



MATHEW McCARTHY, RECORD STAFF

A birthday worth celebrating

Across the region, Canadians new and old mark Canada Day

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Tears flowed freely down Korpo Jorgbo's face yesterday as she joined a group singing O Canada.

It wasn't her first time singing the anthem -- but it was her first time as a Canadian.

"I feel like I belong somewhere -- I feel like a new person," said Jorgbo, who is originally from Liberia but spent 14 years at a camp in Ghana before coming to Canada three years ago.

Yesterday, she took the oath of citizenship at the Woodside National Historic Site along with her 11-year-old daughter, Kiteh Totimeh, as relatives took photos.

"Taking the oath on Canada Day and at Woodside made it even more special," said Jorgbo, who works at Forest Heights Long Term Care Centre in Kitchener.

Family and friends of the 20 people who became citizens at the ceremony were joined by strangers as they clapped and hugged the new Canadians.

It means a lot to be a Canadian, said Andrea Jimenez, who took the oath with her husband, Gustavo Rodriguez, and nine-year-old son, Mateo.

The family came from Colombia more than four years ago and had been waiting for this day, said Jimenez, who works at the Waterloo Regional Children's Museum.

"It's a special day," she said clutching the certificate from citizenship judge Robert Morrow. Her colleagues at the museum celebrated by organizing a barbecue.

Meanwhile, at the Canada Day parade at Riverside Park in Cambridge, the Canadian flag fluttered everywhere -- in the hands of children, atop cars and in strollers.

Crowds lined King Street from Bishop Street to Riverside Park and as the parade went by, the children cheered, clapped and danced. Flag tattoos were also a favourite. By the end of the parade, many children were sporting the tattoos on arms, cheeks and foreheads.

"It's a time to wear your national pride boldly," said Reina McIntyre, who watched the parade go by with her 11-year-old daughter, Tamara, brother Jerry McClay and his wife, Jen.

"We haven't missed the parade in 10 years," McIntyre said. "It's one of those special days when all communities come together to cheer Canada."

Elsewhere in the region, there were dance performances, children's activities and games. Columbia Lake in Waterloo, Riverside Park in Cambridge, Scott Park in New Hamburg and Bingemans in Kitchener boasted fireworks.

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