

# RICHMOND NEWS

## August 26, 2009

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2009

# Richmond News

OLYMPIC COUNTDOWN 170 DAYS

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**Charlotte Diamond**, above, brings audience members on stage to help her sing *I Am Bamba* during her *End of Summer Concert* at Lansdowne Shopping Centre Saturday. Mya Kolick, 5, far right, and Paige LeClere, 5, shake their parents' keys to the beat. This was Diamond's 50th appearance at Lansdowne.

**EDUCATION**

## School district braces for maintenance

By Nelson Bussard

"So we're wasting a lot of time, and we're wasting a lot of money," says school trustee Doreen Sargent. "We're not even Labour Day yet and the Richmond Sockeyes are starting to market a defence of their title, including the PHL championship."

The Richmond school board is crossing its fingers and hoping for a \$4 million shortfall for the coming year, thanks to provincial government cutbacks. Each year, the school board receives a \$4 million facilities grant, which it usually puts toward ongoing maintenance of schools, like roofing and painting. School district authorities are still waiting to see if the grant will survive the upcoming provincial budget cuts, which is due to come down Sept. 1.

Becky Bussard, superintendent for the Richmond School District, said the provincial government has promised to protect "core services."

But school officials aren't clear whether the facilities grant is considered core funding. "This prepares us for bad news," Bussard said. "We're all very nervous from the financial position the government is in."

Liberal MP A. Louise Brack (Richmond-East) believes the grant is part of core funding. "They get it every year, so it is core funding," she said. "Like I think there's been a variation in the facilities grant in all the years I've been elected. I'm thinking it's not going to change."

But school trustee Doreen Sargent isn't so sure. "For the last two or three years they have been playing with the facilities grant," she said. "The announcements have been really late. And we think they're waiting to see how much money they have."

Normally, roof repairs are done in the summer. But because the school board had no guarantee the grant will materialize for the 2009-2010 budget year, it had to defer the roof repairs it had planned to do this summer.

"There were quite a few things we didn't do," Bussard said.

"We've now added," she said, "the responsibility of getting a lot of new money."

When we get a grant that isn't what we actually need, we're in a bind," Sargent said. "We're very, very, very disappointed."

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# Asian explorations

## Vancouverites now have fast, convenient access to the multicultural delights of Richmond's Golden Village

Richmond's Golden Village, as it is dubbed, is now closer than ever for Vancouverites — thanks to the newly minted Canada Line. As an alternative to Chinatown, Richmond's Asian malls offer one-stop shopping seldom seen anywhere other than in the orient.

For those who love Asian cuisines and shopping, but who are loath to drive into Richmond, there are no more excuses. Vancouverites can hop on the Canada Line from Waterfront station and be at the front doors of Aberdeen Centre in 20 minutes.

For Vancouverites living along the Cambie corridor, it could be as swift as a 10 to 15-minute commute.

Among the fabulous Asian restaurants that the city is famous for, one that is often

considered to be among the best is Sun Sui Wah Seafood Restaurant on No. 3 Rd. Loyal clientele boast of its dim sum and seafood dishes.

There are countless other worthy mentions including Lansdowne Centre's #9 Restaurant and Aberdeen Centre's Malaysian/Thai restaurant, Tropika.

Golden Village is a bustling commercial district in the heart of Richmond, which is now easily accessible from the new Aberdeen and Lansdowne Canada Line Stations, says Michelle Dunn, spokeswoman for Tourism Richmond.

Hong-Kong inspired malls, five Buddhist temples and more than 350 Asian restaurants — which offer authentic Far East cuisine

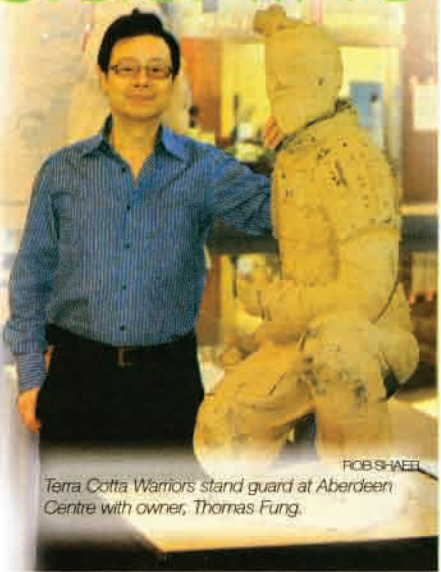
beckon to visitors from Vancouver. Its Asian sophistication is due to the fact that Richmond is touted as having the country's largest Asian-Canadian population by percentage.

This Asian-focused shopping and dining district covers a four-block radius centered on No. 3 Road, just west of Highway 99.

Three major destinations are Aberdeen Centre, Parker Place and Yaohan Centre.

Aberdeen Centre is an award-winning lifestyle and shopping destination, with more than 160 stores and

See "Asian Malls" on page B7



## connect with the canada line

### Asian Malls: Fusion of East meets West

**Continued from page B6**

380,000 square feet of the latest fashions, furniture and lifestyle products, Asian herbs and teas and a specialized marketplace offering fresh groceries and culinary ingredients.

"Its unique fusion of East meets West shopping, dining, entertainment and service amenities include seven full-service restaurants (from dim sum, Northern China cuisine, Japanese to Malaysian and Thai), wireless internet access in an 800-seat food court, exciting weekly arts and cultural performances and exhibits, as well as the only state-of-the-art musical fountain show in town," says Joey Kwan, spokeswoman for Aberdeen Centre.

The centre houses some of the first Japanese establishments in Canada, including Daiso, the well-known \$2 department store, which carries more than 500,000 products in that price range, adds Kwan.

Aberdeen Centre is also home to the internationally award-winning bakery, St.

Gemain. (The baker has been ranked number four in the world at the International Desert Competition).

One of the largest fashion apparel chains in Hong Kong and Asia, Giordano, is also in the mall.

Yaohan Centre is one of the earliest Asian malls developed in Richmond and is still a popular, upscale retail destination because of the varieties of products and services it offers, says Ivy Lui, Yaohan Centre's promotion coordinator. "Much more than a mall, Yaohan Centre is a place you can have lots of fun with friends and family," Lui says.

Yaohan, which celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, has 80 stores and offers a wealth of products and services. In addition to that, entertaining special events are being held from time to time.

Because it is an indoor mall, customers can shop, rain or shine.

Fine fashions, souvenirs and gifts, oriental arts and crafts, a florist, paintings, herbal health food, toys, jewelry, cosmet-

ics, home appliances, foreign exchange, travel, insurance, medical and a realtor are at your service at Yaohan, says Lui. For relaxation and enjoyment, visit the salons, music and book stores.

"The mall is also home to a supermarket providing a wide range of Japanese and Chinese products," Lui says. "On top of all that, its food court provides a diversity of cuisines from different countries."

Yaohan Centre is five minutes walking distance away from the Canada Line station.

Built in 1993, the oldest of the city's Asian shopping malls is Parker Place. It boasts more than 150 stores.

Like the other Asian malls, Parker Place offers shoppers the latest in Hong Kong, Japanese and Chinese fashion, trendy toys and gadgets and Asian cuisine.

Its food court offers authentic fare from Hong Kong style cafes, noodle houses, snacks and specialty drinks, to foods from all regions of Asia.

— Michelle Hopkins