

My Sonoma County

A Collection of Writings by Learners in the
Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Program



Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Program
2019 / 2021

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places
to play in and pray in, where nature may heal
and give strength to body and soul.”

— John Muir



The Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy program is a FREE service for adults who want to work one-on-one with community volunteer tutors to improve their reading and writing skills. We provide adults with individual resources and instruction so they can focus on their personal learning goals as learners, family members, workers, and community participants.

The Adult Literacy Program has been an integral part of the mission of the Sonoma County Library since 1987, striving to bring information, ideas, and people together to build a stronger community.

The views and opinions expressed in these writings are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the Sonoma County Library or any other funders of the Adult Literacy Program.

For the most part, these writings have been reproduced as written by the adult literacy learners and, as such, are not “perfect” by design.

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Maria Cruz Hernandez Mondragon

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And thank you to the current staff of the Adult Literacy Program — Alisa Adams, Jovanna Ayala, and Christine Whyte — who help adult learners and their tutors embark on their important work together, in whatever place that work happens to be: inside their local library, on remote learning platforms and devices, and on screens of all sizes. Like our motivated adult learners and volunteer tutors, our staff are dedicated to discovering all possible learning places.

THESE WRITERS, THIS PROJECT

Adult learners in our community are our neighbors, our coworkers, our clients, and our service providers. In this collection of stories, they are our guides to the places that surround us in Sonoma County.

The unique places and perspectives these adults share have the power to help readers discover new destinations, return to enjoy old favorites, or to take a deeper and more thoughtful look at why some places are open and welcoming to some but not others.

We have much to tell each other, much beauty and truth to share with one another.

Alisa Adams, Adult Literacy Services Coordinator
Sonoma County Library

FOREWARD

The theme for this collection is: My Sonoma County.

There are four sections with the sub-theme of “place”: A Place of Many Favorites; A Place of Struggle and Hope; a Place for Other Topics and A Place to Create make up the four sections of this collection.

Sonoma County is truly a special place. Luther Burbank called it, “the chosen spot of all the earth as far as nature is concerned.” While Mr. Burbank is certainly not alone in his views, Sonoma County is made all the better by the rich community that has chosen to claim these fertile valleys and golden hills as home.

Our community comprises people from all corners of the globe as well as those born and raised here. For over 30 years, the Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Program has worked to support adult learners in our community to feel more confident about their English reading and writing skills. These incredible learners have put their skills to work by sharing their stories of our beautiful home. From our towering redwoods and the cool, salty coast, to the views from atop Taylor Mountain, Sonoma County lends itself to the imagination for all who live here.

The learners of the Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Program have gifted all who read these pages with a glimpse into what makes Sonoma County their home. Their experiences and insights lend a special perspective. They have so much to be proud of and their readers have so much to be grateful for in their efforts to share their stories.

Rachel Icaza, Education Initiatives Librarian & Adult Literacy Supervisor
Sonoma County Library

INTRODUCTION

As a new resident to Sonoma County, I was very excited to be asked to write the introduction for the Adult Literacy Student Writing Collection, especially because this edition's theme is "My Sonoma County." I relished reading the entries from our adult learners because I was able to see my new home from their perspectives and find out about their favorite places. It gave me a peek into their lives and experiences. I left the urban sprawl of Los Angeles almost three months ago for a better quality of life and peace of mind. I share this with many of the writers here, who discuss their own journeys from places far and wide, including Korea and Mexico. I am still getting acquainted with everything Sonoma County has to offer – amazing beaches, raging rivers, wineries, an abundance of fresh produce and dairy, redwood forests, and wonderful towns and cities; each with a unique character that is distinct and separate from the others. I love my daily commute through rolling hills and dairy farms, watching the fog roll over the hills or a sunset. It allows me to decompress in a way that traffic on the 405 could never accomplish, no matter what audiobook I was listening to at the time.

In reviewing the selections here, I am grateful to learn some new spots to discover! Many of the essays focus on specific places, people who have made an impact on them, or the beauty of our landscape. The library is featured in a few essays too. But all is not golden here; some of our writers have experienced racism, discrimination, housing insecurity, and fear about their undocumented status. It is a stark reminder that while we have much to offer, we still have progress to make.

As a newcomer, I feel a kindred spirit with all of our writers, and I hope that while reading our collection of writings, you too learn something new about this place that we all call home, Sonoma County.

Erika Thibault, Deputy Director
Sonoma County Library

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SECTION 1:

A Place of Many Favorites

“A lot of the reasons why something is a favorite thing are all things you don’t necessarily see, the place, the people, the time, where you are, what it meant to you at that time.”

— Jeffrey Jones, Author

A DIVERSITY OF PLACES TO ENJOY

Eloina Ortiz

I moved to Sonoma County almost six years ago. In the beginning I didn't like it too much because everything was different from where I lived before. However I wanted to know about this county (Sonoma). After I explored it with my family a couple of months, I loved it.

There is a diversity of places to enjoy—some individual and some with family. I love the ocean, hiking and tasting wine but my favorite is the forest and the redwood trees.

They are amazing. I like to go there on a sunny day.

Tutor: Nancy Mickens







MY FAVORITE PLACES IN SANTA ROSA

Raju Mothey

I am writing about my favorite places in Santa Rosa, Spring Lake is one, because it is a beautiful place. Also, I can hike there.

There are green trees everywhere. Swans are swimming in the lake. People enjoy walking, jogging, and sitting on the bench. I go there every morning to see the beautiful view in the park. It makes me feel good. It has a healthy atmosphere and Spring Lake is one of my favorite places.

My other favorite place is Sonoma Library. I can go there to read and improve my knowledge of the English language. There are many book choices and it has a quiet atmosphere.

All the employees behave very nice and they provide me with a tutor. Her name is Hally, and she is my favorite English tutor. She treats me like her own family.

I would like to say “thanks Sonoma Library”.

Tutor: Hally Decarion

FIELD TRIP TO NORTH SALMON CREEK BEACH

Woo Hyun Lee

The day before spring break at Santa Rosa Junior College, our biology class had a field trip to North Salmon Creek Beach. The main purpose of this trip was to observe beach habitats. After the lecture, we gathered at the lab classroom and decided who was going to drive and organized the students. It took about 40 minutes to get to the beach.

It was sunny and windy when we got to the beach. The biology professor and the students went down to the sand and slowly walked to the water. We walked on the sand with bare feet and the sand was really hot. The waves were so big and strong that it was not easy to avoid them, so we got easily wet. Once a wave came and retreated, we gathered some soaked sand with filtered boxes. There were some little crabs trying to hide in the soil. They were mostly gray and had small legs compared to their big bodies. The professor told us this kind of crab is called sea lice. Some students found some small sea shells in the sand and rocks. Those were also really small and had various colors. The professor taught us which kind of shells those were.

After we left North Salmon Creek Beach, we went to Bodega Bay. We observed the water with binoculars looking for dolphins or other wild life. We also saw some buoys floating on the water. We couldn't find any dolphins, but we observed some seals. There were some steep cliffs along the coast. The professor said it is dangerous because some people fall from the cliffs and die every year.

We came back to the JC after Bodega Bay. It felt like it was a pretty short time, but it was one of the most exciting field trips in my student life. I am looking forward to returning to the coast soon.

Tutor: Ben Ireland



LEARNING ENGLISH AT HOME AND ALTIMIRA SCHOOL IN SONOMA

Alicia Caldera

When I came from Mexico I didn't know any English. People were talking to me and I only laughed because I was embarrassed that I didn't understand. But I was lucky because God put Helen Graves in my way. She came to my house to teach me basic English, two hours a week, and she didn't take any payment. She did this for about five years. She was my tutor while I was pregnant with Eddy, after he was born my daughters took him out while I was having my lesson.

I went to Altimira Adult School three nights a week. I made friends there who helped me with the words I didn't know. Especially Akemi, she was always there for me, also Alexandria, Veronica and Onn. We studied grammar together; sometimes Onn cooked Thai food for all of us. We went to Altimira school for two years. Then the English classes stopped because there was no more money to continue them.

That was ten years ago and we are still friends. Onn moved to Oregon, Ale and Vero are still here but I don't see them much. Akemi and I are still close friends, we talk and go shopping sometimes. Akemi is Japanese and I am Mexican, we still have problems understanding each other but we enjoy being together.

Tutor: Bob Alwitt



MY LIBRARY

Veronika

When my mind is too busy
Navigating rough seas,
My Library is a place where I can find
Not only nice people but
Calm and quiet friends
Who are standing
Next to each other
Ready to tell me stories
And play with my imagination.

Tutor: Claire Etienne



FOOTHILL PARK: WHERE I CONNECT TO NATURE

Juliana Jimenez

I'm so lucky to live in Windsor because it is close to my favorite place in Sonoma County.

Foothill Park is close to my house. I really like this park because it is a big park where I can walk and run. I can see birds and deer and the beautiful view. And another thing is that when I see people running they motivate me to run or walk and get exercise. I love this park because I can walk with my whole family and spend time with them. I am relaxed when I go to this park, especially in the morning because it is not hot. Sometimes I see people riding horses in the park. My kids love to see the horses.

One day I saw a hawk fly in the sky. The hawk flew and circled down towards the water where it picked up a fish. It flew so fast! I have never seen a hawk fly so fast. It was a really good experience.

I enjoy it when I walk with my kids. I can spend time with my family and remember experiences when I was a kid. Wood on the ground in the park reminds me of picking up wood for cooking food and carrying it on my back for the long walk to my house in my village. Sometimes when I walk in the park, the plants remind me of things from my village like picking mushrooms and seeing some of the same kinds of trees.

I will be sad if the park closes because I will not have that space to walk and enjoy with my family. I tell all my friends about the park so it stays very popular. If it is popular, it will stay open. It is really important to connect with nature, and the park is where I do that.

Tutor: John Jay



Photo Location / Credit: *Foothill Park (Regional Parks) /
Sonoma County Regional Parks Photo Collection*



CLOSE TO THE OCEAN

Hyon S. Akins

Hello, my name is Hyon Akins. I am from South Korea. I was surprised to see the ocean as I got off the airplane and got into the car because it was so amazing to be close to the city, the Richmond Bridge and San Francisco in the county I now live in. The ocean in Korea can only be seen driving in the car for a few hours (4-5 hours).

The first time I felt the beauty of the ocean, I felt good. I lived in my mother-in-law's house that was very close to the ocean. My husband took me and my daughter; showed me the beautiful ocean and I was happy when I went there. Sometimes we would go clam digging near Petaluma ocean. Touching the water, watching people and walking around makes me happy.

When my kids were little, they liked playing near the water and digging in the sand to look for clam shells. They looked so happy. We brought snacks to eat and watched the ocean waves and looked for little fish. We would stay all day.

So the United States is so good because the ocean is close to town and my house. I can go there anytime. I am so happy, so happy.

Tutor: Brenda Bautista

TWO OF MY FAVORITE PLACES IN SONOMA COUNTY

Lupita Ochoa

One of my favorite places is my church, The Resurrection Church. For me it is a place where I fill my life with peace, love, and compassion. I definitely enjoy this place. In my parish I am a volunteer. I prepare the children to receive the sacrament of communion. This brings me a lot of joy because I help the kids of the future to get a solid ground in life. I have been doing this for a very long time and it's a great feeling when I see some of the kids that I taught remember me and still appreciate what I did for them. Also, their parents are very appreciative of what I did for their kids. That's very fulfilling for me.

One of my other favorite places is a home for retired people. We have a group of volunteers who goes to this place and try to bring joy to older people. Some of the people we visit are actually friends from our church. One of the things we do when we visit with them is talk about their lives, their accomplishments, and yes, sometimes their setbacks. So we learn a lot from them, and at the same time, we bring a little piece of happiness for them. So these are my two most favorite places to be. They bring me joy and happiness.

Tutor: Carol Digitale

MY FAVORITE PLACE IS FOOTHILL PARK

Maria Cruz Hernández Mondragon

My favorite place is Foothill Park in Windsor. I think it is great because I can go there every day to run or walk. I run up the hills. Or maybe walk. It is hard!

It is near, not far. At 6 AM the birds (there) are singing. It is so beautiful and I have great pictures.

The water also has big fishes.

Tutor: Marge Cunningham

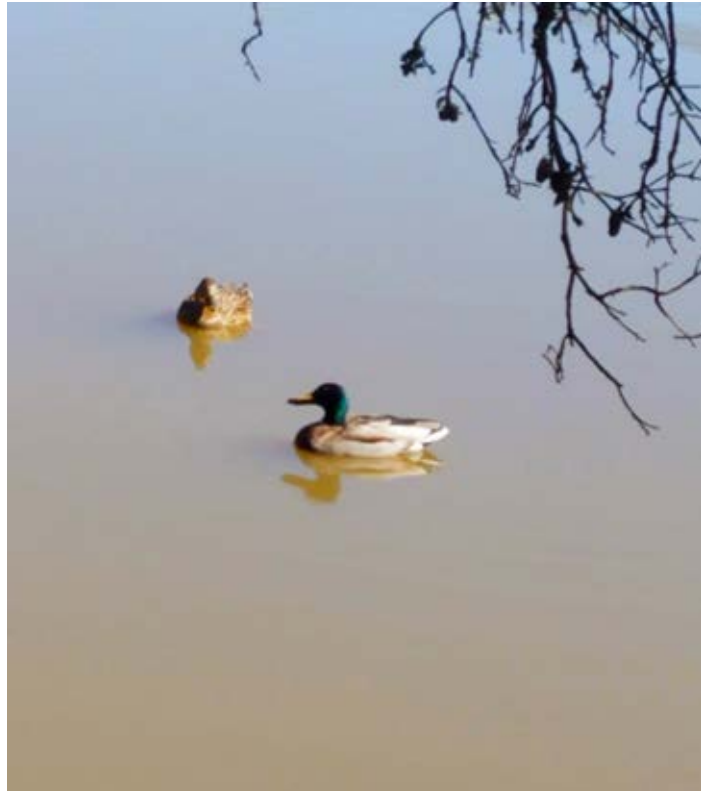


Photo Location / Credit:
Foothill Park / Maria Cruz Hernández Mondragon



MY FAVORITE BEACH: STINSON

Pola Reyes

I like a lot of beaches in Sonoma County, but my favorite beach is Stinson Beach which is in Marin County. I have a very good time there with my family, my husband, my son and our dog Chocolate. I like to get in the car and drive there.

It is a short drive for us.

I like to see the trees, the flowers, the birds and the ocean. The people who go there are very nice and friendly. Some people speak English, some people speak Spanish, and everyone says hello.

We bring a blanket, snacks, lunch, drinks and my son brings a ball. We run on the beach with Chocolate. We go in the water up to our waist, and jump and play in the waves. The water is cold.

Once we saw a whale. The whale was playing in the water and everyone was watching and saying “wow.” Sometimes we see sea lions.

We usually stay until six or seven o’clock. We watch the sunset and take pictures of the sun going down. When we drive home I feel so happy and relaxed and also sad because I want to stay forever.

Tutor: Sharon Gilligan



MY FAVORITE THING TO DO IS YOGA IN SONOMA

Lucina Garcia

I like to go to my yoga class in Sonoma every week. I do yoga because it makes me feel better.

Yoga is doing breathing exercises and meditation and practicing certain movements. It is strengthening my body, mind and spirit. It makes me feel healthier and feel really good. I like everything about it.

Yoga has changed my way of thinking and acting. I'm more tolerant. I don't get angry so easily. I don't think about the past I lived but more about the present. I learned to enjoy nature but above all I learned to be happy.

Tutor: Linda Raboy



OUR FAVORITE PLACES IN SONOMA COUNTY

Rosalí Mendoza

I love to go to the Russian River in summertime because I like to enjoy swimming with my kids and having a BBQ. Sometimes we go with my brother and his family.

My son likes to go to Howarth-Park. He likes to ride his scooter on the sidewalk.

I like the Sonoma County Fair in July because my family likes to go to the rides especially the bumper cars. We also like to watch shows.

My family likes to go to the movie theaters.

I love to go hiking at Taylor Mountain.

Tutor: Judith Rousseau



Photo Location / Credit: *Taylor Mountain Sunset / Sonoma County Regional Parks Photo Collection*

BEAUTIFUL SONOMA COUNTY

Nancy Villena

Sonoma County has wonderful sightseeing places, surrounded by huge fields of grapes, quaint sites and excellent weather. One of the favorite summer playgrounds is the Russian River. Russian River has two personalities; in winter it is dark and blue but in summer it is gorgeous and majestic. Summer is coming and it will be dressed by color and happiness. Sonoma County will show once again its beauty. Sonoma County has lovely natural settings, it has leafy forests with an endless amount of pine trees.

Sonoma County has a lovely and interesting place to visit: Russian River, an enchanting place in summer where families can enjoy some quality time together because of the amount of activities offered, such as canoeing, or simply swimming, so the families can enjoy from morning until night. On the other hand, winter in Russian River is not as pretty as summer is, because of the dangerous flooding in which the people who live near the river end up being always displaced or at least given warnings about their choice of staying for the winter there.

Also, Sonoma County has leafy forests with an endless amount of pine trees and a natural park, Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve. It is a vast forest reserve, where the great attractions are the trees because they are very tall, with measures of at least 300 feet; longer than a football field, and the oldest tree is estimated to be 1400 years old. The families can either hike all the way to the top of the forest or they can drive up there to appreciate majestic views of all the reserve and its surroundings.

Sonoma County has beautiful places to enjoy with the family, or take a simple rest enjoying the nature, looking at people canoeing, it is funny when they do not know how to row and they are going around and around. The natural reserve is an interesting place too, the attraction is the tallest and oldest trees. Finally the wineries are a good place to enjoy with the family, friends or partner. Sonoma County is indeed an interesting place to visit for anyone around the world!

Tutor: Sharon Elwell



Photo Location / Credit: *Swimmers in Healdsburg /
Sonoma County Regional Parks Photo Collection*

JACK LONDON STATE HISTORIC PARK: HISTORY AND NATURE

Youngha Goo

One day Jane, my teacher, and I planned three things. At first, we wanted to enjoy sunshine and go hiking on a short trail. Second, we wanted to have a picnic, bringing a lunch basket. And last, she wanted to let me know about some historic place. That place was Jack London State Historic Park. This trip let me know about Jack London, and Charmian London, his wife.

Luckily, it was a sunny and beautiful day. We walked carefully on a narrow trail, not touching a lot of poison oak. The park was very quiet, calm and peaceful. I was wondering what would come up. At first, I saw Jack London's grave site, where ashes of Jack and Charmian rest together. It was very small and simple, totally different from his dramatic life. So it was very impressive to me.

Next, I hiked to the ruins of the Wolf House. I couldn't imagine how it was planned to design and build 100 years ago. If it was not burned and still stood on the ground, it would have been more stunning as well as more magnificent. It was very interesting for me to see the ruins and compare them with the designs, which made me more curious about his life and also led me to wonder.

Then we visited the museum. We could see many pictures which were taken by him and various art crafts which he collected on his travels all around the world. Through them, I could know he was not afraid of exploring something new, trying and failing, and nothing stopped him.

The museum was not big, but it was fun and educational enough for me. And he earned a lot of money through the books that he had written, but I learned that his life was more adventurous and he used these adventures to write his novels.

As I followed on the trail, it seemed like I was back in time, listening to his thoughts and exploring his adventures. And I thought his life was great—that he did what he wanted and never hesitated. His life was too short, but through his books his life has lasted until now. I would like to recommend this park for someone who likes history and nature.

Tutor: Jane Springer



Photo Location / Credit: Jack London State Historic Park / A. Adams



FAVORITES FOR MY FAMILY

Martha Espinoza

Howarth Park and Spring Lake Park (in Spanish we say Parque de los patos, or ducks) are special for me because I like nature. These parks are also important because I'm a mom; I have two boys: Benito, who is twelve and Juan, who is seven. All the time I'm really happy to enjoy these parks because my boys have a lot of energy, and both places have the perfect entertainment—many things to do outside. We can spend all day long doing different activities there.

Every year is different for us. A few years ago, my boys and I were visiting the special and pretty playgrounds, the sandbox, the water park, the train, and feeding the ducks. A few years later, we were enjoying riding bikes, walking trails, and movie night. We have good memories.

My kids and I remember our special picnic. It was unusual for them because for this one day, we got their favorite sandwiches from Subway and Jimmie Johns, and they were free to eat chips and candy and drink juice or soda.

For my older boy, his favorite things are Spring Lake and Lake Ralphine because he loves fishing and swimming. Benito, Juan, and I participated in a fishing derby. The fishing derby was a contest for the biggest fish. We didn't catch anything, but we were excited to have the experience, and we each received a patch for participation!

Benito and Juan love swimming around the inflatable water playground. They can spend all day long doing this. While they are swimming, I sit and read, watch them, and eat. Nowadays, they also enjoy playing tennis on the court at Howarth Park.

I love Howarth Park and Spring Lake Park because they're open every day, they're pretty, and the weather is good (not so windy as in some other areas of Sonoma County). My kids need to spend time in nature and there are lots of activities there. The parks were my favorite place and have become the favorite place for my entire family!

Tutor: Cynthia Denenholz

SAFARI WEST, SANTA ROSA

Violeta Murillo

I've been living in Sonoma County for 24 years. Sonoma County has a lot of beautiful places but my favorite is Safari West in Santa Rosa. I went there on a trip for my husband's work company. I like Safari West because I love to see animals.

In Safari West they have wildlife and it is nice how you see the animals. It's different from the zoo because you go where the animals live in the hills. You ride on the dirt trails to see them on a tour group jeep. You can see animals close to you.

My favorite animal is the giraffe. They do have giraffes and I enjoy seeing them with the baby giraffes. Giraffes have big, long necks and cute little faces. I like their colors and how they walk makes them seem proud.

They have a lot of animals like zebras, buffalos, rhinoceros, flamingos, turtles, birds, etc. I enjoyed the place. We ate there. Lunch was barbecue ribs and chicken. It was delicious and the dining place was cozy. I hope I can go back soon with my children and enjoy it as a family.

Tutor: Susan Duly

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN SONOMA COUNTY: RIVER'S END

Tom Warren

My favorite Sonoma County destination is sure to make memories for life. In the little town of Jenner just north of Bodega on Highway One is a place called River's End. Up high on a cliff overlooking the Russian River where it meets the sea is this great little restaurant complete with private cabins, stereos and no TV's. The gourmet seafood mixed with organic grass-fed meats is simple but worth the drive. It is not cheap but worth every penny. For an experience you are not soon to forget, bring someone special and make some memories.

Instructor: Michael Powell

Program: Literacy Development/BookNotes

*A partnership between Sonoma County Library
Adult Literacy and Sonoma County Sheriff's Office*

HOWARTH PARK – MY BEST TIME IN SONOMA COUNTY

Suning

My favorite place in Sonoma County is Howarth Park.

In fact, there are three parks in that place – Spring Lake Park; Trione-Annandel State Park and Howarth Park. These parks are connected together. I never know the boundaries between them.

There are many trees and plants so the air is fresh. There are two big lakes. Many ducks and swans living there, and of course there are some turkeys and squirrels and many birds. Sometime there are many goats that are temporally fostered to graze, because grass is growing so quickly. Sometime there are many geese that travel long distances to stop here.

Our hiking group often walks here. We sometimes struggle through the forest trails and sometimes bathe in the sun by the lake. We often stop to appreciate the harmonious and beautiful picture of the animals and the scenery.

After the walk, we are sitting around a big table in the shade by the lake. We share the food we bring. We have a snack and chat while eating. That is my best time in Sonoma County.

Tutor: Pat Dowd





ARMSTRONG REDWOODS STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Dalja Heo

Last summer, I visited Armstrong Redwoods State Park with my family. We had much admiration for the big trees.

These remarkable trees live to be 500-1,000 years old, grow to a diameter of 12-16 feet. The redwood ecosystem is a very fragile one. The Parson Jones Tree is the tallest tree in the grove, measuring more than 310 feet in height. The Colonel Armstrong Tree is the oldest tree in the grove, estimated to be over 1,400 years old. The Icicle Tree shows the unusual burl formations often found on redwood trees. Burls can weigh many tons and grow hundreds of feet above the forest floor.

We took the Pioneer Trail from the park entrance to the Armstrong Tree and Forest Theater.

During the 1870's, this area was set aside as a natural park and botanical garden by Colonel James Armstrong, a lumberman who recognized the beauty and natural value of the forests he harvested. After his death, Armstrong's daughter and the Le Baron family mounted an energetic campaign involving public meetings, rallies, and car-caravans to direct public attention to the need to preserve this last remnant of the once mighty redwood forest. In 1936, the grove was opened to the public as Armstrong Redwoods State Park.

I thank God for giving us this beautiful and magnificent grove. I often visit the Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve and enjoy breathing deeply.

Tutor: Deborah Castillo

PETALUMA GARDEN

Catherine Chung

California is a very warm weather state. Where I live, there is no snow. There are four seasons in a year: spring, summer, fall and winter. I especially love spring days. Its weather is so warm. The birds are singing. The geese are swimming in the pool. The grass reappears. Trees bud new leaves. The spring flowers bloom. The earth smells fresh. Nature awakes from its rest. All animals come out to find food.

My husband brought me to live in Petaluma; I have lived here almost 10 years. A few years ago, I met my best friends and they have the same interest in gardening as I do. We are happy to be planning a garden together and we enjoy planting in spring and summer. We like to plant bok choy, eggplant, beans and tomatoes. All Asian people like to eat those vegetables.

We are like co-workers who work together to plant in the soil to make it fun. Now, we put bok choy seeds in plastic pots — called growing cells — to start to grow seedlings. Let them grow about 3 or 4 inches tall. Then, we will separate the seedlings and plant them one by one in the soil to cover the root. They will be planted in very tidy rows. We will put water on the baby seedlings every other day. When the seedlings grow fast and the sunshine is strong, then we can put water every day. In about five weeks, the bok choy will be almost 15cm or 18cm tall before we can pick it to eat.

Tutor: Cathi Charlberg

RAGLE PARK, SEBASTOPOL

Nolberto Banuelos

When my dog Yogi was small, we started to walk him on the trail of Ragle Park. We wanted him to get used to people and other dogs and kids.

Ragle Park is a good place because there are always people playing soccer and people walking their dogs.

My wife likes to go to Ragle Park because it is a nice place to walk Yogi and for him to get used to people and other dogs and people playing soccer. And Yogi likes the walks on the trail.

Ragle Park is a fun place to be with your pet and your wife because there are nice views, nice trails, and shady trees.

Tutor: Pat Kaplan



Photo Location / Credit: Ragle Ranch (Regional Park) / Sonoma County Regional Parks Photo Collection

SEASONS IN THE ARMSTRONG REDWOODS

Ako Munson

I have many favorite places. There are the Sonoma County libraries where I have lessons with my wonderful tutor, NCFA (Nor-Cal Fighting Alliance) where my children and I train to learn different kinds of martial arts with dedicated people, Anytime Fitness Center where I have awesome yoga instructors, knowledgeable trainers and nice gymmates. There is Craft Bee where Japanese people who are interested in crafts together make things and exchange information regarding restaurants, life stories, books, movies, and shops.

We also have beautiful beaches, woods, and parks with trails. It was difficult for me to pick only one. This time I'm going to pick ARMSTRONG WOODS STATE PARK with the magnificent redwood trees.

Where I first discovered redwoods was at Muir woods in Marin County. I thought the beautiful reddish giant trees were stunning. I had never seen them in Japan. Also, I had driven through "The Avenue of the Giants" on Hwy 101. We parked the car on the side of the road and went wandering around the Redwood forest. It was so magical. I felt like I was in the 'Star Wars' Movie I had seen and the Storm Troopers were coming after me. By the way, I'm not a lunatic! I recommend you take this beautiful drive through the Redwood Tunnel in Myers Flat and Leggett if you go up north. It's so unusual.

When I used to live in Mendocino County, I used to go to Montgomery woods a lot. Sometimes, I hardly encountered any visitors. I felt like I was in my gigantic yard. I liked to lay on the log and look up at the sky and all of the greenery. I enjoyed the park all to myself.

When I moved to Sonoma County, I soon found out about the Armstrong Woods State Park because my daughter went to Guerneville Elementary School for a

while. Also, my son's preschool was located off the first road before it goes to Armstrong Park's parking lot. My son loves the outdoors. It was a perfect preschool for him even though the owner of the preschool told me she had seen a black bear and mountain lions on her property! I used to go for a walk to get exercise in the park after I dropped them off at school almost every day. Luckily, it was only 8 to 10 minutes from my house.

I enjoyed each different season. Spring: it's starting to warm up. After winter new starts are coming up and it is the beginning of the life cycle. The ubiquitous ground cover oxalis in the redwoods is shared with ferns and flowers like Fetid Adder's Tongue, Frillium, Colypso Orchid, and Wild Ginger. Summer: it's hot and dry. The crowds of people visiting there like waves in the ocean. Sometimes it is challenging to park the cars in the parking lots. It is a little bit cooler in the park than outside the park though. Fall: it is getting cooler and the days are getting shorter. When it is windy, the tall redwood tree is dancing around above you. Fallen leaves create a carpet on the ground. Winter: It is wet and cold. The plants are dormant. I like to go to the park after it has been raining for a couple of days. I feel that the air was cleansed and everything is wet. I love listening to the echo of the ripples in the creek. After heavy rains, the water runs rapidly. It seems to me, the creek adds flavor to the park. You can only enjoy the creek in the winter time or maybe beginning of spring. It is a perfect combination for me to feel the mist and redwood trees. There is hardly anybody around except park rangers. The winter is my favorite time to be there.

Tutor: Patricia Oberg

THE MARIN FARMER'S MARKET — REAL FLAVORS, REAL PEOPLE

Lindsay Delgado

I like the magnificent nature of the Armstrong Redwoods, the historical small town of Sonoma and the tranquility of the vineyards in the sunset, but I vote the Marin Farmer's Market my favorite place in Sonoma County. Nested in the valley of the Marin Civic Center, tourists and locals are drawn to its seasonal produce ripe from the field, the aroma from the early morning gourmet food, the authentic atmosphere and the genuine smiles on people's faces.

Strolling among hundreds of booths, weekly grocery shopping can be a leisure here. Care to sample a Golden Delicious apple? Be prepared — the juicy texture and the scent left on your tongue will take you right back to your childhood — when our societies were originally closer to nature. Don't be surprised if all the just picked produce, sustainable family farm raised meat, poultry, and eggs taste much better here, as the sun in Sonoma County and the richness of the local soil play its magic on everything. An amazing array of uncommon ingredients, like Pea Shoots, Lemon Verbena, Maitake mushrooms etc., can be found here to satisfy the taste buds of the most demanding diners.

From the farm to your plate, foods here are at their freshest and tastiest — nothing gets better than this! Furthermore, you don't have to purchase anything in bulk or bunches unless that is your preference. If I were you, I would definitely take home some "Salad for the future" — you will be amazed with all the varieties of greens and edible flowers that you normally don't see in a regular supermarket. And I bet that the exotic taste will draw you back to the market every Sunday morning, year-round.

Don't feel like cooking tonight? You've come to the right place: the golden roasted chicken and the pork ribs turning on the spits — organic and free range. The homemade soups made from secret recipes serve up more choices than you can imagine. And the many choices of the street foods hot off the stove will satisfy every unique appetite. They go just right with the live Jazz in the air.

Strangers chatting with each other, children practicing their new Floss dance moves, farmers offering cooking tips — the passion in the air quickly puts an unpolished smile on everybody's face. Meeting people who grow your food or connecting with others who appreciate nature in your community can create a strong sense of satisfaction.

Time seems to lose its power and effortlessly the market slows you down — in that moment you are transformed back to simple living.

Tutor: Leann Sanford

ONE DAY AT OLIVER'S MARKET

Sicheng Huang

Anne and I went to Oliver's Market on January 22. First, we went to the fruit and vegetable section. I saw so many kinds of vegetables and fruit on the shelf.

There are many colors of cauliflower, they are white, green, yellow, and purple. I never see yellow cauliflower and purple cauliflower in China.

There are different sizes, colors of potatoes. The potatoes are red potatoes, yellow potatoes, russet potatoes, creamer potatoes, baby red potatoes, sunrise medley potatoes, and honey gold potatoes. Potatoes have many different cooking methods, fried potatoes, baked potatoes, steam potatoes, boil potatoes.

Also there are different lettuces on the shelf. They are romaine lettuce, red leaf lettuce, green leaf lettuce, iceberg lettuce, butter lettuce, gem lettuce. I like lettuces. Some people make lettuce salad, but in China, most people will cook it.

On the shelf, there are Jumbo artichokes, brussel sprouts, kohlrabis, celery, red cabbage, green cabbage, zucchini, crooked neck squash, Mexican grey squash, chayote squash, and avocado. I never see Jumbo artichokes and brussel sprouts in my country, I don't know how to cook them. I don't like the taste of avocado, it's expensive in China.

Then Anne and I shared with each other how to cook the vegetables. Different countries have different cultures, they use same vegetable to cook different way. Next, Anne took me to know about the sauces, there are many sauces I have never seen. Later we passed the fridge of milk, there are a lot of different brands of milk in the fridge. I found that milk is in large bottles. After that I talked with Anne about tofu. It is made from soybeans. The tofu has protein. There are three types of tofu, they are soft tofu, firm tofu and fried tofu.

Finally, we visited the seafood place. There are many kinds of seafood at the market. They are salmon, shrimp, crab and all kinds of fish. The workers cut some fish in filet. The customers would like a fish filet, but I would like a whole fish. In China the price of salmon is more expensive than the USA. People eat raw salmon. They use head of fish to make soup. People like the head of fish. They think the head of fish is more delicious than filet. Also the price is more expensive for head of fish than filet. I like to steam whole fish or fry. Sometimes I make fish soup. The Chinese people cook the fish the same way as me.

Tutor: Anne Sekara



DAY OF THE DEAD IN CHINA

Sicheng Huang

The Day of the Dead in Qingming Festival on April 5 in China is a traditional festival and has been a legal holiday since 2008. The holiday focuses on gatherings of family and friends to remember and pray for friends and family members who have died. People use sugar, cake, sugarcane, fruits, boiled whole chicken, roasted pork, tea, and wine. Some people use roasted whole small pig (about 20 pound) which is the tradition for celebrating in front of the graves of the departed. Families clean and decorate the graves sites when they visit. People also pray and light fireworks. They burn some paper models of cars, houses, cell phones, Ipad, computers and mahjong, etc. all made from paper.

Why wasn't Qingming Festival a legal holiday until 2008? Because people suggested the government set this day as a holiday for young people to remember their ancestors, and the government wanted to pass this tradition from generation to generation. The elderly people get good luck after they pray to the departed. For example, people who run a business will pray to the departed in front of the grave and say "hopefully I will earn more money in business." Another example, if a person has a big problem with health in the family, the family members will pray at the grave and say "bless the patient to get better soon."

Qingming Festival is an important traditional festival for remembering the departed and asking for good fortune.

Tutor: Anne Sekara

This story also appeared in the January 2020 issue of Easy English Times.

RANCH OF JACK LONDON

Olena Kraynyuk

Once in the autumn, 2017, on a cloudy, warm, rainy day we left for the ranch of Jack London in Sonoma County. Our car rushed away along the road through the forests. Black wet oak trunks were covered with olive-colored lichen streaming in the wind. New grass began to shoot through the entire carpet of the reddish fallen leaves. Sometimes the green of moss and dense redwood needles were cut by brightly sparkling madrone trunks. It was the beginning of the rainy season. This wonderful forest surrounded the museum of Jack London.

We left our car and rose on foot up the slope to the Happy Walls – the museum created by the widow of Jack London, Charmian. She built the museum like a copy of the real Wolf House which had burnt not long before Jack London's death. The new house was smaller than the original one. From outside, the walls were decorated by massive stones and made the building like a fundamental and impregnable castle. Meanwhile, in one of the windows, there burned a small, friendly light. Full of emotions, we entered the door. Besides our guest, we all had visited this place before, on a summer day of the past.

The museum was built on the little flat ground. The forest grew in front of the museum and down the slope and rose upwards behind it. We walked through all the rooms. Cloudy, rainy forest was seen from the large windows. We looked over show-cases with private things of the writer, and his books including those published in many countries of the world. We saw photos of well-known publications: a strong handsome young man with an open face and hair disheveled by the wind. There were many things saved: a model of his yacht, numerous souvenirs from the whole world gathered by Jack London on his wonderful and dangerous voyages. My heart was wrung by a look at the model of Wolf House.

story continues –

Nearby the huge windows, almost at full length of walls, there were long sofas with cushions on the ends and some personal things of Jack London like boots and saddle. It seemed that he was sitting here just now in the corner, fixing his sight beyond the window on the beautiful endless redwoods. So well it was to sit here, to think, to remember, to dream...but – no! It never had been and was impossible to be. Jack London had never been here. It could only be His Dream House – Wolf House, the way he named it, built lower on the slope in the same forest. It could be, if Wolf House hadn't burned just before moving his family there. Jack London died soon after. He was seriously sick. But the fire, for sure, had made its black deed.

We drove down the slope to the ruins of Wolf House by a little open car, and then set free the museum driver. It was still drizzling.

The ruins produced a terrible impression even if you saw them not for the first time. Massive walls, decorated with large stones, greened by time, were saved only. The wooden gallery constructed in front of the Wolf House, allowed us to have a look from above to the room's planning. I felt the lump in my throat.

When I think about Jack London's life or read his books, I always have a feeling he was close and well known to me and to my friends, like we had met him in reality. He was our favorite writer in our college days. He was so close, so ours, like an old reliable friend. I even placed London's photo over my writing table.

We sauntered around the Wolf House. It was a happy choice to settle it in this fantastic forest.

Then we strolled slowly upwards through the pass among the trees, who maybe, remembered Jack London, his relatives and friends, just for them all, he built the Wolf House.

The grave of the writer is very modest so it is possible not to notice it, if it were not for the plain short wooden fence. No monument, no cross. Only a stone, grown over by moss was there, and one fresh bright-yellow flower laying on it.

Both Londons were buried in the same place – Jack, and later – Charmian. Here completed the life full of adventures, struggles, defeats and victories. He wrote: “The proper function of a man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time.” This way he lived.

Tutor: Linda Dunlap



SECTION 2:

A Place of Struggle & Hope

“See, the one thing good memories and bad memories have in common is that they both stay with you. I guess that’s why I’ve never known how I feel about this place.”

— Angie Thomas, Author

From: *On the Come Up*

ALWAYS SUNNY IN SONOMA COUNTY ...YEAH, RIGHT

Janice Maria Bowens

Sonoma County is a very beautiful place – the greenery, the luxurious beaches, the rolling hills of so many parks. When I moved here, I imagined finding a peaceful place to live. Different things happened to my dreams.

In the winter of 1987, I had a handsome baby boy. Then things went sour, and I became homeless with my small child. I was terrified. I started to look around for a place to live for myself and my son. Always sunny in Sonoma County ...yeah, right.

I was so worried about whether I was going to find a place to live. When I did get my first place, the landlady was a very kind person, but I had to move because too many people started showing up at my home. So, I got the boot and needed to look again.

I discovered that Sonoma County could be racist. I went to look at a rental and a white property manager said to me, “We don’t like your kind living here because you people are not clean.”

Still searching, I asked my white girlfriend to go with me to a rental in Rohnert Park. I was dressed to impress, walked in, asked the manager if she had any rentals. Her answer was, “None at this time, honey.” I sensed dishonesty and felt the sting. I said, “Please don’t call me honey, it’s so disrespectful.” I left on the edge of bursting into tears.

I went back to the car and asked my white girlfriend to go in and try. As she entered the office, she asked if they had any apartments to rent. The manager answered, “How many bedrooms, 1 or 2 or 3?” Then the manager said, “Well yes, we have 5 to 6 apartments.”

story continues –

The pain was so deeply stinging — like being stung by thousands of bees trying to kill my spirit. I was so tired, and I was full of despair, but I had to keep on looking, because it's always sunny in Sonoma County.... yeah, right.

I've moved 5 to 6 times, I just can't keep track. One of my landowners moved in a new stove and on the back, someone had written, "We hate niggers, that's why you must go." I was so angry and hurt. I took a picture and contacted Legal Aid, but nothing happened.

The worst was when I lived on George Street. I moved in with a great property management team of very nice people, but the actual landowner called me a "Black _ _ _ _ _" and my son "Boy." My son heard this and wanted to hit that ole' racist who hated us and other people of color. I had to take some action, so I contacted Fair Housing, but the case was denied.

These most-awful landowners told me to call them "landlord." I told both of them they didn't own me and, "I only call Jesus Christ 'my Lord.'" He is my savior and redeemer, and He's the only one that will receive the respect that is mine to give.

My Sonoma County dream started with the sunny, beautiful place we all see on the surface, but...yeah right...my experiences beneath that beautiful surface are right here too.

Tutor: Janet Felker

MY FAMILY IN SONOMA

Irma Flores García

Three years ago my family's life started to change. Joshua and Yurhitzia are my family in Sonoma. They are my children. My son Joshua is 19 years old and my daughter Yurhitzia is 16 years old. Why did our life change? There were many reasons that I would like to share.

My name is Irma Flores and I am from Mexico. I came to this country in November 2007 after separating from my husband. Jair is my older son but he decided to stay with his father in Mexico. The causes of the separation were domestic violence and alcohol. I came to the United States with Joshua and Yurhitzia when they were 5 and 8 years old. I focused to provide food, clothing and a safe place to live. I started to work very hard, because on my shoulders I had a big responsibility.

In the beginning, our lives were very difficult, because the English language and idioms were extremely hard for us. My daughter learned English quickly when she was 5 but for Joshua it was very tiring. He always said to me that in class, other students laughed at him because he cannot pronounce well the words.

At that time, we lived in Los Angeles and for three years my brother Noe provided for us. Noe said my kids needed care and I needed to study English. My parents talked to me about Sonoma because they visited my brothers Alfredo and Luis, and they said Sonoma is a good place for Joshua and Yurhi. After listening to my parents I was sure I wanted to live here. In 2010 we came to Sonoma. In Sonoma I feel safer than in Los Angeles.

Three years ago our lives took a 180-degree turn upon discovering that Joshua was immersed in a world of darkness — drugs and alcohol. It was a real sadness, a real helplessness to realize that my son was in a place that I never wanted him to be. I asked again and again what I did wrong? Because I worked very long hours to provide the essentials for my family, maybe I forgot to express how much I love them, that they are the reason for my life. My hope is for this time to pass quickly and our life to become better again.

Tutor: Sandy Drew

THE RETURN TO MÉXICO

Maria Zurita

I can't imagine returning to México with my family because there is a lot of violence and a lot of poor conditions that people have been living in for years. One of the reasons that I wanted to come to the United States was that I didn't want to see more crimes, where women were abused and kids were using drugs.

Every night as the darkness came, I felt my fear come, too. I didn't have peace because I thought that robbers would come to my house. That was what robbers would do even if they knew that people were in the house. If robbers came into the house, who would I call? When I was in México I didn't see police in the streets, I only saw security people who didn't carry any protection with them. I didn't know how they would have helped if a tragedy would have happened.

Now in these days I hear that all illegal people will be deported. That depressed me. But at the same time I have faith in God that whatever happens, something good will come out of it. I'm going to stick with that because my faith is the only thing that brings me peace.

The peace I feel from my faith in God is going to make me stronger, so I can make good decisions and a good plan. I have to investigate what will happen with my kids in case my husband and me get deported.

My husband has been telling me that he wants to sell the cars because if we get deported, what will we do in México without money? I don't know what to tell him. If we sell the cars, we would need to buy another car in order to move. If he buys an old car and the other car needs a lot of repairs, he would have to spend a lot of money to fix it.

This is the reality that a lot of illegal people are living with in the United States. We are living with fear. But the only thing that feels very sad is to see kids that are worried. I hope God changes the President's heart so he will stop all this injustice that these innocent people are suffering.

Finally, I would like to stay here in the U.S. where I have my family and where my kids were born. I wouldn't like to return to México where the sun is never bright because a big black cloud covers it with violence and corruption.

Tutor: Linda Evans

SECTION 3:

A Place for Other Topics I Want to Write About

“Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

— Oscar Wilde

MY FIRST WEEK OF WORK AFTER MY INJURY

Elsa Garduno

Monday we did not have children, we cleaned the classroom. At the end of the day I felt so tired. On Friday the main office had a big party for all Headstart employees in Sonoma County.

The party theme was Hollywood movies. My coworkers and I sat at the Titanic table. I met and spoke to people from other Headstart programs. This is called networking. It was a nice party. I had a good time.

Tutor: Jean Oliveira

CESAR CHAVEZ

Cristina Carras Rodriguez

Robert Kennedy once said when meeting Cesar Chavez, “I honor him for his compassion, his honesty, his truth and dedication.” Cesar Chavez is truly a heroic figure and his life-long struggle and sacrifice to better the lives of our poorest, most disenfranchised Americans are what made him heroic. The following is a brief overview of Cesar’s struggle to help migrant workers in California.

Cesar Chaves was born March 3, 1927, near Yuma, Arizona, the son of Librado and Juana Chavez. They had 5 children, three boys and two girls. Cesar’s parents married, in 1924 and bought land a mile from Cesar’s grandparents in Arizona. His father Librado was a hard working field worker. He owned a farm in Arizona but it was taken from him when he was unable to pay the taxes.

Then Librado became a migrant farm worker. However, even though Librado was poor he told Cesar that, “dignity meant more than money.” As a little boy, Cesar traveled through California’s Central Valley with his parents, sisters and brothers looking for work in the fields. Sometimes they lived in tents. Cesar attended many different schools as a boy until he quit school in the 8th grade to work in the fields. His father was injured in a car accident and could not work, so Cesar and his brothers worked in the fields to support the family. During the WWII, Cesar served in the navy for two years where he again felt the powerlessness of discrimination.

After the navy, he married Helen Fabela, a young woman from a family of farm workers. They moved to San Jose. Then they traveled up the coast as a logger in the redwood forest. He later met Fred Ross who taught Cesar that although he was poor he had power — the power to vote — and Cesar became active in registering migrants to vote. Ross had Cesar register field workers to vote and together they founded the Community Service Organization. Cesar organized some work laborers to strike against the Oxnard fruit growers and after a year the growers were forced to hire the local workers and pay them fair wages.

story continues –

Chavez organized a march to Sacramento demanding better wages and working conditions. Later, Cesar formed the National Farmworkers Association in 1965. Cesar was always a good leader. He looked to improve the life of migrant field workers. In 1968 in protest, Chavez stopped eating for twenty-five days straight. He drank only water and diet soda. His followers rallied behind him refusing to work. The boycott ended with higher wages and better healthcare for the union workers. Finally, he achieved his dream of helping all migrant field workers.

Tutor: Michael O'Looney



Photo Location / Credit: *Graton Day Labor / A. Adams*

A POEM ABOUT JAMIE

Jamie Campman

J: Jade is my birthstone

A: Ambitious

M: Memorable

I: Imaginative

E: Easy-going

Tutor: Inez Lybeck

MY DOG

Jenny Wong

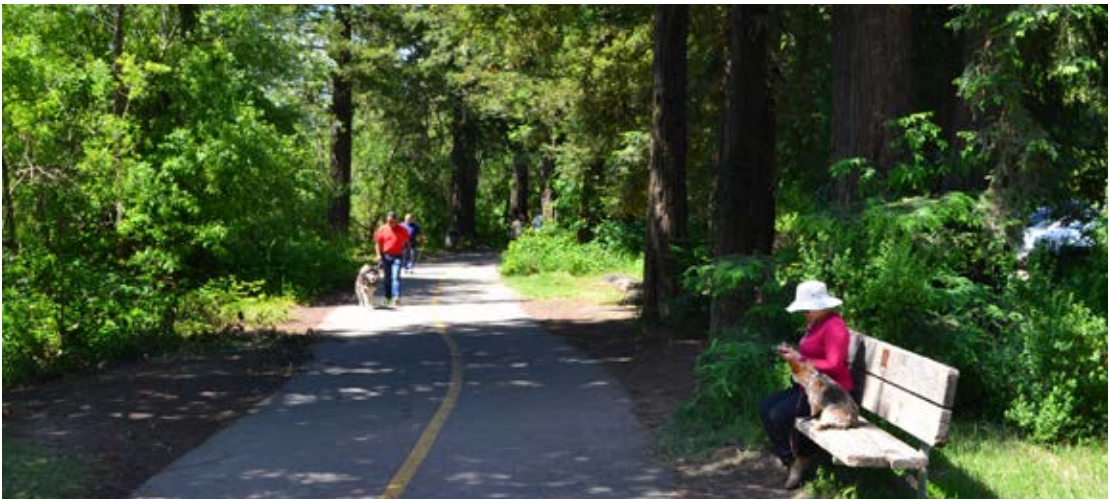
I have a three-year-old female dog, her name is Summer. Her fur is two colors, black and white. She weighs around fifty pounds. My daughter adopted her from the local animal shelter. We did a DNA Test and found out she is a mix of four breeds.

1. 37.5% American Staffordshire Terrier
2. 37.5% Miniature Schnauzer
3. 12.5% German Shepard
4. 12.5% Boxer

Every morning at 8:30 am I take her on a 40 minute walk. Because she barks at other dogs that make eye contact, my daughter took her to a pet training program at Petsmart in Rohnert Park. This has helped discipline her when she is on a leash.

We love her like a family member, she is a very good dog.

Tutor: Susan E. Levin



SECTION 4:

A Place To Create

“It is not down in any map; true places never are.”

— Herman Melville

LOVE

Veronika

Why is love trying to hide from me?
I would like to open my door
To let love come in to my life
As every morning my window
Welcomes the Sun
As it brightens my place.

Tutor: Claire Etienne



Photo Location / Credit: *Sun on Taylor Mountain / Sonoma County Regional Parks Photo Collection*

PATHS TO COME TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE HARMONY

Chandara Noun, Buddhist Monk

In life, to achieve peace, harmony, happiness or any sense of community, one must Listen for understanding. Understanding, of one's self, family, and community as well as respect for our differences. This can be applied to individual life, religion or family. If one can practice these concepts, one can feel fulfillment in one's life.

6 ways of finding Peace

1. Honesty with one another.
2. Tolerance of each other.
3. To persevere to make things realized.
4. To be persistent.
5. To have compassion.
6. To sacrifice for others.

3 ways to gain Peace

1. Have Peace with one's behavior.
2. Use proper words in speech with others to gain Peace.
3. Inner Peace with one's self.

Tutor: Sharon Dennison

FREE Services Provided by Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy

One-to-One Adult Literacy Tutoring & Family Literacy Services:

Available for enrolled adults at all branches and via distance learning platforms (Zoom).

An adult learner is matched with a volunteer tutor who is trained and supported by the Adult Literacy Coordinators team. The learning partners meet for tutoring sessions at their local library branch or on Zoom for: a minimum of 2-3 hours per week for at least six months to achieve learner-centered goals supported by the improvement of the adult's basic reading and writing skills. In addition, participants have access to laptops and tablets if needed for program participation, and small-group virtual instruction classes. Program assessment, instruction, training and materials are FREE.

Prerequisites/Learner Requirements:

In addition to having 2-3 hours a week to meet with a tutor in-person at their library or virtually using Zoom, adult learners need sufficient verbal English skills to communicate and understand their tutor, and to schedule their own tutor appointments and related communications independently. All interested adult learners begin by contacting us. Interested in FREE One-to-One Adult Literacy learning or tutoring?

Contact: (707) 544-2622

literacy@sonomalibrary.org

Visit Us: Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Office
Physical Address: 2nd Floor of Central Library
211 E Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Families for Literacy (FFL) is a service offered to all One-to-One adult learners who have children 0-18 years of age residing in or visiting their home on a regular basis.

The FFL program provides free new children's and young adult books for the adult learner's household. The tutor supports the adult learner in how to read the books aloud to their youngest children so the learner feels confident sharing the story as appropriate. FFL is designed to improve the adult's reading skill, to provide literacy skill-building tips for parents and caregivers, and to create an encouraging literacy environment in the home of all adult learners in our program.

English Conversation Classes: Available Virtually

Non-native English speakers meet for FREE classes led by a facilitator fluent in English. Classes are ongoing, free and designed to help adults practice and improve their conversational English skills in a welcoming and social environment.

Interested in English Conversation Classes?

To register for virtual Let's Talk English Conversation Classes:

Check the library's events listings: sonomalibrary.org/conversation

Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Partnerships

Community Outreach Classes for Adults:

At Partnership Sites (in-person and/or virtual classes per partner agreements)

English & Literacy Classroom Instruction

These classes for adult, non-native English speakers focus on developing English and literacy skills. Evening classes during the school year are provided with partner Luther Burbank Elementary School. Instruction is provided by credentialed instructors and bilingual (English/Spanish) classroom aides.

Interested in Community Outreach Classes for Adults?

Contact: Ernesto Sanchez at Luther Burbank Elementary

(707) 235-2910 (Bilingual English/Spanish)

Alisa Adams, Adult Literacy Services Coordinator (707) 544-2622

Inmate Literacy Instruction, Library Programming & Classes: Santa Rosa, CA

Through a contract partnership with the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, we provide ongoing Adult Literacy and classes taught by credentialed instructors at both the Main Adult Detention Facility and the North County Detention Facility. Inmates interested in these services contact their Inmate Services representative to sign up. Classes are in-person or virtual (per current partnership agreements).

Graton Day Labor ESL Classes:

ESL classes are ongoing and free at the Graton Day Labor Center located at:

2981 Bowen Street, in Graton, CA

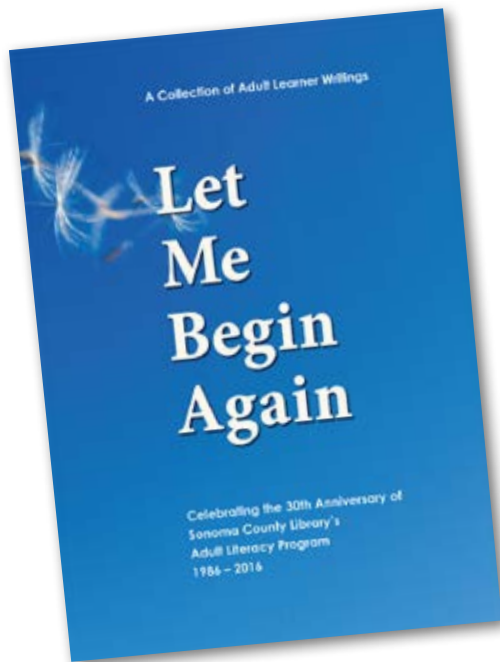
Interested students must be members of the Graton Day Labor Center to participate.

Interested in ESL classes at the Graton Day Labor Center?

Contact: (707) 829-1864



Read more stories by our adult learners...

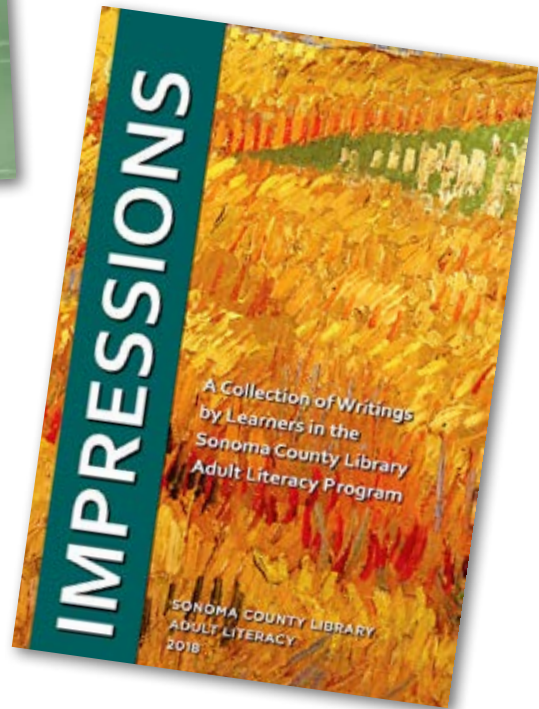


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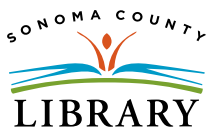


2017
Publication

2018
Publication



Find out how to get involved with our
Adult Literacy program as a donor,
volunteer tutor or adult learner.



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