



ON THE FAST TRACK

**Musician Cole James
embracing opportunity**

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Richmond hip-hop/reggaeton singer and songwriter Cole James has just dropped his latest single, *Bonita*.

Photo submitted

Richmond endures record heat

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

Few things evoke conversation like the weather. And usually it's because of extremes.

Common refrains include "It's too cold" or "Will it ever stop raining?"

So in a region of the world known for "the wet stuff," and where it rains an average of 15 millimetres each day over the course of the year, it's understandable residents get excited when summer sets in and precipitation drops off to less than 80 millimetres for all of July and August.

But what Richmonders—used to fairly temperate conditions throughout the year—and residents throughout the province experienced during the first week of this summer was far beyond normal. In fact, the record-shattering heat wave that blanketed British Columbia last week produced new highs here, there, and everywhere.

The mercury reached a sizzling 30.1 degrees Celsius on June 27 at Vancouver International Airport—not only the highest figure ever on that date, but on any date since record keeping began. But the new mark didn't last long, eclipsed by more than a degree-and-a-half on June 28, and again at 3 p.m. the following day when the temperature reached 32.1 (90 Fahrenheit). With relative humidity at 45 per cent, it felt more like 39 degrees, and southeasterly winds of just eight kilometres per hour did little to help cool the air. Lytton, a desert village in B.C.'s Fraser Canyon, topped out at a sweltering 49.4 Celsius (121 Fahrenheit) on June 29—establishing the highest temperature ever recorded in Canada, and eclipsing the previous record of 45 degrees in Yellow Grass, Sask. in 1937.

Not only did last week's highly unusual ridge of high pressure create a solid dome of sunshine over our province, but it arrived at the end of June. While normally fine weather can be expected, the temperature rarely goes much above the 20 degree Celsius mark. At times last week's scorching heat was close to unbearable—and potentially dangerous. Safety precautions were frequently issued, and people were encouraged to check up on family, friends and neighbours and those with medical conditions. As well, schools in the district were kept closed.

Based on the forecast, predicting daytime highs to range from 29 to 38 degrees over several days, the City of Richmond proactively issued an advisory on June 25. The release offered suggestions for relief from the heat, and even included a detailed map indicating the location of water fountains and other places offering shade and/or comfort. It also suggested enjoying the air conditioning at one of the city's four libraries or viewing the work of local artists at the Richmond Art Gallery.



Photo via Wikimedia Commons

Richmonders sought relief from the record-breaking heat wave that covered the province with an unusual ridge of high pressure last week. It resulted in a record 32.1 degrees Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) on June 29—the highest temperature ever at Vancouver International Airport.

Richmond also established four temporary shelters as respite from the heat, with plans to keep them open until the end of September.

But if there was any good timing for a heat wave it was now, said local farmer Bill Zylmans of W&A Farms.

"Of course this is unprecedented, but luckily strawberries are about finished and Richmond doesn't grow raspberries. For vegetables, as long as you have a good supply of clean water we will get through this. For us the timing could not be better for a heat wave. Crops are growing, and for most vegetables and potatoes and pumpkins it will be O.K. The important thing of course, as I've said in the past, is that the municipality really supports agriculture irrigation infrastructure."

We may have to get used to extreme weather more often though. Experts say global warming and the effects of climate change are to blame.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Homicide team says shooting not gang-related

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A June 25 shooting in Richmond that killed two people is not related to the Lower Mainland gang conflict, according to investigators.

Richmond RCMP arrived at a home near Westminster Highway and Barnard Drive around 8:40 p.m. and found two people deceased. The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) says evidence indicates that this was an isolated incident, and one of the people

who died was a victim of a homicide.

In the last year, there have been more than 20 homicides believed to be connected to the ongoing gang conflict. This includes at least five in Richmond—Anees Mohammed on Jan. 7, Dilraj Johal on Jan. 9, Chaten and Joban Dhindsa on March 19 and Karman Grewal on May 9. In May, the province's anti-gang agency released names and photos of men who pose a risk if they are spotted.

"We are not looking for any outstanding suspects. We will be reaching out to family and friends of the persons involved, seeking infor-

mation, and offering support," said IHIT Sgt. David Lee about the most recent incident in Richmond.

Anyone who has information, or who was in the area of Barnard Drive and Westminster Highway in the hours leading up to the incident, is encouraged to contact the IHIT Information Line at 1-877-551-IHIT (4448), or by email at ihit-info@rcmp-grc.gc.ca.

Should you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers by phone at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

New bike park is proving popular

The much anticipated Railway Granville Bike Park is now a reality.

Located at 5000 Granville Ave., the park opened June 18, just in time to be explored all summer long. Challenging terrain and obstacles, built for all ages and rider abilities, are sure to enhance bike handling and skill development as well as offer hours of fun and adventure.

The 0.2 hectare (0.5 acre) park was built with community input provided through the LetsTalkRichmond.ca consultation process. The resulting final design that was built on site incorporates many of the comments received.

Key features of the bike park include an asphalt pump track with beginner, intermediate and advanced ride lines, log rides, several ladder bridges and other technical obstacles. A map of the park noting the difficulty rating of each pump track, ride-line and technical obstacle is located at each of the two entry points. Boulders at each entrance also serve as informal seating, hangout points and a place to lean bikes.

Easily accessed by bike from the Railway Greenway or by bike lanes and transit along Granville and Railway Avenues, the park's location is close to publicly accessible washrooms and other sport facilities, including a skateboard park, and basketball courts at Thompson Community Centre and J.N. Burnett Secondary School.

Over the next few months, final adjustments to the asphalt surfacing will be made, and painted ride lines and vegetation will be installed.



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

Railway Granville Bike Park opened in June.

Strata raises concerns over community garden



Photo screen grab from Google Maps

Nearby residents are concerned about a proposed community garden on Railway Avenue.

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A community garden proposed on Railway Avenue, next to Branscombe House, is being met with concern by residents of a nearby complex.

Birchwood Estates strata chair Roidon Lamb addressed councillors at a parks, recreation and community services meeting late last month. Lamb says many residents in the 65-unit complex at 4800 Trimaran Dr. have issues with the proposed garden's location.

"Why would a beautiful park be destroyed to

accommodate 40 gardeners, who use it for six months of the year and the rest of the year it is a total eyesore?" Lamb asked in an email to the city.

"In its present state, dozens of people use it year-round, with their kids, not only from our complex (but) several surrounding areas as well."

Lamb's other concerns include increased rodent presence, manure smell, rotting produce and flies, foot traffic and security issues. She notes that other community gardens in Richmond have been vandalized.

City spokesperson Clay Adams says the size and scope of the planned garden has not yet been determined. Public consultation is planned.

"Parks staff is considering a seven- to 10-metre offset from the parking lot, which is also offset from the back fences another three to four metres. The city is also proposing a fence to enclose the community garden similar to those installed in other such gardens. Any layout and number of plots will all depend on consultation with the community," says Adams.

hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Despite pandemic, RCRG stays on course

Agency is Richmond's hub for volunteering and giving

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

COVID-19 may have turned the world upside down, but it failed to stop Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives from fulfilling its mandate.

Adopting a theme of Closed Doors, Open Hearts, the registered charity continued to serve as the hub for volunteering in the city—even when it meant having to pivot.

"As the world continues to be impacted by COVID, we continue to provide services valued by the community, just like we have for the past 49 years," said outgoing RCRG board chair Richard Vetter. "We've pivoted and we've adapted, while always remaining committed to our mission and ideals. As I end my tenure as chair, I've never been prouder to be part of this organization. It's been a unique pleasure to (see) amazing people do amazing work."

A registered charity that serves as a hub for volunteering and giving, RCRG is also a direct service provider, operating a child care resource and referral centre, the Richmond Christmas Fund, and a variety of seniors community support services.

During RCRG's recent annual general meeting held online, Richmond Centre MP Alice Wong said of the organization: "The more I know about RCRG, the more impressed I am. You serve people of all ages, including seniors, and as a former minister for seniors that's very close to my heart."

Wong also gave a shout out to the many volunteers, noting that "no non-profit can survive without dedicated volunteers like you."

B.C.'s parliamentary secretary for community development and non-profits Niki Sharma added that by staying true to a core mission of local philanthropy, RCRG has been able to navigate through the past year's challenges while "ensuring Richmond remains resilient and inclusive for those fortunate enough to call it home."

Mayor Malcolm Brodie lauded RCRG and its team of volunteers for their ongoing dedication, saying "RCRG is in the forefront of caring for our



Photo courtesy RCRG

Newly elected RCRG chair Rick Duff with Ed Gavsie, the organization's president and CEO. Led by Duff, RCRG's 2021-22 board of directors is made up of 14 community volunteers, who will provide the local charity with financial oversight, strategic guidance, and policy advice.

community. That you for how you add to it"

Rick Duff was elected to chair the 14-member slate of directors for 2021-22, with Jat Puri and Lawrie Portugal serving as vice-chairs. Rebecca Swaim has been named executive at large, while Christine Campbell will continue her long-time role as treasurer. Zinnia Johnston, Charmaine Ponnambalam, Linda Reid, Richard Vetter, Antony Wang, Ray Wang, Pat Watson, Lisa Wong and Melissa Zhang make up the remainder of the board elected virtually on June 16.

Said RCRG president and CEO Ed Gavsie of Duff: "Rick is an experienced community leader. From fund development to community engagement, his expertise will help our organization grow and thrive, so we can meet the current and future needs of Richmond residents."

Duff succeeds Vetter, who remains on the board after serving two years as chair.

"Richard's impact on our organization cannot be overstated," said Gavsie. "He led RCRG throughout the COVID-19 crisis, and his calm, considered approach influenced our response. (And) with Linda coming on board, and Pat returning, we have two people who know the Richmond community better than anyone. Antony, on the other hand, brings a more youth-focused perspective. This balance of experience and fresh ideas will lead to better decisions, both for our organization and the community."

The new board will lead RCRG through a significant milestone, as the organization celebrates its 50th anniversary.

"Over the years, hundreds of board members have supported our work and contributed to our success," said Gavsie. "This year's group will carry on that legacy."

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

RICHMOND SENTINEL
OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

Published by
RICHMOND SENTINEL NEWS INC.
200-3071 No. 5 Road,
Richmond, B.C., V6X 2T4

Advertising & Sponsorship
marketing@richmondsentinel.ca
778-325-1297

Newsroom
newsroom@richmondsentinel.ca
778-297-5005

Editor - Don Fennell
dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca



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Funded in part by the
Government of Canada

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City considering e-scooter pilot project

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmond is considering a pilot project that would allow electric kick scooters to travel within the city.

City staff are recommending councillors endorse an application to the province's e-scooter pilot program, which will partner with communities around the province. The staff recommendation will come before council members at this week's public works and transportation committee meeting.

Proposed traffic bylaw amendments would allow e-scooters on roads with bike lanes; local roads (those without lane lines or directional dividing lines with speed limits of 50km/h or less); roads with a speed limit of 30km/h; and shared off-street pathways.

City staff are recommending the maximum speed limit for e-scooters on roads be 20km/h, which is the average speed of a typical cyclist. On off-street pathways that may be shared with pedestrians—such as the Railway Greenway—the maximum speed limit would be 15km/h.

Additionally, to address concerns the city has received about the speed of both pedal bikes and e-bikes on shared pathways, the speed limit would be lowered to 15km/h for these cyclists to match the proposed speed limit for e-scooter users.

Part of the proposed traffic bylaw amendment would "explicitly prohibit bicycles, e-bikes and e-scooters from riding on the sidewalk unless otherwise signed."

Staff note that participation in the program would support the city's mobility targets, as well as greenhouse gas emission and carbon reduction goals.



Photo via flickr.com

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Electric kick scooters may soon be able to travel around Richmond.

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Masks remain mandatory at some businesses

*Province lifted more restrictions
July 1*

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Although wearing face masks is no longer mandated by the province, some Richmond businesses will continue to require their patrons to do so.

Jennifer Yates, owner of Legends Pub & Restaurant on Blundell Road, says customers will still be asked to wear a mask when not seated at their table.

"For now, until maybe a week or two goes by possibly, we will still wear them," she says. "It's easy to stop it, (but) harder to start it again."

Yates says throughout the pandemic, she and her staff have had to police mask wearing when patrons are uncooperative. But, she adds the Step 3 guidelines will bring some positive change, including the fact that sporting events can be shown and larger groups can be seated.

"There's no limit to seating, but we still don't want people to move around. I don't know if we'll have large groups here—I think we're still going to be a little patient on that, and maybe we'll allow more than six people at a table," says Yates.

She plans to show the next UFC fight at the pub on July 10—something that hasn't been possible since last year. Despite the challenges, Yates is grateful for the loyalty of her customers.

"We've been lucky, our customers have been really kind to us and continued to come whenever we had space," she says. "Hopefully the job that the staff has done has made people confident, and (they'll) want to come back and visit us."

Although some restrictions are lifting for restaurants and bars, others remain in place—like the need to have distancing and barriers between tables. Devin Richert, general manager of Tugboat Annie's Pub & Grille on Graybar Road, doesn't anticipate much change compared to the step that reopened indoor dining.

"We are going to make it clear that (masks) are recommended but not mandatory, and we're not going to require them," he adds.

At workplaces, COVID-19 safety plans will be replaced by communicable disease plans, with a focus on hand-washing, personal hygiene, ventilation and staying home when sick. Some higher-risk workplaces may require additional safety precautions, and barriers may still be in place at some locations such as retail and grocery stores.

"Some businesses will be heartened by the good news, and others will be approaching the changes with a bit of trepidation," says Richmond chamber of commerce president and CEO Dan Baxter. "For employers whose businesses depend on events, for instance, they'll be gladly welcoming the news



Photo screen grab from Google Maps

At Legends Pub & Restaurant, patrons will still be asked to wear a mask if they are not seated at their table according to owner Jennifer Yates.

of potentially increased attendance; bars will welcome the return to normal liquor service hours. (Last week) we also saw some big news announced for the River Rock, which is one of Richmond's largest employers, as casinos are allowed to reopen at reduced capacity."

Baxter adds that any business may choose to require masks as part of its safety plan, and that people should continue to have one handy.

***For now, until maybe
a week or two goes by
possibly, we will still
wear (masks).***

— Jennifer Yates

"Unfortunately, we've all seen the videos of abusive customers who were unhappy with the mask requirement," he says. "For businesses who are comfortable allowing masks to be optional indoors, the change in this mandate will take that burden away from their team."

The City of Richmond also announced June 30 it will maintain its mandatory mask order in indoor city-operated buildings.

The province initially imposed its mask mandate on Nov. 19. However, provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said last week that removing masks is "in many ways an incentive for people who have been immunized, have received two doses of vac-

cine."

It is recommended that those who are not fully vaccinated—14 days past their second dose of vaccine—continue to wear masks in indoor public settings.

"It is important for us to continue to wear masks in those indoor settings when we're around people that we don't know and where we not yet have been fully protected," said Henry.

But she added that risk in the community is changing "dramatically," especially for those who are vaccinated.

"We are at the point where I believe it's important that we take away orders as soon as we can and that we take what we call the least restrictive means," said Henry. "And so we'll be moving to guidance again around where it is important for people to continue to wear masks and where—if you're immunized—you may not need to rely on that last layer of protection anymore."

The criteria for moving to Step 3 was at least 70 per cent of the adult population vaccinated with their first dose, along with low case counts and declining COVID-19 hospitalizations. As of June 29—the day health officials announced the move to Step 3—Health Minister Adrian Dix said 78.3 per cent of adult British Columbians had received one dose and 31.6 per cent had received two doses.

On June 29 there were 29 new cases and 110 people hospitalized with active cases. At the peak of the third wave, new cases reached 1,293 on April 8 and hospitalizations peaked at 515 on April 28. The seven-day average of new cases currently sits at 58, down from a high of 1,130 recorded in early April.

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

A place to call their own

*Habitat for Humanity helps
Zaheer family settle*

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

Noor Zaheer finally has peace of mind. Forced to move several times because of a daughter's chronic asthma and allergies, he and his family can now breathe easy thanks to Habitat for Humanity.

"After a lot of struggles we found out about Habitat for Humanity and finally had the opportunity to move into Richmond," he says. "This opportunity means a lot to my family and I. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that is changing the lives of ourselves as well as our kids. Now we can concentrate more on our kids' education for a bright and fruitful future."

Originally from Afghanistan, Zaheer came to Canada seeking a better life. But throughout the journey, he's been equally dedicated to giving back.

A school bus driver for children with disabilities, he and his wife (a chef's assistant at White Spot) and their four children have remained steadfast in their community efforts. That includes volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, the non-profit, non-government organization whose mission is to mobilize volunteers and community partners in building affordable housing and promote home ownership as a means to break the cycle of poverty.

"It is an honour to be a member of one of the most respected organizations in the world," Zaheer says. "We have no words to express our feelings and happiness. We are thankful to Habitat for Humanity, the donors, the volunteers, and the Government of British Columbia. Their support and contribution made this possible."



Photo courtesy Habitat for Humanity

Thanks to Habitat for Humanity, Noor Zaheer and his family finally have peace of mind with a home of their own.

Now with the family settled, the Zaheers can enjoy the "beautiful city" of Richmond.

"It has access to the best facilities, services, schools, malls, and lots of opportunities to learn from and grow," he explains. "Our children are 15, 14, seven and six. The boys have a passion for playing basketball and soccer, and the girls'

favourite activities include reading, drawing and painting."

While the pandemic has cast a negative shadow, the Zaheer story offers a bright ray of hope going forward—thanks to people who care and a willingness to pitch in and lend a hand.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

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RICHMOND AT A GLANCE

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Giving youth mental health a boost

Those aged 12 to 24 can get counselling and support

By **HANNAH SCOTT**

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Gabrielle Cometa is helping to change the direction of youth-centred care at Foundry Richmond.

The peer voice is a crucial element of the model, which brings services including walk-in counselling and sexual health assistance together under one roof for anyone aged 12 to 24.

Cometa, 25, is a member of three different advisory councils at Foundry Richmond, making sure the youth voice is present when making decisions. A former user of its services herself, she says it's been impactful to help shape youth-based offerings.

"The Foundry model is very peer support oriented," says Cometa. "The best people to serve those who need mental health help, or help in general, are those who have experienced the (same) struggles they've been through."

Cometa adds that she appreciated the counsellors' interest in learning about many aspects of what she was struggling with, to try to connect pieces and provide appropriate help.

"It made me feel hopeful that there's a place that knows there's not just one thing and that's it—they're aware that all of these things are connected."

She's also a member of the space planning council, helping to make plans for the permanent home of Foundry Richmond—currently operating in an interim location. Opening during the pandemic also created some logistical challenges as staff were getting set up in the community. Walk-in, in-person appointments became pre-booked virtual ones.

But Foundry Richmond director Tania Wicken says the virtual option has worked well, given the smaller size of the current interim space—and allowed even more youth to find accessible local



Photo submitted

Foundry Richmond takes youth under its wing, providing accessible mental health and counselling services. Gabrielle Cometa is a former user of its services, and now a member of three of its advisory councils.

help.

"I think you get the clients you would get in a lot of traditional agency settings, and then you get a whole bunch of clients that might have fallen through the cracks (at another agency) because they couldn't have fit into the structure that was there," says walk-in counsellor Sean Ford. "Not a day goes by that I don't notice the diversity."

Ford adds that the virtual sessions have been "quite convenient," and he hopes to implement some of the things he's learned in his post-pandemic practice.

"It's been really wonderful and encouraging to be part of a team that keeps adapting and embracing change."

For example, although many of the sexual health nurses were redeployed during the pandemic, doctors came in to pick up additional shifts, which Ford says allowed the sexual health services to continue.

Despite the drop-in nature, Ford says it's still possible for clients to build a trust relationship with a

counsellor—they can request to see the same counsellor each time to further a connection.

Wicken adds that some clients whose needs might be a better fit for other services are connected to those services via staff, who work to bridge the gap. She says the centre currently serves about 200 people a month, and those numbers keep growing.

"We can see the integration starting to happen: (people) are coming in for one thing and getting other services on site," Wicken adds.

She says the centre's greatest achievement has been improving accessibility for counselling in the community.

"It's been great to see how many youth are calling up for appointments with a variety of things going on for them, and being able to provide that counselling on the spot," she says. "(We have) a passionate, dedicated professional team, and I think you really feel that and feel that it's a non-judgmental inclusive space for youth to share what they want to share."

Ford works with a variety of different people every day, a sign that the service is working for the entire community.

"I get these smaller moments in my day when I talk to a few different youth who are struggling with wildly different situations, and the support I offer is different," he says. "We're not just a niche—we're here for everyone. That's something I take a lot of pride in."

And the accessibility of Foundry's services is an advantage: a central location, lack of financial barrier, and in-the-moment help are beneficial, and young people can access services without parental permission. Cometa adds that being able to take your care into your own hands is empowering.

"If something like this had existed when I was in high school, I would have felt much more comfortable seeking help," says Cometa. "Just knowing that Foundry is a place for youth where they can have a voice—I think that's really important."

• hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

ABOUT FOUNDRY:

- Foundry was started in 2009 by Dr. Steve Mathias.
- It was initially known as the Inner City Youth program.
- Foundry offers walk-in counselling, sexual health services, youth and parent peer support, and connections to other services.
- Mathias submitted a proposal to the province in 2014.
- The B.C. government and philanthropic donors funded the first five Foundry centres.

- The program expanded to 20 centres around the province.
- The Richmond location was announced in 2018 and opened in 2020.
- Foundry Richmond is supported in part by the Richmond Hospital Foundation.
- When Foundry Richmond moves to its permanent location, primary care and medical health services will be added as well.
- The centre typically operates mainly drop-in services, with some referrals from the hospital and other community agencies in addition to word-of-mouth spread.

Greaves a CHAMP on and off the pitch

By DON FENNELL

[@rmdsentinel](#)

Owen Greaves has never shied away from a challenge.

Born as a below the left elbow congenital amputee, he has continually demonstrated what is possible—not what's not.

"I have only known how to adapt and tackle obstacles, ever since I was born, which is where this perseverance type of mindset all started," he explains. "I am continuously learning how to overcome new and difficult challenges every single day. Once I have put my mind to an objective I will eventually complete the task at hand no matter what."

This mindset has become second nature to Greaves, who says it has played a pivotal role in becoming the person he is today.

That person is a talented, dedicated, and caring individual who, in September, will be entering his second year at UBC studying general arts. He is also someone as equally proficient on the athletic field as in the academic arena, as evidenced by his rightful place on the varsity men's soccer team.

"I have loved sports since a very young age because I really enjoy working hard to overcome all different types of hurdles that stand in my way," shares the 19-year-old Richmondite. "Sports have also provided an outlet for me to burn off some built up steam or energy, as well as the opportunity to create friendships and establish memories that will last forever."

Greaves began playing both organized baseball and soccer around the age of five, suggesting he "instantly" fell in love with these sports because of the challenges.

"I was never ever hesitant to jump right into any of these sports because I have always believed that I can do anything once I put my mind to it," he says.

As the years progressed, he continued to enjoy playing both baseball and soccer—and at a consistently strong level. However, when he was 13 years old he was forced to make a major decision: either continue playing both baseball and soccer at the second highest level, or choose to focus on one at the highest level.

"I thought long and hard and finally came to the decision that I would continue my soccer journey," he says, adding that throughout middle school and high school at Vancouver College he also played basketball.

Soccer continues to be Greaves' favourite sport and "will forever hold an immensely special place in my heart."

"I love soccer for an endless amount of reasons, but I particularly enjoy it because of how important it is to work extremely hard together as an entire team. I have always enjoyed both watching and of course playing soccer because it is just something I am very passionate about."

As a left-footed player, Greaves has nicely settled into the left back position with the UBC Thunderbirds. It's a role that carries a significant responsibility to defend and protect any threats coming down the wing or



Photos submitted

Richmond's Owen Greaves is an accomplished soccer player and dedicated spokesperson for the War Amps of Canada.

midfield. It also demands joining the attack once his team has properly secured possession of the ball.

Greaves' busy schedule doesn't leave him a lot of down time, but he continues to give back whenever possible to the War Amps of Canada.

"I feel very honoured and blessed to be a part of the War Amps for countless reasons," he says. "The War Amps have provided me with an endless amount of opportunities since a very young age such as attending annual BC CHAMP seminars, participating in the annual Steveston Salmon Festival parade, laying the wreath at Richmond city hall's cenotaph annually on Remembrance Day, and many more for which I am forever thankful."

The War Amps have also supported Greaves, since he was very young with numerous different prosthetic arms that have provided him with opportunities to learn how to ride a bike or workout both arms to ensure he doesn't overuse his dominant arm. This is fully made possible for CHAMPS (Child Amputees) all across Canada due to the War Amps' exceptional Key Tag Service which was created in 1946 by World War II Amputee Veterans.

"I know for a fact that I wouldn't be the person I am today if it wasn't for the War Amps of Canada, and their extraordinary Key Tag Service which has provided significant opportunities for me due to new prosthetics that have continuously gotten more technologically advanced over the years as I have grown in age and size," Greaves says. "The War Amps of Canada is a phenomenal program and I am so proud to be a part of the CHAMP family which will always hold a unique and dear spot within my heart."

Whether it's on the soccer pitch, in the classroom, or perhaps one day in a court of law (he's still deciding on a major area of study, but is thinking about going to law school), Greaves' positive attitude and contributions will always be welcomed.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Students collaborate on Indigenous mural

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

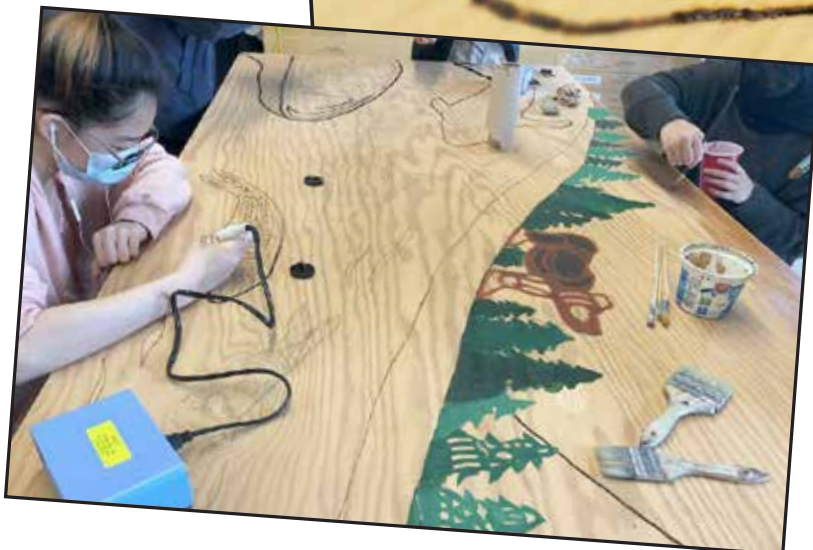
Art students at Richmond Secondary have left their mark on the school district offices thanks to the recent completion of a collaborative Indigenous mural.

The project's completion was also a triumph for another reason: the pandemic caused a long delay, and the group of students that started the project wasn't able to finish it. But the hard work of art teacher Allison Shelling and First Nations artist Christine MacKenzie—who grew up in Richmond—enabled a second group of students to pick up where the first group left off.

"I was interested in bringing the Indigenous perspective alive in an authentic way," explains Shelling.

What began as a standalone workshop became an ongoing mural project when the school received a district grant to do a commissioned piece for its office. Students started working with MacKenzie and designing the mural in January 2020, and were scheduled to start painting the day after spring break—but didn't return to school that year.

Shelling and MacKenzie persevered, and the board agreed to continue to



fund the project, which resumed at the beginning of this year with a new class of students. As with the first group, MacKenzie began by bringing in Indigenous artifacts and teaching students about their significance.

"When I initially came in, I shared a massive chunk of culture. I brought in items including bear hides, drums and traditional regalia," says MacKenzie.

Working with a theme of connection and unity, the mural's design symbolizes the harmony between the First Peoples and settler communities, as well as multicultural and LGBTQ+ inclusion. A combination of painting, pencil, and wood burning makes up the finished piece, which is about five metres long and inspired by the Northwest Coast formline style of art. The style is characterized by its use of ovoids and U-shapes.

"One side (of the mural) is very nature-oriented, it moves into the city landscape of Vancouver and Richmond, then into the Fraser River," says MacKenzie.

It was a proud moment for MacKenzie to be able to make an impact on the school district she grew up in. And she's also proud of the students, for what they were able to accomplish.

"Every time I worked with them, they got so much done—they set the bar high for the rest of my classes because of how hard they did work and how motivated they are," she says.

Shelling adds that the in-class focus on Indigenous culture and art practices helped students become aware of their role in reconciliation and recognized the collective importance

of things like land acknowledgements. As a result of the unique project, students also learned how to work together, create connections and build acceptance.

"They said you might forget individual projects you did in a class, or things you covered. (But) this piece was a really different type of project—it felt meaningful," says Shelling. "They felt proud of themselves that they were able to resolve it."

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Photos courtesy Allison Shelling

Richmond Secondary students worked on a mural, inspired by Indigenous art styles, that is now displayed inside the school board office.

Cole James destined for musical bliss

After keeping his talent a secret, local R&B/reggaeton artist is making up for lost time

By **DON FENNEL**
 @rmdsentinel

Cole James has always been on the fast track. Only now the dream of possibly playing pro hockey or basketball one day has been replaced by an emerging career in music.

The Steveston-London Secondary School grad started speaking when he was just six months old, and by nine months was already stringing-together short sentences. At the same time, he displayed a keen love—and aptitude—for music, singing along with famed children's musician Fred Penner (*The Cat Came Back*) from the age of one.

While learning to read was a little more challenging, singing lyrics for two or three hours a day helped. And soon he was even writing his own tunes.

But unsure how his friends would react, James kept his hobby a closely-guarded secret—until just a few years ago. At 21, he finally gained the confidence to share his talent and now seems destined for musical bliss.

One day, about four years ago while playing basketball with high school friend Benton Robertson, the two began a discussion that led to them to collaborate. In just a few weeks they had completed their first song.

James (born Cole Johnston) has just released his newest song *Bonita*, in collaboration with Balam Kiel. The appropriately fast-paced track is an energetic and engaging blend of reggaeton and hip-hop and a well-imagined collaboration of English and Spanish-speaking singers.

A friendship struck two years ago with Kiel, a Toronto-based Spanish artist who has worked with the likes of Snow, led to the team effort after James decided to transition his music from hip-hop to reggaeton—a music style that originated in Puerto Rico during the mid 1990s. The style evolved from dancehall and has been influenced by American hip-hop, Latin American, and Caribbean music with vocals including rapping and singing.

Until now, James had been writing and creating songs he thought people wanted to hear.

"I tried to make music that was popular with my friends," he says of a song he wrote in just a single session last October. "What I thought they would like and what might get me some buzz. But it



Featuring Spanish artist Balam Kiel, *Bonita* is the latest release by rising Richmond singer/songwriter Cole James.

Photo submitted

wasn't the music I was listening to. I like reggaeton and hip-hop—cheery and breezy. So, for the first time, I have created what I like. And I hope to find others that like this too."

James grew up a big fan of NSYNC (fronted by Justin Timberlake)—so big, in fact, he would wake up his dad many mornings asking him to put on a video of one of the late '90s mega teen pop group's concerts.

"Throughout elementary school I mostly listened to mainstream music and whatever was on

Throughout elementary school I mostly listened to mainstream music and whatever was on the radio, but as I grew older and had more of an ability to search for music I liked, I really gravitated towards R&B and reggae as well as a bit of rap.

— Cole James

the radio, but as I grew older and had more of an ability to search for music I liked, I really gravitated towards R&B and reggae as well as a bit of rap," he says. "I remember playing an NBA video game in Grade 8 and hearing the song *My Elephant Man* and I immediately fell in love with reggae/dancehall music. My favourite artists through high school were Sean Paul, Chris Brown, George Nozuka, Ne-Yo, Tyga, Big Sean and Shaggy."

James says he relates to such artists because "I truly appreciate when an artist can make you feel a certain emotion or is able to paint a picture just by listening to a song." He strives to do the same while creating a new song or at least working on his music, every day.

"I use experiences and emotions that I've felt. I love to create lyrics and melodies for songs. I often just free-style onto a beat and keep my first version. Some nights I can write five songs and they can each be quite different."

By now, James figures he must have penned somewhere between 300 and 500 songs.

"I remember being 13 years old, recording my voice on an iPod touch and using beats that I found on random apps to create something of a song. Or I would cover songs that I already liked. But my mom found a cassette on an old Fisher-Price kids' recorder where I was singing. My mom thought it was my cousin Taylor—a girl—as it was a high voice creating a song. But we knew it was me when all of a sudden I yelled, 'Hey Craig get out of here.' My brother must have been coming into the room. I think I was about five years old."

James says he focuses on creative visuals to go along with every new song he drops—all recorded in his bedroom with a small home studio set up.

He is currently working on a song for a songwriters' challenge with musician Carbon-L. Through the first stage, they are now being paired with mentors Chin Injeti and Farshad (Shadi) Edalat to perfect the song. Injeti collaborates frequently with DJ Khalil and produces for Drake, Eminem and Pink. Edalat is a songwriter for Dirty Radio. The winner(s) of the competition get their song professionally recorded.

James also just finished filming a video for *V12*, a song he released earlier this year. Faze Mito—a film editor for YouTubers and video gamers Faze Clan—came up with the video idea for James, then filmed and edited it.

Finally, James is also currently in the middle of collaborating on a song with Francis Ofili Antetokounmpo, whose brother Thanasis plays in the NBA.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

2021 Richmond Arts Awards recipients unveiled

The City of Richmond and the Richmond Arts Coalition recently announced the six recipients of the 13th annual Richmond Arts Awards.

The awards recognize Richmond residents, artists, business leaders, educators and change-makers for their achievements and contributions to the arts community.

"In the past year, the arts have helped us cope with our separation by bringing us together in creative ways," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "Despite the challenges artists have faced, these recipients demonstrated resourcefulness, tenacity and passion for their community and deserve the recognition they are receiving with this award."

This year, the selection committee reviewed 51 applications to determine the recipients in each of the six categories. The 2021 Richmond Arts Awards recipients are:

Artistic Innovation

Artists Rendering Tales Collective Inc.

This collaborative group of professional artists creates impactful narratives by integrating personal and historical knowledge with honour and respect using the latest digital media tools. Their stunning story-based workshops, performances, art installations, video productions and literary publications showcase a diversity of voices and points of view.

Arts Education

Brigid Coult

Brigid Coult trained as an educator and worked in England until coming to Canada in 1982. She was the President of the British Columbia Choral Federation for 13 years, served as Director of Music at St. Mary's Kerrisdale for 20 years, and since 1994, has been the Chorus Conductor with Richmond Orchestra and Chorus Association. Through the pandemic, when many choirs went on hiatus, she worked in creative ways to keep the chorus viable and active.

Business and the Arts

Aberdeen Centre

Aberdeen Centre is the city's only 'Shoppertainment Destination' with a distinctive retail concept, integrating shopping, dining and entertainment in combination with weekly arts and cultural performances, seasonal celebrations, themed exhibitions and the only state-of-the-art musical fountain show in town.

Cultural Leadership

Chiyoko 'Mary' Hirano

Chiyoko Hirano developed a keen interest in Buyo (traditional Japanese dance) at an early age and has devoted herself to a life-long study, providing



Jackie Lai, recipient of the 2021 Youth Arts Award.

Photo courtesy City of Richmond

people of all ages an opportunity to enjoy learning performing and showcasing Japanese culture. In April 1970, she founded the Tatsumi Kai (Tatsumi-ryu Japanese Dance Society) with students performing at local, national and international events including the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake relief for the Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver. She also chaired the Japanese Cultural Show at the Steveston Salmon Festival for more than 25 years. In 2017, as one of the three founders, she co-hosted the Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival to showcase authentic Japanese customs and traditions of cherry blossom festivals as celebrated in Japan and continues to be involved with this event.

Volunteerism

Jiliang Yao

Born in Shanghai, China, Jiliang Yao is a well-known Chinese ink painter and calligrapher and avid volunteer in the community. His volunteer activities have included countless hours of providing free calligraphy workshops at the Richmond Public Library. His vision is to promote calligraphy as a bridge to connect people and cultures, and bring harmony to the community.

Youth Arts

Jackie Lai

Jackie Lai is a multidisciplinary artist passionate about uplifting the Richmond community through visu-

al art, environmentalism and community-based events. Jackie has been involved with City Centre Community Centre's Youth programs since 2016, contributing more than 100 hours in planning and coordinating numerous events such as their annual talent show and youth art exhibition. In 2020, Jackie also designed, lead and produced a collaborative community mural titled, "Think Global, Act Local" at Richmond Secondary School to prompt students to reflect and improve their personal environmental impact.

The Richmond Arts Awards ceremony is usually held every May. However, as in 2020, this year's event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While in-person celebrations are not feasible at this time, it remains important to maintain this annual tradition to recognize the contributions of arts organizations and artists in Richmond.

In lieu of the ceremony, each recipient will be profiled in an online campaign highlighting their work and contributions to the Richmond arts community via the @HowArtWorks Instagram account. The honourees will also be invited to join future recipients, in person, when the ceremony can, once again, be held in person.

The Richmond Arts Awards are presented in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition with promotional support from the Richmond News. For more information, visit www.richmond.ca/artsawards.

Set aside some time for library book sales

Stock up during July 10 and 24
sidewalk sales at Cambie branch

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

Now that summer has arrived, it's time for some relaxing reading. And the Friends of the Richmond Library is ready to be your resource with a pair of book sales in July.

"Our June book sale was such a success. Customers were happy to take home many of their desired reading materials," says Pat Ng, publicity chair for Friends of the Richmond Library.

Assuming the weather co-operates, sidewalk book sales are being planned for two Saturdays—July 10 and 24—from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day outside the Cambie branch at 150-115901 Cambie Rd. (at No. 5 Road).

The sales will feature many gently-used hard cover adult fiction titles, as well as a great selection of children's, Chinese language, and other non-fiction books all priced individually.

"You will be surprised to find many deals (on books by) your favourite authors and titles for summer reading. Save the dates," says Ng.

Patrons are asked to bring their own bags or boxes, as well as cash for payment. Due to COVID-19, face masks and physical distancing of two metres (six feet) will be mandatory. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the stations.

All proceeds will benefit Richmond public libraries.

For inquiries, go to: <https://www.yourlibrary.ca/friends-of-the-library/fol-book-sale/>

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca



Photo via stocksnap.io

The Friends of the Richmond Library is planning a pair of book sales July 10 and 24 outside the Cambie branch.

Asphalt Paving Advisory

The City of Richmond has contracted All Road Construction to grind and pave the following locations in Richmond from **March 8 to October 15, 2021**:

PROPOSED 2020 PAVING LOCATION DETAILS	
Garden City and Alderbridge Way	Intersection only
8000 Block Westminster Hwy	Eastbound lanes only
Bridgeport Road and Viking Way	Intersection only
6000 Block Cooney Road	Granville Avenue to Westminster Highway
11000 Block No. 3 Road	Intermittent spot repairs for vibrations
8000 Block Lansdowne Road	No. 3 Road to Garden City Road
10000 Block No. 4 Road	Williams Road to Steveston Highway
11000 Block Railway Avenue	Steveston Highway to Moncton Street
Colbeck Road	
Palmberg Road	
Kozier Drive	Vibration complaint
8117 No. 1 Road	Vibration complaint
6651 Blundell Road	Westbound lane – vibration complaint
13000 Block Cambie Road	Jacombs Road to No. 6 Road
Gilbert Road	Northbound lanes (River Road to Elmbridge Way)

Work hours will be 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekdays, and 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekends. Night time work hours will be from 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. (typically).

Traffic will be reduced to single-lane and there may be temporary lane closures. Delays may occur. The use of an alternate route is strongly encouraged.

This work is weather dependent and dates are subject to change without notice.

The scope of the advertised work may be adjusted or cancelled in line with available funding.

Questions may be directed to Wasim Memon, Supervisor, Engineering Inspections, at 604-276-4189, or visit the City's paving program webpage at www.richmond.ca (City Services > Roads, Dykes, Water & Sewers > Construction Projects > 2020 Paving Program).

www.richmond.ca



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HIRING NOW

Chamber says replacing tunnel needs to be priority

Province announces upgrades to Highway 99 to ease congestion

A new Steveston interchange, additional bus lanes, and upgrading the cycling infrastructure are all coming to Highway 99. But while the Richmond Chamber of Commerce welcomes the planned improvements, it also wants to see a plan to replace the aging crossing between Richmond and Delta.

"The George Massey Tunnel should be the province's first priority for infrastructure investment," says chamber president and CEO Dan Baxter. "The existing tunnel was opened in 1959. It's not only woefully under-capacity, it's also seismically unsafe. The Richmond chamber has been a strong advocate for a replacement to this crossing for over a decade."

Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie said the planned improvements, which also include a new bus-only connection at Bridgeport Road, are "a great start" at making travel safer and easier for people coming in and out of the city, he is looking forward to support for the federal government for a new tunnel replacement "so that this important corridor and our region's worst traffic bottleneck can finally be addressed."

B.C. Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Rob Fleming added, "With these improvements, and a new crossing to replace the old George Massey Tunnel, we'll improve safety, reliability and connectivity on the Highway 99 corridor on both sides of the Fraser River."

Government has completed its review of the business case for the new crossing to replace the tunnel. Discussions are ongoing with the federal government on cost sharing for the project.

Construction on the Steveston interchange



Photo screen grab from Google Maps

Upgrades to Highway 99, including a new Steveston interchange, are on the way.

is planned to begin in 2022 and be completed in 2025. The existing two-lane overpass structure at Steveston Highway and Highway 99 will be replaced to accommodate two eastbound lanes and three westbound lanes (including a left turn lane to southbound Highway 99). A new Steveston interchange will improve safety and mobility on the Highway 99 as well as for east-west traffic along Steveston Highway. The changes are also expected to improve access to transit stops and pedestrian and cycling connections across Highway 99.

"For over 60 years, the Steveston interchange has provided an important cross-highway connection for Richmond residents," said Richmond-Queensborough MLA Aman Singh. "The new interchange will address current and future growth in the area and improve mobility for vehicle, transit and active transportation users."

Richmond-Steveston MLA Kelly Greene said adding bus on-shoulder lanes will make public transit along the highway more reliable, improving accessibility and community connections. Tenders for the Highway 99 bus-on-shoulder lane extension and the transit and cycling improvements at Bridgeport Road and Highway 17A were scheduled to go out last week. Work is expected to begin this fall.

Transit improvements will include creating a new bus-only access from Bridgeport Road to Highway 99 southbound. This is intended to improve access to the highway for transit and make the commute even quicker. It will also mean adding new, and widening existing, southbound Highway 99 on-ramps to give transit priority from Bridgeport Road, and the addition of multi-use path connections from Oak Street Bridge.

Improvements to cycling infrastructure will include new multi-use pathway connections will be



Chamber president Dan Baxter.

created from the Oak Street Bridge into the Richmond cycling and pedestrian network.

The original plan for a 10-lane bridge was put on hold following the 2017 election. The province then ordered an independent review and consultation with local mayors. B.C.'s ministry of transportation and infrastructure received the resulting business case for a proposed replacement of the tunnel on Dec. 17, 2020. Detailed in the case were the two shortlisted options for the replacement: an eight-lane immersed tube tunnel, and an eight-lane bridge. A decision between the two options is yet to be announced. The original project was set to be completed in 2022.

"It's hard to overstate the importance of this crossing to Richmond," says Baxter. "It impacts a worker's ability to get to their job, parents' abilities to pick their children up from daycare on time, countless hours for service workers and transportation professionals, who often must make multiple crossings a day, and so much more. Today is a step forward—now we're looking for those next steps."

The George Massey Tunnel should be the province's first priority for infrastructure investment. The existing tunnel was opened in 1959. It's not only woefully under-capacity, it's also seismically unsafe.

— Dan Baxter

Explore Italy with *The Travel Guys*



**Florence
Gordon**

The pandemic has played havoc with our lifestyle.

For the retired who usually head south for the winter, or families who get away during spring break or for an annual vacation, lives have been on hold during 2020 and most of 2021. That doesn't mean we can't dream and plan for the future, so I'm inviting you to travel with me through the lens of a camera.

In 2003, *The Travel Guys* launched a new TV series. This year marks 18 years of filming over 200 destinations, but when the pandemic stopped all travel, our production company had to cancel all travel projects. We were fortunate to have a good library of travel episodes so our TV series continues to air.

Our mission has always been to film popular destinations for new tourists and discover new destinations for experienced travellers. For those who can't travel for whatever reason, we take them along through the lens of a camera and today we are going to Italy.

Rome, Italy is known for its historic sites: the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain and the Vatican, not to mention the great food and wine. Travellers beware, this is not a destination for counting calories.

On my first trip we stopped for lunch and were served a huge platter of noodles smothered in whipped melted butter and cheese. We thought this was the entrée—wrong. We didn't realize the

Italians serve pasta as an appetizer, so we loosened our belts and worked our way through all the wonderful food.

Everyone who goes to Italy for the first time usually goes to Rome. Today we are going to visit a few other cities, travelling from the north all the way down to southern Italy.

Torino (Turin) in northern Italy

Home of the 2006 Winter Olympics, Torino is known for its wine, cheese, chocolate and truffles and is described as one of Italy's overlooked cities. *The Travel Guys* climbed the tallest tower in Torino, the Mole Antonelliana (named after its architect, Alessandro Antonelli). Built in 1863, it now houses the largest museum of cinema in the world. After that, it was off to the city of Asti.

Asti in northern Italy

During their visit, the town was celebrating its annual festival which is centred around a horse race through the streets. Each area of the town of Asti is represented by a racehorse. It's one of the oldest races of its kind in Italy, dating back to 1275.

Piedmont Region in northern Italy

The Travel Guys took a visit to the Mondodelvino winery to sample wine during their harvest season. While in the Piedmont region, they went hunting with a truffle hunter and his dog. Did you know that white truffle is valued at \$3,000 per kilogram? Prior to COVID-19, I attended a wedding in Vancouver and no one touched their pasta appetizer until I mentioned the value of the sprinkle of truffle on the pasta. After that, everyone devoured the appetizer.



Map via Wikimedia Commons

Sicily and Taormina in southern Italy

The Travel Guys travelled all the way down to the southern tip of Italy to meet up with Umberto Menghi, Vancouver's famous chef and owner of *Il Giardino*. They enjoyed sampling wine from the vineyard before heading off to the beautiful city of Taormina with more wine sampling from the vineyards of Montalto winery.

To experience this virtual Italian vacation, go to www.travelguystv.com, select "Episodes," and choose "Italy & Sicily."

Additional travel episodes air weekly on CHEK TV.

A keen and experienced traveller, Florence Gordon is a contributing writer to the Richmond Sentinel.

STR8TS

No number can be repeated in any row or column. Rows and columns are divided by black squares into compartments. Each compartment must contain a 'straight,' a set of numbers with no gaps in any order, eg. [4,2,3,5]. Numbers in black cells are not part of straights but also cannot be repeated in their row or column.

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