

ADULT LITERACY COMMUNITY

Quarterly articles, features, and highlights



Spring Is Upon Us

April is National Volunteer Month, so this issue is the perfect time for me to acknowledge that the growth and development of our library adult literacy programs just would not be possible without volunteers who generously share their time, energy, and knowledge with us in their roles as tutors, class facilitators, and learning partners.

Let's celebrate together! Check out page 8 of this newsletter for an invitation to an in-person program celebration and release of: *Arrivals and Departures* on Wednesday, April 19th, 2023, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm in the Central Santa Rosa Library Forum Room.

Also inside this issue, in honor of Pride Month, celebrated in June, we're featuring information about the start of the Pride movement in America (page 2) to help develop and grow LGBTQ culture knowledge and vocabulary.

Wishing you an abundant Spring & hoping to celebrate with you April 19th,

A. Adams

**Adult Literacy Supervisor
Sonoma County Library**

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- **HIGHLIGHTS**
- **GLOSSARY**
- **INTERVIEWS**
- **IDIOMS**
- **STUDENT WRITING**
- **AND MORE!**

American Culture Corner

Don't know much about LGBTQ history in the U.S.?

Here are some key moments to learn about

Taking place every June, **Pride Month** celebrates the **self-affirmation**, dignity, equality, and increased visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and **transgender** people. The month-long celebration was given the name "Pride" to encourage those feelings as the community comes together to celebrate and **bolster** **LGBTQ+** rights movements.

Before Pride became a celebration, it started out as a protest. In the early-morning hours of June 28, 1969, police **raided** the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay Greenwich Village nightclub in New York, for the second time in a week — a common occurrence in an era when nearly all aspects of LGBTQ life were criminalized. That night, however, the crowd resisted and refused to leave, and patrons clashed with police as the confrontation grew to include hundreds of demonstrators. Riots and resistance continued into the following week. The Stonewall uprising **galvanized** activists across the country and set into motion the modern LGBTQ equal rights movements — including pride.

One year after the Stonewall protests, people **commemorated** the uprising with marches in New York City, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The phrase "gay pride" was also brand-new that year, **coined** by activists as a shorthand to unite the events planned as part of the movement. In 1971, pride went worldwide, with celebratory parades and demonstrations taking place in West Berlin, London, Paris, and Stockholm. Today, LGBTQ Pride celebrations take place in June in the U.S. and at similar or different times throughout the world.

For more online resources, see the top of page 3.

Pride Month: a celebration of the **queer** community every June in the United States

Glossary

queer: is a reclaimed word used to describe any sexual orientation and/or gender identity that may fall outside the common identities

self-affirmation: the act of positively confirming one's own worthiness and value as an individual

transgender: or trans, refers to a person who identifies as a different gender than the sex they were assigned at birth

bolster: to support, boost, or reinforce

LGBTQ+: an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and more — these terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

raided: a sudden attack or invasion

galvanized: to cause someone to suddenly take action, especially by shocking or exciting them

commemorated: to recall and show respect/celebrate something

coined: coined: invent or come up with a new word or phrase

osmosis: effortless — often unconscious recalling/learning

Peace Corps: an organization that trains and sends volunteers to countries all across the world

Quechua: an indigenous language spoken mainly by those living in the Peruvian Andes

docent: a volunteer guide typically at a museum, art gallery, or zoo

delinquent: a young person who is assumed at risk to commit crimes

phonological awareness: a person's ability to recognize and work with sounds in spoken language

More Online Resources about LGBTQ History

The article on page 2 is from: "Key Moments in LGBTQ Pride History: The evolution of a movement, from Stonewall to same-sex marriage" by Sarah Elizabeth Adler. You can find the complete article here:

<https://rb.gy/vk6zau>

Want to learn about gender identity terms, definitions, and pronouns? Check out: "A Guide to Gender Identity Terms" from NPR:

<https://rb.gy/wtxjh8>

Help Us Spread the Word - New Tutor Trainings

Do you have any family or friends who want to become a tutor in the Adult Literacy Program?

Our program has expanded to include English language instruction as well as literacy tutoring. Call us in advance so we can answer any questions and help people register for one of the new tutor trainings below:

**Tuesday, April 18, 2023:
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM**

**Monday, August 21, 2023:
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM**

Student Writing

The Wildfire

By Alicia Caldera

On Sunday evening October 8, 2017, a wildfire started in Sonoma and Napa Counties. It was very windy, and a transmission line broke. The broken line made many sparks and set the wood and grass on fire. It was very dry because there had been no rain for a long time. The fire spread rapidly. The fire caused a lot of damage, houses burned, people were trapped, and some tried to escape. It was too late and they didn't have time to get their possessions, it was a terrible situation.

The city of Santa Rosa was very damaged, people were killed, thousands of houses burned. It was one of the worst wildfires in the history of California.



Student Writing

The Party

Experience Story dictated by Consuelo Diaz

Last Saturday my daughter-in-law had a party for my granddaughter. I made pozole. My daughter-in-law made tres leche cake because she loves it. The other grandma made Jell-O and flan. The cousins, uncles, and friends came to the party. My granddaughter was happy! My son set up the jump-house and all the kids were jumping, yelling, and having fun.

We played a game called "How Well Do You Know Her?" Me and the other grandma had the same points to win the game. The questions were:

- 1) What is her middle name? It is Madeleine.
- 2) What is her shoe size? It is 1, but I put in 13. The other grandma put in 11 ½.
- 3) What is her favorite ice cream? Strawberry.
- 4) What does she like more – unicorns or mermaids? Mermaids.
- 5) What does she like best – books or movies? I said movies, but she likes books best.

My granddaughter turns 8 tomorrow but we had the party last Saturday. She enjoyed the party!



Diego Got Sick

By Blanca Valencia

Seeing your child sick is the most frustrating thing you can imagine. On February 7th Diego got sick after he got out of school. He looked very tired, he didn't want to eat anything, and he was coughing with a lot of phlegm. When he was asleep that night he couldn't breathe, and I couldn't sleep seeing my poor son.

In the morning my husband called his main doctor and she didn't have any appointments available until the next day. It was hard seeing my child suffering like that. When the effects of the medicine wore off, the fever returned. He was vomiting and coughing, and he lost his appetite.

I couldn't wait until the next day so I decided go to the Emergency Room (ER). When we arrived at the ER we went to the waiting room and the nurse assistant came. She asked what was going on and I told her what was happening. She asked for his name and she told me that somebody was going to help us.

Until they called his name, we waited in the waiting room. A few minutes later a nurse called us and he asked me how long Diego was sick. He checked Diego's lungs, oxygen, heart rate, weight, and temperature. He moved us to a room. When the doctor came, he told me he checked everything again and said that everything is normal. The doctor only prescribed Tylenol and Ibuprofen for the fever. He said that Diego's lungs sounded okay and we shouldn't worry. So I asked for an x-ray and he refused to do it because for him everything was normal. I left the hospital very disappointed. The next day my husband said Diego must have an x-ray, and they found Diego had pneumonia. He is okay now, but we were scared.

Reach Your Goals Class

Thursdays 4:30 - 5:30 PM on Zoom

Reach Your Goals is an online class that meets on Thursdays from 4:30 - 5:30 PM and focuses on reading the online newspaper News For You. Students read and discuss articles together. This class is open to all learners in the Adult Literacy program including those enrolled in the English Language Partners program.

This online newspaper is also available for free to all tutors and learners. Go to newsforyouonline.com. At the top of the home page next to the *News For You* title, you will see a "sign in" button. In the space next to the button that says "Enter your News for You password" type **88C385**. Click on the "sign in" button and enjoy!

Get to Know Class Facilitator, Ernesto Sanchez



Ernesto Sanchez

Interviewed by Leticia Soria

Ernesto Sanchez' motivation "to live a life of service" stems from his desire to honor his parents' legacy. "Being the son of Elena and Marcelino is my driving force," says Ernesto. "Everything I know, I got from my father through **osmosis**." And from his mother, Ernesto says he learned the meaning of "true strength."

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Ernesto later moved to Santa Rosa with his family. His connection to this city and the people in it runs deep. Ernesto has been working at Luther Burbank Elementary School for 37 years. He took on the role of Family Mentor for a while before returning to his initial and current position as an RSP Teacher Assistant. Additionally, he has been working at Adult Literacy for about 20 years, starting as a Literacy Associate and eventually becoming a Contract Instructor.

In the evenings, Ernesto facilitates virtual *Reach Your Goals* classes and in-person English Language and Literacy Classes at Luther Burbank and Santa Rosa High School. "It's an opportunity for genuine supportive connections. That's what I strive for. That's what everybody needs. It's a wonderful feeling to have somebody that cares about you," says Ernesto describing his role as an instructor. When asked what advice he has for adult learners, Ernesto shares: "No matter what you encounter, have faith in yourself and push forward."

Ernesto cherishes his close-knit family which includes his sister and four brothers. He says spending time with them is his definition of a perfect day. Ernesto also values the little things in life like going to coffee shops, reading, and hiking. Ernesto says he has plans to slow down sometime in the future: "I'm going to wait for the harvest to come naturally. Right now, my life really is work." Ernesto adds that being dedicated to his work, "helps me acknowledge all the blessings that I have. I am overly blessed. That's the way I live my life."

Get To Know Learner Sicheng Huang



Sicheng Huang

What was your first job?

My first job was working in a factory in China making plastic. I was 19 years old when I worked there and I didn't finish High School.

What is your favorite music?

My favorite music is classical Cantonese music.

What is your favorite food?

Dim Sum because it includes so many things - it's not just one or two dishes.

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a doctor because when I was a child I lived in a small town and if someone got sick, you need to go far away to visit the hospital. And at that time if I was a doctor, I could help the neighborhood and help solve the problems. It was my dream, but it has never come true in my life.

Dim Sum: a large range of small Cantonese dishes that are traditionally enjoyed in restaurants

In the Springtime you can usually find Sicheng hiking at Annadel State Park and riding her bike at Spring Lake: "Those things can refresh my mind and enjoy nature and let me get more energy for the learning." Sicheng needs as much energy for learning as she can get, to help her juggle her child development studies at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) and weekly tutoring with her tutor, Anne Sekara.

When Sicheng moved to the U.S. in 2017 with her husband and son, she didn't know the language or the culture. But throughout her time here Sicheng has been motivated by one thing: "I want to be a good example to my son. I'm not too old to learn and since we live in a new country, we have to learn the native language and continue learning about the culture and everything."

Her son is now 18 and ready to graduate from high school, but Sicheng is as invested in the Adult Literacy program as ever: "My favorite things are tutoring once a week with the tutor and another is improving my oral English in the conversation class." Because of her participation in the program's online Conversation Classes, Sicheng feels more confident when answering the phone: "I have a hard time to hear what someone is talking about. Tutoring has improved those things for me." Sicheng's proudest moment was when she was asked to write an eight-page essay ("eight pages, can you imagine!?") for one of her classes at SRJC.

Sicheng shares that two years ago she took the highest ESL course at SRJC and "the writing was very hard for me and I wanted to give up. But after my tutor encouraged me and the professor encouraged me not to give up and give it my best, I didn't give up the class." Sicheng's advice to others about achieving their goals is: "No matter what it is you encounter you must keep going and never give up."

It has been almost four years since Sicheng has been to China to see her family because of the pandemic and the cost of flights. However, Sicheng and her family "plan to go back to China this summer. We plan to stay for almost two months." Sicheng says what she misses most about China are the local foods and traditional holidays. Lunar New Year is always her favorite time because "the whole family gets together and cooks a big meal."

Get To Know Tutor Randi Farkas



Randi Farkas

What is your favorite book?

The Immense Journey by Loren Eiseley — it's environmental and sociological. It opened up a new way of looking at evolution for me.

What are you reading now?

My learner and I are reading: *Crying in the Bathroom – A Memoir* by Erika L. Sánchez. It's very frank. She grew up in a traditional Mexican-American family but didn't want to go that route. Her first book is a novel: *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*. I'd recommend both books for adult learners.

What are your hobbies?

I'm interested in dream work: how dreams can give us guidance in our waking life, such as bringing to light a part of us that we haven't developed yet. Also, I'm a tidepool **docent** at the coast.

Who or what has inspired you?

Young people speaking out and marching to protect each other and the environment.

Dreams can reveal your truth, especially for tutor Randi Farkas. She was a Literature and Art major in college but at that time, she was thinking about alternative education (instead of the traditional model of “sticking people in desks for 12 years — which isn't healthy.”) Randi had a dream (while sleeping) that she was supposed to be a teacher, and this led to her career centered on child development. She decided to get her Master's in Education, and “I taught third-graders and loved it, then I was hired to run an alternative school for children ages 4 to 12.” Randi moved to California from the East Coast and got her teaching credential here, working with all ages including juvenile **delinquents** in San Francisco.

Randi's teaching career expanded: “In my anti-Vietnam War days, I co-authored a Peace curriculum for elementary schools, which was adopted by Berkeley public schools. I also became certified in Special Ed and specialized in dyslexia: This required different approaches such as working in clay, for example, which I had learned as a preschool teacher, plus there was the emotional aspect since many of those kids had been told they were stupid.” Then Randi decided she didn't want to be a teacher anymore, got her degree and was licensed in counseling, and this led her to open a private practice.

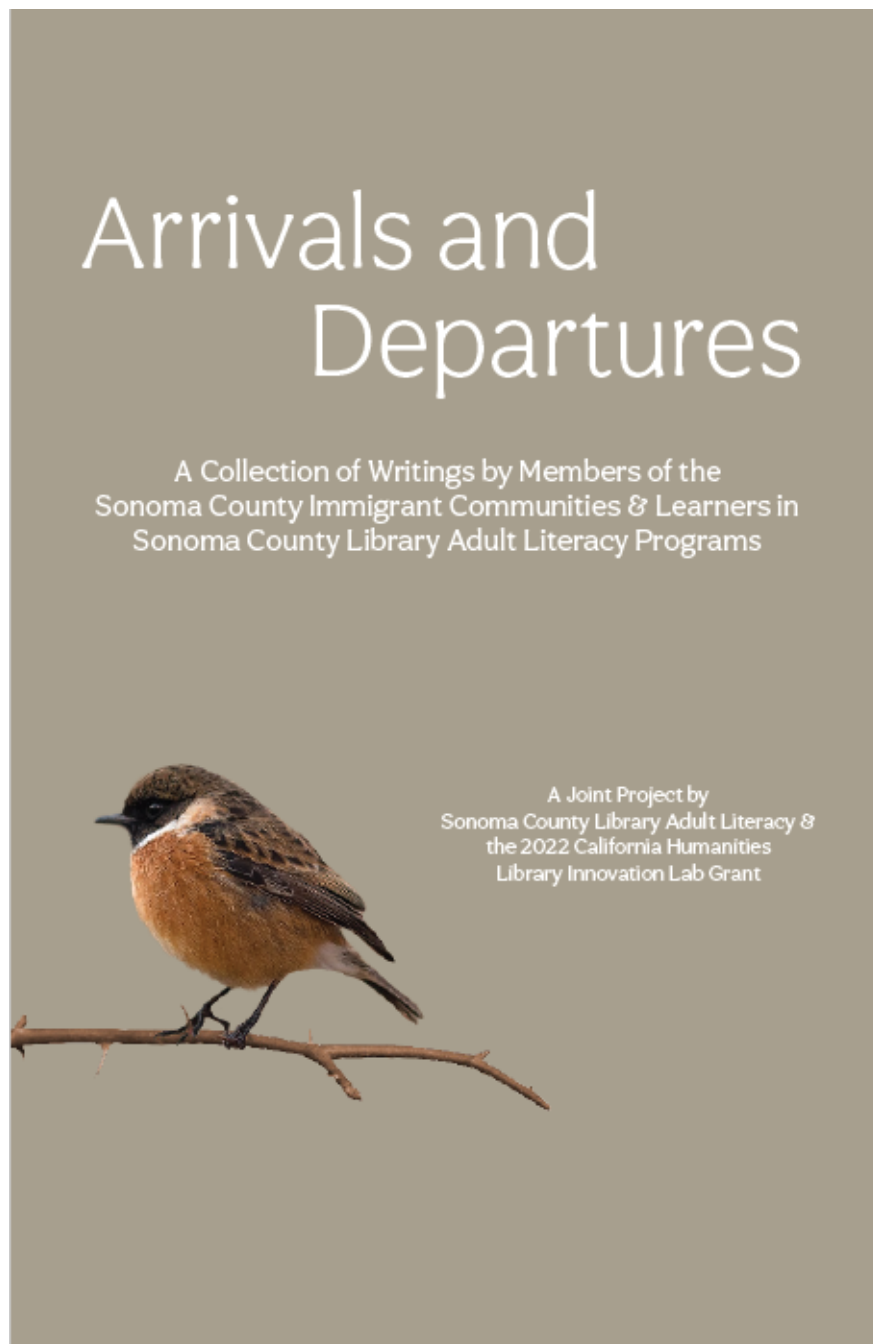
Randi began tutoring in the Adult Literacy Program in 2010, and has worked with seven adult learners so far. “It's exciting to get people interested in reading, and to figure out how that's different for each person.” What Randi enjoys about being a tutor is that “I like the creativity and being encouraged by the program to figure out my own way for tutoring each learner. I also like tutoring at the library — I love libraries — and it's a good place for teaching literacy.”

What is Randi's advice to adult learners? “Don't be shy about giving your tutor feedback. You're collaborating as equals so you want good communication.” For tutors, Randi suggests: “The way you teach should be challenging, not too easy. Try mixing different materials and activities, then be attentive to your learner and see how they respond.”

Celebrate With Us!

Celebrate the release of our latest anthology *Arrivals and Departures* on Wednesday, April 19 from 6:00 - 7:00 PM in the Forum Room at the Central Library Branch in downtown Santa Rosa.

RSVP by April 10, 2023 via phone (707) 544 - 2622 or email:
literacy@sonomalibrary.org



Student Writing

Book Review of *The Other Einstein*

By Yi Zhang

The novel *The Other Einstein* was about Albert Einstein's wife (Mitza Maric), a brilliant physicist — who contributed her efforts to the special theory of relativity. She became Einstein's secret scientific partner, becoming lost in his shadow. The story took me into Maric's heart, mind, and study as she attempted to seek a position for herself in a scientific world dominated by men.

Mitza Maric was born in Titel in Serbia to a wealthy family with loving parents and had a happy childhood. Her mother was a traditional woman and worried about whether Maric could have an opportunity to get married because of her deformity (her limp). On the other hand, Maric's father discovered her gifts in science and spent plenty of time cultivating her interests, meanwhile to support her career in physics he sent her to a genius university in Switzerland. It was a big challenge for Mitza to study mathematics and physics in a men-dominated world, and she was isolated.

However, her close relationship with three female classmates and Albert Einstein gave her a sense of warmth and love. Afterward, Mitza and Einstein fell in love and had a baby without marriage. Her situation forced her to give up her education and return to her hometown to give birth to keep the secret. Although Einstein promised to bring their daughter to Switzerland after they got married, he did not keep his word and was unwilling to see his daughter even as she died from scarlet fever — which made Maric inconsolable. In order to escape her grief, she was devoted to studying the theory of relativity by working with Einstein and craved to find her position in her career, and at the same time, they had two sons. After Albert Einstein became well-known because of their theory, he spent less and less time with his family and spent more and more time with his fellows and even had affairs — that caused Mitza to leave.

I appreciated the author, Marie Benedict, who dug into Maric's history to allow readers to see her natural gift in mathematics and physics and what her renowned husband was like behind the public mask. In my eyes, Einstein was selfish and hard-hearted because he pursued his wishes, desires, and ambitions without caring about Maric and their children's needs. He was unwilling to share any physical academic and scientific achievements with his wife, removing her name from the article on the theory of relativity, and receiving the Nobel Prize alone. Besides this, when Maric gave birth in her hometown and almost died, Einstein made many excuses to refuse to visit them, and even as his daughter (Lieserl) died, he never saw her. His egotism and his desire for success made him seem to lose his humanity even though his contribution was evident.

I recommend this fascinating novel to you and believe that it will give you insight into the "splendid real life" of Einstein and the treatment of his wife and children. You will see how brave she was to leave Albert and find her backbone.



Celebrate Your Work Together

All entries generated from tutor reports -
THANK YOU!

- My learner has successfully interviewed for and just been hired for a better job than her current one. She is also taking a full schedule of Santa Rosa Junior College classes online.
- She is participating in the Bus Operator Training Program, and has mastered accessing Zoom meetings and has learned how to submit homework via Canvas.
- I was delighted when he presented me with a summary of a chapter he read in *The Lightning Thief*. Writing has been a challenge for him.
- She has earned her Permanent Residency designation. I am very proud of her, and I'm glad that she chose to come to the United States.
- We learned strong verbs to write sentences to add to her resume. She will use this resume to get a new job!
- My learner continues to enjoy reading about inspiring people who have "made a mark" on the world. We are now reading about Ketanji Brown Jackson (Supreme Court Justice).

Get to Know the Conversation Class Facilitators



Thea Evensen

Interviewed by Leticia Soria

"I truly know how it feels to be in a country with no access to the language," Thea Evensen says, describing her **Peace Corps** experience volunteering in Peru in her early twenties. Although she received some training in Spanish, many people in the town spoke **Quechua**. "I didn't want to go outside because I couldn't speak or understand. It was a terrible feeling. Very slowly I began to learn, but it was frustrating, and I often felt like I wanted to give up."

Thea did not give up. To this day she maintains her Spanish studies with trips to Mexico and weekly one-on-one Skype sessions with her Spanish teacher. Thea says practice is essential to learning a new skill and progress doesn't happen overnight. "It took me many years to feel confident with Spanish."

Thea is an empathetic English Conversation Class Facilitator. "I really enjoy my students," she adds. "They teach me so much and they're all such interesting people. My teaching style involves conversation, of course, but I also love English grammar. I always try to include a grammar or pronunciation exercise. At the students' request, I've also added a dictation exercise to help them with spelling and listening skills."

Outside of facilitating conversation classes, Thea's interests include playing the piano, traveling, and writing. She is currently working on a collection of short stories and poems about her life. "Some of my proudest moments were when each of my four sons was born, and then my four grandchildren," she says. "The newest grandchild is due in April."

When asked about challenges in her life, Thea shares two quotes that keep everything in perspective and put a smile on her face. 'Constant change is here to stay' and 'this too shall pass.' She adds, "it's always true."

Idioms

Each newsletter, we will bring you a new English idiom.

Feel Like a Million Bucks

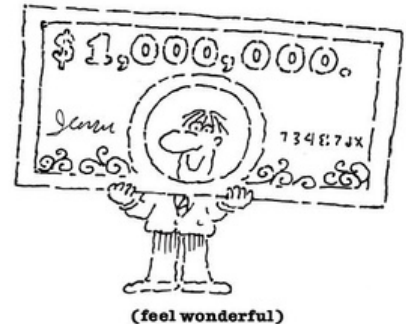
"I bumped into Nick at the barbershop yesterday. He looked great, but I noticed that he had a slight limp when he walked."

"I guess you didn't know that he had an operation on his knee."

"No, I didn't. How is he feeling?"

"He says he's **feeling like a million bucks** now. Apparently the pain in his knee is all gone."

"It's good that he's **feeling so wonderful**. It must be a refreshing change not having to put up with all that discomfort."

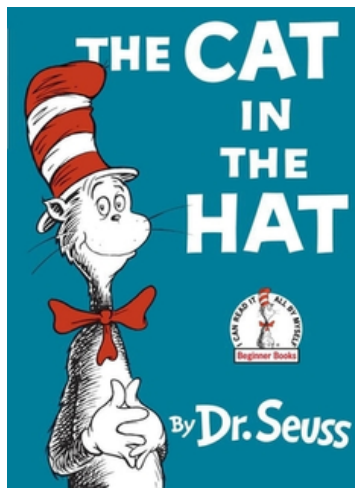


Family Literacy Tips

Play is the most age-appropriate way for young children to learn. Playing with words is a great way for your child to hear the different sounds and parts of the words that make up their language. Help your child recognize that some words rhyme, some words begin with the same sound, some words end the same, and words can be broken down into smaller sounds or parts. Children who begin to notice these things are developing **phonological awareness**. Most children who have a strong sense of phonological awareness have an easier time learning to read.

Types of books that help your child play with words:

- Rhyming books
- Dr. Seuss books
- Mother Goose
- Nursery Rhyme books
- Books that illustrate a familiar song
- Books with a rhythm or beat
- Books with animal noises



What's Cooking?

Have a favorite recipe or food-related story to share? Send it to literacy@sonomalibrary.org

Flan

by Dulce Grajeda

Recipe for flan, serves 6

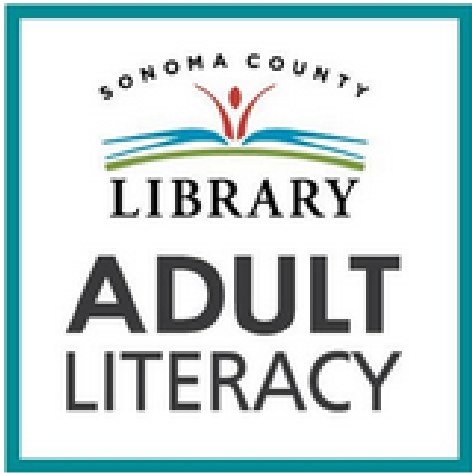
Ingredients:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 8 oz Philadelphia cream cheese
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Put the rack in the center of the oven.

Put all ingredients in the blender on medium spin for one minute. Put the mixture in an ovenproof bowl or square dish. Put the container in the oven for 30 minutes. Turn off the oven and leave in the dish for 10 minutes more. Take the dish and put it outside the oven. Wait until the container is room temperature (one or two hours). Then put the dish in the refrigerator for at least one hour. The flan is ready for serving. Cut in 6 pieces and serve with a pie server.

This story was originally featured in our 2017 Sonoma County Library Adult Literacy Collection:
Bringing Our Stories to the Table.



Adult Literacy Office

Our office is located inside the
Central Santa Rosa Library, 2nd floor
211 E Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Adult Literacy Hours

Our office is open Monday - Friday
10 AM - 3 PM
You can reach us at (707) 544-2622 or
literacy@sonomalibrary.org

How to Submit Your Work

Submissions under 300 words to the Adult Literacy Community newsletter are welcome! We cannot guarantee publication, and materials may be edited and cannot be returned. Please include your name, email, and phone number. Student writings and photos can be sent to:

literacy@sonomalibrary.org

How to Get Involved as a New Tutor

Call or email to preregister for an upcoming new tutor orientation:

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 - 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Monday, August 21, 2023 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Ongoing Classes Open to All:

Join our Conversation Classes for practice speaking English at all levels.

Classes take place on Zoom:

Wednesdays 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Thursdays 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Find and register for classes at

sonomalibrary.org/conversation

Upcoming Library Holidays 2023:

April 9 - Library Closed - Easter Sunday

May 29 - Library Closed - Memorial Day

June 19 - Library Closed - Juneteenth