

AFOOFA

All-For-One-One-For-All

Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre Newsletter St. Catharines Edition

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A feast of flavours from around the world: the new cookbook by the students, volunteers, staff and members of the Multicultural Centre

Our cookbook with recipes from around the world written by the ESL students, volunteers and staff of the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre, to share family recipes and personal stories about their homelands is ready!

The book has 77 pages and it is full of recipes representative of our diverse ethnic community. The recipes have been grouped into appetizers,

soups and salads, side dishes, main dishes and desserts.



You will find recipes such as the very popular Colombian fried patties *empanadas* to the Greek *Youvelakia Avgolemeno*, meatballs with

lemon sauce, or the a Fijian *Pineapple-Lolo* Cake.

Our cookbook is available for purchase at the Welcome Centre (room # 4) for \$ 10.

This project has been made possible thanks to the funding from United Way of St. Catharines District.

For more information, please contact our office at (905) 685 6589.

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February is Black History Month

Black History Month is a remembrance of important people and events in the history of the African diaspora. Since 1976, it is celebrated annually in the United States of America and Canada in February. Each year, most cities across Canada support events and exhibits for Black History Month, inviting members of the public to explore and celebrate the heritage, traditions and culture of African-Canadians.

One noticeable person in Black History was Harriet Tubman, a runaway slave from Maryland, known as the "Black Moses" of her people and the "conductor". She led hundreds of slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad (UGRR). **St. Catharines was the final terminus on the Underground Railroad for hundreds of slaves in the 1820s.**

The **Underground Railroad** and **Niagara's Freedom Trail** was a network of people who hid and guided black slaves as they fled the United States and headed north to Canada to seek freedom. **From 1851 to 1857, Tubman lived in St.**



Salem Chapel, BME Church, Geneva St.

Catharines, Ontario, where she rescued many relatives of those already in St. Catharines including her own parents, brothers and sisters and their families.

When Harriet arrived in St. Catharines, the church was known as "Bethel Chapel" AME. It was a small log building constructed by African-American Freedom Seekers. In 1853 it was decided that a larger church was needed to assist the growing Methodist congregation that arrived via the UGRR. The larger church was completed in 1855.

For more information regarding this important national historical site, visit the following links:

<http://www.stcatharines.ca/en/experiencein/BritishMethodistEpiscopalChurchSalemChapel.asp>
http://www.heritagefdn.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_10020_1.html



Harriet Tubman

Important Employment-Related Terms to Know—Part II



Ontario Human Rights Tribunal: The provincial government agency that deals with discrimination complaints. The Canadian Human Rights Commission deals with complaints from federal workers. The Human Rights Legal Support Centre provides legal assistance if you believe you have faced discrimination. 1-866-625-5179 or visit www.hrlsc.on.ca

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): The CRA is responsible for assessing and collecting taxes and delivering other federal benefits. They are a department of the Government of Canada. Self-employed workers and some other workers may pay taxes differently. Call 1-800-959-8281 or visit www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

Temporary Agency: A business that finds you temporary work assignments at different companies. The agency is your employer.

Signing a Contract: You cannot sign away your rights. If you sign a contract that is illegal (for example, it says that

the employer will not pay overtime) your boss is breaking the law, not you. The boss should not be making an illegal offer. Even if you sign an illegal contract, you are still entitled to your rights under the law. Write down all details of the hours and dates you work, this information will be helpful if you have any problems.

Probation: This is a “trial period” set by the company to see if the job is a good match with your set of skills. The length of a probation period is up to the boss, it is not part of the law. If you are fired after working for more than three months, you may be owed termination pay or notice even if your boss says you are still on probation.

If you have questions regarding any matter related to employment, feel free to ask the Job Search Workshop (JSW) staff at the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre in room # 5 or by sending an e-mail to jsw@folk-arts.ca.

Settlement Topics

Renting? Know your Rights as a Tenant



Many newcomers will rent for an extended period of time, so it is important to know Ontario legal rights. These rights are explained in the Human Rights Code and the Residential Tenancies Act.

The Human Rights Code applies to every person in Ontario. The Residential Tenancies Act applies to most people who rent their housing.

Your landlord cannot discriminate against you because of your race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation or marital status or disability. For example, a landlord cannot refuse to rent to you because you are a newcomer to Canada or because you have children. Once you move into your home, you

have important rights. Some of these rights include the following:

- ✓ Your home must be safe and in good repair. This is true even if you knew about the problems before you agreed to rent the home.
- ✓ You must have access to heat, hot and cold water, electricity, and fuel (such as natural gas). Your landlord cannot shut-off these services, even if you have not paid your rent. Your landlord may shut-off services for a short time so that they can make repairs.
- ✓ Your landlord must heat your home from September 1 to June 15. The landlord has to make sure the heat is at 20°C or more. Some cities have a higher heat standard. Check with your local government to find out more about minimum heat standards in your community.

Upcoming Dates and Multifaith Celebrations



- Feb. 3: Chinese New Year Celebration
- Feb. 4: UN World Cancer Day
- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day
- Feb. 15: Nirvana Day (Buddhism) and Mawlid an Nabi (Islam)
- Feb. 20: UN World Day of Social Justice
- Feb. 21: UN International Mother Language Day
- Feb. 21: Family Day Celebration (Ont.)
- Feb.26-Mar.1: Intercalary Days (Baha'i)
- Mar. 3: Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
- March 9: Ash Wednesday—Beginning of Lent (Catholic—Christian)
- Sunday March 13: Daylight Saving Time starts. Clocks are moved 1 hour forward
- March 17: St. Patrick's Day
- March 20: Spring begins!



- ✓ Your landlord can enter your home only for certain reasons. For example, your landlord can enter your home to make repairs or show the home to possible tenants or in an emergency.
- ✓ Your landlord may raise your rent once in a 12-month period. The amount of the increase has to be within legal limits.
- ✓ You have the right to have children living in your home. Your children and family have the right to make a “reasonable” amount of noise.
- ✓ You have a right to a written copy of your tenancy agreement, written notice of your landlord's legal name and address, and rent receipts.
- ✓ For more information, you can contact a legal clinic or a housing help centre, or visit the Multicultural Centre where a settlement worker will be able to assist you.

Source: www.settlement.org



Language Tid-bits

Practical Tips for Listening/Speaking Mastery of English

By Elaine Gardner

As an English teacher, naturally I'll say attend ESL classes, but also consider the following:

1. Immerse yourself in total English while in the classroom –don't speak in your native tongue at all. Kindly remind your native speaking classmates that you have plenty opportunity to speak to them in your native tongue at break times!
2. Try to **think** in English. Some learners translate word-for-word before speaking but this slows you down.
3. Don't worry about knowing the meaning of every single spoken word—aim for getting the main idea.
4. Practice outside the classroom as much as possible, even daily "small talk" with cashiers in the supermarket, chat with

- elderly people at bus stops.
5. Volunteer in a position or join a group that requires interaction with native English speakers, i.e. nursing homes, the *Out of the Cold Program*, your children's classrooms and especially religious places of worship.
6. Watch TV! Some sitcoms are often easier to follow than movies (i.e. *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *The King of Queens*); talk shows such as *Oprah* and news shows have a lot of visuals to help follow. *CTV Newsnet* is ideal because it repeats the same news every 15 minutes or so.
7. Listen to the CBC radio (99.1 FM) or CKTB local radio (610 AM) and repeat phrases and sentences imitating the announcer as closely as possible—this will really help pronunciation, intona-

- tion, pause groups and word stress.
8. Read a variety of English materials **out loud**. Local newspapers or magazines such as *The Standard* and *Reader's Digest* are excellent sources. Read to your elementary aged school children. Their books are excellent to practice with and your kids are natural teachers!
9. Google "ESL Canadian/American Pronunciation" to find good websites to practice your listening/speaking skills.
10. Practice, practice, practice...because as the saying goes: "**Practice makes perfect**"! Language learners reach a plateau of learning and get stuck for a while before improving. Some people even get worse before they get better! Don't despair! Time will tell!



Thinking of family and friends back home

By Ingrid from Guatemala (Level 5 LINC student)



Canada is a place with great opportunities, but

getting started into this new life is challenge. It is particularly difficult when you have left behind a lot of family and friends and you do not speak English.

I came from Guatemala in 2009 with my 3-year-old daughter after I had

been sponsored by my husband. **The hardest part of leaving was knowing that I wouldn't be able to see my parents, brothers and sisters for an undetermined amount of time...possibly years.**

After two years of living in Canada, I have learned that you really have to struggle and push yourself to be able to achieve your objectives. Some of my present goals are to continue learning

until I speak, read, write and understand English fluently. When I arrived I spoke almost no English! Also, I hope to get my credentials assessed, upgrade my education and skills and work as an elementary teacher (which is what I did back home). I enjoy being in a learning environment, whether I'm learning English or teaching children because education really is "my cup of tea" as they said here in Canada!



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For more information
visit us in our Website:
www.folk-arts.ca

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Special Thanks to our Funders:

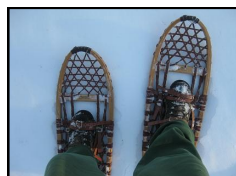
Citizenship & Immigration Canada, Ontario
Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration, United
Way of St. Catharines, City of St. Catharines and
The District School Board of Niagara.

Snowshoeing: a fun Canadian experience

There are opportunities for snowshoeing in the Niagara Region during the winter months (providing we have enough snow!) It is a great experience to share with friends and family and let's not overlook the health benefits!



Snowshoes, sometimes colloquially referred to as webs, are footwear for walking over snow. Snowshoes work by distributing the weight of the person over a larger area so that the person's foot doesn't sink completely into the snow, a quality called "flotation". Traditional snowshoes have a hardwood frame with rawhide lacings. Some modern snowshoes are similar, but most are made of light metal while others are a single piece of plastic attached to the foot to spread the weight. In addition to distributing the weight, snowshoes are generally raised at the toe for *maneuverability*. They must not accumulate snow, hence the latticework, and require bindings to attach them to the feet. While today they are mainly used for recreation, primarily by hikers and runners who like to continue their hobby in wintertime, in the past they were essential tools for fur traders, trappers and anyone whose life or living depended on the ability to get around in areas of deep and frequent snowfall. Even today, snowshoes are necessary equipment for forest rangers and others who must be able to get around areas inaccessible to motorized vehicles when the snow is deep.



Visit the Ontario Trails Council's website and look for information related to Niagara for places where you can go and practice this fun, **traditional/Native Canadian experience**.

Source: <http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/trail-regions/niagara/>



Upcoming Events

Job Search Workshops (Employment)

January: 18, 19, 20

February: 15, 16, 17

March: 22, 23, 24.

HOST—Group Activities

Jan.: Baking for Valentine' Day.

Feb.: Jewelry Making Session &

Chinese New Year's Celebration
(with ESL Department)

Mar.: Seeding for the Spring

Youth HOST Program

Every Wed.: 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.,

'Big Bunch' Youth Group

Settlement

Jan. 19: Workshop on Seasonal
Affective Disorder (SAD) by
CMHA.

Jan. 24: Workshop on Tax
Credit Benefits by CRA

Feb. 1: Registration begins for
2011 Tax Clinics

ESL Events

February: Spelling Bee

March: 'Sugar Bush' field trip

Some traditions observed during Chinese New Year Celebrations

It is the Chinese New Year tradition that every family gives its house a thorough cleaning, hoping to sweep away all the ill-fortune there may have been in the family to make way for the wishful in-coming good luck. People also give their doors and window-panes a new paint, usually in red color. They decorate the doors and windows with paper-cuts and ular theme of "happiness", "satisfactory marriage with The Eve of the Chinese New served. Supper is a feast, coming together. One of the year tradition course is



couplets with the very pop- "wealth", "longevity" and more children". Year is very carefully ob- with all family members most popular Chinese New "jiaozi", dumplings boiled in water. "Jiaozi" in Chinese literally mean "sleep together and have sons", a long-lost good wish for a family. After dinner, it is time for the whole family to sit up for the night while having fun playing cards or board games or watching TV programs dedicated to the occasion. It is also a tradition to keep every light on the whole night. The New Year atmosphere is brought to an anti-climax fifteen days away when the Festival of Lanterns sets in. It is an occasion of lantern shows and folk dances every- where. The Lantern Festival marks the end of the Chinese New Year season and afterwards life becomes daily routines once again. Traditions of the Chinese New Year vary from place to place, considering that China is a big country not only geo- graphically, but also demographically and ethnically. Yet, the spirit underlying the diverse celebrations of the Chinese New Year is the same: a sincere wish of peace and happiness for the family members and friends.

Source: <http://www.123chinesenewyear.com/traditions/>

Note: Chinese New Year begins on February 4 this year