

# READINGS

A newsletter for  
volunteers and friends of  
**Pemi-Baker Literacy**



258 Highland St.  
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PemiBakerLiteracy.org

#### Board of Directors:

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#### Staff:

Darci McCarthy  
Program Coordinator  
and Director

## From the Director

It was another record breaking year at Pemi-Baker Literacy! In 2019, we provided over 1,000 instructional hours to adults in our community. Much of this is thanks to our very devoted and hard-working group of English language learners. Because New Hampshire increased its compulsory school age to 18 a decade ago and unemployment rates in the state are lower than they have been in years, we are seeing fewer HiSET (formerly GED) students than in the past. Nonetheless, we continue to have a committed group of students working hard to earn their diploma.

## Students in the Spotlight



We've had a fun and successful year with our English language learners, who hail from seven different countries: India, Peru, China, Colombia, Thailand, Brazil and Honduras! Some are new to the program while many have been with us for years. In the spring, the class did a cooking unit and had a wonderful time sharing each other's cooking techniques and key ingredients. Their teacher, Janet Englund, says, "It has been a joy to watch this group grow and learn for three years now. Their curiosity and perseverance is something

to be admired. It is so rewarding to work with each of them!" This year our class is focusing much of their efforts on conversation and pronunciation. We are proud to say that all students are licensed drivers now! Given the rural nature of our catchment area, earning a driver's license is a major milestone and is life-changing in so many ways!

Tann Swartz entered our program two years ago. She was newly married and had just arrived from Thailand. Although she learned some English growing up, she was still shy about speaking and expressing herself around fluent Americans. Her dream was to work in the medical field like her husband. After a year in our program she took a test to enter an LNA program, but she wasn't quite ready yet. She was given a textbook and some direction to focus her studies and told to try again later. Tann took the feedback to heart and did not let it discourage her in the least. She continued to attend class at Pemi-Baker Literacy and even started meeting with a tutor to further sharpen her speaking skills. Last spring she tested again and was accepted into an LNA program. She finished at the top of her class in June and recently started working at a nursing home in Franklin. Tann says, "I appreciate all of the support you have given me in the past two years. It feels so good to reach my goal and start my new career. I could not have done it without your help." We are so proud to see Tann in her new position!



## 8<sup>th</sup> Community Spelling Bee

This year's Community Spelling Bee returned to the Plymouth State University Ice Arena and Welcome Center. For the 7th year, AJ Coppola provided the laughs with his humor and his signature "Bee-derhosen". Board member and Queen Bee Kate Donahue chose the words, and Chris Dunstan, in full Bee costume, returned as Timekeeper. Last year's winners from *CASAs Speak and Spell for Children*, Mary Seeger (founding



mother of Pemi-Baker Literacy), Jess Storey and Dorothy Piquado were the judges, and students from the PRHS National Honor Society lent a hand. The *Ortographobians*, Gary Goodnough, Ryan Aquilina and Phoebe Manchester, correctly spelled the word "culottes" to win it all. They also raised the most team sponsorship money and took home three \$50 Common Man cards. It was a DOUBLE WIN for the talented team! The best dressed team was *Spellbound's* Dot Ely, Jan Panagoulis and



Eleni Panagoulis, who each received a gift card to Six Burner Bistro. This year nine teams raised over \$200 before the event, thus earning a "Get Out of Jail Free" card, good for one misspelled word. We applaud their outstanding fundraising efforts!



PSU Dining provided a delicious assortment of hearty appetizers and desserts. Heartfelt thanks to Dave Gyger and the PSU Ice Arena for their warm welcome and to our local business sponsors:

Allstate/Sharon Thorne, Meredith Village Savings Bank, NH Electric Coop, Off Campus Rentals, Plymouth Rotary, Bank of New Hampshire, Common Man Family, Construx, Inc., KPinC Consulting, Little Red Schoolhouse, M'n'M Scoops, Minuteman Press of Plymouth, NH Adventure Bootcamp, Noyes Insurance, Patty Stewart and Associates, Plymouth General Dentistry, Rand's Hardware, Six Burner Bistro, Sunset Grill, Warren Bahr, CPA, and Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank.





Beth Smarse was again generous enough to capture these beautiful photos for us! Visit our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/PBLiteracy](https://www.facebook.com/PBLiteracy) or website [PemiBakerLiteracy.org](http://PemiBakerLiteracy.org) to see even more photos.

## Highlights

Over the past year....

- 58 individuals contacted PBL for help with literacy
- 6 students passed the HiSET
- 12 students worked on learning English as a Second Language
- 4 individuals came to PBL for basic computer instruction
- Students received 1,027 hours of instruction from our caring volunteers and teachers
- Students who completed more than 12 hours with the program spent an average of 73 hours with a tutor
- PBL has 25 active tutors who have worked with at least one student. Three of our board members also volunteer as tutors.





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## ***Volunteers Needed!***

Do you have a couple of hours a week and a desire to help an adult in our community? We are looking for tutors in HiSET (formerly GED) preparation, English as a Second Language, and basic digital literacy. Please call 536-2998 or email us at [PemiBakerLiteracy@gmail.com](mailto:PemiBakerLiteracy@gmail.com) to set up a time for a short orientation.

All of us at PBL appreciate the support we receive in so many ways. Whether it's financial support, your time, telling your friends about us, providing tutoring space or materials, we are grateful to all our donors. Thank you!



## ***How to Support Pemi-Baker Literacy***

Pemi-Baker Literacy is thankful for this very supportive community! Over half of our funding comes directly from YOU! There are many ways throughout the year to support us.

- Click "DONATE" on our website [PemiBakerLiteracy.org](http://PemiBakerLiteracy.org)
- Start a Facebook Fundraiser. Find "Fundraisers" on the Facebook menu and click "Select Non-profit" to get started.
- Shop at [Smile.Amazon.com](http://Smile.Amazon.com). When you do your online shopping at Amazon.com, just start at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). When you choose to support Pemi-Baker Literacy .5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to us. It's that easy!



- Remember Pemi-Baker Literacy in your estate planning. Contact us if you would like more information about making a bequest to PBL in your will, trust, retirement plan, or insurance policy.
- Checks in support of our program can be mailed to 258 Highland Street, Plymouth, NH 03264.



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