



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2010

CONTACT: Caroline Cooke
508-485-4912

CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR VISITS WITH FRAMINGHAM YOUTH

Giles Laroche Discusses Books and Creates Mural with Framingham Boys & Girls Club Members

Framingham, MA – On Thursday, April 22nd, twenty-five 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade Club members welcomed a special visitor to the Boys & Girls Clubs of MetroWest's Framingham Clubhouse, children's book author and illustrator, Giles Laroche. Thanks to a fruitful partnership with the Foundation for Children's Books, the Framingham Public Library and the Danforth Museum, this unique four-day program was a multi-level and participatory approach to reading and art and allowed great exposure to Giles and his works.

The four-day program included volunteers, Pat Keogh, children's literature expert, Marcy Maiorana, Framingham Public Library's children's librarian, and Gayle Vonasek, education consultant preparing for Giles's visit by reading some of his books to the children and exploring some of his illustrations of buildings from around the world. They also worked to prepare questions for Giles based on what the children wanted to know about him, his books and his art. Volunteer, Gayle Vonasek shared that the "children's active engagement with the artist reflected their curiosity about his work as well as their enthusiasm for the opportunity to meet an accomplished author and illustrator." The next day, the kids and club staff walked around the local neighborhood to look at different buildings and their special features to prepare for the special art project with Giles.

The highlight of the program was Giles Laroche's visit to the Framingham Clubhouse. He spent time talking about and demonstrating how he creates his artwork. After sharing his art and books and answering all of the children's interesting questions, Giles worked with Club members to create their own pagodas using his unique technique of layering paper. A pagoda is a type of building commonly found in Asian countries used for religious purposes that consists of many floors and detailed designs. The children really enjoyed using their creativity to add their special touches to their pagodas that are now part of a mural on display in the Framingham Clubhouse. Thank you to Giles Laroche for visiting the Club to share his time and talent with our kids.

To wrap up Giles's special visit, the Club members and staff were able to visit the Danforth Museum next door to view the current exhibit on Giles Laroche. With a special appreciation for how Giles creates his art, the kids enjoyed seeing more of his illustrations up close. Thank you to the Danforth Museum for providing complimentary admission for BGCMW members to see Laroche's exhibit.

Thank you to Giles Laroche, the Foundation for Children's Books, the Framingham Public Library, and the Danforth Museum for helping us make this an engaging approach to reading and art for our youth. As Jennifer Cusack, Executive Director of the Foundation for Children's Books shared, the importance of a program like this is to "build a bridge between the author or illustrator and the students...to ignite a love of reading and learning."

For more information on: Giles Laroche, please visit www.gileslaroche.com; Foundation for Children's Books, please visit www.thefcb.org; Framingham Public Library, please visit www.framinghamlibrary.org; Danforth Museum, please visit www.danforthmuseum.org.

###

About the Boys & Girls Clubs of MetroWest

The Boys & Girls Clubs of MetroWest serves over 3,200 children and youth each year with a low membership fee of only \$25 per child, which makes it one of the largest and most affordable Boys & Girls Club organizations in Massachusetts. 2010 marks our 66th year of providing quality out-of-school programming for the children and youth of greater Marlborough, Hudson and Framingham. The Boys & Girls Clubs of MetroWest remains dedicated to being the *Positive Place for Kids*. Visit us online at www.bgcmetrowest.org.