



PLANETARY PRESENTATION



Summer students
take on Earth-
themed musical

12

Photo submitted

Richmond students presented *Big Beautiful Planet*, an Earth-themed musical project with songs by Canadian musician Raffi, as part of this summer's fine arts program.

City gets \$175,000 grant for Garden City Lands study

The City of Richmond has been awarded a \$175,000 grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund to support its ongoing soil remediation studies on the Garden City Lands.

The Garden City Lands is a 55 hectare (136 acre) greenspace in Richmond's City Centre which is, in part, home to the Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) farm (which operates on a portion of the site that has been managed for contamination), as well as one of the last remnants of the Greater Lulu Island Bog. Council's approved vision for the site, as portrayed in the Legacy Landscape Plan, will see the creation of a public park for Richmond residents to enjoy this piece of living Richmond history in the city centre.

"One of council's goals is to ensure Richmond is a sustainable and environmentally conscious city," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "The Garden City Lands is a special site with a sensitive habitat. We're pleased to see the Federation of Canadian Municipalities supports our vision for the site. The ultimate goal is to develop and implement a plan which will see the Garden City Lands safely offering such functions as food production, recreation and natural interpretation."

Council endorsed an application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for the Garden City Land Remediation Study Project on Dec. 15, 2020. The purpose of the study is to fully identify, characterize and locate contaminants on the project site and secure a Certificate of Compli-



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

The Kwantlen Polytechnic University farm on Richmond's Garden City Lands (looking from north to south).

ance from the province which will certify that the site's contaminants have been safely managed.

Since the early 1900s, the Garden City Lands has hosted a number of land uses including a shooting range and communication towers. These past uses have resulted in low-levels of contamination in the soil. The main focus of the Garden City Land Remediation Study Project is to look further into the impacts of these past land uses and develop a plan on how to best manage

the contamination.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund was established to encourage environmental sustainability work in municipalities across Canada. For more information visit fcm.ca.

For more information on the Garden City Lands including the Legacy Landscape Plan visit www.richmond.ca/parks/about/design-construction/gardencitylands.

Councillors in favour of electronic meeting option

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

City councillors have voted unanimously in favour of allowing council members to attend meetings electronically going forward.

"The current bylaw amendment will enable council members to participate remotely if they are unable to (attend in-person)," said city clerk Claudia Jesson. "The current meeting format of electronic meetings and participation does extend to Sept. 28, at which point this bylaw would kick in and allow members to attend electronically if they are unable to attend regular council meetings."

Updated provincial legislation in the fall will allow electronic attendance going forward, but a city bylaw would bridge the gap between the end of the current provincial legislation and a possible update.

Coun. Andy Hobbs said he had some concerns about the lack of definition in the bylaw amendment, and believes people should only be able to attend electronically "on an exceptional basis."

"My guess is that this is going to be further refined as things open up, and also we'll have a bit more experience where it's more or less discretionary," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie.

Following the fall update to provincial legislation, Jesson said city staff will bring forward further amendments to allow members of the



Photo screen grab from City of Richmond YouTube
Richmond city councillors voted last month in favour of continuing to allow members to attend meetings remotely.

public to continue to attend and participate in meetings electronically, pending council approval.

"There are really some pros of the video and computer technology that has allowed people that perhaps would not have been able to attend in person to attend, and they'd like those opportunities to continue," said Coun. Linda McPhail.

Childcare top of mind for local families

As province moves toward universal model, Richmond works to keep adding spaces

By **DON FENNEL**
@rmdsentinel

Childcare or daycare. Whatever you call it, like this summer's weather it's a hot-button topic these days.

The idea of a universal childcare system, which B.C. continues to move towards, has been in place in Scandinavian countries like Finland for decades now.

The province is also hoping to expand \$10-a-day childcare, and earlier last month issued a formal request for applications from licensed childcare providers wanting to give families childcare for \$10 a day or less.

In its 2021 federal budget, the governing Liberal Party also noted its goal to bring fees for regulated childcare down to \$10 per day on average within the next five years. By the end of 2022, it hopes to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in average fees for regulated early learning and childcare.

To support the vision, the 2021 budget proposed new investments totalling up to \$30 billion over the next five years.

And then there is the issue of space. Enough space.

The City of Richmond currently owns 10 purpose-built childcare facilities throughout the community, and an additional childcare facility and two early childhood development hubs have been secured through rezoning processes and are currently under construction. These new facilities will add another 201 licensed childcare spaces to Richmond's childcare supply within the next two years, increasing the number of childcare spaces in city-owned facilities to 585 spaces.

Coun. Linda McPhail feels the city is "a municipal leader" with its mandate, but adds "we know we cannot (address the ongoing needs) alone."



Photo courtesy RCRG

Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives recently conducted its annual fee and wage survey of local childcare facilities.

"We need to continue to advocate to the provincial and federal governments to ensure quality, affordable and accessible licensed childcare spaces are available to Richmond residents," she says. "As well, we need to continue to work with private and non-profit organizations to create spaces."

As a grandmother, McPhail knows the challenges her son and his wife faced to find affordable and quality childcare. And she adds some of her friends still provide daycare for their grandchildren because spaces could not be found.

Still, she says the city has explored the topic in depth and recognizes it is an "essential need" for working parents and those pursuing their education.

"A key goal of the city's commitment to childcare is to promote the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive childcare system," she says.

Richmond's Child Care Needs Assessment Strategy was released in 2017 to guide future childcare planning initiatives across the community. Short- and long-term actions were developed to

support the development of a comprehensive childcare system in Richmond. McPhail points out that a need identified in the assessment was for additional planning and engagement to support the creation of additional childcare spaces. Currently, the demand for childcare in Richmond significantly exceeds the supply, with childcare spaces available for only 30 per cent of children.

"A key goal under Childcare BC is to implement \$10-a-day childcare across the province," says Katrina Chen, B.C. Minister of State for Child Care. "We're adding nearly 4,000 new \$10-a-day childcare spaces in communities across the province, and we're working with our federal counterparts to achieve the goal of inclusive, affordable, universal childcare for all."

Recently, Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives' childcare resource and referral centre conducted its annual fee and wage survey of local childcare facilities. The centre provides nearly 400 childcare referrals each year, and throughout the year.

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Richmond approved for provincial e-scooter pilot

Following approval last month, the City of Richmond is now a participating community in the province's three-year electric kick scooter (e-scooter) pilot program.

"The goal of bringing e-scooters to Richmond is to trial a safe, convenient and enjoyable personal mobility option that reduces private automobile use, and promotes active transportation and transit use," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "Through monitoring and evaluation, the pilot project is an opportunity to understand the safety of e-scooters, impacts on the public realm, potential for travel mode shift, and community perceptions that in time, will help inform future active trans-

portation initiatives."

The pilot project allows the use of e-scooters within the city in accordance with the provincial regulations and Richmond bylaws, which designate locations where the devices may be operated and at what speeds. Maximum speed limits are in place and vary from 15 km/h on shared pathways to 20 km/h on roadways. In the presence of pedestrians on shared pathways, riders must slow to a walking speed.

E-scooter riders must be a minimum of 16 years old, must wear a helmet, must not carry passengers, and must not ride on the sidewalk. Riders are not required to hold a driver's licence.

Pools expanding capacity, moving to drop-in

As of this week, Richmond pools are returning to normal operations

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmond pools are returning to near normal this week.

Instead of having to pre-book a swimming session, people can begin to drop in at one of the city's four pools, says aquatic services manager John Woolgar. And the pools—outdoors at Steveston and South Arm, and indoors at Watermania and the Minoru Centre for Active Living—will return to pre-pandemic capacity limits.

Woolgar says most directional arrows at pools have been removed, although some remain “that are practical.” Masks will still be required in lobbies, but once people enter the changing area they are optional. Wearing a mask in the pool is not recommended.

“I think that people are used to having to wear a mask everywhere they go. We have had very (few) complaints or concerns from the public about having to put a mask on, and I think people have been really receptive to the protocols that we've put in place at pools,” says Woolgar.

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– John Woolgar



As of Aug. 3, people can drop in for a swim at a Richmond pool.

Photo courtesy City of Richmond

Equipment and toys like pool noodles and kickboards are now being loaned out again, although party room bookings are not resuming until the province enters Step 4 in the fall. Saunas and steam rooms at pools are still closed as well, and Woolgar says the city is looking for

guidance from federal and local health authorities about when those facilities will be able to reopen.

Other programs, including swimming lessons, have been gradually increasing in numbers. Parents are still required to be in the water with young children (until they reach Red Cross Swim Kids level 5), but in the coming months that requirement will be removed.

The Minoru pool is closed for maintenance through Sept. 13, so drop-in swimming will not happen there until September. But at the other three pools, people will be able to take a dip at any time.

For more information on Richmond's pools, visit richmond.ca/parksrec/pools.htm

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New community centre, library tabbed at \$90 million

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Replacement of the Steveston community centre and library is projected to cost around \$90 million, according to a staff report submitted in advance of the last general purposes committee meeting.

Staff recommended \$63 million come from the capital building and infrastructure reserve, \$21.3 million come from the capital reserve (revolving fund), and \$5.6 million come from the Steveston community amenity provision. An additional \$5 million is recommended for a construction escalation contingency fund, also to come from the revolving fund of the capital reserve, in case of unforeseen factors or cost escalation.

Committee members requested staff examine alternative funding sources and report back, but agreed that the existing plan was viable if no alternative funding sources were available.

"If nothing happens, we'll use the funds that are (outlined), no problem. But there may be alternative strategies that we want, for instance we may want to borrow \$20 million or \$30 million, (so) let's take a look at the likely projects that we've got coming up that are going to need capital funds and just (ask), is this the way we want to do it," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie.

He added that it's harder to borrow funds for multiple smaller projects costing one or two million dollars, but a large sum for a building replacement would be more straightforward.



Photo by Hannah Scott

The old Steveston community centre and library will remain in place until the new facility is finished, likely in late 2025 or early 2026.

The recommended design for the new facility, following discussion and public consultation, is a three-storey building totalling just over 60,000 square feet (5,600 square metres). There would be underground parking spaces below the facility and an increase of 90 stalls overall, for a total of 283.

A potential bus exchange on Moncton Street and other transit options are still possible, given the planned location of the new building. The city's director of transportation Lloyd Bie noted that the Steveston Transit Centre remains unfunded due to the pandemic, and is not likely to receive funding for at least five years.

And while some community members suggested covering the pool, the city's director of recre-

ation services Elizabeth Ayers noted that there are enough indoor pools throughout the city to provide service during the winter months.

The existing community centre and library will stay open during construction. Staff recommend it then be demolished "in order to satisfy the parking requirements without impacting the surrounding green space," according to the report.

Councillors were unanimously in favour of the motion at both the committee and council meetings, with the only amendment being the examination of possible alternate funding sources. The project will take four to five years to complete, and should be finished in late 2025 or early 2026.

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Night market among new tourism grant recipients

The Richmond Night Market is one of more than 80 attractions and tour bus operators in B.C. that are receiving support funding from the provincial government.

"We are so thankful that the government listened and provided support," said Raymond Cheung, the night market's owner and organizer. "This grant comes at exactly the right time. We have just reopened, and having this funding will help us reopen safely and make sure we can continue to provide a great summer experience for years to come."

The night market, which was started in 2000, has since become a Richmond staple offering food stalls and live entertainment. It was unable to open last year due to the pandemic, and provincial grant funding will help offset reduced vendor and customer numbers this year.

"The Richmond Night Market is an important hub in our community,



Photo submitted

The Richmond Night Market is receiving \$1 million through newly-announced provincial tourism funding.

welcoming people from all over the Lower Mainland and beyond," said Richmond-Queensborough MLA Aman Singh. "Our government has been working with the tourism sector throughout the pandemic, and I'm proud we are providing this support so it can continue to operate attractions and tour buses in our communities."

The province's anchor attractions play an important role in its economy by drawing visitors to communities and supporting local small businesses throughout the province. Tour bus companies are a key link to bring travellers to many of the regional destinations, attractions and experiences.

The Major Anchor Attractions Program, first announced in May 2021, was one of the seven calls to action from the Tourism Task Force. Grants of up to \$1 million will be provided to both businesses and not-for-profits, including 23 urban anchor attractions, 34 rural anchor attractions and 26 tour bus operators.



Photo submitted

Estella Celeste Banez invites peers to share their feelings about the pandemic via her newly-launched podcast.

Seven-year-old launches podcast

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

At the tender age of seven, Estella Celeste Banez is already an old soul.

Two years ago, on the heels of a successful fashion show to help support the Richmond Christmas Fund, the precocious young Richmondite launched her own line of jewelry—*Oh My Bling, Designs by Estella*. Now, she's started her own podcast.

"I am super duper duper excited," she says. "Last week, I asked kids to join me for this (third episode) and be my special guests to talk about how kids feel about the pandemic. I'm so grateful to my special guests who shared their thoughts on my show."

Her guests included her big brother Lazarus, Megumi (all the way from Japan), cousins Brielle, D'Angelo, Lisee, Audrey and Addison, buddy Kendrick and best friend Sophie.

With the help of her mom Kaye, Estella wants kids to feel empowered to talk about their feelings surrounding COVID-19. And perhaps grown-ups can listen too about what kids are saying about life during these challenging times.

"I was honestly not surprised when she told me she wanted to do a podcast," says Kaye. "She is such a curious child that she would listen in on the podcast I was producing (for work). Keeping herself busy is really how she has coped with having to stay home during this pandemic, while happy to assist at Lazarus's Zoom therapy sessions. She has really been our inspiration to stay positive."

Estella's podcasts will soon be available on Spotify, but have already been posted on YouTube and on her Facebook page @estellacelestecreations.

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Lopez gets birthday wish as fundraiser meets goal

By DON FENNELL
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Marika Lopez started *Seizure Soldiers* a few years ago to further enlighten the public about epilepsy. Last month, the ever-determined Richmondite extended her mission by realizing her goal of raising \$300 to support the Epilepsy Association of Calgary.

Her latest effort was an anniversary wish of sorts, as she celebrated her birthday last month.

"I have decided to fundraise for (the Calgary association) for a couple of reasons," she explains. "They're a hidden gem, offer great services, and I want more people to be aware of them."

Lopez says the public misunderstanding of epilepsy causes challenges worse than the seizures themselves.

A charitable social service agency established to address community, individual and family needs related to epilepsy, the Calgary branch's mission is to support independence, quality of life and community participation.

Epilepsy is a disorder of the central nervous system resulting from abnormal brain activity causing seizures. Anyone can develop the disorder.



Photo submitted

Richmond's Marika Lopez continued her fight against epilepsy with a donation to the Calgary association.

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Non-profit advancing mental health awareness



Photo submitted

Local youth are helping others deal with some of life's biggest challenges.

Richmond-based Community Mental Wellness Association of Canada continues to help others meet life's challenges.

Through the hardships of the pandemic, the association has been able to move forward—in the face of challenges, continuing to stay unified in finding creative ways to implement mental health education into the community.

During the past year, it offered numerous programs and services for all ages. Senior members were able to engage in free computing classes, created to help the elderly learn how to navigate the digital world. And to expand its client group, it is now partner-

ing with Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society to hold lectures and provide professional computer learning courses for a wider and more diverse range of people.

The association's Youth Ambassador Group is comprised of a diverse group of passionate and driven students. The mission

for the youth group is to equip young people with the tools to positively impact the community as ambassadors for mental health.

Recently, eight of its summer students helped to package and distribute food hampers for the homeless in the Downtown Eastside.

The association has also established a bursary program for the future post-secondary students within the youth group. This program aims to help Grade 12 students who wish to pursue a career in psychology and mental health and continue their academic career in post-secondary.

Gleaning garbage from the sea nets new opportunities

By LORRAINE GRAVES

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Just as the COVID-19 pandemic travelled the globe to arrive in Richmond, so too do plastics cruise the world's oceans, washing up on B.C.'s shores, killing wildlife, fouling propellers and entangling marine mammals.

On July 28 in Steveston—a tourist community hit hard by the pandemic—multiple organizations, communities and levels of government announced a collective win-win: many of those discarded plastics are now destined to find a renewed life.

The opening of Ocean Legacy Foundation's plant on Steveston Harbour Authority land on Chatham Street at Sixth Avenue brought together community members and dignitaries.

At the plant, salvaged plastics become high value pellets that can be remelted into new products, much like making new candles out of melted wax stubs.

George Heyman, B.C.'s Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, said the plant is key to "protecting our irreplaceable oceans."

Federal parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard Terry Beech said, "B.C. has 25,000 kilometres of coastline and some of the rarest marine species on the planet."

The recycling facility works in tandem with Indigenous communities and organizations who collect and deliver discarded plastics to the new plant.



Photo by Lorraine Graves

As the Gulf of Georgia Cannery whistle blows, Richmond-Steveston MLA and parliamentary secretary for environment Kelly Greene says with a smile, "Now we know it's officially 10 o'clock."

Not just empty water bottles and straws, plastics come in many forms. For instance, fishing nets, some of which float invisibly in the water, entangle and kill everything—from the tiny marine life that larger sea creatures depend on for food to mammoth whales.

More than 640,000 tonnes of nets, lines, pots and traps are dumped in the sea every year—the same weight as 55,000 double-decker buses.

With the longest coastline in the world, Canada finds much of this plastic debris washed up on its shores.

There are more than just environmental benefits to gleaning these lethal but valuable plastics from the seas.

Government funding allowed those struggling economically during the pandemic, such as Randy Burke of Blue Water Adventures, to pivot, using their boats, barges and nautical skills to clean coastal waters. The clean-up of 306 kilometres of shoreline has created 180 jobs.

Beech said that in tandem with cleaning up our coastal waters, Canada continues to work globally to reduce plastic pollution as quickly as possible.

He warned, "If we continue on as we have, there will be more plastic than biomass in the ocean within a generation."

Chloé Dubois, executive director and co-founder of Ocean Legacy Foundation said, "We have to make plastic pollution obsolete."

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Urban Bounty sowing seeds for the future

Former Richmond Food Security Society assumes new name to reflect varied programming

By **DON FENNEL**
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Emerging from the grips of a global pandemic, Urban Bounty is looking to a resilient future.

It's a belief in the foundation of community that inspired the local organization to introduce a new umbrella name, one that reflects the many and varied programs of the Richmond Food Security Society.

"For many people, our society's name was getting in the way of our goal to create a vibrant community through a sustainable food system of community gardens, education, and community outreach," says executive director Ian Lai. "We're still the same Richmond Food Security Society, but we're wearing a different jacket with a more expressive name."

Lai believes Urban Bounty will be easier to remember, both by partners and supporters, and help ensure the community is more aware of its activities and efforts to bring true food security to Richmond. For families and individuals, he says this will mean the ability to access resources and programs, and empower the community to shift towards a more equitable and dignified model of change.

Lai is also hoping Urban Bounty will attract more volunteers, members, and funders. Volunteers, like with most non-profits in the city whose work is invaluable, are at the core of the group's success. Recovering hundreds of pounds of fresh fruit for community organizations—including the Richmond Food Bank—each year, its network also helps to establish community garden programs, teaches children and youth in the Richmond School District, and offers workshops to develop a healthier community as a whole.

Launched by the Richmond Poverty Response Committee in 2002 as the Food Security Task Force, Urban Bounty continues to play a pivotal role in defining Richmond's food policies. Recently, the 2021 Foodland Asset Report identified the important lands currently available for food production in the city.

Lai and his colleagues are also anxiously looking forward to resuming Farm Fest at Garden City Lands—perhaps as soon as this fall. Held annually prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event is among the society's largest and affords the group a major stage on which to present the importance of food security.

Earlier this year, Urban Bounty was also recognized with the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association provincial award for community leadership. "The Food Hub," its innovative meal program in partnership with the city, do-



Photo via Wikimedia Commons

Organized in 2002 as the Food Security Task Force, Urban Bounty continues to play a pivotal role in defining Richmond's food policies.

nated more than 1,800 kilograms (4,000 pounds) of food that was repurposed into 500 ready-made weekly meals for at-risk community members from May to December 2020.

"This award is an acknowledgement of the positive impact working together has in strengthening our community and its resources," Mayor Malcolm Brodie says.

In response to growing concerns about food insecurity during the pandemic, Urban Bounty also worked to advance the meal initiative. Four volunteer chefs joined the program, which continues to operate out the city-owned Terra Nova Red Barn.

Since 2010, "Seedy Saturday" has focused on nurturing the tradition of growing from local seeds.

Despite the pandemic, Urban Bounty was also able to join forces with the Richmond Garden Club this past May for a "Spring Fling" at Paulik Park. The sale of fruits, vegetables, and herb seedlings along with honey from its own hives, along with numerous workshops on organic gardening, cooking and canning also help raise food literacy.

"We will still run the same programs and our legal name, the Richmond Food Security Society, and charitable status do not change," Lai concludes. "(But) we feel that Urban Bounty encapsulates all that we do and is less of a mouthful. It also allows people not familiar with food security to 'get what we do' right away."

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Library continuing to restore services

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmond Public Library's summer reading program is going strong, with over 3,000 kids registered this year.

And new in 2021, more outdoor activities are being offered as well as online programs. Five different author events for children and writing workshops for teens are some of the upcoming offerings, says head of children and family services Kate Adams.

Library branches have re-opened on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. And special outdoor programs, including *Storytimes in the Park* and *Story-Walks* bring people together more safely.

The library also has several programs within its *Exploring Ecology Through Place* series designed for all ages, notes coordinator of collections and customer service delivery Wendy Jang.

New Indigenous programming includes a weekly podcast series called *First Stories—Tales from Turtle Island*. This pairs with a new Indigenous Resources web page, with access to internal book lists, library programs and external resources.

The Launchpad, a dedicated space at the library's Brighthouse branch, has also re-opened to the public. This area allows community members to explore and access digital technology. The library's



Photo courtesy Richmond Public Library

Outdoor storytime events are one of the summer offerings through Richmond Public Library branches.

3D printers are back in use, as well as other digital technologies that will be introduced over the next few months.

The library is continuing to focus on expand-

ing spaces and seating throughout the summer, says Jang. And new learning kits are in the works, themed around birdwatching and STEAM subjects.

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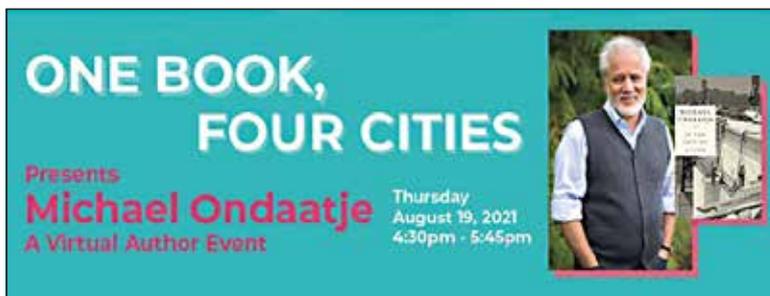


Photo courtesy Richmond Public Library

Author Michael Ondaatje will address readers in Richmond, as well as three other cities, to talk about his book *In the Skin of a Lion*.

Library hosts author Michael Ondaatje

Sri Lankan-Canadian author Michael Ondaatje will join readers for a free virtual event this month.

Ondaatje will talk about his book *In the Skin of a Lion*, this summer's *One Book, Four Cities* community read. People from Richmond can join other readers in Wakayama, Japan, as well as Qingdao and Xiamen, China, to learn more about the book.

The event takes place Aug. 19 at 4:30 p.m., and people can register online at yourlibrary.bibliocommons.com/events/60e4b24ccb5c20370051915d.

The library also has an online forum conversation, which allows readers from the four cities to connect online. Visit yourlibrary.ca/src#v-pills-src_adult to find out more and register for the online forum here: bookclub.yourlibrary.ca/login.

SUCCESS virtual walk raises over \$230,000

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The 36th annual SUCCESS Walk with the Dragon was a virtual event again this year, raising over \$230,000.

SUCCESS offered an interactive map with suggested hiking trails in Richmond and beyond for the July 23-25 event.

"We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the sponsors, donors, participants, and staff for their hard work and dedication to make this event a success," said Terry Liu and Jeffrey Lee, co-chairs of this year's event.

Proceeds from the event benefit the community, going towards SUCCESS programs and services that are unfunded or partially funded by the government.

"In Richmond alone, SUCCESS provides many important programs for our residents," said Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie.

SUCCESS chief executive officer Queenie Choo expressed her gratitude to those who supported this year's event.

"SUCCESS serves our communities with over 300 programs and services, providing help—from early childhood development to seniors care," said Choo. "With the generosity and support from the community, we will be able to continue to serve the vulnerable in the community. Thank you again."

STAR skaters get ready for Olympic Oval stage

By DON FENNEL
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A stately presence has existed within the Connaught Skating Club dating back to its origins in 1911, under the patronage of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught.

But it's an equally impressive commitment to being prepared that continues to enable the club's athletes to stand out among their peers. And it begins at the grassroots.

Thanks to the endless energy and vision of long-time director of skating Keegan Murphy, Connaught's youngest and newest members are quickly provided opportunities to develop their skills. And it doesn't take long before they advance to where the 65 STAR level skaters—set to participate in a mid-summer in-house competition—find themselves at.

The sixth in a series of the popular in-house events, it will take place over two days at the Richmond Olympic Oval. In mid-August, the club's pre-juvenile to senior skaters will be competing at a BC Section Summerskate in Burnaby.

"So many of our new skaters (already) love performing for an audience. Providing short-term goals built around performances really helps motivate them to achieve new skills," Murphy explains.

In all, 65 skaters are expected to participate in the mid-summer spectacle on ice. Murphy says it's an incredible number in regular times, but is especially impressive given the pandemic chal-



Photo submitted

Dennis Dalai is one of 65 Connaught skaters expected to take to the ice at Richmond Olympic Oval in the club's in-house competition.

lenges of the last 18 months.

"It has taken a village to support this generation during a time of limited resources," he says. "I'm so proud that the organization is in such a healthy position developmentally."

Each program will be two minutes in duration,

with the main focus on the joy of performing and attempting to engineer newly-acquired skills.

Most of the STAR athletes have been skating at least two years, with nearly all starting in the CanSkate program.

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Richmond track giant passes away

By DON FENNEL
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Richmond's track and field community is mourning the loss of one of its great contributors with the passing of Jean-Jacques Schmidt.

Known simply as JJ to his many friends, Schmidt was drawn to the Richmond Kajaks Track and Field Club in 1980, when his daughter Frederique joined as an athlete, recalls longtime member Fred Pawluk.

Always sporting a wide smile and receptive nature, it was clear Schmidt (who died at the age of 80 last month) had a deep fondness for athletics. He held various positions within the Kajaks, immersing himself as both a coach and runner. His legacy in coaching began with his guiding the nine- to 14-year-olds and culminated in overseeing the Masters group from 2000 through 2019.

"His coaching skills and integrity were honoured with his induction into the Richmond Sports Wall of Fame in 2019," said Pawluk, noting this rec-



Photo submitted

A popular figure in local track and field circles, former Richmond Kajaks coach JJ Schmidt has passed away.

the fact that JJ is no longer with us, but he will live on in our hearts."

The club also held a memorial run in memory of Schmidt around Minoru Park on July 25.

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Richmond FC kicking off free football

New youth program expands the reach of the 'beautiful game'

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

Suiting up in both the Champions and Premier leagues, Marius Roevde reached the pinnacle of European football. But he's never forgotten where it all started.

Maintaining that he had limited talent and was the "classic grassroots player" growing up in Norway, Roevde is now executive director of the Richmond Football Club where the former keeper is only too pleased to see the local youth soccer association kicking off its 2021-22 campaign with the introduction of a program that focuses on extending the reach of the "beautiful game."

With the financial backing of Coho Commissary (which provides commissary kitchens to restaurant startups), free soccer will be made available to families registered in the Richmond Food Bank program.

"We always wanted to start an academy (for boys and girls) that have had a tough time, and we have worked closely with Richmond Food Bank (collecting donations) for the last 16 months," says Roevde, noting that in Coho they also landed the perfect partner.

"I was introduced to Coho Commissary by Bryan Wevers, from the same family that was donating \$200,000 in scholarships to girls signing up for RFC programs," he explains. "We loved what they are doing and (equally) they loved how much RFC cares about the community. Together we can help more people on more levels than just soccer."

Coho will cover the costs of the player jerseys (which will sport the commissary's logo) and coaching as well as the food for the youth to take home afterwards. Richmond FC is also working with the City of Richmond to offset

field costs. During the COVID-19 restrictions, Roevde headed a club initiative to support the food bank that saw trucks literally overflowing with donations.

More than 300 families are registered with the food bank, and Roevde hopes to reach as many of them as possible.

"We want to grow this program. Community outreach is one of our most important pillars. We want to be the change. If we have helped to feed one family and put a smile on the kids' faces, we have already been successful," Roevde says.

Newly-hired technical director David Thorburn will help Roevde to oversee the program, along with several of the club's senior coaches and board members.

Initially, sessions will be held every Sunday at Hugh Boyd Park for 10 weeks. But Roevde says they are looking to extend the sessions through the winter as well.

"We will start with training then we will offer help for the most eager players to get into the regular programs to play games," Roevde says. "Coho's focus is 'how can we help more people together?' They are an amazing organization and exactly the organization we want to be identified with. Through doing good things and being a community partner, we are building a club and a brand that is so much more than just soccer. We are building a family that cares for everyone regardless of gender or background. Everyone is welcome in our club."

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Photo submitted

Richmond Football Club executive director Marius Roevde (left) and technical director David Thorburn are elated to partner with Coho Commissary to offer free soccer to youth whose families are registered with the Richmond Food Bank.

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).

Students explore connection

District's summer fine arts program focuses on connecting and sense of place

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Students flexed their creative muscles this summer in the Continuing Education fine arts program.

One of their projects was a self-portrait inspired by the work of artist Chuck Close.

"His work was constructed on an underlying grid of squares," explains Catherine Ludwig, the school district's arts administrator who also heads up the summer fine arts program. "Each square is designed into a self-contained miniature abstraction. Our learners used analogous colours to complete their pieces."

In addition to visual art, students also learned about music, drama, dance and photography. Over just three weeks, the 250 students in Grades 1 through 7 put together a mini musical based on songs by Canadian musician Raffi. The show, *Big Beautiful Planet*, was another element of the "sense of place" exploration.

"Our (program) theme became the inspiration for the musical. We selected this particular (show) as it spoke to the fragility of our planet and how each of us has a role in helping to take care of its health," says Ludwig. "Many kids are in their second, third or fourth year within the (fine arts) program."

While last summer's program had to run online, this year students were able to be together in-person at Westwind elementary. They were split into smaller groups based on grade, with both morning and afternoon sessions offered.

Ludwig says there was a calmness about the program that made it clear all learners were engaged.

"It was an honour to witness," she adds. "It was also inspiring to see learners of all diverse abilities so seamlessly integrated."

The musical was filmed in late July, edited and sent out to families. Afterwards, students shared some thoughts about its important message.

"The musical has taught me to protect our Earth because it has given so much to



Photo submitted

This summer, Richmond students learned about the work of artist Chuck Close through a self-portrait project.

We aimed to help our learners with an interdisciplinary approach to connect the dots in understanding the relationship of various pieces of learning and genres to form a bigger, more creative picture.

– Catherine Ludwig

us," says Jolie Wang, a Grade 6 student from Anderson elementary.

Hamilton elementary Grade 6 student Alyssa Voglmaier said: "The musical has taught me that we have to go out of our way and do something about problems (on) our Earth, like litter and climate change."

And Ashley Tse, a Grade 6 student at Thompson elementary, added: "The future of the planet is up to us."

The fine arts program is one of four summer learning offerings that Richmond Continuing Education put together. The others are the innovation program, exploration program and inspiration program.

In the innovation program, students worked with robotics coding, collaborative storytelling and green screens. Administrator Doug Park, who leads the program, says 19 high school students worked as volunteer leaders to help younger students.

Park also runs the exploration program, where students built rocket prototypes, explored how tools can be used to make copper bracelets, and learned about Indigenous uses of local plants and trees. He says students demonstrated "enthusiasm and excitement along their learning journey" in the two programs.

The fourth program is the inspiration program, run by administrator April Pikkarainen. It focuses on growing connections and a sense of belonging, as well as social-emotional learning, and is available by invitation to students in Grades 1 through 6. Students learned how to weave, worked on collaborative art and planned healthy meals that they could prepare on their own.

"Students form connections in different ways and through different activities," says Pikkarainen. "Teachers in the program honour the gifts and needs of the student population, and plan experiences that nurture the whole child."

Through the district's summer learning programs, Ludwig says students can dig deeper in areas of interest.

"We aimed to help our learners with an interdisciplinary approach to connect the dots in understanding the relationship of various pieces of learning and genres to form a bigger, more creative picture."

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Photo by Hannah Scott

Grade 1 and 2 students at Diefenbaker elementary designed and painted signs for the school's garden last year.

Kids dig designing own garden plots

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Students at Diefenbaker elementary enjoyed the fruits of their labour thanks to signs they created for their school's garden.

"As a school community, we work together to grow our garden," says teacher Abigail Aguilar, whose Grade 1 and 2 class designed the signs. "Students work on planting, prepping, weeding and watering the garden beds. My class (last) year planted potatoes, (and) we also partnered with our cohort class to grow carrots."

The signs came about because of two special designated garden beds for student-led activity and play, called the "explore bed" and "story bed." Students are encouraged to use these areas to look for bugs, use toy dinosaurs to create stories, and explore with magnifying glasses and garden tools.

"Students love to explore and play in these garden beds, (and) it leads to many meaningful curricular connections. However, some students did not know which garden beds they could play in," says Aguilar. "As a garden committee, we noticed the need for signage to keep encouraging students playing and exploring in those designated areas. We felt student-created signs would be a great way for our community to come together and to share what we have been growing and what we do with our garden beds."

Aguilar's class brainstormed and came up with sign names, then worked on the designs in small groups. They made practice versions on paper, then copied them onto large wooden signs which were painted and placed in the garden. The hands-on project was engaging and helped students feel connected to the school community and learn to work together.

"(Students) take pride in contributing to their school garden and love to watch what they planted grow," says Aguilar. "It has been great to see our potatoes flourish thus far. My class has been excited to contribute to the garden with the addition of the garden signs."

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KPU student lauded for creativity

A Kwantlen Polytechnic University student's idea to repurpose a sailing centre as an Alzheimer's care home has seen him named one of 100 future design grads to watch.

Paul Charowsky's modern sleek design, part of a third-year mid-term project, caught the eye of Metropolis Magazine, who named him one of the 100 future architecture and design graduates of 2021 to watch.

"It's a super nice feeling. I'm gratified that someone appreciated my work," says Charowsky, who is taking the Interior Design degree at the Richmond campus' Wilson School of Design.

Of the 100 students Metropolis Magazine featured, only 50 were undergrads from North America.

Charowsky created a concept that repurposed a sailing centre by the water in Kitsilano into an Alzheimer's care home. It was a group project that branched off into solo projects.

He visited care homes to research what they were like and what was missing.

"It helps so much actually going to these homes as well and kind of experiencing what it could be just walking through it and, unfortunately, feeling unhappy walking through it," he says.

The other students and Charowsky used Vancouver landmarks, like the Jericho Sailing Centre, for inspiration so that patients would still feel connected to their neighbourhoods and communities.

Charowsky designed a café in the reception area of the home. He had to keep in mind the health, safety and quality of care at the care home, not only to protect the residents but enhance their quality of life.

"Instead of going out of the way to meet someone, you're just going to a café within the place you live," he says. "If a resident comes there they can get coffee but if a family comes there, they can be directed to their family that way."

Wilson School of Design instructor Paola Gavilanez told Charowsky to apply to Metropolis.

"It's a different way of looking at senior care design," says Gavilanez. "It's completely outside the box but it has a deeply rooted research component behind it. And I think as designers one of the things we strive to do is improve people's quality of life."

"Paul and our students are able to develop deep empathy for (the people) who will be using the space. And how you develop deep empathy for somebody who has Alzheimer's without having Alzheimer's or know someone who has Alzheimer's is by doing deep research."

The program, she says, is an interior architectural degree, not just a design degree, which means students need to know building codes, fire codes, sustainable design, which walls are load-bearing and much more when creating projects.



Photo courtesy KPU

Paul Charowsky is a student at Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Wilson School of Design in Richmond.

Entrepreneur creates inspiring ensembles

Headquartered in Richmond,
Smash + Tess coined
the 'romper revolution'

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Some people dread Mondays—but not Ashley Freeborn.

In fact, the chief executive officer of Richmond-based clothing company Smash + Tess says Monday is her favourite day of the week. Freeborn—the eponymous “Smash”—runs the company with her mom Teresa (“Tess”) and best friend Mercedes.

“It started out as a love for all things comfortable, and also I recognized that there was a real hole in the market for not only super comfortable transitional clothing but also for a lifestyle and a community built around that, where women truly uplifted women, where everyone felt included,” says Freeborn.

Born and raised in Tsawwassen, Freeborn moved to Los Angeles four years ago, although she still has a B.C. home that she plans to come to this summer once the border opens.

A high school teacher for 10 years, Freeborn had always dreamed of working in fashion. When she saw a summer intensive program offered in London, she took a chance, and through that program she developed her first business plan.

Smash + Tess entered the market in April 2016, when Freeborn was working in finance. But in 2018, she quit that job and became solely the head of her clothing brand. In the meantime, she’s also had two daughters, Frankie and Stella, the latter of whom was born during the pandemic.

“No one’s really met her yet, because she’s been in the bubble of my house,” says Freeborn. “My children are such a big part of my day-to-day and my work, but also what I do. Creating a legacy of strong powerful women that support each other is something I want my girls to step into one day.”

While she’s recently been named a finalist for the RevolutionHER Trailblazer Award, which recognizes entrepreneurs who have shown dedication to com-

**You have one life, and
you don't need to be
stuck doing something
that doesn't make you
feel fulfilled.**

– Ashley Freeborn



Photo submitted

Ashley Freeborn runs Smash + Tess, a clothing business headquartered in Richmond which is known for its rompers.

munity impact and bettering people and the planet, Freeborn says it wasn’t all smooth sailing when she was getting started in the industry.

“I always say, I don’t know that I’m particularly smarter than anybody else, I think I’m just really tenacious, that’s what sets us entrepreneurs aside,” she says. “Bump after bump, challenge after challenge, you just have to keep going.”

Aiming to fit as many women’s body shapes as possible, and use as many sustainable fabrics as they could, was a challenge for Freeborn and her team. They also wanted to produce locally, which they are able to do thanks to two Richmond headquarters: one on Bridgeport Road and one on Horseshoe Way. She says she was honoured and excited to be considered for the RevolutionHER awards, which will announce its winners in late September.

As for future goals, Freeborn says she’d love to expand to the U.S. as well as elsewhere globally—what she calls “world domination, one romper at a time.”

Freeborn is also proud of the community Smash + Tess has built, celebrating women and bringing them together. And she’s glad to be part of a growing number of female entrepreneurs who are able

to effect change.

“When I was growing up, I never saw women entrepreneurs in the way that we get to see them now,” she says. “The most exciting part of being an entrepreneur is having creative thoughts and getting to take that creative thought and make that happen. Sometimes it’s in the same day, (and) that is absolutely liberating.”

When she’s not at work, Freeborn loves to spend time with her family and to travel, when that’s possible. She’s keeping mum about possible future business endeavours, but does share that writing a second children’s book might be in her future: “I promised Stella, my one-year-old, that she gets a book too—my first one (*Frankie and the Magical Romper*) was about my older daughter. I’m going to need to make good on that promise.”

Being a business owner, and working with her mom and best friend, is “a dream” for Freeborn, and she hopes everyone can love Mondays as much as she does.

“You have one life, and you don’t need to be stuck doing something that doesn’t make you feel fulfilled. I pinch myself every day because I can’t imagine doing anything else.”

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Vaccines vital in fighting COVID-19

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter
and LORRAINE GRAVES



DR. MEENA DAWAR

As second COVID-19 vaccine doses increase province-wide, Richmond's medical health officer says receiving two doses is crucial to protection.

Speaking last month to the city's COVID-19 task force, Dr. Meena Dawar added that with companies doing vaccine trials for children under the age of 12, it's "a matter of time" before these are approved for youngsters.

"The (more infectious) Delta variant is the latest in this chapter," she added. "Two doses of vaccine offer great protection against the Delta variant. One dose is less than optimal."

The Delta variant, also known as B.1.617.2, was first detected in India. According to B.C. Centre for Disease Control data, Delta cases made up just eight per cent of variant cases across the province between June 27 and July 3. But this number climbed to 33 per cent between July 4 and 10, and 39 per cent between July 11 and 17 according to reports released by the B.C. Centre for Disease Control.

As the daily case numbers in B.C. creep upwards again—after reaching a low of just 20 on July 5 of this year—Dawar says wondering what to expect this fall is an important question.

"Every fall we see respiratory illness—it's the season for flu," she says. "It remains to be seen about flu. We're likely to (have) respiratory viruses back."

She says the high immunization rate in Canada has "taken the heat out of the virus, in a way." The virus causes more milder illness in many people, as opposed to resulting in widespread hospitalization. Any changes in guidance will come from the province in response to changing data.



Photo courtesy Richmond Hospital Foundation

Candace Hernandez (left), vice-president of Richmond Hospital Foundation with venerable Chueh Chu Shih, abbess of Fo Guang Shan Vancouver Temple; and Tammy Mu, president, Buddha's Light International Association, Vancouver. Social distancing protocols were followed during the cheque presentation.

Fo Guang Shan donates to Richmond Hospital

Buddha's Light International Association and Vancouver International Buddhist Progress Society have come together for a second time to help fund the new Yurkovich Family Pavilion at Richmond Hospital.

This week's \$10,000 donation adds to the \$50,000 donated over five years toward the new acute care tower.

"Richmond Hospital is a 55-year-old facility serving the community of Richmond. I have seen first-hand the challenges our health care teams face daily as a result of working in an aging building" says venerable Chueh Chu Shih, abbess of Fo Guang Shan Vancouver Temple. "A new acute care tower will allow them to work more effectively and provide more efficient care for patients. Patients will also have access to an environment that is more favourable for healing. This is a tremendous project that requires an enormous amount of resources to complete, but one that will benefit everyone in the future so it was important for us to support"

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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