

## KGC Newsletter

Issue 15, May 2003



### In This Issue

International Volunteer - Workcamp

A Tough Decision  
Vancouver or Toronto

Great ways to get a good deal

KGC Newsletter team:

EDITORS: EPP Level 6 students :  
Doris, Jennifer and Irene

PAGE DESIGN: Stanley Yau

Contact information:  
Kester Grant College  
2412 Laurel Street,  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 3T2  
Tel: 604-877-0355  
Fax: 604-877-0375  
E-mail: info@kgc.bc.ca  
Web: www.kgc.bc.ca

Students are encouraged to submit letters to our editors. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for publication.  
Any comments or ideas, please email to newsletter@kgc.bc.ca

## No Summer Plan? Why Don't You Join an International Volunteer Work camp !

By Doris



Volunteer work is very popular in western countries. Since I came to Vancouver, I always hear a lot about volunteer work. Once in class, my teacher told us about his teenage son's volunteer experience. He is working for a pet store, and once a week he goes there for three hours. His job focuses on cleaning the fish tank and feeding the fish; giving dogs baths and using a hair dryer to dry their fur. Even though he is young, he has already had a lot of work experience.



As a matter of fact, there are many kinds of organizations which need volunteers, and students can get many different kinds of jobs. For me, I am interested in a special volunteer job at a work camp. A work camp is an international project which provides people, who are from different countries, a chance to live and work together. This is a short-term project that lasts around 2-3 weeks and is made up of 5-20 volunteers. Actually, even many Canadians do not know about these projects. Work camps have some common features:

- ❑ physical work such as building, planting, and restoration
- ❑ social work often with children or people with handicaps
- ❑ work or study programs, where work and learning opportunities are integrated.

From my point of view, these are worthwhile projects for people to join. Volunteers are mostly 18-35 in age, and they go abroad together. As a work camp volunteer, you may experience culture shock because you will experience a new language and meet people from different countries. When you get there, you will learn more about the world by working, living and playing with people from a variety of countries. Also people have different motives for taking part in a work camp:

- ❑ To do something useful during a holiday
- ❑ To be active for a cause important to them
- ❑ To travel and become acquainted with a different country

- ❑ To improve language skills
- ❑ To contribute to a foreign community
- ❑ To experience communal living and intensive group dynamics
- ❑ To forge strong and lasting friendships

Before you apply for a volunteer job, you should know the general requirements. The basic requirements are that you should be over 18 because you should be mature enough to accept group living to deal with unexpected situations. In my opinion, this is an adventurous way of traveling. Furthermore, living conditions are a little bit poor. People are required to live in tents, Church basements, or the local YMCA. They are not permitted to live in a hotel so that they can learn how to cook with groups and how to get along with people they don't know. If people can accept these requirements, they may have a chance to apply.



A legal work camper should have a valid passport to travel internationally. Also any visas or other travel documents should be prepared. If you choose camps in Canada or the USA it costs about \$100.CAD, in Europe about \$190.CAD.

Looking back at work camp history, you will find that it has helped a lot of people with their life experience. For instance, " My favorite experience was talking to the residents of the McFarland Home and being on TV! I'll miss everyone who did the camp!"--- Becky Dallender, England: IVS Canada Camp, 2001. This is one of the success stories; actually, there are many people who want to thank these organizations for having the chance to be a work camper.



For international students, having a volunteer job in a foreign country is very useful. Through the work, we can get to know local customs, improve language skills, and learn

to be independent. I am ready to apply for a volunteer job soon because I can get much work experience and I want to offer some of my free time to help others. I hope after learning about work camps that other students will consider becoming a volunteer.

# Making a Tough Decision To study in Vancouver or to study in Toronto?

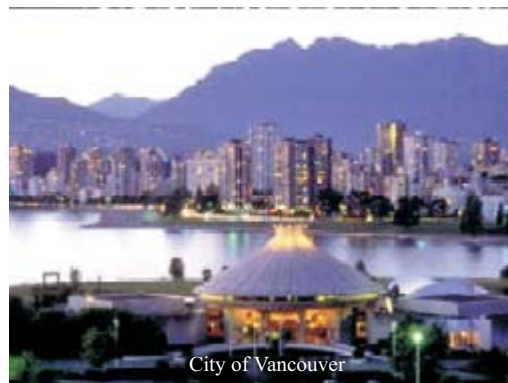
By Irene



Nowadays, studying abroad has become very common. A lot of students come to foreign countries to study. I am also an international student studying at KGC, which is located in Vancouver, Canada. As you know, Vancouver and Toronto are the two main cities in Canada for international students to study. Many students wonder what the differences are between Vancouver and Toronto? I was also concerned about this and hesitated to choose the city I should go to before I came to Canada, so I did a little research in order to make the right decision for myself.

## Vancouver

I bought a map and a book about Canada before I decided to come here; I knew that Vancouver is in the southwest of Canada and that it is made up of 18 municipalities that occupy 2,930 square kilometers on and around the Fraser



City of Vancouver

River delta. It is quite a big place, but its estimated total population is only about 2,028, 996 million.

Since I have been in Vancouver for five months and have talked with many friends who have been here for a long time, I know that the weather in Vancouver is very nice, and the mildest in Canada. Also, in Vancouver, there is lots of sunshine during the year. The average amount of sunshine is over 5.25 hours per day. In this city, spring comes early, because I have seen many kinds of flowers blooming by early March. In addition, my friend who has been here for three years told me that the late summer and autumn days through October tend to be warm and sunny. Because I came here in wintertime, I noticed that Vancouver's winter is the rainy season, but the rain usually involves showers or drizzle, not heavy downpours. Furthermore, through the internet, I learned that the City's mean temperature is 9.9° C (49.8° F). Daytime temperatures average 20° C in summer and 2° C in winter (70°- 35° Fahrenheit).

As we all know, in B.C. we must pay taxes, and the taxes are extremely high. People need to pay taxes on almost everything they buy. We have to pay a 7.5% provincial sales tax (PST) officially called "Social Services Tax" and a 7% federal goods and services tax (GST).

As a result, many international students complain that the living costs in Vancouver are very high. So why do students choose to study in Vancouver?

The main reason is that Vancouver has very beautiful scenery, such as magnificent mountains, wide clear oceans, many high trees, and vivid flowers. Also, there are a lot of parks for people to exercise in and visit. Therefore, during the summer time you can see many people lying on the beach, hiking in the park, and going on picnic in countryside. In winter, people can go skiing on the top of the mountains because it mostly snows on the mountains, not in cities. Vancouver's life style is very comfortable and slow. People have enough time

Average Daily High Temperatures in Vancouver

	Celsius	Fahrenheit
January	5	42
February	7	44
March	10	50
April	14	58
May	18	65
June	21	69
July	23	74
August	23	74
September	18	65
October	14	58
November	9	48
December	6	43

to relax, and their work is not so heavy. They can spend much time doing these things and visiting beautiful natural scenic places.

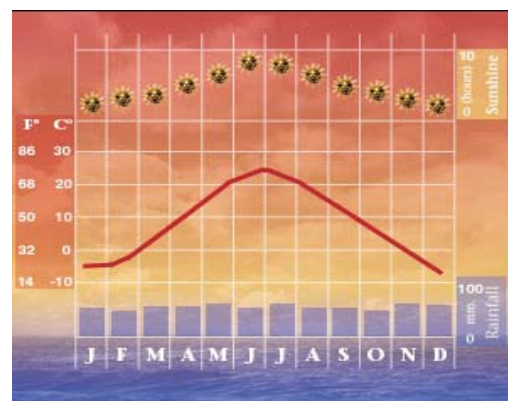
## Toronto

Although I never went to Toronto, I have an uncle who lived there for more than five years. I considered if I should go to Toronto to study before I chose Vancouver, so I researched a lot of information about Toronto too.

Toronto is in the southeast of Canada. With a population of 2.5 million, Toronto is Canada's largest city and is the center of the fifth largest city region in North America. One quarter of Canada's populations lives within a 160 kilometers (100-mile) radius of Toronto. Compared with Vancouver, Toronto is much more crowded. Generally speaking, Toronto



City of Toronto



Average temp. in Toronto (except the highest & lowest)

has a moderate climate with the warmest spring and summer in Canada. But sometimes in summer, especially in July and August, the highest temperature can arrive 40C. Toronto's winter is snowy and cold. During the winter, the snow can be over 10cm high, and the lowest temperature can arrive 32C. One of my friends who is studying in Toronto told me it is very hard to walk to school because of the heavy snow. So, if you plan to go to Toronto to study, you should think about this point. When I complained to my friend who is living in Toronto that I have to pay a lot of taxes in Vancouver, I learned that the taxes in Toronto are a little bit higher than in Vancouver! They are 7%GST+8%PST. The living cost in Toronto is almost the same as that in Vancouver, but Toronto is not like Vancouver that has a "laid back" character. It is a busy city because it is Canada's corporate capital, with more nationally and internationally top-ranked companies than any other Canadian city. So, one of Toronto's major attractions as a business location is its cost competitiveness. In both office and industrial surveys, Toronto's overall costs are among the most competitive among major North American cities. Since it is a business city, people who live there are usually very hard working. The life's rhythm is fast and not as laid back as living in Vancouver. In Toronto, there is not so much natural scenery, but many kinds of buildings.

Although in the city there is not too much beautiful scenery near the city, there is a very famous waterfall called Niagara Falls. If you study in Toronto, you can visit this impressive grand sight. My friend has gone there three times because she likes it very much. My friend said to me that there are more good universities near Toronto, and if I want to study more, I should go there. If students want to learn about all the universities in Vancouver and Toronto, they can visit the web listed site below: However, in my opinion, Vancouver is the best choice. I chose to study here because of Vancouver's warm climate, beautiful scenery and friendly people.

[Http://www.aucc.ca/can\\_uni/our\\_universities/Nova](http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/our_universities/Nova)

# Great ways to get a good deal!

By Jennifer Paik



Shopping is one of the most popular and exciting activities that people enjoy nowadays. Shopping allows people to hang out together, to relieve stress or to simply have fun.

The places I usually go to shop are downtown or the big malls where prices are really high. One day my brother bought some badminton rackets and told me that he bought them for two dollars! I was very surprised to know that the rackets which looked brand new cost just two dollars. I really wanted to know where he got them from, and that was when he told me about a garage sale. I was motivated by my brother's story and started to get interested in flea markets and garage sales.

A flea market is an event where people join together at a public place such as a library or a plaza to sell all kinds of used items for cheap prices. Similarly, from garage sales people can also buy used goods, but they are organized by an individual in a private place such as a backyard or a garage.

While I was looking for information about garage sales and flea markets, I was able to find out that a flea market in Hell's Kitchen in New York has more than 60 years of history. There are about 100 sellers which gather together selling goods such as fruits and cigars. This information helped me to understand how famous these markets are in North America; however, these markets are not common in Asia. Therefore, visiting a flea market or a garage sale would be an interesting activity for many international students

Buying goods from a flea market and a garage sale is very different from buying goods in ordinary shops. First, the prices are extremely cheap and you don't need to pay taxes. In addition, if you can negotiate well with the sellers you can cut down the price. Second, the goods that you get from these markets are sometimes very unique; you can rarely find those things in other ordinary shops. Finally, you can learn about North American culture by looking at what they used in the past. About one week ago, I saw a television show where people bring their antiques to find out the current value of the goods. In the show, a man appeared with an old bowl that he purchased in a garage sale for fifteen dollars. Surprisingly, the value of that item went from fifteen dollars to two thousand dollars!



By now, I think many students are interested in flea markets and garage sales, so I will give you some tips about how to join and find these events.

## The necessary requirements of having a flea market or a garage sale

If you want to have a flea market or a garage sale, you need to know when and where to put your advertisements. This is very important. You should announce that you are going to have the sale at least one week before the sale date. You can decide where you are going to advertise your market such as on the internet, in newspapers and on signs.



▶ When you make your advertisement, you need to write down the place, the time, the date and the items that will be sold. If you are putting advertisements on a sign, you should write down the information in large letters, and if you are putting advertisements in a newspaper, you need to pay for each word.

▶ Arrangement of the goods you are selling is important, so you should keep the goods and the area clean. Price tags should be attached to all goods.

▶ You should remember to put your prices a bit higher than the price you expect to sell them for because many people try to negotiate to cut down the price.

▶ [www.garagesalehunter.com](http://www.garagesalehunter.com), [www.freegaragesale.org](http://www.freegaragesale.org) and [www.ogarksgaragesale.com](http://www.ogarksgaragesale.com) are Internet sites where you can advertise your garage sale.

## How to find a flea markets or a garage sale

Usually, you can find the signs of a flea market or a garage sale along the roads, on telegraph poles, and in local newspapers. You can also find these sales from above internet sites.



Personally, since I heard of these interesting markets I have tried to visit some of them. Last weekend, when I visited McGill Library with my teacher and classmates I saw a sign that told me that there would be a flea market. I visited the flea market with my friend. There I was able to see a lot of interesting things; people were negotiating the prices with the sellers and many unusual accessories that I have never seen before were being sold. While I was looking around the place, one of the sellers explained to me about the history of a suitcase

that was for sale. Even though I could not understand the story fully, it was fun. I also noticed that the people were so friendly, and the purpose of joining a flea market for them was not only to make money but also to socialize with others. Now, I am planning to have my own garage sale downtown. Downtown garage sales are very famous for international students. When they finish studying in Vancouver, they sell what they used such as clothing and furniture for a low price. I hope many KGC students will enjoy the excitement of shopping at a flea market or a garage sale.

