



Marta Chilton, pictured in front of the Dixon Elementary School. She is seated on the memorial bench for her late husband, Roger Chilton.

SPOTLIGHT ON MARTA CHILTON, TUTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

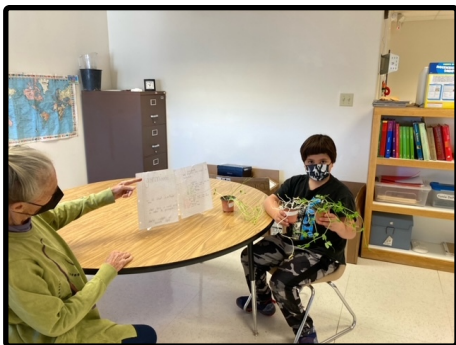
Dedicated. Innovative. An excellent communicator and listener. Empathetic. Patient. Adaptable.

These are just some of Marta Chilton's character traits – and ones that are the attributes of a lifelong teacher.

And teaching is what Marta has been doing for almost 50 years, spanning the decades from 1976 to her “retirement” from formal teaching in 2014. “If there’s a class called ‘retirement,’ I definitely failed it,” she quips.

Counting the seven students she has currently on her roster, Marta provides both after-school and in-school tutoring and mentoring through Embudo Valley Tutoring Association (EVTA). She brings her training in the Montessori and Waldorf methods, and her knowledge of learning disabilities, Sounds In Syllables language training approach, and the Wilson system to bear upon her teaching. She believes that learners have individual talents, and understands that instruction should be tailored to meet each learner's needs. For example, she mentors one of her students with more advanced reading and math, and uses guided reading strips to support a learner with ADHD to stay focused and attentive. Wonderfully attuned to her students' interests, she applies a pupil's preference for fantasy books to engage her in history and the role of cultural myths.

How does Marta measure the success of her tutoring? “The measure is different with each child. I observe them, see what works, pull out different tools if need be,” she responds. “I want every child to know they have choices. They can choose to go to college, or not. I want them to have opportunities, to have doors open to them. I'm gratified if I've helped them learn and develop the skills to accomplish that.”



Developing minds with a hands-on germination project.

TEACHABLE TIMES AND FUN ABOUND AT THE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

Learning does not stop at Embudo Valley Tutoring Association–Embudo Valley Library Afterschool Program. Since its much-anticipated relaunch in October 2021, coordinator Chris Baca and assistant Alexa (Alex) Jaramillo have filled the program with enrichment and science projects. With a store of experience ranging from public outreach and bicycle awareness and safety, to youth-centered educational and art programs and sustainable agriculture, Chris and Alex bring creativity, energy, and organizational know-how to this valuable resource.

The program’s rich and varied activities are designed to build a sense of community for its elementary-school age students and expand their opportunities for educational and social-emotional growth. “Some of our students may not have opportunities to interact with other children on a regular basis, either because they’re home schooled or simply because of the rural area in which we live,” says Chris. “It’s a great feeling knowing we’re providing students with a fun and safe environment to engage and learn with one another.”

Alex agrees. “The program supports creativity through relationship building.” She adds: “We plan to carry on bringing in folks with different backgrounds and knowledge to share their tools so our youth can become well-rounded as they continue to engage with life through their own choices as well.”



Standing: Coordinator Chris Baca and assistant Alex Jaramillo.

Skill on stilts.



Learning science is fun. We discover how to turn a plastic bottle into an erupting volcano.



Highlights of the program to date include stilt walking (hands down a favorite among the youngsters), juggling, and plate-spinning through a collaboration with the Penasco Theater Collective, and science- and math-based learning activities alongside Albuquerque’s Explora Science Center & Children’s Museum.

Says Chris, “There’s always something new and exciting happening at the program.”

To learn more about the afterschool program and your child’s eligibility, please contact Rachel Exposito, Embudo Valley Library’s executive director, via e-mail at rachel@embudovalleylibrary.org or by calling 505.579.9181.

PET PROJECTS – AND MORE – WITH TUTOR LEIGH SAUNDERS

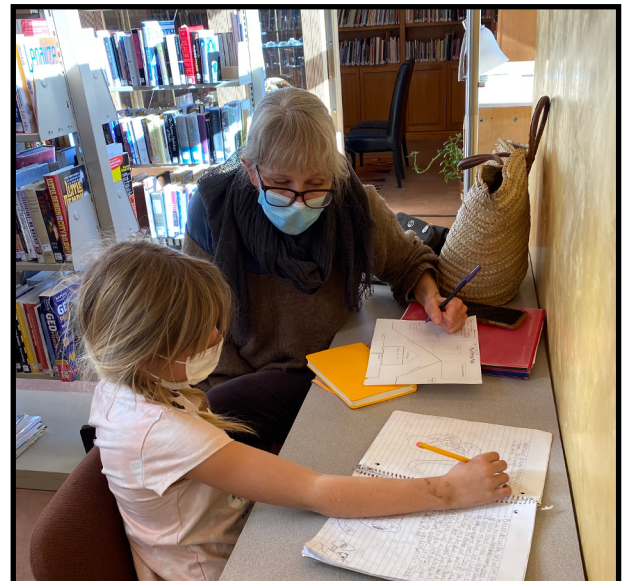
Career scientist Leigh Saunders has an inquiring mind and encourages the students she tutors to be as inquisitive as she is. She wants to know how one of her student's will employ critical thinking, for instance, which is why she went head-to-head with her in a mock debate.

"The topic was a bit difficult," the student says, "and I think I had the harder side to argue. And because there wasn't a lot of information when I was doing research, I had to think on my feet when I was presenting."

Is there a fun and relatable way to fulfill 6th-grade statistics requirement for math? Of course there is, according to Leigh, and she has done so by creating a survey for her students to circulate.

Requesting survey takers to fill out the number of pets in their household, the project is designed to cover aspects of science, critical thinking, data collection, and analyses.

"It's pretty cool," says another student of the crystal-growing project he is doing with Leigh. And it is cool, too, that he is thereby learning scientific concepts such as saturation, the properties of water, and the solubility of the minerals.



Leigh Saunders (above) and Karen Bozik (right) in tutoring sessions at Embudo Valley Library.

PERSONALIZED, CARING SUPPORT FROM KAREN BOZIK

The environment of Dixon has "an overarching energy of care and commitment to the students," says Karen Bozik, EVTA's newest tutor in this area. Her past experience includes a teacher's assistant through Espanola School District, a substitute teacher at Fairview, and an educational assistant in Denver Public Schools.

As an EVTA tutor, Karen says the most rewarding part of her work is relationships with individual students that develop and the ability to hone in on specific areas of need.

In addition to meeting students at Embudo Valley Library, Karen enjoys assisting Dixon Elementary School's teachers and the librarian, Maggie Durham. Of her work there, she comments, "I'm grateful to be working with teachers who are truly engaged with their students and provide astute observations. It's very helpful for me, as a tutor, to know where to begin and how I can best assist." With an eye to the future, Karen says she would like to focus on curriculum development for beginning/ challenged readers. Of note: "I'm also interested in learning how to teach math more effectively."



HOW TO CONTACT EMBUDO VALLEY TUTORING ASSOCIATION

FOR SERVICES:

1. If your child attends Dixon Elementary, Velarde Elementary, or Anansi Charter School, please ask your child's teacher to contact EVTA by e-mailing info@evtanm.org
2. If your child attends Enos Garcia or Penasco community schools, please contact your community school coordinator.
3. If your child is home schooled or attends another school not mentioned above, please fill out the contact form on EVTA's website. Go to embudovalleytutoring.com. Click on "Contact Us" at the top of the Home page to access the form. OR e-mail EVTA directly at info@evtanm.org

TO MAKE A DONATION:

1. Access EVTA's website at embudovalleytutoring.com and click on the "Donate" button on the Home page.
2. Send a donation through Paypal at paypal.me/tutoringassociation
3. Send a check to Embudo Valley Tutoring Association at P.O. Box 267, Dixon, NM 87527

