear substance abuse

The Write Stuff

By Joe Landon, Collier Public Schools

Election Day 2006 is now history. Collier County School Board members Linda Abbott and Kathy Curatolo, who were not up for re-election this year, will welcome two familiar faces and one new one.

Pat Carroll and Steve Donovan were re-elected terms and the board will be joined by newcomer R Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administrative Center 5 representative Dick Bruce, while thanking years of service to our students.

The annual school board organizational meeting 12 noon, Tuesday, Nov. 21, in the school board room, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Administrative Center Osceola Trail, behind Barron Collier High School.

Carroll, Donovan and Calabrese will take the oath members will then select a chair and vice-chair to 12 months. They will also decide on other meeting approve meeting times and dates. If you are unable meeting will be televised live on The Education Channel. A videotaped replay of yesterday's (Nov. 16) meeting can be seen on TV at 12 noon on Saturday 18 and 20, on The Education Channel.

To meet public demand, we've come up with TV replay dates for the recent Bob Stutman presentation on substance abuse prevention among Substance Abuse Coalition of Collier County, with the Collier County Sheriff's Office and the School County to bring this renowned expert to town, his requests for more TV replays of Stutman's discussion with parents.

The 90-minute presentation will be replayed on Channel at the following times:

- 6 p.m. tomorrow (Saturday) and Sunday
- 8 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 26
- 5 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 28
- 8:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 30
- 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 2



In the Spotlight

Featuring
Andie Lloyd of
Sabal Palm Elementary



Andie Lloyd is a second grade teacher and a 16-year-old who has spent in Collier County. She is whose hobbies include football games baseball games her daughter cheer for Top Gun. She and her husband four children. She says her school's greatest strength on student achievement, school improvement and making. "Not matter where a child has come from their family history or socio-economic situation, ability to shine if given the chance," she says. "Do connection between my student's families and the key..."