



## SHAWN HOOK

Canadian recording artist

13

Shawn Hook, a three-time Juno award nominee, "being a singer, the prospects of not being able to sing again weighed on me heavily".

Photo courtesy Matt Barnes





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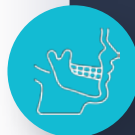
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# Warning calls involving fraudsters posing as police

Richmond RCMP issue public warning regarding fraudsters posing as police following an increase in reports.

Between March 1, and April 8, Richmond RCMP has received seven reports involving fraudsters allegedly posing as police and demanding money. The total reported loss is over \$ 1.1 million. In three instances no money was sent.

All of these investigations involved individuals posing as Chinese police or government officials.

"These fraudsters can be very convincing. They employ various tactics to trick people including spoofing legitimate phone numbers, or making threats of police action if payment is not made. Ultimately, they have one objective, to get your money," says Sergeant Dave Au, Richmond RCMP Organized Crime Unit.

"These types of scams continue to surface in our community and unfortunately people continue to fall prey to these fraudsters," says Corporal Adriana O'Malley, Richmond RCMP Media Relations Officer, "These frauds

can have a devastating financial and emotional impact on the victims which is why we continue to issue these public warnings in the hope of preventing further victimization."

Richmond RCMP want to remind the public that if someone claiming to be from a government agency asks for Bitcoin, Google Play or iTunes gift cards as a method of payment hang up immediately and report it to police.

There are a number of frauds and scams that utilize similar tactics, including the romance scam which has led to significant financial losses for Richmond residents. Richmond RCMP advise on-going discussion with loved ones about these scams in order to promote greater awareness. Richmond RCMP recommend you regularly check the Canada Anti-Fraud website to learn more about the latest scams and frauds affecting our community.

Richmond RCMP encourages anyone who has been the victim of a suspected fraud to report it to the police of jurisdiction.



Photo by Jaana Björk

**Richmond RCMP has issued a public warning regarding an increase in fraudsters posing as police demanding money.**

## Owner's due diligence recovers stolen goods

On April 16, 2024 Richmond RCMP received a report of an alleged break and enter to a residence under construction where a number of tools were stolen. According to the complainant it had occurred between 5:30 p.m. on April 15 and 9:20 a.m. on April 16.

The complainant contacted police a second time later that day and advised he had found his tools for sale on Facebook Marketplace. He stated he was able to identify them based on specific markings he had

put on them.

On April 17 Richmond RCMP Property Crime Unit (PCU) executed a search warrant at a residence in the 4500 block of Sorenson Crescent. Richmond RCMP PCU recovered a number of the alleged stolen tools as well as items associated to another Richmond RCMP investigation.

"When we locate stolen items we want to be able to return them to their rightful owner. Keeping a record of serial numbers or adding identifiable marks can assist police in recov-

ering and returning items that have been stolen," says Corporal Ryan Lee, Richmond RCMP Property Crime Unit, "In this case the owner's due diligence both in marking his items and searching on-line sales platforms assisted us in advancing our investigation and recovering not only his property but other peoples as well."

If you have any information pertaining to a potential criminal investigation Richmond RCMP recommend you contact the police of jurisdiction.

## Ways to celebrate Asian Heritage Month in Richmond

The City of Richmond is proud to celebrate Asian Heritage Month this May, honouring the rich cultural heritage and significant contributions of Canadians of Asian descent. With a series of educational and engaging activities planned throughout the month, residents and visitors are encouraged to participate and learn more about the diverse Asian cultures that enrich our community.

Event highlights for Asian Heritage Month in Richmond:

- Chinese Language Tour at Richmond Art Gallery: Saturday, May 18, 2-3 p.m.

Experience a guided tour in Chinese, featuring current exhibitions and insights into contemporary Asian art.



- The Chinese Ink and Brush Society Exhibition at Richmond Cultural Centre: Apr 30-May 31

Immerse yourself in the beauty of traditional Chinese ink and brush art, showcasing works by local artists.

- The Suitcase Project at Steveston Museum and Post Office: ongoing until Sept. 1

Discover personal stories of migration, identity and belonging from Canadians of Asian heritage through this compelling exhibition.

- Various activities at the Richmond Public Library

Mindfulness Tai-Chi, Multicultural Calligraphy and Tang Poetry.

For a complete list of events and to learn more about how to participate, visit [richmond.ca/AsianHeritageMonth](http://richmond.ca/AsianHeritageMonth)



# Watering restrictions started May 1



Photo via Flickr.com by UBC Micrometeorology

## Seasonal restrictions on lawn watering came into effect May 1.

Stage 1 watering restrictions started, Monday, May 1 and continue to Sunday, Oct. 15. The watering restrictions are regional and part of Metro Vancouver's Drinking Water Conservation Plan. They are supported and enforced by the city through Richmond's Water Use Restriction Bylaw No. 7784.

Watering of edible plants is exempt from regulations.

### Stage 1 Restrictions

The following restrictions take effect:

#### Residential lawn watering allowed:

Even-numbered addresses on Saturdays, odd-numbered addresses on Sundays

Automatic watering: 5 to 7 a.m.

Manual watering: 6 to 9 a.m.

Watering trees, shrubs, decorative planters, and flowers are permitted any day from 5 to 9 a.m. if using a sprinkler; or any time if hand water-

ing or using drip irrigation. All hoses must have an automatic shut-off device.

#### Non-Residential lawn watering allowed:

Even-numbered addresses on Mondays, odd-numbered addresses on Tuesdays

Automatic watering: 4 to 6 a.m.

Manual watering: 6 to 9 a.m.

Watering trees, shrubs, decorative planters, and flowers is permitted any day from 4 to 9 a.m. if using a sprinkler; or any time if hand watering or using drip irrigation. All hoses must have an automatic shut-off device.

The restrictions only apply to the use of treated drinking/tap water. Restrictions do not apply to the use of rainwater, grey water (wastewater from baths, sinks, washing machines and other kitchen appliances), any forms of recycled water, or other sources of water outside of the municipal water supply.

Managing European Chafer Beetles or new lawns

During Stage 1 restrictions, residents may apply for an exemption permit to water outside of watering restrictions if treating their lawns with nematodes or installing new lawns. A permit application should be submitted to [savewater@richmond.ca](mailto:savewater@richmond.ca).

Copies of a receipt/invoice for the nematodes or new lawn must accompany the application. The permit fee is \$39.50 per dwelling unit for all new lawns and non-metered residents applying for a permit. There is no fee for metered residents applying for a permit.

### Water conservation

Stage 1 watering restrictions can delay or avoid the need for higher, more restrictive water use stages. Even if reservoirs have water or the wet weather continues, Stage 1 restrictions will still be in place under the city's Water Use Restriction Bylaw No. 7784 and Metro Vancouver's Lawn Watering Regulations.

Demand for water is at the highest during evening hours when residents require water for domestic uses such as preparing dinner, dishwashing, laundry and showers. Watering lawns early in the morning helps reduce the peak demand on the water system.

Watering restrictions are also a reminder to reduce non-priority water uses such as washing vehicles or non-permeable surfaces such as driveways.

### More information

For water-wise lawn care tips, everyday water conservation tips, and more information about Metro Vancouver's lawn watering regulations, visit [metrovanancouver.org/services/water/water-conservation/Pages/default.aspx](http://metrovanancouver.org/services/water/water-conservation/Pages/default.aspx)

For information or to apply for a water restriction exemption permit, visit [richmond.ca/services/rdws/water/savewater/lawn.htm](http://richmond.ca/services/rdws/water/savewater/lawn.htm)

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# In honour of our soldiers: Bertram Kitcher

In a series about Richmond's poppy street signs, in memory of our fallen soldiers, we share the story of Kitcher Place.

Bertram Kitcher was born on Jan. 6, 1887 in Southampton, England, son of Albelt Edward and Charlotte Toomer Kitcher of Sway, Hants, England. During his time in England, Bertram served in the Hampshire Regiment in England as part of the 4th Battalion.

Later in life, he would leave England and immigrate to Canada, he worked as a carpenter in Steveston with his wife Clara, until his 29 birthday on Jan. 6, 1916. Bertram enlisted in New Westminster, joining the 121st Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He and his Battalion travelled to Liverpool on August 4, 1916 aboard the Empress of Britain. He would then transfer to the 54th Battalion and make his way to France on Dec. 13, 1916.

The following year was filled with hardships for Kitcher, as he found himself in a hospital bed multiple times due to widespread influenza and blood

poisoning as a result of scratches from the barbed wire.

On Oct. 12, 1918, Kitcher was killed in action in France, his widow Clara would return to Hampshire, England after his death. In recognition of his service and sacrifice, the Canadian government awarded

Clara a war gratuity of \$100 as well as a scroll and plaque.

On Jan. 8, 1990, the City of Richmond honoured Kitcher by naming a road after him. Today, Kitcher Place can be found in a small neighbourhood near the Alderbridge Way and No. 4 Road intersection.



A poppy engraved road sign of Kitcher Place.

Screen grab from googlemaps.com



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# Asphalt Paving Advisory

April 20 to November 30, 2024

The City of Richmond has contracted Save On Black Top Ltd. to grind and pave the following locations in Richmond **from April 20 to November 30, 2024.**

PROPOSED 2024 PAVING LOCATION DETAILS
No. 6 Road (Bridgeport Road to Cambie Road)—Bridgeport Road intersection not included. Cambie Road Intersection included
Cambie Road (Shell Road to No. 5 Road)—Intersections included
Bridgeport Road (Viking Way to Sweden Way)—Intersections included
No.4 Road and Alderbridge Way Intersection
Westminster Highway (Gilbert Road to No. 3 Road)—Intersections included
Beckwith Road (Sexsmith Road to Smith Street)—Intersections included
Blundell Road—(No. 4 Road to No.5 Road)—No. 4 Road Intersection included
No. 1 Road (Francis Road to Blundell Road)—Intersections included
No. 1 Road (Westminster Highway to Granville Avenue)—Intersections included
No. 6 Road (Bridgeport Road to Vulcan Way)—Intersections included
Shell Road (Steveston Highway to Williams Road)—Intersections included
Vulcan Way (No. 5 Road to No. 6 Road)—Intersections included
Garden City Road (Cambie Road to Bridgeport Road) —Intersections included
No. 5 Road (Seacliff Road to Kingsbridge Drive)—Intersections included
No. 3 Road (Alderbridge Way to Capstan Way)—Intersections included
Burkeville Subdivision includes Catalina Crescent, Douglas Crescent, Hudson Avenue, Boeving Avenue
Kwantlen Street (Alderbridge Way to Alexandra Road)—Alexandra Road Intersection included
Machrina Way (Horseshoe Way to No. 5 Road)
22000 Block Westminster Highway (MOTI—McLean Avenue) including McLean Avenue Intersection
Knight Street (Southbound Lanes from Bridge Deck to 50m South)
Knight Street South Bound On and Off Ramps at Bridgeport Road
Steveston Highway (Westbound Lanes from Shell Road to No.5 Road)—Intersections included
Shell Road (Bridgeport Road to River Drive)—Intersections included
Shell Road (Hammersmith Gate to Steveston Highway)
Jacombs Rd (Cambie Road—Bathgate Way)—Intersections included
Bathgate Way (Sweden Way—Jacombs Road) Intersections included
Hammersmith Gate (Shell Road to Hammersmith Way) Intersections included
Leonard Road (Ryan Road to Williams Road)—Intersections included
Maddocks Road (Aintree Crescent to Shell Road)—Intersections included
Boundary Road (Thompson Gate to Westminster Highway) including Thompson Gate intersection
Blundell Road (Sidaway Road to No. 6 Road)—Intersections included

Work hours will be 7:00am to 10:00pm on weekdays, and 7:00am to 8:00pm on weekends. Night time work hours will be from 7:00pm to 5:00am. (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 web page at **richmond.ca/paving**.



Photo via freepik.com  
Lansdowne Centre is bringing gardening and workshops inside the mall.

## Urban Community Garden at Lansdowne Centre addresses food insecurity in Richmond

Since 2021, The Urban Community Garden at Lansdowne Centre has been growing fresh produce and donating it to the Richmond Food Bank Society and Urban Bounty, organizations that support families who are experiencing food insecurity. They in turn prepare fresh meals for local elementary schools.

"We are proud of the small impact we have made in the community to fight food insecurity. We have donated close to 2,500 lbs of produce to families in need in the past three years. We also host free, weekly workshops to help people learn to grow their own vegetables at home," says Bronwyn Bailey, marketing manager at Lansdowne Centre.

This year, we are bringing the gardening and workshops inside the mall at Centre Court. Free workshops run every Thursday until June 20 and gardeners of any skill level are welcome to join. The skill can be applied to the garden, patio, balcony, or indoor planting and experts are available to answer questions.

The Urban Community Garden will still be located in the southeast parking lot (near T&T Supermarket) while an Urban Garden Wall will be introduced in the Centre Court during May and early September where vegetables and flowers will be planted inside by the experts from Victory Gardens.

Planting of seedlings in the Urban Garden Wall took place on Tuesday, April 30 at 9:30 a.m. Species include lettuce, onions, kale, cabbage, arugula, spinach and more. All produce will be donated to the Richmond Food Bank Society and Urban Bounty.

# Richmond Chamber of Commerce elects new board

On April 25, Richmond Chamber of Commerce members gathered for their Annual General Meeting. Jason Tse was unanimously confirmed as the 2024/2025 chair of the board.

Tse accepted the new position with gratitude, saying “as a long time resident of Richmond who works in our community as well, I really look forward to working with our extremely talented and experienced board and staff. We live and work in a community that is so diverse in terms of culture, demographics, and industries unlike any other in North America. As we come towards our very exciting 100th anniversary of the Chamber, it will provide us a great opportunity to both celebrate and reflect upon our past and set ourselves up as the foremost location to conduct business for the next 100 years.”

The Richmond Chamber of Commerce 2024/2025 Board of Directors are:

Chair: Jason Tse, Vancouver Airport Authority  
Vice Chair: Cila Kwong RBC Insurance  
Corporate Secretary: Lisa Wong, Lauren Financial  
Treasurer: Fan Chun, Dr. Power Global  
Executive-at-Large: Theresa Rawle, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Immediate Past Chair: Lisa Cowell, Apostrophe PR  
Directors:



Photo courtesy Richmond Chamber of Commerce

Back row: (left to right) Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Grant Bryan, Connor Williams, Samson Chan, Fan Chun, Lisa Cowell, Rosa Salcido, and Mike Matsuo. Front row: (left to right) Nancy Small, Jason Tse, Lisa Wong, Theresa Rawle, and Cila Kwong.

- Grant Bryan, O’Hare’s GastroPub & Liquor Store
  - Samson Chan, London Drugs
  - Mike Matsuo, Vancity
  - Rosa Salcido, Vivid Green Architecture Inc.
  - Nancy Small, Tourism Richmond
- Amina Valli-Hasham, Scotiabank
  - Connor Williams, Ashton Mechanical Group

The AGM was hosted by Nook—Coworking Space in Richmond with a cocktail-style networking reception.

“

It's friends we meet along the way that help us appreciate the journey.



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## Call for Nominations for the 2024 Richmond Heritage Awards



United Airlines aircraft "The Mainliner" on display at Vancouver airport ca. 1938.  
[City of Richmond Archives, Photograph #1997 5 19]

Historic buildings, cultural and natural heritage landscapes, artifacts, and oral and written histories—all are rich resources that contribute to our shared community identity today. The Richmond Heritage Awards annually recognizes the accomplishments of individuals and organizations in the conservation of historic places, and education and awareness about Richmond's diverse heritage.

The City of Richmond Heritage Commission is inviting nominations for the 2024 Richmond Heritage Awards. Anyone can submit a nomination for an individual or an organization.

### Nominations

Complete a one-page nomination form available from the City's website at [richmond.ca/HeritageAwards](https://richmond.ca/HeritageAwards) or by contacting:

Policy Planning Department

**Email:** [communityplanning@richmond.ca](mailto:communityplanning@richmond.ca)

**Phone:** 604-276-4207

### Submit via

**Mail:** Richmond Heritage Commission  
c/o Policy Planning Department  
Richmond City Hall  
6911 No. 3 Road,  
Richmond, BC  
V6Y 2C1

**Email:** [communityplanning@richmond.ca](mailto:communityplanning@richmond.ca)

### Submission deadline

11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 26, 2024.

### Some of the ways an individual or organization may earn recognition are:

- preservation, restoration, rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of a historic place, such as a building or structure, or conservation of a cultural heritage landscape;
- promotion or awareness of local heritage through education, outreach or advocacy; or
- contributions to local knowledge of heritage in public history or interpretation projects.

The Awards jury will include members of the Richmond Heritage Commission. All decisions of the jury are final.



**For more information,** contact Policy Planning Department, at **604-276-4207** or [communityplanning@richmond.ca](mailto:communityplanning@richmond.ca)

[richmond.ca](https://richmond.ca)



Screen grab via [bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca](https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

During the month of May, to ensure that Richmond remains one of the safest communities in British Columbia, Richmond RCMP will be enhancing enforcement throughout the city.

## Enhanced speed and high-risk driving enforcement

Richmond RCMP is reinforcing our commitment to road safety during the month of May, as we participate in the province-wide High-Risk Driving Enforcement Campaign. This initiative supports our ongoing efforts to ensure that Richmond remains one of the safest communities in British Columbia.

Speeding is a known risk factor in road fatalities, contributing to both the severity and frequency of collisions. As part of this campaign, Chief Superintendent Dave Chauhan, Officer in Charge of Richmond RCMP has released a statement via video message reminding drivers of the importance of adherence to posted speed limits for the safety of all road users, including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Statistics underscore the seriousness of the issue: driving just 5km/h over the speed limit increases the risk of crashing by 50 per cent. Furthermore, the province has seen, on average, 84 people killed and 2,168 injured in speed-related crashes each year.\* Richmond RCMP is partnering with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) this month to raise awareness of the risks related to speeding and to promote safer roads for all users.

Throughout the month of May, Richmond RCMP is enhancing enforcement throughout the city in collaboration with partner agencies including ICBC, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, and BC Highway patrol. Speed Watch volunteers will be active with speed-reader boards to show drivers their actual speeds. In addition, intersection safety cameras are being utilized to reduce the number of collisions at intersections.

Other high-risk driving behaviours include failing to yield, ignoring traffic control devices, following too closely and improper passing.

In Richmond, the strategic policing approach towards speeding and traffic safety involves educating the public and applying targeted enforcement actions where needed. This aligns with Richmond RCMP's broader strategic plan, which focuses on promoting public safety through education, partnerships, and targeted enforcement actions.

Richmond RCMP encourages everyone to participate in creating safer roadways by obeying speed limits, being vigilant of road conditions, and driving responsibly.

\*Five-year annual average based on police data from 2018 to 2022. Speed: includes exceeding speed limit, excessive speed over 40 km/h of the posted limit and driving too fast for conditions.



# Comfort food from mamma's kitchen

By DINA BOUCHER  
Contributing writer

The media has left no stone unturned when it comes to reporting the rising cost of groceries. I look back at the fact that both my mom and my dad grew up in big families of eight brothers and sisters and both of their fathers were the only breadwinner. One has to be amazed at how they ever managed but they all grew up pretty healthy. Sundays were always a big family dinner for our family of six and my parents who cooked together always prepared more than needed so that several more meals could be prepared for the following week from all the leftovers.

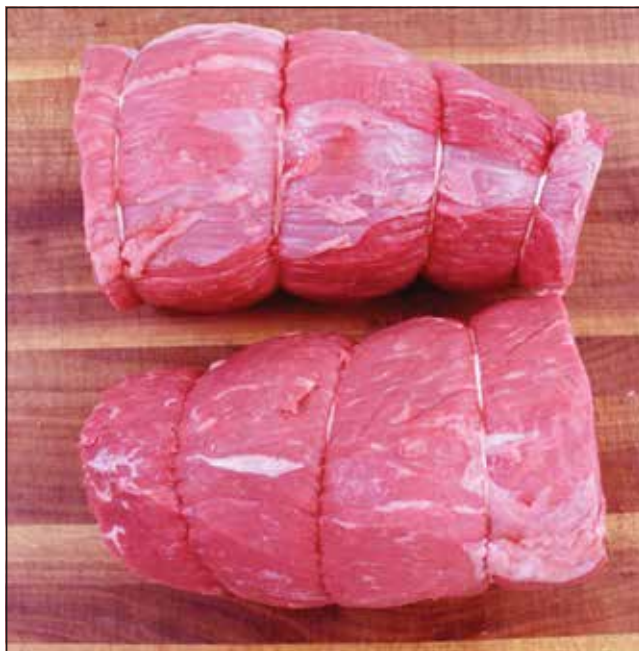
So many of their recipes were hearty, healthy and full of flavour. My dad was a butcher by trade, he was also a great chef so I learned at the early age of 12 how to cook farm style. My dad loved to bake so at the age of 12 I learned how to bake pies and cakes. It's my pleasure to share recipes that have been handed down from my parents which I like to refer to as

- affordable-hearty comfort food and
- how to stretch your food budget.

Today as a senior citizen, I find it challenging shopping for two adults. I buy (at Costco) two very small eye-of-the-round roasts in a package, the reason, there's so little fat and therefore little to no shrinkage.

Step one prepare roast:

- Rub salt, pepper and garlic salt on all sides
- Roasting pan add one cup of water and one cup chopped onion
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- Keep cooked liquid to make your favourite gravy
- Preheat oven 350 degrees and cook roast for



Raw eye-of-the-round beef roast.

Photo by Dina Boucher



Photo via fromvalerieskitchen.com

Cooked eye-of-the-round beef roast.

two hours

One small roast will provide 4 dinners and still have 30 per cent of the meat left over with gravy to prepare the following meals.

- Dinner number one - sliced roast beef, potatoes and turnip with gravy.
  - o Boiled Potatoes whipped with butter (cook enough for leftovers)
  - o Boiled Turnip whipped with butter and brown sugar (cook enough for leftovers)
- Dinner number two—hot roast beef open face sandwich with hot gravy and coleslaw.

• Dinner number three—blend leftover potatoes and turnip with butter, add a small can of kernel corn (drained) and fry all ingredients together, it's flavourful and filling.

• Dinner number 4—with 30 per cent of the eye-of-the-round roast left I like to make a beef stew that provides 8 more meals that can be frozen or shared with a neighbour under the weather. This is why I refer to it as comfort food.

Some people buy stewing beef (an inexpensive cut of meat) but because of no shrinkage with the eye-of-the-round roast it goes a long way and is a tender addition to

this recipe.

Preparation of homemade beef stew:

- Put left over gravy in a large pot—add
- 1 small can tomato paste or 1/3 cup of ketchup
- 1 can of vegetable soup for added gravy flavour
- 1 cup of water and mix all ingredients over low temperature
- Cut left over roast beef into small squares 2 cups
  - o If there is a little meat still left, add it to the stew
- 1 cup of chopped onion
- 2 cups of chopped celery
- 3 cups of sliced carrots (frozen or garden fresh)
- Wash and peel 4 average size potatoes, cut in small squares
- In a separate pot add water and boil the potatoes to semi cooked
- Do not cook potatoes until tender, they will cook in the stew



Homemade beef stew.

Photo by Dina Boucher

- Drain the potatoes add to stew
  - Boil in a separate pot of water, semi cook 1 cup of macaroni or penne noodles
  - Do not cook macaroni until tender, they will cook in the stew
  - Drain and add to stew
  - A pinch of salt and pepper
  - Under low heat simmer the stew stirring constantly
  - Continue cooking and stirring for two hours
  - Turn the heat off, cover the pot with a lid and let the flavours blend
  - Stir occasionally until ready to serve
  - Serve with buttered dinner rolls
- Note, this is a recipe that you can add as many vegetables as you like, it's whatever satisfies your taste buds and your budget

# B.C. bans drug use in public spaces

By MATTHEW CHEUNG  
Contributing writer

On May 31, 2022, then federal Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Carolyn Bennett, announced that the province of British Columbia would receive exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act subsection 56(1). This exemption, at the request of the province of British Columbia, meant that adults, only in the province, could possess small amounts of certain illegal drugs for personal use.

This request was granted by the federal government given the following circumstances:

- Too many lives have been lost due to overdose in the province, others forever altered;
- Substance use harms are first and foremost a health and social issue and should be treated as such;
- Stigma associated with substance use can lead people to hide their drug use, in riskier ways and prevent them from accessing services and supports;
- Indigenous and racialized communities have been and are disproportionately impacted by the overdose crisis and are overrepresented in the criminal justice system;
- The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) has a dual purpose to protect public health and maintain public safety; and the Province of British Columbia has requested that an exemption be granted under subsection 56(1) of the CDSA so that adults will not be subject to criminal charges for the personal possession of small amounts of certain controlled substances as part of its comprehensive response to address the overdose crisis.

The exemption was granted from Jan. 31, 2023 to Jan. 31, 2026; allowing adults (18 and over) in the province to not be subject to criminal charges for the cumulative total possession of up to 2.5 grams select illegal drugs. The certain illegal drugs that were granted exemption included small amounts of opioids (including heroin, morphine, and fentanyl), cocaine (including crack and powder cocaine), methamphetamine, and MDMA also known as ecstasy.

On April 26, 2024, as part of efforts to equip police with more tools to address public safety and treatment access for people with addictions the Province of British Columbia made an amendment to their request for exemption, making it illegal for the use of illicit drugs in any public space, including hospitals, transit vehicles, and parks.

"Keeping people safe is our highest priority. While we are caring and compassionate for those struggling with addiction, we do not accept street



Photo via Flickr.ca

**In a press release sent out on April 26, Premier Eby's office announced it will be illegal to use illicit drugs in public spaces.**

disorder that makes communities feel unsafe," said Premier David Eby. "We're taking action to make sure police have the tools they need to ensure safe and comfortable communities for everyone as we expand treatment options so people can stay alive and get better."

In a news release, Kevin Falcon, leader of BC United, stressed that the latest request for exemptions to be banned in all public places was needed. "Over the past 15 months, it has been painfully clear that this policy has neither saved lives nor reduced drug overdoses but has instead spread harm and disorder in communities across British Columbia," said Kevin Falcon. "From its inception, the decriminalization experience has failed to connect drug users with any necessary treatment or recovery services."

The change to the legality of possessing drugs in British Columbia will allow law enforcement the ability prevent drug use in all public spaces, including hospitals, restaurants, transit, parks and beaches. Officers will receive instruction to only arrest possession of illicit drugs in exceptional circumstances. Upon arrival of a scene where there is possession or use of illegal and dangerous drugs, officers will request the person or group to leave, seize the drugs, or in the most extreme circumstances arrest the individual. Drug possession would not be recriminalized in private settings, legal shelters, overdose prevention sites, and drug check locations.

"Our communities are facing big challenges. People are dying from deadly street drugs and we see the issues with public use and disorder on our streets," said Mike Farnworth, minister of public safety and solicitor general. "As we continue to go after the gangs and organized criminals who are making and trafficking toxic drugs, we're taking action now to make it illegal to use drugs in public

spaces, and to expand access to treatment to help people who need it most."

The government will also improve safety and security for patients, visitors and health-care workers in hospitals. This includes a single policy prohibiting street-drug possession or use and additional measures to increase enforcement, support patients with addictions, and encourage them toward treatment and recovery.

Going forward, when patients are admitted to hospital, they will be asked if they experience any substance-use challenges. Patients will receive active support and medical oversight for addiction care to ensure people with addictions receive personalized care while their medical issues are being treated in hospital.

"Today, we are taking immediate action to make hospitals safer and ensuring policies are consistent and strictly enforced through additional security,

public communication and staff supports," said Adrian Dix, minister of health. "The action plan launching today will improve how patients with addictions are supported while they need hospital care, while preventing others from being exposed to the second-hand effects of illicit drug use."

The province is also expanding access to treatment for people struggling with addiction, including those who are most at risk of overdose by:

- increasing the availability and accessibility of opioid-agonist treatment (OAT), a medication-assisted treatment for people who have an opioid-use disorder, by implementing a provincewide virtual system;
- integrating addictions services with health care, housing and related services; and
- working with experts to develop methods to track prescribed alternatives with the aim of identifying and preventing diversion.

"People across the country are dying from poisoned drugs and B.C. is no exception," said Jennifer Whiteside, minister of mental health and addictions. "Addiction is a health-care issue, not a criminal one, and we're going to keep doing everything we can to save lives and connect people to treatment."

Government is also investing \$25 million to support and expand the Hope to Health Research and Innovation Centre located in Vancouver's Downtown East side, to provide intensive primary care and other services to more people with highly complex medical and psychosocial needs. The innovative Hope to Health model of care is led by Dr. Julio Montaner, a world-recognized physician and researcher in HIV, and in the provision of comprehensive care to vulnerable and marginalized populations. This initiative will lay the foundation for potential expansion to other communities in B.C.

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# B.C.'s new wildfire training and education centre



B.C. has new wildfire training centre.

Photo via Flickr.com

A new dedicated wildfire training and education centre at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) will welcome the province's future wildfire fighters.

The B.C. wildfire training and education centre is a first-of-its-kind program and is a flagship action stemming from recommendations from the Premier's Task Force on Emergencies.

"Last summer, British Columbians endured the worst wildfire season our province has ever seen, and we only got through it thanks to the heroic efforts of our brave firefighters," said Premier David Eby. "Our government is taking action to ensure we are better prepared for future climate emergencies, and that starts by developing and supporting our teams of first responders. By establishing the first-of-its-kind wildfire training and education centre in North America, we are preparing our future wildfire professionals for the critical work of protecting our forests, our communities and our families in a rapidly changing climate."

The centre, the first in North America to transition wildfire training into degree programs and research, will offer comprehensive wildfire training and education programs that progress from basic skills training and learning in the wildfire field, to the future development of wildfire academic diploma and degree programs in wildfire and emergency management disciplines.

Program design will start this year with intakes for program training beginning in 2025 in existing facilities. There are plans also underway to develop a state-of-the-art training facility and building.

"Last year was the most devastating wildfire season on record, and it's clear we need to do more to keep people safe from the impacts of climate change," said Bruce Ralston, minister of forests. "We have some of the most skilled, professional and dedicated teams of wildland firefighters in the world. Through this first-of-its-kind centre in North America, we are taking action to grow our local contingent of wildland firefighters, provide them with

cutting-edge science and technology, and support their long-term career development in B.C."

The new centre, delivered in partnership with TRU and the Ministry of Forests' BC Wildfire Service (BCWS), will enhance the training capacity at BCWS. In addition, BCWS will transition some of its existing training programs and courses into the centre's new curriculum. By 2028-29, more than 1,000 workshops will be offered per year, which will translate into 10,000 course registrations.

This will complement the TRU Institute for Wildfire Science, Adaptation and Resiliency dedicated to research and innovation, which opened in October 2023. Both the new institute and B.C. wildfire training and education centre are building on an existing fire science lab and provincially funded Innovation Research Chair to form a world-class Wildfire Learning, Research and Innovation District at TRU.

"Being part of a broader, collaborative effort with the BC Wildfire Service is a great honour and we look forward to working side by side on initiatives that contribute to building a safer, more resilient future for our communities," said Brett Fairbairn, president and vice-chancellor of TRU. "This partnership reinforces TRU's commitment to leading world-class research, training and innovation to improve how British Columbians adapt to living with wildfires."

The program will initially be funded through enhanced BCWS training resources, first introduced in Budget 2022.

B.C.'s wildfire training and education centre is a core recommendation coming from the Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies. Launched in fall 2023, the task force has worked for six months to put together 31 recommendations focusing on key themes:

- enhancing the use of predictive fire technology;
- expanding wildfire training and prevention programs;
- strengthening local response co-ordination (including with local and municipal fire departments); and
- supporting people with timely and accessible information about evacuation orders and alerts.

The task force met with more than 60 emergency management specialists, First Nations, and key partners that were affected by emergency events, and with other groups that offered to share their perspectives.

"This partnership and program will be the first of its kind in North America," said Thom Porter, retired deputy director of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and member of Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies. "The forest landscape that our children, grandchildren and future generations see will be vastly different than what we experience today. It is our responsibility to provide them with the tools to help them meet the challenges they will face and succeed in the future."

The province continues to implement these recommendations from the task force in real time to help prepare for the upcoming wildfire seasons, including already announcing key steps this year:

- increasing the use of new technology to better predict wildfire movement and growth;
- readying more volunteers to support evacuees;
- funding for communities to better support evacuees;
- enhancing wildfire recruitment tactics; and
- boosting wildfire-fighting fleet and equipment

**Last year was the most devastating wildfire season on record, and it's clear we need to do more to keep people safe from the impacts of climate change.**

Minister of Forests. Bruce Ralston

# Alex Hupka offers patients 50 years of experience

By FLORENCE GORDON  
Contributing writer

*Richmond Sentinel*, Jim Gordon (JG) filmed an interview on location at the office of Esthetics Denture Studio. This is the beginning of a series for our senior citizens and what services and programs are available to keep our seniors active, healthy and informed. To start this project off, we were curious to learn about what a dental technician or dental engineer's role is and who better provide this information than from someone with nearly 50 years of experience.

Alex Hupka (AH) is a registered dentist and registered dental technician who has been offering his service to patients for nearly 50 years.

- 1976 he started his career in Winnipeg as a dental technician.
- 1987 he owned and operated a full-service dental laboratory for eleven years in Winnipeg.
- 1998 he moved from Winnipeg to Vancouver when he was offered a teaching position at Vancouver Community College.
- 2005 he was honoured with Denturist of the Year award.

Alex maintains a relaxing and welcoming environment in his Richmond clinic and is well known for his great service and his friendly manner and says, "beautiful smiles are created by artisans at Esthetics Denture studio."

**JG: We're here in Alex's office at Esthetics Denture Studio, and Alex is actually sitting in the patient's chair.**

AH: I am.

**JG: I wanted to start out with—can you explain to our viewers the difference between a dentist and a dental technician.**

AH: A dental technician is somebody who works by prescription to the dentist, they're highly skilled people, and they will do everything from implants, orthodontics, dentures, and partial bridges. A denturist is somebody who works on a patient, and everything that's removable.

As a technician, I have the ability to engineer a lot of implant bars and design crowns, so when the dentist is doing restorative work, we can be designing crowns or a removable partial and the crown I design will interlock with the partial if required.

**JG: If I'm going to a dentist or a viewer is, do we contact you directly or does the dentist refer us if for example, we wanted a partial bridge.**



Photo courtesy Richmond Sentinel

**Alex Hupka, denturist and dental technician.**

AH: We have a lot of dentists that refer their patients to us. The neat thing is they'll see some of my work on a patient and the next thing you know they're sending us referrals.

**JG: As we said earlier you are originally from Winnipeg, what brought you to Vancouver.**

AH: I had a laboratory for years and I sold it. The next step was to become a denturist because I enjoyed working on patients. When I had my laboratory, I would quite often go out to the dentist office. I have thousands of chairside hours working with the dentists.

With my credentials I was offered a teaching position in dental technology at Vancouver Community College and the rest is history.

**JG: Alex can you talk about just some of the advancements in technology. You said to me off camera, that the digital aspect is something that was in high demand, but now all of a sudden people are moving away from that experience.**

AH: I think they're not satisfied with the ease of use. I've heard of people buying these machines and then it just sits in the office. What people are looking for is more of what I offer. We actually measure the patient's skull and upper and lower jaw and duplicate the images on our technology and through the art of our design the results are—if it's good enough to fool me if I meet you, that's the level I like to work at.

I use what we call cephalometric, which is the measurement of the skull, the shape of your fore-

head, the angles of your forehead and the profile of your face. In other words, we evaluate the dental and skeleton relationship of the human skull. We also review the white part of your eyes, which is the sclera that gives you the base tones for the tooth.

**JG: Let's talk about all that you offer here for our viewers at Esthetics Denture Studio.**

AH: We offer full dentures, partial dentures, precision dentures or if you want to get something that's removable, we can build it. If you have implants, and we need to build a substructure and then a superstructure, there's absolutely no problem engineering it.

**JG: So, if were not coming to you say, through a dentist, can people reach out to your office directly.**

AH: Absolutely. We also have many dentists that we can refer patients to.

The dentists we work with I love dealing with. They're very precise, which is important.

**JG: A lot of your patients are seniors and because people are living longer, do you find yourself creating, say, two or three different types of dentures for a person as they age into their seventies, eighties, and even in their nineties or their hundreds?**

AH: I do actually, and my patients love coming back. Essentially the dentures do hold up, except they're now worn down just from attrition. The neat thing is some of the patients that we have are in their seventies and eighties and nineties. They look amazing. People are living much, much longer.

**JG: You were telling me off camera before we started that along with creating dentures, you also advise your patients, about what to eat and not to eat and why, especially as they're getting older.**

AH: If you're eating a lot of nuts or a lot of fibrous vegetables you will wear out the teeth faster. However, you can't stop a patient. The other thing we also ask people to do is, not to wear their dentures when they go to bed because when they sleep on their side, they could wear them out and they can also wear down bone a little faster. There are many patients whose spouses have never seen them without dentures. So those patients, I tell them the importance of hygiene before bed and in the morning.

For the video interview in full, go to [richmondsentinel.ca/videos](http://richmondsentinel.ca/videos)

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## Joe Biz — *by Joe Leary*

### Shawn Hook

2023 was certainly a transformative year for Shawn Hook. That said, it was certainly not in a positive sense; in fact—far from it.

It was just days into this New Year when the talented Juno Award-nominated singer/songwriter was diagnosed with cancer.

"My initial thought was perhaps I'm fighting off a cold or a bug as I've had swollen lymph nodes in the past," he says. "This was different though because it wasn't going away and once I realized that, I made a doctor's appointment".

It also occurred between dates on a pivotal BC tour; of which his mental focus was on the shows as they were particularly demanding. "I was headlining small theatres, solo; just me and a grand piano which required a lot of vocal practice and rehearsals.

When I'm on stage I'm trying to engage the audience and be as entertaining as possible, so it was a bit of a mental challenge to try to block out my health concerns while trying to put on a great entertaining show".

A daunting reality to be sure and as is often the case, the initial diagnosis would prove worse upon subsequent tests.

"After seeing my GP I was referred to Dr. David Yeh in North Vancouver; one of the top ENT's in Canada and a cancer specialist.

Once I realized I was seeing him was when the thoughts of potentially having cancer popped into my head. He was going to perform a needle biopsy in the office, but I had a sold-out show in my hometown that weekend, so he told me I'd be okay to wait until the following Monday as pathology can take up to ten days".

One can only imagine the thoughts running through his head before performing. "Walking on-stage that evening I knew that if I had cancer, it could possibly be my last show.

It actually motivated me even more to put on the show of my life and it went so well". Feeling



Shawn Hook, recording artist, songwriter, producer.

Photo courtesy Matt Barnes

light-headed and dizzy after the performance; became Shawn's ultimate breaking point.

"I broke down physically and emotionally and knew I was going to have to face the music in a whole different way. "I had the biopsy on Monday and on Jan 31, 2023 I got the call that I was diagnosed with cancer: Squamous Cell Carcinoma with a P16 Expression".

Daunting words to hear to be sure and not surprisingly, Shawn soon ran the gamut of emotions.

"I remember feeling sad, scared; numb and shocked," he acknowledges, "but Dr. David Yeh was really calm on the phone and told me that it was treatable and had a high percentage curable rate".

There was, however, more to come.

"I wasn't completely diagnosed; the tumor in my neck had cancer cells and I had to get a PET scan in order to determine where the primary cancer was".

This added another layer of uncertainty as this surgery is a major procedure; and in a very delicate area. "Being a singer, the prospects of not being able to sing again weighed on me quite heavily—not only because it's a passion of mine and I enjoy

it, but it's also how I make a living".

While it did result in chemotherapy and radiation therapy, Hook has since heard the word that anyone in this situation wants to hear: Remission.

"After I got the good news about remission, I started to focus on getting my strength and my voice back. I had a half-finished EP that I was eager to finish.

After releasing a single last summer that I co-wrote and featured on for a new dance group called, Banker Boys, I ended up signing a deal with Infinity & Records in partnership with UMG and Virgin Music.

"I'm releasing a new single on May 3 called 'Magic'," says Hook. "It's an invigorating, feel-good anthem and the second single from my upcoming EP".

It's also the first of a handful of songs the Juno-nominated singer has slated to release this year.

2024 is certainly shaping up to be a much better year, both health-wise and in terms of the music career of Shawn Hook.

X - @reallyjoeleary • Instagram @joeleary

# OUR CITY *tonight*

## SPOTLIGHT ON Cocktails for the patio season & more great home viewing

### THE SIP – Rose Margarita

We continue our warm up toward the summer season with more cocktail suggestions from our experts. Martin Kovalcik, beverage director, for the Glowbal Restaurant Group, is back with another offering you can sample at his home base, Glowbal restaurant, or in your own home. "As the temperature rises and the sun shines brighter, there's no better way to cool off and unwind than with a refreshing margarita in hand," Kovalcik says. What he has done with his *Rose Margarita* is introduce rosé wine to this wonderful cocktail. "Rose and the classic margarita are a match made in heaven," he says. After we sip and sample, we wholeheartedly agree. "For the 3 oz of rosé wine we would recommend dryer French style rosé," Kovalcik says, "and our favorite is the *Whispering Angel Rosé* with the flavours of grapefruit, citrus, peach and refreshing acidity." The other ingredients include:

- 1 oz Tequila Blanco,
- 1 oz simple syrup
- Then garnish: regular salt or salt combined with dry rose buds, and dehydrated lime wheel.
- 0.75 oz fresh lime juice,
- (made with equal part water and sugar).

Then shake all ingredients with ice and fine strain into ice-filled glass. [glowbalgroup.com](http://glowbalgroup.com)



Photo courtesy Glowbal Group



Photo via Netflix

### THE HOME VIEW – A Man In Full

TV writer, producer, David Kelley, has been entertaining viewers for decades with his brilliance, including the shows, *Doogie Howser, M.D.*, *Picket Fences*, *Chicago Hope*, *The Practice*, *Boston Legal*, *Ally McBeal* and *Big Little Lies*. Kelley is also in that rare category of having created successful shows on all four of the major television networks and HBO. You can also include Netflix, the home of his latest creation, *A Man in Full*. Based on the novel by another legend, Tom Wolfe, this 6 episode series centres around the life of real estate mogul, Charlie Croker (played by the always superb Jeff Daniels), who fights to defend his life from bankruptcy while others attempt to capitalize on his fall from grace. David Kelly has surrounded Daniels with a solid supporting cast including Tom Pelphrey, Diane Lane, Lucy Liu, William Jackson Harper, Aml Ameen, Sarah Jones, Jon Michael Hill and Chanté Adams. Look for *A Man in Full* on Netflix starting May 2. [netflix.com](http://netflix.com)

### THE SIP – Choya Cold Brew Slush

Our second cocktail suggestion comes from our partners at Axis Planning Inc, the importer team behind introducing Canada to the Japanese liqueur brand known as CHOYA. For this cocktail we spotlight CHOYA 23 Ume Fruit Liqueur as a main ingredient in the *CHOYA Cold Brew Slush*, which is perfect for the upcoming patio season. While filming *Our City Tonight*

with Axis Planning at Science World's recent "Science of Cocktails" event, we were able to sample this delicious cocktail that is not available in restaurants, but like all our experts' suggestions, easy to make at home. Start with

- 1.05 oz of CHOYA 23,
- 0.25 oz of banana liqueur,
- 0.5 oz of gingerbread syrup,
- 2 oz of cold brew,
- 1 oz of coconut milk,
- If desired, 1 chocolate "straw"

[axisplan.com/en](http://axisplan.com/en)



Photo courtesy Axis Planning Inc.



# Cowichan Valley Winery produces premium wines

**O**ur City Tonight (OCT) At this year's annual Vancouver International Wine Festival, we had the opportunity to sit down with a local winery representative from Vancouver Island. Michael Abbott (MA), the general manager of Blue Grouse Estate Winery located in Duncan, British Columbia, and in the Cowichan Valley. The Cowichan Valley has increasingly been gaining popularity as a premiere wine destination. Blue Grouse Estate Winery has a very interesting history behind its development, and we were excited to learn more.

MA: It is great news to hear that more and more wine people are talking a lot about the Cowichan Valley, and we personally love to hear that. Our winery has been growing grapes in the Cowichan Valley since the late 1980s. The winery and the vineyard itself were actually planted as part of the Duncan Project which started in 1983.

The Duncan Project was the research development program where they planted varieties of *Vitis vinifera* (grape vines) to assess the viability of wine production in different regions of the valley. When that was no longer a concern, this area was sold to Dr. Hans Kiltz, the founder of Blue Grouse Estate Winery where he propagated grapevines on the property of 7 acres and started the winery. He then was able to secure the second tasting room license issued on Vancouver Island in 1992.

OCT: *That's a great story. Some people may still think or used to think that Vancouver Island was only good for making fruit wines. Now there are many wines that are amazing and winning all kinds of awards. What are the specific wines that you have chosen to showcase here at Vancouver International Wine Festival?*

MA: Blue Grouse Estate Winery has been developing more acreage for the last five years and in six years, we've gone from seven to seventy acres of grapes. The main focus of the plantings that we're going forward with now are our Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay grapes.

With those grapes we can make a multitude



Photo courtesy Blue Grouse Estate Winery  
**Michael Abbott, GM, Blue Grouse Estate Winery.**

of different varieties and styles of wine. We can make rosé, sparkling both traditional method and Charmat, and of course our still Pinot Noir and our still Chardonnay as well as our still Pinot Gris. All of these are our favourite wines and that is why we are showcasing them here at the 45th annual Vancouver International Wine Festival.

OCT: *Please explain to us what makes your wines a little bit different. We can visibly see that the colours are gorgeous.*

MA: Island wines have a certain energy and they have a minerality with a backbone of acidity that just lets them cut through a lot of different food pairings. They show up on the table fresh and they are very enjoyable and easy drinking wines.

The Pinot Noir's are pushing into that full-fruit, forest floor style of winemaking and we are getting very experimental with the different way that we are making these wines. Pinot Gris, which is our current star of the show, is actually made in 60 per cent concrete fermenters and then an additional 40 per cent done in oak. So, it is a bit of a unique style for a Pinot Noir from Vancouver Island.

OCT: *What would you suggest that we pair with the Pinot Gris?*

MA: With that Pinot Gris I would pair a cheese plate. Starting the meal with a Pinot Gris, it would definitely go with fish or chicken or even goes well with the pasta side of the menu.

OCT: *How about the food pairing with your Chardonnay?*

MA: The Chardonnay is new for us and this is only our second vintage of making Chardonnay. It is a beautiful wine and is coming through very clean, very elegant, and very lean. It is something that I would be pairing with a dish that doesn't carry a lot of fat to it. I would lean towards seafood with this one, for example pair with scallops, clams, muscles, salmon, crab, or anything that comes from the coast. I would be pairing any of these with this Chardonnay.

OCT: *So what you're saying is that this is a perfect Vancouver Island wine. And lastly, please tell us what you would pair with the Pinot Noir.*

MA: From a menu perspective with this Pinot Noir, I would be leaning into the heavier set on the menu, so we would be starting to look at perhaps turkey or chicken, lamb or beef. Of course, this red wine is something that we would want to pair with something a little heavier on the menu.

OCT: *How would you further encourage our viewers to come visit you at Blue Grouse Winery in the Cowichan valley?*

MA: What's really unique about the Cowichan Valley and Blue Grouse Estate Winery is that we are a mosaic of activities in the valley. From a destination perspective, you don't just come to taste wines, you come to go whale watching, you could walk the charming streets, there's lots of outdoor activities with rivers and lakes. There are also beautiful restaurants to eat at. And then the wineries dot the valley just like a real mosaic of activities. I encourage everyone to come and experience the many facets of the Cowichan Valley.

For more information go to [bluegrouse.ca](http://bluegrouse.ca)



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