



Partners in English Language Learning

Spring/
Summer
2013

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*English language
gives each
individual the voice
to be heard in our
community.*



We help English language learners become thriving members of our community by offering one-on-one English language tutoring, and building bridges that foster cross-cultural respect, understanding, and friendship.

Letter from Diane Miessler, Board President

Dear PiELL Volunteers and Supporters:

As the newly elected Board President, I thank you for your support of PiELL, without which our organization couldn't exist. I also want to express my inexpressible gratitude to Myra Arstein, our former president. For 2 years Myra led the board with grace and determination and oversaw two unplanned moves in the past year. Although my feet are quite large, it will be tough to fill her shoes.

I became a PiELL volunteer tutor a year ago, after having thought about it for FIVE years. Like many of you, I'm busy and am pulled in many directions. It took awhile to get around to—and find the time for—taking the tutor training. I'm so glad I did.

Working with my student, Ali, has become one of the most rewarding experiences of my week. Getting to know her and her family and seeing her progress in English has been a joy. Over time, like all teachers and students, we've fine-tuned the teaching/learning process, figuring out what we enjoy and what's less labor-intensive in terms of preparation and homework, while still serving our purposes.

Ali decided in January that this is her year to learn English. Although she works and has two children, she devotes several hours every week to studying our peculiar English language, for the sake of communicating with schools and improving her job prospects. She practices English at home with her 11-year-old son, who is bilingual.

A year ago, Ali had limited speaking skills and was too self-conscious to use what she had. Recently, she allowed three new tutors from the April training to observe our session. She spoke with them about their respective lives, then we did our lesson and walked downtown for ice cream with the new tutors and Ali's adorable 4-year-old daughter.

A little something about who I am, for those who are still reading: I'm a mom, a grandma, and the housemaid/nanny for two Chiweenies—Chihuahua/Dachshund mixes—who have burrowed their way into my affections, but who continue to annoy neighbors and passers-by with their yipping. We're working on that.

I'm a musician and singer and the wife of a spectacularly talented musician. My husband, Walter, and I have a band called Purdon's Crossing. We call ourselves "eclectic" because we can't decide on

a genre. We play a mix of old jazz, bluegrass, originals and things I can't define—somewhere between Dan Hicks and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. We will shamelessly promote benefits for PiELL in the coming year—please try to come see us perform.

Over the last umpteen years, I've worked as a nurse in ER, psychiatry, hospice and, lately, at Miner's Clinic. I've also just started a business with a nurse friend as RN Care Managers (we visit clients once a week and are on call 24/7 to support seniors and their families/caregivers). I love nursing, which I've done for close to 40 years, but I do find my thoughts turning to retirement, which is still a few years off.

In my idle hours, I garden compulsively and take care of my just-turned-one-year-old granddaughter who, I think anyone would agree, is the WORLD'S CUTEST BABY. I have photographic evidence for the skeptical. I'm also writing a book about gardening entitled "In Praise of Worms, Germs, Biodiversity, and Afternoon Naps: an aging hippie chick's guide to gardening for fun." I'll let you know when it's on the shelves at our local book stores—someday.

Thank you, again, for your generosity toward PiELL. Most of us want to change the world around us for the better; what sets volunteers and donors apart is that they give time and money that it may be difficult to afford, in order to actually affect that change. Know how much we at PiELL—and how much I, personally—appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Diane Miessler, Board President



New Board President Diane Miessler (right)
with her student Alejandra.

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Tax ID #68-0160848 PiELL is a 501 (c) (3) organization



Dear PiELL Supporters:

We want you to know how very much we appreciate your willingness to support and contribute to the work PiELL does. In the 28 years PiELL has existed, we've affected many lives for the better; we couldn't have done it without people like you. Please take this request in that spirit; know that our appreciation is no less regardless of your response.

That said, we want to make you aware of our financial situation. Our situation is stable at this point but does not look so bright going forward in to the next year. Our financial report is available on our website, but I know many of you have busy schedules and higher priorities than following PiELL's finances.

Since our move from Lyman Gilmore's donated space, we have been paying rent at the two subsequent locations, as well as moving expenses. Our low overhead has gotten slightly higher, and the economy has decreased donations somewhat. In addition to outreach, teaching materials, and salary for our part-time Program Coordinator, we now pay \$150 monthly for rent. We are currently

looking for volunteer grant writers to replace Kathy Mollet, and we are expanding our fundraising activities in an effort to remain on solid financial ground.

If you find yourself able and moved to make a donation in any amount to PiELL, we would be grateful. And if you are a volunteer already giving your time, but unable to donate, we'll be equally grateful for what you offer the community and the organization. We want to keep our supporters "in the loop"; we do NOT want to pressure our volunteers for donations.

Another, FUN way to help is to attend fundraisers, and to buy Scrip cards. Please stay tuned for upcoming events, spread the word, and come if you can.

Thanks so much, again, for all you do.

Sincerely,

Diane Miessler, PiELL Board President

PiELL Needs You

PiELL is facing a challenge—two members of our Board of Directors have recently stepped down; Myra Arstein, President, and Kathy Mollet, Treasurer. We don't want to find ourselves unable to continue our important mission as a result of this loss.

You have shown that you are committed to supporting PiELL. Now, we hope a few of you will consider joining our Board. If you happen to have accounting or grant writing skills, that would be especially valuable! We meet quarterly for two hours.

If you can step up to help PiELL meet this challenge, please contact Nancy Guenther, Nominating Committee Chair.



Congratulations to Judi Kreinick's student, Anglica who received her U.S. Citizenship last year.

OUR GENEROUS DONORS (April 1, 2012~March 31, 2013)

<u>FRIENDS \$1-\$49</u>	<u>PARTNERS \$50-\$99</u>	<u>BRONZE \$100-\$199</u>	<u>PLATINUM \$1000-\$5000</u>
Dora Cividino	Yvonne Bartlett	Marianne & Michael Cartan	Nohemi Mead
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Barbara Duval	Meg Christianson	Barbara Fain	Edi Silverman, in memory of Albert Silverman
Hindi Greenberg	Anthony & Susan Clarabut	Frank & Fran Francis	Mick & Kathy Tuttle
Madelyn Helling	Ellen Gallagher & Allyson Goose	Mary Gibson, in memory of Fred Hargesheimer	Virginia Van Wagner
Dorothy & Ralph Hitchcock	Margaret Glaeser	Ross & Nancy Guenther	Jesus Villarreal
Larry & Lisa Lang	Jan Hedman	J.M. Keating	Patricia Werner
Brad & Margaret Miller	Sarah Jordan	<u>SILVER \$200-\$499</u>	<u>GOLD \$500-\$999</u>
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Emi Sakai	Papa Murphy's (Fowler Center)	Judi Kreinick	Chevron Humankind Matching
Anita Wald-Tuttle in memory of Bill Tuttle	Anonymous	Trevor Michael	e-Scrip
Margarita Weitstock		Arthur & Evelyn Stecher	Westamerica Bank
Nancy & Lee Wilbourne		Save Mart Shares	
Helen Williamson			

PiELL	
Student Demographics (12 Months)	
<u>Asia</u>	<u>Latin America</u>
China	Chile
Mongolia	Colombia
Philippines	Cuba
Thailand	El Salvador
Vietnam	Mexico
<u>Other</u>	Nicaragua
Poland	Paraguay
Afghanistan	Peru

Joanna's Story

Written By Johanna Buryn

My name is Joanna Buryn, I came to USA in 2008. I have been studying English in 1980's in the capital city of Poland. Never was I planning to move out from my country, but suddenly I quit everything and I came to California in 2008 to live here forever. I thought my life here will be like in paradise.

When I first met some people in California, I understand only them speaking kind greeting: "How, how are you" and then I was hearing a stream of complicated sounds, words, and melody, bubbling with no sense, no separate words I could distinguish and comprehend. It was spring 2009 when first I asked for training in English. I was 55 years old woman from different culture, different country, 10,000 miles far away.

My English teacher from PiELL in Grass Valley, California, is Mrs. Dorothy Hitchcock. During these years till now we have been meeting in the Nevada City Public Library at the round table at the back, we have been looking at the trees beyond the glass window and talk or read or write, checking meanings and nuances in the dictionary. These lessons with her were useful in everyday life, it was more for me than studying only some literature. Dorothy is patient and compassionate, open and helpful.

A few times I was participating in the meetings in the PiELL school training new volunteer tutors. I was showing them things like a notebook, a book, a pen, a pair of glasses, and I was speaking loudly their names in Polish language. Then I was asking these persons to repeat the Polish names I just said. Sometimes it was not very easy! Which proves to me and to them, how difficult is to learn the second language, to have good accent and pronunciation. To rewire the brain, to twist the vocal apparatus to produce unknown sounds, to push my throat and tongue and lips to create the sounds they were never making. And then remember all of that. Being here 5 years and having lessons with Dorothy were very significant in my learning. I was able to

obtain my Green Card, driver's license, find a good job, fill IRS tax report, translating my spiritual books. I designed informational signs for the public area in Tobiassen Park in Nevada City, designed a few book layouts which can be read online, made the project of a leaflet for DVSA, I worked in Hospitality House 9 months cooking and serving food.

I do not have anybody from my Polish family left in Poland. In my country I was a linguist, with university level of education plus 31 years of experience, editing, proofreading and typesetting all kinds of books and newspapers, also designing the book layouts. I had my small niche, comfort zone and professional position. Today my diplomas and certificates are on the shelf, useless.

I am a housekeeper in the senior house, and I am proud of this job—older persons need empathy, help, encouragement, and my smile every day as their life is difficult and challenging. These people are losing gradually their ability to drive a car, to read, to hear, to see, sometimes to even move from place to place, and need help in basic human needs like bathroom or bathtub. I love working for them. I lost my identity from my prior life in Poland, but I gained a new life and identity here, so different from what I used to know.

Now I understand American English maybe 70% when people talk, and TV 99%, when I see close captions on the screen. My brain becomes educated when it can see the words being said and written at the same moment. It makes much faster the new neuronal connections and it helps a lot. I try to express my personal issues as a PiELL student and explain processing problems and as well as I can. I try to survive.

Thank you, PiELL. Thank you, Dorothy.



Dorothy (left) with her student Joanna during the 2012 PiELL Potluck.

My Student Ricardo

By Stanley Schwartz, Tutor

Ricardo and I have been partners in English language learning for two years as of February 15, 2013; we both enjoy the experience very much.

Last year (2012) Ricardo tried something he had never done before—"read a book!" I resisted starting with a children's book, recognizing that children's books would not do for a forty plus gentleman.

So where to start? Ricardo was anxious to adventure into book reading. I went into my own library of favorites from my childhood and settled on "Beautiful Joe" by Marshall Saunders, a 100-year

old wonderful dog story. Ricardo's first book! Next came my exposure to young adult classics available at local used book stores. His first choice was "Martin Luther King", a semi-bio; then came "The Prince and the Pauper"; and he is now reading "Treasure Island," this time with the Disney movie as a companion.

I can't say he is ready to read to a kindergarten class, but he is progressing and having fun dealing with new words, strange phrases, and comprehension! We are both looking forward to what is next!



Partners in English Language Learning

578 Sutton Way PMB 198

Grass Valley, CA 95945

**For every day purchases or the perfect gift...
Scrip gift cards!**

Consider ordering Scrip from our Scrip Coordinator, Bev Stout, bstout@pacbell.net, for your everyday purchases or for gift giving! Scrip certificates can be in your hands within hours or gift cards can be ordered the beginning of each month.

To see what businesses support Scrip, visit the Great Lakes Scrip Center "Catalog" at <http://www.glscrip.com/shop/Search.aspx?SearchType=2&CategoryID=0&PageIndex=1>

Each business lists the percentage of the purchase that is credited to PiELL, as well as the dollar denominations that can be issued.

Do your shopping while helping a good cause...PiELL!



PiELL Event Calendar

TUTOR COFFEE

**MONDAY, MAY 20TH 2PM—4PM
AT VALENTINA'S BISTRO & BAKERY,
1041 SUTTON WAY IN GRASS VALLEY,
NEAR CVS**

**NEW TUTOR TRAINING SCHEDULE
Sept. 21st ~ Sessions 1 & 2 8:30am-4:00pm**

Sept. 28th ~ Sessions 3 & 4 8:30am-4:00pm

**Must attend both days.*

Check our website for events: www.piell.org

**Partners in English
Language Learning**

Mailing Address:

578 Sutton Way, PMB 198
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Phone/Fax: (530) 274-8428

Email: admin@piell.org
www.piell.org

Office Hours

Mon: 1:30—4:30

Wed: 1:30—4:30

Fri: 9:00— 1:00

Thank You...to the following businesses where PiELL students and tutors meet in a comfortable and welcoming environment!

BriarPatch Co-op

Brunswick Village

Caroline's Coffee

Flour Garden Bakeries

Grass Valley Library

Nevada County Country Club

Nevada City Library

Penn Valley Community Church

Safeway, Brunswick Basin

Summer Thyme's Bakery & Deli

What's Up Coffee?

**Congratulations and thank you to the 2013
Graduates of our New Tutor Training!**

Eva Bagno
Barbara Brown
Perissa Busick
Larry Flood
Carol Ann Jones
Mary McClain
Mary Menconi

Martha Mosman
Christine Newsom
Ruth Ann Radcliffe
Barbara Ryan
Linda Villegas
Brettin White
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