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RICHMOND news

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We are the champions!



Colts storm back to win their first City Championship title in 15 years.

Big crowds are expected to fill Aberdeen Centre Wednesday night for Chinese New Year countdown celebrations for the Year of the Sheep, said the mall's spokeswoman Joey Kwan. The entertainment starts at 9 p.m. on the mall's central stage. *Photo by Philip Raphael/Richmond News*



Two boaters hurt after jetty crash

Alan Campbell
 Staff Reporter
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Richmond's volunteer search and rescue team was called into action again on the weekend, after a boat crashed near the Iona jetty.

Two people were rescued by the RCMSAR crew following the crash on Friday night at around 6:50 p.m. in what was described by Station 10 coxswain Brian Hobbs as "dark, wet and windy" weather conditions.

Hobbs said crews responded in the north arm of the Fraser River to a report of two people injured after

their vessel struck the rock wall near the jetty.

When the crew arrived at the scene, they discovered one injured person still on the rock wall, who was being helped by a member of a commercial tugboat crew that had been in the area.

The second person had already been rescued onto a nearby pleasure vessel.

The RCMSAR crew treated both patients before the arrival of the Canadian Coast Guard hovercraft, which took both patients to hospital with what were believed to be non-life threatening injuries.

City opens dialogue on sign bylaw

Community advocate worries about a biased process that won't address over-arching issue of race relations

Graeme Wood
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Whether Richmond adopts an official-language sign bylaw will depend on the results of a newly launched public outreach campaign organized by the city itself.

On Monday the City of Richmond announced it is launching a "multi-pronged" public consultation process to open dialogue on how foreign language-only signs have affected "community harmony" in the city.

The campaign begins publicly with a registered, community workshop on March



Kerry Starchuk

12 at the UBC Boathouse, but the broader campaign will involve a number of outreach efforts, according to a City of Richmond news release.

But Kerry Starchuk says she thinks the process may be biased.

Starchuk was one of the first Richmonditers to go public with her concerns for how Chinese signs are a cause and symbol of the lack of community cohesiveness that persists in Richmond.

She believes the workshop — which she notes is being held in a small, private environment — will follow a structured communications technique that relies on a handpicked panel that will try to restrict any wider conversations about race relations.

The city stated it is working with the Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, BC Signs Association and individual sign companies, Canadian Race Relations Council, Laurier



Another Chinese-only sign is erected on a construction site in 2015, after the issue caught fire during the municipal election. *Photo submitted*

Institution, Richmond Chinese Community Society, Chinese Federation of Commerce of Canada and the Chinese Real Estate Professionals Association of BC to gather feedback on the issue.

"I was quite taken back as to whom they've invited. This isn't multiculturalism. This is all self-interest. I can't see how this is going to get any better," she said.

At issue is how some members of the Chinese business community have willfully or unknowingly ignored official Canadian languages by advertising with Chinese-only signs.

Starchuk says the concerns should extend beyond Chinese-only small business signs, which accounted for fewer than five per cent of new signs erected over the last three years, according to city data.

Also at issue, for Starchuk and many others, is how real estate developers have effectively ignored every language except Chinese, causing multi-generational Canadians and non-Chinese immigrants to feel excluded.

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