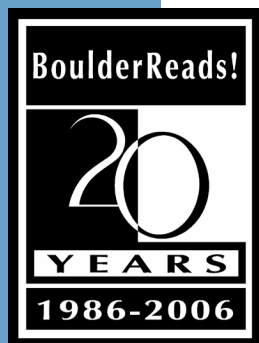
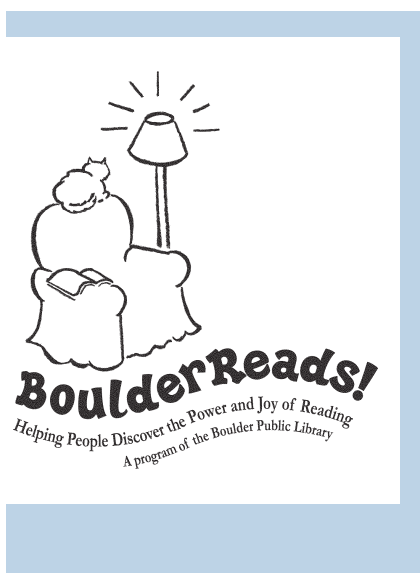


35TH ANNIVERSARY

DISCOVERING OUR WORLD THROUGH STORIES



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LITERACY FOR ALL

DISCOVERIES

The 2021 Collection of Stories
Written by BoulderReads Learners

1986–2021

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BOULDERREADS

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- English conversation groups
- High school completion

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INTRODUCTION

Originally the Learning to Read Program, BoulderReads was founded in 1986 by Diana Sherry to provide reading support to adults in Boulder County. Hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours later, we are BoulderReads, a diverse array of unique programs that improve the lives of adults and families. In addition to our core service of individual literacy tutoring, volunteer facilitators provide Conversations in English groups, partnerships with the University of Colorado engage college students and k-3 children in skill-building through the Reading Buddies program, and adults in need of high school equivalency are supported by the Career Online High School and local partnerships with GED programs. We grow right along with our adult learners and their families, engaging with multiple forms of literacy – digital, numerical, civic, and more. With 35 years of rich history, we have so much to be thankful for. We are happily supported by the Boulder Library Foundation, and would not be here if not for their incredible generosity and fierce belief in our cause.

BoulderReads is unique in so many ways, bridging literacy and English language learning, life skills, and all the innumerable things that preclude self-sufficiency and accomplishment. We build confidence, we foster community, we connect learners to resources, and most of all, we learn together. All of our instruction is delivered by volunteer tutors and facilitators. They personify persistence, kindness, patience, and fortitude, giving of their time first to learn how to teach reading and then to share that knowledge.

Our adult learners have read their first books, written and published memoirs, given cooking demonstrations online, attained citizenship, gone to college, passed vocational exams, gotten drivers' licenses, participated in parent-teacher conferences, learned to ride the bus, opened bank accounts, received awards from City Council and the Rotary Club, learned medical terminology in the face of health crises, applied for jobs, gotten promotions, purchased homes, made friends, started businesses, exhibited their art professionally, founded non-profits, written poetry, read with their children – clearly, it's impossible to list everything. The simplest way to put it may be that they are working to become the versions of themselves that they want to be, with the support of BoulderReads.

I know that I speak for all of the program's staff spanning 35 years when I say my work with BoulderReads is life-changing and uplifting, especially now as we together navigate immense challenges locally and globally. I look forward to the ongoing evolution!

Aspen Walker, Interim Manager
Karen Bowen, Program Coordinator
Christine Burke, BR Specialist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2-3** THE KING'S WORRY BY ANJU AWANEESH UPADHYAY
- 4** THE MILKMAID & THE MILK POT BY GENEVIÈVE BATTAREL
- 5** LEARNING TO READ BY GENEVIÈVE BATTAREL
- 6-7** COVID-19 FROM MY POINT OF VIEW BY BLANCA URENA
- 8-9** DUCKLINGS BY LAN (CICY) JIN
- 10-11** BOULDER HISTORY: MORK & MINDY BY DAVID ALLSHOUSE
- 12-13** BEING IN QUARANTINE BY FRANKLIN ESCOBAR
- 14** NEW WORLD BY GYANENDRA POUDEL
- 15-18** DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, WHO EXPERIENCED A DIFFERENT NOWRUZ THIS YEAR BY HAMID SAMARI
- 19** FROM WINTER TO SPRING BY IRMA SEQUERA
- 20-21** GRATITUDE & RESILIENCE BY LILIAN BUCIO
- 22-23** SRI LANKAN-STYLE COCONUT ROTI COOKING PRESENTATION BY NISA FERNANDO
- 24** THE STORY OF ME MOVING DURING COVID BY ORADAN BARLOW
- 25-26** PARISA & RACHEL BY RACHEL BAKER, CONT.
- 27-29** MY STORY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY RITA HU
- 30-31** COVID-19 BY SWATANTRA NEUPANE POUDEL
- 32-33** COVID-19 BY TAYEBEH FIRUZKUIH



THE KING'S WORRY BY ANJU AWANEESH UPADHYAY

Conversations in English Participant

Once upon a time, there was a king whose empire was spread far and wide.

One day he asked his finance minister how much money they had in their treasury?

The Minister said that they had a lot of money in the treasury. The king then asked him to tell exactly how much money they had.

Then the minister said that they had so much money that ten generations of their people could eat comfortably. The king then asked if there would be no money for subsequent generations? Then the minister said that when the sea is empty, then later generations will have to earn to meet their expenses, meaning this will never happen.

But the king began to worry about later generations. He got sick. Doctors were called to treat the king, but no doctor could cure him. At the same time a saint returned from pilgrimage. When he came to know about the illness of the king, he went to meet him. He asked about the day before the king fell ill. When he came to know all the story, he suggested a remedy.

The saint said that a poor husband and wife live outside the village. If the king himself goes daily for ten days and donate food to them, then the king will be cured. The soldiers of the king took the king to donate food to the poor couple. One day the couple didn't open the door and from inside said that they had enough food to eat and to please take the food back. They were happy.

Soldiers said that they may keep it for the next day. They replied they did not want to store for the future. The king heard about this conversation. Hearing this, the king's eyes opened. If this poor family doesn't even think about tomorrow why I am worrying about later generations and making my life sad. Now the king realized his mistake and stopped worrying for later generations.

This is not merely a story but a lesson for the people who have all the resources and facilities and who are always worried for their future. In keeping their worries, they forget to enjoy the real pleasures of life because of lack of time and lack of peace.

THE MILKMAID & THE MILK POT BY GENEVIÈVE BATTAREL

Conversations in English Participant

A well-known French fable was written in 1678 by Jean de la Fontaine, a French author of poems and fables. The title is: The Milkmaid and the Milk Pot.

The story of the French fable is almost the same of the story of The Milkmaid and her Milk Pail. The moral of these fables is: not to take our dreams too quickly for reality.

A milkmaid has milked her cows. She wants to sell the milk and with the money she dreams to buy animals. The animals she dreams of buying are bigger and bigger: first of all she will buy eggs to have chickens. She already sees the chickens around her house. Then she can buy a pig. And a little later a cow and her calf that will jump in the middle of a herd.

The money of the milk transforms, multiplies in her mind. She imagines the cow and the calf jumping. So she jumps and the milk flowed out. She has to say goodbye to the calf, cow, pig, chicken, eggs

I know in French sentences that illustrate the moral of these fables:

“To buy castles in Spain,” and “One should not sell the skin of the bear before having killed it.”

And in the English fable the sentence is, “Do not count your chickens before they are hatched.”

I also know an English expression, “A pie in the sky.”

To illustrate these two fables, we have the image of the rainbow, which is something inaccessible. We can't touch a rainbow. It is not a physical object. At the end of the rainbow is nothing. People want to reach the end of the rainbow, but it is impossible. They even think sometimes that a treasure is hidden at the end of the rainbow “There's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.”

What is my rainbow?

In my heart there are many rainbows for the good of the world.

As a joke I will say that my rainbow is to speak English well one day and understand it!

LEARNING TO READ BY GENEVIÈVE BATTAREL

Conversations in English Participant



About twenty years ago, I had the opportunity to help a young Moroccan woman learn to read. I went to her house while her two-year-old son was taking a nap.

I could note that there were no books and even no magazine (tv magazine for example). Her husband too could not read.

The young woman learned quickly. I used reading books for foreigners, but gradually I brought storybooks from my children. A few months later she said to me, “Yesterday evening my son had his first story.” From that day, she read a story to her son every night (then, two years later, to her two children).

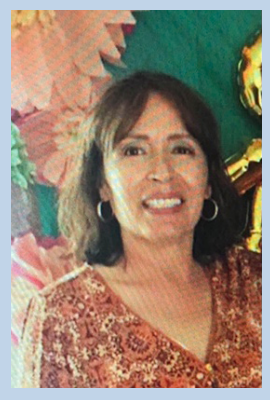
I decided to go with her to the neighborhood library. With the help of the librarian, she was able to choose simple books for herself but especially for her son (and later for her daughter).

Twenty years later her son and her daughter are students in college. And she is very proud of them.

COVID-19 FROM MY POINT OF VIEW

BY BLANCA URENA

Jean Evans, Tutor



I remember that in January 2019 I was watching TV, and for the first time, I heard on the news about the coronavirus that started in China.

I heard that it was an extremely contagious virus. After a few days, I decided to cut the cable because I do not have time to watch TV and because of the amount of bad news that I heard every day.

Then, I kept hearing about covid 19 everywhere – on the radio, computer, telephone, etc. Without a doubt this virus has affected the whole world and we know well the consequences that this “pandemic” has brought us (and I put it in quotation marks because, for me, the pandemic does not exist). Covid-19 does. But instead of listing all the negatives that this unprecedented event has left us, I am going to write my point of view a bit.

Our planet earth is in a moment of regeneration. Therefore, it affects everything that inhabits it. Also, our body, our DNA, is also in the process of regeneration and as a consequence of that, we are suffering all these symptoms, and many people, bodies or minds cannot bear it. That is because we are being bombarded by fear and terror instilled by governments and all types of communication in order to distract us so that humanity does not achieve the awakening of consciousness.

Covid-19 is neither good nor bad. It has only been necessary for this transformation because we are living in a new era, the era of awakening of consciousness, and we will move from the third to the fifth dimension! “The third dimension has to do with the most material part of reality; it is the dimension we are normally in.” The third dimension is what we know an object has: height, depth, and width. “The fifth dimension involves an even greater expansion of consciousness that relates to the perception that everything is one. It is a great shift in consciousness that has to do with understanding

that we are part of the whole. There are 5 Estates of the Universe on which all universal creation is based: love, wisdom, will, evolution and co-creation, with love being the first estate from which all the emotions and all the dimensions of the Universe emanate.” (bioguia.com/entretenimiento/quinta-dimension). It is where humanity will give more importance to spiritual development than to material development, where we will find our true purpose of why we are here and why we have come to this planet.

To achieve this, it is necessary to live without fear, and maintain a good balance in our mind, body, and spirit. I do not believe in everything that the news says, where all we hear is more of the same, and day by day the news is giving more strength and power to the negatives! Despite adversity, I prefer to stay positive, in good health, with positive thoughts, with good energy, good nutrition, a good attitude, a good mood, a good disposition to help others, with a lot of peace and

above all, with a lot of love! Love of life, love of nature, love of my work, love for our fellow man, love of animals, etc. because love and gratitude are the essential parts for living in peace. If there is love and gratitude within each human being, we have it all! And I am thankful for everything I have learned since COVID-19 began until now. I learned the importance of being close to my family, that it is necessary to say I love you, to hug them and show how important they are in my life, and not just assume that they know that I love them and that they are important to me. I also learned to have more tolerance, not to argue over such small things, to live with more harmony but above all to value life! Because each experience, whether good or bad, leaves us learning. Then it only remains for me to say...

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

DUCKLINGS BY LAN (CICY) JIN

It is said a duckling usually thinks the animal or person seen at first sight is its mum while it was hatching. It's such an interesting phenomenon. I'm wondering what other animals have the same characteristic.

It reminds me of one thing that happened when I was a kid. I lived in a rural area at that time. My mum fed many chickens. I remember one year, my mum brought many eggs home. Instead of eating them, she observed them under an old lightbulb. I was curious and asked my mum, "What are you doing, mummy?" She said, "I am watching if these eggs can become chicks." I didn't know how. So, I went on asking her, "How do you know if an egg can become a chick, mummy?" She answered, "Look here, do you see a dark dot inside of this egg? It means this egg may have chance to be a chick." I still didn't understand it, but I watched it with her.

Then she put about 20 eggs under a hen. She told me the eggs need a warm temperature to be able to hatch. When she was not looking, I hid one egg that she picked under my quilt. I wanted to have my own chick. Unluckily, it was broken inadvertently. I decided to steal another egg from the hen. However, I found the hen had become so aggressive and didn't allow anybody to approach her. Otherwise, she would peck you. I had no choice but to give up.

When I gradually forgot this thing, one morning, some strange voices attracted me. I ran to the position of the hen's coop and saw a lot of vivid yellow small pompoms moving. How lovely the chicks were! But still, the hen didn't let anyone approach them, even my mum, the only feeder. Neglecting her, I told many of my classmates and friends and took them to my home to see the chicks.

As time went by, they grew up, and my mum taught me how to discern that some of them would be hens, and the others would be roosters. Even so, I lost interest in them because I found they had become not cute anymore with the growing. Particularly, one of the roosters had become so territorial and liked chasing people and tried to peck them.

Conversations in English Participant

At that time, due to their increasing size, the chicken coop couldn't contain all of them any longer. My mum had to move them to the annex, where the pigs stayed as well as where our toilet was located.

One night, I went to the toilet and noticed one of the roosters tried to peck me. I was afraid and told my mum, but she didn't believe me in the beginning. Since she fed them every day, there was no such thing, she thought. My dad agreed with my mum. He never saw that, either. The next day, not only me, but my sisters and brother said the same thing, and with that rooster growing bigger, he also tried to peck my dad but never my mum.

So when I read about ducklings being imprinted, that is, when they hatch, the first thing they see is the one they think is their mother. I think maybe chicks have the same characteristic. That rooster never tried to peck my mum because she's the first person he saw, and she fed him every day. To think big, sometimes, animals may be more grateful than human beings. What do you think?



BOULDER HISTORY: MORK & MINDY PART TWO: LOCATIONS, CONTINUED BY DAVID ALLSHOUSE

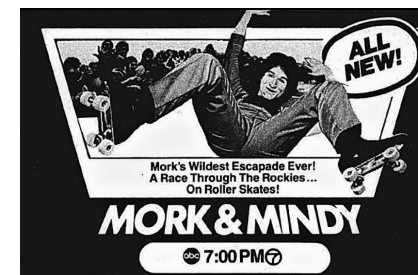
Another location in Mork and Mindy was Wheels Roller Rink, located at 2950 Baseline Road where Sprouts is now. I used to go skating there, before Mork and Mindy started. My mom would drop us off and pick us up. It was pretty fun. A lot of my friends went too. Then, one day, I heard they needed some extra skaters for an episode of Mork and Mindy, but I didn't go.

The location used for The Pine Tree Day Care Center where Mork worked was The Boulder Day Nursery, 1518 Spruce Street. It is still there and in operation. On their website, they even mention Mork and Mindy on their historical timeline! The day care started in 1918 and has been at the Spruce Street location since 1929. It is one of the oldest day care centers in the United States.

"Duelling Skates" was the fourth episode season three of Mork and Mindy and aired on November 27th, 1980. The plot was that the son of the business man who owns the daycare where Mork works convinced his father the building should be torn down.

In the episode, Mork decided to challenge the son, whose nickname was Wheels, to a skating match through Boulder so that the daycare could stay open, Mork could keep his job, and save the children. Before the "Rocky Mountain Road Race," Mindy had to help Mork learn to skate; he had orange and brown skates. Mork and Wheels had to start skating from the top of The Flat Irons down to the middle of Pearl Street Mall where the finish line was. Wheels was cheating on the race so Mork would lose; his friends were throwing tires and other stuff in Mork's way. Mork got off course and went down the bumpy, grassy trail and finally passed Wheels after getting back on track; after that, Mork was ahead!

Lindsey Anderson, Tutor



The camera showed Mork coming down into Boulder and onto Pearl Street. The finish line of the race was about where Haagen Dazs Ice Cream is now. Mork also skated

by Tom's Tavern. At the time, people who parked West of the mall got ticketed because filming was going on in the area. I liked this episode because I knew the roller-skating rink and had fun there; it's another good example of how Mork and Mindy connects to my own history and why the show is important to me.

Mork and Mindy is an important part of my life. It was important when I was growing up and is important now because it helps people remember their past in a special city. I'm glad I can watch it whenever I want because it makes me happy. Mork was one of Robin Williams' most important roles and is one of the best parts of remembering him.

BEING IN QUARANTINE BY FRANKLIN ESCOBAR

Marcia Kahn, Tutor

Being in quarantine has been really hard for me because I like to hang out with the family and, of course, with friends. I haven't been able to see most of my family because we are all scared about the situation that is happening around the world. I haven't seen any of my friends but I think they are in good health too and that is the most important. I also love outdoor activities. I have been running but it's scary because there are a lot of people walking too so I have been doing it early in the morning.

I knew the word quarantine because when women give birth, they take forty days off and I think it's basically the same thing. I miss a lot of things like family, class, work, gym but the most important thing that I miss is freedom. For example, little things like going out and feeling like I'm safe, feeling like nothing will happen to me, talking to people and giving a hug or shaking hands with each other, going to the grocery and not being afraid of people approaching me. I also miss the gym because I think I was doing really good with that. I would wake up early on week days which was a really good habit. It made me start my day in a great mood....I would go back home to cook my breakfast and lunch and get ready for work. Weekends with the family was fun too. I would sometimes meet with the uncles for soccer, and then have some drinks and food, talking about just anything or just making jokes about each other which was fun.



I have been doing workouts at home and running in the morning sometimes. I look for workouts on the internet and it helps me a lot to not feel depressed. I think I haven't been cooking enough like I should, but I cook sometimes. I used to cook more when I was in my normal life lol. I have some recipes that I want to try. I think that I will cook one that I found in a magazine. I will tell you later if I do and it goes well.

I am reading a book that I like a lot. It is called "The 5 a.m. Club" by Robin Sharma and is written in Spanish. It's about good habits that we should learn to be successful in our life and I really like it.

If I think about one thing positive about what is happening right now is when all this passes, we will appreciate everything more. For me, in particular, I feel that I'm getting closer to my sisters and we are having more time together which I like. I hope people get better and learn things about this.

About the market, what can I say!!! I have been really stressed about it. To be honest, I don't think the market will happen this year with the social distancing. People are very scared about it and you know how the market is full most of the time.

NEW WORLD BY GYANENDRA POUDEL

Toby Hankin, Tutor



In 2011, the US government opened DV (diversity visas) in various countries around the world, including Nepal. Following the advice of our family, we also decided to apply for this diversity visa. Everyone in our family filled out the DV form. Diversity Visa was opened for 2012. A few months after filling out the form, they informed us by phone that we had succeeded in winning the Visa. We were very happy at that time. We received the first letter. For the second letter, we filled in the

second letter along with all our paperwork such as marriage certificate, birth certificate, university certificate, etc. A few months later, from the American Embassy, we received information that we got the Diversity Visa in 2012 for the United States. Then we finally went to the American Embassy for an American Green Card with all the certificates and money. The United States chose us in the negotiations. Then we came to the United States from Nepal in February 2012 for permanent residency. After a long journey of three days, we moved to Colorado.

In 2012, we moved from Nepal to Colorado in the United States of America for permanent residency. It was February. At that time, the ground was white with snow. We were sad because we had left our country. On the other hand, we were happy because we came to a very developed country like America. First, we came to a relative's house. After a while we moved into an apartment. At first, we were very worried because our language wasn't great, we didn't have a job, and we had to take our children to school.

After a while we started working. There were people from different countries at work. It was very difficult because all the co-workers spoke their own languages. Everyone at work was helpful and friendly. They taught me how to do my job. The children's education was also good and our time was going well. Our English also began to improve. Our job was also getting better. We also bought a car. In the first year, we arranged everything and were less worried and happier.

DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, WHO EXPERIENCED A DIFFERENT NOWRUZ THIS YEAR BY HAMID SAMARI

Lloyd Botway, Tutor

New Year in Iran—Nowruz, in Persian—coincides with the first day of spring. Iranian people celebrate the new year because they believe spring is a growth season; it gives them hope and energy to start more outdoor activities. In fact, they celebrate the renewing of the natural world and overcoming the cold and dark winter.

Nowruz is a two-week celebration that marks the beginning of the New Year in Iran's official Solar Hejri calendar. The celebration includes four public holidays from the first to the fourth day of Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian calendar, usually beginning on March 21.

Although we have several holidays, my favorite one is Nowruz. Although it is a four-day public holiday for people who work at offices, it's a 13-day holiday for students. On this holiday, families and friends meet each other in their homes and congratulate each other for the arriving of the new year. They wish each other a happy and healthy new year.

When I was a child, I celebrated Nowruz with my family in my hometown. My hometown Hamedan is very cold and snowy in the winter. If we had a lot of snow in our backyard, I would clean it and put all the snow into the garden. I also cleaned and washed our small pool and filled it with fresh water and put a few golden fish in it. I prepared a Nowruz table for our family that is called Haft Sin, Persian for "Seven S's." This is a traditional custom that came from 2500 years ago. People put seven special things on the table; the first letter of each word starts with "S", like Apple (Sib in Persian), Vinegar (Serkeh), Sumac spice (Sumac), Garlic (Sir), Wheat sprout (Sabzeh), Silver berry (Senjed), and Coin (Sekeh). These seven things reflect happiness, healthiness, and wealth for people in the New Year. I usually put red fishes into a crystal fishbowl and set it on the Nowruz table. I also decorated the Haft Sin table with a bunch of tulip or daffodil flowers. Since we had a lot of guests during Nowruz's holidays my father bought different kinds of cookies,

DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, WHO EXPERIENCED A DIFFERENT NOWRUZ THIS YEAR CONT. BY HAMID SAMARI

chocolates, and fruits to welcome guests. My mother cooked us fish and rice for New Year's Eve dinner, which is a most common dish for that time, although some families cook chicken or special kinds of stews for that night.

In the first day of the New Year, we went to my grandparents' houses for greetings and celebration of the new year. They gave us paper money instead of presents, because that was a common custom between close families. We collected our money and with our parents' consideration, we were allowed to save a part of our money and use the rest of it for buying a toy. I really miss those days because each period of time is unique and can never be repeated again.

Since I got married, my wife and I always have been trying to follow the best and interesting parts of our custom about Nowruz. When we were in Iran, we performed a few things before New Year's Eve, including cleaning the house, painting the walls if needed, mopping the rugs and shopping for required items such as new

clothes, cookies, chocolates, and fruits. Since during the holidays all repair shops are closed, I always brought my vehicle to the dealership for seasonal checking and changing the engine oil one week before the new year holidays, because we always had a plan to travel during Nowruz holidays. A few years after our marriage time, we saw ourselves sitting around the Nowruz table with our son. We tried to teach him all the customs related to Nowruz.

In 2017, my family and I moved to the United States. We have celebrated Nowruz in the United States for four years. I always have been preparing the Haft Sin table and decorate the table with a traditional tablecloth, which we brought from Iran. We buy special kinds of cookies, chocolates, and fruits from the Persian market to welcome our guests. Parisa, my wife, cooks rice and fish, just like Persian people in Iran. After the new year starts, in the USA, instead of visiting our family, we call our family and congratulate them for the new year and spring.



Our Haf Sin Table (1400 Solar Hejri/2021 Georgian)

We noticed that the Iranian community in Boulder celebrates Nowruz at CU every year. We attended one of them, which was held in 2019. At that celebration, a few Persian groups performed Persian dances and read poetry. Persian foods also were served. We met all our Persian friends there, and we had an opportunity to hear the sounds of Farsi (the Persian language) around us. We really found ourselves in a great atmosphere.

This year Nowruz was completely different from the previous ones due to the pandemic. Iranian people could not meet and hug each other and could not sit beside each other to talk about the best things that happened for them, which is one of the most important customs in Persian culture.

Although I was not in Iran, I could feel the silence in streets and the loneliness of families. This is really strange, having Nowruz with no guests, no gifts, no meetings. This would be more difficult for kids, who like to show their new clothes to their cousins and friends.

Many Iranian families such as millions of families across the world have lost their beloved family members due to Covid. I believe Iranian families who lost a beloved family member had a very sad Nowruz, which is contrary to the spirit of life, growth, and spring.

Unfortunately, we received very sorrowful news: Parisa's father passed away due to Covid. This news ruined our life situation, and we really did not know at that time what to do alone and far from our family. Parisa wanted to go and be with her family, but it was not possible to travel at that

DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, WHO EXPERIENCED A DIFFERENT NOWRUZ THIS YEAR CONT. BY HAMID SAMARI

time because of limited flights. The pandemic situation did not allow our friends to come and see her, which doubled our grief. My son and I were trying to calm her down, but to no avail. She had not seen her father for two years. She had decided to go to Iran last summer, but Covid started, and it was not possible for her to go. She promised her father to see him in this summer, but her wish was completely destroyed. She loves her father much like most girls do, and she talked with her father on the phone almost every day.

Covid could not let Parisa see her father, like many people across the world. She wept alone in grief over the loss of her father in exile. Within two months of that incident, the Persian New Year was started. I got her permission to prepare our small Haf Sin Table. We sat around the Haf Sin Table and prayed for her father and all people who are beloved of their families, praying for a good year for all people around the world, for having a new year without the pandemic.

Although she has come to terms with her father's death, her eyes sometimes show that she has cried to herself. After a long time, when she got her vaccines, I saw her reaction at that time, she was not very happy, because she thought if the vaccine were available sooner, it would rescue her father. By the way, after getting vaccine, she booked her ticket to go to Iran and see her mother and her siblings. At that time, I saw tears of joy and sorrow flowing on her cheeks.

FROM WINTER TO SPRING BY IRMA SEQUERA

Maryann Edwards, Tutor



Winter is coming! The trees seem to be dying, but they are not. Trees renew the bark of their trunks and their leaves begin to fall. In winter the trees are strengthened on the outside and create new life on the inside like a pregnant woman carrying the new life in her womb. They wait for Spring to give birth to those lives. Winter left and Spring came ... and the miracle was done! The trees are renewed with fresh colors and new life, those leaves that once fell, joined the earth, fed the trees and what yesterday were their clothes became compost to strengthen those trees becoming another lifestyle. The useful, positive and loving life does not die, it is renewed and lives forever!

GRATITUDE & RESILIENCE

BY LILIAN BUCIO

Jane Rich, Tutor



I grew up having a muegano* family, a large family. My parents always inculcated to my brothers, sisters and me how important it is to have and maintain our family together.

I, as many other persons in the world, have been struggling day by day with this pandemic. I am thinking of the day that we can get rid of this invisible executioner. This pandemic has been taking away from this

world some family members and dear friends. However, I cannot give up. I need to be strong. Every day is a good opportunity to do my best. I take one day at a time. I repeat this to myself every day.

During these almost 18 months of uncertainty and confusion around this Covid-19 pandemic, I had the opportunity to re-affirm how important it is to take care of ourselves. We need to pause in our accelerated lives, and listen and learn from our own bodies. There is not enough money that can bring our mental and physical health back. We need to be aware and to learn from other countries, other people and other experiences. It's not easy but we need to try to not make the same mistakes, and to be more observant, more health conscious and less selfish.

I have gratitude to God for having given me a son. I am blessed to have an amazing and exceptional son close to me. We take care of each other. My son is a smart man. He is always kind and generous. During these hard times, he has been a very important emotional and economic support for not give up.

I have been thinking how blessed I am. I had the opportunity to say goodbye to my lovely, generous and exceptional mother last January. She was a brave warrior fighting against cancer for more than three years. She was blessed to have avoided this terrible virus. She had the opportunity to have a peaceful funeral with my father, her 8 children,

few grandchildren, family and friends; one of her children was present virtually, but she was there too to say goodbye to her mother. It has been a very painful time. We miss her.

My father is a strong, generous and wise man. He is 90 years old. He is missing his best friend and partner; they shared 60 years of marriage. He says that life is like a dream, and we need to think about the good and bad things that life has given us as a lesson to act wisely.

This pandemic didn't have clemency for anyone. Poor, middle class and rich people around the world could not hide from this terrible, invisible executioner. Everyone around the world is struggling with the same pain, and some of us are taking it as a good and painful lesson of life.

During all my life I took for granted my health. I am able to see, to talk, to hear, and to touch. I am able to walk without any worry. Now, when I am on my daily walk, I highly appreciate being able to breathe the fresh air, and feel it on my face and body. I feel gratitude for this opportunity. I am blessed to enjoy one more day of life.

I am grateful to my faith that doesn't let me down. I am grateful to my family for their unconditional support when I need them. I am grateful to my friends who give me their friendship and love. I am grateful to all these adorable amazing and generous souls, my English tutors Jane Rich, Deborah Kalish, Carol Smoot and Doras Montgomery who gave me their personal time during several years and their valuable friendship. They shared with me their knowledge in different professional fields that helped me return to my professional and daily life in this new country and culture. Also, I am grateful to have a job that is my passion and a roof that protects us against this extreme weather.

Hello, world! All of us are on the same journey. We need Resilience!

*muegano: A traditional Mexican dessert. Squares of dough are fried then covered with a caramel syrup made from piloncillo that maintains all the squares together and are hard to separate.

SRI LANKAN-STYLE COCONUT ROTI COOKING PRESENTATION

BY NISA FERNANDO

Nancy Erickson, Tutor

My name is Nisa Fernando. I was born and raised in Sri Lanka. I came to the USA in 2013. I am married and we have a daughter, Oshini. She is almost 4 years old.

I was given the opportunity to present a Sri Lankan style cooking recipe to share with you on January 14 of this year. This was sponsored by Boulder Public Library Foundation. I was thankful for the Library Foundation and Jess Rainy for the opportunity. This was aired via YouTube in the library's Community Cooking program.

That day I shared with you how to make Sri Lankan style Coconut Roti, Tomato fry and Milk tea.

I chose that recipe because it was very simple, and you could find ingredients easily and locally.

I had prepared all the ingredients and I started cooking. Jess Rainy and Alice Eccles from Boulder Public Library were here to coordinate this event on YouTube and directed the questions from the audience to me. My husband helped with the camera. I also had a practice session with my Boulder Read's tutor Nancy Erickson prior to this presentation.

INGREDIENTS for coconut Roti (This is for families of 3-4)

4 cups of white or wheat flour (bleached or unbleached)	5 or 7 fresh curry leaves – optional (curry leaves also available in Indian stores)
2 cups of grated coconut (usually you can buy frozen coconut flakes at any Indian stores)	2-3 chopped green onions
1 cup of finely chopped onion, preferably red onion	1 tbsp of butter
1/2 cup of finely chopped jalapeno peppers (with or without seeds – depends on how hot you like)	2-3 tsp of salt or to taste
	1 1/2 cup of water (to make a soft dough that does not stick)

METHOD:

In a large bowl let's mix flour, coconut, chopped pepper, onions, curry leaves and salt.

Add water a little at a time and keep kneading it until you get a good soft dough and keep it aside for a few minutes.

Next, I started to make the tomato fry and this was the list of ingredients.

INGREDIENTS for Tomato Fry

- 4 sliced medium ripe tomatoes
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper chopped (seeded or seedless)
- 1 sliced medium onion (yellow or red)
- 5-6 curry leaves (finely chopped)
- 2-3 tbsp of olive / canola oil
- 1/2 tsp of crushed red pepper
- A pinch of turmeric
- Salt to taste

(If kids don't like tomato fry you can use, fish curry, chicken curry, Jam, hummus, butter, cream cheese etc.)

METHOD:

In a pan heat oil and first add onions, green peppers, and curry leaves. When onions are turning light brown, add tomatoes, red pepper powder, turmeric, and salt. Mix well and cook for about 4-5 minutes on medium heat.

If the tomato fry is a little extra sour, you can add a teaspoon of sugar or ketchup to make it a little less sour.

Now let's get back to cook the Roti. First place a non-stick pan on the stove with medium heat. Now you need to make a small ball from the dough and flatten it to make a flatbread. Then lay it on the heated pan on medium heat. Let it cook for about three minutes and then turn it over to cook the other side. Make sure the roti dough is cooked enough with brown spots on both sides. (you don't need any special pan for this but just any cooking pan will do).

Tasty cup of milk tea (black tea with milk).

Boil 3 cups of water and add 2 pods of crushed cardamom. And add a couple of black tea bags or 1 teaspoon of tea powder. Boil it for a couple of minutes and add a cup of fresh milk (whole or other) and heat it up a little and strain to cups. You may add sugar or honey to taste.



Thank you.

Enjoy it.

THE STORY OF ME MOVING DURING COVID BY ORADAN BARLOW

Laura Roettiger, Tutor

I had been living at my adopted mother's house for a year and then Covid hit. I lived there for 6 more months. During that time, I visited my family and was exposed to Covid 3 times. Every time I was exposed, my adopted mother would communicate to me her rules and expectations. I broke her rules.

So after the third time, she communicated to me that she did not feel safe and she was not willing to repeat the same mistake. She gave me a choice. I could go live with my family or find a new place to live. I did not want to go backwards so I got to looking for a new place. I visited seven places near where I work. The fifth place was the best option. I went for it and got it. Two weeks after she gave me those options, I had found a place and moved in.



I learned to take more responsibility. When I put my mind to something, it happens faster than I think it will take.

I love my mothers and what they have taught me and what they are still teaching me.



PARISA & RACHEL BY PARISA TASHAKORI

Rachel Baker, Tutor

I first met Parisa in January of 2020. I had completed training for BoulderReads in the fall and got word of a potential match in December, with an Iranian designer and instructor looking to improve her academic English and American cultural knowledge. I was fairly fresh out of architecture school, new to Boulder, and looking for a fun volunteer experience. Little did I know that the experience would be so transformative and that I would make a friend for life.

Parisa and I clicked almost immediately. She has an infectious curiosity and openness that made tutoring sessions fly by and often led to very interesting tangents. We both were excited to have been matched up with someone with a design-oriented background. We spent our sessions editing her lesson plans, reviewing the podcast we were listening to in between sessions, reading articles that caught our interest, and learning American

culture and idioms. (We have a consistently growing google doc named "Super Slang," that is now 8 pages long.) We also enjoyed learning about each other's cultures and discovering surprising similarities in Persian and Latinx culture. Almost two months into our journey, Covid hit and we moved our tutoring sessions to Zoom.

Around this time, we also began to work on Parisa's resume for a new position at CU Boulder's Design School. Parisa is also an incredibly humble person, so it wasn't until we really started looking at her past work and experiences that I fully understood what a phenomenal designer she is. I feel that this time displayed why adult ESL education and the work that BoulderReads does is so important. Parisa's work is full of social commentary, reflections on her experiences (as a women designer in Iran and as an immigrant in America), and other complex, creative ideas.

PARISA & RACHEL BY PARISA TASHAKORI CONT.

While we were happy to be going through the process of finding the English words to express these ideas, I could see how frustrating and isolating it was for her to be overflowing with these ideas, but to not have the English to properly convey their nuance and complexity.

The rewards of our time together certainly were not one-sided. Throughout my time in Boulder, working at a small architecture firm, I was discovering that I was drawn towards the graphics work I was doing and started to consider a career shift from architecture to graphic design and 3D visualization. Working with Parisa offered a glimpse into this field and her insight has been helpful and encouraging in this process. Our day-to-day conversations touch on design quite often and I had the opportunity to interview her about her career, which was very interesting, both in discussing her journey so far and the future of design and technology.

Perhaps more important is the support we built over the past year and a half. I believe the work that BoulderReads does can be considered community care. In reflecting on our pair-up, it's clear that our sessions were pretty

vital in maintaining a sense of community and combating isolation in a tumultuous year. Some of our sessions were light and hopeful – offering a bit of a break from doom-scrolling the news that continued to worsen. Other sessions were more serious, grappling with uncertainty and fear, from the events of the year and our own experiences - such as navigating America's political landscape as women of color, the loss of a loved one, or any of the many shocking events of the past year. The importance of this connection was highlighted last month when I was unexpectedly hospitalized and underwent surgery - Parisa was kind enough to visit me in the hospital, feed my cat, and hand off my apartment keys to my dad in the dead of the night.

I've now moved to my home-state of North Carolina and transitioned to part-time work, in order to build a design portfolio and apply for graduate programs in graphic and communications design. Thanks to 2020, Parisa and I are already very used to holding our sessions over Zoom, so we are continuing to meet, even across time zones and distance.

MY STORY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY RITA HU

Linda Murphy, Tutor

My name is Rita Hu, and I'm from Taiwan. I've been living in Boulder for two years. I met many friends through English conversations at the Boulder Main Library. Once after a session, we went to Alfalfa's Market across the street from the library, and I had a good time with them. When COVID-19 hit the world, all in-person conversations turned into virtual sessions. I'd like to share my story during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One year ago, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Colorado. People who live in Colorado got into a panic and started stocking up on household essentials, such as toilet paper, face masks, and hand sanitizers. I was about to run out of toilet paper at that time and needed to purchase it at grocery stores. However, the toilet paper supply collapsed. People irrationally went out to stock up on toilet paper. Suddenly, toilet paper became the most precious commodity early on in the pandemic. A few days later, I decided to give it a shot, so I went to buy toilet paper at Costco. I arrived there before it opened to avoid crowds; however, surprisingly, I saw many people were waiting in line already. Thankfully, I still acquired toilet paper and felt satisfied.

MY STORY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY RITA HU CONT.

Masks were also in short supply at the same time because people use masks against the spread of COVID-19. Since the virus started, many people have been taking more precautions and hoarding masks as much as they could. In Taiwan, the government declared new mask rationing: every Taiwanese resident could only buy two masks per week in the early stages of the pandemic. However, buying masks was a complete waste of time because people spent a few hours in line just for two masks. They were also exposed to the risk of getting an infection of COVID-19 because of failing to keep social distancing.

On the positive side, people couldn't store masks, and health care workers and medical personnel could get enough masks to protect themselves. Additionally, the government banned the export of masks to ensure the local supply of masks. But the government did announce that each Taiwanese resident could send 30 masks every other week to their immediate family overseas. I was glad that I could receive masks from my family. I wear them all the time to protect myself and other people when I'm outside.

In addition, I quit going to the gym at the beginning of the pandemic. All gyms were closed to prevent the spread of the virus. It took a few months for my gym to reopen and allow members to come back inside. Members are required to schedule workout times because of the limitation of the number of people at the same time. I was worried about getting infected if I went back to the gym. Eventually, I decided to go back there. I've been exercising at the gym for months, and people wear masks and stay 6 feet apart from others.

I cannot deny that there is a risk to do indoor activities; however, I wash my hands regularly before and after a workout to reduce the risk of infection. There're also sanitizers and rubbing alcohol available in the facility to wipe the equipment, making me feel more comfortable working out.

I'd preregistered for the COVID-19 vaccine for months, and I recently received a notice from my health insurance company that I'm eligible for the vaccine. Then I found a vaccination site near me and made an appointment expeditiously. I hoped I wouldn't get an allergic reaction to the vaccine. When I was in the medical center, the nurse was ready to give me the first dose. Just a wink and everything was done. After vaccination, I had to remain on-site for 15 minutes to watch for a rare allergic reaction. I didn't have any severe side effects so far except for a sore arm following the injection.

In short, COVID-19 has made everyone's life upside down. People used to rarely wear masks, even when they were sick. Now wearing a mask to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 has become normal in our lives. I'll get my second vaccine dose at the end of April, which will keep me from getting COVID-19. As a growing number of people are willing to get vaccines, a large population will be immune to COVID-19.

COVID-19 BY SWATANTRA NEUPANE POUDEL

Susan Litt, Tutor

With the advent of the English New Year 2020, my family and I were not spared from something as big as biological weapons “coronavirus” which was spreading around the world. The battles that my family and I fought physically and mentally will be remembered as long as I live. Due to the good health and resistance of the children, they didn’t have to fight much against the virus. But me and my husband had gone through a lot. My husband recovered within a month. Probably because his general health was better than mine. Although everyone in my family got better quickly, I had it for more than 4 months.

Covid-19 attacked me in the form of a war. Because I had it for a very long time, I started having problems with diabetes, cholesterol, anemia, digestive system, asthma and insomnia. However, as a woman, facing many obstacles all her life, no matter how much I was suffering, I was more worried about my family than myself. On one hand, I am afflicted with body aches, fever and shortness of breath. On the other hand, I see my husband coughing up to the

point of choking himself, and I see my kids having difficulty sustaining themselves. It was hard to contact the doctor as they are also caught up with this situation as well.

How much pain did a mother, wife and a woman feel when she saw such a situation around her? I can’t even imagine now. Even now, when I remember those struggles, I burst into tears. Seeing how my own health condition is as well as the health condition of my family added more pain. Neither we can consult each other, nor we could help each other to get and feel better. As my husband and the children started to get better, I was overwhelmed. Fighting with the ever-long rage of rage, my body became weak and I was more weakened by the worries of my family and the fight with Corona. My body was in pain, I was sweating because of fever and weakness and the hospital wasn’t planning to accept me.

It was harder to breathe, I couldn’t sleep, I couldn’t get up from the bed either. I was taken to the emergency room. They didn’t respond to me properly. They took my Chest X-ray and CT scan. The result stated that I have pneumonia

and it caused blood clots in the lungs. However, they didn’t bother doing COVID testing. They told me that they only had limited equipment and a ventilator and were for their peoples only and they can’t do anything for me. I requested many times, “I have difficulty breathing, body pain, and fever. I live with my family in an apartment with limited space and a common bathroom. I already saw everyone suffer and I don’t want them to suffer again with the virus. Please, do the testing and give me instructions to deal with it properly.” They didn’t respond to my request appropriately. I was sent back home without testing and instructions. I had no choice but to come back home and sleep. Breathing and body aches made it very difficult, but as the fever subsided to some extent, the only hope was that it would subside completely. After 13 days with symptoms, I had to travel more than 30 miles to get my first corona test and the result was positive. After not being able to take any medicine and proper food while my body was fighting coronavirus, I was devastated and the pain was so unbearable that I told my son



to poison me. I didn’t believe that I could survive anymore. I cried every time thinking that I would not be able to see my 80-year-old parents, brothers and sisters, and the rest of my family who live in Nepal.

I already had a fever and breathing problem but caught a common cold, and swollen legs. I started throwing up and started having constant bowel movements for almost another month. The body couldn’t digest any food or water, making it hard for me to eat properly. Because of that, my kidneys and pancreas were affected as well. I was so drained that I didn’t have the strength to talk properly.

When I did testing again after two and a half months, I was still positive for COVID. Three month’s coronavirus and constant bowel movements affected my kidneys as well. Now I tested negative for COVID. And slowly my body is recovering. Thanks to the advice of a family friend Dr. Keshab Poudel and the blessings of all the well wishers, things got better.

COVID-19 BY TAYEBEH FIRUZKUHI

I came back from Iran on September 11, 2019. Everything was fine. I registered for several English classes that I used to go to last year. After that I arranged with my tutor the time of meeting each other in the Boulder Public library to read a new book. I talked with the sewing group and scheduled to join them again for quilting on Thursdays.

My son had done reconstruction in the basement of the house. He and his wife furnished the basement for us (my husband and I). We needed our privacy despite the fact that most of the time we were together.

Life went on as usual, every day, every month. At the end of December, I heard about a disease that people had suffered in one of China's cities, Wuhan. Nobody thought about it seriously. Most people thought it was a kind of cold or flu. But it wasn't. It was an unknown virus. It was similar to SARS-Cov-2. It was killing people there by the time we knew about it. The researchers named it Covid-19.

After New Year some people who had that kind of symptom were found in some countries. It was a perplexing situation. For example, in Iran it spread in Qom, a city near Tehran, the center of religious education, then all over the country. Then in Europe, in the United States, in Colorado, all over the world. It was frightening. What could we do? What did we have to do?

The researchers recommended to people, "Wash your hands constantly, keep your social distance, wear a mask, use hand sanitizer and ..."

The new days of our life started. My son told us, "Mom, dad, don't go out please. We bought for you everything you need." Only he and his wife went to the grocery. Then they disinfected all the stuff with alcohol in the garage. It was too much work. My second son who lives in Iran ordered us in the same way. I felt we were prisoners. All classes were shut down.



Lynn Weatherwax, Tutor



It was too hard for me as a person used to being in society, with people, with my friends. I quit my classes, my sewing group in church, my meeting

with my tutor. But technology made a miraculous situation for me and for most people. Everything became doable, but online. My son started working from home. My granddaughter went

to online school. My husband and I went to Zoom classes and Face Time connections with our tutors. But I couldn't continue my sewing gathering in the church. My husband and I had a plan to go back to Iran in the summer. Our flight was canceled. We used to visit our family especially my son and his family in summer time. We wanted to say welcome to our newborn grandson, and give him his clothes that I bought for him as presents. I missed the opportunity of being there when he was born.

I am still missing many things I love to do, such as gatherings for Thanksgiving, gathering for our New Year, going to restaurants and hugging each other, so far. I took my Covid vaccine although nobody in my family in Iran had the vaccine yet. I appreciate being healthy and my whole family is still healthy too. I can see my grandson and his parents online on WhatsApp most nights and play Peek-a-boo with him.

Last Thursday after more than one year I went to meet my sewing group. It was a wonderful day for me. They gave me a baby quilt as a present for my grandson. I blessed them and hugged them. Every member of the group did a piece of it. I think this quilt has all their love and hope for my grandson.

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