

Student success spurred at the library

I like to tell friends that I would not have gotten through high school math or science classes if I hadn't had the patient help of my brilliant engineer father. It's true. I didn't have to pay a tutor because I had one for free in my own home. But not all students are so lucky. That's why the Tuolumne County Library offers homework help for children in grades four through eight on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. at Sonora's main library.

"For many parents, paying the cost of a tutor is beyond their budgetary means, as most tutoring services charge at least \$20 per hour," said Technology, Literacy and Outreach Librarian Lynn McCormick. "The Homework Help program is reliant upon volunteer retired teachers who meet with students. It is currently a drop-in service. Since it uses volunteers, there is no cost to the library or to children or their families who wish to utilize this program."

New to the library, the homework assistance service started earlier this year. A retired school-teacher offers help to each student individually, guiding him or her through his or her studies. While the teacher works with one stu-

Homework Help Program

WHEN: 3 to 5 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays

WHERE: Tuolumne County Library, 480 Greenley Road, Sonora

COST: Free

MORE INFO: 533-5507 or tuolcolib.org



dent, he or she will encourage other students to complete other portions of their homework as they wait. So far, the program has had a slow start, but McCormick hopes word of mouth and promotion will bring in more students and lead to the library bringing in more teachers on more days.

"One of the issues that I see is not only getting the word out, but finding ways to entice the students to

take advantage of the help," she said. "We do see a number of young people daily (although not as many as in the past), but they want to use the computers for games or just hang out with their friends. It is hard to argue against that, as some of the kids do not have Internet access at home."

But McCormick said a strong need for helping hands (and minds!) does exist.

"I have received calls from parents

and grandparents requesting information about where to find tutoring for their young student," McCormick said. "There is a definite need, as many children struggle with their homework and do not always have the home help needed. Many students have both parents working and the curricular demands are often at levels that parents will struggle with when trying to help their child understand many of the concepts of today's classroom."

For example, McCormick said sixth graders are being introduced to algebra, and many adults can easily forget how to solve basic algebraic equations if they have been out of school for a few years or more.

"Oftentimes for a child, receiving one-on-one help will be very beneficial," McCormick said. "The tutor is able to attack a problem in a different manner, which can help break down a learning barrier."

The library also offers several other programs for children and adults. A bookmobile travels to various neighborhoods in the Don Pedro, Columbia and Jamestown areas three days a week to make borrowing books more accessible.

Tuolumne Talk

Harmony Wheeler

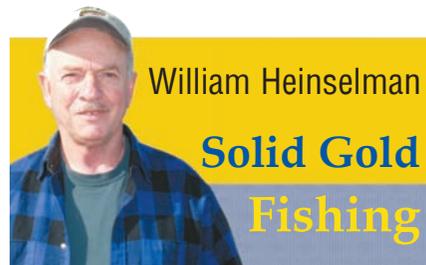


Other locations are part of the rotation, too; to see the schedule, visit tuolcolib.org and click on "WOW Mobile Library."

Other services at the library include adult literary services, the Born to Read program for children under 5 years old, regular story and craft times on Tuesdays through Thursdays at 10:30 a.m., monthly afterschool programs, early learning computers preloaded with educational games for toddlers and preschoolers, and the Paws to Read program, which features once-a-month visits with therapy dogs.

The library is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more, call 533-5507 or visit the website.

Send your Tuolumne County events to Harmony Wheeler at hwheeler@sierralodestar.com and mtaylor@sierralodestar.com.



Camanche proves that not all trips score bites

I figured this week it was time for some bank fishing at Camanche Reservoir. Camanche has 53-miles of shoreline and is part of the Mokelumne River chain of reservoirs. There are two marinas and the lake is owned and managed by the East Bay Municipal Utility District. The Camanche Recreation Co. is in charge of operating the recreational offerings here. The lake is accessed from the north from Camanche Road near Ione and from the south via South Camanche Parkway, which leaves Highway 12 in Wallace.

The morning I hit the lake was cold and foggy. It was so foggy that if I had planned to boat, I would have waited a few hours so I could see to navigate. Lucky for me my plan was to bank-fish the South Shore Trout Pond and the shorelines of the lake.

I arrived at 7 a.m. and my first stop was the pond. I heard that the pond was once a quartz mining pit and is very deep. The trout pond is about 5-acres in size and is one of four

ponds at the south side of the lake. All are gravity fed from the Mokelumne River and the water discharged from the ponds drains into the lake to unite and continue down the Mokelumne. I noticed five cars parked in the lot just across the road near the pond. It's stocked with some big fish – the pond record is 19.37 pounds – so I figured that I'd get a report from the anglers right away.

I fished the north side of the pond and could barely see the anglers just up from me on the eastern shore. There were a couple of guys on the south side, too, but there was no way to see them in the ground-hugging clouds. Even though my vision was obscured from the fog, sound traveled well at this hour of the morning. I heard one gentleman catch a fish, which immediately woke up the rest of us and created a happier mood for everyone.

I was soaking rainbow PowerBait on each of the two setups I had in the

water. For backup rigs, I also carried one rod with a casting bubble and night crawler and a 3/8-ounce gold Kastmaster spoon. I saw one fish hit the surface and reeled in one PowerBait. I cast the bubble with a single night crawler to where I spotted the fish, but got no takers. A few minutes later I traded the night crawler setup for the Kastmaster spoon and fan-cast the entire area.

An hour went by and not one single hit. The same slow morning was shared by the other fishermen; there wasn't a nibble between us. At this point, I moved on to the main lake.

The fog lifted for a moment, so before leaving the pond I decided to interview the lucky guy who caught

the only fish of the morning: John Withrow of Valley Springs. I asked him if the fish on the stringer was his and he politely said it was.

John told me he started fishing the South Shore Trout Pond three weeks ago. Then I asked him the key ques-

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William Heinselman

John Withrow of Valley Springs caught this rainbow on a Berkley Mice Tail lure at the South Shore Trout Pond at Camanche Reservoir.

Brian J. Tewksbury

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