

ESL News for January 25, 2016

Local news

Story #1 Dine Out Vancouver is Canada's largest food and drink festival. It began 14 years ago and has grown every year since. Over 100,000 people a year dine at 288 different restaurants which offer special prices. From January 15 – 31, the restaurants are serving fixed-price menus at affordable prices. The menus feature three-course meals for \$20, \$30, and \$40.

This year also includes a collection of [events](#) designed for foodies, including cocktail classes, live performances, brunch crawls, and beer tastings.

Restaurants range from small eateries to internationally known dining spots. Courses are often matched with BC wine pairings from British Columbia's best wineries.

You can also enter a contest by submitting your photos and videos on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. Hans Choi of Vancouver won 52 Restaurant Gift Certificates, a value of \$3900, in 2015!

You can see beautiful dine out food, read stories and get more information at these websites: <http://www.dineoutvancouver.com/> , <http://social.dineoutvancouver.com/>

Story #2 Recycling changes are happening in Vancouver. Presently, we sort our glass, cans, and plastic in a blue box. However, glass can break easily during collection. When broken glass mixes with plastic, metal and paper containers, it becomes difficult to sort and properly recycle all of these materials.

From January, the City of Vancouver will be delivering "Grey Boxes", special containers for recycling glass bottles and jars. To look up your glass delivery date, visit www.vancouver.ca/recycle .

Here at Vancouver Community College (VCC) we are starting our own new recycling initiative. What do you do with pencils or pens that don't work anymore? Most people throw them in the trash. Did you know that writing instruments such as felt pens, pencils and markers are recyclable? A company called TerraCycle has joined with another company called Staples in a recycling program for writing instruments. TerraCycle Canada will send the depleted writing instruments for recycling into items like park benches, waste bins and more. Staples collects the items for pickup. Look for a recycling container near your classroom or drop off your used items at Staples.

For more information visit www.terracycle.ca/en-CA/brigades/writing-instrument-brigade .



<https://www.terracycle.ca/en-CA/brigades/writing-instrument-retail-based-brigade.html>



Staples Brigade accepted waste:

1. Any brand of pens and pen caps
2. Any brand of mechanical pencils
3. Any brand of markers and marker caps
4. Any brand of highlighters and highlighter caps
5. Any brand of permanent markers and permanent marker caps

Canada

Story # 3 January 27 is Family Literacy Day. It was created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999. ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that wants to increase reading skills. The organization connects business, unions, government, communities and individuals to support lifelong learning through various programs, and partnerships.

Family literacy programs want parents to improve the reading and writing skills of all family members. By reading to children and joining in fun literacy activities, parents are actively keeping their own skills sharp while at the same time strengthening the relationship between the family which encourages lifelong learning.

Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is important to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's reading skills amazingly, and can help a parent improve their skills as well.

Here are suggestions for "15 Minutes of Fun" from their website. (<http://abclifeliteracy.ca>)

Lights out, talk on:

After your bedtime story, turn the lights off and talk about new endings to the story you just read together.

Surfing Snacks:

Go online together to find out how your favorite foods are made. Are they something you can make together at home?

Find ABC:

Have an alphabet scavenger hunt to look for things that begin with each letter of the alphabet.

Let's go Shopping:

Have kids write the family grocery list out themselves. Let them check each item off the list. (Hmm, wonder how chocolate got on the list...)

International

Story #4 Vancouver enjoyed the warm temperatures of a "pineapple express" weather system over the weekend. It brought rain and temperatures of 10-12 C. The historical daily average for this time of year is only 5 C.

Meanwhile, the eastern US and Canada were hit by a severe storm system. The wind and snow caused the cancelation of thousands of flights. Government offices and schools closed. Even entertainment events were shut down. New York City mayor, Andrew Cuomo, issued a travel ban. Nothing was moving except emergency vehicles. The police asked people to stay home, so residents hurried to supermarkets. Store shelves emptied quickly as people stocked up on food supplies.

Washington D.C. was the hardest hit. Winds of 80 km/hr along with the snow created blizzard conditions. Ten US states declared states of emergency. In the end, New York and

Washington received up to 1 metre of snow. That's three feet! It was more snow than residents had ever seen. Twenty people died in weather related events including car crashes, shovelling snow and hypothermia.

Story #5 Health officials in South and Central American countries and Jamaica are worried about a new virus called Zika. In Brazil, the Zika virus was linked to microcephaly — babies born with abnormally small heads and underdeveloped brains.

Now, they also link it to a condition that can cause paralysis - Guillain-Barre syndrome.

Canadian and American health officials say pregnant women and women trying to get pregnant should postpone travel to areas where the virus is found.

Officials in the affected countries are so concerned they are advising women not to get pregnant. Brazil will fund a vaccine to protect against the virus.

Canadian officials say no Canadians have been affected, but Britain reported three travelers with the virus this week.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says there are 22 countries and regions to avoid including Barbados, Bolivia, Ecuador, Columbia, El Salvador, Brazil, and Jamaica. About 80 per cent of those infected have no symptoms. The virus is spread by day-time mosquitoes. It can cause fever, rash, joint pain and red eyes.

Story #6 A magnitude-7.1 earthquake hit southern Alaska early Sunday morning. The earthquake struck about 1:30 a.m. Alaska time and was centred 250 kilometres southwest of Anchorage, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The violent shaking woke up reporter Mark Thiessen, who had been asleep for about two hours when the quake struck.

"I remember the bed swaying back and forth, and loud noises, enough to wake me up even after taking sleeping pills," said Thiessen, 53. "My husband came into the bedroom forcefully saying, 'Get up! Get up!' " he said. "But I was already awake, trying to figure out what was happening."

In the community of Kenai, located on the Kenai Peninsula, four homes were destroyed and an entire neighbourhood had to be evacuated after a gas leak was reported, Kenai police Chief Gus Sandahl said Sunday morning.

"No injuries. Thank God," he said. "There was a major explosion. We're fortunate that no one was hurt."

Crews were still trying to resolve the gas issue nearly eight hours after the earthquake. A shelter was set up for the 20 people displaced by the destroyed homes.