

January 2017 Newsletter

“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.”

– Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., Civil War Veteran &
U.S. Supreme Court Justice (1902-1932)

You help stretch your students’ minds every time you meet with them (and maybe stretch your own, too.) This is a priceless gift.

Welcome to



A new year, a new school! In January, we will begin to place tutors in Loma Verde Elementary School. Loma Verde is a K-5 school in the Ignacio area of Novato. In 2015, 69% of its 3rd graders did not achieve a Met or Exceeds grade level standard on California state tests in English-Language Arts/Literacy. (Almost all of our other schools have a similar profile.) Equally important, Loma Verde’s principal, teachers and staff are welcoming and the kids are (of course) adorable.

We now have tutors in 9 schools:

- In Novato, we are in Hamilton and Loma Verde Elementary Schools
- In San Rafael, we are in Bahia Vista, Coleman, Laurel Dell, San Pedro, Short, Sun Valley and Venetia Valley Elementary Schools.

If you have a friend, neighbor, acquaintance, etc. who might be interested in volunteering with us, please let Tove, Julianne, Donna or Judy know. We can always use more tutors, and your referrals bring us the strongest volunteers.

Volunteers of the Week – Congratulations to Sister Colleen Kern and Todd Wiedenmayer who were recognized as Volunteers of the Week!



We've been lucky to have Coleman tutor Sister Colleen Kern volunteer with us for over 8 years. She was recognized in the *Marin IJ* on November 9th. Cathy Falco, 2nd grade teacher at Coleman Elementary School, wrote "Sister Colleen is dedicated and caring. She teaches children to be responsible and independent. She is unwavering in her belief that if students persevere, they will become excellent learners and eventually successful adults. We are fortunate to have her teach our children."



Venetia Valley volunteer Todd Wiedenmayer now supports two classrooms, focusing on literacy as well as computer skills. He was recognized in the *Marin IJ* on January 4, 2017. "I have worked with Mr. Todd for 4 years. He helps with centers, reads one-on-one with students, and also develops their computer skills. The students love him. They are always so excited to see him. We also love hearing about his travels. He has literally traveled around the world." says Yoana Landin, 1st grade teacher at Venetia Valley Elementary School.

**I CAN
University**

Literacy Training at Venetia Valley –On January 11th, many tutors from across our schools and Marin County School Volunteers attended a literacy training given by Rebecca Hornthal, Venetia Valley's Literacy Coach. In addition to sharing some staggering statistics about illiteracy

in the U.S., Rebecca educated us about:

- A FIXED mindset ("I've always been stupid") versus a GROWTH mindset ("I can't read this book yet but if I keep working at it, I will be able to."). Tutors and teachers are invaluable to instilling and maintaining a growth mindset in students.
- The importance of GRIT (aka PERSERVERANCE) to a growth mindset. We saw the TED talk by Angela Duckworth about this. You can view it at https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance
- Strategies to help students decode words they can't pronounce
- Tips that tutors can use before a student starts a reading session (pre-reading), during reading and post-reading. Post-reading questions at the end of a session can provide a sense of closure even if you haven't finished reading the book. They can also build anticipation and excitement about returning to the reading next time.

If you'd like copies of the material, contact Judy Kramer.



Experience Corps Marin Library – Judy has started a small library of books about tutoring and some of the teaching approaches we’re learning about. It includes:

- Carol Dweck’s “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” (which describes the fixed vs. growth mindsets)
- Paul Tough’s “How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character”

- “The Practical Tutor” by Emily Meyer and Louse Z. Smith

Please contact Judy if you’d like to borrow any of these books.

Training & a Movie



“Diving into Common Core Math” – Back by popular demand, on Tues., February 14th from 10 am – 1 pm, join trainer Paula Hammons and dive in with us for an interactive and fun workshop concerning the philosophy, methodology and language associated with 21st Century Common Core Math. With simple word problems being introduced in Kindergarten, literacy is an important part of Math at all grades. This is

an updated version of the training she presented in March 2016. Please contact Judy Kramer if you’d like to attend.

"What's behind Behavioral Challenges and How to Address Them" is being presented by Volunteers-4-Youth on Tues., February 28 from 4-6pm at Marin County Office of Education (MCOE), 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., San Rafael. It will be led by Sandra Ramirez-Griggs, a bilingual, bicultural mental health professional who works in Marin County Schools.

Volunteers-4-Youth will also screen the film **"Paper Tigers,"** about how one high school has succeeded in working with at-risk youth. It is by Marin filmmaker Jamie Redford and will be shown on Tues., March 7 from 4-6pm at MCOE, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., San Rafael.

Cultural Sensitivity - Mariana Lopez, a program manager for Marin County School Volunteers and the LEAP AfterCare director in San Rafael schools, leads an excellent training on cultural sensitivity that EC Marin staff and volunteers have found of value. The next session will be held on Tues., March 21, 2017 from 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM at MCOE, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., San Rafael. To register, click here

<http://mcsv.org/event-2429633> or contact Judy Kramer.



Basic literacy training is required of first-year tutors but is also open to experienced tutors. EC Marin trainer Paula Hammons will lead these “Literacy 101” and “Literacy 201” sessions. Judy Kramer has contacted you if you haven’t taken these trainings. See the Calendar below for dates and locations.

- “Literacy 101” Brief Description: Overview of the basic elements of literacy instruction to help you understand how reading is taught in today’s schools; different learning styles; tips for behavior management; and an opportunity to share tips and challenges with fellow tutors
- “Literacy 201” Brief Description: A deeper look at literacy instruction with a focus on developing fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills; tips for working with English Learner students; and an opportunity to share tips and challenges with fellow tutors

Please take Literacy 101 and Literacy 201 in sequence. They may be taken more than once – you learn something new each time. To register for the trainings, please contact Judy Kramer.

Calendar

Date	Event	Time	Location
January			
Mon., Jan. 23	Literacy 101	12:30 – 3 pm	Room 107, Connection Center, 3240 Kerner Blvd., SR
February			
Mon., Feb. 6	Literacy 201	12:30 – 3 pm	TBA
Thurs., Feb. 9	Novato Schools: Minimum Day		
Tues., Feb. 14	Deep Dive into Math	10 am – 1 pm	CVNL Conference Room, 65 Mitchell Blvd., Suite 101, SR
Feb. 20-24	Mid-Winter Break – No School		
Tues., Feb. 28	“Behavioral Changes & How to Address Them”	4 – 6 pm	MCOE, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., SR
March			
Thurs., March 2	Literacy 101	10 am – 12:30 pm	TBA
Tues., March 7	“Paper Tigers” (film)	4 - 6 pm	MCOE, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., SR
Thurs., March 9	Literacy 201	10 am – 12:30 pm	TBA
March 20-24	Parent Conference Week at San Rafael schools (no school on Monday; ½ day Tuesday-Friday)		
Tues., March 21	Cultural Sensitivity Click here to register http://mcsv.org/event-2429633	9:30 – 11:30 am	MCOE, 1111 Las Gallinas Ave., SR
Mon., March 27	Novato Schools: Minimum Day		
April			
April 10-14	Spring Break – No School		
Sat., April 29	CVNL Volunteer Fair	10 am – 1 pm	Buck Institute for Research on Aging, Novato
May			
TBA May	EC Marin Celebration – date, time location TBA		
Fri., May 26	Novato Schools – No School (Staff Development)		
Mon., May 29	Memorial Day – No School		
June			
Thurs., June 8	San Rafael Schools – Last Day of School		
Fri., June 9	Novato Schools – Last Day of School		