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| **Beach Books: Interactive book lets kids experience the past**  by Annie Lubinsky July 28, 2011   |  | | --- | | http://www.tbrnews.com/content/articles/2011/07/29/stepping_out/step2.jpg | | “I Remember When . . . ,” by Dawn Wynne | |  |   Redondo resident Dawn Wynne learned a lot from her grandfather.  Among other things, the World War II veteran taught her the importance grandparents would have on her own child one day.  Sadly, Wynne’s grandmother passed away the day before her daughter was born. But months later she had a dream about her grandparents that gave her the inspiration to write a special book.  “In the dream, they were talking about the way things used to be and telling stories,” Wynne said. “I woke up with sadness that my daughter couldn’t hear the stories.”  She had images of a record player and a rotary-dial telephone floating in her mind. These were objects her grandparents had used daily, but are mysteries to today’s children.  “I wanted my daughter to know what that was like to use these objects, and I thought it would be great to have a book that allows children to learn how they work,” Wynne said. With her husband’s encouragement, she soon created the prototype for such a book.  In “I Remember When . . . ,” a grandmother recalls using items like a washboard, a clothesline and a film camera. The tactile elements within the book, such as the dial of a rotary phone, the film in a camera and a record on a player, enhance the reading experience.  “It is not the typical touch-and-feel book,” Wynne said.  While she originally designed the book for toddlers, she found older kids enjoy it just as much because of its link to the past.  “They get to hear a piece of history from their parents’ and grandparents’ time. When they see the record, they don’t understand how it works. They think it’s a CD,” Wynne said. “They don’t understand a rotary phone, and ask how does it work, how do you use this? The only thing they understand is the black-and-white TV.”  She wrote the book not only to give children a connection to the past but also to promote literacy. As a seven-year teacher in Inglewood, Wynne saw children enter school without a strong connection to books and reading.  “Children who are exposed to books, who were read to and told stories, came in with a better foundation than children who are not exposed to them,” she said. To help children begin reading, she has donated copies of “I Remember When . . .” to local preschools and Head Start schools.   |  | | --- | |  | |  |   Wynne also chose a writing style that supports early reading skills.  “The repetition of the words ‘I remember . . .’ on most pages helps children learn and develop sight recognition for words,” Wynne said. “And it’s important for children under five to have tactile elements because that’s how they learn.”  Wynne’s 2 1/2-year-old daughter, Giovanna, loves “Mommy’s book,” Wynne said.  The author will share the book with other children at Pages bookstore on Monday. She plans to bring a record player, washboard and rotary phone to the storytime event, playing the role for other children that her grandparents played for her.  Find the book  “I Remember When . . .” can be ordered at stores listed at [www.dawnwynne.com/order/](http://www.dawnwynne.com/order/). | |
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