



Creative talent

Students' artwork
highlighted

13

Artwork by Richmond students is highlighted on greeting cards produced by the district's fine arts program. It's an initiative organizers hope to repeat every two years. *Photo submitted*

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More winter shelter beds available in Richmond

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

and LORRAINE GRAVES

Thanks to funding from BC Housing, the Salvation Army Richmond House Emergency Shelter on Horseshoe Way has an additional 15 beds this winter season, bringing its capacity to 45 people. All 45 beds are currently full as of a Dec. 1 update.

In addition, the temporary emergency response centre in the old Minoru seniors' centre is open through March 31 with 45 beds. There were 38 guests staying there as of Dec. 1, says director of community social development Kim Somerville. A few more referrals were also expected last week.

The 2020 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, which took place in early March, recorded 85 individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond—a 15 person increase from the 2017 count. Of those individuals, 25 were unsheltered, two had no fixed address, and 58 were in some kind of shelter. In 2005, the total number of homeless people recorded in Richmond was just 35.

"The trend is troubling," says Richmond Poverty Response Committee chair De Whalen. "We were hopeful that because the new (Salvation Army) shelter had opened, we were going to see the numbers go down."

BC Housing and the city are continuing to discuss responses to homelessness in the community, says Somerville.



Photo submitted

The temporary emergency response centre, located in the old Minoru seniors' centre, had 38 of 45 beds full as of Dec. 1.

New affordable rental housing coming

Almost 100 new rental homes are coming to Richmond for people with low to moderate incomes.

"These projects will mean new, affordable homes for a wide range of people—from seniors on fixed incomes to growing families and people with disabilities," said Attorney General David Eby, the minister responsible for housing. "There's a lot more to do, and I look forward to working with the non-profit housing sector and all our partners to continue delivering the homes people need."

Among the 16 projects province-wide are those at 3699 Sexsmith Rd. that will feature 11 homes for families and seniors and be built in partnership with More Than A Roof Housing; and at 5491 No. 2 Rd., where 80 homes for seniors, families and individuals living independently with mental health challenges will be constructed. It is a partnership with Pathways Clubhouse Society of Richmond and the City of Richmond, with construction expected to start in July 2021.

The request for proposals for the current intake of the Community Housing Fund, which launched in May 2020, is open until mid-January 2021. Approximately 3,000 new affordable homes are expected to be funded this intake—the second since 2017.

For information about the Building BC: Community Housing Fund, along with details on how to apply for the current intake, visit: <http://www.bchousing.org/CHF>



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

A rendering of the planned project at 5491 No. 2 Rd., which will be a six-storey building with 80 affordable housing units.



Photos submitted

While additional precautions will be in place during this year's holiday shopping season, Richmond malls have worked hard to maintain a festive atmosphere for locals.

Malls facing unpredictable holiday shopping season

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

While December is normally a busy time of year for the retail sector, this year is a little more unpredictable. Major Richmond malls are gearing up for the holiday season with new plans in place—and the same festive decorations.

"The prediction for retail is that people are starting their shopping earlier in the year, which we're seeing," says Lansdowne Centre marketing manager Bronwyn Bailey. "People are consolidating their shopping trips, so rather than browsing for a while before making a purchase or going to multiple locations for multiple purchases, they'll consolidate it to one larger shopping trip which is great."

While the usual surge in shoppers is less predictable this year, all four malls surveyed—Lansdowne Centre, Aberdeen Centre, Richmond Centre and McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Vancouver Airport—expect customer numbers to increase in December.

According to Statistics Canada, in December 2019 BC saw over \$7.2 billion in sales. In April, at the height of pandemic restrictions, this number dropped to \$5.6 billion, reflecting a nation-wide decrease in sales. Retail sales have been steadily rising since May, but the latest numbers from Statistics Canada's September 2020 report indicate that while most industries are seeing increased sales compared to the same time last year, clothing and accessory stores have seen a sharp decrease in sales (12.5 per cent less than September 2019).

"Traffic is definitely lower than it was (in previous years)," Bailey adds.

And with the government advising people to stay home and not gather, the Aberdeen Centre team is not too sure what kind of customer volume they'll see this month, says Tiffany Ho, senior vice-president and senior general manager of Fairchild Developments, which operates the mall.

For people wanting to shop locally but not inside a mall, curbside pick-up programs are also available. At Lansdowne, the program has been

ongoing since the spring, but larger stores have their own separate pick-up programs. Richmond Centre also has pick-up stations, and at Aberdeen Centre a similar program is in development. At McArthurGlen, many individual stores offer virtual shopping including video appointments and digital catalogues.

Malls are also offering customers new ways to plan their visits. Through Richmond Centre's app, you can prepare for your visit including making appointments at some retailers to avoid waiting in line. McArthurGlen's website has recommendations for quieter times to visit, and Lansdowne Centre has a 'gift with purchase' promotion throughout the month of December. Anyone who spends more than \$250 in a single day at three or more stores will receive a \$20 gift card.

At some malls, shoppers may also notice photo sets where they are invited to stop and take photos with their families.

"On site we have socially distanced safe decor, where people can come with their families and take their own photographs safely and cleanly," says Bailey.

McArthurGlen marketing manager Ally Day describes the decorations as "a socially distant out-

door wonderland."

"Instagrammable decor will be set up throughout the centre where consumers are encouraged to take socially distant photos while enjoying an open-air shopping experience," she adds.

While Santa won't be visiting any malls live this year, he is still available for online visits. At Lansdowne Centre, Santa and Mrs. Claus are hosting live story time events on social media. Richmond Centre is offering free one-on-one Santa Claus visits via video chat.

At Aberdeen Centre, rather than offering live performances from school choirs and other community groups, the fountain has been turned into a 'winter wonderland' stage on a frozen lake.

"This year unfortunately we can't operate the water fountain because of the pandemic, so we drained out all the water and built the stage, and all the decorations are inside the water fountain," explains Ho. "On the stage we have some lighting similar to a reflection on a frozen lake, and then a Christmas tree, reindeer and snowflakes—all the decorations are on the stage inside the water fountain. Although we can't do most of the (usual) activities, we can still have some celebration."

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Hobbs to seek council seat in upcoming by-election

Former two-term Richmond school board trustee and retired Vancouver police superintendent Andy Hobbs has announced he is entering the campaign for the recently vacated seat on Richmond city council.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to earn the trust and support of fellow Richmondites to represent them on council. I have championed many community causes over the years and I plan to present my vision in the coming weeks and months that will make life better for the residents of Richmond," Hobbs says.

Hobbs grew up in Richmond and graduated from Richmond High. He later attended UBC, and served for over 35 years with the Vancouver Police Department, retiring as a superintendent.

He was elected to two terms on the Richmond School Board and remains an active volunteer in the community. Currently, he's the chair of the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, a director on the Tourism Richmond board, and a board member for the Royal Canadian Marine

Search and Rescue in Steveston.

Hobbs and his wife Lynn raised three children here and they now have three grandchildren, also living in Richmond, which has strengthened his sense of community and his desire to make things better.

"(This) has been an extremely challenging year for our community," Hobbs says. "Parents had to decide whether to send their children to school during a global pandemic; our seniors have had to endure long stretches of loneliness as families and friends stay apart; our local businesses have had to either shut or reduce hours—which means many of our neighbours are struggling to make ends meet. I want to bring practical, forward looking policies to city hall that will help bring our community together as we recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and look to build a stronger, more inclusive, and sustainable city for the future."

More information on Andy Hobbs and his policies for Richmond can be found at: www.facebook.com/AndyHobbsRichmond



Photo submitted

A longtime Richmondite and community champion, Andy Hobbs will vie for the council seat vacated by recently-elected Richmond-Steveston MLA Kelly Greene in the upcoming city by-election.

Richmond animal shelter will change hands in new year

Operation of Richmond's animal shelter will transfer from RAPS to the BC SPCA as of Feb. 1.

The city says its new agreement with the BC SPCA coincides with the start of construction of the new Richmond Animal Shelter, which will replace the existing facility at 12071 No. 5 Rd. The new facility will be built on the same site, so the existing shelter will close from next spring until construction is complete in two years.

"Continuity of care and service for stray, abandoned and in-need animals in our community is important, especially during this construction phase," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "The BC SPCA brings considerable experience, expertise and resources to the city in the area of humane and respectful animal welfare and the city looks forward to working with them."

RAPS CEO Eyal Lichtmann and president Fearn Edmonds said they are grateful that the BC SPCA can accommodate animals requiring re-

location during the two-year interim period. The city says animals will be relocated to the BC SPCA's Vancouver facility on East 7th Avenue.

"We look forward to collaborating with our friends at the BC SPCA to ensure the smoothest transition and seamless delivery of care to the animals," added RAPS representatives.

Along with shelter services, the city agreement will see the BC SPCA take over animal control services in Richmond. Starting Feb. 1, BC SPCA officers will provide animal control from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. daily, maintaining current hours of service.

Meanwhile, the RAPS team expressed gratitude to the people of Richmond and the city for their 13 years operating the city animal shelter. After their current contract ends on Jan. 31, RAPS says its priorities include opening a new dog sanctuary and a standalone RAPS animal shelter, as well as opening more thrift stores and "franchising" their animal hospital model.

"We are excited to enter our second quar-

ter-century by broadening our reach and saving and improving the lives of even more animals. Everything we do is possible because of the generosity of animal-loving people in the community. Thank you for your continued devotion to our mission and we look forward to continuing this life-saving journey with your support," said RAPS representatives.

Contact information for animal services in the city remains unchanged at this time. Anyone wishing to find a lost pet, report a dog off-leash or running at large, or injured or dead animals should continue to call RAPS at 604-275-2036. For enquiries related to animal regulations, dog licensing and fees, contact community bylaws at 604-276-4345.

The BC SPCA will also continue to operate its Richmond education and adoption centre at 7791 Steveston Hwy., and RAPS its animal hospital, cat shelter and thrift stores—which are operated directly by the society.

RICHMOND SENTINEL
OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

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

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marketing@richmondsentinel.ca
778-325-1297

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Block Watch partners with Crime Stoppers

Block Watch is teaming with Crime Stoppers to help fight the bandits.

"Neighbours in a Block Watch program might find themselves uneasy about calling police if the crime involves a neighbour for example, or someone else who might be able to identify them," says Linda Annis, executive director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. "Block Watch is now actively encouraging block captains and neighbours to consider an anonymous call to Crime Stoppers. Like all tips we get, any information given to Crime Stoppers by a Block Watch member will be passed on to the relevant police authority while the tipster remains totally anonymous. This way, any Block Watch neighbour spotting something doesn't need to second guess whether or not it's safe to report it."

"We're proud to be able to offer something that allows our Block Watch members to report a crime without any fear of reprisal," adds Regan Borisenko, president of the Block Watch Society of BC. "We know how effective Crime Stoppers is in successfully soliciting information anonymously that otherwise might not come to light. We still encourage our members to call police in most cases, but in situations where they might have doubts about their personal safety, our training will make sure they know they have our support if they want to call Crime Stoppers instead."



Photo courtesy RCMP

Take preventative measures to prevent theft from your car, say Richmond RCMP officers.

Richmond RCMP: prevent gift theft from vehicles

Richmond RCMP officers are recommending that people take preventative measures to stop thieves from stealing Christmas gifts that may be in cars.

Police suggest:

- locking car doors
- removing valuables from view, and removing all personal belongings from your car
- not leaving any personal identifica-

tion, mail or credit cards in your car

- not leaving a loose garage door opener in your car

- reporting any suspicious people or activities in your area to Richmond RCMP

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Winter in the Village returns with adapted activities

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Enjoy special holiday events in Steveston with the community's annual *Winter in the Village*.

For the first time this year, people can vote online for their favourite tree in the *Festival of Trees*. Each year, festive trees are decorated by local merchants and organizations and displayed inside Steveston's Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site. In addition to the new online voting option, the cannery will also be open for in-person viewing and voting until Dec. 24 with additional protocols in place.

There are 15 trees decorated this year, says marketing and visitor services manager Mimi Horita. She adds that, as expected, some groups have cancelled due to different circumstances during this unusual year.

"We did not hold a 'decorating party' this year, and scheduled the decorating times over a one-week period to ensure safe distancing," Horita says of the changes to this year's planning.

While advance tickets are not required, capacity will be reduced to allow for physical distancing. In keeping with new public health restrictions, all visitors must wear a face mask while visiting the display. Staff and volunteers at the cannery also wear masks at all times.

Another annual tradition is bringing holiday cheer from online. For the last three years, the Steveston Historical Society has presented *Songs in the Snow*, a series of evenings celebrating the holidays with live music and entertainment. This year, the event will be presented virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Cancelling was not something we ever considered," says executive director Rachel Meloche. "We figured that if we could find a way to make it virtual



Photo courtesy Gulf of Georgia Cannery

Each year, the historic cannery in Steveston presents the *Festival of Trees*, a holiday display featuring trees decorated by local merchants and organizations.

and do something, somehow, that at least we could still have the event and it would give people some of the magic."

Thanks to help from loyal sponsors, the historical society team was able to pivot this year. The Richmond Arts Coalition sourced all the musicians and performers, and local cartoonist Cartoon Katie will do live caricature drawings of participants watching on Zoom.

"I know that the music industry has really suffered this year, and we had the funding so we wanted to get it into the hands of the artists who need it the most right now," says Meloche.

Registration is free or by donation, and people can also pre-order and pick up free craft kits as well as hot drink and cookie packages. Meloche says the driving force behind *Songs in the Snow* is that the holidays are expensive, and so many events have a fee associated with them.

The event will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Dec. 12 and 19. Each night will have different crafts and performances so people can register for all three. Performers will be live through their own individual broadcasts. And Meloche is heartened by the ability to bring some holiday cheer to people's homes.

"That's what we wanted to do, just bring a little bit of the magic of *Songs in the Snow* to people," she says. "I've heard

from a family that they're all participating from their own houses—so we're bringing people together, just differently.

"It's going to be a really different and difficult holiday season for a lot of people. If we can bring some brightness, then I've done my job."

Other events include:

- touring Steveston with a self-guided *Light Up the Village* walking tour of holiday lights every day after 4 p.m.

- voting for your favourite decorated shop window, sponsored by Tourism Richmond, Steveston Merchants Association and Steveston Insider (find a map at www.VisitRichmondBC.com/WinterVillage)

- visiting the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site from Thursday to Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. to hear stories of the multicultural workers who called Britannia home a century ago

- mailing a letter to Santa at the Steveston Post Office—if it's dropped off by Dec. 10 you can expect a response from the big guy himself

The *Festival of Trees* is open daily through Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Dec. 24 it will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Regular admission is \$11.90 for adults and \$10.20 for seniors, with youth under age 17 and society members able to enter for free. Admission will be by donation on Sundays: Dec. 13 and 20.

To register for *Songs in the Snow* tickets, visit www.historicseveston.ca.

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Photo courtesy City of Richmond

This year's *Winter in the Village* features festive decorations as well as online events to enjoy from home.

Hospital seeks support for surgical campaign

By DON FENNEL
@rmdsentinel

Richmond Hospital is home to compassionate, highly-talented surgeons and healthcare professionals dedicated to providing a vast range of surgical procedures to save and improve lives. But the capacity of their efforts is limited by the resources available to them.

A \$2 million Surgical Restart campaign aims to help.

"The campaign started to come together when the (provincial) government postponed all elective surgeries in the spring, which had a significant impact," explains Jim Bindon, director of philanthropy with Richmond Hospital Foundation.

Each year, an average of 4,000 in-patient and more than 5,000 out-patient surgeries are performed. And while the hospital has seen a surge in volume since elective surgeries resumed in the summer, Bindon says it is expected to take a period of years to clear the backlog.

That scenario resulted in an increased focus on the importance of surgical equipment, which can quickly become outdated. Bindon says a major community hospital like Richmond Hospital, which has eight operating rooms, can perhaps expect its surgical equipment to last a maximum of eight years at which point it becomes "outdated technology."

"Replacing such tools every seven or eight years is standard for most hospitals, so we recognized the extraordinary demand on the surgical department and said let's get the equipment so we have the right tools in the hands of our surgeons. That was the genesis of the Surgical Restart campaign."

Several different pieces of surgical equipment



Photo by Jaana Bjork

Richmond Hospital Foundation encourages you to support a healthier future by giving to its Surgical Restart campaign.

were deemed urgent, highlighted by a multi-specialized system used to provide minimally invasive surgery.

"The benefit of that from a surgeon's view is enormous," says Bindon, explaining that a key benefit of the new generation equipment is the quality of images it provides for the cameras and displays used during laparoscopic procedures.

In addition, a new "SPY fluorescence imaging system" will allow surgeons, for example, to confirm blood is flowing properly during certain operating procedures.

The cost of the system is \$1.6 million.

As well, four of the eight operating rooms will receive "technology facelifts" allowing them to communicate directly with each other by sending imag-

es and data in real time, creating yet another "huge advantage" says Bindon.

A special lithotripsy laser to help surgeons better assist patients with kidney stones—an incredibly painful condition—is also part of the Surgical Restart campaign, as are a pair of bipolar cautery units that eliminates the risk of electrical interference for patients with pacemakers or neurological conditions.

"Richmond is the first hospital in BC to use this new equipment, and that puts us on par with the leading facilities in the United States and around the world," Bindon says.

"It's a huge advance for our surgeons," says Bindon.

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Developer donates \$200K

Local real estate developer Michael Ching has donated \$200,000 toward the new acute care tower in Richmond.

Extending his generosity even further, Ching also has partnered with South China Morning Post to donate \$50,000 towards Richmond Hospital Foundation's Surgical Restart Campaign. Mr. Ching has also donated 25,000 masks to Vancouver Diamonds Lions Club as a part of their disposable masks fundraiser for Richmond Hospital Foundation.

"I am very thankful for Richmond Hospital and all of the work the doctors, nurses and staff have offered through this pandemic and more," says Ching. "Having lived in Richmond for a decade, and Richmond being home to most of my projects and work, this contribution is a thank you for the care the hospital has provided for its community over all of these years."

As a business owner in Richmond, Ching is dedicated to helping Richmond Hospital and healthcare in the community, recognizing the need for new equipment, new facilities and the importance of providing the best in care to those living here.

"We are thankful for Mr. Ching's donation to the new acute care tower and his commitment to impacting health care in Richmond for future gen-



Photo courtesy Richmond Hospital Foundation

Real estate developer Michael Ching (photographed with Mayor Malcolm Brodie and his wife Christine) has donated \$200,000 toward the new acute care tower at Richmond Hospital.

erations," says Natalie Meixner, president and CEO of the Richmond Hospital Foundation.

Hospital receives \$1 million donation

Longtime friends of Richmond Hospital have donated \$1 million toward future projects.

Johnny Fong and Rebecca Cheng have collectively pledged \$700,000 to Richmond Hospital Foundation towards the new Yurkovich Family Pavilion (new acute care tower). They have also donated \$300,000 to the Surgical Restart campaign, committing to match your donations dollar for dollar up to \$300,000. Your donation will have double the impact on supporting local surgical teams and equipping them with new state-of-the-art equipment, bringing a new standard of care to surgery at Richmond Hospital.

Fong is a business owner who immigrated to Canada with his family in the 1970s. In 1981, he started to establish his business. Bringing passion and courage coupled with invincible dedication and resilience, he has built a very successful company, CTG Brands, based in Richmond and two other locations in Toronto and Montreal.

Fong holds a strong belief in giving back and making an impact on those most in need. In 2006, he was chosen as one of the 100 most influential Chinese-Canadians in BC.

"The doctors and nurses faithfully serve the community at Richmond Hospital," says Fong. "The healthcare teams are great and they need help from the community to fund state-of-the-art equipment to save more lives in a safer and more efficient way."

"Richmond Hospital's original building is very old, deficient and small, while Richmond's development has grown so fast in population and city development," notes Fong. "Approximately 60 per cent of the population of Richmond is of Chinese descent and the community needs a hospital



Photo courtesy Richmond Hospital Foundation

Johnny Fong and Rebecca Chang (centre) have donated \$1 million to Richmond Hospital. Accepting on behalf of the hospital foundation are Christine and Malcolm Brodie.

that meets today's healthcare standard and demands. That is why I have also made a donation towards the new acute care tower in Richmond and hospital expansion."

Cheng and her family live in Hong Kong. The family is very involved in charity work and understand the impact donors can have in a community. She and her family visit their family and friends in Vancouver on a yearly basis. When she heard about the needs of Richmond Hospital from Fong, she was inspired to help.

"Being able to be part of the solution and to be able to help others, especially in healthcare, brings joy to my heart," says Cheng. "Making an

impact that is meaningful to not only me but to the community is what encouraged me to make this donation. I invite the community to join myself and Mr. Fong in putting the right tools in the hands of the surgical teams at Richmond Hospital."

Richmond Hospital Foundation president and CEO Natalie Meixner shares her appreciation for the inspiring donations.

"Their dedication to philanthropy and commitment to inspire others is a true reflection of their strong values of giving back and bringing our community together to provide the best possible care, close to home," says Meixner.

Review looks to resolve racism in BC healthcare

Indigenous people in BC are exposed to widespread racism that often results in negative experiences at the point of care, inequitable medical treatment, physical harm and even death, the independent review into Indigenous-specific discrimination in the province's healthcare system has found.

"Indigenous people and healthcare workers have spoken clearly—racism is an ugly and undeniable problem in BC healthcare that must be urgently addressed," said independent reviewer Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond. "This report provides a blueprint for fundamental changes to beliefs, behaviours and systems that are necessary in order for us to root out racism and discrimination and ensure that the basic human rights of Indigenous people to respect, dignity and equitable healthcare are upheld."

The Addressing Racism Review was launched in June 2020 by Health Minister Adrian Dix after allegations were made about an organized "Price is Right" game involving guessing Indigenous patients' blood alcohol levels in BC hospital emergency rooms. A detailed examination of those allegations found no evidence of an organized game occurring as originally depicted. The review found anecdotal and episodic evidence of multiple activities that resemble these allegations in some fashion, but none of them could be described as organized, widespread or targeting only Indigenous patients.

Informed by the voices of nearly 9,000 Indigenous patients, family members, third-party witnesses and healthcare workers, as well as unprecedented analysis of health data, the review found clear evidence of pervasive interpersonal and systemic racism that adversely affects not only patient and family experiences but also long-term health outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

More than two-thirds of Indigenous respondents to the review's survey said they had experienced discrimination based on their ancestry—and only 16 per cent reported "never" having been discriminated against—while accessing healthcare.

The report concludes that this problem is widely acknowledged by many who work in the system, including those in leadership positions. The report makes 24 recommendations to address what is a systemic problem, deeply rooted in colonialism.

The recommendations include establishing three new positions to provide leadership on the issue, a new school of Indigenous medicine at the University of British Columbia and the development of a new approach to cultural safety and humility training for BC healthcare workers. The report also calls for the Ministry of Health to establish a senior-level policy and accountability table with Métis Nation BC and for government to work with Indigenous organizations.

COVID-19 recovery programs to support farmers

The province is hoping two new programs, and increased support for a third one, will help improve food security and build a stronger economy following COVID-19.

"During COVID-19, we have seen the incredible importance of having a strong local food economy to put food on the table and keep people working," said Agriculture Minister Lana Popham. "BC's farmers and food producers have stepped up to the challenges of COVID-19, and we are working with them to put us on the path to a strong recovery with investments in new and improved programs that will feed people and strengthen our economy."

As part of making it easier to get a farm up and running, the new Small Farm Business Acceleration Pilot Program is offering funding up to \$800,000 for business plan coaching for small and new farmers, as well as cost-shared funding for commercial farm infrastructure and equipment, to increase productivity and sales.

For this pilot, a small farm is defined as one with a total annual gross revenue of less than \$60,000 in the last two years. The program funding will cover 50 per cent to 75 per cent of total approved project costs to a maximum of \$17,500 for individual farm businesses.

"My team and I are excited to see the province invest in small and new farms," said Young Agrar-

ians co-founder Sara Dent. "Providing support to a new generation of people brave enough to start farming in today's land market requires innovative programs that address the needs of new farmers, and I hope this investment will continue to grow in the coming years. Small-scale farms are the bedrock of local food economies and key to strengthening short supply chains. They are essential to healthy and resilient food systems that can weather the changes we are experiencing today."

To help growers increase the acreage planted with raspberry varieties that are ideal for BC's climate and suitable for the fresh and individually quick-frozen raspberry markets, the BC government is investing \$90,000 in a new Raspberry Replant Program. The program is cost shared with growers, which will result in a minimum of \$162,000 of investments in the sector.

"On behalf of BC raspberries, I would like to thank Minister Popham and ministry staff for allocating funds toward a raspberry replant program in British Columbia," said James Bergen, chair, Raspberry Industry Development Council. "It is my hope this program will aid in revitalizing the BC raspberry industry."

Additionally, the province is boosting the Beneficial Management Practices Program, which supports farmers in taking steps to better protect the air, land and water, and aligns with government's

CleanBC climate goals.

The province is investing an additional \$800,000 into this program, both this year and next.

Projects funded by this plan may:

- improve air quality and reduce emissions
- improve land and water quality, and enhance or protect biodiversity
- improve nutrient management (fertilizer use);
- achieve more efficient agricultural waste management
- result in more efficient irrigation water management

To be eligible, farms must have a complete environmental farm plan, and approved projects will address topics identified in these plans.

"We were grateful to see the province's Stronger BC plan, which supports farm resiliency while putting food in grocery stores and dinners on tables," said BC Agriculture Council president Stan Vander Waal, president, BC Agriculture Council. "Investment in the agriculture sector right now is critical. Not only is it a core component of the province's economy, it will play a major role in helping the province weather and recover from the pandemic-induced economic downturn, particularly in rural communities."

Funding for these and other agricultural programs was included in BC's Stronger BC economic recovery plan.

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RAPS COMMUNITY REPORT Caring for the animals who care for us

A moliday miracle



**Mandy
Lichtmann**

In October, RAPS received a call from a Good Samaritan after she spotted a stray mama cat with six newborn kittens on a dilapidated central Richmond property slated for demolition. RAPS' team went out immediately to trap the feral cat and kittens, something RAPS has been doing in Richmond for 25 years. Peggy, the mama cat, and her babies were picked up and brought to the RAPS Animal Shelter. Despite surviving outside while pregnant, birthing her kittens and keeping them healthy and well-fed while facing the outdoor elements and all the associated dangers, Peggy and her babies were somewhat famished but seemed to be in good health, all things considered. Peggy is missing about half of one hind leg. We aren't sure if the partial missing limb is the result of a fight with a raccoon or an accident or if she was born like that.

As with all our pregnant mamas and mamas with kittens, Peggy and her crew were taken into the home of a foster family. My family was thrilled to provide a safe, warm and quiet space for this delightful little family—the sixth litter we have fostered in the past year. At first Peggy was quite distrustful and hissed at people. Eventually she and the kittens settled in comfortably. We aren't sure if Peggy had mothered other litters prior to this one but she was an expert, loving mama and over time felt at ease with her human fosters. The kittens grew, gained motor skills, and became little sweet hooligans over the weeks. Everything went as perfectly as one could hope for this awesome little family.

Then, only two days before Peggy and her kittens were due to have their medical exams at the RAPS Animal Hospital to be deemed "fit for adoption,"



Photos submitted
Rescued mama cat Peggy faced a near-death illness but has recovered after a complicated surgery.

Peggy suddenly began to vomit and refuse food. She was taken to the RAPS Animal Hospital first thing the next morning and it was clear this poor, sweet girl was in a life-threatening state. Following diagnostic tests, emergency exploratory surgery was performed by Dr. Roey Kestelman. A section of Peggy's bowel was obliterated, her abdominal cavity filled with fecal matter and she was on the verge of dying. It is presumed that Peggy had ingested a foreign body that worked its way through her intestines and caused massive and traumatic damage prior to coming to foster care. Peggy may have eaten something sharp while trying to survive on the streets.

The three-hour surgery performed on Peggy was extensive, resulting in the removal of 23 centimeters of her bowel and reattachment of the severed pieces. After the lengthy and risky surgery, Peggy was fitted with a feeding tube so her bowel could heal. She underwent several sessions in the hyperbaric oxygen therapy facility at the RAPS Animal Hospital to assist in healing—the only such treatment available in Canada for animals. She was by no means out of the woods following her surgery. With such a huge trauma to her insides and an

intricate and complicated surgery, there is always fear of leakage from the reconnected bowel, which could at best, lead to a second surgery or worse, death. Peggy's prognosis was that the trauma was so severe she most likely would not survive.

Over the next week, Peggy received 24/7 care, with IV fluids, medications and a lot of loving care. We are thrilled to let you know Peggy's recovery has been nothing but spectacular! This girl is a fighter and, so far, she has had no further complications and is healing exceptionally well. Her feeding tube has been removed and she has a voracious appetite. She is being doted on by the loving medical team at the hospital and it looks like it won't be long now until Peggy is discharged and returns to the RAPS Shelter to prepare to find her forever home.

We feel so fortunate that RAPS has the facilities to care for a complicated case like Peggy's, through the RAPS Animal Hospital. In many other jurisdictions or in the care of other organizations, she might have faced euthanasia. Instead, she has a long life filled with love ahead of her. Peggy is why RAPS exists and exemplifies our no-kill mandate.

Mandy Lichtmann is Volunteer and Outreach Manager of the Regional Animal Protection Society.

CLEMENTINE & TANGERINE

Clementine and Tangerine are two bonded sisters. These are your typical scared, yet fun and cute, guinea pigs. They are both still very young, and need a family that is very patient with them.

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



REGIONAL ANIMAL PROTECTION SOCIETY (RAPS)

rapsbc.com | City Shelter: 604-275-2036

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



In their own words...

Seasonal Wellness



**Bill
McNulty**
Councillor

For the past 9 months, the COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll on all aspects of our society. Fear of the virus has forced us to look more closely at how it affects all of us, particularly regarding our mental health and related issues. The pandemic makes us feel confused, sad and anxious. Self-isolation separates us from some routines we used to do to help us manage our feelings. Dealing with the virus manifests feelings of depression, anxiety, isolation and unknown stress.

As we restrict movement as part of our efforts to reduce the number of people infected with COVID-19, more and more of us are making huge changes to our daily lives. The new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home schooling of children, and the lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues take time to get used to. Adapting to lifestyle changes such as these and managing the fear of contacting the virus and

worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us. It can be particularly difficult for people with mental health conditions.

COVID-19 is taking its toll on us, both psychologically and physically. We fear exposure and being sick, then self-isolation and perhaps loss of employment. It is reported via a survey that most healthcare and support workers feel unsafe and suffer emotional stress, depression, and suffer widespread burnout. Some are on track for post traumatic disorder. We thank them for being on the front line for all of us.

From January to September 2020, the Richmond RCMP responded to almost 4,000 calls possibly related to mental health and addictions issues. Of those, over 250 were responded to by the specialized RCMP/VCH Fox 80 unit.

Richmond offers a combination of partners and supportive services that allow a variety of vulnerable groups to be served including low-income families, seniors, and individuals with mental health and addiction issues.

If in need of help, a few of Richmond's many resources include:

- Chimo Crises Line: 604-279-7070
- 310 Mental Health Support: 310-6789 (area code not required)
- Foundry: 604-674-0550
- Community Mental Wellness



Association of Canada: 604-273-1791
• SUCCESS: 604-408-7266

Traditions bring a sense of stability, but Christmas will not look the same this year. We will need to get creative and find new ways to celebrate safely, perhaps making new traditions and prioritizing what is important to us, while making special memories with our family and friends.

This holiday season may be more memorable because it is different. Spread joy and happiness whenever you can.

I wish you a safe and merry Christmas and may 2021 bring a brighter year of health and happiness to the world.

City of Richmond Council Meetings Calendar

City of Richmond Council has postponed most standing Committee meetings until at least the end of January 2021 to further strengthen existing physical distancing measures aimed at curtailing the spread of COVID-19. The exceptions will be General Purposes Committee, Finance Committee, Planning Committee and Development Permit Panel. Council Meetings and Public Hearings will also proceed as scheduled.

All meetings will take place in Council Chambers at Richmond City Hall.

Development Permit Panel
3:30 pm | Thursday, December 9

General Purposes
4:00 pm | Monday, December 14

Public Hearing
7:00 pm | Monday, December 14

Special Council Meeting
7:00 pm | Monday, December 15

General Purposes
4:00 pm | Tuesday, January 5

Finance Committee
Following the General Purposes Committee Meeting | Tuesday, January 5

Planning Committee
4:00 pm | Wednesday, January 6

Council Meeting
7:00 pm | Monday, January 11

Development Permit Panel
3:30 pm | Wednesday, January 13

General Purposes
4:00 pm | Monday, January 18

Public Hearing
7:00 pm | Monday, January 18

Meeting schedule subject to change

For meeting agendas and reports visit
www.richmond.ca.



Visit www.richmond.ca/watchonline to link to live streaming or watch archived video.



Burnett students learn hands-on marketing

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Marketing students at Burnett secondary are giving back to their community.

Inspired by the sacrifices and generosity of frontline workers, they were tasked with contributing through three goals: reinforcing the government's COVID-19 safety guidelines, starting a non-profit fundraiser to give back to frontline organizations and workers, and developing a project to create or revitalize community spirit.

"Normally the marketing classes would run a school store as part of their experiential learning experience, but with COVID it just wasn't possible," says marketing teacher Chris Lee. "As an alternative, I changed this component to be more of a social non-profit pop-up venture format."

The students developed a mechanical hand sanitizer that uses a gravity-enabled foot pump. A virtual social gathering focused on a pre-



Photos submitted

Marketing students at Burnett secondary created and sold original products including glass poster art.

corded talent show as well as an online gaming tournament aimed at bringing people together.

"In terms of the actual concepts regarding sales and marketing the students really go through the entire gambit," says Lee. "They learn to develop, source, cost, market, sell and provide customer feedback wherever applicable."

They also raised funds for the Richmond Hospital and Vancouver Covenant House through several initiatives. Student-designed Burnett clothing and tote bags were sold online, as well as a "pandemic kit" including masks, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.

The last fundraising item was glass poster art, which was inspired by an online trend fusing art with music. Customized pieces of glass art capture favourite songs or artists designed to look like a Spotify music player.

"All of these projects really focus on experiential, hands-on learning," says Lee. "Given our limited time with the students in this new 10-week quarter system, the projects were designed to be like a pressure cooker, where basic entrepreneurial and marketing skills would be developed in a very short period of time. It is my personal belief that such an environment challenges students to learn in a very active way, while reinforcing what they've learned in class lessons."

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca



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**We'd love to hear
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**RICHMOND
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OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

Art cards highlight student talent

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Art has been part of Lucy Kerr's life as far back as she can remember.

One of nine students (along with a 10th collaborative piece by a Grade 6/7 class) whose piece has been tagged for a set of greeting cards produced by the district, the Grade 11 student at McMath says art is a way for her to unwind.

"Art is really relaxing for me, and just a creative outlet that is really a big part of my life," she says. "My family has always been really appreciative of art—I've been going to art galleries and talking about that for my whole life as well."

Kerr's piece "Sunny Day" was inspired by the work of acclaimed Canadian artist Ted Harrison, whose style Kerr says she has "always loved." She adds that the process of looking at different artists' styles has helped her to create her own: she prefers to paint portraits, which recently she has been doing by commission.

"I want to make something that moves people, and I like getting the emotional reaction when someone sees the art I created for them," she says. "It's different than a photograph—there's so much more meaning that you can draw from (a painting), and it gives a lot more dimension."

Emi Fairchild, a Grade 4 student at Homma elementary, echoes Kerr's love of art.

"Art is a great way to express yourself, and it takes your mind off things that you don't want," she says.

Her piece "Trumpet of the Swan" was part of a school project inspired by the book of the same name. The artwork mostly uses oil pastels, but Fairchild also chose to add Sharpie to her piece at the end "to make it stand out from all the details."

She also creates art in her spare time, mostly using pencil and paper. Recently, she's started weaving which she says is "easy and fun."

Kerr and Fairchild are two of the student artists chosen for the Richmond School District's art card project. Spearheaded by district fine arts administrator (and Blair elementary principal) Catherine Ludwig, the project aims to highlight the work done by students and art teachers across the city, as well as circulating student art broadly.

Ten selections—which reflect a balance of different schools, ages, and genres of art—were printed on greeting cards. Packages of cards were initially given to district administrators for their correspondence, but they will also be available in the near future to members of the school community who want to place an order.

Ludwig says the arts educators



Original artwork by nine Richmond students, as well as a 10th collaborative piece by a Grade 6/7 class, will appear on a set of greeting cards produced by the school district, recognizing the creative talents of young artists.

Photos submitted

in the district started making plans for the project in February, along with trustees and other stakeholder groups.

"One of the goals that came forward, as we imagined a vibrant place for arts education in the district, was creating opportunities for our learners beyond the four walls of our school," she explains. "(Art) speaks loudly and it amplifies who you are, and ultimately it helps with that uncharted territory of who you are as the self."

With a desire to make Richmond learners feel supported and part of a larger community, Ludwig and her team asked teachers to submit students' works for the project. The selections were professionally scanned and a graphic designer in the district ensured they were uniform with things like backdrops, while staying true to the original works. And each student submitted an artist statement, reflecting on their piece, that appears on the back of the card.

By chance, two of the selected works were self-portraits: one by a Kindergarten student from Blair and one by a Grade 12 student from MacNeill. Ludwig

has copies of those two pieces displayed in her office.

"It gave the direction of why we're doing this—look at what happens when we dedicate arts education with passionate arts educators teaching our young ones," she says.

Ludwig adds that she hopes to repeat the project every two years to represent the changing students within the Richmond school system. And next time, she wants to make a call out for other mediums, too—including sculpture, photography and textiles.

"Connecting with others, having your masterpiece or your image experienced by another is so powerful," says Ludwig. "It propels you and inspires you to grow and learn and it also encourages you. You get that feedback from others and get a sense of your legacy as an artist."

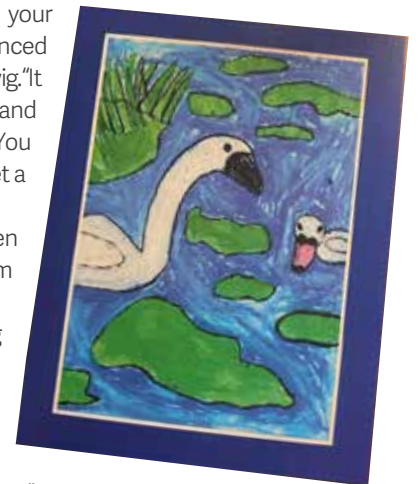
She says the kids have recently been picking up their sets of cards from Blair, and their excitement is visible.

"This project had a hand in helping them feel something beyond themselves—that their art had a bigger impact beyond the page," says Ludwig. "You can just sense how powerful this is for them. I'm so proud of them."

The students whose art is featured on the cards are equally as enthused. When she found out her piece would be featured on one of the school district's art cards, Fairchild was "really excited."

And while Kerr doesn't see art as a future career, she expects to never give it up completely regardless of where she ends up in the future.

"I know that art will always be a part of my life, and it will always be a very strong hobby of mine," she says.



Photographer inspired by contrast, emotion

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

For photographic artist Gerry Boretta, the *Midsummer Art's Dream* exhibition provided an opportunity to step out of her comfort zone—and display the photographs that consumed her time during the pandemic.

While exploring an old macro lens and photographing plants on her deck, Boretta thought about entering the Richmond Arts Council's annual exhibition, which she knew of in advance.

"It kind of fit with COVID, the exploration and discovery of a new phase of photography," she says. "I didn't have a plan in my head, what I had was a direction I wanted to explore. I wanted to explore and come to a place where I was really in charge of what was sharp versus soft in images."

Boretta joined her first photography club in 1999, but has been taking photos for more than 50 years. She says a workshop called 'Your Creative Vision,' which she took about five years ago, provided a lot of inspiration.

"That's when I began to take art, rather than to just document reality with my camera," she says. "In the workshop, I learned how to use the camera more like a brush."



Photos by Gerry Boretta

Gerry Boretta is a photographic artist and a first-time exhibitor in the Richmond Arts Council's annual show.



The contrast between light and dark provides Boretta with constant inspiration. And during the pandemic, she finds herself drawn to things that reflect COVID-19 or its impacts. She describes an experience sitting on bleachers by a baseball diamond, taking photographs through the gaps in a fence with an empty school in the background. Another day, she sat on one of the benches outside the cannery in Steveston, and was stunned by the emptiness of the streets around her.

"I'm finding that I'm being moved today by the changes that COVID has wrought, and by my sensibility about being trapped and buildings being vacant," she says. "COVID has also trapped me on my balcony and made me see differently things that I normally look at."

She entered three photographs in the exhibition, all a product of her exploratory process with her macro lens and dahlias: *Just Starting*, *Surrounded By Summer* and *Summer Rainbow*. The latter won second place in the exhibition's photography category.

Since retirement, Boretta says growth has been a big part of her artistic process.

"I did a lot of learning, a lot of independent study in order to be able to answer the question: 'What makes this a good picture?'," she says.

While she always has questions about her photography, Boretta says she can now answer the question: 'Why did you take this picture?' about her own work. Now, she's driven more by emotional response.

"I value what people say about my work, but now if I've created a piece that really moves me, I don't care what anybody else thinks about it."

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RICHMOND AT A GLANCE

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Richmond FC wants to put you in the driver's seat

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

During challenging times like these, it can seem difficult to find something positive. But as the holidays approach, Richmond FC is grateful to have a friend in a local auto dealership to help steer it through a down season.

While many football (soccer) clubs have had to lay off staff, Richmond has been able to avoid following suit. It has also provided full refunds to all families for the absent spring season and covered all processing costs.

"We felt it was the right thing to do to return (this) money during uncertain times," explained executive director Marius Roevde.

That put the club in a tight financial position, but he says they have been determined to work through it by being "smarter, better, and embracing all the opportunities available within our community."

On that note, Columbia Chrysler in Richmond has donated a new Fiat Spider convertible valued at \$35,000. The club will be raffling it at the end of 2020.

The partnership with Columbia Chrysler at 5840 Minoru Blvd., part of the Go Auto family, is an "amazing opportunity," for Richmond FC, says Roevde.

"Go Auto can see how important the work Richmond FC is doing is, and they want to support and be a part of it," he explains.

The club has already started selling tickets, and Roevde adds club members have been amazing in their efforts. He encourages anyone wanting to



Photo submitted

A new Fiat Spider convertible is up for grabs in Richmond FC's holiday fundraiser. With the donation of the car, Columbia Chrysler has partnered with the youth soccer club on a draw to be held at the end of 2020.

club is relying on its members to help sell 10 tickets each within the next several weeks. Given the strength of the committee, he is confident they will do it.

"Fundraising coming from this lottery will help the club grow, expand our new programming, cover some of the costs involved in refunding spring fees to those who needed it, support people that can't afford soccer, and upgrade our existing programs for members," Roevde says.

He adds, many youth sports teams ask member parents and kids to volunteer for hours every month as a basic part of their programming.

"Though we truly appreciate our volunteer coaches and managers, we don't usually ask member parents for much beyond that. But we do have plans to grow this club in 2021 and, rather than raise fees to pay for that, we're hoping the generosity of Go Auto Columbia Chrysler, and our members' own efforts to help sell the tickets, will propel us forward to bigger, better seasons ahead. We have so many amazing people in and around this club, and I'm so proud to be a part of it."

Tickets are \$20 each, and can be requested by contacting raffle@richmond-fc.ca. In the email, include your full name and mailing address and the number of tickets you would like to purchase, and you will then be provided with details on how to pay. The draw date is Dec. 27.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

This lottery will help expand our new programming, cover some of the costs involved in refunding spring fees to those who needed it, and support people that can't afford soccer.

– Marius Roevde

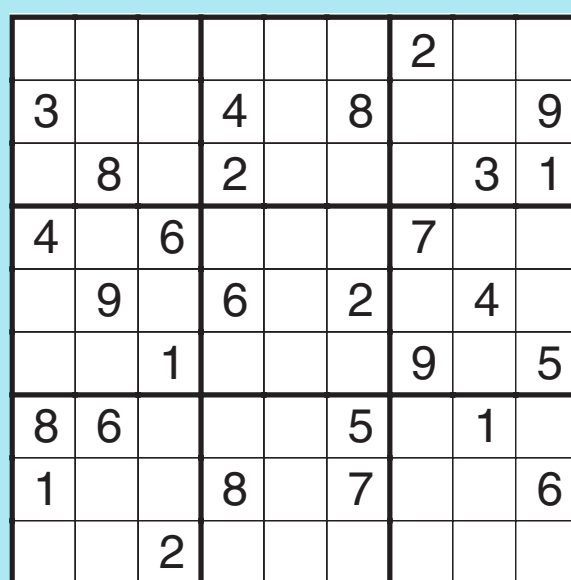
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