

Book Signing, Giveaway of “Charlie Bubbles” Books

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Children at Haykazunyadz Armenian School enjoy gifted “Charlie Bubbles” books. A book giveaway and signing will take place on Friday, Sept. 9 from 10 a.m. to noon at Glendale Area Schools Credit Union. Provided by Paul CARAFOTES

By Bethany BROWN

The Glendale Area Schools Credit Union is sponsoring a free book giveaway and book signing with local author Paul Carafotes on Friday, Sept. 9 from 10 a.m. to noon. Carafotes is known for his “Charlie Bubbles” storybook series that first began with the publication of “The Adventures of Charlie Bubbles” in 2012.

The series follows the journeys of a young boy named Charlie – named after and inspired by Carafotes’ real-life son. One day Charlie discovers that he can blow magic bubbles that can bring him to faraway incredible places. Through his adventures he meets many new friends and together they learn the values of friendship, loyalty, acceptance, humility and kindness.

Carafotes said the idea first came to him when his son Charlie was a baby; Carafotes would blow bubbles at him and watched as his eyes grew wide in amusement. Carafotes then pondered what would happen if there was a bubble big enough to carry the little boy away, fantasizing about the magical places he would go and the people he would meet – and thus, Charlie Bubbles was born.

Carafotes said he has continued to make every story different, with various themes and adventures because he learned from his personal experience that parents get tired of reading the same books to their children repeatedly.

“I wanted to write a story that parents could also enjoy with the kids, so that it can be a very hands-on bonding experience because that’s what it was for me and Charlie,” he said.

Carafotes emphasized the goal of the books is to encourage children to be confident and courageous and believe that they can achieve anything they put their minds to. Charlie’s motto throughout the series is to be “helpful, loving and kind” and he hopes those who read the books will feel inspired to live lives guided by that motto.

“It’s a commentary on society and a reminder to people that if you want friends, you have to be a friend,” he said. “One of the tenets [of the books] is that when you say ‘yes’ anything is possible but when you say ‘no’ nothing happens! So, say ‘yes’ and be kind.”

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Charlie (who is 15 years old) followed in his father’s footsteps and wrote his first book for the series, which is set to be released this November. It is called “Zena the Great” and is based on the family’s Maltipoo dog. It is illustrated by local student Harper Pam. A special edition hardcover collection of all three of the original Charlie Bubbles books, “Charlie Bubbles Triple Play,” was also recently released and is available for purchase.

Additionally, just over a year ago, Carafotes formed a charitable non-profit organization tied to the books called Charlie Bubbles Cares for Kids. The goal of the organization is to raise money so imaginative storybooks can be distributed to disadvantaged children “endeavoring a positive influence in their young lives.” Charlie Bubbles Cares for Kids has been able to provide hundreds of books to children’s hospitals, homeless shelters and schools in Los Angeles and San Diego counties. Books have also been donated to Tufts Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

“We’re really trying to expand and get books to children all over the country, not just locally,” Carafotes said. “The more money we raise through donations, the more we can do ... at the end of the day we just want to bring smiles to children’s faces.”

To learn more about the organization and how to donate, visit <https://charliebubblesbook.com/>.

To take part in the book signing and giveaway on Friday, visit the Glendale Area Schools Credit Union, 1800 Broadview Dr., Glendale 91208 between 10 a.m. and noon.