

# Changing Times

A magazine made by newcomers from Southwest Saskatchewan

Dec. 2011



May the **peace**  
and **hope** of  
Christmas stay  
with you each  
day of the new  
year!

Merry  
Christmas!

Shub Naya Baras

**Selamat Hari Natal**

God Jul og Godt Nyttår

Mitho Makosi Kesikansi

Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!

*Gézuar Krishlindjet Vitin e Ri*

**Boas Festas e Feliz Ano Novo**

*Naya Saal Mubarak Ho*

I'D Miilad Said ous Sana Saida \*

Seng Dan Fai Lok, Sang Nian Fai Lok

메리 크리스마스 와 새해 복 많이

Krismas Njema Na Heri Za Mwaka Mpya \*

*Wesolych Swiat i Szczesliwego Nowego Roku*

**Щасливого Різдва та Нового Року**

**聖誕快樂，新年快樂**

Счастливого Рождества и Нового Года

**Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo**

Winshuyu sa Svyatkami i z Novym godam \*

*Shuvo Baro Din - Shuvo Nabo Barsho*

*Vrolijk Kerstfeest en een Gelukkig Nieuwjaar*

*Zul saryn bolon shine ony mend devshuulye*

*Kala Christougenna Kieftihismenos O Kenourios Chronos*

**Priecīgus Ziemassvētkus un Laimīgu jauno gadu \***

*Nadolig LLawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda \* Bon nadal i felix any nou*

Mo'adim Lesimkha. Shana Tova \* **Selamat Natal dan Tahun Baru**

**Maligayang Pasko At Manigong Bagong Taon**

**Froehliche Weihnachten und ein glückliches Neues Jahr!**

Joyous Celebrations

Oh, Christmas Tree ...

**NEWS** from  
Immigration  
Office



*I always believe though that keeping the family together especially during this season is always the best tradition.*

## Greetings from Icasiana

This is our family's third Christmas here in Canada. There is a lot to miss about Christmas back in the Philippines with all our relatives and friends...the food, the lights, the church bells, the Christmas carols, the gatherings and many more. The best part is always the Noche Buena, a midnight meal on Christmas Eve with the entire family right after the Christmas Eve mass. I am sure every immigrant family who celebrated Christmas back home had some traditions that they hope to keep. I always believe though that keeping the family together especially during this season is always the best tradition. Every other tradition flows from the family, whether it be an old or newly acquired tradition. So I hope everyone gets to celebrate Christmas with their families. For those who are not able to be reunited with their families this Christmas, I hope they find peace and happiness in the company of friends and other community members.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas!

## Greetings from Claudia

As the Holiday Season is upon us, we find ourselves reflecting on the past year and on those who have helped to shape our organization in any way. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working with you in the year to come.

We wish you a very happy Holiday Season and a New Year filled with peace and prosperity. Christmas is love, always love. Christmas is God, and God is love.

Christmas - Magic blanket that wraps itself around us, that is something so intangible that it is like a fragrance. It may weave a spell of nostalgia. Christmas is a day of feasting, or of prayer, always it will be a day of remembrance - a day in which we think of everything we have ever loved.

**FELIZ NAVIDAD Y PROSPERO AÑO**



*Christmas is love, always love.  
Christmas is God, and God is love.*

## Greetings from Agnese

As holidays are approaching I keep reflecting on two things: family and tradition. It is the time of the year when we long to be with our families. For those of us whose families are on the other side of the world, it is a harsh reminder of exactly how far we are from our loved ones. This will be my sixth Christmas in Swift Current, and to be honest, a sense of sadness has been overwhelming me in the past years. I missed my family dearly. This year, though, I have a special treat: my sister is visiting me over the holidays. It is truly the best Christmas gift ever!



Together we hope to indulge in some Latvian baking and traditions. I come from a country with rich cultural heritage where customs and traditions run deeply in our way of life. Just like other immigrants, I am sure, I tend to overdo on traditions. I think it is our way of trying to stay true to our cultures and identities while being in a foreign place. Funny thing is that I have never been such a 'traditions' person back home. But here, the more I miss home, the more I cling to the traditions and customs I am able to keep and preserve. I must confess that I go one step further; I almost expect others to enjoy and embrace my traditions with similar passion. Needless to say, that this does not always go well with my strong willed Canadian husband. Now that we have a son, who is as much Canadian as he is Latvian, we have to stop thinking in terms of 'my' or 'your' traditions, and really have to start thinking in terms of 'our' traditions and decide which customs from both cultures (not just mine) we should embrace in our little family. And that may mean that I will have to relax and let go of some of my Latvian traditions (sigh).

I encourage you to stay true to your identity and keep as many traditions from your culture as you possibly can, but don't forget to embrace the new and maybe you can adopt or start a new tradition this year as well.

*Priecīgus Ziemassvētkus!*

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We would like to thank Marie-Daniel for all her effort, hard work and creative ideas while volunteering with the Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre past few months. We will miss your fun personality, creativity and your efficiency.

We wish you all the best as you return home and continue your studies. We hope to see you again! Make sure to visit us next time you are in town.

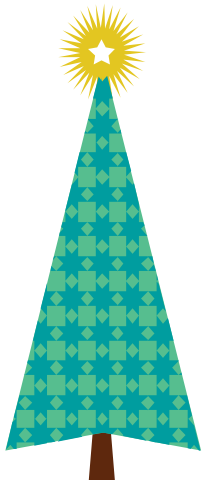


## New Staff Member



Please meet Agnese Vilde, our new Information Service Advisor. Originally from Latvia, Agnese has lived in Swift Current for over five years now.

Having gone through the immigration process herself, she knows firsthand of the struggles and difficulties newcomers face. She is glad to have this opportunity to share her knowledge and assist others in their transition to their new lives in Swift Current and Southwest Saskatchewan.



## HOLIDAY HOURS

Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre will be closed from **December 23rd** till **January 2nd**.

If there are any immediate concerns, please contact us at:

icasiana@newcomerwelcomecentre.com  
or  
claudia@newcomerwelcomecentre.com

## NWC Website Coming Soon!

We are happy to announce that we will be launching our very own website in the new year! We will keep you posted!

## IMMIGRATION NEWS

### CIC Goes Paperless

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) hopes to simplify the application process and make it more accessible to applicants by moving more of its business online. On line services allow people to apply whenever and wherever they want, with online tools to help navigate the immigration process and fill out forms. As of Dec.1, 2011 CIC will no longer print and mail out forms and application kits. Applicants can still print the forms themselves from the CIC website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.asp>



### SUPER VISA

As of December 1, 2011, parents and grandparents of Canadian citizens and permanent residents have a new option for visiting their loved ones in Canada. They may be eligible to apply for the **Parent and Grandparent Super Visa** and be able to visit their families in Canada for up to 2 years without the need to renew their status.

**To apply** for the Parent and Grandparent Super Visa, **one must:**

- be the parent or grandparent of a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada;
- be found admissible to Canada;
- and meet certain other conditions such as:
  - provide a written commitment of financial support from their child or grandchild in Canada who meets a minimum income threshold;
  - prove that they have bought Canadian medical insurance coverage for at least one year;
  - complete an Immigration Medical Examination

For more information about the Super Visa, please check out the Citizenship and Immigration website [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)

# have your say

We asked you about your favorite Christmas tradition, custom or memory. This is what you said:

*Ezekiel (Mexico):* I love everything about nativity scenes. What I really like about Canadian Christmas is that no one is left behind. You are treated like family by local people and being invited in their homes.

*Elisa (Philippines):* our favorite Christmas activity is caroling. It is when children get candy and/or money when they go around homes caroling.

*Bernadete & Gissele (Philippines):* our favorite part about Christmas, of course is eating! Because we love eating! What we love about Canadian Christmas is the ambiance of White Christmas.

*Jennifer (Philippines):* my favorite Christmas tradition is Dawn Mass that takes place every morning at 4 am, from Dec. 16-24

*Tsolmon (Mongolia):* my favorite Christmas custom has to do with gifts: I love wrapping them and seeing my kids opening them. We also exchange gifts on the New Year's Eve.

*Archie (Philippines):* my favorite Christmas Carol from my country is Kumbatchero. It is really fun!

**ASK US!** We are currently building our FAQ section of the website. Send us your questions and we will try to answer them. The best questions along with our answers will be published.

# Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree ...



## The Great Debate: Real vs Fake Christmas Tree

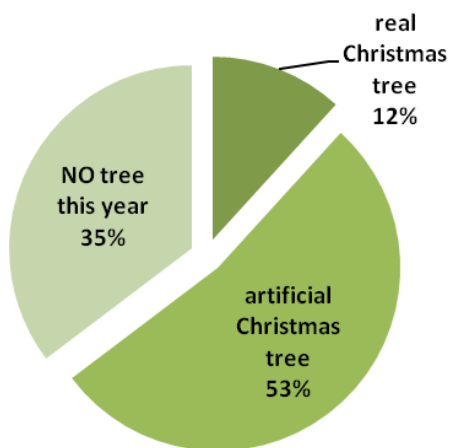
Everyone loves the smell of a fresh Christmas tree (unless you are allergic), but when you consider all the expenses and resources needed to grow them and the number of years (6-12) it takes to reach the wanted height, chopping down a living tree may seem like the most un-environment friendly thing to do.

But is getting an artificial tree the “greener” choice? It’s not so much about how many uses you can get from your tree... as it is about what the tree is made of, and what it does to the environment when it is created and when you dispose of it.

So before you make your choice, consider carefully.



We asked our newcomers what kind of Christmas tree they will have in their homes this year. And here is what they told us:



<b>Price</b>	\$ 42.60	\$ 96.50
<b>Number sold Annually</b>	27 million	9 million
<b>Profits</b>	1.15 billion	869 million
<b>Manufacturing</b>	95% grown in North America	80 % made in China
<b>After Holdiays</b>	100% reusable and recyclable!	never biodegrade, but can stay in decent shape for 10 years

Source: [www.readymademag.com](http://www.readymademag.com)





## Make your own Christmas Tree!

If you don't want to get a real tree but still would like that fresh pine smell in your house, be creative and make your own miniature Christmas tree.

### What You Need:

- \* Some branches
- \* Wine bottle
- \* Good scissors
- \* Hot glue gun
- \* Small decorations, sparkles, ornaments

### ASSEMBLY:

Cut small pieces and glue them to the wine bottle starting from the bottom. Slowly work your way up to the top of the bottle. And decorate!



## DID YOU KNOW

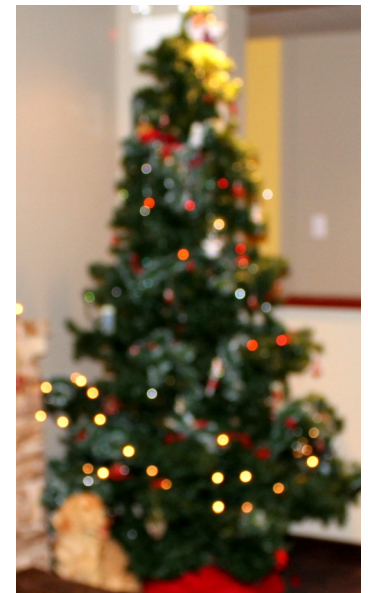
... that when a Christmas tree is cut, over half of its weight is water?

... the first ones to think of faking the Christmas tree were Germans, in 1800s.

... the first artificial Christmas tree was produced by a toilet brush company? Yes!.. The first fake Christmas trees (in 1930s) looked pretty much like giant, green toilet brushes.

## How to Care for Your Christmas Tree

- Make sure your **tree stand** is large enough not only to hold the trunk of the tree but also to hold 4 litres (one gallon) of water;
- Before bringing the tree inside, cut 1-2 cm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch) off the tree stump before placing it in water. Make the cut perpendicular to the stem axis. Don't cut the trunk at an angle, or into a v-shape, which makes it far more difficult to hold the tree in the stand and also reduces the amount of water available to the tree.
- **Add water twice a day** so the base of the tree never dries out. Your tree will need several litres of water every day.



*NWC Christmas Tree*

**Sources:** Canadian Christmas tree grower association: [http://www.canadianchristmastrees.ca/main\\_eng.html](http://www.canadianchristmastrees.ca/main_eng.html) & National Christmas Tree Association: <http://www.christmastree.org>



# A Cultural Serenade

by Icasiana De Gala

# culture days



The Newcomer Welcome Centre hosted the final event for Culture Days Celebration. A Cultural Serenade featured talents from different performers of diverse cultural background. Music was the central theme of the night, with six musical number and one dance number. Musical instruments from piano, guitar, drums, saxophone and flute were all used in the performances to create beautiful music. After all the scheduled performances, the audience had a great time singing along with the karaoke. Snacks and drinks were also served for free.



This event was sponsored by SaskCulture & SaskLotteries.



The Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan also sent a mapping kit. Attendees put pins on the map to show where they came from.





# Multi-Stakeholder Forum

by Icasiana De Gala

Last November 18, 2011, the NWC held its very first Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Settlement and Integration. The main objective of the forum was to identify gaps in the settlement and integration services in the Southwest Region and strategies on how to address these gaps. This was also an opportunity for collaboration and communication among Southwest communities on the central theme of settlement and integration for Newcomers in Canada.

The forum was attended by representatives from different employer groups, other service provider organizations, school divisions, RCMP, Career and Employment Services, Tim Helfrich from the Ministry of AEEI, and a few newcomers.

Settlement, Integration & Retention

EAL support for newcomer students

Protection for temporary foreign workers

Awareness & Acceptance

Reunification of families

Agency support and collaboration

Newcomers bringing skills to community

Recognition of prior learning and/or experience

The Welcome Centre and the Ministry each made a presentation on the services and programs of their organizations as well as some data regarding newcomer arrival. After the presentations, there was a discussion on existing programs and organizations providing services to newcomers, what improvements or additional programs need to be done, and who or what organization should we bring the issue to for possible action.

We hope to present the results of the forum to newcomers in order to get their perspective on these issues and come up with a more cohesive and extensive report.



# A Gift For Christmas

by Marie-Danièle Thériault



Alexandre Frounier, Tony Kramer, William Hock, Sarah de Vries, Stephanie Shyluk (the project leader) Pier-Alexandre Lecavalier, Marie-Daniele Theriault, Jean-Francois Tremblay, Lisa Lin and Virginie Gaulin

This year the Katimavik group will have a wonderful gift for Christmas. After 6 months of volunteering in Canada (3 in *Swift Current* and 3 in *Rimouski*), the group will go back home to their families.

After the group hosts the Improv night at the Centre on December 3 and celebrates the International Volunteer Day with volunteers in the community on December 8, it will be time to go home.

*“I had a great time in Swift Current, with a good community who knew us and helped us in the activities submitted by the group. I’m happy to be with my family for Christmas.”*

Marie-Danièle Thériault  
from Saguenay Lac-St-Jean, QC

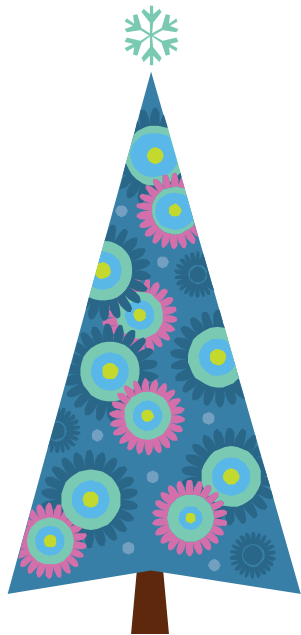
The Katimavik Group wants to thank the community of Swift Current for all of their help during the program and wish you a very Merry Christmas!

*“Christmas for me, is about spending time with precious family and being together. It’s not about gifts or how many you get, it’s about smiling faces and being joyful with whatever happens, and it’s about being together, cooking together and laughing about silly things,”*

Sarah de Vries  
from Guelph, ON

*“I had a great past three months in Swift Current, I am really going to miss my job at the Swift Current Care Center, but I am so excited to be back home for Christmas!”*

William Hock



# A Joyous Celebration!

By Icaisana De Gala

The Filipino community in Swift Current and surrounding areas celebrated their Christmas party last Dec. 17, 2011 at the Palliser Pavilion. The feast on the table was sumptuous, the entertainment was energetic and the company of family and friends was great. The Palliser was fully-packed with both Filipinos and friends. Children were excitedly playing around. Parents were busy greeting each other. It was a festive mood. After the dinner and the program, there was dancing until the midnight. It was an indeed a joyous occasion.

**MALIGAYANG PASKO!!!**





# POTS & PANS

## baking session



As part of our Pots & Pans program, for our last event this year we decided to do something different. With holiday season fast approaching we thought it would be nice to do some baking.

It is always nice to learn about different cultures from far away and discover new exotic tastes, but how about our local baking traditions? For some of us it still seems pretty foreign and strange.

To learn more about Canadian baking, we turned to the experts—Schimmel's Dutch Bakery. Our expectations were met and more: we learned how to create, bake and decorate cookies, pastries, butter tarts and of course, Schimmel's famous cinnamon buns. The best part, we got to take home all our baking. Thank you Jack for teaching us and Schimmel's Dutch Bakery for hosting us! We had lots of fun and will keep enjoying all the tasty goodies we baked together.



*This event was sponsored by Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre Child Nutrition & Development Program.*

# REMINDERS

## LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS

Want to take an **ESL** class?  
Need to **improve your English** for your job?

**Ask us** about our language assessments and to see if you qualify! For more information and to sign up, please contact Agnese at (306) 778 6262 or [agnese@newcomerwelcomecentre.com](mailto:agnese@newcomerwelcomecentre.com)

## WHO IS NEW?

Don't forget to **tell us who is new** in our community. If you know someone (neighbor, friend, colleague or family member) who is new to Swift Current and South West Saskatchewan, please let us know so that **we can welcome them** and assist them in any way we can.

May the NWC be the first stop towards their settlement.

## FURNITURE DONATIONS

As you may know, we take furniture donations that then are given to newcomers. We have been receiving a lot of calls lately from people inquiring what exactly we accept and how they can donate.

### WE TAKE:

- Furniture (in good condition from smoke free homes)
- TVs, Music/Media players and etc.
- Bicycles both adult and child
- Other household items such as microwaves, toasters, coffee machines, etc.
- Blankets, pillows and bedding

### HOW TO DONATE?

Please **give us a call** (778-6262) to let us know when you are coming to drop off your donation and we will meet you at the back door.



Don't miss out on important events, announcements and opportunities for newcomers living in Southwest Saskatchewan.

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

## HOMEWORK CLUB

If you would like your kids to take part in the program, please send us their names and grade level, as well as the subject that they would need help in.

**We are also looking for volunteer tutors!** To apply and for more info,

please contact us at **778-6262** or email [icasiana@newcomerwelcomecentre.com](mailto:icasiana@newcomerwelcomecentre.com)

**CONGRATULATIONS to newlyweds:**



**Terry & Tony**



**Ruslan & Oksana**

**we welcome new babies**



***Hoenheim Peter***  
born on  
December 19  
to Aileen and  
JR Barraca



***Finn Eston*** born on October 29  
to Keleah and Dustin Ostrander



***Kaelan Thomas*** born on November 12 to Marina and Thomas Dyck



# CONGRATULATIONS to NEW Canadian Citizens



Myriam Arias



Stephen Daniel



Raoul Rojas, Victoria Martinez and family



*This season is the best time  
to welcome everyone,  
but everyone is always welcome  
all season .*



**SOUTHWEST NEWCOMER  
WELCOME  
CENTRE**

The Newcomer Welcome Centre is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to creating and maintaining a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers who have decided to reside in Southwest Saskatchewan. In providing programming and services to assist with the settlement and integration, the Southwest region will continue to be rewarded by ever growing diversities of culture and rich ethnic communities that are pleased to call our region, home.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



from the Newcomer Welcome Centre staff