

ADULT LITERACY COMMUNITY

Quarterly articles, features, and highlights



A Season to Celebrate

By the time this newsletter reaches you, our October 1st celebration of library learning partners and recognition of student writers will be completed. Thank you to all the adult learners, volunteer tutors, library staff, and guests who were able to attend. It's a great pleasure to begin another fall season together.

In this issue of our Adult Literacy Community newsletter, I am delighted to introduce you to our newest Literacy Associate Marcos Soriano (Pg. 7), showcase more student writers (Pgs. 3 & 9), and feature profiles of an adult learner making fantastic progress on his goals (Pg. 6), as well as a skilled volunteer conversation class facilitator and tutor (Pg. 10).

And.. I invite you all to participate in interactive projects featured in this issue that reflect on this season. Please check out these projects happening now through the end of the year and participate if they appeal to you: The Gratitude Writing Project (Pg. 5), Día de los Muertos in the Adult Literacy Office (Pg. 8), and our Holiday Open House the week of December 16th (bottom of Pg. 8).

Wishing you a Warm Autumn Glow,

A. Adams

Adult Literacy Supervisor
Sonoma County Library

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- **HIGHLIGHTS**
- **GLOSSARY**
- **INTERVIEWS**
- **IDIOMS**
- **STUDENT WRITING**
- **AND MORE!**

American Culture Corner

The first **corn maze** was created in Pennsylvania in the 1990s. They have since become very popular. Corn mazes are an American **staple**, especially during the Fall season. Corn mazes can come in many different designs, from nature themes to popular culture, and they are often used for a Halloween activity!

Corn mazes are sometimes created near a **pumpkin patch** around September and October each year.



Who Are They?

Katie Ledecky is an American competitive swimmer who has won more individual Olympic races than any female swimmer in history.



Katie Ledecky
1997 - present

Ledecky holds the 20 fastest times in world history in the 1500 meter swim and 9 Olympic gold medals.

Ledecky's book: *Just Add Water: My Swimming Life* is available from the library catalog now in audiobook, e-book, or physical copy.

Glossary

corn maze: a **maze** that you walk through cut from a field of corn

maze: a path or collection of intricate paths, typically from an entrance to a goal. Here it refers to a type of tour puzzle where people must find their way in and out

staple: something that is consistently present or recurring

pumpkin patch: a field where pumpkins are grown and people can go visit to purchase one

ranch: a ranch, typically one with livestock animals such as chickens, goats, sheep, and/or horses

mindfulness: awareness of the present moment

tall ship: a large sailboat built in an older, traditional style

fortunate: lucky

melody: a series of single notes that are put together in a pleasing to listen to way

concert: musical performance generally given in public

mocha: a type of coffee bean that is earthy and strong

palate: the roof of the mouth

recall: to remember

"pipe up": an idiom meaning to speak out

Nambia: is a country located on the south-west coast of Africa

trajectory: the path an object takes as it moves through the air



Left: Katie Ledecky swimming

Family Literacy in Action

Family Literacy is a service within the Adult Literacy program where the office staff select, package, and send an age-appropriate book or resource for each child in the enrolled learner's household who is 0 - 18 years old.

Did you Know?

Studies have shown that the more words a young child is exposed to, the more they'll learn. This can help them be better prepared for Kindergarten and ready to read in school.

The library offers many resources and events aimed at exposing kids to new and exciting words and stories.

For more information on upcoming events visit www.sonomalibrary.org/events where you can choose to view events for babies/preschoolers all the way to adults!



Pictured here is Damien, the grandson of one of our learners. He's reading a book he received through the Family Literacy service.

Student Writing

We love to publish learner writings in our Community Newsletter. If you want to send us something for publication, please email it to us at: literacy@sonomalibrary.org

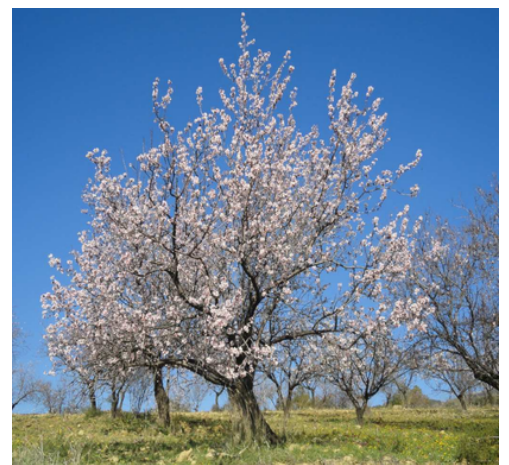
Dos Palos Vacation

By Elizabeth Reyes, Tutor Sheldon Reber

Our family and my sister's family went to Dos Palos three weeks ago to have a weekend vacation at the **rancho** the church has there. They allow us to stay there and use the rooms, the kitchen and the pool. In the rancho there is a big pool where our children swam a lot during the three days we were there. Also in the rancho they have animals like, sheep, turkeys, dogs, cats, rabbits, chickens, horses, roosters, etc.

Also there are many almond trees. In the morning and in the afternoon when the sun goes down we used to walk around the plantation and eat almonds. My sister and I brought a lot of food to cook there. Also we brought drinks and snacks.

We had a wonderful time in the rancho with our children eating, swimming, and playing all day.



An almond tree

Tutor Meetup!

Thank you to all the tutors who were able to join us for our September 18 Tutor Meetup. Tutors learned about the changes coming to the Goals Report as well as some upcoming Literacy projects highlighted throughout this newsletter (Día de los Muertos altar, Gratitude Writing, and Adult Literacy's Holiday Open House). Tutors had the opportunity to meet and support one another by sharing their tutoring challenges and successes.

If you missed the meet-up - don't worry! We will email all tutors a summary of the highlights covered in the training.

Here's what tutors said about this last meet-up:

"I liked hearing from and talking to the other tutors about challenges, tools, and solutions."

"The time to exchange with others was really helpful."

"Everything was great! An update on future writing projects, explanation about goals update report (new goals!) and small group brainstorming. Got some new ideas!"

"It was a chance to learn what other tutors are experiencing and what has worked well in terms of resources."



Staff member Leticia Soria facilitates tutor discussion



Staff member Joe Ayala talks with tutors



Staff member Marcos Soriano with a group of tutors

Gratitude Project

*"Appreciation can make a day, even change a life.
Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary."*

~Margaret Cousins

Hello Adult Literacy & English Language Partners,

Library Adult Literacy coordinators are working on our annual "Gratitude Window" display at our office inside Central Santa Rosa Library. Please share your gratitude (and build writing skills) with us. We will be delighted to receive your writing about what you are thankful for so we can read it, be inspired, and include it in our Gratitude Window.

Adult Literacy Learners and Tutors are invited to use the enclosed stationery with fall leaves on it to write down what you are each thankful for at this point in your life.

Return your gratitude writing in the enclosed self- addressed, stamped envelope. This gratitude writing project is open NOW: October 1 - November 15th, 2024.

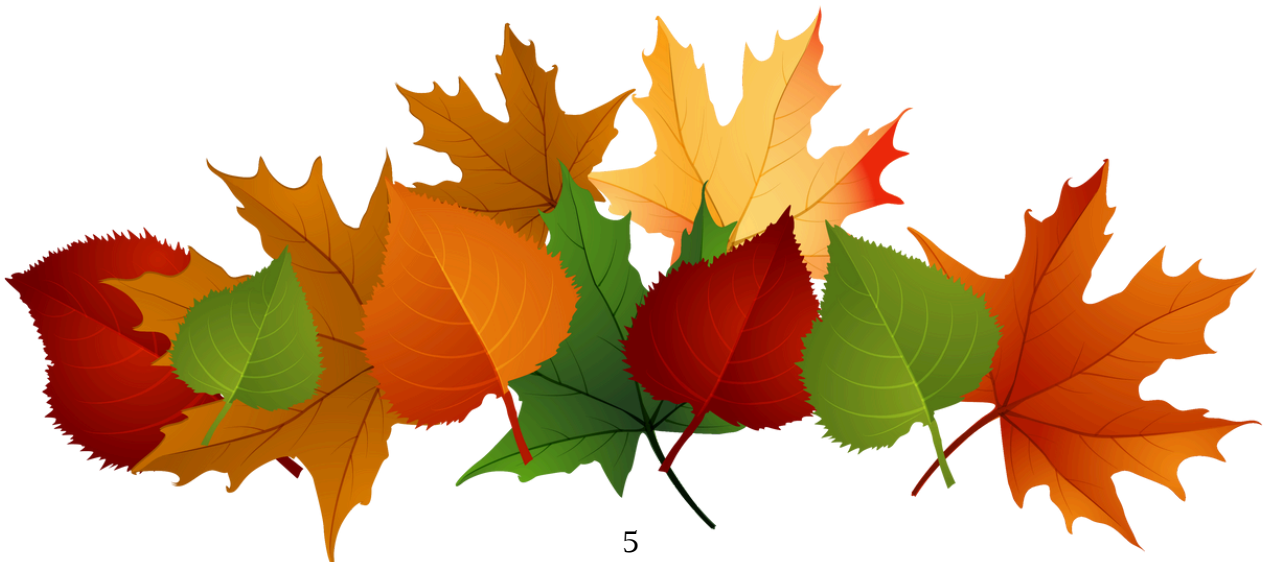
Your participation will: build writing skills, share gratitude with our library Adult Literacy community, and create a display we will celebrate and cherish all season.

Stop by our Adult Literacy office to see our community "Gratitude Window" in mid - late November, but before December! The Adult Literacy office is open Monday - Friday 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. Closed on major holidays.

With Appreciation,

Alisa, Joe, Leti, and Marcos

The Adult Literacy & English Language Partners Service Team



Get To Know Learner Jesús Suazo Otoya



Jesús Suazo Otoya

What is your perfect day?

My perfect day would be to stay in the forest in a redwood cabin with coffee and family.

What was your favorite job?

My favorite job is the job that I have right now.

Why did you want to become a bus driver in the first place?

I was looking for a job that paid better and was more enjoyable.

What is your fondest memory?

My fondest memory is my last Christmas and New Year in Peru.



The bus that Jesús drives

Jesús moved to the United States from Peru at the beginning of last year. Moving to a new country, and learning a new culture and a new language, was very challenging. Although he had studied English during high school, he did not have the vocabulary he needed to express himself, and he felt frustrated.

When Jesús came to the Adult Literacy office at the start of this year, he had two goals: he wanted to get more involved with his community, and he wanted to improve his English for professional reasons. At that time, he was working in the produce department at a grocery store. His position often put him in direct contact with customers, but when people approached him, he had difficulty understanding their questions and he would struggle to come up with a response.

In April, Jesús was matched with his tutor Noah Freitas. They began by working with the *Confidence and Connections* workbooks provided by the Adult Literacy office, focusing on the goals that Jesús had set during his assessment. But Jesús quickly added a new goal: he had just been hired by West County Transportation to work as a bus driver, and he needed to pass four different tests and get his Class B driver's license before he could start driving the bus.

Working with his tutor Noah, Jesús began studying the vocabulary words that he'd need to know for the tests. He also brought in sample tests that he and Noah reviewed together. The driver's test included an extensive safety inspection of the bus, in which Jesús needed to be able to identify different parts of the bus and various pieces of safety equipment.

In July, Jesús passed the driving exams and received his Class B license. He now works as a School Bus Driver, picking kids up and bringing them to school.

When asked if his participation in the Adult Literacy's English Learner Program has helped him, Jesús responded: "For me, the program changed my life. I learned more English and got a better job."



Marcos Soriano

Welcome Marcos Soriano! Adult Literacy has a new staff member

What are you reading right now? I'm reading the book series "Mindfulness Essentials" by Thich Nhat Hahn, a Buddhist monk from Vietnam. It's a collection of short, simple books focused on bringing **mindfulness** to different aspects of regular life. The goal of mindfulness is to reduce mental distractions in order to pay more attention to the present moment, in hopes of experiencing each moment more deeply.

First job/Work experience: My first job was scrubbing bird poop off the front steps of a local ballet studio. I was twelve years old at the time, and I'd clean the steps once a week. Since then I've had all kinds of jobs, from being a deckhand on a **tall ship** to being an English Teacher in Spain.

Hobby: I like to read and write. I read everything, but recently most of my writing has been in crime fiction, horror fiction, and fantasy fiction. I've published a novel in each of those genres. I also like to go on walks with my dog.

Favorite thing about working in SCL Adult Literacy: I feel very **fortunate** to work with such kind and helpful people; the staff here at SCL Adult Literacy are really wonderful. I also have a lifelong interest in learning languages. My father's first language was Spanish, but I didn't really start trying to learn Spanish until I was a teenager. Becoming bilingual has been one of the accomplishments I am most proud of, and I'm excited to be involved in helping other people pursue the same goal.

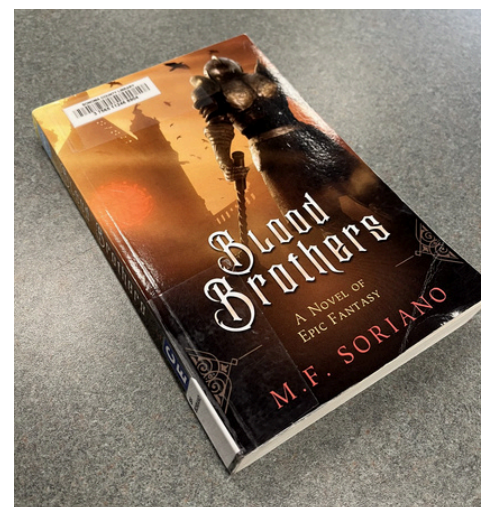
What are you looking forward to in the coming months? I'm hoping to visit my hometown later this year, and I'm looking forward to my daughters spending some time with their cousins.



Karter, the family pup



Left to Right: Marcos, daughter Maya, wife Tara, and daughter Lina



One of Marcos' books, Blood Brothers, available for checkout at the library

Día de los Muertos

Is there someone who has died whom you want to honor and remember?

Día de los Muertos is a way to reflect on the individuals who have had an impact on our lives, to remember the time we spent together while they were alive, and to share your tribute with others.

Here's how...

October 1 - 31, 2024 - Send the following to literacy@sonomalibrary.org

- A digital image/photo of the individual(s) you want to remember – as an email attachment
- In your email, tell us your favorite memory or special tribute to this person in a few sentences and be sure to sign your name to the email message
- **Send your tributes as early as possible: Now through October 31st.**
- We will print out your photos and words and place them artfully on our Día de los Muertos altar. **The altar will be available for sharing/viewing November 1-3rd.**



2023 Finished Altar



2023 Altar (another view)

Holiday Open House Week at the Adult Literacy Office

Please stop by the week of December 16 – 20 from 10:00 am -3:00 pm.

Learners and Tutors are invited to stop by the Adult Literacy Office on the 2nd Floor of Central Santa Rosa Library, 211 E St, Santa Rosa to:

- Enjoy a cookie or a holiday beverage of coffee, tea or cider!
- Share a wish for the holiday season and the coming New Year!
- We'd love to see you and wish you the very best this special time of year.



Student Writing

We love to publish learner writings in our Community Newsletter. If you want to send us something for publication, please email it to us at: literacy@sonomalibrary.org

Sugar Loaf Park

By Magdalena Reyes, Tutor Kristin Patterson

My favorite place to walk is Sugarloaf Park. The sound when I walk in the park is amazing. I can hear the sound when the air flows through the trees, it's like a **melody**. When I walk into the road I hear the cracks when I step on the dry leaves. Also I can hear my heartbeat. Sometimes I hear the streams and waterfalls. Together the sound is like a **concert** of the most natural melodies. This sounds like inviting me to move my body, or just only to reflect.

When I am walking through the forest, I feel the breeze on my face. I feel the stones on the road like a massage in my feet. The waterfall is an invitation to dive into the cold water. I feel a new sensation when I touch the water with my hands and I think about diving in.

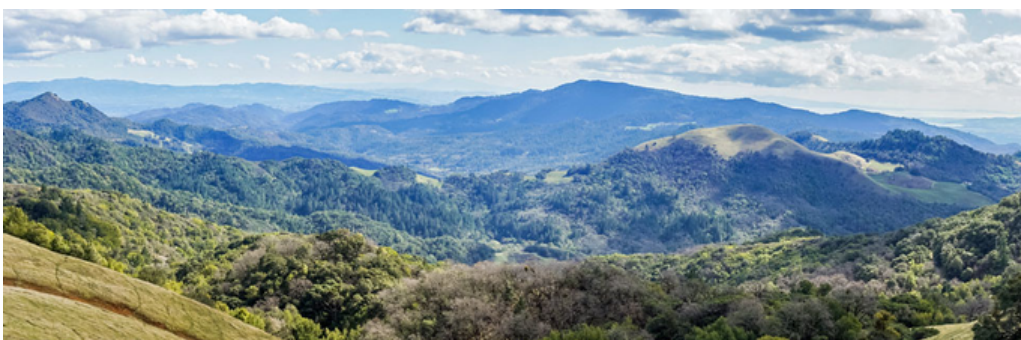
Walking in the forest the sense of smell opens to new breath. It's like filling my lungs with something new and full of life. Trees smell like moss and fungi; the smell is unique and naturally sensitive in my nose. The land smells wet and sweet like a piece of **mocha**.

Sugarloaf Park is like wanting more cake, many people can not resist tasting it. The color of the different kinds of flowers is like fresh food for my eyes. The green of the moss is tempting to bite into. I would like to try it and have that sensation on my **palate**.

The park is full of power and life. I can see different kinds of trees, insects, birds, squirrels, butterflies, and more wild animals who live there. Trees are great, they're like houses that other beings inhabit in their trunk and bark. Going to the forest is like traveling inside the body. The trees are like the brain, controlling the forest. Feeling the sensitivity of the colors of the flowers and leaves, the amazing sun shining through the trees brings emotion to the heart and stomach. The road and the stream are like blood running through the body. Going to the park is the most wonderful place. It is like being born again.



Sugar Loaf Ridge State Park Kenwood, CA



Celebrate Your Work Together

All entries generated from tutor reports -
THANK YOU!

- One of our learners earned their US Citizenship and we want to wish them a BIG CONGRATULATIONS! 🇺🇸
- My learner has registered to vote! 🗳️
- We practiced common conversations like:
 - Calling up to make a doctor's appointment.
 - Calling up a plumber for leak help.
 - Describing what we think a person is doing that we see outside the window.
- Adult Literacy learner is **recalling** the names of parts of the body and foods, as they are needed for her job as a caregiver.
- This learner has learned how to ask English speakers who talk too fast or use words that she doesn't understand, to help her by talking slower or helping her with difficult words, using Google translate if necessary.

Get to Know the Conversation Class Facilitator



Laura Schatzberg

Interviewed by Leti Soria

It is never too late to find a passion in life. Laura found one “at an advanced age after having worked at many jobs.” Her passion for teaching English as a second language grew from “an immediate attraction to the process of learning a language and what happens in a classroom.” Laura earned a CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) and taught English through the Peace Corps in **Namibia** and in a private language school in Odesa, Ukraine.

Today, Laura continues to instruct Ukrainian students online. She is also a one-on-one tutor in the English Language Partners Program and an English Conversation Class Facilitator. Laura has tutored her adult learner since March 2023. “We talk a lot so that she gets practice speaking in a non-judgmental space. Speaking a language you are learning can be intimidating so it is important to feel comfortable.”

Laura applies the same thought process to the way she facilitates conversation classes by letting the participants do most of the talking. “Occasionally I **pipe in** to change direction, invite a participant in or introduce a new topic.” She adds: “I think it is a great opportunity for language learners to practice what they learn in class or read in books.”

As she is semi-retired, Laura fills her days with relaxing activities like reading, enjoying her garden, knitting, and taking walks along the Prince Greenway in Santa Rosa. She also volunteers at the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens. Reflecting on her career **trajectory**, she says: “my favorite jobs have been those I volunteered for and all the teaching I do.”

Idioms

Each newsletter, we will bring you a new English idiom.

Pipe Up, Pipe Down, and Pipe In

To **pipe up** is to voice one's opinions freely with force.

To **pipe down** is to become quiet.

To **pipe in** is to add a comment to a conversation people are having.

"Don't worry, he'll *pipe up* if he feels he's being overlooked."

"*Pipe down*, I'm trying to sleep!"

"Roberto and James were talking when Roberto's daughter *pip*ed in that she was hungry."



Pipe Up



Pipe Down

What's Cooking?

Have a favorite recipe or food related story to share? Send it to literacy@sonomalibrary.org

Enchiladas with Salsa and Lettuce

By Abelino Oseguera

Ingredients:

- 16 tortillas
- 1/2 pound Oaxaca cheese
- 6 chilies "guajillo"
- 2 chiles "ancho"
- 1 clove garlic
- Oregano
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- Lettuce (chopped)

Salsa:

- 4 tomatoes
- Cilantro
- Juice of 1/2 orange
- 1/4 onion
- 5 jalapeno peppers
- Salt (to taste)



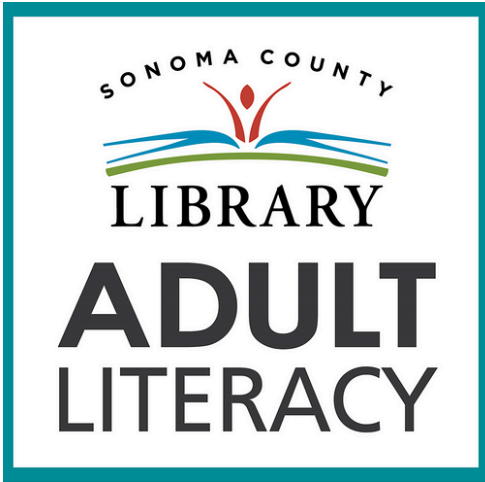
Instructions:

Clean the chilies and boil them in water. Put chilies and garlic in blender and blend until smooth. Heat vegetable oil in pan.

When oil is hot, heat tortillas, then dip them in the chili sauce.

Place cheese in the middle of each tortilla and add lettuce and chopped salsa.

This story was originally featured in our 2017 Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Collection: Bringing Our Stories to the Table.



Adult Literacy Office

Our office is located inside the Central Santa Rosa Library, 2nd floor
211 E Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Adult Literacy Hours

Our office is open Monday - Friday
10 AM - 3 PM
You can reach us at (707) 544-2622 or
literacy@sonomalibrary.org

How to Submit Your Work

Submissions to the Adult Literacy Community newsletter are welcome! We cannot guarantee publication, and materials cannot be returned. Please include your name, address, and phone number. Student writings and photos can be sent by email to: literacy@sonomalibrary.org

How to Get Involved

New Learners: Call 707-544-2622

New Tutors: Call to preregister for an upcoming new tutor orientation. 2025 trainings will be posted here:

sonomalibrary.org/visit/locations/adultliteracy/volunteer

Ongoing Classes Open to All:

Join our Conversation Classes for practice speaking English at all levels. Classes take place on Zoom on the following days:

Wednesdays 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Thursdays 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Register for classes at

sonomalibrary.org/conversation

Upcoming Library Holidays 2024:
October 10 - Library Closed - All Staff Training
November 11 - Library Closed - Veterans Day
November 28 and 29 - Library Closed - Thanksgiving
December 25 - Library Closed - Christmas