

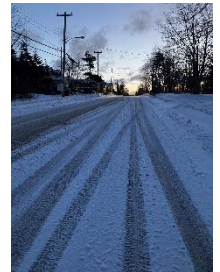
Hi everyone,

The first month of the new year:

Weather:

January is for mostly everyone the winter month of the year. I definitely experienced the cold weather formations in Newfoundland. In the beginning of the month up to 30 cm of snow fell, which is still there. Because of the wind chill factor, which makes you feel the temperature colder than it actually is, it is often very cold and in some places there is a lot of snow, in others next to nothing, but everywhere the ice is frozen, which makes the walking paths very slippery. In general, everyone is going to school by school bus, by their own car or their parents give them a ride to school. We are next to the only ones who are walking to school every day. Canadians are not used to walking, the sidewalks are always packed with snow from the roads, which is why we mostly walk in the streets.

My first real snowstorm was crazy. You could only see distance of 5 m, because the snow is flying all around you. Crazy strong wind blows, which I've never experienced before, were coming on my birthday. You sometimes just had to stop walking and hoped to be strong enough to not have to walk backwards. The lowest temperature this month was -19 degrees, which felt like -28 degrees because of the wind. Our host mom told us to try to cover as much skin as possible, so we walked to school, wearing as much a hiking trip in Alaska.



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My birthday:

I celebrated my birthday on two days. On the actual day, my music teacher baked cupcakes, which were really delicious. She also tried to sing me a German birthday song, which was actually pretty good, but the English song was obviously better. After school I went with some Canadian friends to Tim Hortons, which is a place where you order drinks and baked goods like muffins, Tim bits, which are little donut balls, sometimes they also have wraps or sandwiches. This brand exists in almost every small town or village. In the evening I went with my hostsister and some friends to the mall, where there is a gaming room, with lots of slot machines. All in all I had a really nice Canadian birthday. The next day, my host family prepared a birthday supper. I chose my favorite meal, they bought a delicious birthday cake, sang some songs and they gave me their presents. One Canadian girl, whose birthday was on the same day as mine, invited us to her birthday bowling party, which was a lot of fun. I think in general going bowling is really popular, because at my host dad's birthday, we also went bowling with the whole family. He turned 70, for this special occasion, my hostmum organised a nice family supper and one of their daughters paid a company to put up some flamingos in our front yard, which is not that uncommon for someones birthday here.



School:

At the end of this month, we had fake midterm exams in school. Due to weird regulations from the school district, the midterms in English and math were not possible, so I just had to write a midterm in physics. The teachers told me, normally there is one midterm week, where you just go to school to write your midterms, which are tests about all the content you've learned so far. These tests are taking 2 to 3 hours. One of the regulations was that the midterm can just take an hour, so I wrote my midterm during a normal

school day like a normal test, just with content about the whole year. Obviously, I am not really disappointed to not have to write these crazy exams. Much better than writing these exams is preparing for my graduation at the end of the school term. A professional photographer spent one week at our school to take graduation pictures of each graduate with the cap and gown. This professional photo shooting was quite an experience for me, and I am really looking forward having the opportunity to experience a Canadian graduation.