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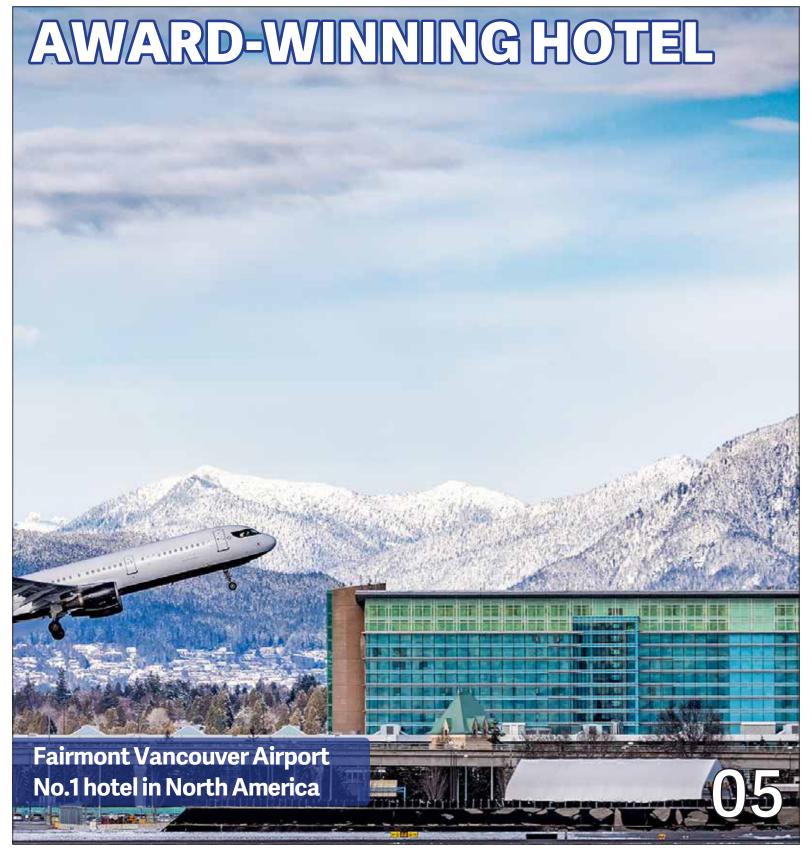
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VOL. 7 ISSUE 5

**NOT-FOR-PROFIT** 

MARCH 28 - APRIL 10, 2023



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# YVR and Unity sign agreement

Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and Unity, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to commercialize YVR's Digital Twin powered by Unity, for the global aviation industry. This strategic collaboration aims to bring YVR's Digital Twin model to the broader aviation market so other airports can advance their digital transformation.

YVR's digital twin is the first major product out of YVR's Innovation Hub which was launched in 2021 as a people-first technology to advance the airport's vision to power the future through innovation and sustainable technology solutions. It's a powerful tool that facilitates optimization, future planning simulation, training testing, and more by aggregating and visualizing data across disparate sources. Through the integration of sensors, historical and real-time data into the platform, the digital twin strategically presents key information in 2D and 3D, enabling data-driven decision-making and collaboration which has never been available before.

"From the beginning, YVR's digital twin has been centered around our people—employees, passengers and the community," said Lynette DuJohn, vice president of Innovation and chief innovation officer at Vancouver Airport Authority. "In bringing our digital twin to the global aviation market, we look forward to working with other airports, and industry partners, to positively transform the way they serve their passengers through the possibilities this exciting technology offers."

This big step wouldn't be possible without the support of the airport's partner Unity—the world's leading platform for creating and growing interactive, real-time 3D (RT3D) content and its professional service group, Accelerate Solutions.

"I am very excited about Unity and YVR's joint goto-market plan for an airport Digital Twin platform," said Ryan Peterson, vice president, Accelerate



File photo by Hannah Scott

## YVR and Unity accelerate digital transformation in aviation with YVR's Digital Twin platform.

Solutions, at Unity. "The last three years have seen a tremendous amount of collaboration, boldness and vision from both organizations, and I believe this digital twin platform can provide incredible value to airports around the world. Accelerating aviation's digital transformation will have a massive, positive impact on our society, with the goal of driving efficiencies in the transport of people and goods."

Since 2021, the YVR digital twin platform has addressed various operational challenges amid changing aviation and travel realities. During the 2022 peak summer travel season, YVR's Guest Experience Team used the digital twin to relieve passenger congestion at security checkpoints. To support YVR's decarbonization goals and help the aviation industry reach net zero emissions by 2030, YVR is working in collaboration with carrier partners to build a greenhouse gas calculation model that monitors, maps out and analyzes more efficient aircraft movements with the aim to reduce

airside emissions.

As part of its reconciliation efforts, YVR will provide access to training opportunities to Musqueam students through a Unity certification program designed to advance future career placements within the digital twin and gaming industries. YVR and Musqueam are located in the same community on land that is Musqueam traditional territory. YVR is also exploring the possibilities in digitizing the airport's extensive Indigenous art collection, so as to share Indigenous culture, art and language with the world.

YVR has a long history of designing industry-leading travel technology to transform the passenger experience, deliver operational efficiencies and bring these solutions to airports globally, most recently with its BORDERXPRESS kiosks. In the coming months, YVR will be working closely with airports and sector partners to advance digital twin technology and make it available to partners in Canada and around the world.

# Upgrades coming to Iona Island treatment plant

The province is providing Metro Vancouver with funding to upgrade the Iona Island wastewater treatment plant in Richmond, ensuring it can meet the demands of the growing population, while protecting the health of people and the environment

"B.C.'s population is growing at an unprecedented rate, and with that growth comes increasing demands on our infrastructure and our environment," said Premier David Eby. "Municipalities need help building climate-resilient infrastructure that provides people with the services they need while protecting nature. That's why we're investing \$250 million in upgrading Richmond's Iona Island wastewater treatment plant to ensure our communities and our coastal waters remain healthy."

The province is providing \$250 million to Metro Vancouver to cover one-third of the total cost of Phase 1 of the upgrade project. Funds will support facility upgrades that will help improve wastewater capacity and quality for more than 750,000 residents, address seismic resiliency, and protect residents' health and the Fraser River's ecosystem for years to come.

"The Iona Island wastewater treatment plant provides services to people in

Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond, University of British Columbia and the University Endowment Lands, and the Musqueam Indian Band," said Anne Kang, Minister of Municipal Affairs. "We are working together to make sure needed infrastructure is updated and maintained so communities can thrive into the future."

Metro Vancouver is engaging with local First Nations through the project planning phase and is working closely with the Musqueam Indian Band whose primary lands are directly across the north arm of the Fraser River from the lona facility.

"I would like to extend my gratitude to the province for cost sharing in one of the largest and most transformative infrastructure projects Metro Vancouver has ever undertaken," said George V. Harvie, board chair, Metro Vancouver. "Together, we are protecting important marine environments, creating jobs, improving resiliency to climate change and taking meaningful steps toward reconciliation."

The upgrades must meet federal regulatory requirements. Phase 1 is underway and is scheduled to conclude in 2026. This work sets the foundation for additional updates to address treatment regulations.

# City partners with Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency

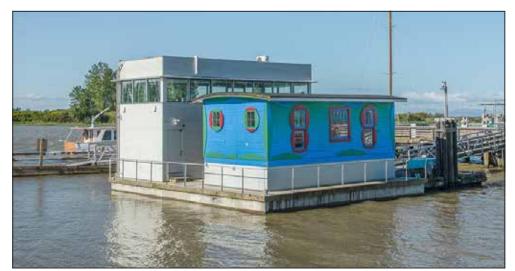


Photo courtesy Henri Robideau and the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency The Blue Cabin moored at Imperial Landing in Steveston.

The City of Richmond is pleased to announce a partnership with the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency to provide artist-led public programs at Branscombe House, in association with activities at the floating residency located at Imperial Landing throughout 2023. Free public artist talks, open studio events, and workshops will animate the heritage home beginning mid-March through October.

Berlin-based artist Michelle-Marie Letelier will arrive later this month and be in residence at the Blue Cabin through the end of April. Two more residencies will take place later in the year, including a partnership with the Australian Arts Council and Footscray Community Arts Centre (Melbourne, Australia) aimed at fostering intercultural exchange between Indigenous artists and communities in each region. Additional programs by guest conveners will be presented as The Foreshore Immersive, with broad subject matters, and research and

questions first introduced during the Foreshore Initiative (2016 - 2018).

The Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency is supported by the Blue Cabin Committee, comprising three founding partner organizations: Creative Cultural Collaborations (C3) creativeculturalcollaborations.com, grunt gallery gruntca and Other Sights for Artists' Projects othersights.ca

Behind-the-scenes tours of the Blue Cabin will be offered throughout the year, including during annual cultural events such as Doors Open Richmond in June and Culture Days in September and October.

The Blue Cabin is currently moored at Imperial Landing (4280 Bayview Street). Built by a Norwegian carpenter in 1927, the cabin was sited near Cates Park on the North Shore for more than 80 years before undergoing extensive remediation. The cabin's long-time inhabitants, prominent Canadian artists Al Neil and Carole Itter, as well its unique vernacular architecture and association to artistic happenings in the area, contribute to the

heritage building's cultural significance.

The Branscombe House Artist Residency takes place in a restored Edwardian-style house in the residential area of Steveston. Since its inaugural residency in 2016, the program has hosted seven visiting professional artists for 11 month community-engaged arts residencies. Branscombe House, built in 1908 and restored in 2014, is located at 4900 Steveston Highway and is one of the earliest settler homes in the area.

For more information on the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency and upcoming programs, visit thebluecabin.ca

To learn more about opportunities for artists in Richmond, including the Branscombe House Artist Residency, visit richmond.ca/culture/ artistsopportunities/artists

# An act of kindness

By SAMUEL CHENG Reporter

he kindness bestowed upon us by my son's former employer was beyond generous and I wanted the community of Richmond to know that BakeMart is a company with a heart," says George Benes Sr.

Mr. Benes Sr. called the Richmond Sentinel and shared that his son George Jr. who recently passed away, was 18-years-old when

he joined Bakemark (formerly Kirkland & Rose) in the late 80's.

Paul Boileau, the general manager of Bake-Mark said that "George Jr. worked on a production team producing products that are manufactured in Richmond and distributed throughout British Columbia and across Canada."

In memory of George Benes Jr., former and current staff at BakeMark came together for a memorial luncheon on Jan. 14, 2023, Donations and condolences were personally delivered to the Benes family.

In researching the Richmond company, we discovered it's a leading bakery manufacturer and distributor, headquartered in Richmond with over 33 branches across Canada and the United States. What separates BakeMark from their competition is that their recipes are all developed in-house by the research and development team based in Richmond.

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# Fairmont Vancouver Airport named No. 1 hotel

Fairmont Vancouver Airport has been named the No.1 Airport Hotel in North America for the ninth consecutive year and has climbed to No. 3 in the world at the annual Skytrax World Airport Awards.

The World Airport Awards are the most prestigious accolades for the airport industry, voted by customers in the largest, annual global airport customer satisfaction survey completed across 100 nationalities of airline passengers at 550 airports from August 2022 until February 2023. The Best Airport Hotel Awards rate overall hotel experience, access from the airport to the hotel, friendliness of hotel staff, cleanliness, in-room amenities, fitness and spa facilities, quality of food and restaurant service, and value for money.

"It is an honour to be once again recognized as North America's Best Airport Hotel and we are thrilled to be included in the top three airport hotels worldwide," says Randall Williams, general manager of Fairmont Vancouver Airport "This award truly showcases the hard work of our entire team and their dedication to delivering new and extraordinary experiences every day."

The luxury hotel, located directly in Vancouver International Airport, has re-defined airport accommodation. The hotel's newest innovations include a selection of wellness experiences ranging from complimentary in-room wellness rituals guided by Three Sages to its Fit on the Fly Suite,



Photo courtesy Fairmont Vancouver Airport

Fairmont Vancouver Airport named No. 1 airport hotel in North America and No. 3 in the world at the 2023 Skytrax World Airport Awards.

complete with a Peloton Bike, FITBENCH ONE, yoga mat, and self-guided Nordic hydrotherapy experience. Recently welcoming Harris Sakalis as executive chef, the hotel's culinary offering is set to take on an exciting new direction while continuing to highlight locally and sustainably sourced ingredients from farmers and fishers across the Pacific Northwest.

Located just 90 steps from the U.S. departures level, guestrooms and suites are fully soundproof with floor-to-ceiling views of the airport runways, Pacific Ocean, and North Shore Mountains. Lay-

over meets luxury with day use rooms and health club passes available for travellers, while guests can check in and print boarding passes in the hotel lobby. Runway vistas and award-winning Pacific Northwest cuisine are featured in Globe@YVR restaurant, Jetside Lounge, and through its 24-hour In-Room dining. The hotel also boasts a full-service day spa, a health club with an indoor mechanized resistance pool; and state-of-the-art meeting facilities with over 8,800 square feet of space.

For more information, visit worldairportawards.



# ICBC driver licensing program explained

By SAMUEL CHENG Reporter

Residents who are new to Richmond or British Columbia can find the driver licensing system to be confusing and perhaps different from the system in place where they previously lived. There are knowledge tests and road tests an individual may have to go through before they are able to acquire a full license.

The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) currently has eight classes of driver's licenses in place, giving people the right to operate different motorized vehicles.

Motorized vehicles do not only include cars, but also trucks, vans, buses, motorcycles, and other vehicles with an engine.

The most common license categories, or perhaps the ones most people are familiar with, are the

Class 5 and Class 7 licenses. These licenses allow holders to operate cars, vans, trucks, construction vehicles, utility vehicles, motorhomes, tow trailers, or other one- to two-axle vehicles weighing up to 4,600 kilograms.

A Class 5 is a full license with no restrictions, whereas Class 7 is consid-



You can visit the ICBC at Lansdowne Mall to get your licenses.

Screen grab from Google Maps

ered a learner's permit, identified by the "L" or "N" magnet found on the rear of a car.

Class 6 and Class 8 are motorcycle licenses. This license class includes not only motorcycles, but all-terrain cycles and vehicles (ATVs) as well. Similar to Class 5 and Class 7 system, a Class 8 license does come with driving restrictions whereas Class 6 does not.

A Class 4 license can be separated into two variations: restricted and unrestricted. Both Class 4 restricted and unrestricted allow holders to drive a taxi or a limousine (up to 10 people including the driver for the restricted license), operate a commercial use vehicle such as an Uber and Lyft, or drive an ambulance, as well as any vehicles listed under a Class 5 license.

Additionally, an unrestricted Class 4 license also permits its holder to drive buses with a maximum seating capacity of 25 people including the driver. Buses include school buses, special activity buses, and special vehicles used to transport people with disabilities.

With a Class 3 license, one can operate trucks with more than two axles and drive or tow trailers that exceed 4,600 kilograms. This includes dump trucks, tow trucks, and mobile truck cranes.

Furthermore, with a Class 3 license, a vehicle operator can drive any vehicle listed under a Class 5 license. However, a Class 3 license does not permit people to drive a bus carrying passengers.

A Class 2 license grants the licensee the right to drive buses including school buses, special activities buses and special vehicles. Also, it covers all the vehicles listed under Class 4 and Class 5 licenses.

Lastly, a Class 1 license permits the operation of semi-trailer trucks as well as all the vehicles listed from Class 1 to Class 5. Motorcycles are an exception not included under the Class 1 license.

Aside from vehicles that require a license to operate, there are certain vehicles and motorized vehicles that do not require users to acquire an additional license.

A clutchless scooter with an engine size of less than 50 cc, a maximum speed of 70 kilometres per hour or lower, a maximum weight of 95 kilograms, and a wheel diameter 254 millimeters can be ridden with a Class 5 or Class 7 license, but not a learner's license.

It is important to follow traffic laws as well as watching out for the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles that are on the road. Most important of all, people should not drink and drive.



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# Free 2023 income tax assistance in Richmond

t's tax time again—the deadline for filing 2022 Canada Revenue Agency personal income tax returns is on May 1. Richmond organizations continue to offer a mix of dropoff/pick-up and in-person income tax preparation assistance primarily for low income individuals (\$35,000 annual income or lower, \$35,000 to 37,500 with one child) and families (\$45,000 dual annual income or lower).

Bring valid government-issued photo identification and all relevant documents such as T4, T5 and Canada Child Benefit slips. And remember, it's important to file your taxes whether you've earned income or not to ensure you're receiving all of the Canadian tax system benefits and credits.

- CFC Tax Assist (132-7295 Moffatt Rd.): Saturday and Sundays, now until April 30. Advanced registration is required, and service is available in English and Tagalog. Call Mylene at 604-370-0274 or email cfchandmaid@gmail.com to book an appointment.
- Chimo Community Services (120-7000 Minoru Blvd.): Monday to Friday, until June 30. Service is available in English and Chinese. Call 604-279-7071, or email taxes@chimoservices.com to book an appointment.

- Christ, the Living Stone Fellowship Vancouver (5959 Lancing Rd.): Drop off income tax forms April. 1, 9, 15, 22, 29, or May 6. Advanced registration is required, call Evelyn at 778-835-8428 (Mondays, Tuesdays Thursdays from 4:30 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.) or email clsffreetaxclinic@yahoo.com to book an appointment.
- City Centre Community Association (5900 Minoru Blvd.): Saturdays and Sunday, now until April 24. Advanced registration is required, call Helena at 604-204-8582 or email heglis@richmond.ca to book an appointment Visit citycentrecc.ca for more information.
- Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (190-7000 Minoru Blvd.): Year-round. Must be 55+ or disabled to qualify. Call 604-279-7020, email info@rcrg.org or visit the office to book an appointment.
- available in English and Tagalog. Call Mylne at 604-370-0274 or email cfchandmaid@ nail.com to book an appointment.
  Chimo Community Services (120-7000 inoru Blvd.): Monday to Friday, until June of Service is available in English and Chimology.
  Richmond Centre for Disability (842-5300 No. 3 Rd.): Drop off income tax forms Monday to Friday, now until April 28. Call 604-232-2404 or email taxfiling@rcdrichmond.org to determine eligibility and book an appointment. Visit rcdrichmond.org/ for more information.
  - Richmond Multicultural Community Services (210-7000 Minoru Blvd.): Drop off

income tax forms Monday to Saturday, now until May 5. Advanced registration is required. Call 604-279-7160 or email ashok@rmcs.bc.ca to book an appointment.

- Richmond Public Library (Brighouse branch second floor, 7700 Minoru Gate) in partnership with Lord's Harvest Fellowship: Drop off income tax forms April 2, 9, 23, or 30. Advanced registration and library card are required. Call 604-231-6413 or visit the "Ask Me" desk to book an appointment
- Richmond Women's Resource Centre (Richmond Caring Place, 110-7000 Minoru Blvd.): Drop off income tax forms Monday to Thursday, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., until April 20. Call 604-279-7060 or email office@richmondwomenscentre.org for more information.
- Vancouver Midas Lions Club: Advanced registration is required, and service is available in English and Chinese. Email Choi Chan or Anne Su at midaslionsclub@gmail.com to book an appointment. All clients are welcome.

For more information visit richmondprc. org/free-2023-income-tax-preparation-assistance-in-richmond/



# A Richmond resident's journey to healing

By **SAMUEL CHENG** Reporter

era Cheng, a social worker from Richmond was diagnosed with Tarlov Cyst disease, a rare disease that has plagued her, since she was in a motor vehicle accident.

Tarlov Cyst are fluid-filled sacs that can be located along the nerve roots of the spine. It is most commonly found in the sacrum, also known as the bottom of the spine.

Tarlov Cyst was first discovered in 1938. However, the cause of Tarlov Cyst still remains unknown today. It is speculated that the shock or trauma of the spine can cause the spinal fluid to build up, which can eventually lead to the development of Tarlov Cysts. Severe falls or car accidents are some of the examples that may increase the likelihood to the buildup of cerebrospinal pressure.

Tarlov Cyst can be distinguished by two different types: asymptomatic and symptomatic. Asymptomatic means having little to no symptoms while symptomatic does pose a variety of different symptoms depending on the severity of the condition.

"Symptomatic Tarlov Cyst disease is a rare disease as only 5-9 per cent of the population have cysts but only 1 per cent of that 5-9 per cent experience symptoms," says Cheng

Symptoms such as shock-like or burning pain in the lower back, headaches, loss of bladder control and even loss of feeling or control of movements in the legs and feet are some of the common symptoms for symptomatic Tarlov Cyst.

"It has progressed to excruciating nerve pain combined with bone-on-bone grinding pain and crushing sacral pain that is debilitating anytime I'm sitting, standing, walking and/or bending," says Cheng.

If left untreated, the buildup pressure on the nerves by the cysts can cause the surrounding bones to deteriorate. Which in Vera's case, it's causing sacral bone erosion according to a medical report from Texas neurosurgeon. If worsen, it can cause permanent damage to one's nervous system. According to the studies, women are at a much greater risk of developing such condition compared to men.

"If I do not get surgical treatment, I risk permanent neurological damage and the loss of the use of my legs," says Cheng.

There are many reasons as to why Tarlov Cyst is a difficult disease to diagnose. Firstly, there is very little knowledge about the condition. Secondly, many of the doctors and specialists may not consider the possibility of Tarlov Cyst as there are many other disorders that may pose similar symptoms. Lastly, it would be difficult to determine Tarlov Cyst as the be root of the problem without undergoing magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or computed tomography

"I live in B.C. Canada, where there is very little un-



Vera Cheng with her puppy Oscar.

Photo courtesy Vera Cheng

derstanding of this disease and therefore, my experiences and pain are often dismissed," says Cheng.

Although there are no permanent cures for the disease, there are treatments and surgeries that can help relieve the pain that the patient is going through. The method of treatment is individualized, capitalizing on the specific symptoms that one is

A combination of non-surgical and surgical methods of treatments are used to combat the cysts.

Draining the fluids and shunting the cyst are one of the most direct method of treatments. It helps to mitigate the buildup pressure and the pain. However, this form of treatment is impermanent as the fluids in the cyst will build up over time.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) are procedures used to alleviate irritation, inflammation and nerve pain.

Another practice is to inject the cysts with fibrin glue, a biologically-based sealant, to prevent the buildup of fluids. Though the effectiveness of this method has shown inconsistent results as some patients experienced immediate relief of pain while

it took others longer to achieve the same results. Not to mention the possibilities of developing other complications and side effects along the way.

This rare condition has prevented Vera from continuing her career as a social worker and a counsellor. As an individual whose nature of the job is to assist and help others with their needs and problems, the sudden shift in the spectrum can be a challenging fact to take-in.

"I have spent my career listening to the stories of others," says Cheng. "It is difficult for me to ask for help as I am used to being the helper."

Upon the discovery of the rare disease, Vera has remained faithful and hopeful. Despite the torment and the suffering that she is currently going through, she continues to inspire and encourage others who may have or experience other rare diseases.

"Don't give up," says Cheng." As discouraging as it can get, continue to advocate for yourself and seek out a second or third opinion from doctors."

The comments are not that of the writer but of Vera Cheng.

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# Richmond Stories: Veteran shares stories

By **MATTHEW CHEUNG**Reporter

Millions of Canadians have proudly served their country, putting their lives on the line. Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans (ANAF) Unit 284 President William Spencer sat down with *Richmond Sentinel* interviewer Jim Gordon to discuss his journey in the armed forces and the importance of the ANAF.

Jim Gordon (JG): I understand that the 76th anniversary of the ANAF just passed. Can you tell our readers a bit about that special moment?

William Spencer (WS): We were proud to be one of the units, for the veterans here in Steveston. Twenty years ago, there (were) two Army, Navy, Air Force clubs here, but because of financial reasons they had to close one down (unit) 285. This being a nice building, we've been able to survive and carry on the veterans' legends and what they stood for

JG: The last two years have certainly been challenging for every-

one. How has Unit 284 been able to survive?

WS: Even with government's support (we didn't get a whole lot of money) it's been a struggle to survive and support the community with what little we have. When we opened our doors, we tried to get the message out to the public, that you are welcome. The younger generation don't know that you don't need to be (a member of the) military to come into this facility. It's a great place for socializing. We have all types of different events, card games, billiards, darts, live bands on Saturdays, and the biggest dance floor in Richmond.

## JG: It is definitely important to bring up the fact that many people want to come (here) but think they need a membership or to be a veteran.

WS: We don't push membership, but it is a private club. Visitors are welcome to come in and check it out. Membership is only \$50 (of which) \$32 goes to command.

## JG: Something else many (people) don't know is the amount of charity work and your involvement in this community.

WS: We have our meat draws on Friday and Saturday to raise money to support Richmond including the Richmond Hospital, but there are agencies like Heart and Stroke (Foundation) and (BC) Cancer that don't have an office in Richmond, so we still support those as well.

#### JG: Where do you see things going in the next five years?

WS: We are trying to reach out to the younger (members), the ones that are aging out of cadets and the ones that are coming back from different conflicts.

# JG: The soldiers returning from Afghanistan are the new veterans. Is your club trying to find ways to reach out to them as they are a new generation of vets?

WS: We've been trying, the only stoppage today would be the Privacy Act. We've been trying to get a hold of veterans out there (as they may not know) how to contact anyone or even clubs to get help.

JG: What can someone do who wants to get involved? Is it a matter of



Photo courtesy Richmond Sentinel Videos

Army, Navy, and Air Force Veterans president William Spencer is the oldest living veteran on call.

reaching out to your local MP, to say 'I want to help get these younger people into this place?' Is that a good start?

WS: Yes or the Veterans Affairs have an office downtown and any social services are a good help. We're registered with them, to help anyone looking for housing or support, or even medical devices like hearing aids.

# JG: Let's talk about your life and history. How did you become involved in service to one's country?

WS: We'd have to go back to 1973, I was in Vancouver and joined the Navy Reserves (HMCS) Discovery at Stanley Park. I graduated from that and went into the regular Navy and wanted to train in radar sonar, they told me it would be 10 to 12 years. At 18, that sounded like a lifetime. I returned home to Ontario, and I decided to join the Army there. I wanted a career (as a) field engineer, they said the only opening was infantry, but in a couple of years I could transfer out. There was no transfer, so at five years I left and moved back to Vancouver. I didn't realize at the time that I signed a document saying I'm on call for the next conflict (the Gulf War, Kuwait War, Iraq, Falklands, Afghanistan and now Ukraine). I'm the oldest living veteran on call.

## JG: At what point does being on call end, at a certain age or if you have a fit body?

WS: You'd think there would be an age limit, (but there isn't). For someone at my age I give blood every two weeks or every month depending on the situation.

# JG: Do you have any last words, that you want to say to our readers that want to come in to your club?

WS: It's open to the public and we're looking for volunteers because our club and our events are basically run by volunteers. The only paid staff is the cook and bar staff, so if anything that needs to get done, it's all done by volunteers. We're always looking for support, it's hard work but fun.

For the full video interview visit www.richmondsentinel.ca/videos

•matthewc@richmondsentinel.ca

## *In their own words...*

# Richmond leads in embracing and integrating diversity



Bill McNulty
Councillor

Richmond is a great place to live. Located on the Fraser River, it is easily accessible, blessed with beautiful scenery, and is supported by an array of strong infrastructure thanks to many years of Council vision and investment.

It is also rich in culture. Richmond is regarded as one of Canada's most culturally diverse communities. Over 60 per cent of its residents are immigrants, with over 180 different ethnic or cultural origins calling our city home. That diversity incorporates many different languages, religions and beliefs. As residents, we see unique elements every day, whether it be through the products available in our stores and restaurants, to the languages we hear in cafes and on street corners. These characteristics make our city special. How we embrace and integrate this diversity is what makes us unique.

The Highway to Heaven along No. 5 Road is an internationally renowned example of how Richmond has brought together diverse cultures and beliefs to

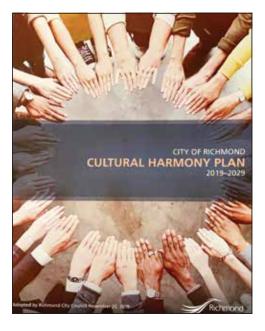
become neighbourly and to build a sense of community. Over 20 houses of worship line the road between Westminster Highway and Steveston Highway. Temples, mosques, churches and religious schools adorn the four-kilometre stretch and are a testament to how Richmond leads the way in cultural harmony.

Sadly, not everyone follows the principles of human kindness and inclusion. The instances of socalled hate crimes and hate incidents rose during the COVID pandemic as people faced increased isolation and other pressures. It was easy to direct feelings of frustration toward others.

But the City, RCMP and others have worked together to address such attitudes and support those targeted for negative comments and actions because of their culture, look and beliefs. Council's statement on anti-racism and the RCMP "Hate Has No Place" campaign have helped reduce the number of hate crimes by almost half over the past year, and the number of hate incidents by a third.

Council recently adopted the Richmond Community Protocol developed by the Richmond Resilience BC Committee as a tool to combat racism. Like our innovative Cultural Harmony Plan, it offers steps and recommendations to enhance inclusion and diversity.

Our discussion when adopting the



Federal Government definitions of anti-Asian and anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, colonialism and systemic and institutional racism showed the breadth of thinking and opinions in Richmond. The discussions at Council were fulsome and we heard differing views from residents—and Council—on the definitions. We also saw and welcomed the passion that exists for cultural representation and recognition. For some, those differences are a focus for negativity. As a lifelong resident and long-serving Richmond Councillor, I believe that those differences are what make us stronger.

# City of Richmond Council Meetings Calendar

The City of Richmond Council and Committee Meetings are available online. Watch live or view previous meetings by visiting richmond.ca/WatchOnline.

For further information, meeting schedules and assistance in participating either virtually or in person, please visit richmond.ca/CityHall or contact the City Clerk's Office at 604-276-4007 or CityClerk@richmond.ca.

Mar 29 | 3:30 p.m. Development Permit Panel

Apr 3 | 4:00 p.m. General Purposes Committee followed by Finance Committee

Apr 4 | 4:00 p.m.

Planning Committee

Apr 11 | 7:00 p.m.

Apr 11 | 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

Apr 12 | 4:00 p.m. Community Safety Committee

Apr 13 | 3:30 p.m. **Development Permit Panel** 

Apr 17 | 4:00 p.m.
General Purposes
Committee followed
7:00 p.m. Public Hearing

Apr 18 | 4:00 p.m. Planning Committee

Apr 19 | 4:00 p.m. Public Works and Transportation Committee

Apr 24 | 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting



For meeting agendas and reports, visit www.richmond.ca/CityHall. Meeting schedule subject to change



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# NDP MLAs say grants will support sports and tourism in Richmond

New Democrats MLAs Kelly Greene, Aman Singh, and Henry Yao say funding for sporting events in B.C. communities will boost local tourism and enrich sports communities for B.C. athletes, so sports fans, athletes, and businesses can enjoy games close to home, and travel to games across the province.

"I am pleased to see our government invest in Richmond's thriving sports scene," said Kelly Greene, MLA for Richmond-Steveston. "Sports brings our communities together and celebrates the achievements of our athletes. I look forward to cheering people on."

In Richmond, the following events are receiving funding:

- \$3500 for the Curling BC U18 Championships last December
- \$5000 for the Badminton Provincial A&B Champions and Circuit Series A and B last August
- \$4500 for the Badminton Western Senior Elite Championship in January
- \$3000 for the Western Canada Age Class Wrestling Championships n January
- \$2500 for the Rhythmic Gymnastics 2023 Elite Canada Championships in February
- \$1500 for the 2023 Vancouver invitational Wheelchair Rugby Tournament this March
- \$2250 for the Artistic Swimming Mable Moran Provincial Qualifier and Championship this April
  - \$3000 for the Karate BC Provincial Championships this April
  - \$10000 for the World Karate Federation Series A competition this April
  - \$4000 for the Badminton Provincial B Championship this May
  - \$1950 for the Badminton Open BCD Championship this June
- \$5000 for the Pacific Distance Carnival and Canadian 10,000 Championships this June
- \$4000 for the U19 Women's Western Canadian Softball Championships this August
  - \$7500 for the 2023 Canadian Boccia Championships in October
- \$3000 for the 15th Annual International Wheelchair Curling Bonspiel 2023 Canadian Open in November
  - \$4500 for the Curling U21 Championships in February 2024

"From wheelchair curling to karate tournaments, sports create an important, inclusive space for our community," said Aman Singh, MLA for Richmond-Queensborough. "I am pleased to see our government invest in sporting events that bring people together."

Financial support for these events is coming through two funding programs—the Major Events program and Hosting BC. The province invests \$500,000 annually in each program, for a combined \$1 million for these events and opportunities.

Through the Major Events program, non-for-profits are supported to host competitions and community development opportunities. Hosting BC is administered by viaSport, and supports organizations to put on smaller-scale events and opportunities for under-served and under-represented groups and regions.

"People in Richmond love getting active and taking part in sports like badminton and curling," said Henry Yao, MLA for Richmond South-Centre. "Our government's investments will support major sporting events that promote athletic achievement and personal well-being, increasing accessibility for all."

Over 140 organizations in total are receiving support through these programs

Learn more at news.gov.bc.ca/28352



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

Federal government announced \$9.1 million in housing initiative for Richmond.

# Government of Canada announces rapid housing initiative fund

onourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Wilson Miao, Member of Parliament for Richmond Centre, Parm Bains, Member of Parliament for Stevenston-Richmond East, and Malcolm Brodie, mayor for the City of Richmond announced \$9.1 million in funding for Richmond, one of the 41 recipients of the third round of the Rapid Housing Initiative's (RHI) city stream. This investment is set to help create at least 18 new units.

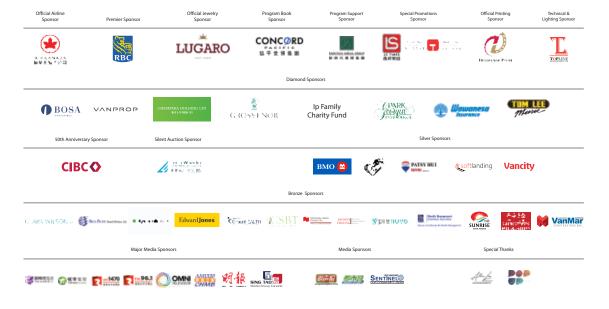
This is made possible by the Government of Canada's additional investment of \$1.5 billion through RHI, bringing the program's total to \$4 billion to support the country's most vulnerable. This investment is expected to create at least 4,500 more affordable housing units for Canadians in severe housing need across the country, with 25 per cent of investments going towards women-focused housing projects.

RHI provides funding to facilitate the rapid construction of new housing and the acquisition of existing buildings for the purpose of rehabilitation or conversion to permanent affordable housing units. The additional funding for the third round of RHI will be divided into two streams: \$1 billion through the Projects Stream and \$500 million towards the Cities Stream.

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# Richmond Stories: Shaena Furlong

By **MATTHEW CHEUNG**Reporter

President and chief executive officer (CEO) of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Shaena Furlong, sat down with interviewer Jim Gordon and former senior reporter Hannah Scott to highlight the past year and exciting events happening this year.

Jim Gordon (JG): Hannah, what were some of the highlights that are memorable to you in 2022?

Hannah Scott (HS): I was able to attend more community events this year, one of which was the opening of the newest community garden. It contained 200 plots on the garden city lands, taking hundreds of people off the waitlist while filling a public space with something that is beautiful to look at

A couple months later, I was able to attend a special event that focused on seniors telling their stories. The community arts council of Richmond held an exhibition called *The faces of Richmond*, where seniors were interviewed and (had) their portraits painted by local artists. It was a touching experience to see people who have lived in Richmond for decades share about their experiences living here. The city also opened a brand-new animal shelter that held enough space for 17 dogs, 40 cats, and a few smaller animals like rabbits.

JG: Shaena, as president and CEO of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, you manage the operations plus over 60 events and advocate for small businesses. What stood out for you in the past year?

Shaena Furlong (SF): 2022 felt like a return to business. A lot of support that we had during COVID was slowly phased out and we saw a revitalization in the economy. At the Richmond Chamber of Commerce in quarter 1 2022, Omicron meant we couldn't host any in-person events so annual favourites were put on hold.

Coming out of quarter 1, we saw a more open environment and we hosted a business after five event at Versante hotel for members only. We had almost 100 attendees, people were in masks, some comfortably not wearing masks, it was a great celebration. In many ways, it felt like a return to normalcy and businesses had more certainty for planning their future.

JG: How have businesses who needed to change during the pandemic, changed for the better?

HS: I found that visual artists and writers were able to spend more time on their craft while actors said initially it was very challenging.

SF: We've seen a lot of good innovations continue, like hybrid work and flexibility from employers, access to work, those things are here to stay. At the chamber, we ramped up our webinar programming in 2020, and that continues to be a



Photo courtesy Richmond Sentinel Videos

CEO of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Shaena Furlong sat down with *Richmond Sentinel* to highlight the past and present.

way that people like to receive education.

JG: As things progress in 2023, are businesses requiring staff to return to the office or has productivity stayed strong enough that staff can work from home or adapt to a hybrid work schedule?

SF: It depends on the nature of (their) work. There are positions where it is more productive to be in the office to collaborate with colleagues. I think every business needs to make that decision on their own. I do know some businesses are struggling to get workers back into the office. I hope some level of flexibility will stay in work-places so that productivity does not suffer. At the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, we've found being able to walk into each other's office to ask a question or to have a quick meeting is energizing and works for us.

JG: Hannah, how challenging was it to collect information for the paper, when you can't converse with the person in the office?

HS: I found the people I interviewed were happier to chat at an unusual time of the day. It was nice to see people (on Zoom) in their personal space, in their home with their art in the background.

JG: What are you looking forward to, going into the new year?

HS: I am hoping more city events are going to return. (Last year) with the introduction of new variants some events that were scheduled to

take place couldn't happen like the Cherry Blossom Festival. I'm also hoping the Steveston Salmon Festival will return in full force, with a parade and fireworks, because that's a beloved family event

SF: The CARHA Hockey tournament is (something) that I am looking forward to this year. Events like that bring so much revenue into the City of Richmond. Also, we finally hosted our Lunar New Year event, it was great to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit in a room of about 300 people.

At the chamber, we're focused on sustainability events, as well as events around women in leadership. From a business point of view, I hope we'll see a decline in the inflation rate and (with regard to that), we will continue to host events with chief economists so the community can be kept updated.

JG: Do you have any last words worth mentioning about this past year?

HS: It was nice to see the community come together and learn from this (experience).

SF: The Richmond Chamber of Commerce has a vision to make Richmond the place to start a business and we want to work on that by promoting community events that encourage entrepreneurship among people who aren't entrepreneurs or wouldn't be on that path.

For the full video interview visit www.richmond sentinel.ca/videos

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# Local TV personality started in radio

By JIM GORDON & LEETA LIEPINS Contributors

ur City Tonight (OCT) sat down with Marke Driesschen, local TV personality and CTV Morning Live's weather presenter.

OCT: I've know this gentleman for many years, he delivers the weather every morning. Weather is a very hot topic in this city because it's sun glasses or umbrellas and everything in between. Marke how many times do you get stopped on the street and they want to blame you for the weather?

Marke Driessche (MD): The best one of all, I was on my bicycle on the Burrard street bridge and a guy in a pick-up truck recognized me, slammed on the brakes and yelled "where's the sunshine?"

OCT: You graduated from Seneca Radio College and worked at a radio station in Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario. Let's talk about radio, I grew up in that era and radio was really something back then.

MD: I got turned onto radio in high school, first it was AM radio, of course, and later because I got a little older, it was FM rock radio, which was just starting out I use to listen to it as a teenager

while doing homework and thought I could do that: play records for four hours and talk. Later, I got to be proficient in theatre arts and performing, but my passion was to do radio, that's what I wanted to do. I never even thought about doing television.

OCT: I, like you, have been doing television for a long time and love it, but I still get a charge when I step into a radio studio. You went from Sault Ste. Marie to Saskatoon, and you also worked in Winnipeg. At what point did TV come calling.

MD: Television came calling when I was in Saskatoon. I worked at this FM rock station which got sold to a different company, who turned it into the "Best of yesterday, today, and last week" ... I lasted another couple years with them, but it was like a marriage that wasn't working out.



Photo courtesy Marke Driesschen

Marke Driesschen TV personality sat down with Our City Tonight to discuss his journey in media.

> I bounced around, out of work for a while, when a new television station opened, which is now Global Saskatoon. They asked me to work for them and one of the things they wanted me to do was the weather because I was filling in for the weather person who was going on maternity leave. So, I thought David Letterman started this way, let's see what happens and I never looked back.

> OCT: It's interesting when I think about reporting weather on the prairies, cold, snow and then hot. Did you come to Vancouver to specifically do

> MD: I was in Winnipeg at the time and the news Director at UTV saw my weather show in Winnipeg and offered me the job out in Vancouver.

OCT: You've done stand up comedy for almost

as long as you've done radio. Is that something you still like to do?

MD: I do love it, but I don't do it anymore mostly due to my schedule. I can't wait around at a comedy club to get up on stage to perform at 11:15 at night when I have to get up at 3:30 a.m. to go to the studio. I really love doing stand up and I really love doing improv. If you can make a whole room full of strangers laugh, not at you but at what you're saying, that feels incredible.

OCT: You have interviewed a lot of celebrities over the years, you interviewed someone that I envy, John Cleese a bunch of times. Please talk about what it was like to interview a sharp, sarcastic comedic guy like him.

MD: The first time, it was extremely intimidating. He was on tour to do the Unique Lives and Experiences series, and it was supposed to be his daughter doing the question-and-answer segment. But then it turned out last minute to be me. I was completely surprised and didn't know what to expect.

I knew he was very sharp and could be a little bit acerbic as well. I met him at the sound check and the stage manager came over and introduced us. John said to me, "Marke one thing to remem-

ber is there's no such thing as making a mistake. We're just going to have a lot of fun and we'll see whatever happens and we'll just enjoy ourselves." That just put me at ease right away, and after that, it was so much fun.

OCT: I think too when they sense you know what you are talking about in terms of their career it is much better. Is there anyone left that you'd like to interview?

MD: I'd love to talk to Jerry Seinfeld, and in the music world, I would love to talk to Dave Grohl.

OCT: He gets up early in the morning folks, I commend you Marke for doing it all these years, delivering to us the weather every morning.

For the interview in full go to richmondsentinel. ca/videos



at 10:30 DAILY



richmondsentinel.ca March 28 - April 10, 2023 ENTERTAINMENT

# Jason Priestley narrates / directs new documentary

By JIM GORDON & LEETA LIEPINS
Contributors

Jason Priestley, a Canadian born actor and television director is best known for his role in the long-running television series, Beverly Hills 90210. His more recent Canadian television series *Private Eyes*, Priestley the executive director, also played the lead role of Matt Shade, a retired hockey player turned private investigator.

A very recognizable actor in the world of television and movies, Jason Priestley's latest project has him directing and narrating the documentary film *OFFSIDE: The Harold Ballard Story* which debuted at the Whistler Film Festival this past December.

Our City Tonight interviewed Priestley on the red carpet at the Whistler Film Festival.

Our City Tonight (OCT): I'm here with a guy that is no stranger to our readers out there, he just made a great movie that I enjoyed, it's Offside: The Harold Ballard story. As a guy that grew up in the 70s and 80s in Toronto and cheered for the Toronto Maple Leafs until I moved to Vancouver, I can attest that these were painful years for hockey fans.

Please, explain for those who may not know the story behind this film and the story of Harold Ballard, the owner of the Toronto Maple Leafs who was a very different owner, to say the least.

Jason Priestley (JP): For people of my generation and older, the film will be a trip down memory lane. It is terribly difficult to encapsulate this movie in a short interview for people who don't know who Harold Ballard was.

He can be described as the very mercurial, extremely difficult to understand owner of the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team. He owned the Toronto Maple Leafs from 1972 until he passed away in



Photo courtesy Jim Gordon

Jason Priestley directs and narrates movie based on former Toronto Maple Leafs' owner Harold Ballard

1990. He almost single-handedly destroyed that franchise. As you can attest to.

OCT: What is also interesting is that you bring up details in this movie, and I thought I knew a lot about Ballard and the team but what I didn't know was that his roots went that far back into the organization and the Con Smyth days.

JP: These roots went back to when he was one of the managers of the Toronto Marlies hockey team. In fact, he was the general manager of this Toronto Maple Leafs farm team, and he worked his way up.

He was a member of the "Silver Seven" which was the group that managed the team when hockey legend Conn Smythe was exiting his ownership of the team.

That group sort of shepherded the team through their last bit of glory in the 60s. But then in the early 70s, he sort of had the team land in his lap as Stafford Smythe, Conn's son, died unexpectedly from complications.



Photo courtesy Lone Eagle Entertainment OFFSIDE: The Harold Ballard Story premiered at the Whistler Film Festival.

Ballard was sort of the last man standing after this tragedy, and he found himself in ownership of this piece of hockey legend or hockey royalty in Canada.

OCT: You brought up some points as the director and narrator of the movie Offside: The Harold Ballard story. I didn't know this, as I was a little too young at the time, but you reveal in this film that Harold Ballard was in the process of going to prison during this time.

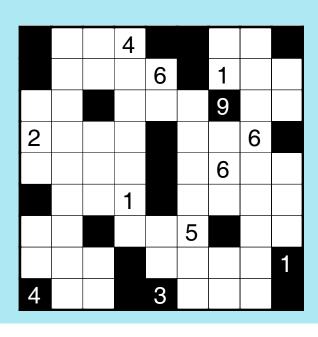
JP: Yes, he was about to head to prison to serve a three-year term, and he only served one year of that term. He was on his way to prison for forty-seven counts of white-collar crimes, and he had to go to Millhaven Penitentiary (now Milhaven Institution). The story is remarkable because these were all crimes that he committed against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

OCT: These are just a few of the stories that make this film fascinating and if you're a Toronto Maple Leaf fan, you certainly do not want to miss OFFSIDE: The Harold Ballard Story.

The interview in full can be seen on richmond sentinel.ca/videos

## STR8TS

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