

LiteracyLinks

The Portland Literacy Council Newsletter for Volunteer Tutors

Peggy L. Murphy, Editor

November 2012

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Save the Date!

Tutor Conference

March 16, 2013

Reed College

Tutors Share Ideas & Techniques

by Peggy L. Murphy, Editor

Expanding on the tutor-sharing workshops from the annual Tutor Conference, tutor discussion groups have hit the ground running. Meeting in April, June, and October volunteer literacy tutors shared techniques, challenges and successes, while developing *camaraderie*. Facilitated by tutors, the informal format brings together like-minded adult education advocates and helps supplement the advice and guidance received in training and from VLT Coordinators.

New and familiar faces have been at each session, and I asked a few of the repeat attendees how they benefit from the discussions.

Fran Eichaneauer tutors at PCC Southeast Center, and has been tutoring for a few years. Fran's takeaway from the meetings:

"For me I enjoy being part of a group of tutors and knowing that we all work hard to help other adults learn English. Without the tutor group I was feeling isolated from the larger ESL community. Hearing a variety of teaching styles and ideas helps me learn and feel good about my own tutoring possibilities.

JC Kizak, Cascade tutor and ESL graduate student, is also enthusiastic about the tutor discussion groups:

"The tutors in the discussion group have my back. They are in the field and teaching English, either one-to-one or for a group. They are a vast pool of experience and expertise. Since I am fairly new to tutoring, I appreciate the support. In our discussion group, we share our experiences and offer suggestions and guidance. We illuminate our guidance through real life experiences. Our shared stories reflect the real world faced by our students. I come away from the meetings recharged and enthused for my tutoring session. I may bring a new approach or teaching tool to that session.

Tutor discussion groups will be scheduled each academic term. **Tentative dates** are February 2, April 27, and July 27, 2013.

(Please see **Tutors** next page.)

(Tutors, from page 1.)

Meeting dates are subject to change depending on room availability. October's session was held at the PCC CLIMB Center located near OMSI, a more central location which we hope encourages eastside tutors to attend.

Look for meeting notices in future **LiteracyLinks** in our Calendar section. Portland Literacy Council will send an Email so that interested tutors may RSVP, typically two weeks before the meeting date.

For more information about the tutor discussion groups, contact **Peggy Murphy**, Portland Literacy Council.

Countdown: GED 2014

Big changes are in store for the GED test. The 2014 Series test will focus on career- and college-readiness skills and will use more complex texts. The 2002 Series, with five testing areas, will end December 2013. The 2014 Series testing will include reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science, and social studies.

Test-takers who haven't completed the GED tests or earned a GED will lose their scores and have to start over in 2014. The 2014 test is computer-based, and the paper tests are history. Test-takers who have to retest will pay additional fees.

The New GED Test to be released in January 2014 will be offered by computer only. Both Cascade and Willow Creek Testing Centers plan to transition to computer based testing in early 2013 but will continue to offer the 2002 Series by paper until its closing date in December 2013.

For more information:

"A Quick Guide to the New 2014 GED Test,"
New Readers Press

General GED Information, Portland Community College

GED State Exam, Portland Community College

Volunteer in Guatemala

Amigos de Santa Cruz, Guatemala, seeks volunteer EFL instructor for the Kaqchikel speaking village of Santa Cruz la Laguna on beautiful Lake Atitlan in the Guatemalan highlands. Teach culinary arts students, secondary scholarship students, and offer an adult class. Emphasis is on beginning and intermediate level conversation skills. Students are Spanish speaking, mostly undereducated and lacking basic skills.

For more info — **Amigos de Santa Cruz** see the "more . . ." tab

Health Literacy Conference

Legacy Health and community partners will host the second Oregon and SW Washington Health Literacy Conference, "Toward a Culture of Clarity," Friday, March 1, 2013 in Portland, Oregon. Target audience includes health educators and community-based organization representatives. National and local experts will share research and evidence-based practices to help increase health literacy and improve quality, safety and outcomes for all.

Health literacy is important because those with low health literacy are unable to read, understand, and effectively act on basic medical instructions and information. Patients with low health literacy are less likely to comply with treatment or seek preventive care, and more likely to be hospitalized. The National Patient Safety Council states that no other single issue has a greater impact on health status.

Health Literacy is a top public health issue. Nearly nine out of ten adults have trouble applying everyday health information. It is a leading cause of health disparities. Research shows that adopting specific health literacy strategies with all patients, and particularly those most at risk, results in increase quality and safety for patients.

Conference details and registration.

Editor's Note: From information provided by Kari L. Stanley, LPH, Director of Community Relations, Community Benefit, Legacy Health.

What's in Your Tutor Toolbox

The Times in Plain English

Looking for a great resource for reading and conversation about current events in an easily used format? Try "**The Times in Plain English**," self-described as "a newspaper in plain language" with "an international reading platform."

Targeted to basic readers, content of *The Times* draws on publications including the *Christian Science Monitor*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Arizona Republic*, et. al. The website describes its material as "freshly written" and "not intended to be an edited version" of the original.

The November 5 edition includes articles about greater numbers of part-time workers in restaurant and retail, vertical farming in Sweden, the impacts of immigrant workers on our economy (pros and cons), and problems caused by obesity. Each article has a link to the original source. Additionally, each edition has tips for teachers about reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The Times has an extensive index and Google Translation feature is available in many, many languages. It's a free subscription, all you have to do is submit your Email address. They don't ask any questions, not even the name of your first pet! You can also print anything for free.

Editor's Note: I like the fresh approach to writing on this site — I prefer the original writing to seeing the copycat articles that seem to proliferate on the Internet.

What is Plain English?

From the **Plain English Foundation**

"Plain English is a flexible and efficient writing style that readers can understand in one reading. It combines clear, concise expression, an effective structure and good document design. The term 'plain English' was coined by Sir Ernest Arthur Gowers, who in the 1940s was asked by the British Treasury to write a guide on avoiding pompous and over-elaborate writing."

For Your Calendar

Volunteer Literacy Tutor Training

Registration Information (register by Email or telephone 971-722-6111 X3700)

January 19 & 26, 9 am to 4 pm
PCC Southeast Center, 2305 SE 82nd

To register:

Call: 971-722-4620 x3700

E-mail: pdxliteracy@hotmail.com

Tutor Discussion Group

Tentative Dates: February 2, April 27, & July 27, 2013. Look for firm dates and locations in upcoming issues of **LiteracyLinks**.

Opportunities

ORTESOL(Oregon Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)

Fall Conference 2012

Teaching in the Time of Transitions

Friday, November 16 & Saturday, November 17

Portland Community College Sylvania Campus

Details and registration: **ORTESOL**

Multnomah County Library

MultCo Library GED Learning Labs

Learn general information about GED testing requirements. Take a practice test and learn how to study online and from library study guides. Learn about many resources to help prepare you for your GED test. Attendance at the lab qualifies participants for a partial GED testing scholarship.

Registration is required.

- Gregory Heights Library, Saturday, November 17, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
- Rockwood Library, Saturday, December 15, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
- Holgate Library, January 19, 12:30 to 2:30 pm
- North Portland Library, Saturday, February 16, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm