



ENTREPRENEUR – STUDENT

**Award winning
Vedanshi Vala gives back**

13

Photo by Richmond Sentinel

Richmond's Vedanshi Vala, executive director and cofounder of BOLT Safety supports women in need of temporary refuge.

Richmond offers planet-friendly programs

The public is invited to participate in some of the 20+ free and low-cost programs offered as part of the City of Richmond's celebration of Earth Week from April 15 to 23. Options include an Introduction to Birding session, a Bees Workshop, and guided tours of picturesque Paulik Park. For something more active, gather family or friends to help with the invasive plant removal at Terra Nova Rural Park.

The City of Richmond has partnered this year with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Garden City Conservation Society, Birds Canada, the Lower Mainland Green Team, Urban Bounty, the Richmond Garden Club and other community organizations to deliver family-friendly programs and experiences to mark Earth Week. The unique and interactive programs offered focus on environmental sustainability, citizen science, community engagement and garden management. All are designed to be fun and educational and to have a positive impact on the local environment.

For residents wanting to support Richmond's environment year-round, the city encourages individuals, groups and businesses to enroll in the Partners for Beautification Program. This program promotes local citizen stewardship with volunteer options that include cleaning up litter in an adopted area in their neighbourhood or helping with shoreline clean-ups along trails that line our island city. To learn more, visit richmond.ca/beautification

For a complete list of Earth Week activities and how to register, visit richmond.ca/earthweek



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

Over 20 activities are offered as part of the City of Richmond's Earth Week from April 15 to 23.

Spring Gardening series at Brighthouse Library

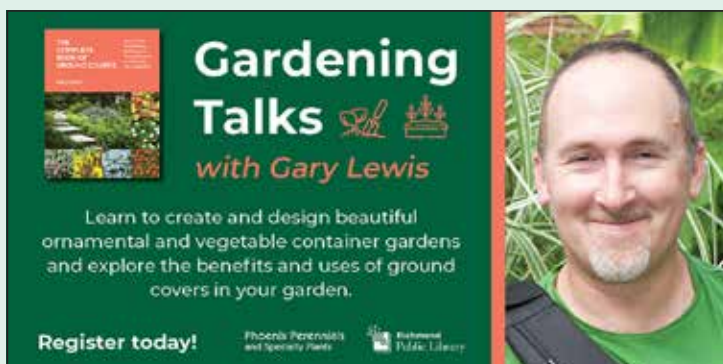


Photo courtesy Richmond Public Library

Learn to create and design ornamental and vegetable container gardens with Gary Lewis.

Richmond Public Library, in partnership with Gary Lewis, author of *The Complete Book of Ground Covers*, is pleased to offer a free three-part series to inspire you this gardening season. These free talks take place April 19, May 10, and June 14, and interested participants can register for one, two, or all three sessions.

In the first session, curious gardeners will learn how to make their patio,

balcony, and garden look beautiful with pots filled with shrubs, perennials, ground covers, and bulbs. In the second session, gardeners will discover the flavours and health benefits of growing your own food, as Gary demonstrates how to grow berry bushes, edible perennials, and annual vegetables in containers. The final session will highlight the functional and aesthetic uses of ground covers in the garden inspired by photos taken from Gary's travels to gardens around the world.

Gary Lewis has a lifelong passion for plants. He holds a Master of Science degree in botany and is the owner of local Richmond business Phoenix Perennials, which has grown into an award-winning nursery. He is a regular speaker at professional conferences, garden shows, and garden club meetings and has appeared many times on radio and television. Gary was selected as Communicator of the Year by the B.C. Landscape and Nursery Association and as one of Canada's Top 10 Horticultural Professionals Under 40 by *Greenhouse Canada* magazine.

These talks are suitable for beginner, aspiring and experienced gardeners. Don't miss your chance to learn valuable tips and tricks to keep your garden looking and tasting great! Register now to reserve your spot at yourlibrary.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?q=gardening+talks

Looking for even more gardening advice? Stay tuned for details about Gary's return in October with advice on using bulbs to add beauty and colour to your spring garden in containers and how to grow them.

Council celebrates unveiling of 2023 Street Banners

Ten newly designed banners were unveiled at the council meeting on Monday, March 27, the first in-person unveiling celebration in three years. These bright and artistic banners will beautify major gateways into the city and areas within Richmond's downtown core.

"These banners exemplify the broad range of artistic talent we have in our Richmond community," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "It is fantastic that we were able to once again celebrate the winners' success in person at council, and we're looking forward to seeing these banners installed across our city."

In total, 550 designs were submitted as part of the Street Banner Contest, which opened for submissions in August 2022. A judging panel, made up of community members, shortened the list to 20, with the public then voting on the ten new street banner winners. This year, voting took place on the city's "Let's Talk Richmond" website with more than 6,500 votes cast over a two-week voting period.

All entries reflected one of the following 10 themes: Community, Connection, Nature, Neighbourhood, Sustainability, the Arts, Urban Landscape, Waterfront, Wellness and Wildlife.

All 550 submissions are available for viewing on the City's street banner website (richmond.ca/banners) as an opportunity to recognize the amazing contribution and effort made by all participants. A complete set of the ten winning banners



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

The 2023 Street Banner Contest winners (from left to right, top to bottom): Haihua Su, Dilshad Mithani-Kara, David Poon, Yewon Choi, Joyce Tse, David England, Vladimir Chessman, Liong Zhang, Allisa Ritchie, and Tristan Todd.

ners are on display in the atrium at Richmond City Hall.

Previous year's street banners and reusable banner bags can be purchased from the Richmond Nature Park (11851 Westminster Highway) daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The City of Richmond Street Banner Program is

an initiative of Partners for Beautification, a community engagement program that encourages Richmond residents to become actively involved in creating a vibrant and beautiful community.

For more information on the Street Banner Program and to view the winning designs, visit richmond.ca/banners

Richmond receives multiple financial honours

The City of Richmond has been recognized with multiple top honours for its financial reporting and budgeting by the C.D. Howe Institute and Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada.

"The city is known for its sound financial management and strong fiscal responsibility," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "The city strives for clarity, completeness and timeliness not only in our financial reporting, but in everything we do and the services we provide. Budget transparency fosters citizen engagement and supports informed decision making at all levels."

Richmond received an 'A' grade—the highest amongst 32 major Canadian cities—in C.D. Howe's annual report card on municipal budgeting, financial reporting and fiscal transparency for 2021.

The C.D. Howe Institute is an independent not-for-profit research institute whose work focuses on economic policy and research. Its grading is based on high standards of transparency, usefulness and completeness, and reflects how easily a person can understand key numbers in financial documents and how those documents are presented. Timeliness is also a consideration. The institute suggests a budget should be presented in advance of the fiscal year so councils have time to deliberate and make informed decisions before resources are committed or spent.

Richmond also received the GFOA's Canadian Award for Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive 2021 Annual Report—the 20th consecutive year the city has received this award. In addition, the Annual Report Highlights document was bestowed with the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting for the 13th successive year.

The GFOA Financial Reporting Award Program encourages municipal governments throughout Canada and the U.S. to publish high quality, comprehensive annual financial reports beyond the minimum statutory requirements set by the Community Charter and the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.

The Popular Annual Financial Reporting Awards Program encourages local governments to produce high quality, abridged versions of their comprehensive annual report that are readily accessible and easily understandable to people without a background in public finance.

To read the C.D. Howe Institute's report, visit cdhowe.org/public-policy-research/show-us-our-money-fiscal-accountability-canadas-cities-2022

Both versions of the city's award-winning 2021 Annual Reports are available on its website at richmond.ca or from city hall upon request.

Richmond to celebrate World Leisure Day



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

World Leisure Day is being celebrated in Richmond on Sunday, April 16 with 30+ free and low-cost activities.

World Leisure Day is being celebrated in Richmond on Sunday, April 16 with more than 30 free and low-cost activities for all ages and interests.

World Leisure Day is a global initiative of the World Leisure Organization (WLO), which aims to highlight the importance of leisure, in all its forms: recreation, parks, sport, education and arts, culture and heritage. The theme for this year's World Leisure Day is "Leisure for Social Transformation" to promote the importance of leisure activities in bringing people together, building social connections and fostering community belonging.

The activities offered by the City of Richmond and its partners include: Fun with Acrylics at South Arm Community Centre; Self-Guided Walking Tours at Terra Nova, Sea Island and Brighthouse Park; a Cycling Art Tour; the theatrical show, Discounted Hotpot Centre at the Richmond Cultural Centre; a Family Story Time at Steveston and Ironwood Richmond Public Library; free public skating at Richmond Ice Centre; drop-in open gym sessions at various Richmond community centres and drop-in fitness classes at the Richmond Olympic Oval.

For a full listing of World Leisure Day activities and how to register, check out richmond.ca/leisureday

In 2017, the WLO (worldleisureday.org) designated Richmond as a World Leisure Community of Excellence, recognizing Richmond for its rich arts and cultural communities, outdoor green spaces, unique heritage and waterfront roots, as well as its breadth of recreation and sport opportunities.

Red Seal training available for more people

More people will now be able to train for jobs as automotive technicians, millwrights, and welders on the Lower Mainland through a new Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) project funded by the province.

"Skilled tradespeople are in high demand, so we're removing barriers to skills training," said Sheila Malcolmson, minister of social development and poverty reduction. "We're funding Red Seal certification so people can secure good jobs in their communities."

Ace Trades and Technical Institute (ATTI) is receiving more than \$560,000 to deliver the automotive technicians,

millwrights and welders training project on the Lower Mainland.

"ATTI is excited to provide participants with training that leads to technical skills, certification and practical experience that employers in the trades sector are looking for," said Supneet Chawla, founder and chief executive officer, ATTI. "This program supports people to achieve their trades-certification goals and gain the practical skills required to excel in their future careers."

Participants will receive 10 weeks of essential employment and technical skills training, four weeks of work experience with local employers, and one

week of followup support to prepare participants for work.

The first intake of full-time in-class training started April 3, 2023. The second intake will begin July 4 and third intake on Oct. 16. Anyone interested in finding out more about this or other CEP projects can contact their local WorkBC centre.

This announcement is part of StrongerBC's Future Ready plan, which is making education and training more accessible, affordable and relevant to help businesses grow and prepare British Columbians for the jobs of tomorrow.

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The history of Moffatt Road

By **SAMUEL CHENG**
Reporter

With the logo of the poppy imprinted on the road sign of Moffatt Road in Richmond, the history behind the name deserves to be honored and commemorated.

The Richmond road was named after Bernard Joy Moffatt, who was born on Dec. 13, 1917. Moffatt lived in Fernie, B.C. before moving to Richmond in 1932 with his parents and sister.

Moffatt graduated from Richmond High School in 1935 and proceeded to study at the University of British Columbia. Shortly afterwards, Moffatt joined Barrett-Lennard accounting firm as an articulated clerk.

As World War II erupted Europe, Moffatt was enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on Feb. 12, 1941. He was sent to a number of provinces including Manitoba, Alberta, and Prince Edward Island for training.

On the Christmas Day of 1941, Moffatt was commissioned to fly out to England in the April of 1942. Moffatt was initially tasked to ferry planes over the Atlantic

Ocean before he suffered a minor injury three months later. By October of 1942, Moffatt was assigned to a station in Malta.

Moffatt was with the unit 69 squadron and was in the Wellington aircraft at the time when he went missing on Nov. 10, 1942. Moffatt's body was never found nor recovered and no graves were installed in his name. However, Moffatt's name can be found on the Malta War Memorial.

Moffatt Road is located near the heart of Richmond, to the east of Gilbert Road and west of Minoru Boulevard. It is surrounded by various amenities and public destinations within minutes of walking distance.

Public amenities such as Minoru Centre for Active Living, Minoru Park, and the Minoru Public Library are some of the resident's favorite destinations for recreational activities.

Ferris Elementary School and Richmond Secondary School are the featured schools when it comes to education and learning. Not to mention that the Richmond City Hall and Brighthouse SkyTrain Station are easily accessible as well.

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Photo by Samuel Cheng

A poppy engraved street sign of Moffatt Road.

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Richmond student wins Loran Award

Gerardo Mejia, a Grade 12 student at Cambie secondary, was named one of 36 Loran Scholars.

The Loran Scholars Foundation is redefining the idea of scholarships in Canada: looking beyond marks, we find and bring together community-engaged students who show strength of character and are ready to embrace the challenge of leaving the world better than they found it. As graduating high school and Cégep students, the pursuits and accomplishments of the 36 newest recipients of the Loran Award are exemplary, but it is their values-driven approach to leading and dedication to uplifting their communities that distinguish them as Loran Scholars.

As the newest recipients of the Loran Award, these students participated in an in-depth, nationwide selection process carried out through the work of hundreds of volunteer assessors and interviewers. We look for qualities that grades alone cannot show: a breadth of interests, and deep commitment to service, the courage to make difficult decisions, and the determination to work towards long-term goals.

Within the new cohort, one scholar founded a nonprofit to support mental well-being; another established her First Nation community's first youth centre; one organized a fundraiser to advocate for and raise awareness of struggles faced by Afghan women; another serves as her school board student trustee and lead astronomer at an eco-park; and one founded a science club for his local elementary students. These are but a few examples that give us hope for a future in which these emerging leaders are able to realize their potential. We know they just need support and opportunities to grow.

Loran Scholars benefit from a four-year, comprehensive leadership-enrichment program, tuition waivers and financial support, and a network of values-driven peers and mentors—unlike anything else offered in this country. We give exceptional young people a launchpad to unlock their potential and empower them to make positive change in their communities.

From writing an application to attending national interviews in Toronto, the entire Loran selection process is a personal growth experience, in itself—a chance for the students to reflect, learn about themselves, and connect with other passionate and optimistic young changemakers. In addition to the four-year Loran Award granted to 36 students, we also recognize and provide one-time entrance awards to 54 Loran Finalists who made it to Nationals and 60 students recognized as Loran Provincial and Territorial Award recipients at the semi-final level. Overall, we will be investing close to \$4 million in 150 students



Photo submitted

Cambie secondary student Gerardo Mejia is a Loran Award winner.

across Canada this year.

Since its inception 34 years ago, the Loran Scholars Foundation has provided more than \$62 million in undergraduate awards to 3,200+ promising high school and Cégep students including 757 Loran Scholars. Together, alumni of the program form a diverse ecosystem of purpose-driven leaders pushing boundaries across an array of fields, such as technology, the arts, law, science, education, and finance. Loran Scholars have gone on to hold such positions as: president, doctors of the world; country manager for Azerbaijan, the World Bank; assistant professor, critical studies of race & indigeneity at the University of Toronto; chief of staff, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency with the Government of Canada; and ceo, Birds Canada. Moreover, eight Loran Scholars have gone on to clerk for the Supreme Court and 25 have been selected as Rhodes Scholars. Though their work spans a multitude of sectors and disciplines, alumni share and continue to be guided by Loran's core values of character, service, and leadership.

For more information, visit loranscholar.ca

Students set to improve cycling skills, confidence

Thousands of students at elementary schools across B.C. are ready to improve their cycling safety and skills as the fourth year of Everyone Rides Grade 4-5 gets moving.

"Learning confidence and safety skills while cycling will encourage a new generation to make environmentally friendly travel choices," said Rob Fleming, minister of transportation and infrastructure. "Promoting cycling as a fun and healthy way to get around is part of our upcoming Clean Transportation Action Plan."

Students in the Capital Region, Metro Vancouver, Kelowna, the West Kootenays, and the Prince George area will learn foundational biking skills, helmet safety, as well as practical hands-on activities such as stopping, hand signals, and road sign awareness. Bikes and helmets are provided and adaptive options are available for children with disabilities.

"Opportunities for more exercise—like biking

to school—have many benefits for students, including improved learning outcomes and longer attention spans, as well as better overall health," said Rachna Singh, minister of education and child care. "This exciting program helps students to feel safe biking while breaking down barriers so more students can enjoy the benefits of active transportation for school and life."

Everyone Rides Grade 4-5 is a program developed and delivered by HUB Cycling, a not-for-profit organization that has 25 years of experience helping remove barriers to cycling and promoting the health, environmental and economic benefits of cycling through education and training.

"For the fourth year of Everyone Rides Grade 4-5, HUB Cycling is excited to provide more than 6,500 elementary students with the opportunity to learn to ride their bikes to and from school," said Rose Gardner, HUB Cycling director of

bike education. "The program can also spark increased cycling among educators and participating families, leading to the health, environmental, and economic benefits that active transportation can bring. By adding schools in the Prince George area to this year's program, we're bringing this fully funded accessible education program to over 65 schools in 2023."

More than 22,000 students have participated in the program since it began through a combination of online, in-class and on-bike learning. This skill development gives students the option to use the many new and upgraded cycling facilities that participating communities across the province have been building.

The B.C. government has invested \$1.4 million in the Everyone Rides Grade 4-5 program since 2020.

For more information about HUB Cycling visit: bikehub.ca/erg45

CARHA Hockey World Cup recap

By MATTHEW CHEUNG
Reporter

The 2023 CARHA Hockey World Cup has come to an end. Across six days of action, hundreds of teams battled within their division for the chance to be named winner of their respective divisions. Visitors from around the world visited the City of Richmond and attractions nearby to take in the most highly anticipated amateur adult hockey tournament.

"The event was an incredible success both on and off the ice," says Becky Kolberg, manager of communications and digital media at CARHA Hockey. "Player feedback, although early, has been extremely positive."

The event started off with many competitors of the tournament participating in the March of Athletes from the athletes village to the Richmond Olympic Oval.

Day one of play at the CARHA Hockey World Cup featured 41 different games across the rinks at the Richmond Olympic Oval and the Richmond Ice Centre.

Day two saw 40 games across the seven different venues but one goalie scored the biggest win that day. Wathla Warriors goalie Cody Robinson surprised his girlfriend by getting on one knee and proposing, to which she responded with an emphatic yes. Truly a moment that the couple and CARHA will never forget.

The third day of action at the CARHA Hockey World Cup saw tournament high 47 games across the seven venues. Teams battled it out against their opponents in hopes of advancing to the next round. Some games featured strong victories by individual players who propelled their teams to victory and others were stuck in a deadlock until overtime.

On the fourth day of action, teams who had a game remaining battled it out on the ice to complete the seeding before the elimination tournament began.

Mar. 24 kicked off the start of the elimination tournament, with each division having tournament formats that saw only three teams advancing to participate in the elimination tournament and others having all four.

The fifth day of action also featured a highly anticipated event in the Molson Canadian 25-plus feature game final between an undefeated Devs team and hometown squad Britvegas. The stands were filled with hockey fans excited to see the division finals.

"I believe the count was approximately 500, which is an average turnout for the feature game" says Kolberg.

The Devs started the game firing on all cylinders, as players Kolby Steen, Don Danroth, Ryan Uchaz, and Brandon Campos would all score in the first period. In the same period, Britvegas would respond



Photo courtesy CARHA Hockey

The Britvegas hockey team was able to upset the Devs in the Molson Canadian 25+ finals at the Minoru Ice Rink.

with goals from Kyle Uy and Gunnar Wegleitner. In the second period, Britvegas would tie the game after goals from Josh Murphy with five minutes remaining and Gary Dhaliwal with one minute left in the period. The game would continue to remain at a deadlock between the two teams in the third period and overtime. Heading into the shootout, Britvegas would start it off with a goal from Jordan Deyrmenjian, followed by a save from their goalie Patrick Zubick. The teams second player in the shootout, Gunnar Wegleitner, would score for his team, putting all the pressure on his goalie and the Devs. Britvegas' Patrick Zubick would make the save, securing the win for the hometown team.

In the final day of action at the CARHA Hockey World Cup, 32 teams suited up for 16 games across the seven venues. In the women's division, the Warriors defeated the Smooth Grooves 6-2. In the Vizzy 19+ division, the hometown Richmond HC defeated the Simpsons by a score of 8-2, and the Brigade bested the Surrey Beavers by a score of 5-1.

HC Mehtimakelainen won against St. Moritz Selection 5-3 in the Molson Canadian Ultra 35+. In the Pizza Pizza 40+ division, BIK Karlskoga defeated HT Cream convincingly scoring seven goals by a score of 7-3. Trangsund 45 won 5-3 against Pitea VIP in the Gadar Promotions 40+ division.

The Quesnel Goldpanners bested the Alta Tigers 2-1, to win the iPlayHockey 50+ division, while Val D'Or 50 beat the Langley Bears in the River Rock Casino Resort 50+ division. In the Cyclone Taylor Source 55+ division, the Trojans beat the Old Foxes by score of 6-1, meanwhile in the Lulu Island Winery 55+ division the Spare Parts Store tied the game late in the third period before winning in overtime against Muumiot.

Trangsund 60 beat the Lindsay Pastimers by a score of 5-1, winning the Westcoast Sightseeing 60+ division and the Dispepat 60 secured a 4-2 win over the Whistler Winterhawks in the Stanley's Grill 60+ division. The Vancouver Sign Group 65+ division

sion featured SOHA Team Sweden and Cyclone Taylor Sports, with Cyclone winning by a score of 5-0.

In the Lawrie Insurance Group 70+ division, the Schooners defeated the Global Oldtimers 4-1. Meanwhile, the SOHA 70+ team faced off against the LSH Antiques, with the Antiques winning the Universal Coach Line 70+ division by a score of 2-1.

The final day of the CARHA Hockey World Cup featured a closing ceremonies for all teams and a musical performance. Teams were able to say their goodbyes before they journeyed back to their cities or ventured out to explore popular tourist attractions like Stanley Park and Whistler Ski Resort.

"The Closing Ceremonies featured the band Dr. Stranglelove who kept everyone dancing right through until midnight. All of the participating travel teams took in the evening and we had a number of locals join in as well equating to approximately 1500 attendees" says Kolberg.

The finale of the tournament left many participants and viewers wanting more of the CARHA Hockey tournament. "The number one feedback / question we received was 'when and where will the next event be?' There is definitely appetite from the teams to participate in future events" says Kolberg.

As of now, it has been confirmed the location of the next tournament has not been chosen yet, but the organization will chose carefully when the time comes for cities to bid on the event. "We cannot predict where future events will be held. It will all depend on the cities that demonstrate interest and the objective of the association at that time" says Kolberg.

The next CARHA Hockey World Cup is expected to take place in 2027, due to the fact that they've adopted the tournament to resemble the Olympics. For more information, visit carhahockeyworldcup.ca

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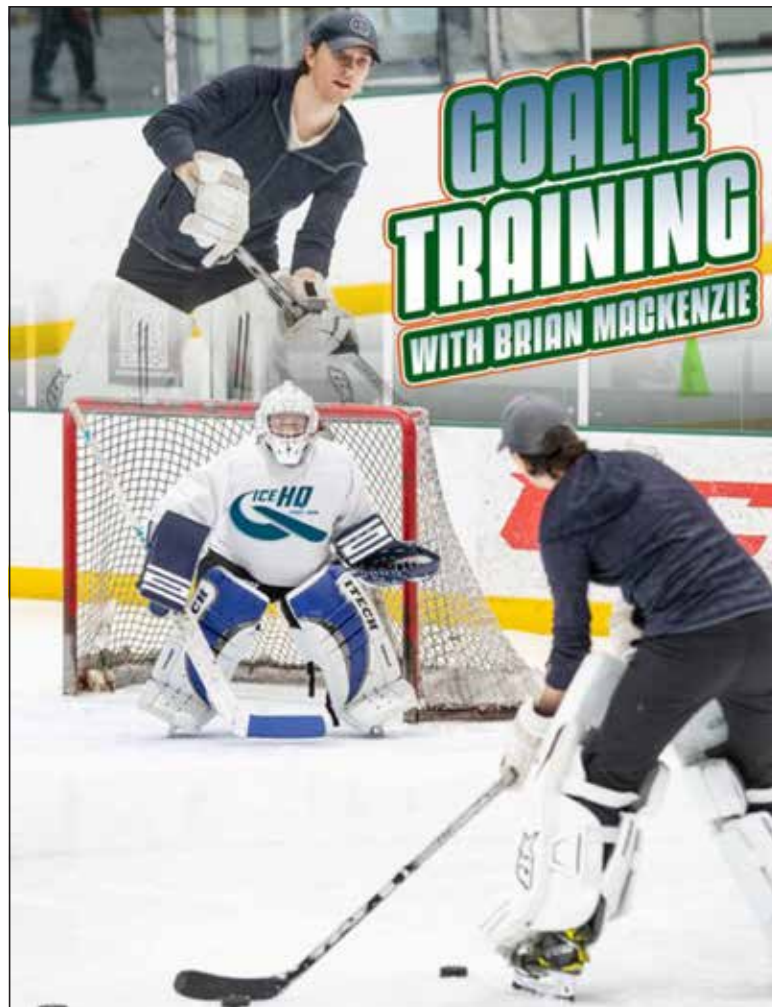
One man's vision for hockey in Australia

By FLORENCE GORDON
Contributing Writer

The Richmond Sentinel (RS) sat down with Ross Fisher (RF), owner and managing director of Australia Skate Company in Melbourne, Australia. Sitting in the players' lounge at the Richmond Olympic Oval during the CARHA Hockey World Cup, the following story unfolded.

RS: Ross, I understand that you embarked on a journey to bring ice hockey to Melbourne when hockey was relatively new to most. You needed an ice rink so you decided to take it upon yourself to build an ice rink. You gathered people to get involved. Because many didn't know how to skate nor play hockey, you developed programs to address this. Can you explain how it all began and how you incorporated the different levels of learning so that eventually they could play hockey?

RF: Thanks for having me and it's great to be here. Obviously for us, this whole tournament has been a fantastic experience. It's going to have a lot of great memories for the players that came. The history of my experience goes back to 1996 when my daughter was into figure skating and my son played street hockey and wanted to play inland hockey. I quickly grabbed onto the sport and realized that it's an exciting sport to watch, so I looked for a venue and started with a roller hockey rink in 1998. It was a long process and finally in 2018 we opened our ice rink. We had some players that had played inland hockey before, so we developed programs for new players to bring them into the sport. It just exploded resulting in a passionate group of hockey players that have been playing for a couple of years now, who are a large part of the group that we brought from Australia to the CARHA tournament.



Goalie training with Brian Mackenzie

Photo supplied

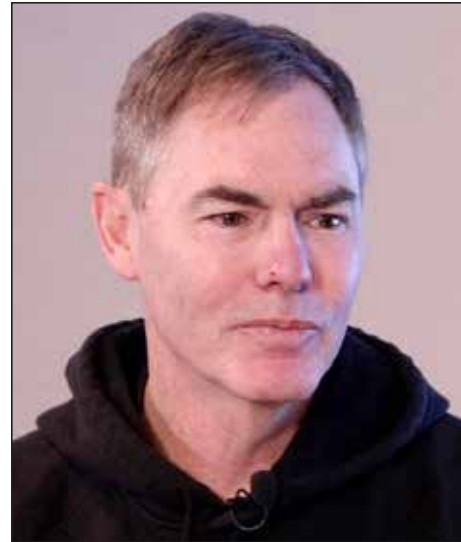


Photo courtesy Richmond Sentinel
Ross Fisher, director and CEO of Ice HQ.

RS: When you mention passion I was here for the media reception and a player came in by himself wearing an Australian shirt so I chatted with him. He said that they lost their first game 8-1 but if you were in the locker room you'd think they had won, they were so grateful for being part of this tournament. He also expressed, the friendships that have developed were totally different from other sports he had played.

Ross he also said, that you run a very respectful operation, that if players are being bullied or players

are too aggressive you want no part of that. You want players to learn how to skate and play hockey and be part of something like this tournament.

RF: Absolutely, our recreation league at our rink run three seasons, we have over 60 teams each season which tops over a 1,000 players so from a management point of view we want to make sure when people come to play recreational hockey we don't want them to worry about getting injured. Everyone has to get up and go to work the next day.

RS: You're right they're not playing professional hockey or making a living at playing hockey so you don't want anyone getting injured. I understand you have a junior league, a men's league and a women's league, is that correct?

RF: Yes, the women's and junior league is really an important part of our program. The adult senior programs tends to take care of itself in regards to growth as they fall in love with the sport as soon as they find out about it. One of the biggest growth area is the women's program, we have from junior development entry level to our recreational league. We have nearly 200 female players that play just in our leagues which has led us to launch a new league that will start this year. We are calling it our pro-winter league for women only and we'll have three competitive teams with a draft process and those teams will play throughout the season. It's a fantastic development for our younger female players who at age 14 will be eligible to play in that league.

RS: Will you be working towards developing an Olympic women's team?

RF: There's no doubt in Australia our women's program has a much greater opportunity to play at Olympic level but it's a tough gig to get into that level of hockey. With the passion, growth and the opportunity we have some very talented players, home grown that are coming through our junior players program. The girls recently won their division at their recent tournament and the junior men won their division as well. The growth and talent coming through is a real positive sign for the sport.

RS: Looking back, when you first started on this journey how did you get the word out to the community because at the time ice hockey was really only street hockey.

RF: We had the inland hockey rink that we ran as a multi-sport centre that included roller derby, inland hockey and lacrosse so we had a base that we were able to grow from when we did open the ice rink, and word just got out. Those that entered the development program had so much fun they brought their friends and it grew from there. Wednesday is our development program day with junior development of 30 students age 10 and under that are just starting competition playing right through to the senior development program—the rink is full.

RS: Ross you said you're not demonstrating big wins but it's the experience.

I understand that you brought four teams to compete in the CARHA tournament, what age groups are playing.

RF: We do, we have four teams competing two teams in the 35-plus age division as it suited more at the development of where our teams are at this time versus playing in the 25-plus age division which is a tough division and fantastic for our players to watch.

RS: *We are sitting here in the players lounge over looking two rinks and two games, you can see the quality of the hockey being played. Again, for your players that are part of the tournament it's an incentive when they return to Australia to work toward the next CARHA Hockey World Cup which happens every four years. You brought families with you as well have you been out touring the city to see a lot of the tourist sites.*

RF: A lot of the players and their families turned this into a travel experience as well as the hockey experience so I've been organizing things to do with a couple of buddies. We went to the Capilano Suspension Bridge it was a beautiful day, it was amazing to walk around. Personally I've been to Vancouver a few times so I've been to Stanley Park and other fantastic places. It's very much like Melbourne.

RS: *It is, we've filmed in Melbourne and it too is a beautiful city right on the ocean we do have many similarities. I know that when I was talking to the Australian hockey player earlier in the week he said some of the players wanted to go skiing between games and he said "no don't do that you might get injured then you won't be able to play hockey, the whole focus is to play hockey then go ski". It's good to hear our visitors are enjoying themselves. I hope the people in Richmond have been great Ambassadors welcoming them and guiding them about the city.*

RF: It is one of the friendliness populations around.



Recreational hockey programs.

Photo submitted

RS: *We think so, it has so many elements to offer, we are a multi-cultural city with lots of restaurants and activities to choose from. Ross I really appreciate you taking the time out to do this interview. In closing is there any comments or encouragement for anyone that wants to attempt to do, what you did for hockey in your community.*

RF: For us this trip was about the experience and every single player that came on this trip got that in truckloads so they're fired up and excited to get back home and get better and look forward to 2027 wherever the next CARHA Cup may be.

RS: *We hope you and your teams enjoy the rest of your stay in Richmond and hope that you'll return. Ross thank you again and safe travel home.*

To view the video version richmondsentinel.ca/videos

Richmond Sentinel talked with CARHA organizers

By FLORENCE GORDON
Contributing Writer

Following the interview with Ross Fisher, the *Richmond Sentinel* (RS) sat down in an interview with Lucy Peeling (LP), CARHA's manager of special events, for a review of the tournament's progress.

RS: *Lucy, the Richmond Sentinel met three years ago to partner with CARHA and then Covid-19 happened and everything was put on hold for the last three years. You and your team have been the heart of the world cup tournament, planning this event from Ottawa for the last three years. Can you bring us up to date on how this week has been going?*

LP: We're so thrilled how everything has come

together. The feedback from the teams, is that there's a general excitement just being here because it has been a long road to get here. We've been talking to the teams for several years to finally be here and be part of the experience, is really special for us. It's more than a hockey tournament, it's hard to grasp the spirit unless you're here but the teams get it, so it's really rewarding.

RS: *You had teams come from 10 different countries from England, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland, Australia, Kazakhstan, Canada, USA and Ukraine were to be here and were in the games scheduled right up until the last minute. We were all hoping this would come together as we have a large Ukrainian community and they were really excited when I called them.*

LP: We were really hoping they were going to

make it, they were really motivated and wanted to be here but it just didn't work out.

RS: *What's your next project after this tournament ends?*

LP: We'll do a wrap up to review the event with our sponsors and partners and then we'll start working on the bid for the next tournament which will probably go out in 2024. Any Canadian city can apply, once that's done we'll start planning the next one.

RS: *One thing I want to ask you before we close – where can everyone watch the games when they go home because they all are from different countries and we know the games are being filmed.*

LP: Our website carhahockeyworldcup.ca will have everything archived there. For the full video interview visit richmondsentinel.ca/videos

BrickCan Lego convention

By MATTHEW CHEUNG
Reporter

The 2023 BrickCan Lego convention is returning to Richmond in full force. For the first time since the pandemic, avid Lego fanatics and fans can attend the two-day convention that between April 22 to 23. The convention will be held at the River Rock Casino Resort Show Theatre. The convention will be split into six sessions, at two-hour intervals, a morning, midday, and afternoon session.

The BrickCan organization is looking forward to hosting the event in person and the reactions of the young children who visit as well as the parents or grandparents that brought them.

"For us it's like having a family reunion with a whole bunch of amazing Lego models to look at. We have fantastic conversations about creations, new sets coming out, and the innovations and techniques used in our creations. For the



ticket buyers I see their faces light up with inspiration and nostalgia, young builders are excited to get home and build with their own Lego and moms, dads, and grandparents are taken back to a time when they spent hours creating with these wonderful little bricks" says Allan Corbeil, chairman of BrickCan.

BrickCan is made up of a small group of Lego fans who volunteer their own time to run this not-for-profit group. It started out when the group came together and wanted to show off the creations they had made. In 2016, the group had decided to host their own Lego convention after attending some that had taken place in the United States.

"We came together because we love this hobby and wanted to spend time where we live with our friends doing what we love to do, build and show off our Lego creations. We sat down and talked about what we liked about other events and what we wanted to bring to our event. It was very important that we have our own local take on a Lego exhibition" says Allan Corbeil, chairman of BrickCan.

The goal of BrickCan is to promote community events in Canada for Lego builders, collectors, and all fans. As well as provide networking events for groups who have interest in collaborating building collecting, and displaying Lego creations or products. In addition, BrickCan hopes to be able to increase awareness of the Canadian Lego fan community and Canadian culture.

"It was very important to us that we have our own local take on a Lego exhibition. With the help of our Lego fan community, we made it happen and have had a lot of fun doing so" says Corbeil.

Over the past three years the BrickCan Lego convention, like many other events have had to adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many events had to be shut down, businesses continued to lose money due to the protocols and lack of customers. For BrickCan, the abrupt cancellation was disappointing but understandable. BrickCan adjusted to the circumstances and went virtual that same year, followed by an online gallery in 2021, and a limited in-person event in



Photos by Alex Saar

The 2023 BrickCan Lego convention is coming back to Richmond in full force.

2022. Nonetheless, the virtual events do not do the exhibitions justice.

"We did a virtual event each year with one in 2020 being something we put together rather quickly. We tried to engage local fans with an online gallery in 2021 and 2022 with very limited success and engagement from the public. Looking at the Lego creations does not compare to seeing them in front of you. The Adult Lego Fans still had fun chatting at our virtual event and planning for 2023" says Corbeil.

Since their 2016 inaugural event, the organization has quickly grown in size and appreciates the opportunity to host such an event in the Lower Mainland with fellow Lego fanatics.

"We have been very lucky to live in such an amazing place with Lego fans wanting to come and see our creations. We have had a great turnout right from the start at our first event. We sell out of tickets now a bit faster than we did in year one and we are thrilled with people's love of these colourful bricks" says Corbeil.

With many creations being brought to the event for display, there are bound to be some creations that stand above the rest. Some notable creations are the Jurassic Park build or the Ice Wall from hit television series Game of Thrones.

"I am always impressed with the stuff that I have little skill at creating myself, such as the great ball contraptions. They are always a crowd pleaser. I really appreciate seeing the collaborations. It is the creations where the builder has really thought outside the box when making their model that always amazes me. I am impressed with even the smaller models in which the builder has created something using a part in a unique way" says Corbeil.

Tickets went on sale in early January but were quickly sold out two months later, according to Ticketmaster, as a limited quantity of 900 tickets per session were sold.

For more information about BrickCan, visit brickcan.com

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Taiwanese hotpot chain bubbles over

By **SAMUEL CHENG**
Reporter

Boiling Point, a Taiwanese-inspired hotpot chain with over 19 years of history has decided to come together to share their story.

Having been in the Richmond community for almost 13 years, Boiling Point takes pride in employee happiness and customer satisfaction. It strives to uphold its social responsibilities as a corporate as well as creating a supportive environment in the process.

The founder, Rick Chou, immigrated to United States and worked various jobs before establishing his very own hotpot empire. Being an immigrant far from home, Chou often missed the mouth-watering aroma of beef bone broth he grew up enjoying.

In 2004, after gathering enough savings, Chou opened up his first hotpot in Hacienda Heights, California with the help of a co-founder. It was the first Taiwanese-style hotpot at the time and it featured three different flavors of soup base. Four additional flavors were added to the menu in 2005.

"The goal of Boiling Point was to bring the tastes of home to his customers and provide high-quality, fresh ingredients in every bite," says Calvin Chang CEO of Boiling Point.

By the year of 2008, Boiling Point had expanded outside of California and the country. Having acquired the soup holder patent in 2013 and the opening of the first concept store in 2015, the expansion of the business continued. As of today, the hotpot franchise has over 1000 employees worldwide with over 23 branches in the United States, Canada and Japan.

The name "Boiling Point" is derived from the ideology of constantly improving as a whole, just like

how there is no limit to when the water boils.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the chain suffered a steep decline in business due to the COVID-19 protocols that prevented customers from dining in at the restaurants. Not to mention the labor and employee shortages that many businesses have faced. In addition to having to rely on take-outs and partnering up with online delivery platforms, Boiling Point came up with an innovative online store called the BP Market.

BP Market features fresh and personalized food deliveries that customer can enjoy in their own home. Jin Tea Shop is also affiliated with Boiling Point, specializing in various selections of teas and Taiwanese organic tea leaves.

"Despite our continuous effort to provide delicious food with dedication and care, we are paying more attention to develop a strategy that benefits both environment and customers," says Chang. "We opened the BP concept store and Jin Tea Shop using more environmental-friendly ingredients."

Continuous effort of delivering savory food and drinks with dedication and care has always been the top priority for the hotpot giant. Boiling Point values honesty, integrity, respect, and care and that's what separates the business from the other restaurant chains.



Photos courtesy Boiling Point

Thai tomato hot soup, one of Boiling Point's most popular items.

"Never compromising quality over cost, we insist on using only the best ingredients and monitor each process to provide the highest quality and authentic food," says Chang.

Challenges are not uncommon for a business that has opened its doors to customers for nearly two decades. Increasing number of restaurants means more competition and high degree of globalization leads to instability in the market. Nonetheless, Boiling Point works tirelessly to provide its customers with quality products and services.

"Our goal is to offer delicious food and create a relaxing environment for both new and returning customers to enjoy our soul warming hot soup," says Chang. "Together, we are spreading the warmth one hot soup at a time."

Having been in the Richmond community for almost 13 years, Boiling Point takes pride in employee happiness and customer satisfaction. It strives to uphold its corporate social responsibilities as well as creating a supportive environment in the process.

"Our goal is to not only create a win-win-win solution for customers, shareholders, and staff, but to also take corporate social responsibility," says Chang.

The customers are the foundation and building blocks of the Boiling Point organization. Providing the customers with exceptional service and highest quality of products are how Boiling Point was able to achieve the pinnacle of success.

Boiling Point expresses the deepest gratitude to their valued customers' loyal support, which has been instrumental in their continued growth and success as a global restaurant chain.



Beef hot soup, is one of Boiling Point's classic items.

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2023 Volunteers Are Stars Awards

Over 30 individuals and groups have been nominated for a 2023 Volunteers Are Stars Award. The winners will be announced on April 19, during an awards ceremony at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel.

Presented by Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG), and held since 2001, the Volunteers Are Stars Awards are a celebration of community service, giving local volunteers a chance to shine.

"Nominations come directly from residents and community organizations," says Ed Gavsie, president and chief executive officer of RCRG. "That grassroots element is important. The nominees are being recognized by fellow community members, who have seen the impact of their contributions."

During the awards ceremony, one winner will be named in each of four categories, honouring individual, group, youth, and leadership volunteers.

Leading up to the event, RCRG will also be highlighting the nominees on its social media channels, so people can like and share the posts, and leave comments congratulating and thanking the volunteers.

"The winners are chosen by an impartial panel of judges," says Gavsie. "In the meantime, we want to share the story of each nominee, because they've all made a meaningful difference in our community. Whether or not they receive an award, every one of them is a star."

In addition to the awards ceremony, the event will feature a stand-up reception with appetizers and refreshments, along with activities like a photobooth and a volunteer-inspired participatory art project.

Tickets range from \$50 to \$75, and can be purchased online at rcrg.org/vas

2023 Volunteers Are Stars Nominees

Star of Richmond – Recognizing Outstanding Leadership Volunteers

- Lilian Callegari
- Mary Derksen
- Susan Ness

Shooting Star – Recognizing Outstanding Youth Volunteers

- Megan Chan
- Serena Chin
- Ava Koldenhof
- Christopher Mok
- Eden Wu
- Micah Wu

Constellation – Recognizing Outstanding Volunteer Groups

- A Not So Silent Night Committee
- Richmond Advocacy and Support Committee
- Richmond Hospital or Healthcare Auxiliary Thrift Shop

Nova Star – Recognizing Outstanding Individual Volunteers

- Leon Chew
- Don Danyluk
- Frank Fowlie



Photos courtesy Richmond Cares Richmond Gives

The 2022 Constellation Award, recognizing an outstanding volunteer group, is presented to the South Arm United Church Outreach Committee.



The 2023 Volunteers Are Stars Awards will be given out at a special ceremony on April 19.

- Raymond Goh
- Patricia Gustafson
- Jackie Lee
- Marcus Narsaiya
- Charles Pinto
- John Read
- Linda Shirley
- Erika Stewart
- Ron Toffolo
- Grace Turner
- Ray Wang

- David Wong
- Rosemary Yee
- Jasmine Yip
- Claire Zhang
- Melissa Zhang

Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG) is a registered charity that serves as a hub for volunteering and giving. RCRG is also a direct service provider, operating a Child Care Resource & Referral Centre, the Richmond Christmas Fund, and a variety of Seniors Community Support Services.

Richmond entrepreneur focused on giving back

By MATTHEW CHEUNG
Reporter

Vedanshi Vala has received numerous recognitions (nominated for YWCA Women of Distinction Awards and the Surrey Board of Trade's Top 25 Under 25 award) as a gifted young entrepreneur in her business career and as a volunteer community leader. The UBC student, was raised in Richmond and graduated from Hugh McRoberts Secondary School. As founder of MAZE Jewelry, a local jewelry production, Vala focuses on a brand that strives to create simplistic pieces that are custom made to fit the wearer's style while providing customers with an exceptional customer experience.

"I was raised in an Indian family where your jewelry was often a heartfelt gift from loved ones or to celebrate important life milestones. Similarly, I want other people to feel cherished, which was one of my motivating reasons for founding my jewelry brand MAZE" says Vala, founder of MAZE Jewelry.

"My vision for MAZE is to celebrate each person who wears the brand. Moreover, in a world that needs to be ever conscious of the perils of fast fashion, MAZE takes things slow: pieces are made-to-order, tailored to the wearer's unique sizing. This not only ensures that excess waste is minimized, but is inclusive of diverse body sizes, and personal preferences. The concept of bespoke fashion has existed in India for millennia, and I'm thrilled to bring that experience here."

For every sale that MAZE Jewelry makes, 20 per cent of the sales are donated to Covenant House, a non-profit organization that supports homelessness through meals, housing, mental health, and substance-use programs.

"I'm excited to be able to translate this passion for giving back to my community through MAZE's strong philanthropic commitment to support Covenant House's work to provide unparalleled love and support to young people in crisis" says Vala.

MAZE designs offer necklaces, bracelets, and rings which are all custom made to the customer's fit and liking. Each piece of jewelry is designed to maintain balance while pushing past the boundaries of basic jewelry designing.

"The design choices behind each piece dances between maintaining balance and throwing all the design rules out the window. I also wanted to retain a signature look and feel for the brand's designs, so I chose to make pieces using a variety of combinations and permutations so similar to motifs. I wanted pieces to look unique, flattering and elegant," says Vala.

The
MAZE
Team is

made up of a group of young students who all have the same goal of producing a brand that creates slow fashion and reduces the excess waste that a normal brand may produce.

"The MAZE team has come together pretty organically, the nice thing about being in school is that you're always finding people who have the same energy as you," says Vala. "Our family at MAZE, from the leadership to the creative talent to brand ambassadors – all of us are young students. I think that when young people have something they believe in, that balance becomes very possible as they prioritize the things that matter to them."

Working alongside Vedanshi Vala is Shanaya Virk, the chief marketing officer of the company, who aims to give anyone that comes across the brand an unforgettable experience. Virk is also a co-founder of Calypso, an event organized by young adults passionate about music, supporting women who have been diagnosed with breast or gynaecological cancer, in hopes of brightening their path throughout life.

"My co-founder and I wanted to create an event that inspired the city of Mumbai. The two of us were heavily in tune with our love for music, and we wanted to share that with like-minded individuals. Our youth are incredibly talented and showcase that talent and genuine love for music through Calypso. I'm happy to bring this passion for young people creating art that gives back to the MAZE brand", says Virk.

Vala's contributions to the community continues as the executive director and co-founder of BOLT Safety Society (a federally registered not-for-profit organization) who launched several programs one of which is "Safe Hubs". Partnering with local businesses they provide safe places where victims of domestic violence can seek temporary refuge. Together they are trying to end violence, harassment, and abuse in communities through their digital platform.

Vala will be heading to New York as a representative of BOLT Safety to discuss the important role technology faces in improving women's safety.

"This year, I will be representing BOLT Safety at the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN headquarters in New York to be part of a global conversation on the role of technology in improving women's safety.

For more information about MAZE Jewelry, visit mazybyvala.square.site

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Vedanshi Vala, founder of MAZE Jewelry and co-founder of BOLT Safety.

Photo courtesy Lal Cora

Canadian actor builds list of film and TV credits

By JIM GORDON & LEETA LIEPINS
Contributors

Born in Winnipeg, Canadian actor Aleks Paunovic is also a producer, and a writer, with three decades of work in film and television. Coming from a family of boxers, Aleks himself became a former champion boxer until a shoulder injury ended this career. While playing in a rock band, Aleks auditioned for a role in a TV movie. He got the role, and turned his boxing athleticism into a stunt acting career and the rest is history. In 2001, he stopped in Vancouver on his way to Los Angeles when 9.11 happened and entry into the US changed, so Aleks made Vancouver his home. He built an amazing career as an actor adding writing for film and television to his list of credentials.

You may have seen him over the past few years in the popular television series *Arctic Air*, *Van Helsing*, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, *Snowpiercer*, and most recently in the Marvel television miniseries, *Hawkeye*. He has an extensive list of film credits as well including *Freaks*, *War for the Planet of the Apes*, and *Zero Contact* starring alongside Anthony Hopkins.

Our City Tonight has interviewed Aleks on more than one occasion and sat down with him to catch up on his latest projects.

OCT: The last time we had you join us was just before the pandemic started. You have been working steadily despite these challenges. Let's jump right into your most recent television series called GenZeroes, tell us all about this unique project.

AP: *GenZeroes* is a project that I am executive producing and starring in. I am working with some amazing Vancouver talent. We have some great people involved, House of Kibaa, a tech company, is producing the project. I am very excited to be part of this and not only the live-action part of it, but the comic book version of it as well.

OCT: As we understand it, this is a Sci-Fi chronicle that takes place 200 years after earth is basically destroyed in 2022, the plundering aliens have left, and the survivors have formed ten separate factions that now compete for control of the planet.

AP: We did not want to create the typical post-apocalyptic story where everything's dirty and



Aleks Paunovic, Canadian actor, writer, and producer.

Photo courtesy Ben Cope

people are just trying to survive. We created the scenario that reflected 200 years into the future when the aliens are not even part of the storyline. The earth is kind of thriving and the question remains as to whether the aliens are coming back or not. My character Bishop, and amazing actress Nicole Muniz, who plays my daughter on the show, follows the different factions and is the new way of living. Matt Venables and Jeremy Smith, from *Van Helsing*, are producing it and are the showrunners. They also wrote the series.

OCT: Your last movie, Zero Contact, had you travelling all over the world even during the pandemic and amidst the lockdown. That must have been quite the experience. We know you must have lots on your plate because you're always travelling and working. What are your big plans for the rest of 2023.

AP: Yes, I have lots of big plans for the year! We shot *Zero Contact*, starring Anthony Hopkins, and that was an amazing experience. It was the first feature film shot as an NFT with producer Rick Dugdale, and Enderby Production. Lionsgate picked it up as a feature. This was exciting for us because on top of that, it fueled the idea for doing a second and third film in the series. Last December, we started in Antarctica, which is so incredible. No Hollywood scripted feature has ever been shot in

the Antarctic.

OCT: Sounds like that must have been extremely challenging to get there?

AP: Yes, getting there was really tough. We had to fly from Chile to Antarctica where there were no airports, the planes literally landed right on the ice, and we were all staying in tents. It was truly a remarkable experience to be a part of that and we continue it in 2023 as we shoot the second and third in this series. In fact, we will again be shooting all over the world.

OCT: It is great that you are filming the live-action GenZeroes series in Vancouver and further able to support local talent in all areas.

AP: I love the idea that we can keep it here and what is really exciting to me is that a lot of people have taken notice plus some very big production companies have also taken notice. As a result, we are close to partnering with someone else to either go the television route or the feature film franchise route. I also love that we can offer our friends jobs on the show.

Check out and follow Aleks Paunovic on his social media platforms to find out what he is doing next. You can also go to genzeroes.com to experience the *GenZeroes* universe.

The interview video can be seen on richmond-sentinel.ca/videos



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OUR CITY TONIGHT

Film explores decisions and consequences

By **SAMUEL CHENG**
Reporter

The Family Man, directed by Brett Ratner, explores what happens when people make difficult irreversible decisions that may have long-lasting effects.

The film starts out focussing on a successful Wall Street executive who wakes up on Christmas morning finding himself in bed next to his ex-girlfriend, 13 years after they had broken up. The film stars Nicolas Cage as Jack Campbell and Téa Leoni as Kate Reynolds.

In Jack's new life, he's married to his ex-girlfriend and he has two kids, Annie and Josh. Worst of all, he is now a tire salesman in a small, rural town. Having to face drastic changes in such a short amount of time, Jack finds himself re-learning and re-engaging in something he didn't care much about before; love.

Initially, Jack tries to retrace and find his way back to New York City without any luck—the people he knew no longer recognize him. Jack hates the middle-class and impoverished life he has been forced into. He had become accustomed to the lavish lifestyle of living on the top floor of an expensive New York City apartment building and signing off on multi-million-dollar contracts.

After a couple of months, Jack is beginning to settle into his new routine of kissing his wife on the cheek every morning before leaving for work, dropping off and picking up his kids from school, and shopping for groceries, but just as he is getting comfortable, Jack realizes the changes are impermanent and he will return to his old lifestyle of tailored suits, cocktails, and Ferraris in no time.

Ironically, Jack no longer wants to go back to his old luxurious life because his new life taught him the true meaning of love, appreciation, and gratitude.

The Family Man teaches that although money is an important necessity in life, it should only be valued so much. Money should not replace the important human elements of life like love, joy, serenity, and other positive emotions are just as important.

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Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons

Nicolas Cage at the 66th Venice International Film Festival.

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