

# LiteracyLinks

Quarterly Newsletter - December 2024



Portland LITERACY Council

## What we're covering this quarter:

- First United Methodist Donation
- Participation in 2024 Portland Book Festival
- Presenting at Oregon Department of Education Conference
- PLC Welcomes Two New Board Members
- (Re-)Introducing PLC President Cheryl Thoen
- Oregonian Season of Sharing Features PLC
- QUICK NOTES:
  - BTT 2024-2025 Winter Schedule
  - 2024 Year-End Appeal
  - Save the Date: PLC March 22, 2025 Tutor Conference

---

## First United Methodist Church of Portland Donation: An Early Thanksgiving

The First United Methodist Church of Portland designated Portland Literacy Council as the charity recipient of the funds from their book sale. Every year the church has a sale of books donated by its members where the cost of the books is an at will donation. A portion of the proceeds is used to buy new books and supplies, and another portion is donated to a local non-profit that supports literacy. In early November, the representatives from the church presented PLC President, Cheryl Thoen, with a check for \$500. We are very grateful to literacy tutor Nadine Schectman for making the connection and all the church members who participated generously.



Mary Gentry, Diana Sellers, PLC's Cheryl Thoen and Nadine Schectman  
with the donation check

---

# Participating in 2024 Portland Book Festival



On Nov 1 and 2, PLC partnered with Beaverton Literacy Council on a booth at the [Portland Book Festival](#), at the Portland Art Museum. The festival featured a wide range of author discussions, drop-in writing workshops, pop-up readings, an extensive book fair, and an exhibit hall with nearly 100 booths.

Over the course of the event, volunteers had great conversations with potential tutors with a steady stream of traffic at our booth - the Scrabble game was a big hit!

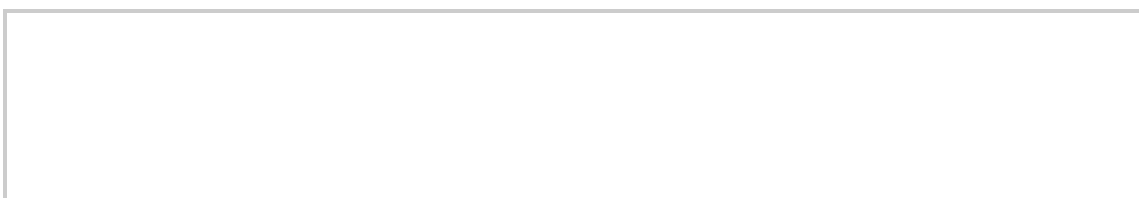


There was keen interest in tutoring and we had 55 people sign up for more information. The Book Festival was an experiment for us and folks expressed appreciation that we were there. We made new connections with other organizations as well as learned about other amazing initiatives around Portland.

Did you attend the Portland Book Festival? Let us know about your experiences and look for us next year at the event!

---

## Presenting at Oregon Department of Education Conference





Tangela Purdom speaks at the conference

PLC's new Foundational Literacy program was featured at the Oregon Department of Education's Adult Basic Skills Conference. Julie Hiefield from Language and Literacy Fund, PLC representatives, Suzanne LaGrande of the Blosser Center and donor Tangela Purdom used a panel format to describe the impetus and content of the program focused on training a group of tutors to help native English speakers learn to read. Tangela's remarks on her experience with dyslexia were especially impactful. The Salem Convention Center was packed with adult education practitioners from around the state.

## PLC Welcomes Two New Board Members



Rachel Holley

Rachel was born and raised in Auburn, Washington. "Auburn has a very diverse immigrant community where most of my friends' parents were immigrants, and spoke different languages other than English as their first language." Growing up, Rachel studied classes at her local library in Spanish for many years, before switching to French in university, and eventually moving to a small town in northern France to teach English for over a year. As a non-native speaker she found living in France "very challenging. I had to go to the



Hydn Park

Hydn Park joined the PLC Board because they wanted to give back and share their own experience as a U.S. immigrant. In 2001, at age 8, Hydn moved to Beaverton with their family from Korea. They recalled their own ESL experience in the Beaverton School District. From 3rd to 5th grades, Hydn and their fellow ESL classmates, were pulled out from their regular classroom for one period per day for ESL instruction. "At first, I really didn't know what was going on. I was asked to give an oral presentation in class, but I really had no idea what the words

grocery store and not know how to talk to the cashier. I had to figure out how to take the bus, to navigate paperwork. I developed a lot of empathy for what it's like to live in another country where English is not commonly spoken." Later, Rachel went on to study at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, where she earned her Masters in Irish literature. After returning to the U.S., and briefly teaching secondary elementary school before COVID hit, Rachel eventually decided to use her writing skills to become a grant writer for Adelante Mujeres, a non-profit organization run by and for the Latine community in Forest Grove, working to foster and encourage leadership through programming in education, entrepreneurship, health, and leadership training. As a PLC Board Member, Rachel explained, "I wanted to find a way to give back to the community and use those grant writing skills I learned. It's a niche skill set but it's so vital to non-profits to access those funds. I hope as a PLC board member, I can use my skills as a grant writer, by helping PLC to maintain their financial sustainability into the future." In addition, Rachel wants to help increase PLC's visibility throughout the region: "How do we make this organization more visible and get a wider audience engaged?"

meant, so I just memorized the sounds of the words." Hydn went on to earn their Bachelors and law degree and returned home to work as a lawyer. Hydn also tutors Introductory English literacy with Beaverton Literacy Council. In the process, Hydn has observed that many tutors are native English speakers who have never learned another language themselves. "I think it will be helpful if we can help tutors to understand more what it's like to be on the other side." Hydn described a PLC tutor training she attended last fall where the instructor taught a portion of the class entirely in the indigenous language of Peru, Quechua. It turned out that many tutor-trainees found trying to learn Quechua in that language really frustrating, and found it surprising it took so much repetition to learn a new word. "That experience is really so valuable to helping new and experienced tutors understand what it's like for the ESL students." While serving on the PLC Board, Hydn hopes to spread the word about PLC's mission to more diverse communities across the region. "I think if we increase the number of tutors and volunteers from various demographics, it will strengthen the impact PLC can have, and I'm looking forward to helping PLC in that growth."

---

## (Re-)Introducing Cheryl Thoen as PLC President

In September 2024, past-Treasurer Cheryl Thoen was elected PLC President.

"I am very pleased to have stepped into the role of Board President for the PLC. Having been involved with PLC for over 10 years, I feel that I have a solid knowledge of what we do and why. And working with our wonderful E.D., Lorie Wigle, our small, but multi-talented staff, and our very active and committed Board is a joy. As the holidays approach, it's easy to feel grateful for the team we have at Portland Literacy Council, the good work we've done in the past, and the positive changes and new opportunities ahead."

---

## The Oregonian Includes Portland Literacy Council

Each year The Oregonian selects a few non-profits to feature in their [Season of Sharing holiday fundraising campaign](#) – and this year Portland Literacy Council is fortunate to be included! Reporter Amy Wang wrote a terrific article about the organization and featured one of the GED candidate's experiences working with us. Another reason for gratitude!



---

## QUICK NOTES

---

### Basic Tutor Training: Winter Schedule 2024-2025

Scholarships available – Contact Lorie, [lwigle@portlandliteracy.org](mailto:lwigle@portlandliteracy.org)

Date	Course Title	Instructors and Fees
Saturdays, January 25 & February 1, 2025 9:00AM – 2:30PM	Basic Tutor Training In-Person at PCC Southeast	Lead Instructor: Sarah Bauer  Registration Fee: \$50 <a href="#">Click Here To Register</a>
Tuesday and Thursday evenings 7:00 – 8:20PM Feb. 18, 20, 25, 27, March 4 & 6, 2025	Basic Tutor Training Online via Zoom	Lead Instructor: Jennifer Snyder Registration Fee: \$50 <a href="#">Click Here To Register</a>

Beginning in January our **Awesome Tutor Workshop** format will change to be one 2 hour and 15 minute session instead of being held across two days.

---

### 2024 Year-End Appeal

Portland Literacy Council is appealing to our supporters for year-end donations. There is a great deal of work to do to improve adult literacy in Oregon. Well-trained and compassionate volunteer tutors are critical to changing learners' lives for the better. Please help us continue to grow the tutor community by [donating here](#).

---

### Save the Date: Spring 2025 Conference

The annual Volunteer Literacy Tutor Conference will be held March 22nd at PCC



Southeast. Please mark your calendar!

Proposals are being accepted now for workshops to be offered. If you have a topic you would like to present, you can find more information at <https://www.portlandliteracy.org/vlt2025/>

---

Thank you for being a part of the Portland Literacy Council network. We will return next quarter with another update. In the meantime, follow us and stay in touch via social media! We are on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram (@portlandliteracy).

---

Portland Literacy Council  
[Portlandliteracy.org](https://www.portlandliteracy.org)



---

Edited by Sara Urch. You can reach me at: [sara@portlandliteracy.org](mailto:sara@portlandliteracy.org)

Portland Literacy Council | PO Box 2872 | Portland, OR 97208-2872 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!