



NEWSLETTER

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January/February 2019

A Message from Megan

Happy New Year!

This year will be full of new people, materials, and activities at PSC and the Contra Costa County Library.

PSC will be getting a new program manager in early 2019. I know all our tutors, students, and partners will give him or her a warm welcome. Stay tuned!

As of January 1, 2019, the Library will no longer collect overdue fines on library materials. This change is part of the Library's efforts to remove barriers and make access easy and equitable for everyone. If you have been hesitant about getting or using a library card because of fines, then please reconsider. For more information, ask your local librarian.

In addition to discontinuing fines, the Library will be launching a reading campaign called "Read to 2020." Each month will have a theme and three related challenges; people can complete one, two, or all three! Students are welcome to use the PSC supplemental reading collection to participate. We have simple biographies, abridged classics, short novels written specifically for adult learners, and more. Read the article in the next column for additional information.

Are you looking for an alternative to *Challenger*, *Voyager*, or *Endeavor*? If so, you will be excited to know that PSC is purchasing a new series called *Journey to Success*. Currently, only levels three through six are available, but we should have lower levels before the end of the year. If you would like to try it out, speak with a PSC staff member.

- *Megan*

"Read to 2020"

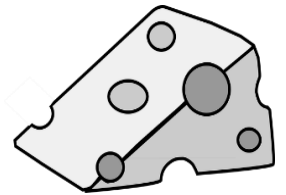
The Library invites you to join a year-long reading challenge! Each month of 2019 will have a different theme and up to three challenges to complete. Ask a librarian to show you how to keep track of your 2019 books online or on paper. And remember, audiobooks are still books.

January: New Year, New You

1. Read a book on the "New Shelf."
2. Read a book to learn a new skill or for self-improvement.
3. Read a book by an author who is new to you.

February: And the Award Goes to...

1. Read an award-winning book.
2. Read a book made into a movie.
3. Read a best-selling title.



BOOK CLUB –

Who Moved My Cheese?

When: Get the book now, then meet on Thursday, March 21, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. to discuss.

Where: PSC Pleasant Hill

Students: Is "read a book" one of your goals? Read or listen to this short book with your tutor and then come talk about it with PSC friends! Tutors are welcome to come with their student.

Book: *Who Moved My Cheese?* (by Dr. Spencer Johnson, 96 pages, 1 hour audio CD) - Bestselling fable about dealing with change and finding happiness. An engaging story with a useful life lesson.

Student Achievements

Success Stories -

Students are reading:



Ferozan M. – *Zoya’s Story: An Afghan Woman’s Struggle for Freedom*

Helen G. – *Jane Eyre*

Kay N. – *Grandfather’s Dance*

Lucy L. – *Call of the Wild* and *Jane Eyre*

Turpekai M. – *Death on the Nile*

Tenzin P. completed her “first crossword puzzle and book report ever,” according to tutor Athena Galanis. Good job, Tenzin!

With tutor Jane Capps, **Ehte A.** did the activity in the *In Our Words Exercise Book* that corresponded with her story in *In Our Words*. Double awesome!

Suzette Leith reported that **Rocio C.** put her skills to good use creating a Go Fund Me page for a relative’s cancer treatment. Best wishes!

Tutor Janice Hicks wrote this about **Kerretta F.**: “Learning more sight words and how to spell them – really proud of her. She has come so far.” Great work, Kerretta and Janice!

Way to go, **Margarita G.**! According to tutor Karen Helfter, Margarita read her first book, *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, in English. What an accomplishment!

Work completed:

- Sergio Q.** with Gail Marshall – *Challenger 1*
- Lucie S.** with Denise Renke—*Wilson Step 3*
- Annie B.** with Valerie Thurston—*Challenger 5 & 6*
- Velia R.** with Mike Slinde – *Challenger 6*
- Bernard B.** with Susie Thompson—*Wilson Step 9*
- Harriet W.** with Sue Klingman—*Wilson Step 9*

REMINDER: Goals Forms Due January 25

Hurray! It’s time to review progress on the goals your learner set for the July – December 2018 period and to set new goals for the January – June 2019 period.



For July - December goals set, mark if your learner made progress or met the 1-3 goals set at the start of the period. For future goals, pick 1-3 achievable goals to work on from January to June. Write in any details that make the goals more specific and measurable. Break large goals into manageable substeps.

In Central County, forms are due to the Pleasant Hill office by Friday, January 25 – call your coordinator (Megan, Kate, or Maya) with any questions. East County and West County tutors will be contacted soon by Laura or Leslie to talk through the forms.

High-Five Bingo is all-new for 2019!



Tutors: Expand your learner’s horizons by playing High-Five Bingo in 2019. The game board is redesigned with new challenges for 2019 and will be mailed to you with your goal letters (or given at a goal meeting with Laura or Leslie in West and East Counties).

Please encourage your student to give the game a try! Students who complete all the activities in one row and turn it in to a PSC office by Monday, July 1, 2019 will get a “high five” and a prize (new prizes in 2019, too!). THREE grand prize winners will be drawn from all those who completed the challenge. Grand prizes will be awarded at the Recognition Event in the fall of 2019. Good luck and have fun!

Tutor Tips



In Our Words: It's Never Too Early!

by Leslie

Last year, we discovered what it's like to live in the deepest canyon in the world, to work on a chicken farm, and to make Veggie Momos, a Tibetan dish. We also sympathized with those learning English's quirky rules: "How is a /t/ silent?" wrote Douglas B. in his "Manifesto."

All because our students put the time, effort, and heart into writing for ***In Our Words***, our annual student publication. As a tutor, you can be your writer's cheerleader to make this a goal in 2019.

It's never too early to start encouraging your learner to share experiences that we all learn from. Submissions for the yearly publication is due in May. Each story should be fewer than 400 words.

But how do you come up with that first draft? Some tips from tutors who worked with new and continuing authors last year:

A successful article comes from a student who is comfortable and not under any pressure, says tutor **Sandy S.** "I start talking to them about *In Our Words* fairly early, even before the PSC staff mentions it. That gives them a lot of time to think about whether they want to submit something, and to think about what they'd like to write. I emphasize that it's completely voluntary and that they can take time to think about it."

Tutor **Nancy G.** makes a quick warm-up chat with her learner a part of every lesson. The learner can talk about anything! "Once I pick up on something, we discuss it more so she can frame it without knowing where I'm going with the discussion. Eventually, I will ask her to write what we have just talked about. "Just a few sentences." She takes it from there and we, together, will spend several sessions tweaking and correcting. It's at this point I suggest this would be a good story for the student writings book."

Tutor **Kathy U.** said she starts developing topics by casting the net wide! "We brainstorm a list of possible topics (8-10) and then narrow the list to 2 or 3 ideas. It's best if the ideas come from the student, with prompting from the tutor. Once my student narrows down the list, we do a mind map to figure out what could be included."

Tutor **Kim V.** explains a Diamante Poem, a short poem with a set format, to get her learner's creative juices flowing. Her learner wrote two poems! Here is the template:

Line 1: noun

Line 2: adjective, adjective

Line 3: -ing verb, -ing verb, -ing verb,

Line 4: either a 4-word phrase or 4 nouns

Line 5: -ing verb, -ing verb, -ing verb,

Line 6: adjective, adjective

Line 7: synonym for Line 1

Books are helpful too. PSC's collection includes *Writing Frames: 40 Activities for Learning the Writing Process* (beginner); *Writing Skills* (beginning to advanced); and *The Write Stuff: Putting It Into Paragraphs* (intermediate to advanced).

Happy writing!



West County Corner

Folks are excited over here at the San Pablo Library for the long-awaited opening of the new café/market in the northwest corner of the library building.

The market will feature fresh produce and groceries, and it will accept food stamps or equivalent. The market will also sell fresh sandwiches and coffee. Just what we need here in San Pablo!

By the time this newsletter hits your mailbox, the market/café should be fully stocked and open for business. A gentle reminder that food and beverages may not be consumed in the main library itself.