

LiteracyLinks

Quarterly Newsletter - March 2026



Portland LITERACY Council

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2026 Volunteer Tutor Conference

The 2026 Tutor Conference - *Equity Through Literacy* - will be held on Saturday, April 11, 2026, at the PCC Rock Creek Campus.

- **12 workshops and panel discussions**
- Student Speakers
- Networking opportunities

[Register Now!](#)



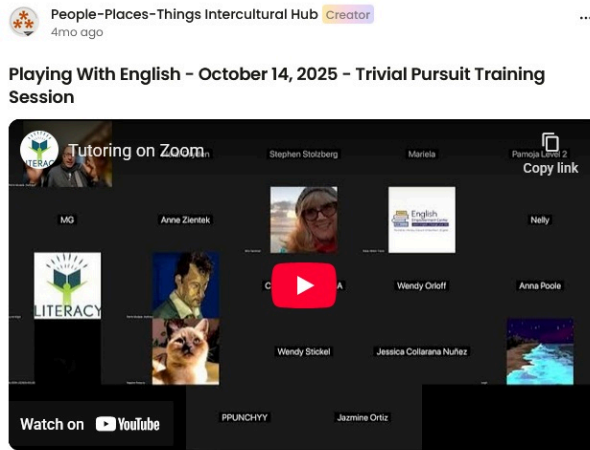
**2026 Volunteer Literacy
Tutor Conference**
April 11, 2026
PCC Rock Creek Campus



Resource Spotlight: RealTime Zoom ATW

Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned zoom teacher, it can be tricky to set up a class, interact with students, and teach online. In this session, conducted by **Patrik McDade** in October 2025, participants shadowed an accomplished teacher to glean tips and met some amazing students.

Click the video below to see how the class held a Trivial Pursuit style training.



Participant Feedback:

~It was super creative with student participants from Central America and an online game of Trivial Pursuit.

~Patrik role modeled creative use of Zoom features.

Literacy and Art



Last Fall, we received a request from **St. André Bessette Catholic Church** to provide literacy tutoring for their visitors from the unhoused community. The iconic “red door” church at 6th and Burnside in Old Town Portland provides a number of day services including a food pantry and meals.

A small group of volunteers worked with the priest and staff to agree on a format that included “**art and reading**” and we began hosting sessions every Tuesday and Thursday in the hour before their daily movie.

Many of the visitors are more inclined to art than reading and most are quite literate. But we’ve had good interest in poetry – Billy Collins and Shel Silverstein are favorites – and a couple of aspiring writers have engaged. We’ve also added ceramics work with a local artist on Tuesdays.

There are a few regulars now, but every day is different. If you would like to learn more about this program, please email Lorie at lwigle@portlandliteracy.org.



RECAP - 2025 Willamette Week's Give!Guide



\$9,044.63
raised of \$12,000
goal

95
donations

75%
of Goal



Thanks for all your support!!

Now that the dust has settled from the 2025 **Willamette Week's Give! Guide**, we wanted to thank all who donated, allowing us to achieve 75% of our \$12,000 goal. In addition to the funds raised, we reached new audiences and created relationships with other non-profits in the Portland area.

We partnered with Broadway Books, the Library Foundation, Portland Street Books, Literary Arts and SOAR and are excited to continue building on those relationships.

We were also able to participate in the January Willamette Week Volunteer Guide which has garnered new subscribers and tutor interest.

Board Member Hydn Park's Literacy Corner



Can You Read This?

There's a kind of knowledge so woven into daily life that it stops feeling like a skill. Reading street signs, scanning a menu, clicking through a health portal, helping a kid with homework — these feel like background noise, not accomplishments. But background noise has a habit of hiding things. A woman in one literacy study timed her entire week around TV commercials: she knew that when the second ad break of her show aired, she had exactly enough time to catch her bus to a tutoring session. No calendar, no alarm, no written note. A whole architecture of workarounds, invisible to everyone around her.

Adult literacy in the United States has been quietly declining for a decade, and it turns out the consequences aren't quiet at all. Researchers estimate it may cost the U.S. economy up to \$1.4 trillion in lost GDP and between \$100 and \$200 billion in excess health care costs — because if you can't easily read a prescription label or navigate a patient portal, staying healthy gets a lot harder. About 28% of American adults read at or below an elementary level, and most of them have spent years getting very good at not letting anyone know.

It's also a problem happening right here. The Portland Literacy Council's **Foundational Literacy Program** works with local adults who are building exactly these skills — reading, writing, and the quiet confidence that comes with them. If you've ever thought about volunteering, tutoring, or just learning more about what that work looks like, this is a good moment to look into it.

This quarter, spend ten minutes with this newsletter's recommendation:

"The Drop in Adult Literacy Is an Economic Issue Too" — *Marketplace*, December 30, 2024

A short, clear-eyed interview with Daphne Greenberg, director of the Adult Literacy Research Center at Georgia State University, about what "literacy" actually means (hint: it's more than reading), why so many adults fall through the cracks, and what it costs when they do. The part about compensatory strategies — the quiet, elaborate ways people navigate a world built on the assumption that everyone can read — is worth sitting with.



Segmented Mailing Lists

Which list is right for you? We have created an additional mail list so our constituents can opt in to receive either just the Newsletter/News, or just Tutor Announcements, or stay on both lists. Everyone on our original list is included on the new Tutor Announcement list. If you want to just receive the LiteracyLinks Newsletter and other newsworthy items, please subscribe to the news only list.

We also have a Volunteer Literacy Tutor Exchange mailing list for tutors to share tips, tricks, teaching aides, etc.

- LiteracyLinks Newsletter/News [SUBSCRIBE](#)
- Tutor Announcements [SUBSCRIBE](#)
- VLT Exchange [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Thank you for being a part of the Portland Literacy Council network. We will return next quarter with another update.



Edited by Cheryl Miller. You can reach me at: cmiller@portlandliteracy.org

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