



*Merry Christmas and
Happy Holidays!*



A MESSAGE from your MLA



TERESA WAT
MLA | RICHMOND NORTH CENTRE
604-775-0754
Teresa.Wat.MLA@leg.bc.ca

The holiday season is often a time of reflection for many of us. As MLAs wrap up the fall legislative session in Victoria and return to their respective ridings to continue their work, I am reflecting on the year we had with a mix of sadness and hope.

I am honoured to continue to serve as the Official Opposition Critic for Tourism, Arts, and Culture as well as the Opposition Critic for Multiculturalism, helping to hold government to account on its commitment to make progress on reconciliation, address the horrific rise in anti-Asian racism and hate crimes, and build a more inclusive British Columbia for all regardless of culture, ethnicity, or personal identity.

I am incredibly proud of the work that my colleagues and I have done and continue to do. We are inspired daily by British Columbians who truly help drive positive change in our province. On Wednesday, November 24, I had the honour of joining my colleagues in the Official Opposition and hundreds of parents, families, and autism advocates to call on the B.C. government to reverse its planned changes to its funding and service delivery model. The move to a 'hub' model would strip away individual funding from neurodiverse children and families, and we are asking for a reversal of this decision.

2021 hasn't been the year of recovery many of us were hoping for. Between COVID, the summer heat dome and wildfires, and now the devastating floods brought on by atmospheric rivers, thousands of British Columbians across the province have seen their entire lives uprooted.

As many of our communities begin the long and arduous recovery process, my thanks go out to the thousands of British Columbians who have gone above and beyond to support those in need. They include our gurdwaras and cultural centres cooking thousands of meals for families; the many organizations who offered helicopters, boats, trucks, and anything they had to help get goods into our communities and get people to safety; and our many community leaders, emergency responders, and local heroes who have worked tirelessly to save and support our fellow British Columbians.

This holiday season, I will keep these local heroes in mind and do my part to carry forward the spirit of community, selflessness, and kindness that so many have shown.

So from my family to yours, I wish you all a very happy holiday season,

Teresa Wat



Bringing greetings to the 20th Annual Winter Wonderland, hosted by Rotary Club of Richmond Sunset.



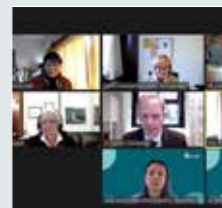
Visiting the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet near YVR for their holiday celebrations.



Participating in the 2021 Richmond RCMP Toy Drive, in support of the Richmond Christmas Fund.



Joining cleanup efforts with the Canadian Ismaili Muslim community at Minoru Park.



Meeting with Autism BC on funding cuts and disruption.

Youngs keep Christmas close at hand

Surrounded by friends and family, the holiday season is a time for sharing for running club founders

By **DON FENNELL**
 @rmdsentinel

John and Joan Young epitomize the term young at heart. And their plans for the Christmas holiday season reflects that.

The founders of the Forever Young running club, the couple keep active throughout the year dedicating themselves to being the best they can be. And in doing so, they enthusiastically extend a welcoming and helping hand to the community at large.

Such a positive and inspiring mindset all starts at home, and the Youngs' Christmas tradition reflects that as their house is decorated and trimmed with love. The exterior features plenty of colourful lights, while inside a big tree in the living room shines through the front window for Santa to see.

"The Young family always celebrates Christmas morning opening presents under the tree, when our middle-aged children and our grandchildren arrive from their homes nearby," John explains. "Nothing is more delightful and fun than watching our grandkids rip open their presents with shrieks of glee. This is usually followed by a waffle brunch which easily tides us over (until) the highlight of the day—Joan's delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings. At the table we snap open Christmas crackers and wear silly paper hats, while we pass around the platters of deliciousness. With an extra table extending into the living room, we have up to 16 family (members) and friends around our big dining room table. For the 48 years we have been married, we have celebrated this way."

Of course, John stresses, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Christmas cookies. For the past several years, Joan sets aside a cookie-making day with the couple's daughter and daughters-in-law. The afternoon sees the kitchen transformed into a cookie-making factory, with four "mission-focused" ladies making delicious and attractive Christmas



Photo submitted

Forever Young running club founders John and Joan Young look forward each year to celebrating the Christmas holidays with family and friends. And, as always, giving back through the club to the Richmond Food Bank remains a priority.

delights. Even their six-year-old granddaughter is recruited to carefully place the Smarties on top.

The month of December, in general, is special to the Youngs who make the most of it to share precious time with family and friends.

"We have about 27 families on Barkerville Court and each December Joan and I host a Christmas tea at our home," John says. "Many of our guests are amazed that we have a wood-burning fireplace, and are eager to take selfies in front of the fire."

The tea also allows for the introduction of newcomers to the close-knit street, with many making impromptu speeches expressing how welcome they feel in the neighbourhood.

"This is a great time to bring out our rarely-used English tea cups inherited from past generations," John adds.

Then, of course, there is the Forever Young Club, and a big year-end luncheon at the Richmond Curling Club which traditionally attracts over 100 members.

"Of course, we schedule the banquet on one of our walk/run days, holding it an hour or so later," John says. "Exercise first, coffee and fun second."

During the banquet, the Youngs look forward to

presenting a large-sized cheque to the Dream-On Foundation charity from the proceeds of the club's not-for-profit Forever Young 8K held each September.

And, not to be overlooked, is the singing by all—led by members who sing in choirs.

"We pass our carol sheets and all join in," says John, noting many members do not celebrate Christmas but sing along with joyous abandon.

Unfortunately, for the past two years COVID has put a halt to the celebration. But recognizing need pauses for no one, the club continue to raise needed dollars for the Richmond Food Bank. Last year, club members donated \$3,790.

Finally, this year John and Joan, along with good friends, have decided to take a short stay-cation in Vancouver; booking an upscale hotel downtown for two nights. They also plan to splurge at a fancy restaurant for dinner, before attending the fabulous Tenors Christmas Concert at the Orpheum Theatre. They've also booked the Michelangelo presentation at Canada Place to cap off a relaxing and refreshing break from their regular Richmond routine.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Kids' art reminds drivers to plan safe ride home

By **DON FENNELL**
 @rmdsentinel

Tomekichi Homma Elementary School students have a message for drivers: plan a safe ride home this Christmas season.

The students' message is being shared on brown bags, which are being distributed to customers at the BC Liquor Store at Ironwood Plaza.

The project, which began Dec. 16, is a joint venture with ICBC, Richmond RCMP, and the BC Liquor Store at Ironwood, intent on emphasizing the importance of planning ahead for a safe ride home if planning to consume alcohol.

Every year, on average, 65 people are killed in crashes involving impaired driving and over 1,700 are injured.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

'Home for the Holidays' resonates with locals

Richmondites share holiday plans, while hoping for prosperous and healthy new year ahead

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

Recently updated by local crooner Michael Bublé, Bing Crosby's "I'll Be Home for Christmas" is a timeless holiday classic that never wears out its welcome. And its message is still as relevant today as it was when it was released in 1943.

That's certainly true for many Richmond families, who are rejoicing at the blessing of being able to gather once more to celebrate the holidays together.

"We are lucky that our older two kids are coming home from StFX (St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia) for the break," says educator Chris Kennedy. "We are excited that we can go back to some of our family traditions this year. Since our kids were young we would go with friends to Van-Dusen Gardens and on the Stanley Park Train in the days before Christmas. And on New Year's Day we always do a family 5K run. It is the only few days of the year we don't have organized sports, so it is nice to have family time without our usual commitments."

Jody Cranston, a renowned Richmond stone and weight thrower, is looking forward to another very busy holiday season with his family.

"My beautiful wife Grace is a Christmas fanatic and has had our home decorated for the holidays since early November," he explains. "And my 14-year-old daughter Taila will get two weeks off from school but she might be busy over the Christmas break with her acting. Taila is also really into working out so we will hit the gym a few extra times in December."

In contrast, local nurse Victoria Groff says COVID will unfortunately kibosh—for the second straight year—the family's annual Christmas long weekend gathering in 97 Mile House.

"It's a crazy weekend with 16 of us in one big house, and involves skating on the frozen lake, competitive charades, and special moments be-



The Kennedy clan is looking forward to reuniting in Richmond this Christmas. *File photo*

tween family members," she explains. "I'm hoping instead we are still able to have a small dinner with my extended family that live in town, and Zoom hang with family out of town. It won't be the same, but I'm thankful I can see some of them."

Recreation leader Jared Hulme and his wife plan to spend a few days in Prince George post-Christmas with his mom—enabling her to meet her grandson Jaxton for the first time.

The trip will be Jaxton's first plane ride, and Jared also looks forward to catching up with some old high school basketball teammates now residing in Northern B.C.

"Jax will see what a real snowfall looks like, we'll go sledding and snowshoeing and enjoy other winter stuff like outdoor ice skating," Jared says. "Being a new dad has been a whirlwind but very special at the same time because I grew up without a father. I get to do all the things I dreamt of wanting as a boy with my son. I race home every day. I can't wait for Christmas morning to see Jax open gifts and run around all jacked up from his new toys."

The Hulmes will also mark this Christmas with

other traditions, including attending a service on Christmas Eve and enjoying a small, intimate family dinner on Christmas Day.

"Like everyone, we are trying to be safe and do our part but still make the best of things," Jared says.

Richmond School Board chair Sandra Nixon and her family also hope to be able to resume some holiday traditions this year, including attending the pantomime at Metro Theatre and catching a glimpse of the Christmas tree at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery. Otherwise, she says the holiday will be low-key featuring a small dinner on Christmas Day with close family.

"I am very grateful to be able to do this, as last year I wasn't able to see my mom or sisters over the holidays," she says.

As for ringing in the new year, Nixon says, "With the kids still at home, we're happy to have another opportunity to make fondue and play board games together as a family. And enjoy a New Year's Day walk at Garry Point."

dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

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Advertising & Sponsorship
marketing@richmondsentinel.ca
778-325-1297

Newsroom
newsroom@richmondsentinel.ca
778-297-5005

Editor - Don Fennell
dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca



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Canadians advised to avoid holiday travel

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The federal government issued an advisory last week, strongly suggesting Canadians avoid non-essential international travel due to the Omicron variant of concern.

The sudden imposition of control measures, including possible lockdowns, is cited as a reason for the recommendation. People may have difficulty returning to Canada, or may not be able to access health care if they become ill.

For those who are travelling there are more considerations to keep in mind than a pre-pandemic holiday season.

Vancouver International Airport (often called by its three-letter airport code, YVR) is currently seeing just over 30,000 travellers per day. Typically there would be 75,000 to 80,000 travellers per day at this time of year according to Robyn McVicker, the airport's vice-president of passenger journey.

McVicker adds there are about 3,000 to 5,000 international arrivals per day, versus the 10,000 to 15,000 that would be typical. The market at YVR is usually 50 per cent domestic, 25 per cent international and 25 per cent U.S.A.

Those who are travelling should make sure they know the entry requirements for their destination, given the slew of constant changes. For instance, those heading south to the U.S.A. need a negative COVID-19 test within 24 hours of departure, although a rapid antigen test is acceptable in this case.



Photo courtesy YVR, pre-COVID pandemic

While more people are travelling this holiday season than last year, the federal government recently advised against international travel.

Then, once people arrive home in Canada, they must fill out the ArriveCAN app within 72 hours of their return.

Some international passengers (coming from destinations other than the U.S.A.) are selected at random for arrival testing. The federal government is increasing the number of travellers who will be tested, with the goal of reaching 100 per cent, according to its website.

The transition last month to requiring full vaccination for all travellers aged 12-plus was very smooth, according to McVicker.

"I really applaud the airlines for being ready to manage this. They've had to work some pretty significant magic pretty quickly in order to make sure they can verify everybody before they get on a flight," she adds.

And there are always backup plans in place in case of flight cancellations due to inclement weather or COVID-19.

"I think airlines are always prepared for that," McVicker notes. "We have had to adjust the operation over and over (through) the last few months."

As of Nov. 16, the B.C. Centre for Disease Control is no longer posting notifications for COVID-19 exposures on airplanes. But McVicker says this won't have any impact on airport operations.

For the most recent information on travel rules and restrictions, check YVR's website: www.yvr.ca/en/passengers and the federal government site: travel.gc.ca/travel-covid

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

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Decades-old holiday display unveiled again

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

For nearly 40 years, the Woodman family has been bringing holiday cheer to Garry Street.

"My family started doing the display in the early 1980s," says Jen Woodman of their home, known as "The Ho Ho Ho House." "My grandfather was a skilled woodworker, and he and my dad started building it together with a love for Christmas."

The elaborate decorations began with a snowman family, reindeer and a "HOHOHO" sign on the roof of a bungalow. The house was re-built in the 1990s, but the new roof was too steep for the reindeer, so they moved to the ground.

"Now, my brother is the lead on putting up the display with my dad, and thankfully friends also go by and help," says Woodman. "The display takes over a month to put up for one or two people. Thankfully with helping hands this can get done on weekends, a few random days off from work during the weeks leading up, and then a big push at the end."

Following some weather-related delays, this year's display was unveiled in early December. Along with the lights and decorations, for the last few years there has also been a donation box for Wigs for Kids B.C.

"We chose Wigs for Kids because my mom and I are actively involved in it," says Woodman. "It was started in Steveston by a group of ladies that we know, and 100 per cent of everything that is (given)—including volunteers' time—is donated."



Photo by Hannah Scott

Known as "The Ho Ho Ho House," this home on Garry Street has been decorated in elaborate fashion since the early 1980s.

Although the display is hard work to set up each year, and sometimes leads to electrical shocks, Woodman says it's an amazing feeling to be able to spread holiday cheer to locals, especially during the pandemic.

When asked what motivates her family to keep decorating year after year, Woodman says it's the joy it brings to people, the smiles, and the thanks.

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Richmondites buying local this holiday season

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmondites are exercising their generosity this year when it comes to buying gifts for loved ones. And in doing so, they're also helping to support local businesses that have felt the pandemic's impacts.

At A Monkey Tree Emporium in Steveston, a staff representative confirms there have been more customers than last year and people are spending about 10 to 15 per cent more.

And at Splash Toy Shop across the road, owner Beth McKercher says people are spending less time browsing, instead coming into the store with a purpose or shopping online wherever possible.

"I think people are missing that in-person Christmas experience, and they want to make sure it's an extra special year," she says.

"We're selling a lot more European toys, a lot more educational and quality STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) toys that

are really going to make the kids think and be creative."

At Lansdowne Centre, popular items include home decor, electronics—particularly mobile devices—and toys. Marketing manager Bronwyn Bailey says there's also been a return to dining out at the mall's full-service restaurants. In all, she says 2021 numbers are up by about 30 per cent over 2019, perhaps due to the mall's mix of tenants which include many essential services.

"I'm really pleased to see people coming back and supporting local retailers," says Bailey. "One insight that I've found really interesting is that people are so aware of the (global) supply chain issues that shoppers are buying off the shelf more than I would have expected with online shopping and everybody being much more comfortable with e-commerce. People are not wanting to order online and take the risk of delivery times, they're coming in and actually buying in-stock merchandise from brick and mortar retailers."

Shopping trends are following suit at McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Vancouver Airport, with a 25 per cent improvement in visitors to put the number on par with 2019 levels, according to McArthurGlen Group marketing manager Ally Day.

However, not all stores are experiencing more traffic. A staff representative at Michael Hill jewellery store, located in Richmond Centre, says customer traffic this year is lower than last year.

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Police offer holiday home security tips

Every year the holiday season brings increased property crime, and Richmond RCMP is reminding the public of steps that can be taken to help prevent your home from being a target for thieves.

"Most people know not to leave items in their vehicles while they shop, but thieves also target homes and vehicles in residential areas this time of year," says Cpl. Ian Henderson. "Still, there are some things you can do to make life more difficult for thieves in the days before Christmas. One is a nightly check before settling in for your long winter's nap."

Each night until Christmas, police will be tweeting out reminders to residents to do a #9PMcheck. Common things you should check include:

- Vehicle doors locked, tools and valuables removed or hidden from sight
- Garage door opener and house keys removed from vehicle
- Garage door closed and light off
- Inside door from garage to home locked
- Bicycles locked and out of sight
- Motion lights on and working
- Yard gates closed
- Yard shed locked
- Front step, mail and packages taken inside
- Front door locked (no key left in door) and front



Photo via bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Richmond RCMP are reminding people to be extra vigilant this Christmas season.

light on

- Back door locked and back light on
- Windows closed and locked
- Blinds and curtains closed
- Valuables and keys secured
- Surveillance system on and recording
- Alarm activated

"It's important for people to remember—thieves are opportunists," says Henderson. "They're looking in windows and checking out doors. Why would they buy things when they can take yours?"

Between 2019 and 2020, Richmond RCMP saw a

17 per cent drop in residential break and enters, a portion of which the RCMP says can likely be attributed to COVID-19 travel restrictions. With fewer restrictions and travel on the rise this holiday season, Richmond RCMP want to remind people of proactive measures they can take to help prevent their home from being targeted.

"Anything we can do to prevent a crime from occurring is a win for public safety which is why providing these tips is important. In addition to education, my team reviews all of the break and enters to identify trends or matching modus operandi," says Sgt. Simon Lee.

Tips to help keep your home secure include:

- Do not keep ladders or tools on the outside of your home. If something can be used to gain entry into your home, keep it locked up and out of sight.
 - While on vacation, arrange for someone to shovel/mow the lawn and park in your driveway. It's ideal to have someone you trust house-sit for you so your home is still lived in while you are away. If this is not possible, make sure your home looks lived in.
 - Use timers on indoor lights and tamper-proof, motion sensor lights around the perimeter of your home. Lighting is the most effective crime prevention tool since criminals do not want to be seen.
- For more tips on home security, visit the BC RCMP website.

MERRY CHRISTMAS &
Happy Holidays

PARM BAINS
Member of Parliament
STEVESTON - RICHMOND EAST
Parm.Bains@parl.gc.ca

WILSON MIAO
Member of Parliament
RICHMOND CENTRE
Wilson.Miao@parl.gc.ca

Christmas Fund online auction tops last year's total

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

After over 1,000 bids from 200-plus bidders, this year's Richmond Christmas Fund online auction has raised \$46,611. Last year the auction raised \$35,775.

While this year's total was a record for the online format, that setting doesn't generate the same level of excitement—and possible bidding wars—as the usual in-person event, according to Ed Gavsie, president of Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (which annually operates the fund). But with pandemic-related restrictions continuing the decision was made in September to go ahead with a second online auction.

The most popular items this year were restaurant gift certificates, all of which went for full face value or very close to it. A \$100 credit for Steveston's Little Mexico Cantina actually went for 10 per cent above face value, Gavsie adds. The highest single-value bid was \$6,000 for a "Live Like a Billionaire" package, including a lavish stay at the city's new Versante Hotel.

As they do every year, Richmond community members stepped up to help make Christmas a little happier for their neighbours. With the exception of a small B.C. gaming grant, all the other donations are purely a result of selfless giving.

"There's been no reluctance on behalf of the Richmond community to support those people in need," Gavsie says. "That's why we use the cutline in the logo: 'Community is like family.' I think it's very apropos for the Christmas Fund program."

And local businesses also stepped up. Summit Customs Brokers joined with Manitoulin Transport to make a \$10,000 donation, as well as sponsoring the dunk tank where Richmond RCMP Chief Superintendent Will Ng took the plunge late last month. The seventh annual RCMP toy drive more than doubled previous years' cash donation totals, in addition to filling a cube van with about 1.5 tonnes of toys.

Herband, Platinum Pro-Claim, TD Bank and



Photo courtesy Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives

This year's Richmond Christmas Fund auction raised \$46,611.

the Richmond Auto Mall are among this year's "Angel Donors," giving \$10,000 or more apiece. Other donors include Sage, which contributed \$8,500 as well as sports equipment and staff time; and the Steveston Merchants Association, which along with community member Doug Harder raised a record \$1,665 at the Christmas Classic Car Cruise.

The annual fund is supported by a team of vital volunteers who help with registration, prepare packages for families, set up and take down the toy room, and transport toys—among many other tasks. The volunteer group includes high school students who help sort toy donations after school.

In all, over 2,300 people were helped this year, with the final total forthcoming. Among the many programs offered by Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives, Gavsie finds the Christmas Fund the most satisfying.

"When we do the distributions, I get to see the parents and get the thanks. It's more than just thanks—it's total gratitude from people who are saying 'Without this program my kids wouldn't be getting toys,' or 'Without this Christmas Fund my family couldn't afford to put together a nice Christmas meal.' That gives me great satisfaction, to be able to provide help for all the people who need help in our community."

This year's Christmas Fund also marks the last for chair Wayne Duzita, who leaves his post after 15 years. Longtime MLA and seasoned community leader Linda Reid will take over next year, when Gavsie hopes the team can return to its usual in-person registration and distribution process. The Christmas Fund will also celebrate 90 years of giving in 2022.

•hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

Free transit returns for New Year's Eve

TransLink is bringing back its tradition of helping customers get a safe ride home by offering customers free transit on New Year's Eve, from 5 p.m. on Dec. 31 until 5 a.m. on Jan. 1.

Fare gates will remain open between these hours, and customers are advised not to tap Compass Cards or any other payment methods. Customers who begin trips prior to 5 p.m. should tap out, as per normal tapping procedures, to ensure they're charged the correct fare.

"Offering a free and safe method of transportation on New Year's Eve has been a long-standing tradition at TransLink," says TransLink CEO Kevin Quinn. "While restrictions prevented us from offering this last year, we are excited to bring this tradition back and encourage all those celebrating 2022 to choose transit for a safe ride home."

Highlights:

- Buses will run on a regular weekday schedule with some routes running additional evening and late-night service after their normal schedules.
- NightBus will continue to operate round-the-clock service on several routes.
- SkyTrain will operate on regular weekday service.
- SeaBus will be running regular weekday service. Last sailing from North Shore will be at 1:00 a.m. and from Waterfront will be at 1:22 a.m. with extended 15-minute service until 1 a.m.

Additional SkyTrain staff, Transit Police and Transit Security officers will be on the system to direct and assist customers.

Richmond keeps tax increase to 3.86 per cent

By DON FENNEL
@rmdsentinel

Forget that large latte this month. Or at least consider cutting back. It may be good for your health, and you can put that \$5 you'll pocket towards covering next year's property tax increase.

In Richmond, the average household can anticipate shelling out another \$69 to cover a proposed operating budget that will limit property taxes to a 3.86 per cent increase. The additional funds will help cover a number of items, including the rising costs of police services.

An increase in RCMP wages imposed through a federal agreement is responsible for much of the increase in policing costs. While the final bill is still being tallied, preliminary estimates from the RCMP is an additional cost to Richmond of about \$7 million. Council chose to limit that impact through a three-year phase-in plan to reduce the immediate cost to taxpayers.

The proposed operating budget also includes funding for operating a developer-fund-



Photo by Jaana Björk

Council has chosen to limit the impact of increased policing costs through a three-year phase-in plan.

ed childcare facility, as well as several capital infrastructure projects such as the Steveston Museum and Richmond Curling Club.

Richmond City Council has also approved a capital budget of \$107.8 million. That includes \$12.2 million for drainage and dike upgrades to enhance the city's flood protection infrastructure. Other capital projects include several infrastructure improvements to the city cycling

network, Richmond Nature Park, South Arm Community Centre, Richmond Ice Centre, and Watermania.

In accordance with the community charter, the city is undertaking a process of public consultation on the proposed consolidated five-year financial plan (2022-2026) via Let'sTalkRichmond.ca through Jan. 9.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

City recognized for environmental efforts

Richmond has received two environmental awards from the Environmental Managers' Association (EMA) of BC.

The corporate hazardous materials management training was recognized in the regulatory challenge category, and the Mitchell Island stewardship initiative in the discharge control category at the organization's 2021 Environmental Awards Gala.

The EMA of BC is a non-profit organization consisting of a group of sector specialists. The organization assists businesses conducting environmental work to effectively anticipate and respond to environmental issues.

"Council has a long history of excellence when it comes to the protection of our environment," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "Having the Environmental Managers' Association of BC recognize the City of Richmond as industry leaders is a testament to our commitment to ongoing advancements in this area".

The corporate hazardous materials management training program was established in 2019 to centralize the management of all hazardous materials information through customized staff training and data management. The award recognizes Richmond's efforts in training over 250 staff since 2019 and improving hazardous materials data management systems on a web-based collaborative platform, fully customized by staff to centralize management of all hazardous materials information.

The city's Mitchell Island environmental stewardship initiative, endorsed by council in April 2019, aims to improve local storm water quality and improve compliance through business outreach and senior regulatory engagement.



Photo courtesy City of Richmond

The Mitchell Island environmental stewardship initiative works with local businesses to improve the quality of storm water discharging from the industrial community to the Fraser River ecosystem.

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File photo

Olympic race walker Evan Dunfee will be seeking a seat on Richmond city council next year.

Dunfee confirms run for city council in 2022

By DON FENNELL
 @rmdsentinel

Evan Dunfee has confirmed his plans to seek a seat on Richmond city council next fall—20 years after his dad did likewise.

Don Dunfee was a candidate in the 2002 municipal election, and while Evan says he didn't pay much attention to his dad's political ramblings as a youth, it's likely that helped plant the seeds for his own eventual bid.

"I was pretty politically adverse growing up," Evan says. "I had the privilege of not having to pay attention because I didn't feel anything tangibly affected me. So when my dad talked politics I kind of tuned him out."

But as his sporting career progressed, and his profile rose with increased success at the international level, Evan's interest and appreciation for politics did likewise.

"For the last number of years I was privileged to speak for athletes while fighting for what I believe in," says Evan, whose bronze medal performance in the men's race walk event was one of the most inspiring at last summer's Olympic Games. "A lot of that (experience) helped edge me toward this direction."

Evan, who has been a tireless spokesperson for KidSport and ensuring every child has the opportunity to participate in sports, says while walking around the city during his daily training sessions he has developed a particular interest and passion for his community.

"I begin to question why this is here or what could be done better, and envisioning what Richmond could or should look like for the next generation," he explains. "I really believe Richmond is doing a lot right, but there's still a lot of room for improvement. But I also think Richmond could be a city to be envied throughout North America. Status quo is so hard to uproot, but we can't rest on that. We need to get the boulder to move toward change and see the benefits of it."

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Stay and play in Richmond this winter break

Are you looking for something fun and different to do during the winter break? The City of Richmond and its partners have organized something for everyone with plenty of fun, local activities to do during the two-week school break from Dec. 18 to Jan. 3.

Some close-to-home, active options to get you and your family holiday-ready include:

- Getting into the festive mood by taking in light displays throughout Steveston Village, City Hall Plaza, Britannia Shipyards and other areas of the city.

- Experiencing the perfect place for a holiday skate at Winter Wonderland at Minoru Arenas. Set under a canopy of twinkly lights with festive music and an impressive centre-ice display, bring your family and friends to this annual winter time activity.

- Dropping-in to one of nine fitness centres for an energizing workout.

- Making a splash indoors (instead of outside in the wet weather) by taking the family for a swim at the ever popular Watermania or Richmond's state-of-the-art pool experience at Minoru Centre for Active Living. Whether it's swimming laps before an indulgent meal, splashing with the kids or challenging yourself on the Wibit obstacle course, a family swim is always a great idea.

- Taking a self-guided historical walking tour at Terra Nova and Brighthouse Parks. Experience some of Richmond's beautiful outdoors and re-energize your body and mind while walking the trails.

- Visiting the city's website at www.richmond.ca/winterbreak to check out the great variety of single day programs, workshops and drop-in opportunities.

All activities meet strict health and safety guidelines as set out by local and provincial health authorities.

Winter daycamps may still have spaces to keep kids active and social during the school break. Find all the details and how to register online at www.richmond.ca/winterbreak



Photo by Hannah Scott

There are things to do all over the city this winter break.

Boyd bands together for winter concert

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

The old gym at Hugh Boyd secondary rang out with the sounds of the season recently.

At the first in-person winter concert in almost two years, students were able to showcase their musical talents through performances by the likes of the Grade 8 band, senior jazz band, senior concert band, and the guitar ensemble.

"Having the opportunity to perform is hugely important for young musicians," says Boyd music teacher Kristian Naso. "A concert is something to work toward, something to look forward to. Not having the opportunity to publicly perform music is akin to athletes only practicing and never playing a real game."

While the student musicians have been able to meet and rehearse during the pandemic, they've had to strictly adhere to safety guidelines including maintaining at least a two metre distance and wearing masks at all times. It's also meant using bell covers where possible and using a "whole lot of hand sanitizer."

"Last year, we needed to put rehearsals on hold during times of increased COVID cases, since ensembles were made up of a mix of learning co-



Photo submitted

Hugh Boyd hosted its first in-person winter concert in almost two years on Dec. 15 featuring performances by various student groups, including the jazz band.

orts," Naso explains. "But we were able to share our music with the school community via audio and video. As a result, we learned a lot about the recording process."

Performing in concert provides young musicians with even more insights, including the enormous responsibility each has to their peers. And, says Naso, "This is a lesson in responsible citizenship, a character trait that young musicians will apply in many other contexts throughout their lives."

"The thrill of performance can really 'hook' a young musician into a lifelong pursuit of their musical potential," Naso continues. "Also, learning to overcome the nervousness of performing for a live audience is a very important part of the process. Participation in live performances allows young musicians to experience being in the spotlight and helps them develop a sense of self-confidence while being supported by their bandmates. Music is made to be shared and heard by others."

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Cambie's Sock Wars reach less fortunate

By DON FENNELL
@rmdsentinel

Who hasn't received a pair of socks for Christmas? But while many may take the gift for granted, *Sock Wars* aims to show how important a seemingly simple pair of socks can be to those less fortunate.

During the Christmas holiday season, students at Cambie Secondary School are building on what was originally a fundraising event to gather new socks and underwear for the homeless that entered the emergency wards at St. Paul's and Vancouver General hospitals as well as Covenant House for youth.

The concept originated in 2010 when advanced life support paramedic Jeff Watts, who was working with student First Responder teams and the Health Science 12 program at Cambie and other Richmond schools, initiated *Sock Wars*. He'd seen first-hand the plight of the homeless—sockless or, among the more fortunate, socks full of holes.

In a friendly competition, students rallied to ensure that some of society's most vulnerable people didn't go without such a basic need, explains June Sanders, who teaches the Humanities 8 class at Cambie.

"We were able to provide emergency wards with enough socks to take them through a whole year, and then some."



Photo by Athina Nourali

Through Sock Wars Cambie secondary students are ensuring more than 450 children less fortunate are provided with a pair of new socks every Christmas season.

But while the inter-school competition eventually ceased, Cambie has continued the endeavour with grassroots organizations. A staff member led to a current partnership with KidSafe, a program for more than 450 vulnerable inner-city children, mainly elementary aged.

Like the adults, many of these children would come to school without socks or socks full of holes. But through their efforts, Cambie's *Sock Wars* initiative has been able to commit 450 pairs of new youth-sized socks each year.

Cambie's efforts also extend to assist Youth Unlimited's Street Life Outreach Program on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, as well as several other communities in Greater Vancouver including Richmond. The outreach program provides a

safe space for marginalized young people, many of whom are street-entrenched and/or participating in high-risk, street-level activities.

Now firmly solidified as a tradition at Cambie, classes compete to collect the most donations during a two-week fundraiser that kicks off with "Crazy Sock Day."

"The last few years, the fundraiser has been organized by our Pathways program, with Grade 10 students taking the lead," notes teacher Stephanie Paukov.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca

Locals win big in lottery games

One went "wild," and the other's daughter thought someone had died.

Those were the contrasting reactions to a pair of recent lottery wins by Richmond residents.

It was a turn in the right direction for James Gordon-Carmichael that netted him \$202,038.20 thanks to an unexpected pull over to purchase a Lot-6/49 ticket.

He was driving down Vancouver's Thurlow Street when he spotted a Martway corner store to his left and decided to stop and buy a Lotto 6/49 ticket. It ended up matching five of the six numbers, plus the bonus number, in the Nov. 10 draw.

"I was at my house and I scanned it with my phone," said Gordon-Carmichael, who immediately called one of his daughters after realizing his big win. "I was crying and laughing all at once. She thought someone passed away. It was



Richmondites James Gordon-Carmichael (above left) and Glenn Allen were big winners in recent lotteries.



Photos courtesy BC Lottery Corporation

a crazy conversation."

Glenn Allen, meanwhile, was at home when he found out he'd won \$100,000 on a Set for Life scratch and win.

"My first thought was 'wow, this is good.' So wild," Allen said.

Allen purchased his ticket from the 7-Eleven on 72 Avenue in Surrey and first shared the good news with his son.

"I called him the day after I found out and he was so excited," said Allen, who added that his favourite lottery game is Set for Life.

He plans to share some of the prize with his son and will also put some towards purchasing new parts for his Mustang. He'll save the remainder for his future.

"I am retiring in February so it's nice to know that I will have some extra money to put away to make retirement a little more comfortable," Allen added.

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Runners ready for Steveston Icebreaker

By **DON FENNELL**
@rmdsentinel

Flat, fast and scenic, a stretch along Richmond's beautiful waterfront offers the perfect tonic for the new year.

After a year's hiatus, the community's only road race returns Jan. 16 to the spectacular shores of Steveston when the Richmond Kajaks Track and Field Club stages its annual fundraiser—the Steveston Icebreaker 8K and New Balance 1K Kidsrun.

"If you are looking to start your running season off with a good time, some beautiful views, and have some family fun, you don't want to miss this one," says race director Jared Hulme. "Being Richmond's only road race, the Icebreaker has a true community feel to it."

Two years ago, when the event was last held, a record number of participants turned out to enjoy a balmy seven-degree Sunday on the heels of a cold snap that had gripped the West Coast. In all 472 runners completed the 8K course and another 71 the Kidsrun 1K which loops around the Imperial Landing pond.

While this 2022 race will not feature a post-run expo, as was the case in previous runs, there will be safe post-run activities at the start/finish line. And with pre-registration already well underway, Hulme expects both events to soon sell out for the first time ever. To get in on the fun, be sure to sign up today at www.icebreaker8k.ca.

All funds raised will support KidSport Richmond, with popular ambassador and Olympic bronze medal race waker Evan Dunfee walking with the kids.

Whether you choose to run or walk, or will be pushing a stroller, the event is open to all levels of "athletes," from the weekend warrior to the elite.

•dfennell@richmondsentinel.ca



Photo submitted

Those fleet of foot, and everyone who welcomes a brisk run or walk to kick off the new year, will be anxious to partake in Richmond's only road race on Jan. 16.

Wishing you all the joys
of the season and
happiness throughout
the coming year.



Richmond actor brings classic villain to life

By HANNAH SCOTT

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Richmond's Avery Taylor plays the villain in this holiday season's Metro Theatre pantomime, a retelling of the classic story of Snow White.

"Getting to play the Evil Queen for me was something I'd always wanted to do," says Taylor. "When I started working on the show, I started a lot with voice and with finding the queen's voice. It was challenging, because I hadn't used my voice in a long time."

With help from choreographer Suzanne Ouellette, Taylor also worked with physical gesture to allow her to take on her character's larger-than-life presence.

"Probably one of the biggest challenges for me was allowing myself to take up all that space—(my character) is very self-involved because she's the queen, everyone bow down. I'm not like that as much, so that was kind of interesting," she says.

Taylor, who graduated last year from Simon Fraser University's theatre performance program, says it was exciting to be back in the theatre after the COVID-19 pandemic decimated the industry.

"It was one of those things where everything changed for a period of time, and then kind of re-introducing yourself to getting to perform live theatre," she says.

Taylor's entry into acting came through a love of storytelling and being able to connect with an audience through narratives. She first became involved with theatre while attending McNair secondary, where she was a part of shows including *Grease* and a musical version of *Sleepy Hollow*.

She first dipped her toe into the pantomime genre during the pandemic, when she worked



Photo by Nicol Spinola
Richmond's Avery Taylor as the Evil Queen in *Snow White* at Metro Theatre.

remotely with a Toronto-based company for an online show. The genre originated in England and is built around songs, comedy, audience participation, and specific characters including a "dame" (female character played by a man) and a villain.

One of Taylor's favourite roles she's ever played

was a clown who did little mimed performances around an installation-based show at the Orpheum called *Still Life Continuum*. Having seen shows there before, she says she enjoyed the experience of performing there herself.

And during university, Taylor directed a show called *These Shining Lives*, which she says was a good introduction to the process of directing.

In the future, Taylor says she'd love to continue to play characters like the Evil Queen. She's also interested in acting for film, which she plans to continue to pursue.

"I love theatre, and I just always encourage people to go see shows because every show is unique and different and you get all these experiences," she says. "It's really an awesome moment to reconnect—there's been a lot of that. It's very community-based, and being able to connect with people and share a laugh is at the bare bones of it."

Director Chris Adams says *Snow White* lends itself well to a smaller cast, which numbers just 15 as opposed to the annual pantomime's usual 30. When writing the script back in May, "there wasn't just Plan A and Plan B, there was Plan A to Z."

Instead of the audience joining the cast on stage, or actors going into the audience, the usual audience participation will be limited to a traditional rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas", a game of charades, and some other elements. Despite these changes, Adams thinks the audience will still feel welcomed and involved.

The Metro theatre is located in south Vancouver, just across the Arthur Laing Bridge. *Snow White* runs through Jan. 3. For more information or to buy tickets, go to metrotheatre.com/snow-white-the-panto/.

• hannahs@richmondsentinel.ca

STR8TS

No number can be repeated in any row or column. Rows and columns are divided by black squares into compartments. Each compartment must contain a 'straight,' a set of numbers with no gaps in any order, eg. [4,2,3,5]. Numbers in black cells are not part of straights but also cannot be repeated in their row or column.

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Winter Wonderland

AT MINORU ARENAS

December 10–January 3

7551 Minoru Gate | richmond.ca/arenas | 604-238-8465

The perfect place for a holiday skate is Winter Wonderland at Minoru Arenas! Set under a canopy of twinkly lights with festive music, bring your family and friends to this annual winter time activity. Regular admission rates apply.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					Dec 10 6:30–9:00pm Public Skate	Dec 11 12–4pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate
Dec 12 12–4pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 13 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 14 	Dec 15 6:00–9pm Public Skate	Dec 16 	Dec 17 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 18 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate
Dec 19 12–4pm Public Skate 4:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 20 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 21 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 22 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 23 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 24 10am–4pm Public Skate 	Dec 25 Closed 
Dec 26 10am–4pm Public Skate	Dec 27 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 28 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 29 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 30 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Dec 31 10am–4pm Public Skate	Jan 1 12–4pm Public Skate
Jan 2 10am–2pm Public Skate 2:30–6pm Public Skate 6:30–9pm Public Skate	Jan 3 10am–4pm Public Skate	<p>For public skate and drop-in sessions: Proof of Vaccination is required for individuals 12 years and older. Participants must show a BC Vaccine Card. Individuals 19 years and older must also provide valid government photo ID.</p> 				