



## THE VICTORIA CHINESE MESSENGER

维多利亚华人信息

*August 2014 (1st Ed.)*

*Victoria, British Columbia*

### 2014 Marks 20 Years of Dragon Boat Races in Victoria

On August 15, 16 and 17, look to the inner harbour for the Canada Dry Victoria Dragon Boat Festival.

The Victoria Dragon Boat Festival is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. It is a free community event, with races to entice the spectators and a festival site featuring cultural entertainment and local musicians. The charity of choice for the festival is the BC Cancer Foundation.



Throughout the entire weekend there will be entertainment, food booths, a beer garden and bands playing on the main stage. On the night of Friday August 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be the “Lights of Courage” lantern ceremony and entertainment at the main stage. On the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, the races will begin with upwards of 90 teams competing for glory in the races. By the afternoon of Sunday August 17<sup>th</sup>, the races will be down to the “dragon noses” as the paddlers power their dragon boats to the finish line.

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This Victoria Dragon Boat Festival began as a demonstration race during the

1994 Commonwealth Games. It has since grown from a one day festival with 20 teams to a 3 day event with more than 90 teams.

The volunteers at the festival report year after year that this is the best festival to volunteer for in Victoria. For more information check out the website at <http://victoriadragonboat.com/about-us/get-involved/>.



This festival brings people together in the community from all walks of life and from all spectrums of the corporate world. Lifelong friendships blossom in the teams where camaraderie is paramount. The corporate sponsors bring the festival to life and the public help with the support of the Charity of Choice. The Victoria Dragon Boat Festival has become one of the premiere festivals in Victoria and features Victoria's jewel, its inner harbour. In the end, the entire community wins with free events for spectators and economic benefits for the local economy. It is great fun for everyone involved, so be sure to get involved and come check it out this August!

## The Hungry Ghost Month

The scariest month of the year is upon us, as August marks the beginning of the Hungry Ghost Month (鬼月, *Guǐ Yuè*), involving activities and celebration similar to Halloween or Night of the Dead in Western countries. During this month, it is believed the king of hell opens the gates of hell to allow ghosts to visit the living world. It is the only time of year that ghosts are released to freely roam the Earth. The most important celebration during this month is the Hungry Ghost Festival, when the gates of hell are believed to be most open. This calls for special ceremonies to worship the dead, with events planned across China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. The Hungry Ghost Festival falls on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh lunar month, falling on August 10<sup>th</sup> this year. The hungry ghosts, also called 'good brothers', are believed to be ancestors of people who died and did not receive a proper burial or funeral.



Image taken from: [www.masterhancua.com](http://www.masterhancua.com)

Chinese families celebrate this festival to remember their dead family members and pay tribute to them. While also

praying and paying tribute to other unknown wandering ghosts so that these homeless souls will not intrude into their daily lives and bring along misfortunes or bad luck. Daily rituals during the Hungry Ghost Month include offering sacrifices to the ghosts, including rice, meat and fruit. Red candles, joss sticks, incense, and paper money are burned daily until the end of the month when it is believed the ghosts return to hell. Miniature paper items like cars, houses, and clothes are also burned as the living want to ensure the deceased have all the material goods they need for the coming year. Some families will eat vegetarian meals and set extra place settings for deceased family members. The Hungry Ghost Festival often begins with a parade with decorated lanterns in various shapes, including boats and houses, placed atop decorated floats. The paper lanterns are then carried to the water, lit, and released. The glowing lanterns and boats are meant to give directions to lost souls and help ghosts and deities find their way to the food offerings. At some Hungry Ghost festivals, like in Keelung, Taiwan, a Chinese character of a family's last name is placed on the lantern that the family has sponsored. It is believed the farther the lantern floats on the water, the more good fortune the family will have in the coming year.



Image taken from: [www.echinaexpat.com](http://www.echinaexpat.com)

The origin of the Hungry Ghost Month has roots in Buddhist and Taoist traditions. The sacrificial gift-giving custom, an extension of the traditional Chinese notion of “Universal love,” began after the legend “Mu Lian Saving his Mother from Hades”.



Image taken from: [www.demotix.com](http://www.demotix.com)

The tale describes how Mu Lian had to save his mother, who had been cast into the depths of hell for her past sins. By fasting, praying and offering sacrifices of food and spirit money to the Lord of the Dark Realm, Mu Lian was able to rescue his mother from being a hungry ghost, leading to the daily sacrificial traditions during the Hungry Ghost Month.

Article content taken from:  
[Chineseculture.about.com](http://chineseculture.about.com)

<http://chineseculture.about.com/od/chinesefestivals/a/Hungry-Ghost-Festival.htm>

[Chinahighlights.com](http://www.chinahighlights.com)

<http://www.chinahighlights.com/festivals/hungry-ghost-festival.htm>

[Cultureofchinese.com](http://cultureofchinese.com)

<http://cultureofchinese.com/traditions/festivals-customs/chinese-ghost-festival/>

## Happenings

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### VICTORIA CHINESE COMMERCE ASSOCIATION

**Next Meeting: September TBA**

**Check the VCCA website in August  
for more details**

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### Victoria Dragon Boat's 20th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser

**Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>  
Cocktails and Reception at 7:00pm  
Inn at Laurel Point (690 Montreal Street)**

Celebrating **20 Years** of Dragon Boating  
in Victoria

An evening of cultural entertainment,  
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### VICTORIA DRAGONBOAT FESTIVAL

Coming up this **August 15, 16, 17**. Stay  
tuned for more information in our  
August Messenger.

## 2014 Chinatown Night Markets

Every Wednesday Night  
**July 9-August 27<sup>th</sup>  
5pm-9pm**

in the 500 block of Fisgard Street

Happenings are regularly updated online  
at [www.victoriachinesemessenger.com](http://www.victoriachinesemessenger.com)

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## **2014 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT**

**Please note that the listed organizations are not limited to persons of Chinese descent.**

### **Victoria Chinese Commerce Association**

New projects on the go...including the need for volunteers for the 2014 Chinatown Night Market!

Find out more: Check website [www.vcca.ca](http://www.vcca.ca) for more information on that and the regular meetings.

### **Victoria Chinatown Lions Club**

If you wish to serve the community, the Victoria Chinatown Lions Club meets every second and fourth Wednesday at Golden City Restaurant. Contact Art Quon at [art.quon@rbc.com](mailto:art.quon@rbc.com) or Alan Yuen at [yuenfam@shaw.ca](mailto:yuenfam@shaw.ca)

### **Victoria Chinatown Lioness Club**

Meetings are second Monday of the month at Golden City Restaurant.. You will need to contact their president for more info. This is a very active club which has won awards for its philanthropy.

### **Victoria Chinatown Care Foundation**

Mandate is to support and fundraise for the needs of the Victoria Chinatown Care Centre located in Chinatown. Volunteers for fundraising events. For information on the foundation go to [www.chinatowncarefoundation.com](http://www.chinatowncarefoundation.com)

### **Victoria Chinese Messenger**

You can also volunteer by submitting foodie tips, articles and photos of Victoria things, places and events for posting on our facebook or online publications.

## **Getting Ready for Express Entry**

In January 2015, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will launch a new electronic system called Express Entry to manage applications for permanent residence in certain economic programs. Canada needs high levels of immigration to meet current and future labour market needs, which will ensure our economic growth and long-term prosperity.

Express Entry will allow Canada to actively recruit, assess and select skilled immigrants under the following federal economic immigration programs:

- the Federal Skilled Worker Program,
- the Federal Skilled Trades Program, and
- the Canadian Experience Class.

Provinces and territories will also be

able to recruit candidates from the Express Entry system for a portion of the Provincial Nominee Programs to meet local labour market needs. Under this new system, employers will also have a key role in selecting economic immigrants. Employers will access candidates through Canada's new and improved Job Bank and through provinces and territories where applicable.

The Express Entry system involves two steps:

***Step 1) Potential candidates complete an online Express Entry profile***

Potential candidates will complete an online Express Entry profile where they will provide information about their skills, work experience, language ability, education, and other details. Those who meet the criteria of one of the federal economic immigration programs subject to Express Entry will be placed in a pool of candidates.

Candidates will be ranked against others in the pool. Only the highest-ranked candidates (those deemed to have the best chances for economic success), and those with qualifying offers of arranged employment or provincial/territorial nominations, will be invited to apply for permanent residence.

If a candidate does not already have a valid job offer from a Canadian employer or a provincial/territorial nomination, he or she must register with the Government of Canada's Job Bank which will connect him or her with eligible Canadian employers.

Where applicable, employers will be

required to obtain a Labour Market Impact Assessment from Employment and Social Development Canada. There will be no fee for Labour Market Impact Assessments for permanent residence applications under the Express Entry system.

Completing an online Express Entry profile does not guarantee that a candidate will receive an Invitation to Apply for permanent residence.

***Step 2) Citizenship and Immigration Canada will invite certain candidates to apply for permanent residence and process their electronic applications within six months.***

Candidates will receive an Invitation to Apply for permanent residence if they rank among the top in the pool, based on their skills and experience. Candidates who have a valid job offer from a Canadian employer (subject to the Labour Market Impact Assessment process in place at that time) or have been nominated by a province or territory will be given high scores in the ranking system.

Candidates will have 60 days to submit an **electronic** application for permanent residence through one of the following programs:

- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP);
- Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP);
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC); or,
- A portion of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

will process the majority of complete applications (i.e. applications including all the necessary supporting documents) within six months or less.

Candidates in the Express Entry pool who do not receive an Invitation to Apply for permanent residence after 12 months may resubmit their profile and re-enter the pool if they still meet the criteria. This provision will prevent backlogs and ensure quick processing times.

Express Entry will result in faster and more efficient service to potential skilled immigrants. It will also allow the Government of Canada to be more flexible and responsive to Canada's changing economic conditions and priorities

### Quick facts

- Canada's Economic Action Plan 2014 will invest an initial \$14 million over two years, followed by \$4.7 million per year ongoing to ensure the successful implementation of Express Entry.
- Express Entry will transform Canada's immigration system into one that is faster and more responsive to economic and labour market needs.
- Express Entry will allow Citizenship and Immigration Canada to select the candidates who are most likely to succeed economically in Canada, rather than passively process all applicants in a queue.
- Express Entry candidates who are invited to apply for permanent residence can expect

faster processing times of six months or less.

*(This summary is prepared by Sarina Hoi, BA, MA, RCIC of Ocean Pacific Immigration Associates Ltd. from information from the CIC website. To contact Sarina Hoi email: [shoi@oceanpacificca.com](mailto:shoi@oceanpacificca.com) or through [www.oceanpacificca.com](http://www.oceanpacificca.com).)*

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## Foodies

**Our online version is regularly updated with a “Foodie” comments section. Here are some snippets for your “digestion”:**

*“...craving some India fusion... try out the Mint on Douglas...”*

*“... Hit the Tapas Bar again, just can't get enough of their Heart of Palm salad..”*

*“...ok where can you get some key lime pie? So far the best can be found in Stevenston, but locally Brown's Social house has one on its menu...and as of this week it seems Cactus may carry it too...”*

*“...still liking the dumplings at Raymond's add some of their own hot sauce and voila you have a taste and decent heat sensation...”*

*“...a new tapas coming – Bodega Tapa & Wine.. gonna to be right next to the existing famous Tapas Bar in trounce alley...”*

*“... so don't forget the Hotel Grand Pacific provides award winning fine dining under Executive Chef Rick Choy... there you can enjoy some great wines with their inventive creations...”*

*“...spicy seafood noodle soup - have you had some healthy noodle soup at Shanghai Noodle on Quadra Street yet?... just across from Crystal Pool...”*

*“...the keg after 9 pm has some good and inexpensive appy's...”*

*“...or what about the deep fried chicken bits at La Tea Ah on Fort...”*

“... still got Don Mee’s on my list for dim sum, particularly the traditionally Cantonese ones...”



Hotel Grand Pacific

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Founding sponsors are visionary sponsors who commit their support to us, to the Chinese/Asian community in Victoria and to the Oldtowne districts of the Chinatown, Oldtowne and Design areas in Victoria. They have committed as longer term sponsors to support the sustainability of the community service provided by Victoria Chinese Messenger. We thank them for their faith and support of our community services.

### **About the Victoria Chinese Messenger:**

We bring and report on happenings in the community. Our focus is on public and community service within the context of your social networks. Our goal is to bring the community closer and to pass on social happenings and community service events. Join us as we work with you to make our community a better place. Help us use social media to make for better communities, grow our community, help others, and bring people together for common purposes.

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Happenings: Submit your events, news, or interesting facts. Our Public Service and Community Service column may publish information as a free service to non-profit groups. Again, any publication of information provided is in our sole discretion

#### **Publisher:**

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#### **Editors:**

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**Next Meeting:  
Orbus Business Network's Summer BBQ  
August 7, 2014  
6 pm – late  
Please contact us for more information  
and to RSVP.**

**To join the meeting email:  
[orb@orbusnetworks.com](mailto:orb@orbusnetworks.com)**



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