

LA Harbor International Film Festival

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To create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world

For Immediate Release

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MEDIA ALERT

Wilmington Middle School Participates in

“Read The Book, See the Movie” featuring KIDNAPPED

Students Join Sixth Annual Program as Healthy Diversion in Difficult Times

January 28, 2009 - In contrast to the tragic event dominating the news from the Port community of Wilmington, CA., students at Wilmington Middle School (WMS) are excited to receive a donation of 150 copies of the adventure novel Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson from the LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) courtesy of sponsor Penguin Classics. Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn of the 15th District representing Wilmington, is also a sponsor of the LAHIFF program along with L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe.

"We have felt a collective sense of grief, and a responsibility for helping our young people cope with the many challenges they face, particularly in light of the Lupoe family tragedy that happened right in their neighborhood," said Councilwoman Hahn. "This excellent program enhances the love of reading for students, providing a healthy escape from problems that young people often struggle to deal with constructively."

The students will be participating in the LAHIFF sixth annual “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) free education outreach program, for students and members of the community, that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film. Over 1000 students from harbor area schools are expected to participate in RBSM and attend the culmination program screening of the Disney 1960 film version of the book at the Warner Grand Theatre (WGT) in historic downtown San Pedro – the Port of Los Angeles - on April 23. Film’s star James MacArthur (“Danno” in *Hawaii 5-0*) is invited to attend and speak to the students about the making of the movie. The LAHIFF takes place April 23-26 at the WGT.

Guiding the students at WMS is Agnes Pitlik, Literacy Coach, who heard about the RBSM program last year and has been eager for her students to be involved. “The timing of giving the books to the students is exactly right with the mood of sadness and confusion prevailing after the recent tragedy and the mysterious circumstances involved,” states Pitlik. “Reading offers solace and insight into the human condition, and an enjoyable experience and catharsis for personal emotions. Good books are friends for life.”

Other sponsors of the RBSM are Minute Maid, Pirate’s Booty, and Mary Star of the Sea High School who provide refreshments; and Williams Book Store (celebrating its centennial year) and the L.A. Maritime Museum, in San Pedro, who help distribute books to community readers.

The entire LAHIFF program will be announced March 12 at the “Seafarin’ Reception and Press Launch.” Tickets go on sale from April 1 online at www.warnergrand.org and Williams Book Store; and at the box office on festival dates.

For more about the LAHIFF see the website at www.laharborfilmfest.com

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