

The ESL News for February 15, 2016

Story #1 Best Valentine's Gift Ever

Christian Willenberg, of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, gave his fiancé the best Valentine's gift. It was a gift that can save her life.

Christian Willenberg met Errin Tollefson 5 years ago. After a few dates, Errin told Christian that she was on kidney dialysis and needed a donor kidney. Her father had wanted to give her a kidney, but he died of cancer a few years ago.

The first time Christian saw Errin get sick from an infection he decided to help her. He secretly got tested to see to see if he was suitable to be a donor. Not only was his kidney compatible, it was a perfect match. It is rare for two people that are not family to be a perfect match.

After he found out his kidney was compatible, he bought an engagement ring. Christian asked Errin to marry him. When she said yes, he gave her the ring and told her he was also giving her a kidney.

The surgery happened on February 4th. Errin is still recovering in hospital, and Christian is by her side.

They are now planning a wedding for August. Christian will be sharing his life as well as his kidney with her.

Story #2 Winterruption 2016 on Granville Island

This weekend, Friday to Sunday, February 19th to 21st, is Winterruption, a winter festival on Granville Island. There are many events, indoor and outdoor activities, art exhibitions and crafts. There are films, music, dance and theatre performances. Some events are free and others you need to buy tickets for.

There are free craft, music and dance events for children and families. Most of these events are at the Kids Zone and its Picnic Pavilion. Asa Branco Street Band Brazilian music will get you dancing Saturday and Sunday, at 10:30 and 12:00. Dance to African music with Jacky Essombe, Saturday and Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Also Cuadro Flamenco, Spanish music and dancing, happens Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Back to Basics with Soul Project, 4 styles of street dance: Breaking, Popping, Locking and Hip Hop, is at 11:00 on Saturday and 11:45 on Sunday. Make puppets at a puppet-making workshop on Saturday and Sunday from 10:30 to 4:30 also at the Picnic Pavilion at the Kids Zone.

There are kids activities at other locations too. Join playtime in a free drop-in of Parent and Tot Gym - toys and a bouncy castle at False Creek community Centre 9:30-12:00 noon on Sunday. Friday to Sunday, make beautiful watercolour snowflakes at the Federation of Canadian Artists 10:00 -3:00 or create colourful creatures at Make 11:00-4:00.

Go to www.granvilleisland.com/winterruption for more information.

Story #3 Change Language Requirements for Canadian Citizenship

Several B.C. MPs (Members of Parliament) want the federal government to change some restrictions on the English or French language proficiency test that immigrants must pass to become Canadian citizens.

In 2014, the Conservative government, under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, passed Bill C-24. The bill made the language test more difficult. It also increased the age range of people required to take the test from 55 to 65 years old.

NDP MP for Vancouver-East, Jenny Kwan, says this language proficiency test is hard to pass and prevents some hardworking immigrants from becoming Canadian citizens. Some people have tried the test 3 or 4 times and not passed even though they studied hard. She says her mother would not have passed the test, but she still learned enough English to get a job and work until she was 65.

Sukh Dhaliwal, Liberal MP for Surrey Newton, says the language proficiency test is good because it encourages young immigrants to learn English or French. But, he doesn't think elderly immigrants should have to take the test. They may have trouble passing the test, despite living and working in Canada for many years. He wants the age range for the test changed back to 55.

Story #4 Gravitational Waves have been Detected

LIGO, (Laser Interferometer Gravitational –Wave Observatory Project) in the U.S., announced that gravitational waves have been detected. A merger of two black holes caused these gravitational waves. 1.3 billion light-years away from Earth, the two black holes that were spinning around each other joined together and became one black hole. This event gave off an enormous amount of energy that was carried away by the gravitational waves and caused ripples in the fabric of space-time.

The fact that these gravitational waves exist confirms many theories about black holes and the universe and opens up the possibilities for new scientific discoveries in space.

Story #5 Canadian Women's Soccer Team Move to the Semi-Finals

The Canadian Women's Soccer Team at the CONCACAF Women's Olympic Qualifying Championship in Houston, Texas beat Trinidad and Tobago 6-0 on Sunday. This moves Canada to the semi-finals next Friday. A win on Friday means Canada's Women's soccer team will qualify to play at the 2016 Rio Olympics. The team also plays Guatemala on Tuesday.

It was a special game for Captain Christine Sinclair as she scored her 159th international goal making her second on the all-time international scoring list.