



A Letter from Laura

First, happy holidays! We hope your upcoming holidays are filled with joy.

Second, a reminder that **Ron Shoop from Penguin Random House** will be conducting his final *Book Lovers Forum* before he rides off into retirement. It will be on **Tuesday, November 15 from 6:30 – 8 p.m. in the Pleasant Hill Library** (1750 Oak Park Blvd.). It promises to be a very special evening. Ron will review his favorite titles from ALL publishing houses. Plus, we'll have some surprises in store as we bid Ron a fond farewell.

Finally, our Pleasant Hill office move will be happening soon! We expect to move to our new space in the Pleasant Hill Library the week of November 28 – December 2, but the date may slip by a week or so. Please note that during the week of the move, we will not have tutoring space available for pairs, and staff will be busy unpacking all of our tutoring materials and settling into our office.

Which brings me to office open hours. Starting the week of November 14, we will be suspending evening office hours until we are settled in our new office. Once we are settled, we will reinstate evening hours on Tuesdays. We will no longer be open on Thursday evenings.

Finally, we will be holding an **Open House** (date TBD) to show off our new office and where our tutoring materials are located; review how you'll enter; show you potential tutoring spaces; and, of course, feed you yummy treats! Stay tuned for more information. And again, **Happy Holidays!**

- Laura

NEWSLETTER

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ccclib.org/psc

November/December 2016

Happy Holidays!

CAREER ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL

Contra Costa County Library, in partnership with the California State Library and Gale (part of Cengage Learning), will be offering adults the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma and career certificate through Career Online High School. All coursework will be completed online. The library's pilot program will provide a limited number of scholarships on a first come, first qualified basis to adult learners.

Applicant Requirements:

- Be 19 years or older
- Live in Contra Costa County
- Have a Contra Costa County Library card in good standing
- Be comfortable reading, writing, and speaking English
- Have basic computer and internet skills
- Have access to a desktop computer or laptop
- Have a working email address
- Have completed at least the 8th grade
- Be willing to spend 8-10 hours a week on coursework

Program Quick Facts:

- Adults earn both their high school diploma and a certificate in one of eight career areas.
- Courses are taught online and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The program is self-paced, but students should plan to devote at least 8-10 hours each week to coursework.
- The program consists of 18 credits total; each credit is designed to be completed over the course of one month.
- It may be possible to transfer credits from previously completed accredited high school courses, shortening the completion time. Adults have up to 18 months to complete the program.
- Each student is assigned an academic coach and is given additional instructional help when needed; the coaches are available via phone or email.

For additional information and to get started in the application process, go to <http://ccclib.org/cohs/>

Student Achievements

Success Stories:

Students are reading:

Ike E. – *Doorknob Five Two*

Lucia L. – *Red Notice*

Martha G. – *Three Cups of Tea*



Mary Ellen Crisp reports that her student **Rowena D.** is on a roll. Not only did she pass the DMV renewal test after reading the booklet and taking practice quizzes, she also finished *God Help the Child and Home!*

Akisha A. passed her national medical assistant exams and received a certificate in phlebotomy! Her tutor, Marc Hanson, is very proud of all her hard work and progress. Congratulations, Akisha!

Marilyn Lloyd let us know that **Alicia F.** successfully met the health literacy goal of managing a family member's hospital stay. Well done, Alicia!

Work completed:

Ricky R. with Bob Baum – *Wilson Step 1*

Tierra J. with Celia Lawson – *Wilson Step 2*

Richard W. with Kim Van Hoesen – *Wilson Step 2*

Arthur T. with Penny Snyder – *Wilson Step 7*

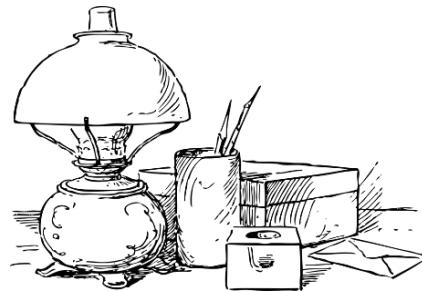
Lucy E. with Megan Brown – *Wilson Step 11*

Finding “Read-Alikes”

Has your student finally found (and read!) a book she liked? If so, use the Library’s online catalog to find similar books.

When you enter a book’s record in the catalog, click on “Related,” which can be found in the menu on the left. This link will open a list of books in the same series, a list of similar books you might like to try, and a few authors that might be worth checking out.

For example, if your student enjoyed *Sarah, Plain and Tall*, they might also enjoy *When the Circus Came to Town*, the *Little House ...* series, or *Inside Out and Back Again*.



EASY JOURNALING: A Workshop for Students & Tutors

Tuesday, January 10, 5:30-7 p.m. *or*

Wednesday, January 11, 10-11:30 a.m.

Pleasant Hill Library Meeting Room
RSVP by January 4 at 925-927-3250

Writers of all levels can start a journal. In addition to free-form diaries, there are also guided journals with simple one-word-per-day formats, fill-in-the-blanks, short answer prompts, and more. What they all have in common is an invitation to write freely with no fear of mistakes or judgment. Come see sample journals and discover what feels right for you. This workshop is good for:

- writers of any level (beginners welcome!)
- anyone wanting to get more comfortable writing
- students wanting to write life stories
- tutors looking for writing ideas for their student



WELCOME NEW TUTORS

Anu Gandhi

Jessica Sullivan

Arlene Sirott

Kanika Jefferson

Caroline Friedmann

Karyl Toms

Christine Steers

Kathy Dunne

Dan Tussey

Katie Hamlin

Daniel Borsuk

Ken Klinner

Danielle Goudeau

Margaret Clarkson

David Beals

Varalakshmi Rajendran

Emily Edson

Wendy Watling

Janis Freeman

Yasmin Lee

Jennifer Moffet

Tutor Tip



Comic Relief: A Writing Activity by Megan

Are you looking for a fun and fresh way to practice writing? Look no further - Bill Zimmerman's makebeliefscomix.com is here!

This free website (or downloadable iPad app) offers your student the chance to create his own comic strip. It can be as short as two panels or as long as four – but don't let that stop your student. Have him write a series.

And don't worry about not being computer savvy. There are instructions on the website that are fairly easy to follow as well as a demo. Also, if you use the PSC computer lab, feel free to ask for help from a staff member or volunteer tutor.

The website address is makebeliefscomix.com. Be sure to check out the links along the bottom of the page. There, you will find lesson plan ideas, prompts, and ESL activities.

Other ways you might use this website include:

- creating a comic related to a vocabulary word or an idiom you just learned
- having the student create a comic strip that retells a story you just read together
- making a comic strip to use as a birthday card
- creating your own comic. Then print it, cut it up, mix it up, and let the student try to put it back in the correct order.

If the computer is overwhelming for your student, go to the site on your own and create a comic strip with empty bubbles. Print it and let your student write in the bubbles at your next session. In fact, the site already has over 500 "printables" which can be filled out by hand.

And most importantly, don't forget to show us your student's creations!

SAVE THE DATE: ESL Tutor Support Meeting

Wednesday, March 1, 2:30-4 p.m.
or Thursday, March 5, 9:30-11 a.m.



Come chat with staff and fellow tutors about what is and what isn't working in your tutoring sessions. This is a great time to meet each other and share resources, challenges and successes.



West County Corner

Thank you to all the tutors and students who attended the West County Recognition Event on October 18! We snacked, chatted, heard from students about PSC, and celebrated all you've done. We hope you had as much fun as we did.

On Sunday, November 6 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., the Hercules Library will be celebrating its ten year anniversary. The event will be fun for the whole family with activities such as a Tagalog Storytime, a magician, face painting, music, guest speakers, and more. Don't miss it!



Computer Lab News: [Readtheory.org](http://readtheory.org)

If you'd like to work on reading comprehension skills, check out readtheory.org. Once you create a free account, the website will give you a quick assessment and place you in a level. After the assessment, the website offers various passages on a range of topics. You'll answer questions about vocabulary and main idea, and the site will track your progress.

Tutors may also create accounts, so they can view their student's progress. This can be an easy way to practice at home on days when pairs don't meet or while a tutor or student is on vacation. Unmatched students can come into the lab and have a lab tutor log in as a teacher. Contact Maya with questions at mdobjens@ccclib.org.