

Changing Times

A magazine made by newcomers
to Southwest Saskatchewan

SPRING
2013

OUR BIG CITIZENSHIP ISSUE

Eligibility & Application Process
New Language Requirements
Dual Citizenship
Discover Canada:
Getting Ready for the Test

Immigration News

Our Stories:
The Journey from there to here



SOUTHWEST NEWCOMER
WELCOME
CENTRE

from the editor

Looks like you had to wait for this spring issue of Changing Times just as long as we all had to wait for spring itself.

Needless to say we have been very busy here at the Welcome Centre with different workshops, sessions, events and a record high number of tax-returns completed.

To beat the winter blues we wanted to make this issue extra colorful and bright. I hope we have succeeded in cheering you up as well as providing you with some very useful information about Citizenship.

As I am getting ready to apply for the Canadian citizenship myself, I found it very useful to gather this material and learn from our wonderful presenters. I hope it will help you as well.

Enjoy the sunshine!

~ Agnese



why do we love Canada?



The availability of opportunities regardless of who you are or where you come from. However, one must only be willing to look for them, and work the extra mile to achieve them. Newcomers especially, with our many barriers, must find our strength and improve on our weaknesses, in order to overcome those barriers and take advantage of the available opportunities.



Icasiana de Gala



Claudia Muñoz

I do love Canada because I do take as a gift coming from GOD, for me everything coming from Him is Special. Peace, freedom, surrounded by nice people I feel this is my country, a really good place to raise a family.

I love Canada because it is so big and diverse, and so different from coast to coast. There is so much to explore: mountains, beaches, forests, lakes, rivers and the little hidden treasures of the prairies. I am always positively surprised by the small town hospitality. I love when people smile and greet each other when passing on the street.



Agnese Vilde

I like being a Canadian because our two most popular media personalities are named Jian Ghomeshi and George Strombopolis! I love the fact that I can always tell if a movie is made in Canada by looking at the credits and seeing all the different names from all over the world.

~ Wendy Swann



I love Canada of course because it is where I grew up. My family is in Canada so it is my home. I also love the freedom and opportunities that exist here. I love the beautiful and varied landscapes, I love the diversity that is celebrated here, I love that we have Medicare and I love that we have a strong history of peacekeeping. I even love winter, just not all 6 months of it!



Anika Henderson

I love the countryside and going hiking outdoors. And also the wonderful people I've met here.



Rae Kroshus



Mable Derksen

I love Canada since it is my country by birth. I marvel at the diverse landscape of our nation, coast to coast. I enjoy experiencing all four seasons here in the prairies (yes, even all the snow, though it would be nice if it would go now!). I value our people, our politeness, our generosity, our educational system, our democratic government, and our health care. There is no other nationality I rather be!



Jade Koch

I love living in Canada because of the spirit that comes with every Hockey season and the pride in Saskatchewan during every Football one.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Why we love Canada	2
What's New!	4
Immigration News:	5
Citizenship: Eligibility & Application Process	6
Citizenship: Language Requirements	7
Q & A about Citizenship process	8
Citizenship: Discover Canada	11
Dual Citizenship	12
Diversity Celebration	13
Our Stories: Journeys from There to Here	14
International Women's Day Celebration	16
Partners in Action: SW Crisis Services	17
Literacy = Fun	18
Who is Saint Patrick?	19
Reminders	20
Programs & Happenings in the City	21
New Arrivals & New Babies	22
Families reunited	23
New Canadian Citizens	24



Happy Birthday, Ica!!!!



From the Board of Directors...

The Board of Directors of the Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre are pleased to announce the appointment of our permanent executive director Icasiana de Gala. With vast international experience in law combined with local experience in programming with the City of Swift Current and most recently in an interim management capacity with the Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre, de Gala brings a wealth of knowledge to the position.

After two years in an interim capacity, we couldn't be more pleased to bring on Icasiana in a permanent capacity to continue to provide leadership and grow our operations and services. We continue to see an influx of newcomers to the region and believe she is the right fit for ensuring the centre provides support throughout the settlement process.

De Gala replaces former Executive Director Anika Henderson who has moved on to operate her own business.

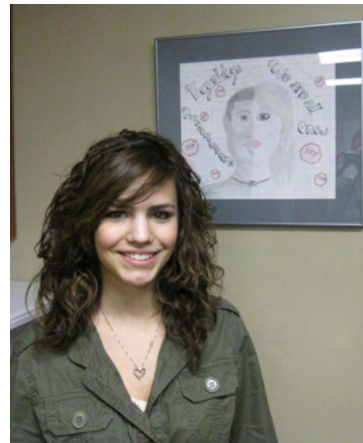
*~ Keleah Ostrander, Chairperson
Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre Board of Directors*

Meet Rob & Carol

Rob and Carol Schroeder recently moved to Swift Current after living for 23 years in Germany. In Germany they rubbed shoulders with immigrants from many different countries and have always enjoyed meeting people from various cultures. Their family itself is international and lives on two continents. While in the process of reentering the Canadian culture themselves, they want to reach out and help others, who are immigrating to Swift Current.



Meet Jade



Hello, my name is Jade! I am volunteering at the Newcomer Welcome Centre through the Work Experience program at my school.

I enjoy playing sports and being outside. I am very involved in my school, town and surrounding communities. My dream is to one day travel the world.





IMMIGRATION NEWS

New Start-Up Visa Introduced

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will launch a new program on April 1, 2013 to recruit innovative immigrant entrepreneurs by offering the opportunity to create new jobs that will lead to economic growth for Canada.

The program is designed to help in-demand entrepreneurs fulfill their potential and maximize their impact on the Canadian labour market by linking them with private sector organizations that can provide essential knowledge and resources.

In collaboration with Canada's Venture Capital, Private Equity Association and National Angel Capital Organization, CIC will identify the people who will be eligible to participate in this program. The selected applicants will be granted permanent residency and immediate access to a wide range of business partners to steer them towards success and prosperity.

The New Start-Up Visa initiative is the first of its kind in Canada. It is designed to encourage business leaders from around the world to create new jobs that will have a fresh, positive impact on the Canadian economy. The Canadian government hopes the program will help Canada to remain competitive within the global economy while repositioning itself as one of the top desired destinations for newcomers.

NEW Federal Skilled Worker Program – Changes to Selection Criteria

Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney has announced that the *Federal Skilled Worker Program* (FSWP) is re-opened and will soon be accepting applications (beginning May 4, 2013). The program is designed to ensure skilled newcomers have the opportunity to find jobs for which they are qualified. The new FSWP will ensure that jobs will go to those best suited for them. This will be economically beneficial for workers as well as all Canadians.

Changes have been made to the FSWP selection criteria. Language proficiency and youth are two factors that have a major impact on the economic success of immigrants and determine how great their contribution to Canada's economy will be. In addition, FSWP will introduce the Educational Credential Assessment (ECA). Education points will more truly reflect the value of foreign credentials. There will be changes to the arranged employment process allowing employers to hire applicants quickly if there is a demonstrated need. Lastly, additional adaptability points will be granted for spousal language ability and Canadian work experience.

In order to participate the program, applicants must:

- **meet the minimal language requirement, which is level 7 of the CLB assessment.** Language assessments are available at existing agencies designated by the Minister and listed on the CIC website.
- **have their education credentials assessed prior to arriving in Canada.** The assessment of foreign education credentials will compare an individual's credentials to those available in Canada. This will give new immigrants an opportunity to upgrade their education prior to coming to Canada.

The FSWP accepts only a limited number of applicants per year. It is hoped these new applications will be processed in few months rather than in a few years. These changes WILL NOT APPLY for those who have applied to the FSWP prior to May 4th, 2013 with a qualifying arranged job offer or under the Ph.D. stream.

To find full press releases go to <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/releases/2013/2013-03-28.asp>
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/releases/2012/2012-12-19.asp>

News Releases summarized by Jade Koch



CITIZENSHIP: Eligibility & Application Process

In order to apply for Canadian Citizenship you must meet the requirements in all of the following areas:

AGE

You must be at least 18 years old to apply for Canadian citizenship. To apply for citizenship for a child under 18:

- The parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian must submit the application on behalf of the minor.
- The minor must be a permanent resident but is not required to meet the 3 years of residency in Canada requirement, if one parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian is already a Canadian citizen or will be applying to become a citizen at the same time.

PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS

You must have permanent resident status in Canada, and that status must not be in doubt. This means you must not be the subject of an immigration investigation, an immigration inquiry or a removal order (an order from Canadian officials to leave Canada).

RESIDENCE IN CANADA

Adults must have lived in Canada for at least three years (1,095 days) in the past four years before applying. Children under the age of 18 do not need to meet this requirement. You may be able to count time you spent in Canada before you became a permanent resident if that time falls within the four-year period and time spent outside of Canada or time spent serving a sentence may not be counted (there are a few exceptions).

It is NOT possible to meet the residency requirements if you have been a permanent resident for less than 2 years.

Residence Calculator

You can use the Residence Calculator to find out if you have been in Canada long enough to apply for citizenship. If you have not been in Canada long enough, it will tell you when you will be eligible to apply. You can find it at: <https://eservices.cic.gc.ca/rescalc/startBasicCalc.do>

HOT TIP

for your Citizenship application

Before submitting your Citizenship application, or any application to CIC for that matter, make sure you check to see if the forms have been updated. CIC updates application forms regularly and it is your responsibility to ensure that you are submitting the most up-to-date version. Citizenship application forms for example were updated in November 2012 and again in February 2013.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

You cannot become a citizen if you:

- have been convicted of an indictable (criminal) offence or an offence under the *Citizenship Act* in the three years before you applied;
- are currently charged with an indictable offence or an offence under the *Citizenship Act*;
- are in prison, on parole or on probation;
- are under a removal order (to leave Canada);
- are under investigation for, are charged with, or have been convicted of a war crime or a crime against humanity; or
- you have had your Canadian citizenship taken away in the past five years.

What if I have a Criminal History or Current Charge?

If you are on probation or are charged with an offence and are awaiting trial, you should wait until after the probation has ended or the trial is over to apply for citizenship.

If you have spent time on probation, on parole or in prison in the last four years, you may not meet the residence requirement for citizenship. Time in prison or on parole does not count as residence in Canada. Time on probation also does not count as residence in Canada if you were convicted of an offence. If you have spent time on probation from a conditional discharge, it may be counted toward residence.

KNOWLEDGE OF CANADA

If your application is accepted and you are 18 to 54 years old, you will have to write a citizenship test. (For more information on how to prepare for the test, see next pages 12-13)

What Happens Next?

CIC will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your application. Next, they will send you a notice of the time and date for your test. If you pass the test and the citizenship judge determines that you meet all the other requirements for citizenship, you will be invited to a citizenship ceremony. During that ceremony, you will take the oath of citizenship which is the final requirement for citizenship, and receive a certificate of Canadian citizenship.

What if I Don't Pass the Test?

If you do not pass the written test, CIC will send you a notice telling you to appear for an interview (30-90 minutes) with a citizenship judge. At that interview, the judge will ask you the test questions orally to give you another opportunity to demonstrate that you meet all the requirements of citizenship (including knowledge and language).

Processing Times

The current processing times, from the day that CIC receives your application to the day that you attend your citizenship ceremony is **21 months**. You will be able to check the status of your citizenship application once you receive your acknowledgment letter by registering online: <https://services3.cic.gc.ca/ecas/security.do?app=ecas>

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Canada has two official languages—English and French. If you are between the ages 18 and 54, you must submit proof of your ability to speak and listen in one of these languages with your citizenship application.

As of November 1, 2012, CIC will return your application as incomplete if you do not send acceptable proof that you have adequate knowledge of English or French.

What Can I Submit as Proof?

- If you completed secondary education or higher, in English or in French, submit your diploma, certificate or transcript showing the program completed.
- If you were a federal skilled immigrant who submitted test results to CIC with your application for permanent residence, you can submit those results, even if they are expired.
- If you have completed federal LINC language training and you achieved at least CLB 4 in speaking and listening, you can submit your LINC certificate.
- If none of the above apply to your situation, you will need to take a third party test and submit your results. For English, acceptable tests include:
 - CELPIP General or CELPIP General LS (see more info on the right);
 - IELTS General;
 - For French, the required test is TEF.

Please note that all results must indicate that you have achieved a level CLB 4 or higher in speaking and listening.

Additional Language Requirements

A Citizenship judge makes the final decision on all cases. When you talk to CIC staff or a citizenship judge interviews you, they will also look at how well you:

- understand basic spoken statements, questions and instructions;
- express basic information or answer questions;
- take part in short, everyday conversations about common topics;
- speak using basic grammar, including simple structures and tenses;
- show that you know enough common words and phrases to express yourself.

*Citizenship Advice & “Hot Tip” provided by
Anika Henderson
Imagine Immigration & Consulting*

CELPip-General LS Exam

Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program - Listening & Speaking

<p>Short description</p>	<p>The CELPip-General LS Test is a two-skills version of the CELPIP-General Test. It accurately assesses listening and speaking proficiency in typical everyday situations.</p> <p>The CELPip-General LS Test is designated by CIC as evidence of listening and speaking proficiency for those applying for Canadian citizenship.</p> <p>Currently available only in Canada but that also means that it uses only Canadian accents. It is completely computer-delivered, has an easy online registration and you can get your results online within 8 business days.</p>
<p>Test Fee:</p>	<p>\$ 150 + tax</p>
<p>Test Format</p>	<p>CELPip has 2 parts (1 hour long in total):</p> <p>LISTENING PART: 45 questions / 30 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Matching Statements to Pictures → Answering Questions → Identifying Similar Meanings → Comprehending Dialogues → Listening to Conversations <p>SPEAKING PART: 16 questions / 30 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Answering General Questions → Interpreting Graphic and/or Tabular Materials → Telephone Role Play, Conversation & News Item → Oral Response to a Topic <p>Both parts are delivered by computer. You are equipped with your own headset for the listening component and there are no human examiners in the speaking component. Each component of the test will be given a CELPIP Level from 0 to 5. Each CELPIP Level is referenced to the <i>Canadian Language Benchmarks</i> (used also at the provincial Language Assessments)</p>
<p>Available locations in Saskatchewan</p>	<p>Regina: SIAST Wascana Campus, Room 412, 4500 Wascana Parkway, Regina SK S4P 3A3 http://www.gosiast.com/about/campuses/wascana.shtml</p> <p>Saskatoon: McKay Career Training Room 206, 133 3rd Ave North, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 2H4 www.mckaycareertraining.ca</p>
<p>Next test dates</p>	<p>In Regina: Jun 22, Jul 13, Jul 14, Aug 10 & Aug 11, 2013 In Saskatoon: all booked up!</p>
<p>Learning resources</p>	<p>Learning materials: http://www.celpiptest.ca/study-materials/celpip-general-ls-learning-program/</p> <p>Free sample questions: https://secure.paragontesting.ca/CelpipLsSample/</p> <p>Check your local library branch to see if they have any of the learning materials available.</p>

ask the expert

Q: I am taking English classes at Great Plains College (GPC)? Can my ESL teacher provide me with a LINC certificate? How long do you have to attend ESL classes to meet the requirement?

A: GPC language instructors CAN issue language certificates for registered learners in their LINC programs who achieve CLB 4 or higher in speaking and listening. GPC is currently finalizing the guidelines for issuing language certificates. It is expected that in order to be issued a certificate, learners will have to meet the following requirements:

- New learners will be required to attend classes for a minimum of 3 months with 60 per cent attendance
- Returning learners will be required to attend classes for a minimum of 2 months with 60 per cent attendance

Q: Can I use the results of my Language Assessment (organized by the Welcome Centre and administered by a local language assessor) as a proof of language proficiency?

A: Unfortunately no, you cannot use those results as proof of language proficiency.

Q: How should I proceed if I lost my Record of Landing document? Can I still apply?

You will need to apply for a replacement Record of Landing document before applying for Citizenship. For details of how to apply for a replacement, go to: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/certcopy.asp>

Q: Do I have to renew my expired PR card before I apply for the citizenship?

No, you are not required to renew your expired PR card before you apply for citizenship. Your PR status cannot be in question when applying for citizenship but your PR status has nothing to do with having a valid PR card. However, I would advise that you apply to renew your PR card as soon as possible as it is not advisable to leave Canada without a valid PR card.

Q: What happens/what should I do if I moved provinces after submitting my citizenship application?

If you change addresses after submitting your citizenship application to CIC, it is very important that you advise them of your new address. You may notify them of your address change online at: <https://services3.cic.gc.ca/ecas/security.do?app=coa>

Q: What happens if your application has been denied?

Your application for Canadian citizenship may be refused for a number of reasons. The most common reason for refusal is failure to meet the residency requirement. Upon receiving the judge's refusal decision, you have 60 days within which you can decide whether or not you wish to appeal rejection or refusal of your citizenship application. The appeal must be made to the Federal Court. These types of appeals involve a complicated procedure subject to strict evidentiary and procedural rules. If you find yourself in this situation, it would be well worth your while to retain the services of an experienced citizenship and immigration lawyer with specific experience in this area.

*Immigration questions answered and advice provided by Anika Henderson,
Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant, Imagine Immigration & Consulting*

We hosted two *Citizenship Workshops* that were well attended and really appreciated. We would like to extend our THANKS to our knowledgeable and enthusiastic presenters Anika Henderson and Wendy Swann.

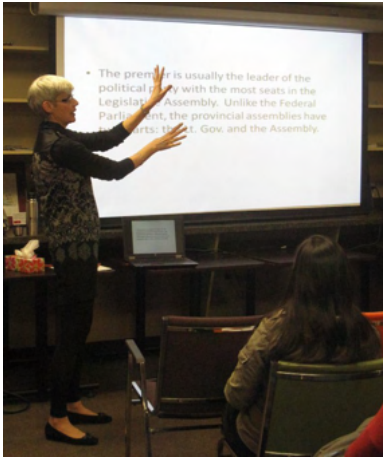


*Do you have an immigration question?
Let us know and we will try to answer it in
future issues.
Please send your question(s) to
agnese@newcomerwelcomecentre.com*



Discover Canada - Getting Ready for Your Citizenship Exam

By Wendy Swann



It was my pleasure to conduct an information session on March 8 for people interested in applying for Canadian citizenship.

I have summarized that information in this article if you didn't have a chance to attend the workshop.

Please be aware the questions I used as a guideline are in the Discover Canada booklet (p 34, pp 52-53). I think there are several useful preparation tools online including: quizlet.com citizenship test flashcards, the Richmond Public Library site and www.cic.gc.ca. The booklet is available from the government of Canada as well as at the Newcomer Welcome Centre.



Let's look at the government of Canada first.

The Head of State is Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Our HoS is a hereditary sovereign and She is a constitutional monarch which means She is subject to the Constitution as is every one of Her subjects. Although politicians pursue the interests of Canadians they are also influenced by political ideology and regional concerns. The Crown is not influenced by political ideology. The concern of the Crown is the welfare of all Canadians. Thus the Queen has the right to be informed and to advise Her governments, but She cannot override their decisions.

The Queen cannot be in Canada most of the time so She is represented by the **Governor General His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnson** (GGs are appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister approximately every 5 years).

The **Head of Government is the Prime Minister**. He/she represents the political party with the most seats in the House of Commons in Ottawa. Our current PM is the **Right Honourable Stephen Harper**, leader of the **Conservative Party of Canada**.

The **Official Opposition** is the political party with the second most number of seats in the House of Commons. The current leader of the **Opposition is the Honourable Thomas Mulcair**, leader of the **New Democratic Party of Canada (NDP)**.

Other political parties and their leaders in the House of Commons: **Liberal Party** (interim leader, the Honourable Bob Rae), the **Bloc Quebecois** led by the Honourable Daniel Paille and the **Green Party** led by its only sitting member, the Honourable Elizabeth May.

Our **Parliament** consists of three parts:

- the **Executive** (the PM and Cabinet)
- the **Legislative** (the GG, the Senate and the House of Commons) and
- the **Judicial** (the courts whose job it is to settle disputes).

The **Member of Parliament (MP)** for this constituency (federal electoral district), **Cypress Hills - Grasslands** is the **Honourable David Anderson** of the Conservative Party. The Queen's representative in Saskatchewan is the **Lieutenant-Governor Her Honour, Vaughn Solomon Schofield** (like the GG appointed by the PM approximately every 5 years).

Q & A

Q: Why does Canada keep its allegiance to a Head of State who resides in another country?

A: Part of the answer is tradition. Canada is a member of the Commonwealth, made up of former colonies of Great Britain (the highest honour a Canadian can receive is still the Victoria Cross, issued by the Crown).

Our government is based on the British system and the role of the Crown is integral to the functioning of the government. For example, two of the most important documents containing our rights and freedoms are

British: the Magna Carta and Habeas Corpus.



Each province and territory has its own government. That is why we are a federation: we have a central government for the whole country and then each of the ten provinces and 3 territories has its own government. **Confederation** refers to the birth of Canada by act of the British Parliament on July 1, 1867. The political head of the province is the **Premier, the Honourable Brad Wall** who represents the provincial constituency of Swift Current as a **Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)** in Regina. Premier Wall is the **leader of the Saskatchewan Party** which holds the most seats in the Provincial Legislature (58 seats of which the Sask Party has 49). The **Leader of the Opposition** in Saskatchewan is the **Honourable Cam Brotten** who is the leader of the **New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan**.

The municipalities constitute another level of government. The urban municipality of Swift Current is surrounded by the rural municipality of Swift Current. **His Worship, Mayor Jerrod Schafer** and a council of 6 run the city of Swift Current.

In order to participate in an election people must be at least 18 years of age and Canadian citizens. Elections Canada issues a voters' list. You can have your name transferred to the voters' list when you apply for citizenship or you can indicate your desire on the federal income tax form.

The Constitution of Canada 1867 (British North America Act) and the 1982 Constitution form the basis for all laws for all people in Canada. Canadians enjoy many rights including mobility, Aboriginal rights, language rights (both the 2 official languages and minority educational rights) and multiculturalism. There is some conversation in Canada about our multicultural policy. There are people who favour assimilation over diversity. That is one of the reasons multiculturalism is protected in the Constitution. Most Canadians believe that embracing the strengths of many different cultures only adds to the richness of Canada (the provincial motto for Saskatchewan is "from many peoples strength"). We are a country of immigrants – only the First Nations and Inuit people are indigenous inhabitants. Perhaps that is why our constitutions protect the rights of minority groups throughout the country.

"I am so proud that people from other countries choose to make their homes in Canada and become Canadian citizens. I think that is quite a compliment to a country and its citizens."

~ Wendy Swann

Four fundamental freedoms for Canadians (guaranteed in the Constitution) are freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought including freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association. All men and women are equal under the law. Canadians are expected to take responsibility for themselves and their families by getting a job, and working to contribute to the overall economic and social benefit of the country.

There are **3 founding peoples**: the Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Metis), the French and the English. **The Metis** are a people who have mixed First Nations and European ancestry. **Inuit** means "the people".

Canada eventually acquired **responsible government** in the 1840's. This means that the government must maintain the confidence of the other representatives in the House of Commons. If the confidence of the House is lost (for example by defeat of the government's proposed budget in the House of Commons), the government must resign.

The **Canadian Pacific Railway** (the CPR) is an important symbol in Canadian history because it physically tied a vast geographical entity together. It also carried new settlers to the west to take up farming. Other important Canadian symbols include the Crown, the flag, the maple leaf, the coat of arms, the Parliament buildings in Ottawa, ice hockey, the Canadian Football League (CFL), Lacrosse and the beaver.



In addition to studying from paper copy of *Discover Canada* guide that will be mailed to you once your application has been accepted by CIC, you can have a head start and access it online or download it as an eBook or mobile application on your phone or iPad.

If you never received a copy or you have lost it, you can contact the CIC call centre at **1-888-242-2100** to have a copy mailed to you.

DUAL CITIZENSHIP



Dual citizenship occurs when a person is a citizen of two or more countries and more than one country recognizes you as its citizen.

Some common ways to obtain citizenship are:

- Being born in territory considered to be of that country;
- Having one or more parents who are citizens of that country;
- Having married a person who is a citizen of the country;
- Having gone through the legal process of earning citizenship via examination in a previously foreign country;
- Having lived in that country for enough time to qualify for citizenship.

There are approximately **90 countries** that permit dual citizenship. Canada is one of them. While Canada has very open and accepting laws regarding dual citizenship, this is not true for all countries. Some countries will revoke citizenship when a citizen of that country acquires a Canadian passport; other nations may simply not recognize the new citizenship at all.

Each country possesses its own set of rules and laws regarding dual citizenship. If you are seeking Canadian citizenship, you should consult your country's embassy or consulate first to find out your country's stand on dual citizenship and how acquiring Canadian citizenship will affect your citizenship in your country of origin.

While there are many benefits to dual and multiple citizenship, there are also some disadvantages. In addition to having a previous citizenship revoked, it is also possible to be caught between the legalities, taxation requirements, compulsory military service, and other seemingly unexpected problems of two countries. It is crucial to be aware of the rules and regulations regarding dual or multiple citizenship in each country.

Dual citizenship speaks to Canada's diversity and comfort with multiculturalism. Many new Canadians opt to keep their previous citizenship in addition to their Canadian citizenship. In most cases, having dual citizenship is positive and beneficial. More information on dual citizenship is available at:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/dual-citizenship.asp>

To obtain the correct names, addresses and telephone numbers of your country's consulate or embassy, you can consult the Consular Affairs website <http://www.international.gc.ca/protocol-protocole/index.aspx?view=d> or call the Enquiries Service of the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade at 1-800-267-8376 (toll-free, from anywhere in Canada) or 613-944-4000 (in Ottawa).

Adopted from: <http://www.canadavisa.com/dual-citizenship-canada.html>

Celebrate Diversity:

SEEING BEYOND THE RACE



To recognize the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21)** we celebrated by getting together proudly wearing our cultural or national colors (some of us), geared up for a discussion about racism, discrimination and diversity.

Ray & Sylvia in Jerusalem



Ray Friesen gave a compelling presentation

describing injustice and discrimination in Palestine. He has been there twice in the past years himself and has learned more from the experiences of his daughter who works in Bethlehem. She has witnessed firsthand the atrocities and challenges Palestinians face on daily basis. Consequently we were able to hear the stories professional news organizations don't broadcast. Thank you, Ray, for being the voice and sharing the stories of Palestinians with us. Your passion for justice and peace is inspirational.



While enjoying delicious ethnic snacks we had many discussions about our experiences as newcomers and how much more diverse Swift Current has become over the past few years.

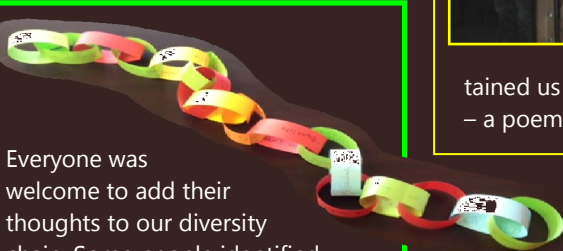


We were treated to an excellent short documentary by Anne Marie Nakagawa examining what it means to have a background of mixed ancestries. It examines how comfortable Canadian people really are with multiculturalism. The movie looks at the lives of seven Canadians who openly share their struggles and experiences growing up in Canada being racially different. It also examines how they have been perceived when visiting other parts of the world. Although talking about serious issues, the movie ends with a positive message of hope for the younger Canadian generation proud to embrace their diverse and unique ancestry. If you have a chance, make sure to watch it. You can watch the documentary online free of charge at: http://www.nfb.ca/film/between_living_in_the_hyphen/



Shawn Wiskar and Rachel Hussey enlightened and entertained us with their lovely performance – a poem about being the change.

Shawn Wiskar and Rachel Hussey enlightened and entertained us with their lovely performance – a poem about being the change.



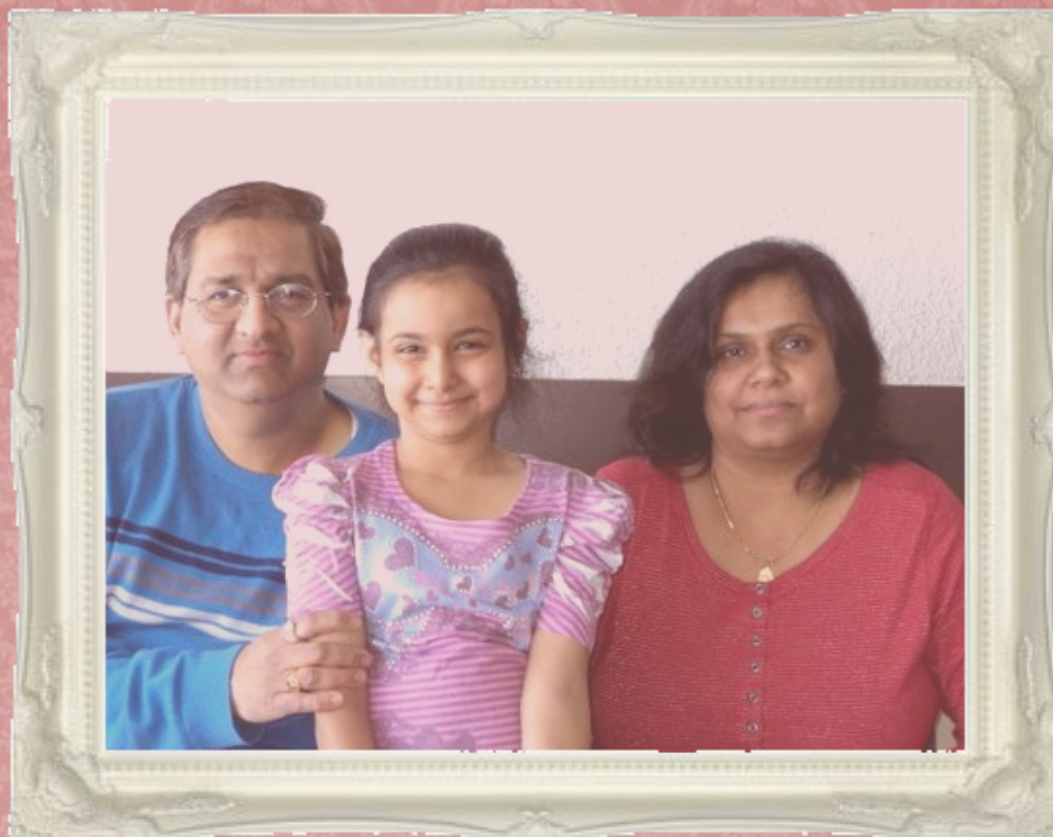
Everyone was welcome to add their thoughts to our diversity chain. Some people identified their unique or uniting qualities. Feel free to stop by and add your thought link to this colorful chain.

A huge THANK YOU goes to our volunteers: Carol, Rob, Rae and Juan Alex. We would also like to acknowledge the generous contributions of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan and Southwest Multicultural Association, as well as Innovation Credit Union, Boston Pizza and Great Plains College for our door prizes.

Our Stories: Journeys from There to Here

The Will to Survive and Thrive

By Mabel R. Derksen



I walked into the lobby of the *Paradise Inn*. The space was clean and inviting. I casually browsed through the tourist information on a nearby table. A side door opened and Jayshri Patel entered with a smile.

"Hello, I'm Mabel," I introduced myself.

"Oh yes, our interview!" she responded.

We settled down in blue armchairs and started our conversation. We exchanged pleasantries and talked about our common ethnicity. We shared tidbits about our families in both English and Hindi. I dis-

covered Jayshri and her husband Kehul emigrated from Gujarat, India in the new millennium. Their daughter Bhargavi was born in Toronto, Ontario. Now they are managing a motel business in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

My curiosity was piqued. I asked the question, "Tell me your story on how you came to live in Swift Current?" Jayshri's story began.

Jayshri arrived in Toronto on March 11, 2005. She met her husband Kehul through a friend and they were married shortly thereafter. In spite of being trained as a Laboratory Technologist, she took

a position at Tim Horton's while her husband worked two other jobs. They purchased a house and welcomed the anticipation of a new baby. Bhargavi was born to Jayshri and Kehul in 2007.

During this time, Jayshri started the process of becoming a citizen of Canada. Kehul had already received his citizenship in 2005. Bhargavi became a Canadian citizen by birth. Now it was Jayshri's turn to embrace Canada as her new home.

After completing the minimum time of residency, Jayshri submitted the necessary paperwork.

In the meanwhile, she dedicated hours to studying each and every word of the citizenship guide *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship*.

Approximately nine months later, Jayshri Patel received her "Notice to Appear to Write a Citizenship Test".

"What was it like to study the citizenship book?" I asked.

"It was exciting! It was full of good information on weather, business, and jobs. I did not know what was in Saskatchewan or Manitoba [until I read the book]. [I discovered] there are mines here."

Jayshri successfully completed the multiple-choice citizenship test in the allotted time. Soon, she delightfully received her "Notice to Appear to Take the Oath of Citizenship". Jayshri recounts, "It is a really exciting moment! You get to sing *O Canada!* [And when you sign the citizen papers, you realize with excitement], *I am a citizen of another country!*"

Eventually, the Patel family moved to Swift Current, Saskatchewan to fulfill the dream of owning a business. They were informed of the opportunity to purchase the *Paradise Inn* through a friend who owned a motel in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan. A partnership was formed, a Toronto house was rented to tenants, and a move to snowy Saskatchewan occurred in the Fall of 2011. Jayshri recalls her feelings during the move, "I asked my friends [in Toronto] to tell me everything they knew about motels. I was trained in the medical field. I didn't know anything about motels!" Yet, when she arrived to Swift Current, she tirelessly devoted herself to being taught by the former owner. Now, she says with confidence, "I am the main person here, 24/7."

Both Jayshri and Kehul have accepted their new life in Swift Current with determination. They enjoy the community and appreciate people's helpfulness. They are blessed with good customers. They have the will to survive and thrive in a business with much competition.



"In India, you need education to be successful," Jayshri explains, "In Canada, you also need the will to survive [as a newcomer, especially in a cold climate]."

If you are willing to accept the challenge, the sacrifice, and the hard work to live here, citizenship is your reward. You have to struggle for it. [And if you do], slowly you will achieve your goal."

Do you have a story to tell of how Swift Current has become your new home? We would love to hear from you!

Please contact us at 306-778-6262 or agnese@newcomerwelcomecentre.com

International Women's Day Celebration

By Jade Koch

A festive celebration filled with entertainment, speakers and food was held on March 9th at the First United Church in honour of women everywhere. International Women's Day is designated to promote and celebrate women. The theme of the event was, "Women as Mentors" and was paired with the song "Bread and Roses" which was highly appropriate. With the help of some local women and teenagers everyone was able to spend a few hours meeting new people and learning something they may not have known before. A short quiz ended the day of celebration. The table of people having the most correct answers walked away with a small prize. However, in the words of the Emcee of the event, Bula Ghosh, "No one is a loser if you gain a friend". I think it's safe to say that we all walked away winners.



IWSC meet on Wednesdays @ 7:45 at the Welcome Centre.
For more info contact Myra (306) 773 - 5068

**PARTNER
ORGANIZATION
IN ACTION!**



"Building healthier families and communities together"

Southwest Crisis Services works to assist those who are experiencing abuse and also provides education to prevent violence and abuse. Programs are confidential and free of charge unless otherwise indicated below. More information on all programs can be found at www.swcrisis.ca

Southwest Safe Shelter - provides short-term (4-6 weeks) secure, comfortable shelter free of charge to women 18 and older and their children leaving an abusive relationship. It is staffed 24 hours a day and staff will work with clients to develop a plan and to provide support, information and referrals. Call 306-778-3692.

Genesis House Second Stage Housing - clients who access the Safe Shelter may then be able to access affordable subsidized housing for about 6 months if they are still at risk and re-establishing themselves in the community. Clients are expected to pay some of the costs of this program.

24 Hour Crisis Line - calls are taken 24 hours a day from anyone in crisis the southwest- male or female- who may need support, information and referral. Call 306-778-3833 or toll-free in the southwest to 1-800-567-3334. Calls are not recorded or traced.

Women's Outreach - a confidential one-to-one supportive counseling program for women (18+) experiencing any kind of abuse. Provides support, education, small group sessions, referrals, advocacy and helps with practical assistance. Call 306-778-3684

Men's Outreach - a confidential one-to-one supportive counseling program with a male co-coordinator for men (18+) who experience abuse or who have abused or are at risk to abuse. Provides support, education, referrals, advocacy and helps with practical assistance. Call 306-778-3433

Children's Outreach - a confidential one-to-one supportive counseling program for children 5-17 experiencing abuse. Provides support, education, and referrals. Serves children and youth from the community and those who are staying at the Shelter. Call 306-773-1064.

Violence Prevention Education - provides free education sessions on a variety of topics to children and youth in schools and community youth groups. Topics include: healthy relationships, peer pressure, bullying, dating relationships, conflict, communication, boundaries and more. Call 403-813-3802 to book a session.

Public Awareness - provides adult education sessions on various topics related to abuse and organizes and attends public awareness events. Call 306-778-3386 to book a session.

**SOUTHWEST
CRISIS SERVICES**
Crisis Line ☎ Safe Shelter 🏠 Genesis House

*Someone to talk
to can make
a difference*

**CRISIS LINE
778-3833
OR
1-800-567-3334**



LITERACY = FUN

at the Welcome Centre on February 1st

To conclude the *Family Literacy Week* we hosted an afternoon of fun & learning in cooperation with the *Southwest Literacy Committee* and the *City's Recreation & Parks department*. Thanks Shawna for making this event such a fun one!

We would also like to THANK our wonderful volunteers Wendy and Rae for helping out and showing that
LITERARY = FUN!



**15
MINUTES
OF FUN**

Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's literacy skills dramatically.



Lucky winners of this year's *Family Literacy Week Draw* were: Lysha, Francis, Kirby and Bhargavi.

Who is Saint Patrick?

By: *Gabhánach Ó hEochaidh*

March 17th is a time when Irish people all over the world, including the five million in Canada, celebrate the life and times of Saint Patrick, Apostle to the Irish. He is credited with converting the people of the island from their pagan beliefs and rituals to Christianity and the ways of Christ the Redeemer.

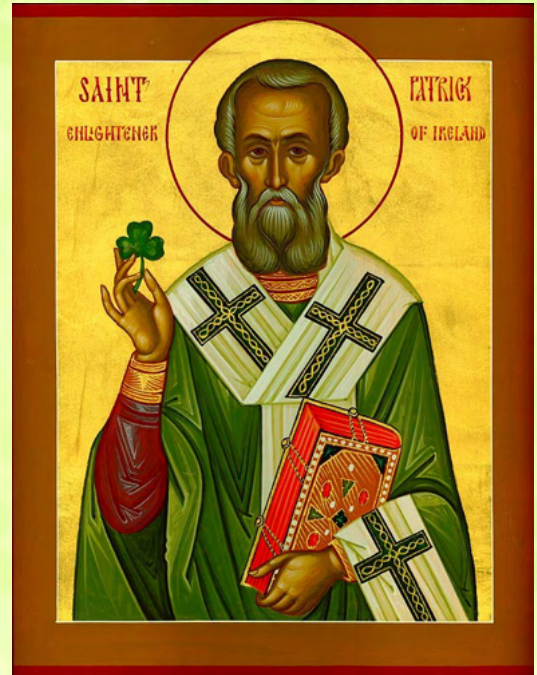
St. Patrick was born in the 4th century to Roman nobility in Britain. As a boy, he tended sheep on the cold, damp, windswept hills and mountainsides of Northeastern Ireland. He spent many a lonely night staring into the heavens praying to God that he might one day be re-united with his family. His prayers were answered and in a vision, God told him to make his way to the coast where a ship anchored in the bay would return him to his family.

Patrick's love of God grew strong and he soon entered the priesthood. He became a talented cleric and was sent to Ireland as an ordained bishop by the Roman Papacy in 432 AD.

There are many myths, stories and legends about St. Patrick's time in Ireland. One of these tales says he taught the Irish the doctrine of the Holy Trinity of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit by making an analogy to the shamrock, a three leafed plant found all over the island. He used it to illustrate the Christian belief of three persons in One True God.

Another legend says St. Patrick banished all the snakes from Ireland. Modern science suggests that there were never any snakes in Ireland in the first place, but as we Irish like to say "never let the truth get in the way of a good story". It is said that he chased all these snakes into the sea after they attacked him during his forty day fast on top of a mountain. Today, every summer, thousands of pilgrims climb to the top of this "Holy Reek" in bare feet to pay homage to the great saint.

Patrick preached to the Irish for almost forty years and is the founding father of the Irish Church.



He is buried in Down Cathedral, Down Patrick, Country Down just 20 miles South of Belfast along with Ireland's other revered Saints, Saint Bridget of the cross and St. Columba, sometimes called "Colmeille".



reminders

who is new?

Don't forget to tell us who is new in our community. We would love to meet them!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

SOUTHWEST NEWCOMER
WELCOME
CENTRE

Make sure to keep checking in to keep up with the latest **news about immigration** as well as the **upcoming events** at the Welcome Centre, the city and Southwest Saskatchewan.

www.newcomerwelcomecentre.com

SGI

Driver Education 6-hour in class session
May 4, 9 am -4 pm

Few spots are still available!

FEE: \$ 100

Participants must hold a Learner's License. Jennifer Taylor from JD Driving School, will be the instructor. Call the Welcome Centre at 306-7786262 to register.

TRUE SPORT

We have a bag full of sports equipment & board games. We have basketballs, tennis racquets, frisbees, soccer ball and other sports equipment. So come by and borrow some equipment and try a new activity!



Are you planning to take the IELTS or TOEFL test? Make sure to visit your local Library branch and you could borrow one of these guides and/or test practice materials.

Don't miss out on important announcements and opportunities.



Add us and keep in touch with all that is going on!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/41822533487/>

Immigrant Access Fund **IAF**

→ The Immigrant Access Fund

The Immigrant Access Fund provides micro loans to immigrants who need help to pay for the costs associated with obtaining the Canadian accreditation or training that will allow them to work in their profession or trade.

More info at the Welcome Centre!

LEAD | LINC Home Study
Canada

Learn English
From Home
for free

visit us for more information! Or check out their website at www.linchnational.ca

To enroll contact Bula Ghosh from Great Plains College (306) 778 5477 bulag@greatplainscollege.ca



programs & events coming up!

Parenting in Canada

FOR: Parents with young children 0-6.



WHEN? Monday, May 6 @ 10:30-11:30 **WHERE?** Newcomer Welcome Centre
WHAT? Sharing of experiences among parents from here and around the world.
CONTACT: Louise at 306-773-6160 or Icasiana at 306-778-6262

Nature Play-along the Chinook Parkway

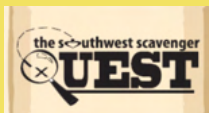
FOR: Children 6-10 years old.



WHEN? April 27, May 11, 25, June 1, 8 @10am-noon
WHERE? Check with the City's Rec & Parks to find out the next location
WHAT? Children will be able to do fun and healthy outdoor activities. Pre-registration is required.
CONTACT: SC Rec. & Parks at 306-778-2787

Southwest Scavenger Quest

FOR: Teams of 2-5 members.



WHEN? April 20, Race starts at Days Inn @ 2pm.
WHAT? Collect pledges, dress up (or not!), take to the road for a scavenger hunt around the city, perform and photograph some crazy physical and mental tasks, enjoy complimentary supper and entertainment. Top 3 teams win great prizes!
CONTACT: SW Crisis Services, to register a team or for information call 306-778-3386.

Helping Newcomers Succeed in Canada

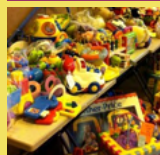
FOR: anyone interested.



WHEN? April 20, Race starts at Days Inn @ 2pm. RSVP by April 23
WHAT? RBC Mortgage Specialists will be providing information session on how to secure mortgage.
CONTACT: Linda Adams at 306-774-4771 or linda.adams@rbc.com or Mike Kessler at 306-774-6453 or michael.kessler@rbc.com

Annual Fundraising Sale

FOR: everyone, especially families with young children



WHEN? April 27, @9am-2pm **WHERE?** Entrepreneurial Centre: 885 6th Ave NE, Swift Current
WHAT? Fundraising Sale: Items for sale will include toys, children's equipment, books, maternity wear, gently used children's clothing and parenting books. Items are targeted for the under 16 age group.
CONTACT: Family Resource Centre, Louise at 306-773-6160 .

Babysitting Course

FOR: open to anyone, at least 11 years old



WHEN? May 11, 8am-5pm **WHERE?** Newcomer Welcome Centre
WHAT? Canadian Red Cross will be the instructor. With FEE
CONTACT: Tiffany or Trisha at 306-778-3986

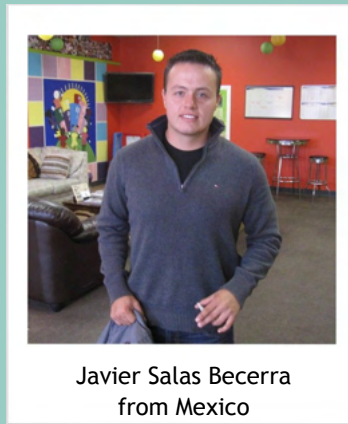
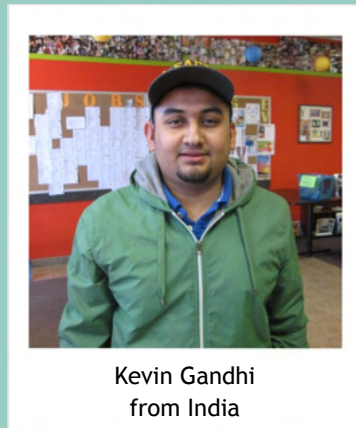
Introduction to Family Literacy Training

FOR: everyone, especially those who work or plan to work with children & families



WHEN? May 22, 9:40am-4pm **WHERE?** Great Plains College SC, Conference Room
WHAT? Workshop on Family Literacy, how to engage families in fun learning, how to plan family literacy activities and a lot more. Limited seats available, pre-registration is required.
CONTACT: Bula Ghosh at 306-7785477

new arrivals



new babies

Congratulations to Tommi-Lyn and Rogelio on birth of their son!

Matteo Robert Ortega
born February 13, 2013
6 pounds 10 ounces



& families reunited



**Teekoory family
from Mauritius reunited**



**Paola is reunited with her twin
sister Adriana Sisa Ochoa
from Colombia**



**Catherine is reunited with her
mother Lourdes Silvestre
from Philippines**



**Cornelius is reunited with Elayne
Lizeth & their children from Mexico**



**Renjel is reunited with his
wife Rhea Taping
from Philippines**



**Angelita is reunited with her daughter
Frances & son-in-law Randolf
from Philippines**

Congratulations to new Canadian citizens



Aguilar family at the oath-taking ceremony on March 12, 2013 at the RCMP Heritage Centre in Regina.

Camarador family at the oath-taking ceremony on January 29, 2013 at the RCMP Heritage Centre in Regina.



SOUTHWEST NEWCOMER WELCOME CENTRE

Centre Hours
MONDAY - FRIDAY
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

306 778 6262 PHONE
306 778 6226 FAX

rwc@newcomerwelcomecentre.com

The Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating and maintaining a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers who have decided to reside in Southwest Saskatchewan. We hope to enable independence and respectful community participation for newcomers by providing settlement and integration services and by promoting cross cultural awareness to all in the communities we serve.