

April 2009

Alberta Newsletter

Outpost



OUTPOST EXPATRIATE NETWORK

Dear Shell Partners,

We are heading into spring, although the weather doesn't always show it, the days are getting longer and it will soon warm up.

Along with changes in the weather, we also have some changes at the Outpost.

We are glad to welcome Nicky Turner who has joined our group as administrative help.

We have lost Laure Pascal-Suprenaut as one of our welcomers, and Janneke Vrolijk has returned to The Netherlands, though not before she was able to update our Career and Development Guide.

Furthermore, we will be losing Judith Smallwood to Houston this summer.

I am also due to end my time here in Calgary, and sometime this summer I will be heading back to Texas.

However, we are still busy at Outpost. We are on the edge of completing our updates of the Inside Guide, and the Career and Development Guide is receiving its finishing touches (if anyone would like an electronic copy, let me know).

Hanne, Cheryl and I have attended a Dreamweaver class and now we are ready to complete a major renovation of the website.

As is the norm in the expat world, things change, evolve and move on. I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter, and if you have anything to contribute in the future, let us know. It will be greatly appreciated.

Carrie Musetti

Editor: Hanne Marette

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Carrie Musetti
Hanne Marette
Gilly Cole

We welcome ideas or comments. Please email your input to scan-outpost-calgary@shell.com

For the next issue, please send your contribution by June 15, 2009.

Nice people, sunshine and a sip of wine

On a beautiful day in February, I joined Carrie Musetti, Tula Pascoe and Cheryl Lindeboom for a day of skiing at Nakiska with the Nakiska Ladies Program.

We all met at the bus early in the morning and already at this point, there was little doubt that we had an amazing day in front of us. The sun was shining, the sky was blue, and the bus quickly filled with about 40 smiling and laughing women.



We reached our destination an hour later, and after splitting up into groups according to ability, we all hit the slopes. And it was good! The snow was great, the temperature was perfect, and all groups were accompanied by an instructor so even the hard core skiers learned new techniques to practise on their own.

Around noon we all met up in the restaurant for a nice lunch and a presentation from a guest speaker. The lunch was a great time not only to sit back and relax, but also to get a chance to have fun with Carrie, Tula and Cheryl. Our different skiing abilities had separated us in the morning, but now there was plenty of time to catch up and listen to each other's skiing adventures.



*Carrie, Cheryl, Hanne and Tula
after a great day at Nakiska*

After lunch we all went out on the slopes again to get a bit more out of the day. The clear sky was the icing on the cake, running down hill in the perfect snow.

The lovely afternoon ended shortly before the bus was ready to depart. However, there was time to taste a cool glass of wine in the sun on the restaurant's deck before we went back into the bus to head back.

The ride home didn't make an end to the day. A broad range of sponsors had provided small gimmicks as well as prizes in a drawing. Thus, the most of the time back was spent hoping to win one or another item. That didn't happen, though - for either of the four of us.

Nevertheless, the trip was a great experience and a day with a lot of fun!

Hanne Marette

Do you aspire to become a writer, or do you have an idea for an article that might be relevant for other expat partners?

Don't hesitate to bring your suggestions forward so we together can take a look at the possibilities for publishing!

Thumbs Up!

What do you recommend?

Have you read a book that you think others might enjoy?

Have you attended an event that you have to share with others?

Do you just want to spread a word?

Don't hesitate to write a small review or to simply bring the idea forward.

All inputs are highly appreciated!

Shell Chinook Club promotes and provides social and amateur recreational activities and related services for its members.

The club offers a range of benefits and great networking possibilities.

Take a look at www.outpost-calgary.com or call the Chinook Club office at (403) 691 3358

Looking to continue your education?

Are you looking to continue your education or to add a little flavour to your resume?

Mount Royal College and University of Calgary offer Continuing Education courses and certificates.

Take a look at conted.mtroyal.ca or conted.ucalgary.ca to find out what might be of interest to you.

*Recommended by
Hanne Marette*

KLM lands in Calgary

Great news for many expats. From May 3, 2009, KLM starts flying Calgary-Amsterdam.

If you're going to Holland, you no longer have to change your flight on the way, and if you still have connecting flights, you now have an extra option to choose from.

*Recommended by
The Outpost Team*

Enjoy the outdoors with University of Calgary Outdoor Centre

The new 2009 Summer Program Guide is now available, and registration is open for all programs.

So, if you're looking for outdoor activities, University of Calgary Outdoor Centre offers a broad range of sports, activities and skills that will guarantee you a lot of fun.

This is whether you're looking for mountain hikes, climbing, wilderness and safety skills, water activities, wind sports or biking and in-line skating.

The Outdoor Centre also offers youth programs and camps so your kids can make the most of the season.

Take a look at the possibilities and various offerings in the guide available at www.calgaryoutdoorcentre.ca

*Recommended by
Carrie Musetti*

**Calgary
Newcomer's Club**
is a great way to
meet other expatriate
wives and engage in a
broad range of
activities from book
clubs to mother &
toddler activities to
the Great Canadian
Outdoors.

Visit their website
[www.calgary
newcomersclub.com](http://www.calgarynewcomersclub.com)
or call
(403) 245 8993
and leave your name
and number

Do you have trouble with U-turns in Alberta?

Have you wondered whether or not - or at least when - it is legal for you to make a U-turn in the province of Alberta?

Well, I have lived here for over four years and still was not sure. I imagined I could not be the only one so I looked it up, and here it is for you.

Transportation Canada states that U-turns are not allowed:

- On a roadway between intersections.
- Where a sign prohibits making a U-turn.
- At an intersection controlled by a traffic-control signal (lights).
- At an alley intersection.

Now, that covers almost everything. Thus, I think it is safe to assume that, unlike many other areas in the world where U-turns are allowed unless signage indicates otherwise, here in Alberta, U-turns are not allowed in most instances.

Should you decide to disregard these rules, the infraction will cost you two demerit points.

If you wish to get more information on Alberta traffic laws, you may refer to www.transportation.alberta.ca.

Carrie Musetti

Need help with an overseas assignment?

Do you know of anyone who is about to undertake an overseas assignment?

We can help smooth their transition with information about their new posting and announce their arrival to the local Outpost in the new City.

We would like to extend our Outpost services to the Shell Canada staff in Calgary, who are about to undertake an overseas assignment, since we have much experience in bringing people in.

We have information and non-contractual advice to support the employee and their family with before they depart to a new country if they should need it.

If you know of anybody who is about to make this kind of move, we would be grateful if you could let us know. This way we can contact people individually and invite them to visit Outpost to see if we can be of any assistance.

We do maintain a library from several of the Shell locations and can provide people with an inside guide if it is available.

The Outpost Team

Notice Board

Are you our new Outpost colleague?

Janneke has left Calgary and thus also her position as editor of the Career & Development Corner.

We need you!

So, if you have been dreaming about joining the Outpost team, if you like to write, or if you would simply like to assist fellow expat partners finding their way around the job jungle, we're looking for you.

Estimated time needed for the job is about 2 days every quarter.

Send an email to scan-outpost-calgary@shell.com or leave a message on our phone 403-691-4829

WANTED

Hillside Bungalows

If you're looking to go away and spend some days in the Rockies, you might want to check out www.hillsidebungalows.com

Chrissy Church is renting out cabins so you can enjoy a nice getaway. Hillside Bungalow charges \$95 off season and \$150 on season.

Take a look at the website, call Chrissy at 403-762-3408 or email her at chrissy@hillsidebungalows.com

Looking to buy or sell?

Soon you will be able to post and view items on the Outpost website.

Till then, try one of these websites
www.kijiji.ca
www.buysell.com
www.usedcalgary.com

or take a look at the Shell Intranet
<http://Sww.shell.com/ep/epe/staffOffers/>

Visit www.expatswomen.com

ExpatsWomen.com is a site designed to help all women living overseas. Their mission is to inspire your success abroad.

Whether this is your first experience living abroad, you are a long-term expat woman, a repatriate, a researcher, an HR or Relocation Professional looking for expat resources, or someone just dreaming of expat living, this is the place to go look!

The site displays more than 1,000 quality content pages, nearly 800 expat women blogs, more than 200 readers' stories, invaluable country resource pages, interviews with successful expat women, loads of motivational articles and an inspirational monthly newsletter.

Enjoy!



Activities for mums with preschoolers

Are you looking for a temporary job?

Try to contact Kelly Services.

Kelly Services have agreed to look into job applications by Shell spouses favourably.

*Kelly Services
300 5th Avenue SW,
Main floor
Phone: (403) 269-2586
www.kellyservices.com*

Are you aware of the Partner Development Program (PDP)?

Make sure you know what you can gain and what you can claim as an expatriate spouse!

www.outpost-calgary.com

Get involved in the Calgary community with your 0-5 year old!

Our lives as expatriates started when my husband took a position with Shell in The Hague. Having lived there for eight years, we moved in August 2008 to a second posting here in Calgary with our two young children. We arrived knowing from our Canadian friends that life here is very community-based and that to get the most out of our new home, we should jump into community life! It has also really helped us to quickly settle in as a family.

Community groups

March, being Calgary's Community Awareness month, couldn't be a better time to join your local community organisation. These organisations can be really useful when looking for activities to do with your pre-school child.

I belong to both Richmond and South Calgary Community Groups and both offer playgroups for the newborn to +3 age groups. Don't expect all Calgary playgroups to be the same; they can differ in how they are run and what the expectations and emphasis are, but they generally have regular weekly activities, including seasonal crafts, visits from librarians and book/toy sellers, snacks and help practicing good manners!

The morning usually finishes with stories and songs led by the group leader. Sessions are timed around 9:30-11:15. Expect to pay a weekly subscription of \$2-\$5 a week. You may also be expected to take a turn in providing a healthy snack for the whole group once a term.

These groups are a great entry into meeting other Calgary mums and caregivers, who can give you the inside track on vital information such as finding local babysitters and what the local pre-kindergarten groups are like.

Joining your local community group also enables you to join in other activities offered throughout the year and organized in your neighbourhood such as seasonal parties, soccer and ice hockey lessons, as well as hearing about discounts at local businesses.

Calgary Moms meet-up

Another way to make contact with other Calgary Moms with pre-school children is through the Meet-Up website. Both the Calgary Moms Meet-Up and the South Calgary Moms Meet-Up are free to join, and you only pay for the activities you attend. The events range from play dates at members' homes, meet-ups in coffee shops and gyms, walks in local parks to "Mom only" events in restaurants and film theatres.

These websites really do give you lots of ideas on where to take the children and what events are offered in Calgary. There is also a wide range of Moms attending these events and even if you do not meet any kindred spirits, it is a great way of finding out what is available for children in and around Calgary and where all the Calgary Moms hang out!

Zoo and Science Centre

Buy yearly passes to the Zoo and TELUS Museum of Science.

The Zoo not only offers the opportunity to see the animals but also has a great outdoor play park. There are also free story sessions on Thursday mornings for pre-school children as well as special events offered throughout the year such as the Christmas Light Spectacular and Easter Egg Hunt.

*Looking for a job,
a change in career,
or good advice?*

*Take a look at
the Career & Develop-
ment Corner in
previous newsletters
available at
[www.outpost-
calgary.com](http://www.outpost-
calgary.com)*

*This will help you get
information about
networking, writing a
resume, tips on job
fairs, and much more.*

The TELUS Science Centre has a changing events programme throughout the year and has an interactive discovery room for young children.

Both these passes will also entitle you to admission to the Zoo and TELUS Science Museum in Edmonton; a must if you are visiting the city. For both places local Moms will recommend that you take your own food and drink to enjoy as a picnic, since food choices are fairly limited in the restaurants (though your kids may not complain!).

Calgary libraries

Various resources are available to the pre-school children and their mums at the 12 Calgary public libraries. The kids' areas are bright and well-resourced, complete with kid-friendly computers.

The cost of joining the library is \$12 for adults and free for children under the age of 12. This entitles you to borrow books from any of the locations (and you can drop returned books at a different location from where it was borrowed). All the libraries offer a variety of courses for younger children and their parents. Pick up the most recent course brochures and go online to book up a few sessions.

Plan ahead; you need to be quick on the draw to register for these sessions... they are very popular and can become fully booked within half an hour of the sign-up opening. Themes range from story and finger play sessions, seasonal events like Easter and St. Patrick's Day, to video and craft events with outside agencies visiting to add an extra special flavour to that book event.

Whilst in the library remember to pick up your free copy of Calgary's Child and Calgary's Child Family Guide. These are great resources on events offered across the city to children of all ages.

Homecare

Lastly, if you do need a real break from your pre-school child, do look into homecare options in your local neighbourhood. Most of this kind of day-care is run out of peoples' homes, but this certainly does not mean the kids are not well cared for. (For more information about how these professionals are registered please refer to your Shell relocation brochure.)

They do a lot of activities with the children from visits to local playgroups and parks to going to the zoo and museums in Calgary. One home care mum I have heard about even has a Dutch style bike in which she sits her six daycare kids and rides them around the city. Another has a bouncy castle in her basement for the kids to jump off all their excess energy on days when they have to stay indoors.

These groups are smaller than the traditional daycare centres, but your child will still be given the chance to mix with other kids of the same age. Sometimes, the home care mums will also take your school age children during vacations, if there are spaces.

I have been living in my local community for five months with my two children of 3 and 5. The months have flown by, and it will soon be time to say hello to the local school community and the busy days of full-time kindergarten, but that is another article!

