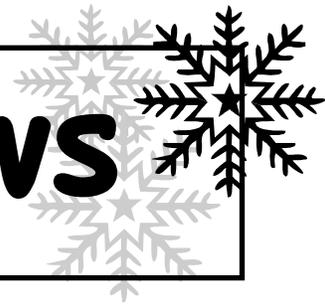




News & Views

A Newsletter for Families at the University of Victoria



December 2009
Issue 147

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NEWSLETTER

EMMA CHALIFOUR

Family Centre Hours

Tuesdays

9am-5pm

Playgroup
10:00am-12noon
After School Club
3:20pm-5pm

Wednesdays

10am-2pm

Playgroup
10:00am-12noon

Thursdays

1-3pm

Culture Club
1pm-3pm

Fridays

10am-12noon

Playgroup
10am-12noon

Eating Together

Emma Chalifour

For many December is a month of celebration, people all over the world, from many different faiths, will be celebrating this month. A common element seems to be that of gathering together with friends and family to feast on special holiday foods. Eating together is one of the ways we connect and share community.

Eating together can also be one of the ways that families spend time together all year round. For many families it is often the only time that everyone is in the same place at the same time. According to the BC Council for Families, this simple activity has been shown to have lasting benefits for family members, including mental wellness, prevention of risky behaviours, healthy eating habits and closer family relationships.

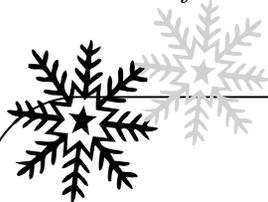


Better Eat Together, a study from the BC Dairy Foundation, found that 80% of parents rank eating dinner together with children as one of the most important or a very important activity they do with children. "Parents and children are more emotionally fit when they eat meals together." says John Rosemond, MD Family Psychologist, one of the sources consulted in the study.

The National Center on Addiction & Substance Abuse at Columbia University found several preventative benefits to family meals in **The Importance of Family Dinners V**. Children and teens who had five or more family dinners per week, compared to kids who had less than three, were:

- At 70% lower risk for substance abuse.
- Half as likely to try cigarettes.
- One third less likely to try alcohol.
- Likeleir to get better grades in school.

For more information look at the BC Council for Families website: www.bccf.ca



A Winter Celebration!



The Family Centre would like to extend an invitation. We would love to have you join us for a hot drink and a snack before you head into the winter break. Join us for some family craft activities and the opening of the new 'Quiet Room'!

Time: 4:30-6:30pm

Place: The Family Centre



The grand opening of the quiet room will take place at 5:30pm.

We look forward to seeing you there! If you have any questions regarding this event please give us a call at 250-472-4062.

Thank You!

Have you noticed the many parents and children wearing matching hats amongst UVic families? We have Karen McIvor to thank!

Each year she creates a bag load of coordinating hats for parents and their children. It is always an exciting day when we get to try on her beautiful creations - not to mention how cute everyone looks! Thank you so much Karen for all your hard work.



Kristine and Maeve Mannion

Changes at the Family Centre

This is proving to be a season of change for the Family Centre. Dana Sibley, who has been the Youth and Family Programmer at the Family Centre since May 2008 has a new job at Shoreline Middle School as a counsellor. Although she will still be running the After School Program we will not get to see her around as much, she will be greatly missed! Dana spent one year with the Family Centre as a practicum student from the School of Child and Youth Care and we were pleased to have her continue on as a staff member for the following year. Dana has added much to our staff team with her enthusiasm and warm, welcoming professional manner with both adults and children. Her many connections in the local community have expanded the Family Centre's ability to reach out to student families. We wish Dana all the best in her new job.

Emma Chalifour will be transitioning into Dana's position. Emma is no stranger to the Family Centre. Emma and her family lived 'down-the-hall' (literally!) for three years. Emma's husband graduated from the Education program this summer and therefore they moved out of Family Housing. Emma has been a member of the Family Centre's Advisory Committee since January 2008. She has also been the editor of NEWS & VIEWS since May 2008. Emma and her husband have two children aged four and two.

Since Emma is moving into a new position she will no longer be the editor of the newsletter. She is being replaced by Kristine Mannion (the lady who last month shared her life lessons learnt from the fruit fly). Kristine, and her husband Steve, have lived in Family Housing since July 2008. Steve is studying for his Masters in Music. They have two children, Connor who is three, and Maeve who is six months. (Maeve is pictured above with Kristine in their matching hats.) We look forward to more of Kristine's insights and creativity in future issues of News & Views.

Lastly, we have to say goodbye to Nuran Nahar. Nuran has been running Culture Club this year. She is returning to Bangladesh. Thank you Nuran for all your work with Culture Club, we wish you a safe journey home.

Remembrance Day

The following poems were written by members of the University of Victoria Family Centre's After School Club. We gathered on November 10th to learn about the history of Remembrance Day and it's symbols. We talked about our experiences with war and shared stories of people we knew who were affected by wars. We decided to share our feelings about War, Peace and Remembrance Day.



"The Quiet Room"

The Family Centre is thrilled to announce that the back room has been transformed from a storage room to a sanctuary of peace and calm! This room will be the place for people to go and read or simply enjoy some quiet. It is comfortably furnished and will soon be ready for you to enjoy. The room will be 'unveiled' at our Winter Celebration on Wednesday December 16th.



Vikes Recreation

Vikes recreation has programs for adults & children. Registration for Winter 2010 programs begins Monday November 30th. Please check the website for more information & registration at:

www.vikesrec.uvic.ca

Christmas Bureau Hampers



Are you in need of a helping hand this holiday season? If so, please fill out an application form and mail it in or drop it of at the address listed. Application forms are available from the bulletin board outside the Family Centre, or can be downloaded from CFax1070's website (go to 'Santa's Anonymous' and look in the FAQ's section.

The deadline for applications is December 4th.

Eid al-Adha is here

Eid al-Adha "Festival of Sacrifice" or "Greater Eid" is a holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide to commemorate the willingness of [Ibrahim](#) to sacrifice his son [Ismael](#) as an act of obedience to God. Satisfied with Ibrahim's devotion, God kindly and mercifully sent a sheep at the last second, and it was slaughtered instead. Muslims, who can afford, re-enact this scene by slaughtering sheep, camels or cows of their own. One third of the meat is donated to the poor, one third is given to friends, neighbours and relatives, while one third is kept by the person who offered the sacrifice for use within his or her own family members. This act symbolizes Muslims' willingness to give up things that are of benefit to themselves or close to their hearts. It also symbolizes their willingness to give up some of their own bounties, in order to strengthen ties of friendship and help those who are in need.

Eid al-Adha is the latter of two Eid festivals celebrated by millions of Muslims all over the world. The festival lasts for three days or more depending on the country. Eid al-Adha occurs approximately 70 days after the end of the month of Ramadan. This year, Eid al-Adha will begin on November 27th, 2009.

Before Eid, it is so exciting for everyone in the family specially kids since they start to think of gifts, presents, and new outfits their parents prepare for them. Eid is a happy time which is marked by new outfits, gatherings, short prayers followed by sermon, going out, visits to family and friends, gifts to children, and of course by lots of food.

Eid Mubarak...!! (wish you a happy Eid)
Abeer Heikal



Miki's Corner

The theme for the month of November has been Bears, which ended on the 27th with "Teddy Bear Day". The children seemed to have enjoyed the bear songs, finger plays, movement, and Teddy Bear snacks.

As we all know, children learn through repetition, consequently they are joining in and singing some of the familiar songs that we repeat each week. Children also need to have predictability in their lives and again this is apparent at snack and circle times. If I don't get over to the table soon enough some of the children will start to sing the "Hungry, Hungry" song on their own. They also know that "Holding Hands With Friends", comes after the "Greeting" song, so they automatically all stand up and reach for a neighbours hand. We have some very enthusiastic strong singers during our circle times, which is wonderful to hear.

During the month of December I will introduce Nursery Rhymes and some gentle Fairy Tales. December is a busy month for most families, getting reading for various seasonal celebrations. I want to wish you all Happy Holidays and a joy filled New Year.



Free to a good home!

The Family Centre has a large container of 'Mega Blocks' to give away. These are building blocks suitable for toddlers and preschoolers. If you would like to have them please phone or email us. If more than one family is interested we will draw a name.

Phone 250-472-4062 or familyc@uvic.ca.

YOU BRING THE FOOD, WE'LL WAIVE THE FINES

Food Banks Canada just announced the largest year-over-year increase in food bank use since 1997. In time for the holiday season, the University of Victoria will be making a 'gift' of library and parking fines to help fill food bank shelves.

UVic Libraries "Food for Fines" program runs Monday, Nov. 23 through Friday, Dec. 11 and is a nationwide food bank drive. For each non-perishable food item donated, UVic library users will have \$2 waived from their library fines, up to a maximum of \$20. Donations will go to the Mustard Seed and the UVic Students' Society Food Bank and can be dropped off at the McPherson Library (Mearns Centre for Learning) as well as the Curriculum Library in the MacLaurin Building during regular library hours.

UVic's Campus Security Services (CSS) is also spreading some early holiday cheer by reducing parking ticket fines by \$5 for a donation of a non-perishable food item. The offer is good from Tuesday, Dec. 1 through Friday, Dec. 24. Bring your parking ticket and food donation to CSS during regular office hours.



Programs and Events

A great way to get connected!



Playgroups:

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings the Family Centre hosts fun and energetic playgroups. Tuesday mornings from 10:00-12 features a popular music and movement program. Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10:00-12 are more of a crafts time, relaxed with toys, games, and friends for the kids to play with. Wednesday and Friday morning end with a ten minute circle time.

After School Club:

Tuesdays from 3:20 – 5pm. The After School Club is a great place to meet other kids whose parents are UVic students and enjoy some fun and games.

December 1st ~ Goodbye party for Cindy and Lauren.

December 8th ~ Gift making.

December 15th ~ Electronic Games Day.

We are always looking for new ideas for the After School Club so if any adults or older teens have a talent or expertise they would like to share with this group please Call or e-mail Dana at (250) 472- 4062 or familyc@uvic.ca

Culture Club Schedule

The Culture Club welcomes members from diverse cultural backgrounds and meets on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:00pm. Its purpose is to support international and new Canadian student families.

Please Note:

The Family Centre will be closed for the winter break from Thursday 24th December until Monday 4th January.

If you need assistance during this time please call Campus Security or the Housing Office.

We wish all our UVic Community a happy holiday season and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Who to call...

Housing Office	721-8395
Family Centre	472-4062
Maintenance Line	721-8650
Maintenance (<i>Emergency</i>)	721-8658
Health Services	721-8492
Campus Security	721-7599

Community Events

Thursday 3rd December, 6-8pm ~ Art on the Avenue Gallery Walk and Ottavio Open House. 2000-2200 Blocks Oak Bay Avenue. Receptions at galleries and shops along Oak Bay Avenue. Special exhibits and artists in attendance. Kabuki Kab rides between galleries. Enjoy the taste of the season at Ottavio Italian Bakery and Delicatessen.

Saturday 5th December ~ IEOA 11th Annual Lighted Truck Parade. Watch fabulously decorated trucks roll through the downtown at approximately 7pm. Check the website ieoa.ca for all the details.

Saturday 5th December ~ 20th Annual Lighted Ship Parade. The lighted ships will make two loops of the Inner Harbour after the IEAO Truck Parade passes through the causeway. Spectators at Ship Point will enjoy a night market with live entertainment. For more information visit www.victoriaharbour.org.

December 1-20th ~ Bear Wear 2009 at the Hotel Grand Pacific. The holiday teddies are back for this 9th annual fundraiser for the Queen Alexandra Foundation. Bears are dressed and donated by local businesses. Vote for your favourite (\$2.00 suggested donation), and place your bids. The silent auction closes Sunday, December 20 at 2 pm, at which time the highest bidder for each bear gets to take home a new best friend. Funds raised at Bear Wear 2009 go to the Queen Alexandra Foundation. For more information please call 250-721-6855.

December 1-19th ~ FREE PARKING! Did you know that you can park for free downtown every Saturday from 11am-2pm until December 19th? For more information visit www.victoria.ca/residents/parking.shtml.

December 1st-20th ~ Horse-Drawn Trolley Rides. FREE! Saturdays 11am-2pm, Sundays 1pm-4pm. Enjoy a classic downtown tradition with your family. Every weekend horse-drawn trolley will circulate throughout the downtown. For information on where to get on or off go to www.downtownvictoria.ca.

December 1st-January 4th ~ Festival of the Trees. Every year the Festival of Trees transforms The Fairmont Empress into a lush forest of beautifully decorated trees. The trees are decorated by local businesses, organizations and individuals. The trees are displayed throughout the hotel.

December through to February ~ Eagle Extravaganza. Goldstream Provincial Park Two hundred and fifty eagles start arriving at Goldstream in late November and stay until February. Binoculars are a MUST. www.goldstreampark.com

December 26th through to January 3rd ~ Jack and the Beanstalk. St Luke's Players 4th Annual Panto. Matinees 2pm and evening performances at 8pm. Adults \$12, Students \$10, Children 5 and under \$5. St Luke's Hall. 3821 Cedar Hill X Road. Information 250-884-5484 www.stlukesplayers.org