



Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services

Volunteer Services Office - (213) 228-7540 - volserv@lapl.org

LOOK AT US!

Summer 2010
Edited by Ruth Gooley

It's a Match Part I

Bonnie's Story

by tutor Bonnie Rigdon

What a surprise at the end of my ALP tutorial session to receive the name of a Bulgarian woman civil engineer as my new student. It turned out that she lived just a few blocks from my home in Sunland, and we easily made a two-day-a-week schedule to begin the Challenger series at the Sunland-Tujunga branch.

After our first meeting under the huge oak in front of the library, we talked about formal and informal introductions, along with

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Elena's Story

by learner Elena Stavreva

My name is Elena Stavreva. I am from Bulgaria. I want to tell my story about my learning in Adult Literacy Program at Sunland-Tujunga Library. I think this is very good and helpful experience to learn English, and I want to share with you. I appreciate the Adult Literacy Program because it gives me a big chance to get back on my feet. Since, I have been in the United States for over seven years. My reading, writing and comprehension was very bad and I didn't have social life for a long period of time.

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*Tutor Bonnie Rigdon (left)
and learner Elena Stavreva*

Creative Corner *Learners Write Stories, Poems & Essays*

My Three Daughters

by learner Leticia Buenrostro

Brenda is my first daughter, the big one. Always when she comes home, she says, "Hi Mom!" and she kisses me. And she asks me, "What do you

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Adult Literacy Services are generously supported by the Caroline Singleton Adult Literacy Endowment through the Library Foundation of Los Angeles,

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Bonnie's Story *continued from p. 1*

general common courtesies. It was a struggle at first to understand Elena's words, and I was embarrassed to keep asking her to repeat, but eventually we began to communicate much easier as her vocabulary increased, and she struggled with vowels and pronouns. She uses the Cyrillic alphabet, so I could identify easily with the difficulty after my recent training session using it.

As we became more familiar with each other, learning about each other's families and livelihoods, we shared customs of America and her Bulgarian homeland. When holidays approached, we exchanged recipes and treats, which gave us delicious opportunities to discuss measurements, ingredients, and fruit and vegetable names. St Patrick's day, leprechauns, the pot o' gold at the end of the rainbow were all new ones on her. Elena brought me tourist booklets of her beautiful mountain hometown, and she told me about their agriculture, school system, and beautiful monasteries, Trila being her favorite. I learned that in Bulgaria they have a special day for people with the same name.

Elena was a joy to tutor, as she eagerly studied, read and re-read her lessons and was always prepared. Her diligent reading of ALL the vocabulary word lists in review was impressive. She was also open to any new ideas I suggested to keep up interest or aid in a particular difficulty. We both enjoyed the stories she read me in the "News for You" publication, sparking conversation about places, customs and peoples. She went on-line to read along with the stories, which was a great help in pronunciation and fluency. We laughed so much at stories we told on ourselves. I remember the time her husband was listening to her reading along with "News for You" and he teased her, asking her why she didn't sound like the voice on the internet.

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Elena's Story *continued from p. 1*

I tried to go to Glendale College three times, but every time something happened and I had to drop my classes. In 2008 I had very good teacher for "Listening and Speaking" class, she told me to go to a public library and try to find tutor because she thinks I need personal help with how to read and build sentence and then come back to finish college.

In May 2009 after only 2 months waiting I get my tutor Bonnie. I felt so lucky and happy. At first I start to learn on Challenger's books. First five lessons was very hard for me. I remembered, I find 138 new words, that mean every third words was new for me. My tutor was very patient. She helps me a lot to understand new vocabulary, gives me plenty of examples and synonyms to get the right meaning of words and sentences. Step by step I built my vocabulary with a lot of exercises like read articles from "Reader's Digest," newspapers and books, and then discuss the main idea and meaning of new words.

Bonnie help me in many way to improve my English such as writhing sentences and letters in real situation as my daughter's homework, instructions from her school, prepare "Request for information" for my job and we write a "Thanks letter" after job interview. In September I decided to take EIT Exam for PE license and Bonnie helps me read and discuss "Ethics" Chapter of examples questions. After that review I felt more confident myself on examination date.

When I start this program, I have a goal to prepare myself for job interview. We reviewed and practicing "Sample job interview questions" and I am so grateful to Bonnie because after a few weeks I had a interview with ACT-1 Recruiter Services Company. On the interview I felt comfortable and much better in speaking with other person then last years. I think this was a great deal to me.

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It's a Match Part II

Keep the Focus on Phonics

by tutor *Lisa Ingalls*

I started working with Connie Wong in December 2009 at the Lincoln Heights Library Literacy Center. On our first meeting I asked Connie what her learning goals were and which skills she wanted to improve. She said she wanted to work on her pronunciation and vocabulary, so that she could communicate better at work.

We started working in Challenger 1 and reading aloud from books at various grade levels for practice. It became apparent that her comprehension was very good and that she had a good working knowledge of the language; the only thing was she had trouble pronouncing words with consonant blends. I talked to Carolyn Barelli (the literacy coordinator) about our progress and she suggested we use the *Focus on Phonics* workbooks, which have been really helpful.

Connie is a wonderful student and an interesting person; it is such a pleasure to work with someone so eager to learn! We've been meeting twice a week at the library for an hour and a half for several months now, and it's really beginning to pay off! Her pronunciation is improving! Besides the phonics and practice skills workbooks, Connie brings in the newspaper (in Mandarin) and translates the stories for extra

practice and vocabulary building. We also just talk. We talk about our families, interests, work, etc. for practice and it's fun to get to know each other. I discovered that Connie sings Chinese opera... How awesome is that! §



Connie's Story

by learner *Connie Wong*

My name is Connie Wong. I am so ashamed to say that I have learned English for more than ten years. I thought I studied English too slowly and people still didn't understand what I said. I felt frustrated until I started being tutored through the Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services. My tutor, Lisa Ingalls, helped me engage in learning English again.



Tutor Lisa Ingalls (left) and learner Connie Wong

I usually keep quiet in the class except the teacher forces me to answer his or her questions. This tutoring program is taught face to face program so I have to speak to Miss Ingalls. I know that my accent is very bad and I can't control my tongue to make some sounds. Miss Ingalls found out what I needed to work on and she corrects my pronunciation repeatedly. I bring a recorder to the library to record what Miss Ingalls teach, so I can practice at home. Right now, I have improved my pronunciation. I feel very happy. I want to thank Ms. Carolyn Barelli who introduced such a great teacher to me. Miss Ingalls is a very kind and patient lady. I like her so much. If you want to study something, don't be shy and keep going. You can be successful one day. §

Creative Corner

Learners Write Letters

Can You Hear Me? by learner Afalita Misa

Mr. Lal,

I just can't believe that you've gone. I am truly sad, and still sad until now. Every time I remember you, every time I read my friend's status about you, or even to see the pictures that they posted I cried! It's breaking my heart deeply to know that I didn't get a chance to talk to you. I wanted to tell you so much! The things that you had told me to do... yes I have that plan. I wish I had a chance to let you know for I know you will be happy to hear that good news, and I know that you will be proud to me as always. Mr. Lal... I had to change my FB status.. not because I forgot about you... but because I can't stand it. It hurts too much that I don't want to think about it anymore, but I just can't. If you can see me now from above, I want you to know that I'm typing my little note for you on my computer. If you're wondering why my tears are dropping it's because I think about you. I lost you, and I missed you. Why didn't you even appear in my dream even once? Give me a chance to say good bye. I wish I have rewind button... I wish I wish I wish... Can you see Mr. Lal? I'm mourning... I'm truly deeply sad... but I know that you don't want me to stay at this stake. I know that you, from above, are now trying to tell me to stop being sad. I know that you want me to continue to pursue my dream, and to be successful. I will remember everything you've told me. I want to steal your brain Mr. Lal, so I can be as great as you are! I don't write that much, but this time I have to do it.. I have to pour out what's in my heart. It's too painful to keep. Can you still check your email there? I hope you can... I will cc this note to your email, okay? Okay Mr. Lal, I think I feel better a wee bit... just a tiny bit. I will read this note to you in a while. I hope you can hear me. Love to you. “ §

“This letter is particularly poignant,” says tutor Lia Evans. “It was written by Afa to a former boss who recently passed away in Indonesia whom she didn't have the opportunity to see during a recent visit.”



tutor Lia Evans (left) and learner Afa Misa

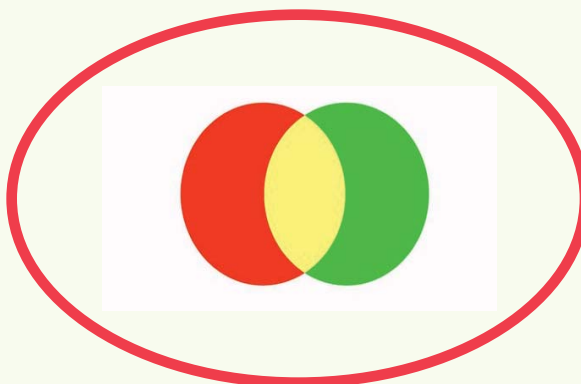
Hints by Susan by Susan Casmier

Two terms that come up regularly in discussions about reading techniques are “chunking” and “visual representation.” What are they?

Chunking refers to taking small chunks of information at a time rather than the whole reading. So perhaps your student can deal with comprehending and paraphrasing a sentence or even a paragraph. Maybe the sentence will have to be broken into chunks to achieve comprehension and speech-like reading. For example: Tom and Jerry went to the fair and ate too much junk food. Who went? Tom and Jerry (the who chunk). Where did they go? to the fair (the prepositional phrase and where chunk) and (signals there is something more to come) What did they do there? ate too much. What? junk food.

There are students who have trouble with information in the middle. They might remember the beginning of sentences and the end, but not the stuff in the middle. They seem to glaze over for that information. For them, chunking is an important strategy. We start as small as we need to and work up to bigger chunks.

Visual representations involve graphics. Another name for these is GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS. Graphics are great for people who are visual learners rather than verbal learners. We have some good examples on our website under topics for the tutor. For example, a Venn diagram, two interlocked circles, can really help one see the similarities and differences between two things in a comparison/contrast essay. One circle has distinct characteristics of item A while the other has the characteristics of item B, and the area where they overlap has the traits they share.



Venn Diagram

These are two helpful strategies for increasing comprehension in reluctant readers. §

Adult Literacy Services is expanding. We welcome two new literacy coordinators. Kay Bailey at the Venice Branch and Sophia Webber at the Pio Pico Koreatown Branch.



Kay Bailey at right

An English professor wrote the words:
“A woman without her man is nothing”
on the chalkboard and asked his students
to punctuate it correctly.

All of the males in the class wrote:
“A woman, without her man, is nothing.”

Are you ready for this.....?

All the females in the class wrote:
“A woman: without her, man is nothing.”

FUTURE TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Tutor training workshops will be held on the following dates at the following locations. Please call your local Adult Literacy Coordinator for information.

Saturday, September 25, 2010,
Robertson Branch, 10:30 am-5:30 pm.

Saturday November 6, 2010,
Pico Union Branch, 10:30 am-5:30 pm

Saturday December 11, 2010,
Benjamin Franklin Branch, 10:30 am-5:30 pm

CLASSES:

Adult Literacy Services are proud to offer the following classes. Please call the appropriate Center for more information.

Singleton Adult Literacy Center at the Central Library:

English Conversation Class: Monday-Wednesday: 3:30-5 PM
Friday 2-3:30 PM

Writing Class: Tuesday & Thursday 5-6:30 PM
Wednesday 2-3:30 PM
Friday: 12:30-2 PM

ESL & Citizenship through LAUSD's Distance Learning:
Tuesday 3:30-6 & Thursday 3:30-7:00 PM

Mid-Valley Regional Branch:

English Conversation Class: Wednesday 3:30-5 PM
Thursday 12:30-2 PM

Pacoima Branch:

English Conversation Class Thursday: 7-8 PM

Panorama City Branch:

English Conversation Class Friday 4-5 PM

Washington Irving Branch:

English Conversation Class: Tuesday 2-3 PM
Writing Class: Tuesday 3:15-4:15 PM
ESL & Citizenship through LAUSD's Distance Learning
Friday 2-4:30 PM



Creative Corner

My Three Daughters

continued from p. 1

have to eat?” She doesn’t like to eat in restaurants—she prefers my food. When she comes she always asks me for breaded chicken and she helps me with the rice. When she is finished she says, “Mom thanks for the chicken. I love you! Because you know this is my favorite food.”

Beatriz is my middle daughter, the second one. Everything is quiet until she is home because she always says, “Vieja! I’m here! You miss me all day?” When she comes she sits on my legs and says, “You’re ugly because your hair is dirty. You have a big nose!” When she comes she pinches my nose very hard! And she takes my hand to go to the kitchen to make some food for her. When she’s done, she says, “The food was just ok; I ate it because I was hungry. But don’t worry...I love you.” She always does the same welcome every day when she comes home.

Esmeralda is my third daughter, the little or last one. She always likes to stay close to me. When we are out she always likes all my attention. When she is home she always calls me to read with her and play Operation or Monopoly. At night she always asks me to stay in bed with her and she says, “Mom I love you. Goodnight. I want my kiss!” She repeats and repeats this until everybody says, “Esmerelda: quiet!” to her. She does the same routine every night. §

Rave by tutor Ramona Cash

Leticia has made incredible progress since we met last November. When we first sat down to get to know one another and talk about some of her goals for herself, she had an impressive list: improve her reading comprehension and pronunciation in English, become a more confident writer, pass her California driving test, learn how to use a computer (she never had before except, in her words, “to turn the power off or on”). Just half a year a later, she’s made a serious dent in accomplishing all of these—and many more—goals. Her writing here (“My Three Daughters”) is 100% Leticia-generated, from the dictated content, to our collaborative editing, to her very first attempt at word processing. For this assignment, she learned to use a keyboard to type her finished draft in the Cahuenga branch library.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

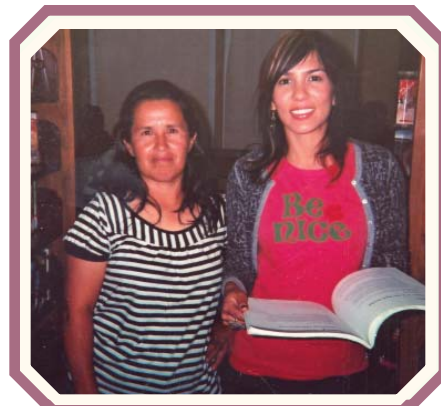


“Today my student checked out two English language books from the library. We were both very proud,” boasts tutor Tess Carstens.

See photo at left of Dolores Larios checking out books.

Rave *continued from p. 7*

Leticia is the kind of student who comes to me with questions she's jotted down over the weekend when she is confused about subject-verb agreement or American slang. She constantly looks up words on her own when she doesn't recognize new vocabulary; the margins of her workbooks are covered with her notes and definitions. She's had perfect attendance to our tutoring sessions, even when I have not—when I was out of town for several weeks last month, she completed an independent study program that we developed together, so her skills actually *improved* while I was away! I like to tell Leticia that I love getting to work with someone who takes learning and her own growth so seriously. She's one of the most motivated people I know. §



*Learner Leticia Buenrostro (left)
and tutor Ramona Cash*

Day of the Dead *by Albino Martinez*

Oaxaca, a state and capital located in Mexico has many traditions and customs. One of these traditions is the Day of the Dead. Each year during the first and second day of November the people of this place have a special celebration for the dead. Each family decorates an altar with flowers, food, fruits and religious images. They make a big meal with traditional food and they visit the cemetery.

The Day of the Dead is a big celebration in all parts of Oaxaca, during the last days of October the markets are covered with scents, colors and flowers. All the stands are full of fruits, vegetables, chilies, chocolate and a special bread called pan de muerto and the traditional flowers. Flor de muerto a beautiful yellow flower and cresta de gallo a pretty large red flower. Everybody goes to the market to get all the ingredients to prepare the traditional Mole, a special Oaxaca dish for this celebration and make tamales with it. Also they buy fruits, bread and chocolate to decorate the altar.

Once they get home they start to decorate the altar. They make an arch with two sticks of sugarcane and wrap it with the yellow and red flowers; it was secured to a table. Then, they hang fruits all over the arch. The table is decorated with china paper, fruits, food, tamales, bread, water, candles, liquor, flowers, and religious images too. All the food that they place on the altar is the food most liked by the relatives who passed away. Also, in some altars they place some pictures of their beloved ones.

The food is another special part of the celebration. Tamales and mole are the main dishes. Liquor, sodas and hot chocolate are the traditional beverages and the traditional bread is “pan de muerto.” All houses prepare

a special breakfast; it includes hot chocolate, bread, and hot tamales. It's a tradition that all relatives visit the mom's house and have breakfast with her, also the neighbors and close friends. It's a tradition that if you visit someone during these days you have to be prepared to eat at any time since the food is sufficient to feed everyone.

The first of November at night many families go to the cemetery and spend the night there. They clean the tombs and place flowers, candles, and incense on them. They pray



Learner Albino Martinez

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CONGRATULATIONS

Graduates of the Tutor Training Workshop

May 15, 2010 at Exposition Park

June 26, 2010 at Mid-Valley

Edward Amaning-Ampomah
David Alford
Scott Anderson
Aldo Astorga
Harold Christensen
Barbara Cinney
Dali Colorado
Leonard Duncan
Phyllis Elston
Ethan Furman
Priscilla Hart
Maranda Henderson
Winnie Leh
Mark Lovasz
Leticia Maldonado
Marialynn Manasan
Lise Marken
Cheryl Marlowe
Nikki McAndrew
Annette Medrano
Peter Monroe
Cynthia Moore
Barbara Motz
Ericka Ochoa
Summer Petersen
Eric Pizarro-Grant
Beverly Plitt
Angela Reneau
Marisela Rodriguez
Marina Sangkavichai
Lalita Singhasri
Roberta Stone
Jessica Tovar

Sharon Adkins
Kay Bailey
Helen Beal
Barbara Bernstein
Alvaro Cardona
Susan Collins
Nicole Cortes
Tricia Enriquez
Hans Tristan Fraungruber
Bianca Gallegos
Raul Gonzalez
Corina Huitzacua
Jeane Marie
Zoe Masongsong
Richard Mehana
Misty Miller
Ramona Montayne
Daniel Morris
Will Norell
Muriel O'Malley
Ivan Sanchez
Katrina Schutte
Janet Shin
Jade Takahashi
Marsha Toledo
Kelsey Wrobel

For the schedule of future Tutor Training Workshops see page 6.



Creative Corner

Essays continued and a Poem

Day of the Dead *continued from p. 8*

and sing all night. There are bands of music and mariachis. The next day some families bring food to the cemetery and eat there, in some places they only visit the tombs and attend the mass that the priest commemorates to the faithful souls.



At home during these days at noon, all the family solemnly stays close to the altar symbolizing that the spirits of the dead relatives come to the altar and enjoy the food. Children crumble up some yellow flowers in a bowl and spread them on the floor making a narrow path from the altar until the bowl is empty, that symbolize the way home so the spirits don't lose the way to the altar. While the children are spreading the flower petals, men are setting off some fireworks and the bells in the church are ringing.

Thus, the Day of the Dead is more than a celebration; it is ritual to our beloved ones who passed away. It's not mourning; it is a big party where everybody participates, from children to old people. We celebrate death with respect, joy, and happiness. Death is celebrated by the living. §

The Ripped Dollar Bill

by *Francisco Navarette*



While riding on the bus one day
Sunken deeply into my thoughts
Staring at the floor
Suddenly I discovered a one dollar bill.

Oh my god, I cried out!
Poor dollar bill is split in half! I said to myself.
The phrase "in god we trust" was tarnished,
And Washington's face was ripped.

The two halves had been joined
With a piece of adhesive tape
They were completely askew and spoiled.
That's why it'd been thrown?

I wonder who had the audacity to commit such a crime
With the most powerful currency in the world.
Or maybe it's losing value? Am I wrong?
Or perhaps nobody cares too much on
What once was strong?

Despite everything, I just believe
That money can buy happiness, and sadness too.
Wealth and power, love and hatred,
War and destruction.

Affectionately, I lifted it, shook the dust off of it.
I folded it gently and put it in my pocket.
This poor ripped dollar bill
That dug up my buried thoughts.

Independence Day by *Jacinta Alfaro*

My name is Jacinta Alfaro. I am from Mexico and we celebrate Independence Day on September 15th. We eat delicious food such as tacos, pozole, enchiladas and tamales. We decorate our streets with colors of our flag: green, white and red. There is also a parade where military men and children march. The president gives a speech and says: "Viva Mexico", after the speech there is fireworks and traditional music. People enjoy this special day because we feel very patriotic and like to celebrate our culture. §

Bonnie's Story *continued from p. 2*

Elena's scores have improved since she first began taking the "Engineer-in-Training" exams, which she attributes to our work in improving her comprehension. She is a busy lady, working part-time for an architect, volunteering as a teacher's aide in her six-year-old daughter's classroom, and being a homemaker. It makes me happy to see Elena's daughter using the library services of DVDs and her favorite books so naturally at her young age. What satisfaction I've had in being a part of helping Elena become a more comfortable, sociable part of our community, and having such fun in the process! §

Elena's Story *continued from p. 2*

We also have a fun part of our work. Every meeting we discuss for 10-15 minutes something that has happened in my family, USA as a general or my country Bulgaria. I like this part of our work because this gives me a chance to improve my speech, build a bridge between us like friends and fill me with positive energy.

I think that Bonnie's tutoring is very beneficial and important to me, without it I would not be able to make the progress I did. We had very successful year. I am very pleased with the great opportunity to be included in Adult Literacy Services Program. I want to say "Thanks" to my tutor Bonnie, who is a really great, responsible person, an excellent teacher, and everybody who helped me! §

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Make a difference!**

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**For Information Please Call (213) 228-7037
or visit www.lapl.org/literacy**



If you are a tutor or student and wish to write something for the newsletter, please contact your coordinator or email Ruth Gooley at rgooley@lapl.org.



LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
Adult Literacy Center Locations



Central Library Singleton Adult Literacy Center
630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 228-7037 / FAX (213) 228-7138

Contacts: Nancy Bird, nbird@lapl.org; Beverly Pichardo, bpichard@lapl.org;
Maria Vargas, mvargas@lapl.org

Baldwin Hills Branch
2906 S. La Brea Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90016
(213) 623-4078 x14690
Contact: Carolyn Francis
cfrancis@lapl.org

Lincoln Heights Branch
2530 Workman St.
Los Angeles, CA 90031
(323) 226-1696
Contact: Kathy Hall
khall@lapl.org

Robertson Branch
1719 S. Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90035
(213) 623-4078 x14290
Contact: Penny Mickelbury
pmickelb@lapl.org

Benjamin Franklin Branch
2200 E. First Street
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Contact: Alicia Chavarin
achavari@lapl.org

Mid-Valley Regional Branch
16244 Nordhoff St.
North Hills, CA 91343
(818) 895-3663
Contact: Mary Anne Arensdorf
marendo@lapl.org

Robert Louis Stevenson Branch
803 Spence St.
Los Angeles, CA 90023
(213) 623-4078 x11990
Contact: Alicia Chavarin
achavari@lapl.org

Cahuenga Branch
4591 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
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cbarelli@lapl.org

Pacoima Branch
13605 Van Nuys Blvd.
Pacoima, CA 91331
(213) 623-4078 x15390
Contact: Laurraine Pollard
lpollard@lapl.org

Venice Branch
501 S. Venice Blvd.
Venice, CA 90291
(310) 821-1769
Contact: Kay Bailey
kbailey@lapl.org

Echo Park Branch
1410 W Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
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Contact: Peggy Blow
pblow@lapl.org

Panorama City Branch
14345 Roscoe Blvd.
Panorama City, CA 91402
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Contact: Laurraine Pollard
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Washington Irving Branch
4117 W. Washington Bl.
Los Angeles, CA 90018
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Contact: Beverly Pichardo
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**Exposition Park - Dr. Mary
McLeod Bethune Regional Branch**
3900 S. Western Ave.
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Pico Union Branch
1030 S. Alvarado St
Los Angeles, CA 90006
(213) 623-4078 x17090
Contact: Mark Lovasz
mlovasz@lapl.org

Watts - Alma Reaves Woods Branch
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Los Angeles, CA 90002
(323) 789-2850
Contact: Michael Travis
mtravis@lapl.org

Jefferson Branch
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Los Angeles, CA 90018
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Contact: June Brandon
jbrandon@lapl.org

Pio Pico – Koreatown Branch
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Los Angeles, CA 90005
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Contact: Sophia Webber
swebber@lapl.org

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Junipero Serra Branch
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Contact: June Brandon
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Platt Branch
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Contact: Susan Casmier
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