



SOIL SANCTUARY

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14

Photo courtesy Kimi Hendess
Kimi Hendess and Kareno Hawbolt are passionate about their farm, Sweet Digz, which delivers fresh produce to people through a weekly box delivery program.

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Richmond Sentinel encourages local community members and local business owners to engage with us. Share your feedback and ideas at marketing@richmondsentinel.ca or contact us at **778-325-1297**.

Community comes together in time of crisis

By DON FENNELL

[@rmdsentinel](#)

Business at Banh Mi Tres Bon restaurant in Richmond was doing well early in the new year. Then on March 22 the tables were turned upside down.

That's the day the order came down to close due to COVID-19, leaving owner Lan Do heartbroken.

"The biggest challenge was letting our staff known of their temporary layoff, and being uncertain of a return date," he says. "We made the decision to close our doors sooner than many businesses because we believed in protecting the safety and health of our team."

But the sudden closure also left the restaurant with an abundance of food. Do was anxious to give it away rather than see it go to waste and that led to some unexpected serendipity.

Janice Lambert, executive director at Richmond Family Place, had just been conversing with a nutritionist at the local health department about the cancelling of in-person programming and the immediate shifting to virtual support for families. But one of the priorities yet to be realized was food security for the most financially vulnerable families, some dependent on Family Place's meal programs. Soon after, Lambert got a call from lan Lai of the Richmond Food Security Society.

"(Lai) mentioned he was talking to Lan Do, and Hajira Hussain at the Richmond Food Bank Society, as well as a couple of chef colleagues who also wished to help during the COVID-19 pandemic," Lambert says. "This then led to food bank donations being provided to the chefs, and also to the restaurant, and then used to make healthy, nutritious meals for recipients."

During this time, Lambert also heard from Connections Community Services Society. Since its in-person programs also stopped due to COVID-19, it was offering the use of a van and staff to deliver the meals.

"This pandemic has stretched everyone in the world in ways we couldn't foresee," Lambert says. "We have always worked very collaboratively with many non-profit agencies in Richmond, but have not seen this level of generosity. This gives us hope for the future that is uncertain in so many ways. People want to help, but they don't know how."

Considered an essential service, Richmond Family Place's dedicated team has continued to work through the necessary changes. Lambert says it is fortunate its grants were approved for the current year, but revenue from its thrift store and cancelled golf tournament will seemingly not be forthcoming. The first quarter of unearned revenue also coincided with a notable rise in demand for services that will challenge the organization.

"There have always been financially-vulnerable families living in Richmond," suggests Lai. "These families have maintained their anonymity going about their day-to-day lives working as hard as possible without everyone knowing. But as a result of COVID-19, we have seen an increase in people requiring some assistance. Dignity has been key in meeting the demand. And as work begins to resume, and schools come back online, I see an adjustment in the numbers being served."

Lai also lauds how Richmondoites have united in the face of adversity, and come to support each other. New partnerships have formed, and organizations have cross-pollinated for the greater good.

"This is an amazing process to be involved in, and I am proud to say I am a Richmondoite. Our community is resilient and rich in resources."

To help meet the community's needs, Richmond Food Security has altered many of its programs and put its education streams online. Its com-



Photo courtesy Richmond Food Bank

A desire to help led a Richmond restaurant to unite with local service groups to ensure local families facing financial challenges have access to nutritious food.

munity building initiatives will continue as planned, including building two community gardens in the next month. Additionally, it has been using three of the largest school gardens exclusively for community meals while more than 275 seed packages have been distributed from its library for new and existing gardeners to participate in the food system.

Richmond Food Bank has always been about community, and through its Match Maker initiative, the Richmond Food Bank was happy to play "our little part" in supplying chefs with surplus food, says executive director Hussain.

"This initiative is best reflected in the statement 'We are all in this together' because it brought various organizations together for one common purpose—ensuring that people had access to good wholesome food during their time of greatest need."

Hussain says the food bank is indebted to its donors who continue to step up, and to its volunteers for their ongoing support.

"I would like to believe that our clients are being able to sustain their families' health through the nutritious grocery assistance they are receiving through the food bank," she says. "So, we are essentially creating community each and every day that we are open."

But while grateful for the support, the food bank too is being challenged. Donations of non-perishable food have dropped significantly, coinciding directly with a decline in food drivers and fundraisers by community groups. That has forced the food bank to purchase more food. And each client is already forced to spend upwards of an hour in line to be served.

During this challenging time for the food bank, Do and his staff were honoured to be able to step up and help. Since re-opening June 1, Banh Mi Tres Bon has been busy and Do is grateful.

"The pandemic has taught all of us that we can't back down when tough times are upon us," he says. "We must be creative and innovative on how we can continue with the vision we have put forth. (This has given) us an opportunity to reflect and how we can do better as we pivot into the new normal."

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*This gives us hope for
the future that
is uncertain in so
many ways.*

**-Janice Lambert
Richmond Family Place**

New airport CEO envisions lofty future

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

During a difficult time for the aviation industry, Tamara Vrooman is rising to the challenge.

Named CEO of Vancouver International Airport (YVR) in May, she began her new role on July 1 amid pandemic restrictions.

"In some ways coming in during this time you'd think would be a challenge, but actually it's an opportunity to look at the business and the organization end to end, and do it in an environment where fast-moving change is going to be required," says Vrooman.

Born in Victoria and a lifelong British Columbian, Vrooman's work in the business community has been recognized many times over. The CEO of Vancity for 13 years, she led the credit union to become the largest Canadian organization to adopt a living wage policy in 2011.

Last June Vrooman was named chancellor of Simon Fraser University (SFU), where she received an honorary doctorate in 2016. She's also been recognized by groups such as the Association of Women in Finance and the Women's Executive Network.

When named SFU's chancellor, Vrooman was described as "a respected leader and champion for social justice" by SFU president and vice chancellor Andrew Petter.

"She brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to community betterment," Petter added.

Last year, Vrooman received the Order of British Columbia for her community leadership through business. She says ever since leaving university, she's always been drawn to business as an opportunity to serve people and communities.

"The opportunity to provide leadership and work with people who are such a vital part of the economy as an airport is always appealing and will continue to be so," she says.

A former board member at the airport, Vrooman knew the organization and what it stood for before assuming her new position. The airport's people-centric nature and sense of place always stood out, as well as its connection to the community and the Musqueam nation.

"When you're at YVR, it's absolutely clear where in the world you are," she says.

Vrooman adds that the timing of her appointment has given her the opportunity to set YVR on a path for the future. While there

have been unexpected challenges, she maintains that the people around her constantly demonstrate their strength.

"It's been a great opportunity to see that even in the most challenging times, the essence of what makes a big company and organization great is unchanging and comes to the fore right when it's needed," she says.

There are several focal areas Vrooman wants to work on during her tenure. She sees the lower passenger volume during the pandemic as an opportunity to do things that weren't possible before. Adjusting to COVID-19 means having basic protocols in place, but the airport has also stepped up its cleaning technology, deploying elements like robotics and artificial intelligence.

And looking to the future, YVR hopes to continue its strong connections to the Asia Pacific region and its economy, says Vrooman.

"Looking into the next 30 years, what role does YVR need to play when it comes to things like technology, logistics, cargo delivery, drone delivery, the opportunity for bioscience and biosecurity to be a bigger part of our economy going forward?" she adds.

So far, Vrooman's time as CEO has been filled with plans for new projects amid the constant changes of the pandemic. And through it all, her commitment to the airport and its future success is clear.

"Tamara is a visionary executive with an exemplary track record leading large, complex institutions in both the private and public sectors, including through periods of enormous challenge, innovation and growth," says board chair Annalisa King. "With a career-long commitment to the betterment of BC, she is the ideal person to lead YVR forward."

Although challenged by the unpredictability of the pandemic and its impact on planned growth, Vrooman clearly has passion for the industry.

"I've always been a big fan of YVR, a high user of its service, and I'm proud to be the CEO," she says.

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Photo courtesy Vancouver Airport Authority

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Submissions sought for street banner competition

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Artists across Richmond are invited to submit entries for the annual street banner contest.

This year, the contest aims to capture residents' day-to-day experiences in their own neighbourhoods. It is open to artists of all ages and abilities. A range of artistic mediums are welcomed including photography, graphic design, collage, watercolour and oil painting.

Submissions will be accepted until Sept. 18 at 5 p.m. A judging panel of community volunteers will narrow down to a shortlist of 20, which can then be voted on by community members through an online system.

Winning designs will be displayed for one year, beginning next February, on a thousand street banners throughout Richmond's downtown core and main roadway entrances to the city. In addition, each contest winner will receive a \$300 honorarium and a full-sized banner with their design.

Participants are encouraged to consider the following 10 themes when submitting their entries:

- Resilience
- Connection
- Active Living
- Nature
- The Arts
- Community
- Wellness
- Urban Landscape
- Island City
- Sustainability

For complete contest rules and guidelines, and to submit entries, please visit www.richmond.ca/banners.

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Photo courtesy City of Richmond

Last year's winning banners are displayed in downtown Richmond.



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Food Bank opens express hub at Hugh Boyd Park

To better serve its clients living in the West Richmond area, the Richmond Food Bank Society has opened an express food hub at Hugh Boyd Park.

As of Aug. 10, a depot is operating in the parking lot off Francis Road. It will be open every Monday (with the exception of stat holidays) from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Drive-through grocery assistance will be available, and walk-ins are also welcome.

The depot will operate with a focus on the health and safety of food bank clients and volunteers, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We would like to alleviate the increasingly long line-ups during our regular grocery distribution at the Cedarbridge Way location. It will also allow us to reach out to the people in the West Richmond area who are in need of food assistance, but are unable to come to our main location or take advantage of our home delivery service," says Hajira Hussain, executive director of the Richmond Food Bank Society.

With the opening of the West Richmond depot, clients will now have the option to pick up from this location (only on the day and time specified) as an alternative to picking up their

hamper from the main Cedarbridge location. As usual, clients can pick up food once per week (per household). The grocery distribution program at 100-5800 Cedarbridge Way continues to operate five days a week: Mondays through Thursdays, and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is also a depot located in East Richmond at Peace Mennonite Church, which operates on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

In keeping with the public health directives on maintaining safe physical distancing and minimizing contact, clients will be served outdoors, one by one. All hampers are standardized based on the number of individuals in each household.

Clients choosing to come to the West Richmond depot are encouraged to arrive no earlier than 3:30 p.m., and to drop in any time before 5 p.m. Clients are encouraged to follow the posted signage for drive-in and walk-in lanes.

The Richmond Food Bank Society provides food assistance, advocacy and related support to community members in need. As a registered charity and a non-government organization, it relies on the generous donation of individuals, community organizations and businesses in



Photo courtesy Richmond Food Bank
Richmond Food Bank Society has added an express food hub at Hugh Boyd Park.

order to serve the community. The food bank also gratefully receive grants for some of its programs. The West Richmond depot is made possible in part by a grant from the government of Canada and the United Way of the Lower Mainland.

Three city fitness centres have reopened

The fitness centres at South Arm Community Centre, Thompson Community Centre and Minoru Centre for Active Living reopened this week. Users must register in advance for a 75 minute session.

Registration for each week of sessions opens at 10 a.m. the Monday before. Regular admission prices apply, and drop-in attendance is not permitted.

Register online at richmond.ca/register using your MyRichmond account. Anyone without one can set one up in advance at myrichmond.richmond.ca. You can also register by calling 604-276-4300. Recreation access card holders and recreation fee subsidy users must call the registration call centre to book an exercise session.

Additional protocols are in place to reduce the risk of spreading

COVID-19. Change rooms are not available, so users must arrive ready to exercise no more than five minutes prior to session start time. Equipment should be wiped down with provided disinfectant before and after use.

Wallet lockers and cubbies will be available, but users are encouraged to only bring essential items (e.g. keys, wallet, phone, towel, water bottle). Bags and other belongings will not be permitted on the fitness centre floor.

The reopening of these fitness centres is another opportunity for people to get out, get active and get socially connected in a safe, monitored environment. It is also a significant part of the city's restoration plan.

More updates will be shared via the city website at richmond.ca/covid19 and social media channels as they are confirmed.



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Stevestonite launches line of luxury streetwear

By DON FENNELL

 @rmdsentinel

A bit of a perfectionist, Craig Johnston spent the past two years bringing an idea to life. But he wasted no time developing a brand identity.

Johnston, a 20-year-old Richmondite, is excited to be introducing a new line of luxury streetwear. Unsighted Clothing's inaugural selection of hoodies and t-shirts was introduced last week (Aug. 14) and will be available through the company's website <https://unsighted.ca/>. All the items feature high-end art images on heavy weighted, high thread count 100 per cent luxury cotton. Johnston says the stretch materials are developed and sourced sustainably, and are free from harmful substances as well as being ethically traded and created under the most fair and socially responsible conditions for workers.

"I wanted to make clothing people could buy and still be able to go out and show off," says the young clothing designer. "Fashionable first, luxury in feel and quality second and affordability third."

He wanted to include all the essential attributes while drawing attention to a challenge close to his heart—sight and visual impairment. It's a condition his grandfather has been afflicted by and Johnston has found a way to pay homage by incorporating raised (3D) Braille—depicted in the logo—into the sleeves of each item to close-caption each garment's artist image and other features. As well, a percentage of all sales will be donated to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

"My grandfather has been suffering vision loss for the past few years—luckily he still has vision—and that inspired me," Johnston says.

Johnston is now happy he didn't rush into production, taking time to improve the designs and outsource the materials.

"The steps it took in order to launch took years of practice and research," he explains. "To start, I had no knowledge of how to do any of this. After learning, I spent time emailing and meeting with screen printers and label makers to finally create the perfect tags and prints. But I have been interested in fashion for as long as I can remember. My mom tells me I always had an opinion on what I wore since I learned to walk."

The designs, which retail from \$50 to \$120, are targeted mainly to consumers between the ages of 15 and 35. Johnston says some similar items sell for much more.

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Photos submitted
Richmond's Craig Johnston has designed a line of luxury streetwear for the young consumer, while also paying respect to those with visual challenges.



Race walk champion focused on 2021

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

If this had been a normal summer, Evan Dunfee would have been trying to catch his breath after the whirlwind of competing in the Olympic Summer Games. But COVID-19, and ultimately a global pandemic, altered that course.

Instead, Dunfee has been home in Richmond and busy training for the next opportunity to challenge the world's best race walkers of which he's a long-standing member.

Dunfee, you may remember, became something of a Canadian folk hero at the 2016 Olympics in Rio. In the 50-kilometre race, Hirooki Arai of Japan initially finished third but was then disqualified for making contact with Dunfee. Arai's medal was reinstated on a further appeal at which time Dunfee advised the Canadian team against making a further appeal. Dunfee himself set a Canadian record in the event of three hours, 41 minutes, 38 seconds.

Dunfee, 29, came to terms with the fact there would be no Olympics this summer back in March.

"I honestly haven't thought about the 'where I should be right now' bit at all," he said. "For me, the Olympics became 2021 back in March (when the Canadian Olympic Committee was among the first to declare it would not send athletes to the Games, which were ultimately postponed to next summer).

"I just sort of flipped the switch and changed the focus. I've been enjoying training a little easier and stress free. I'm healthy which is the best part."

Training has been quite different though, Dunfee says. He's done just as much as he's felt

inspired to, and it's actually added up to more than ever—about 4,100 kilometres through July. But there's no speed work, no workouts on the track, and no interval sessions.

"I just haven't had the motivation to do those, nor the desire. And to be honest, there's nothing in the schedule that I need to be in peak shape for. Motivation has certainly changed, but I enjoy training for the most part. I like getting out the door and doing something so that has been pretty easy, but I haven't been motivated to get out the door early in the morning or do that second evening session if I have other things I'd rather be doing. Basically, the motivation now is to train as much as I want to and try to enjoy my time at home as much as I can."

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Photo submitted
Richmond's Evan Dunfee is maintaining his training, but in a much more relaxed manner as he looks toward a 2021 Olympic Summer Games.

Seeds being planted for safe return to play

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

In a year when few things seem normal, preparing for the fall sports season is equally confusing.

The days immediately following Labour Day usually signal a return to routines like work, school and play. But in 2020 uncertainty is trumping certainty, and that's forced local sports enthusiasts to play a game of wait and see as safety continues to be the top priority.

"Richmond's local sport organizations are to be praised for all their hard work to ensure the safety of their participants, volunteers and staff while keeping their sport alive in

the community since returning to the fields a few weeks ago," says city spokesperson Clay Adams. "The efforts being taken by many Richmond sports groups to bring participants back with modified skill development is helping the community remain connected and involved during this challenging time."

Having said that, none of the community sports groups are close to pre-COVID-19 competition and games right now. Adams says local sports groups that rent outdoor field space are presently working with their provincial organizations, ViaSport, and Sport BC, to determine what aspects they can resume through a "Return to Sport" plan.

The "Return to Sport" plan details requirements for sanitation, hygiene, physical

distancing, and a graduated return to play strategy along with examples of skill development activities and drills that are appropriate for each phase of their plan. Some groups such as softball and baseball are playing modified games within their own organization, while others such as soccer and football are not playing any games or scrimmages due to contact being a critical part of the sport.

"Progression to modified games will be different for each sport, but there are no pending changes to what and how each may progress in the coming weeks as it relates to games, tournaments and travel outside of Richmond for competition," Adams says.

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Fundraising campaign begins as surgeries resume

As all surgeries resume, Richmond Hospital Foundation is launching a new fundraising campaign for surgical equipment.

The Surgical Restart campaign will raise funds for more than \$2 million in surgical equipment that will improve care and benefit all surgical specialties at Richmond Hospital. This represents the single largest refresh in nearly a decade.

Richmond Hospital performs more than 4,000 inpatient surgeries and more than 5,000 outpatient surgeries each year, and provides a robust array of surgical procedures from across a wide variety of surgical specialties.

"As scheduled surgeries resume post COVID-19 and backlogs are cleared, we know there is a great and urgent need for surgical equipment. Having state-of-the-art equipment allows us to use new groundbreaking

Having state-of-the-art equipment allows us to use new groundbreaking surgical techniques, allowing our patients in Richmond to benefit sooner from equipment that has become the new standard of care.

-Dr. Daniel Kopac

surgical techniques, allowing our patients in Richmond to benefit sooner from equipment that has become the new standard of care," says Dr. Daniel Kopac, head of surgery and a vascular and general surgeon at Richmond Hospital. "The latest generation of surgical equipment also allows us to attract and retain the best and the brightest surgeons who seek out hospitals in which to use their surgical skills."

A highlight of Surgical Restart is a new portable, state-of-the-art minimally invasive surgical system. Four of the eight Operating Rooms will receive "technology facelifts" for wireless connectivity and ultrafine 4K resolution screens. Minimally invasive surgeries include abdominal surgery, colon cancer

surgery and orthopedic procedures, and offer benefits for patients that include faster healing, faster procedures, less pain, less bleeding, shorter hospital stays and faster return to an optimal life.

New surgical equipment also includes revolutionary SPY technology that allows surgeons new computer-enhanced visualizations to ensure proper blood flow to organs in real-time, ensuring greater accuracy, greater patient safety, and greater assurance for surgeons performing procedures.

"Recent events have thrust our health care teams into the spotlight, focusing on how important good health is to all of us and how vital donors

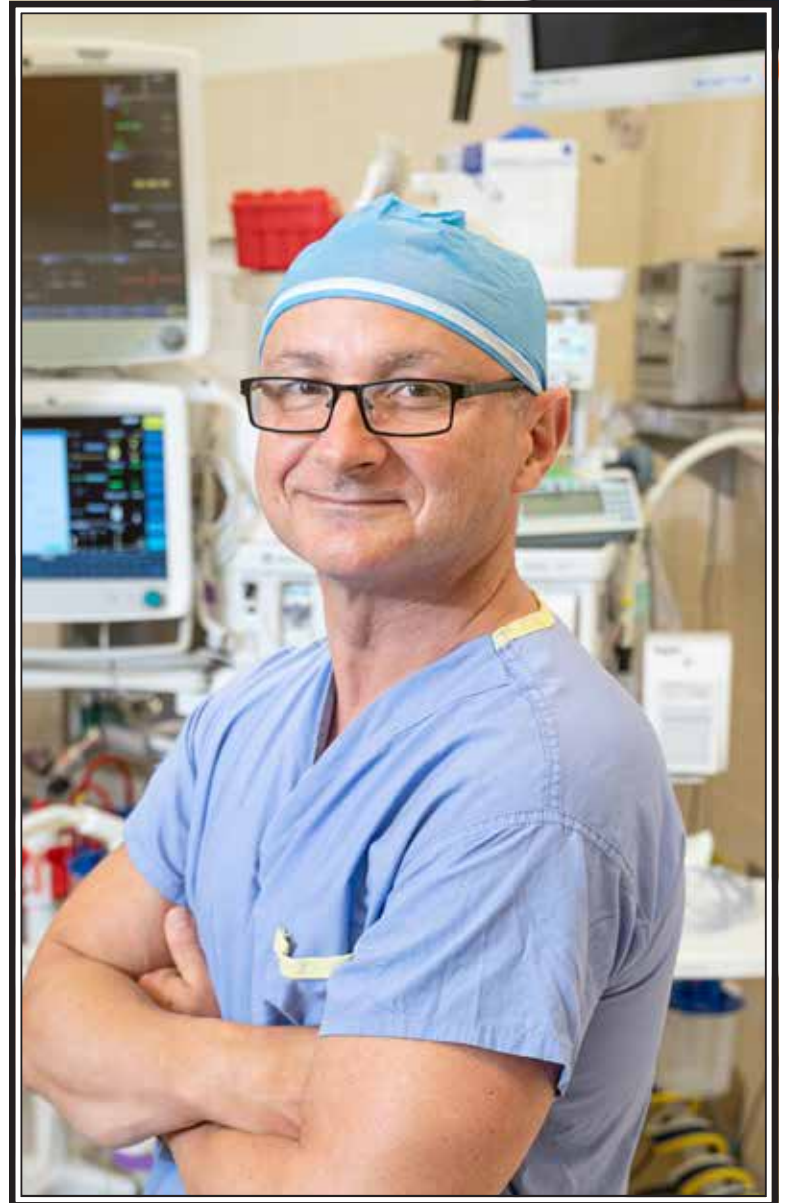


Photo courtesy Richmond Hospital

Dr. Daniel Kopac is head of surgery at Richmond Hospital.

from our community are in bringing the best in care close to home," says Natalie Meixner, president and CEO of the Richmond Hospital Foundation. "We believe now is the time to invite philanthropic leaders to take action to help fund what's innovative and necessary to help our surgeons care for those who need it most."

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Practice safety in small gatherings

Even when hosting small gatherings, adhering to all safety protocols is paramount.

The Government of Canada is reminding guests to follow recommended practices for protecting themselves and others. In addition, it is advising to:

- host gatherings outdoors
- ensure the size of the gathering meets local public health guidelines

- encourage guests to bring their own food and drinks, and avoid sharing snack bowls or using hands to eat from the same bowl

- use disposable dishes and cutlery
- promote hand hygiene by providing liquid soap, no-touch waste containers and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Full details can be found at www.canada.ca/en/public-health

RAPS COMMUNITY REPORT Caring for the animals who care for us

RAPS asks public to keep an eye out for neglected animals



Pat
Johnson

With the help of Richmond RCMP, animal control officers from the Regional Animal Protection Society (RAPS) rescued 10 animals from horrific conditions in a Richmond home on Aug. 8. Police were notified by neighbours, who were concerned about the well-being of the animals. The police confiscated the animals to RAPS' care.

"It appears that the animals' guardian was out of the country when the pandemic began and was relying on friends and family to care for the animals," says RAPS CEO Eyal Lichtmann. "Sadly, the conditions in which we found the animals was far from acceptable."

There were overflowing litter boxes, feces and urine throughout the home and evidence of neglect and inadequate human companionship. In all, 10 animals were taken into the care of RAPS—two dogs, two adult cats, four adolescent cats and two kittens. All the animals were infested with fleas. For kittens, fleas can be life-threatening because young cats can become anemic. The dogs were also badly matted.

"Fortunately, a veterinary exam indicates that they are otherwise in relatively good health," says Lichtmann. "While they were all stressed by the situation and their move to the RAPS Animal Shelter, they actually seemed happy to see us and they are all quite friendly and well socialized."

The situation has led RAPS to issue a public appeal.

"This is a time when many people are experiencing challenges and our normal routines have been upset," Lichtmann says. "There may be rea-



Photos courtesy Regional Animal
Protection Society

Ten animals were rescued from a home in Richmond and taken into the care of RAPS Aug. 8.

sons why our schedules or habits change. But animals require consistent and adequate care and attention. We are asking people to be especially vigilant about the animals in our community right now. If you are out on a walk or a bike ride, or chatting with neighbours, check in with the animals who share our community. If you have any concerns, call RAPS. If you see something, say something."

The case is being investigated by the BC SPCA, which is responsible for enforcement of provincial legislation around neglect or abuse of animals. Meanwhile, Lichtmann is expressing gratitude to the concerned neighbours who notified police—and the Richmond RCMP for a speedy and compassionate response.

"Animal welfare organizations like ours strive



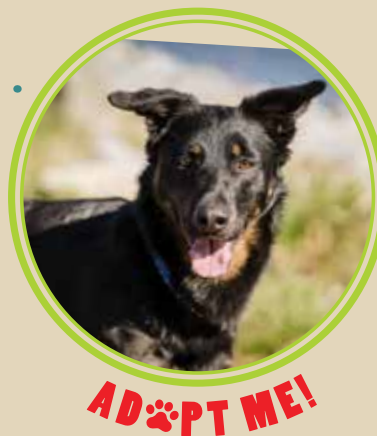
to eliminate animal cruelty and neglect," says Lichtmann. "But we depend on the eyes and ears of people in the community to help alert us to situations. We are deeply grateful to the neighbours who did not turn a blind eye to this situation. They may have saved lives. We are also so thankful to the officers who assisted us through the process. It is reassuring that they recognize that animals are an integral part of our community too."

Pat Johnson is communications manager for the Regional Animal Protection Society.

MY NAME IS CHIPS

Majestic Chips has made great progress since coming to us as a stray and not being reclaimed. He is a very energetic, loving and affectionate boy once given time. He has probably suffered some sort of trauma, as he finds it difficult to trust new people, so we are looking for someone who has experience with fear-reactive dogs, as Chips is still learning how to trust new people and build relationships with them.

****Due to COVID-19, all meet and greets will be by appointment only. Please call us at 604-275-2036 to set up an appointment.****



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REGIONAL ANIMAL PROTECTION SOCIETY (RAPS)

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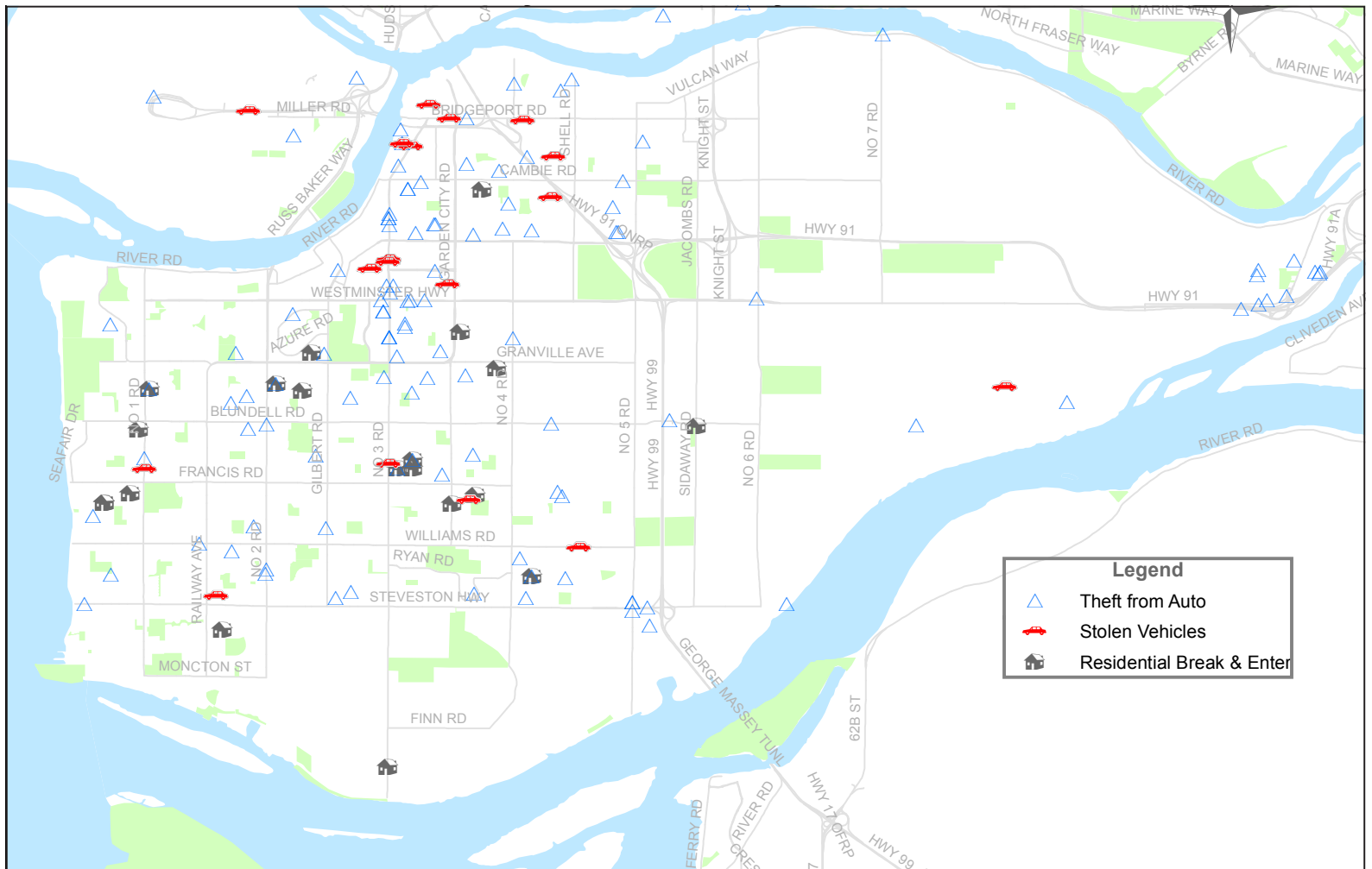
The RAPS Animal Hospital and Animal Ambulance are supported by Applewood Nissan





RCMP

Crime Map July 1 - 31, 2020



City and RCMP join forces to erase hate

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The city and Richmond RCMP are partnering for an anti-hate campaign.

Originally a result of recent racially-motivated incidents, the poster also addresses other forms of hate. People are urged to reach out to police if they experience or witness any hateful behaviour.

"We are sensitive to the fact that our community is woven from many cultures and ethnicities, as is the makeup of our officers that proudly serve Richmond," says Supt. Will Ng, officer in charge of the Richmond detachment. "Be assured that we will always investigate and treat all hate-motivated crimes seriously and continue to do our utmost in protecting our community."

The RCMP released a statement saying it condemns all forms of racism and will investigate every report of hate that is brought forward. These sentiments were echoed by Mayor Malcolm Brodie.

"The public can be certain the City of Richmond

does not, and never will, tolerate hateful behaviour," says Brodie. "Such attitudes and actions do not reflect the community's celebration of our rich history of culture and diversity. Council supports the RCMP's focus on building public awareness to call for help if they experience any hateful behaviour."

The new posters will be placed in public buildings around the city. Richmond RCMP will also disseminate the posters through Richmond RCMP Business Link and Block Watch, as well as have officers from the Community Policing Unit distribute them to the community.

To report a hate motivated incident contact Richmond RCMP at 9-1-1 for emergencies or 604-278-1212 for non-emergencies.

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Photo courtesy Richmond RCMP
A new initiative from the city and Richmond RCMP aims to bring attention to hate through a poster campaign.



hate

HAS NO PLACE.

If you've been the target of a racially motivated incident call police.

This includes any incident believed to be motivated by hatred or prejudice focused towards any identifiable person, group or property.

Emergency: 9-1-1
Non-emergency: 604-278-1212

仇恨

在我们的社区无立足之处

若你成为带有种族歧视动机事件所针对的目标，请致电警察。

类似的事件包括因仇恨或偏见引起的，针对的目标可以是任何认可的，团体或财产。

紧急电话 9-1-1
非紧急电话 604-278-1212

BC students to return to school Sept. 10

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Students throughout BC will return to school on Sept. 10 after deliberation by provincial authorities.

This gradual restart aims to allow extra time for students and staff to learn about new health and safety measures.

"Schools are going to look different in September," said Education Minister Rob Fleming. "Staff, students and parents need time to get familiar with all the new health and safety procedures that are designed to keep them safe and confident in their school settings."

Starting Sept. 8, staff will meet with their school's health and safety committee to receive instructions about how the updated guidelines, developed with the BC Centre for Disease Control and provincial health officer, will work in their school. This will also allow time for educators and staff to adjust to their new routines, finalize plans for learning groups, review health and safety protocols, and confirm lesson plans that align with the new normal in schools.

Students will be welcomed back by Sept. 10 and will begin by getting familiar with new classroom layouts. Students will be assigned to their class, find out who is in their learning group, practice new routines and familiarize themselves with how to safely move from their classroom to other areas of the school.

Additional guidelines will be available to support school districts with their restart plans. These guidelines will include information about children who require extra support, hybrid instruction for large urban high schools, minimizing physical contact within learning groups, and before- and after-school child care.

"By working collaboratively with leaders in our education system, we are making sure students and staff are safe, ready and welcome when they return to school in September," Fleming said.

Teri Mooring, president of the BC teachers' federation, said she's still looking for more details from the provincial government.

"The plans are still underway but there aren't enough details and information right now for folks," she said. "It's understandable that there's a high level of concern and stress about what it'll look like in schools in September."

Mooring emphasized that the safety of staff and students is the top priority.

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Photo via flickr.com

The Friends of the Richmond Library is running its annual Whale of a Book Sale with pre-packaged books.

Library book sale goes curbside

By DON FENNELL

@rmdsentinel

Through the years, the Friends of the Richmond Library Whale of a Book Sale has evolved into a popular fundraiser eagerly anticipated by readers of all ages. But when the pandemic was declared in March, all such fundraisers were put on hold.

But, following much deliberation, a unique version of the tradition is set to debut.

The first Curbside Book Sale will be held Aug. 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the south end parking lot at the Cambie branch of Richmond Public Library, 11590 Cambie Rd. The sale will feature what Friends of the Richmond Library publicist Pat Ng describes as "fabulous deals of fiction books pre-packaged by genre and author, Chinese books and surprise picks all at \$2 a bag."

There will also be quality children's and fiction books available at \$2 each.

Patrons are asked to bring their own bags or boxes, and the sale will be cash only with all proceeds benefitting Richmond public libraries.

Due to COVID-19, face masks will be required, and all patrons must keep a distance of two metres (six feet) from others. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

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Homeschooling in Canada gaining momentum

This is part one of a series of education stories.

By KRISTEN HOGETERP
Contributor

The number of families deciding to homeschool in Canada is growing.

A 2017 study by the Fraser Institute in Vancouver discovered that enrollment rates are rising across the country not only for private schools, but also for home learners.

The National Home Education Research Institute says families who homeschool their children usually do so for one or more of a few reasons, including concerns about the environment of a school, tailored learning experiences, religious education, and custom programs for children with special needs.

Richmond's Debbie Jiang decided to homeschool after her son Graham, who was in Grade 1 at the time, asked her to.

They have now been homeschooling for three years and enjoy the freedom and flexibility it gives them.

But what exactly is homeschooling?

Homeschooling is a blanket term used to describe all students that learn at home. These include distributed learners, registered home learners, and even unschoolers. Distributed learning students enroll with a school, usually an online school, and complete and submit their coursework to a teacher remotely. They receive support and resources from whichever school they enroll with, and pay no additional fees after initial tuition, which is somewhere around \$200 per student per year. And home learning students complete all their work independently.

BC home learners must register with the provincial government through a school, but other than that are completely on their own. Those who decide to register with a teacher will receive up to \$1,000 per child per year, but must submit portfolios and weekly reports to the teacher. If they choose to be completely independent, they may receive up to \$150 per child per year, but do not have to report to anyone or follow a specific schedule. The school a home learner registers with gets \$250 per student per year and is expected to supply the home learner with access to the resource library, extracurricular activities, and other similar benefits.

Then there are unschoolers. This radical branch of homeschooling is child-directed, as parents of unschoolers believe that children who learn what they wish to learn will be more interested in what they learn and retain more of the information. They believe that if children do not



Photo by Debbie Jiang

For Graham Jiang, even outings to the park can be part of a regular homeschool day.

know something and they feel the need to, they will want to learn.

Whichever path of homeschooling families decide to take, there will be a lot of effort involved.

So what if parents feel like they are unqualified to teach their children? What if they do not think they can handle the workload?

"Every parent is qualified to homeschool. It's not about academics as much as it is character building and spending time knowing your child really well," says Jiang.

Parents don't need to have all the academic answers in order to homeschool. They just need to direct their children to know where to look for them.

Children can look up the information on their own, thus gaining not only the information but research experience in the process. And the bonus of this is that the student is not only learning they are also learning how to learn. This prepares them in the future for situations when they will need to learn on their own.

Another way homeschool families can share information and learn together is through a co-op, which is similar to a group class. Children get together in a central location, such as a church or community centre, to learn, teach, and form friendships at these co-ops, also known sometimes as community classes.

Homeschool students may attend classes in co-ops anywhere from one hour to three days

per week, depending on the program. The systems are flexible and allow for many different learning styles to be incorporated. Parents and older siblings may volunteer to lead and teach different classes based on their interests and areas of expertise, and the community learns together. This is a way to build community and teach social skills to the children because they must interact with others in many different age groups.

"We are a community and it feels like hanging out with family," says Jiang. "There are only 30 of us, and the kids and parents alike enjoy being with each other."

Co-ops are an integral part of many homeschoolers' lives, and it is perhaps in this area that they are feeling the pandemic the most. Many are turning to video conferences and online meetings.

"Many classes that our children attended were shut down and they can't even play with friends that are next door," says one homeschooling father of two, who requested his name not be published. "But in terms of academic education, nothing has changed. We're looking forward to seeing family and friends and doing more outdoor activities (after the pandemic)."

Although it is not always easy, both parents and children involved see homeschooling as a privilege and continue to be thankful for the new opportunities.

Partners pour hearts into Sweet Digz

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmond's mineral-rich clay soil is ideal for farming says Kimi Hendess. And she would know: Hendess and her partner Kareno Hawbolt own Sweet Digz Farm, where they grow over 40 different crops on around three acres of land.

Through Sweet Digz's community-supported agriculture model, people can protect local farmland and support food security. Each year, people can become members and buy into the harvest in advance of the season.

The program is one of only a few in Richmond, and Hendess and Hawbolt endeavour to do most of the work themselves rather than hiring a large staff and only concentrating on the management aspects.

"We've always chosen to keep it small because we still want to be doing the farming (ourselves)," says Hendess. "Our demand definitely exceeds our supply."

This year Sweet Digz had to hire a delivery person in addition to the part-time staff who help them over the summer. They also have volunteers who help with deliveries and harvesting. Staying at a small scale means longer working hours for Hawbolt and Hendess, who take just six weeks off annually, in December and January, to decompress.

"We're lucky enough to have a family cabin that we can go to," says Hendess. "We try to just go offline—we have to recover from complete burnout."

After a break, they spend the rest of the winter months doing business development and planning for the season ahead. While field work takes precedence, there are also other elements of the business that require attention year-round.

"We had to learn to only do what's necessary," she says. "That's how we're able to balance the field work with the business side. A lot of people wouldn't call it balance—we don't really sleep and have a life. That's farming. If you talk to any farmer, the season is just 'go go go.'"

Despite the hard work, Hendess says the benefits far outweigh the challenges. They receive a lot of love and appreciation from their customers, who are glad to have access to local fresh produce. But like many industries, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about several changes for Sweet Digz, including the cancellation of their annual market. Hendess notes that the isolation and quarantine most people were going through didn't occur for them—as farmers, they're used to being busy with little time for socializing.

"We've realized during this time how much of a privilege it is to have this work," says Hendess. "We have this land we lease, and that we're able to work the earth, and this work is meaningful to us and people appreciate it."

Hendess grew up in North Delta, and Hawbolt in

Richmond. While Hawbolt has been farming for 20 years, Hendess found her way to the profession through an interest in landscaping and climate change. They found their current location in 2013 and have been on a year-to-year lease ever since.

Hendess recognizes the challenges faced by new farmers, particularly the lack of a trades or apprenticeship program. This creates a huge risk for new farmers, who may not know the ins and outs of the trade. But she and Hawbolt were mentored by a local generational farmer.

"There's a generation of farmers in Richmond who are aging out and looking for people to come in behind them," says Hendess. "It's about relationships and learning from people."



Photos courtesy Kimi Hendess
Kimi Hendess and Kareno Hawbolt have owned Sweet Digz Farm in Richmond since 2013.

"Often we say we aren't going to grow onions," says Hendess. "They're so cheap in the grocery store, but they're so much work (to grow). Organic agriculture is so much about hand weeding, and anything that's hard to weed is such a big challenge."

But customers love onions, and Hendess and Hawbolt like to provide variety. This also contributes to their resilience plan.

"If something happens to one crop, then we have all these other crops," says Hendess. "Something else will work out anyway, even if one crop doesn't."

Potatoes are another challenge, particularly because hand digging is labour-intensive, but a harvest beloved by customers. Hendess says she and Hawbolt eat a lot of potatoes throughout the winter, using them as a source of protein.

In addition to the delicious fresh food they eat regularly, Hendess says the time spent in nature has an indescribable quality she loves.

"It's just that quiet joy really, those moments when the sun is setting or it's the early morning," says Hendess. "You see these little magical things being in nature and working in nature all the time. That's one of the things that makes it all worthwhile."

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Photo submitted

Richmond-Steveston MLA John Yap presented a BC community gaming grant to the Richmond Music School Society which was represented by board president Ginna Ng and directors Juanna Chan and Gallant Ma.

Music school receives financial boost

Richmond Music School has received a welcomed gift. Celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, the community's largest and oldest not-for-profit music school has received a BC community grant of \$45,000. It was presented to members by Richmond-Steveston MLA John Yap.

Originally founded by a group of parents seeking quality music education for their children, the school is a founding member of the BC Association of Music Schools. Its focus is on providing accessible music education to all sectors of the community, with an emphasis on program excellence and community work.

Offering a range of instruction to all age groups and abilities, most of its instruction is aimed toward completing the Canadian Royal Conservatory of Music exams or the UK Associated Board of the Royal School of Music as well as preparing for local music festivals and competitions.

The school remains closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, but is offering online lessons. For details call 604-272-5227 or email info@richmond-musicschool.ca

Steveston Historical Society receives grant

One of the city's best-known historical groups has received a BC community gaming grant.

Dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Steveston, the Steveston Historical Society received a cheque for \$13,700 from Richmond-Steveston MLA John Yap.

Organized in 1976, the society has since 1977 operated (along with the City of Richmond) the Steveston Museum and Visitor Centre which is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Built during Steveston's heyday, the historic building at 3811 Moncton St. was the community's first bank operating as the Northern Bank in 1905. It then became a Royal Bank for almost half a century.

In 1966, Dr. James Campbell operated a medical practice there until selling the building in 1977.



Photo submitted

Richmond-Steveston MLA John Yap presented the Steveston Historical Society with a BC community gaming grant for \$13,700. Accepting on behalf of the society were co-chair and former city councillor Linda Barnes, director Melissa Zhang, treasurer Carmen Keitsch and second vice chair Michael Chiu.

STR8TS

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