

Watsonville/Aptos Adult Education News and Views



"If you have come here to help me, then you are wasting your time...But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."—Lila Watson, Australian aboriginal educator



Vol. 5 No. 20

The Growing Strong Issue

Feb. 28, 2006

Plans for 150th Anniversary Celebration Saturday, March 11, 11:00am - 4:00pm, Green Valley

Plans move ahead for what promises to be a great day for our school. There will be dancers, music (among others, our own Juan Carlos Pozo and also Kevin Kraft), demonstrations, and food. The mayor, board members, honored alumni and current students all will speak. Plans are for the day to end in a dance with a DJ. We've tried to identify many alumni and interested friends to invite them, but please help us. Tell all of our students to come with friends and family, and if there are people that should be formally invited please let Cathy Jo or Natalie know.

School Council Talk About Budget Concerns

On Wednesday, February 15, the school council met in a regular meeting. On the agenda was more troubling news about our funding and the condition of our budget. Although well deserved by our classified staff, a retroactive raise for them and managers, added to the retroactive raise for teachers, has reduced the prospects of our avoiding another year of deficits. Additionally, correctional education has begun to encroach on our general fund. Attendance in January was a bit higher than January last year, but our ratio of student-to-teacher isn't high enough to help us out of this current dilemma. A difficult but productive discussion was had at the council, and Bob was directed to evaluate how we could reduce or change some "non-ADA generating" positions... what we call Leadership positions. We will reduce 25-30 hours a week of these positions and the exact impact will be known by next week. While we need to capture as much attendance as possible, the dates and size of summer school may be affected by these funding challenges. Some of the council felt anxious with this degree of uncertainty about our funding. Adult ed. has historically had swings in its funding cycles, and Bob assured the council that within the next two years or so, we might be entering into our school's "golden age." Retroactive pay should show up on the next pay check. Check with Marjorie about the checks if you can't understand the amounts or calculations.

Coaches' Corner

"What's great about working at WAAE?" asked at the January PDRT.

I like:

A supportive staff and leader

Fun staff and faculty

That it's Not 9 to 5

Students who enjoy (appreciate) their classes

Teacher coaches

The Flexibility

Great students

Having a positive impact on the community

The facilities

The opportunities

Playing the guitar

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Student's Success covered by the Sentinel:

BY DONNA JONES
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

February 9, 2006

Laura Garcia can't believe her life.

Since September, the 31-year-old mother of two found the job of her dreams, traveled to Washington, D.C., for her first professional conference, and, Tuesday night, she started college.

As an immigrant from Jocotepec, Jalisco, Mexico, and lacking a high school education, Garcia never expected to have the opportunities she's had in the past few months. But she said enrolling at Watsonville/Aptos Adult Education changed her life.

"When you get here, the only thing you think about is work," Garcia said. "You have to find a job."

For Garcia that meant waitressing. But when her son started kindergarten at Freedom Elementary School six years ago, she wanted to help him and she started volunteering in the classroom. Soon she realized she needed to learn English and that led her to the adult school. Within a year she also earned a general education diploma, an alternative to a high school diploma, and finished a course in office skills through the adult school's Career and Technical Department.

"I started, and then I said 'more, more, more,'" said Garcia, who completed her basic education in Mexico at 15, and then enrolled at a vocational school for flight attendants.

In September, Garcia was hired to work as a parent educator at Even Start, a Freedom Elementary School program that works with low-income families to ensure school success.

In October, she attended an Even Start national conference in Washington. The visit to the nation's capital also made an impression on Garcia, who came to Watsonville 10 years ago as a bride.

"When you see all those monuments, you think 'I want to be an American,'" she said.

Tuesday, Garcia took her first Cabrillo College class, a course in early childhood education. Maybe she'll become a preschool teacher, she said. But for now she'll share the skills she learns with the parents she works with at Freedom.

Kim Iwasko, who heads the Career and Technical Department, said Garcia is only one of thousands of success stories the department can claim.

The adult school provides short-term courses aimed at helping students get jobs.

About 400 students enroll each year in courses ranging from accounting and computer repair to construction and pharmacy technician — many tailored to help Spanish speakers learn or improve their English at the same time. Garcia said education is the key to a better life. Working as a waitress isn't a bad job, she said. She still waits tables on Sundays, and enjoys the people she meets and the chance to practice her English.

But getting more education enabled her to snag a job that not only pays well and provides medical insurance, but gives her the opportunity to help others.

“Go to school and put all your heart into it, and you’re going to obtain whatever you want,” Garcia said. “That’s the message.”

Contact Donna Jones at djones@santacruzsentinel.com.

“What’s great about working at WAAE?” asked at the January PDRT

- Being involved with families in the community
- Computer access
- The pay
- Building relationships with students and colleagues
- Fun games
- Singing
- Variety
- Teaching with someone named Lola
- Facilitating success in cultural acclimation
- Teaching adults because they want to be there
- Personal growth
- Mariana
- Meeting new, good people
- No major behavioral problems (like junior high)
- The schedule
- Great boss, Bob!
- Long vacations
- Sick pay
- Helping folks
- Resources and materials
- The counselors are so nice, and they work so hard
- A supportive staff and leader
- Raye Smith and her hootzba
- Observing the growth of students
- Student life stories
- Direct accountability with students
- Teaching Spanish GED
- The curriculum variety
- Everyone is flexible
- Creating more equal opportunity and equality through language acquisition
- Good snacks at meetings
- Helping, coaching, encouraging, inspiring
- The energy level of students and staff
- The teachers I work with
- Having a support group
- The fact that I get paid to do something I love doing!

Coaches' Corner

It is great working at WAAE! Thanks to you all for making it so! Molly & CathyJo



**Safety
Drills**

WAAE Calendar



Wednesday, March 8 - Fire drill

Wednesday, April 5 - Earthquake drill

*All drills will take place
for Porter at 10:00 am and 7:30 pm
and at GV at 10:30 am and 7:30 pm*

Wednesday, March 8, 7:00pm

PVUSD Board Meeting,

*Adult School "PVUSD Student of the Month" Patricia Doolittle
Come see our student recognized at the PVUSD Board Meeting*

*150th Anniversary of California Public Adult Education
WAAE Celebration*

Saturday, March 11, 11:00-4:00, Green Valley

CCAЕ Legislation Day

State Capitol

Monday, March 13

Spring Break

April 14 - 22

Three Year Month-to-Month Comparison

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	
July	75.93	61.57	58.22	-3.35
August	49.02	62.49	55.65	-6.84
Sept	109.97	98.15	94.74	-3.41
Oct	108.74	101.03	101.44	0.41
Nov	103.69	89.75	97.74	7.99
Dec	62.6	52.83	50.38	-2.45
Jan	94.62	83.1	87.08	3.98
Feb	99.17	96.34	96.34	
March	136.23	104.1	104.1	
April	88.97	98.64	98.64	
May	81.42	89.7	89.7	
June	22.01	66.18	66.18	
Total	1032.37	1003.88	1000.21	-3.67
		CAP	1042	