

Alberta Newsletter
Outpost
OUTPOST EXPATRIATE NETWORK

Dear Shell Community,

Welcome to the May Outpost Calgary Newsletter.

I would like to begin this newsletter by sharing with you some Outpost Calgary Team news.

The first is that Veronica Viruega has joined the Outpost Calgary Team as our Career & Development Advisor. Veronica is an engineer who found herself working closely with HR teams. A special area of interest for her is to help people to manage change by developing new skills and to discovering new opportunity areas.

We are delighted to have her on the team, and we are busy putting together ideas and plans for C&D activities.

We will be kicking off very soon with a workshop "**Expatriate life – a chance to grow**". The workshop takes place on May 12. See more details inside the newsletter.

Regina Stegenga has also joined the team and is working with Hanne on the website. She will be taking over as Webmaster in the late summer when Hanne moves on.

The Team has said goodbye to Cheryl Lindeboom, who is busy with new projects. Thank you Cheryl for your contribution, and all the best for your new venture.

Over the summer, we will also be saying goodbye to Clare Snow, our Volunteering Coordinator. If you are interested in helping to develop links between Outpost Calgary and various charities, we would love to hear from you.

We are also looking for welcomers and volunteers to help organize Outpost events.

As ever, if you have any news, feedback or suggestions, please do let us hear them. You can phone or e-mail the office or pass on the ideas in person at one of our Coffee mornings.

Happy Reading!

Nicky Turner

Editor: Hanne Maretti

Contributions:

Nicky Turner
Veronica Viruega
Regina Stegenga
Paula Middendorp
Karin Millson
Hanne Maretti

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 14.

Do you want to be a part of the Outpost Team?

We are looking for welcomers and volunteers to help organize Outpost events, and we are looking for a new Volunteer Coordinator who can help create contact between Outpost Calgary and various charities. Come join us!

Expat Life, a chance to grow

*Join Outpost for a workshop about your
Career & Development Opportunities in Calgary!*

I am Veronica Viruega and, like you, I am in Canada following my partner's career.

As me, you may find that living in another country is quite a challenge, from settling to adjusting to lots of changes: culture, language, products, education system, weather, you name it!... It requires such an effort!

In my experience, after a decade working at the energy sector and gaining HR experience through divestment processes (change management, HR strategic planning and new skills development...) and being in contact with many expats, I still find that the professional question which torments so many of us accompanying expatriate partners on a posting is: "what do you do"?

But the question that most of us may find even more daunting is the one we ask ourselves, when house, children and lots of miscellaneous arrangements have been completed..."What do I want to do now???"

Does this sound familiar to you?

If so, whatever your situation is, my suggestion is the same: enjoy the experience and give yourself the opportunity to grow!

At this very moment, you might be enjoying a break from work, and you may want to combine your children's care with visiting the surroundings. You can develop new skills, complete post-secondary studies, embark on new studies, or just simply help others support a non-profit organisation. You may even want to get a paid job or work on developing your own business.

If you can identify with either of these thoughts, join us for our workshop "**Expat Life – a chance to grow**". The workshop takes place on Wednesday, May 12th, from 9.30am – 12.30am. Please contact the Outpost office for details and to sign up.

It will be an excellent opportunity for you to help you find your focus, to get into something new, or simply to share your experiences with others.

Veronica Viruega

Outpost Calgary Career & Development Workshop!

Come and join us for our "Expat Life - a chance to grow" workshop where Veronica Viruega will talk about the opportunities that exist for expat spouses - as well as the pitfalls that you want to be aware of.

Wednesday, May 12, from 9.30am to 11.30am

Contact us at the office for more details and to sign up for the event at scan-outpost-calgary@shell.com

We look forward to seeing you!

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!

Notice Board

Congratulations to our New Arrivals Michael, Annette and young Julius, on a new arrival of their own!

Baby-girl Caroline Victoria arrived on April 21st at the Foothills Hospital Maternity Unit.

Caroline weighed in at 3007 g and has a fine strong voice!

Congratulations to the family – What a start to your posting!

LiveInCalgary.com

LiveInCalgary.com is a website to support people considering a move to the Calgary region as well as longtime Calgarians. The website contains information about post-secondary opportunities, neighbourhood and lifestyle information as well as links to local job boards.

Find the website at liveincalgary.com from Calgary Economic Development

Looking to buy or sell?

If you haven't found what you're looking for or sold what you wanted at Outpost, take a look at:

www.kijiji.ca
www.buysell.com
www.usedcalgary.com

Items for sale - expat moving overseas!

2009 Toyota Highlander Sport (with superior suspension), 27000 Km in excellent condition. The car is fully Loaded - including Navigation Package, V6 engine, AWD, seats 8, heated leather seats, dual air control, sunroof etc. Winter tires included. The price is \$41,000 (negotiable)



Samsung LN46A750 **46" LCD HDTV**, Pace TDC776D **HD-DVR** (Shaw PVR) and high quality **stand**. The price is \$1500

Breakfast table in excellent condition, six (6) chairs, removable leaf. The price is \$500



"TuffStuff" Olympic class weight bench, including weight rack, leg developer attachment, preacher curl attachment, over 250 pounds weight, standard bar, adjustable dumbbells w/ 55 pounds weight, euro dumbbells: 22 ½ and 42 ½ pound pairs. The price is \$400

Call Ryan at (403) 691-3976

But what about the dog...?

Many of us will not go on an assignment where the pet cannot go, and thus the dog or cat comes along. We look into the import rules, find a house or an apartment where pets are allowed, and we look into the great off-leash areas our base city has to offer. At least so did we...

Being the lucky owners of two happy-go-lucky dogs, there was no discussion of whether to bring them to Canada - and it was no trouble getting them imported. The trouble began when we first decided to make use of our travel budget, because... what about the dogs?

We looked into many kennels. However, as the dogs are not fixed, that proved most difficult. We did visit some kennels that would take them - and we left again pretty quickly, because we did not feel confident about the accommodations.

Our solution was Pet à la Mode, whom we decided to try out since we were out of ideas. That turned out to be the best decision we could have ever made!

Caroline, the owner of Pet à la Mode, had a good handle on the dogs - a large breed and a giant breed - from the start, proving to us that we should make use of our travel budget and leave the dogs in her care.

Since we started using Caroline, we have had no concerns about the occasional getaway - except to confirm the dates with her before booking our plane tickets!

We have used her to walk the dogs on days where our schedule just didn't leave room for them, we have used her for in-house sitting for short and longer trips (with the added benefit of having someone to look after the house, the mail, water the plants, etc), and the dogs have truly bonded with her whether on single walks, off-leash or on-leash group walks.

We would have never been able to enjoy our travels if we had not been able to find someone that we could trust completely.

So, if you are thinking of going somewhere where your pet cannot join you - or if you are looking for someone to walk your dog during the day - Caroline and Pet à la Mode comes with my highest recommendations!

Hanne Marette

What do you recommend?

What have you done, read, seen or experienced that might be of interest to others?

Let us know and we will share your thoughts with the expat community!

Pet a la Mode - dog walking and pet services!

Pet à la Mode is simply the best dog walking and pet services company in Calgary! We offer physical and mental stimulation to dogs as well as excellent support service to our customers. We are personal, professional, and playful!



We believe that dogs are fulfilled with exercise, discipline and affection, and use affection to praise dogs for their good behaviour.

We offer on-leash private walks for under socialized dogs, on-leash group walks to socialize dogs, off-leash group walks for happy, graduated on-leash, or balanced dogs as well as and in-house sitting for all pets with love and cuddles.

Visit www.petalamode.com or call 403 771 4962 to book a free consultation

Volunteer Spot

The CPAA is looking for volunteers!

It's Gala Time Again! Shine up your shoes, put your party hat on and come help us throw an event to remember.

The CPAA 2010 Gala will be held on May 7 at the Deerfoot Inn and Casino. Volunteers will be needed for a variety of roles including set up, security, silent and live auction assistance and help with take down.

Vacation Villa Connections! Did you know that the CPAA has a custom-built fully accessible vacation villa available for rent? We are looking for someone to help spread the word. This position involves calling various locations in Calgary to place villa posters and brochures. Onsite support and training is provided as well as a script and contact list. Vacation Villa Connections is a 5-10 hour time commitment done at your convenience. Our office is located at 3688 48 Avenue NE.

Disability Funding Researcher! A volunteer is needed to research and review potential funding sources for people with disabilities in the Calgary region. This information will be passed on to members in need of financial assistance.

This is a great volunteer opportunity for someone wishing to work from home. Applicants must be computer literate and have strong research skills. This project is expected to take 10-15 hours.

Graphic Designer Wanted! If you are looking for a great cause to lend your graphic design skills to, the Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta is the place for you.

Volunteers will work with the Communications and Marketing Coordinator on a number of challenging and interesting assignments. The time commitment is task-oriented, but generally around 2-3 hours per week.

Adaptive Swimming Assistant! The Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta is offering an Adapted Aquatics program for its members. Friendly volunteers are needed to assist adult swimmers with a wide range of disabilities as they learn new swimming skills.

The program will run Tuesdays from 3pm-4pm at Westside Recreation Centre. The tentative start date is May 4, 2010.

Brains, Brawn and Banners! May is Cerebral Palsy Month and the Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta needs help placing banners in Calgary.

Two large banners will be going up on Sunday, May 16 and taken down on Saturday, May 29. Volunteers must be available for 2-3 hours on these days and be able to help lift and secure the banners onto bridges.

For more information or to sign up please contact
Natasha Gleiser, Volunteer and Events Coordinator, at phone (403) 219-3610

Are you a volunteer?

If you know of an organization that seeks volunteers that you would like to recommend, let us know and we will advertise it in the next issue of the Outpost newsletter.

Volunteering in Calgary: an experience

My family and I arrived in Calgary from an assignment in Denmark. After the initial business of settling in and establishing our daughter in kindergarten, my thoughts turned to finding something for myself. I had hoped to find work with a financial background and no language barrier. The language barrier in Denmark was a major hurdle to getting a job, but in the end I was lucky enough to get some contract work with Shell.

Working transformed my expatriation experience. So, I was keen to do something in Calgary. However, arriving in January 2009 in the depths of recession, though handy for finding a house to rent, was not optimum for getting a job, especially without Canadian qualifications, references, etc...

I noticed from reading the Calgary Herald that there was a lot of coverage related to volunteer work and charities. So, I thought rather than focus on getting a job, I would look to do some volunteer work – the benefits covering many fronts, including work experience, building a network, to act as a reference, to meet people and do something useful.

As with many things in life, the idea is easy, but then where to start? The internet... I quickly came across www.volunteercalgary.ab.ca Naively, I thought that it would be a quick and easy process, after all I was offering to work for free. The procedure was akin to applying for a job, application form, interview, and waiting for the phone call... After some searching, I applied for two positions that I found via the Volunteer Calgary website. The first position was directly linked to my area of work as financial accountant and the second with a cat shelter.

The process seemed to last forever for the finance job with UeND, and I had all but given up when I got a phone call that they wanted me. For MEOW (the cat shelter), it was much quicker, though I did have to go to be checked out and interviewed before being offered the role of spending a morning once week cleaning 50 cat litters! Though for a cat lover the benefits are obvious.

UeND (formerly ChristmasFuture) was launched to help inspire and empower North Americans to refocus a portion of their gift, giving budget towards strategic and sustainable projects in the developing world - to help end extreme poverty. Since I got the job, my role has been to help them with their books – initially, the idea was that I could do this from home and also have the option to do the work from one of the board member's office.

This has been great since I also get to meet the people from the business and the charity. The bookkeeping work feels like a job – with its ups and downs – missing invoices, messy paperwork, and all the normal headaches of administering books for a small company. However, I have to remind myself of why I am doing it: to build experience and my network, and for the people to whom the money flows to..

The MEOW Foundation in Calgary is a humane society with a no-kill mandate. They facilitate the adoption of the stray and abandoned cats that are rescued into new loving, permanent homes. For me, this compensates for the fact that we decided to leave our cat behind with relatives in UK, and that our current rental agreement prevents us having a pet. The cat work is a real pleasure, and something I would try to keep even if I got a full time job.

You can find out more about the organizations and maybe get inspired to start or expand your volunteer work at www.uend.org and www.meowfoundation.com

Regina Stegenga

Are you familiar with the
**Partner Development
Program (PDP)?**

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

Find more info:
www.outpostcalgary.com

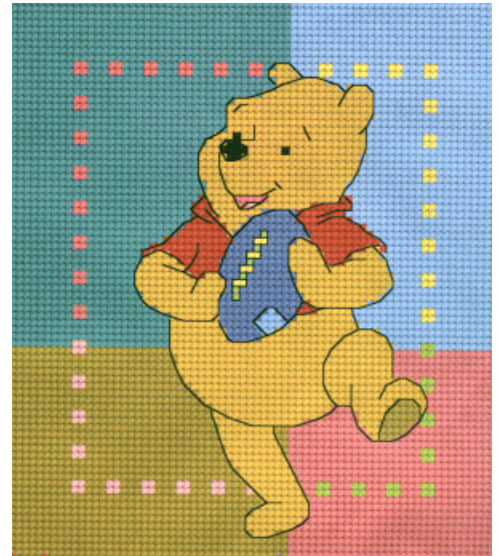
The Calgary Stickers

As in many places in the world, so too in Calgary: A group of women comes together on a weekly basis to enjoy each other's company, while sharing an interest in thread, stitches, fabric, silk, wool, and each other.

Approximately two years ago, Jan Clayton moved from The Middle East to Calgary and because of her pleasant experiences with the stitchers' group that existed in Oman, she started looking for others who shared her interests.

Soon, 'The Calgary Stitchers' was formed.

At the moment we are a group of eight women with internationally diverse backgrounds and varied expatriate and stitching experiences.



Source: layoutsparks.com

Some of us quilt, some enjoy cross stitch, others work with wool or silk, and one even uses plastic and metal (sometimes!). Both traditional and contemporary approaches are enjoyed and supported.

We meet every Wednesday morning in each other's houses. This is a group where the emphasis is on enjoying each other's company and knowledge of the crafts we do, as well as the lives we lead, and although we do have a cup of coffee or tea, that is not the focus of the meeting.

We would like to further develop our knowledge and experience with textiles. To this end, the group also arranges occasional visits to galleries downtown. Recently, we visited Untitled Arts Society and the Epcor Centre Windows. Karin, one of our members, had some of her work exhibited in the latter. Next week we will attend the Canadian Quilt Show in Calgary.



Source: about.com

Once a month Karin also offers us a fabric dying workshop in her studio, which is a great way to explore new terrain for many of us!

If you are interested in these workshops, feel free to contact Karin directly.

Joining the group is a great way to meet other women when you are new to Calgary, and it allows you to share your love of your hobby. It also widens your interests and knowledge.

In the last months, some women have left the group due to re-assignment and some newcomers have joined. If you are interested in stitches, one way or another, and are also interested in sharing that interest with a group, please feel free to make contact and check us out.

Paula Middendorp (403-764-9797)
and Karin Millson (403- 453 1823)

Calgary

Newcomers Club

is the way to meet other expat wives and engage in a broad range of fun and interesting activities.

Visit: www.calgarynewcomersclub.com or call 403-245-8993 and leave your name and number.

Shell Chinook Club

gives you social and amateur recreational activities and services for its members.

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

Reach the Chinook Club office at: 403-691-3358

Upcoming Events

April 30: Outpost coffee morning at Ann's from 10.00am - 12.00noon.
Please RSVP directly to Ann

May 8: The Calgary Farmers' Market invite moms to come to enjoy a **free five-minute massage** from 10am - 3pm at the second floor atrium. While you wait, enjoy some fabulous tea, and nibble on delicious treats from our vendors.

May 12: Outpost Calgary Career & Development Workshop "**Expat life, A chance to grow**" from 9.30 - 11.30am. Please contact Outpost Calgary for details and to sign up at email scan-outpost-calgary@shell.com

May 22: The Calgary Farmers' Market offera a **free soap-making class**, hosted by Patsy Clark of Patsy Clark Ostrich Farm. The one hour class will show you the tricks to making soap at home and each participant will get a bar of soap to take with them. Space for this class is limited so register ASAP by emailing info@calgaryfarmersmarket.ca

May 28: Miranda has kindly offered to host a **Outpost Pot Luck Lunch** from 11.00am - 1.00pm. Children are welcome, though the house is not child proof and toys are thus required.

Welcomes & Goodbyes

We would like to **welcome:**

Michael and Annette
Jeronimo and Christina
Abi
Jean
Tim and Ginny
Jose Rincon and Elaine
Shailendra and Madhu
Sean and Gwen

to Calgary!

At the same time, we say **goodbye** to:

Felix and Yumaris
Germen and Karen
Jonathan and Yvette
Erik and Jennifer
Carson and Linda
Mariam

Allan and Ave
James and Trina
Bob
Francis and Janet
Ryan and Mone
Joseph and Anne

We wish you all the best of luck on your new adventures!

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