

# LiteracyLinks

The Portland Literacy Council Newsletter for Volunteer Tutors

Peggy L. Murphy, Editor

October 2011

## In This Issue

Take Me Out to the Ballgame  
GED Fundraiser  
Community Grant Reminder  
Tutor Toolbox  
Calendar  
Opportunities  
How Many Tutors?

## Board of Directors

Kris Magaurn, Chair  
Jay Morgensen, Vice President  
Sharon Callen, Treasurer  
Emilia Gilroy-Sander, Secretary  
Troy Hickman  
Cari Martz  
Penny Russman  
Peggy L. Murphy  
Lisa Davidson

## Portland Literacy Council

PO Box 2872  
Portland, OR 97208-2872  
[www.portlandliteracy.org](http://www.portlandliteracy.org)  
Email Newsletter Editor

## Special Notice

PLC is proud to offer a \$500 community grant to a nonprofit providing adult literacy tutoring. See page 2 for more details. Apply via the [Portland Literacy website](http://Portland Literacy website).

## Take Me Out to the Ballgame

By Peggy L. Murphy



Fran Eichenauer and Alfredo Calles

If you walked by one ESOL classroom at PCC Southeast Center around the 4th of July this summer, you might have thought that Portland baseball was returning. You would have heard "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." If you had opened the classroom door, you would have caught a whiff of peanuts and Cracker Jacks. That's because volunteer tutor Fran Eichenauer was demonstrating American culture to her students through music, taste, and smell.

After Fran and her husband relocated from Colorado to Portland to be near children and grandchildren, she discovered tutoring at PCC Southeast Mercy Corps. She's tutored steadily since winter term 2011. A social worker by trade, her work with groups is a natural fit for a conversation class.

Using a variety of methods, Fran teaches her Level 2 and 3 students technical language skills including grammar, word structure, and pronunciation. Word bingo facilitates learning prefixes, suffixes, and difficult word sounds.

Please see Fran, page 2.

**Fran** ( Continued from page 2).

Scrabble tiles serve as building blocks for teaching spelling. For students with limited English vocabularies, Fran uses the white board and has students draw pictures of life in their home country. Fran writes the new words on the white board, and the student copies them. As their English skills increase, Fran has observed that her students become more comfortable conversing, learn to fit into their new surroundings, and begin to use their English skills for practical matters such as conversing with their children's teachers.

Fran's inspiration comes from her students who have much to teach about language and culture. While she prepares for each class, she doesn't hesitate to set

aside lesson plans to follow the students' interests. She finds that flexibility results in delightful surprises — one of her students is a well-known Salvadoran artist who helped paint the cupola ceiling of the National Museum in El Salvador.

Many students are exposed to American culture through cable TV. To the uninitiated, professional baseball games would be hard put to compete with action-filled shows such as "Cops." I'm willing to bet that if Fran's students were channel surfing and came upon a Seventh Inning Stretch and heard "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," they would join in and also recall the taste sensations of peanuts and Cracker Jacks. Ahhh — a positive recollection of American culture à la Fran Eichenauer.

## Scrabble Tournament for GED Test Scholarship Fund

Scrabble Tournament 2011 registration is now open. ([Register online here.](#)) Proceeds from registration fees will benefit Portland Literacy Council's GED Test Scholarship Fund, and help hard-working adults earn this basic education credential.

**Where:** Gotham Tavern, 2440 N Interstate Avenue

**When:** Saturday, October 29.

Doors open at 11 a.m.

Tournament is from Noon to 4 p.m.

This is a perfect opportunity for adult literacy advocates to enjoy a Saturday afternoon of good deeds, good words, good people, and good food. And oh, the Prizes!!!

Registration fees are \$25 per player, \$50 per team (one rack of tiles per team). The tournament uses the

standard Scrabble rules with a few rule exceptions to help even the playing field. Players can purchase a dictionary lookup of a word, or return a triplicate letter — for a \$1 contribution to the GED Fund.

The tournament uses "The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary," Fourth Edition Merriam-Webster. Players can conquer fears of two-letter words, Q, Z, X, J, and vowel dumps at [Cool Words to Know](#), published by the [National Scrabble Association](#).

Questions? Contact [Peggy Murphy](#), 971-207-6769

## Reminder: PLC is Awarding a \$500 Community Grant

The deadline for the PLC Community Grant for nonprofits providing literacy tutoring to adults has been extended to November 17. See full details in the [September LiteracyLinks](#). The application process includes identifying your organization and its nonprofit status, and telling the PLC Board, in 500 words or less, how your organization will use the \$500 grant. Let us hear from you. For info about the grant, [Email Portland Literacy](#).

## What's In Your Tutor Toolbox?

Sponsored by Kathleen Holloway, VLT Coordinator, PCC Southeast Center

October Highlight: [ProLiteracy Education Network](#)

Tutors, suppose you are tutoring a citizenship class and writing practice is on the day's agenda? This happened to your reviewer. When I noticed a "flashing aura of cognitive energy" swirling around the room and crashing, I flashed back to grade school and the punitive practice of staying in from recess to write "accommodate" 200 times on the blackboard (hardly an optimum technique).

I looked for answers at the ProLiteracy website, and I found them. I was reminded that if a particular sound is absent from one's first language, it will take a whole lot of "cognitive power" to hear it in another language. I watched a short video where a seasoned teacher helped students identify individual letters in words, and worked with students in groups and individually. I crafted a new plan to help my students learn to spell words targeted for the reading and writing portions of the immigration interview.

The training sessions at ProLiteracy present both theory and practice, which I think tutors will find very useful. The relatively short sessions include plenty of review to reinforce understanding of the techniques.

Thanks to Kathleen Holloway for suggesting ProLiteracy Education Network, with resources for instructors, students and organizations. Within the instructor section, links include techniques and strategies, lesson plans and activities, online courses, using technology, and literacy for social change. (The online courses formerly housed at Verizon/Thinkfinity are available here.)

This is a worthwhile resource for brushing up your tutoring skills while waiting for the 2012 Tutor Conference.

*Reviewer: Peggy L. Murphy*

## For Your Calendar

### GED Scrabble Tournament Oct 29

Details on page 2.

### Volunteer Literacy Tutor Training

November 12 & 19, 9 a.m to 4 p.m.

Cascade Campus, PCC

[Registration information](#)

## How Many Tutors Does It Take?

Tutors matter to PCC's adult basic education and English language learners: During the 2010-2011 academic year:

**356** Volunteer Literacy Tutors donated **23,467** tutoring hours to **1,268** adult learners who spent **44,917** learning hours with tutors.

**Thank you Volunteer Literacy Tutors — you are what it takes.**

(Source: Kay Talbot, VLT Coordinator, PCC Sylvania)

## Opportunities

### Library GED Labs

GED seekers may attend a GED Lab orientation session at Troutdale Branch Library, October 8, 2-4 p.m, for Learning Labs: Guide to GED Resources. [Registration](#) and orientation are required. Space is limited to eight slots. Candidates who complete the series of labs qualify for a testing scholarship at Londer Learning Center.

### Dynamic Activities for Language Learning

People-Places-Things

Saturday, October 8, 1 to 3 p.m.

Abundant Life Church, Parkrose Campus Auditorium  
4536 NE 116th Ave, Portland

[Register at People-Places-Things](#)