



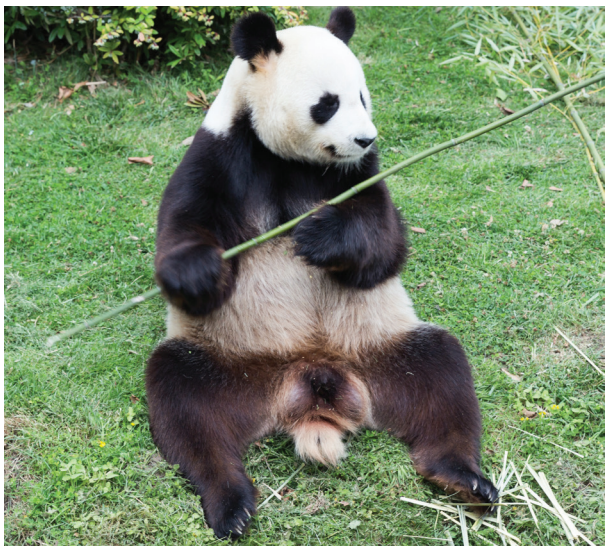
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# The Westcoast Reader

January  2017



Giant pandas eat bamboo.  
PHOTO: WILLIAM CROCHOT/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Barj Dhahan encourages intercultural connections.  
PHOTO: JENELLE SCHNEIDER/VANCOUVER SUN



Tony helps Alice with a doughnut.  
PHOTO: ARLEN REDEKOP/VANCOUVER SUN

## Giant Panda Twins

Mei Lun and Mei Huan are giant pandas. They are twin sisters. They are 3 years old. They were born at a zoo in the United States.

In November 2016, they were moved to China. Life is different for them in China.

### The pandas must learn a new language.

The panda sisters understand their names and simple directions in English. Now they must learn to understand Chinese.

### The pandas must eat new foods.

The panda sisters are also used to eating North American food. Now they must learn to eat Chinese food.

### Why were the twins moved to China?

China loaned their parents to a zoo in Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta zoo agreed to send any cubs born in the United States back to China. Therefore, the twin cubs had to go to China.

Some facts about Giant Pandas:

- Giant pandas eat mostly bamboo shoots and leaves.
- Pandas eat fast and they eat a lot.
- Pandas spend about 12 hours a day eating.
- There are not many giant pandas in the world.

## New scholarships and a prize

Barj Dhahan and the University of BC started a new scholarship program for aboriginal students in 2016. Each scholarship was worth \$20,000. There were 20 scholarships. The scholarships will help aboriginal students pay for university.

Dhahan also gives money for the Dhahan Prize for Punjabi Literature. The winner of the \$25,000 prize for 2016 was Jarnail Singh. Singh is a short story writer. He immigrated to Toronto in 1988.

### Who is Barj Dhahan?

Barj Dhahan is a successful business man. He came to Canada as a youth from India. He completed high school in Vancouver and went to the University of British Columbia. His wife, Rita, is from a Mennonite background. They live and work in Vancouver.

“I’ve been blessed by my family coming to Canada,” said Dhahan. Dhahan wants to help people of all cultures. He wants to help them integrate into Canadian society. He values Canada for its economic strength and democracy.

## Inviting community in

Tony Han is five years old. Alice Clark is 100 years old.

Tony and Alice enjoy each other. They make things. They smile and giggle.

Tony goes to a daycare centre. Alice lives in a seniors’ nursing home.

The daycare is in the same building as the nursing home.

### Seniors are often lonely.

Visits from the children make the seniors happier. The children in the daycare get to know them.

They wave and say ‘Hi’ to the seniors. They play and eat with the seniors.

The seniors enjoy the children. As a result, they are less lonely.

More homes for seniors are starting to invite the community to come in. It is good for the seniors. It is also good for the community.



Tony and Alice hug.  
PHOTO: ARLEN REDEKOP/VANCOUVER SUN

# Calendar

Family Literacy Week

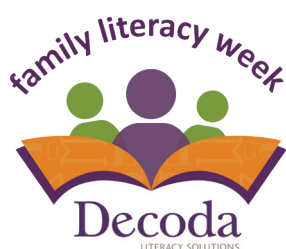
Jan. 23 -29

Family Literacy Day - Jan. 27



PHOTO: DAN ENJO

Activities during Family Literacy Week help raise awareness about how important learning together is for children, family and community. This year's theme is *Tuning into Music: Listen! Make! Move!*



Multicultural Children's Book Day - Jan. 27

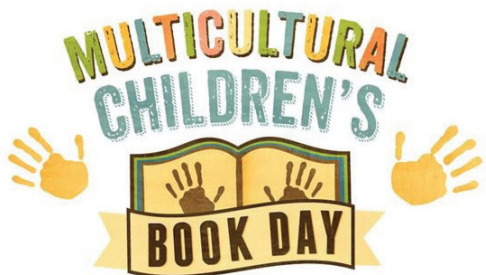


IMAGE: MULTICULTURALCHILDRENSBOOKDAY.COM

Today we raise awareness about children's books with characters from all cultures.

Chinese New Year – Jan 28



Chinese New Year Parade

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Chinese New Year's Day is the first day of the Chinese lunar calendar. The new year celebration lasts 7 days. In 2017, it is January 27 – February 2. This is the Year of the Rooster. If you are born in a Year of the Rooster, you are hardworking, confident, observant, courageous, talented, honest, and frank.



It's the Year of the Rooster

PHOTO: PIXABAY

# Family music fun



Children learn by making music.

PHOTO: JOAN EXLEY

## Tune into Music: Listen! Make! Move!

Families can enjoy music together. Music helps children learn. It helps them learn new words and how words sound.



PHOTO: JOAN EXLEY

Families can have fun with music. Here are some ways:

- Sing together. You don't need a good voice.
- Move to music together. You can dance or march.
- Make music together. Tap sticks or spoons in time to music.

Visit your library to get more ideas for family fun with music. It is fun to learn with music!

## A cat calls 911

The RCMP on the Sunshine Coast went to a house in Gibsons Landing. Someone there had called 911.

The police officer looked around the house. He found a cat and a phone in the bedroom. The phone was on the floor. The cat looked guilty.

### What happened?

The cat knocked the phone off the table. He stepped on a speed dial button. He called 911.

The officer said, "Don't put 911 in your speed dial. It causes a lot of accidental 911 calls."

Adapted from the *Vancouver Sun*



ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY

# Resolutions



PHOTO: PIXABAY

## New Year's Resolutions

A New Year's resolution is a plan that starts at the beginning of the year. Making resolutions at New Year's is a Canadian tradition.

### Resolutions are promises.

A person resolves, or promises, to do something. It is usually something hard, like trying to stop smoking. The five most popular resolutions made by Canadians for 2016 were:

1. stay fit and healthy
2. lose weight
3. spend less, save more
4. enjoy life
5. spend more time with family

What are your New Year's resolutions for 2017?



PHOTO: PIXABAY



ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY

## What is the RCMP?

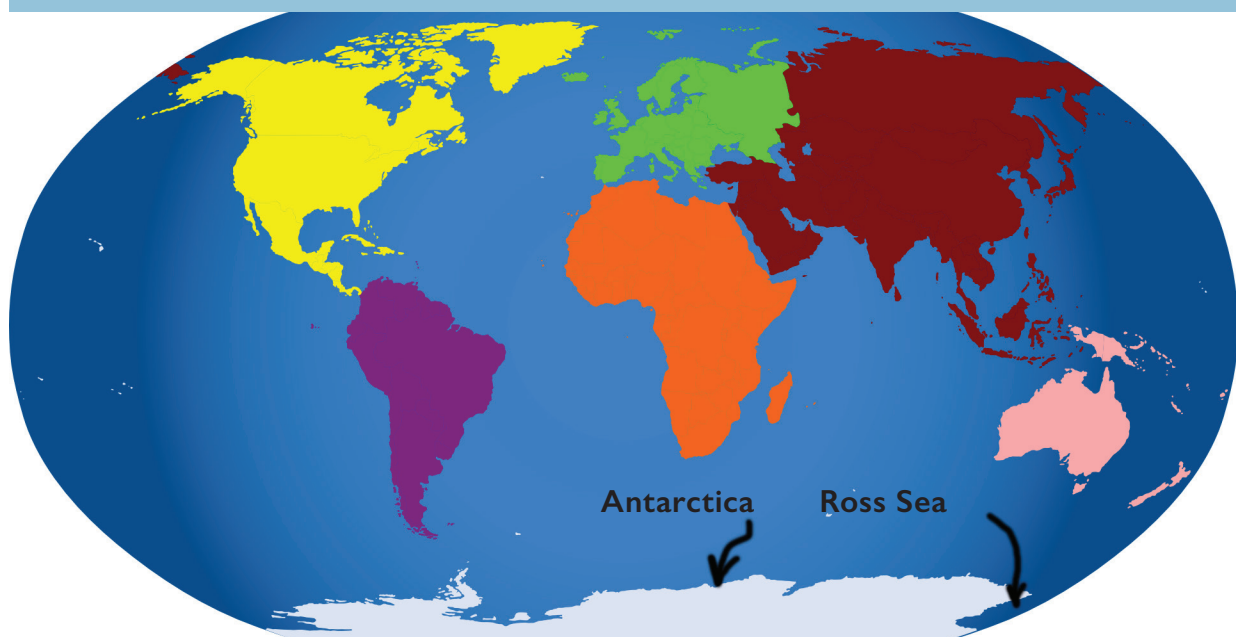
RCMP means Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The RCMP provide police services in many communities in Canada.



The RCMP dress in their best for the Musical Ride.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

# Environment



Map of the world

ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY

## World's Largest Marine Reserve



In October 2016, the Ross Sea became the world's largest marine reserve. The Ross Sea is near Antarctica. It is 1.6 million square kilometres of water. It is twice the size of Texas.

Marine reserves are created to protect the environment. No one can take or harm animals or plants in the reserve. Some fishing is allowed.

More than 24 countries agreed to protect this large area of ocean. The idea was discussed for many years. It is the first time so many countries worked together to protect a marine environment.

The marine reserve will open on December 1, 2017. It will be a reserve for 35 years.

### Animals will be protected.

Many animals live in or near the Ross Sea. They live in a very cold place.

Many kinds of marine animals live there. At least 10 types of mammals, 6 types of birds, 95 types of fish, and over 1,000 animals without backbones live in the marine reserve. They include penguins, seals, whales and Antarctic petrels.

Because Antarctica is so remote and so cold, people don't usually live or work there. The animals live with very little human contact. It is one of the few places on earth where this is true.



Penguins live in the rugged landscape of Antarctica.

Photo: Pixabay

Source: *The National Geographic*

# Surfing in Tofino



This surfer is staying warm in her wetsuit.

PHOTO: ADAM CHILTON

## Winter surfing in Tofino



Surfers surf all year round in Tofino. The water near Tofino is cold. The temperature is about 10C all year.

Surfers must wear wet suits, hats and booties to stay warm. With the suits on surfers are warmer in the water than on the beach.

Local surfing instructor, Krissy Montgomery, says surfing requires strength and coordination. It requires practise all year. Surfers come to Tofino in both summer and winter.

The sport of surfing is becoming popular. For the first time, surfing will be an Olympic sport at the Olympics in Tokyo in 2020.

### Even beginners can have fun.

"Beginners should take lessons," says Montgomery. Learn about how to read the waves, how to stay safe and how to have fun. "You don't have to be an expert to have fun."

Adapted from the *Vancouver Sun*

## Facts about Tofino

Tofino is on the west coast of Vancouver Island in the Clayoquot Sound.

Tofino is a small, remote community. It is the home of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations.

The population of Tofino is about 2,000. The town has 14 surfing schools.

## 2017 is Election Year in BC

May 9 is voting day in BC. On that day, voters will choose their Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). This is called a General Election. Campaigning officially starts in April. To help you prepare for the election, Elections BC and *The Westcoast Reader* will include a 4-page supplement in the April issue of *The Westcoast Reader*.

Watch for the special issue of *The Westcoast Reader* coming in April!



Buying on credit cards affects your credit score

PHOTO: PIXABAY

# Canadians borrow money

Canadians borrow money to buy almost everything. We borrow to buy cars, houses, groceries and airplane tickets.

Credit scores are used by banks and other lenders. They use them to decide how much money you can borrow.

Some landlords and employers also use your credit score. They use it to decide whether to rent to you or hire you.

More than 21 million Canadians borrow money and have credit scores. Most of us do not know our credit score.

You can find out your credit score. It's free. Two agencies collect your financial information and create your credit score. They are Equifax Canada and TransUnion Canada.

**What is a credit score?**

Credit scores are numbers from 300 to 900.

- 800 + Excellent credit rating
- 750-800 Very good credit rating
- 700-750 Good credit rating
- 650-700 Fair rating
- 600-650 Bad credit rating

A high score gets you more credit.

Sources: The Vancouver Sun, CBC news, Equifax Canada, Transunion Canada money crashers.com



73% of Canadians have smart phones

PHOTO: PIXABAY

# Canadians go wireless

By the end of 2016, over 30 million residents of Canada had subscribed to a wireless network. More are signing up every day.

Thirty million is about 80 percent of the population of Canada. The total population of Canada is 36,286,378.

- 73 percent of Canadians have smart phones.
- 55 percent of Canadians stream music on YouTube.

Canadians still want more and faster internet access.

## World-wide use of the internet is growing

A new report from the United Nations says that almost half of the world's people use the internet.

About 80 percent of Europeans use the internet. Only about 25 percent of Africans use the internet.

Iceland has the highest level of usage. Over 89 percent of Icelanders use the internet.

Adapted from The Vancouver Sun and <https://www.cwta.ca/facts-figures/>



Syrian refugee women making dinner.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SHERIFA AZZAB

# Syrian refugees give back

A group of Syrian women made a special dinner. They made dinner to thank Canada and the Mount Pleasant community. They cooked special foods from Syria.

“They want to give back to the community,” said Sherifa Azzab, a settlement worker at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House.

The women also made a video. They shared songs and cultural dances with the diners.

The women say that Canadians are warm and helped them. These women have been in Canada for about a year.

Adapted from [www.cbcnews.ca](http://www.cbcnews.ca)

**Facts about Syrian refugees to Canada**

35,745 Syrian refugees entered Canada since November 2015.

1,938 Government Assisted Refugees from Syria came to BC between November 4, 2015 and July 17, 2016. Another 1,000 were expected in December. Almost half of these refugees live in Surrey.

Sources: Government of Canada, [www.issbc.org](http://www.issbc.org) and The Vancouver Sun



**Some of the many New Years in 2017**

Not all cultures celebrate New Year's Day on January 1. Here are two that start the new year on a different day in January.

1. Chinese New Year – January 28
2. Seollal (Korean New Year) – January 27 – 29

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