



# “Lectura (Reading) Lounge: A Cool Place to Read!”

Pssst!

I have some exciting news to share:

A reading room—called Casey & Charley’s Lectura Lounge—is opening in Park City this month!

Reading lounge? What exactly is that?

Will it be like a library? A learning center? A café?

Not really, but, kinda-sorta...

Lectura Lounge will be cool, cute, and cozy, set up like a living room, located in Prospector Square—in close proximity to PCHS, McPolin Elementary, TMJH, and public transit.

What better way for your kids to work in their 30-40 minutes of daily required reading for school? At Lectura Lounge, you’ll find multiple reading nooks, cushy seating, lively colors, dog-themed décor, and books in both Spanish and English (and French to come!).

Allow me to backtrack a bit before I give you the full 411 on this cool-cute-cozy reading room...

Earlier this year, I’d written a short piece about Casey & Charley’s Foundation for Dogs and Kids, a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit established by my family—my husband, Ray; our two sons, Marco Casey and Emilio Charley; and me. Our foundation supports organizations that promote language and youth arts enrichment, literacy, and the physical health and well-being of dogs. In NPC’s March issue, I discussed DLI (Dual Language Immersion) in Park City School District, where Marco and Emilio are students in its Spanish secondary pathway and Spanish DLI



elementary model, respectively.

I’m a huge fan of multilingualism. And so is Ray, who just the other night told me, “In PCSD, there are 4,600 students, and about two-thirds are in either the Spanish or French DLI program—all potential participants in our nonprofit!”

Potential participants?!

Lectura Lounge will run an afterschool reading buddies program, where volunteers read to kids whose dominant language is the opposite of theirs. Sessions are slated to be approximately an hour or so, with the first 20-30 minutes dedicated to a light meal (e.g., pizza), then nestling

*Maybe you’ve seen a need in our community and wondered how you could help. Maybe you want to use your professional skills to help others — or even learn new skills. Maybe you’re seeking connections with other service-minded professionals in our community or abroad.*



The Park City Twilight Rotary Club was exactly what I wanted!

I wanted to join Rotary for years, but the times the other two clubs in Park City met just didn’t pan out for this working girl. I needed a club that was more flexible on attendance and met after business hours with a strong focus on service projects.

Enter the opportunity to charter a third club in Park City. From the first charter meeting, I knew we would be a success as the people there wanted the same things I did and walked the talk.

Twilight Rotary Club is truly “The Fun Club” with some of the kindest, most generous people and business owners like me. It’s been a blessing.”

**Lisa Blakemore**

Blakemore Real Estate  
Broker/Owner



## WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU JOIN US!

We meet on the first and third Wednesdays.

Social begins at 6:00 pm.

The meeting begins at 6:30 pm and ends at 7:30 pm

@ Park City Coffee Roaster. (764 Uinta Way, Park City, UT 84098)

## TOP FIVE REASONS TO JOIN ROTARY:

- Community service
- Networking
- Leadership skills
- International service
- Friendship



into comfy chairs with reading partners, complete with acoustic room dividers to help reduce neighboring noise. Two time slots, 3:30-4:30 and 5:30-6:30 p.m., will be offered, along with the aforementioned light meal—free of charge to our community—once or twice a week to kick off the program.

“It’s not an easy thing for kids to jump in and learn a second language for half the day,” Ray says, “and for parents to help with homework if they don’t know the second language their child is learning. We hope to eventually offer programs for adults, especially parents of DLI students, or even just host events for new families and all Park City residents.”

Coming from San Francisco, a culturally diverse city, Ray and I wondered about the demographic makeup of Park City, given the fact that PCSD has two DLI programs. Marco and Emilio’s San Francisco school is tucked between Glen Park and the Mission District, two areas encompassing myriad Hispanic and LatinX communities—in these neighborhoods, we could easily attend a Día de Los Muertos altar workshop at a San Francisco public library, or check out ¡VIVA!, a Latino/Hispanic culture festival that’s free to the public.

“One of our goals for Lectura Lounge is to offer the community another place to hang out, to bring everyone together, not just at the schools,” Ray explains. “The Prospector neighborhood is diverse—for the most part, it has a strong Latino presence—so I’d love for

Marco and Emilio, along with other Spanish learners, to know more about the Latino and Hispanic cultures through ‘potential participants’ via reading buddies.”

Lectura Lounge plans to launch a language conversation program down the road—a great opportunity for everyone to learn not just about the LatinX culture but also many others here in Park City. “The neighborhood we live in is full of transplants from the Bay Area and East Coast,” Ray adds, “and families that have lived in other countries, like Ecuador and Costa Rica.”

Also upon moving here, Ray and I were pleasantly surprised about the extent to which multilingualism is valued in Utah. “Sixty percent of all public school DLI programs in the U.S. are located in five states: California, New York, Texas, North Carolina, and Utah,” emphasizes Ray, reciting to me statistics he gathered from online research. “There are 297 DLI programs in Utah’s 945 public schools!”

For me, personally, multilingualism, cultural competency, and empathy complement one another. From my experience volunteering at Marco and Emilio’s San Francisco school, I observed its students and parents/guardians showing positive attitudes toward other cultures—simply, an appreciation of other people. Marco once read a book to the entire school with a local drag queen, who needed help with a few Spanish words; and Emilio

sang “Recuerdame” (“Remember Me” from the movie *Coco*) at the school’s end-of-year party, Fiestaval, receiving compliments from parents of his native-Spanish-speaking kindergarten classmates.

During school hours, I—and, I hope, other local authors and volunteers—look forward to hosting a storytime circle for caregivers and their tots. Aside from books, Lectura Lounge will have tabletop games like Bananagrams (in both English and Spanish); puzzles; bilingual movie nights with popcorn; and conversational AI language software that visitors can access. Drop-in hours will be from 9:00 to 3:00, Monday through Friday. While you’re browsing our small, but growing library and start to crave a snack or a drink, one of our wonderful volunteers might slip you a bottle of water, or a small cup of Keurig to enjoy in one of the reading nooks in the back, or offer some Goldfish crackers to your child. (Note: “not really” a “café,” but you get the idea!)

When asked about Lectura Lounge’s long-term goals, Ray nods and smiles, exuding optimism. “We’re a small foundation, but we’re lucky to be able to fund the startup process. In 2024, we plan to start looking for potential funding to keep the programs going.”

Help make Lectura Lounge continue to be a cool place to read! Our grand opening will be held on Friday, January 12, 2024 (time TBA), at 1960 Sidewinder Dr., #106, Park City.

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