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April 20, 2010

Ms. Gail Johnson, Manager  
Manager Legislative Services  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, B.C. V5Y 2C1

Dear Ms. Johnson,

This will confirm our request to make a presentation at the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting on May 26, City Hall at 4:00 PM. We also have a report we would like to present to all members of the committee. Please advise the deadline to submit this report. You can reach me by email at [bonniebeaman@shaw.ca](mailto:bonniebeaman@shaw.ca) or by phone during the day at 604-278-6277 or home 604-277-5397.

Yours truly,

*Bonnie Beaman*  
Bonnie Beaman, Chairperson



*Wellness is our passion*

# **Richmond Wellness and Fitness Association**



## **Report to Council 2009**



## **About the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association:**

The Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association's (RFA) mission is to raise awareness, encourage participation, and champion health and wellness initiatives by identifying, creating and promoting opportunities for healthy living.

The association is made up of 7 volunteer board members and an RFA coordinator.



## **History of the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association:**

Founded in 1984, the RFA has a proud and accomplished history within the health and wellness sector in the City of Richmond. The RFA was one of the first community associations to offer fitness classes in Richmond. These initial classes were very successful with some having over 100 participants on a regular basis. Since 1985, the RFA has offered first-class fitness instructor training. Courses such as Fitness Theory, Group Fitness, Step, Ball, and Choreography are just some of the examples. To date, all the courses have been very well attended.

The RFA has also offered corporate wellness programs to the Vancouver Airport Authority and Canada Post, assisting each of these companies to a healthier workplace and decreased absenteeism. The RFA also has a strong partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health Baby Days and delivers post-natal fitness workshops for individuals who attend this program in Richmond.

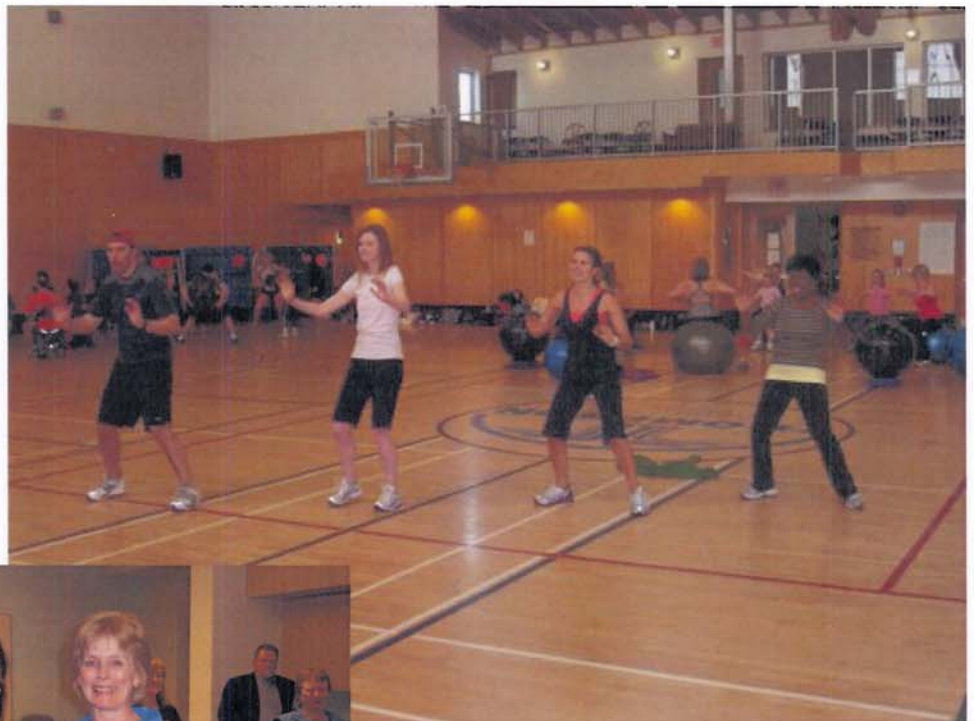
By 2002, many of the fitness classes that were originally offered by the RFA were being offered in the local community centres. At this time the Board of Directors commissioned an independent review and based upon extensive consultation it was determined that the mandate of the Association would be better focused on supporting citywide health and wellness initiatives rather than offering classes. Between 2002 and 2007 the RFA supported numerous fitness initiatives in the City of Richmond such as a Move for Health Day walk and wellness lecture series.

In 2007 the RFA became a sponsoring partner for Walk Richmond and in 2008 the RFA used their funds to hire a coordinator to continue with this program. This coordinator contract was expanded and now allows the RFA to seek out new opportunities and work on filling other gaps with respect to health and fitness programming in the City of Richmond.

## Notable Achievements Over the Years:

### Carrie Beaman Fitness Instructor Bursaries:

In memory of Carrie Beaman, an exceptional fitness leader, the RFWA established the Carrie Beaman Fitness Instructor bursary in 2003 to support the continuing education needs of fitness instructors in Richmond. Each year, one to two City of Richmond Fitness Instructors have been given a bursary of \$100 to help pay for courses that will better serve the fitness needs of the citizens of Richmond. To date, the RFWA has awarded over \$1,000 in bursaries to fitness leaders in Richmond.



### Carrie Beaman Fundraiser for the British Columbia Cancer Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Foundation

Each year the RFWA hosts a fun fitness event. In addition to the fitness class, the RFWA provides individuals with a chance to win a door prize, as well as coffee and goodies after the fitness class. Classes are lead by fitness instructors that volunteer their time. The space is donated by the Steveston and Thompson community centres.

Average attendance for this event often exceeds 50 participants. ***The RFWA successfully raised between one and two thousand dollars per year for the past six years for the B.C. Cancer Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Foundation.***

## Walk Richmond:

Walk Richmond is an initiative aimed at building a legacy of healthy lifestyles in Richmond by engaging people in lifelong walking. This project, a partnership with the City of Richmond, offers Richmond residents and workers the opportunity to take steps towards healthier living by changing behaviors and encouraging them to explore the benefits of walking and active living.

***To date there have been 77 walks coordinated with an average attendance of over 26 people per walk. The average attendance has grown by 16% from 2008 to 2009 and this trend is expected to continue. Over the last three years the RFWA has guided over 368 individuals through the beautiful trails and walkways in Richmond.***



The Walk Richmond Workshop Series seeks to introduce Walk Richmond participants to new activities and expand their knowledge base around healthy living. Partnering with other community oriented organizations (RCMP, Canadian Mental Health, Canadian Cancer Society) ***the RFWA has coordinated many workshops allowing people to explore a new activity or improve their knowledge with respect to healthy living.*** Examples of the workshops include Nordic pole walking, learning how to use the equipment at the seniors playground at the West Richmond Community Centre, healthy eating and nutrition and sun protection while walking.

## Walk Richmond Connections:

Partnering with the City of Richmond, the RFWA is currently working on mobilizing adult Chinese immigrants towards greater participation levels in programs such as Walk Richmond. The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association supplied an initial grant to kick-start this initiative. To date the City of Richmond and RFWA have translated the Walking Guide Book and Walk Richmond schedules, offered walks with a Cantonese speaking walk leader and produced targeting marketing materials (press releases, newspaper ads) toward new Chinese immigrants.

## Summary:

The future is bright for the RFWA. In addition to current projects the RFWA has a number of pilot projects just getting underway. The RFWA looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with the City of Richmond to improve the quality of life for those living or visiting Richmond.



Walk Richmond is a guided walking program aimed at promoting overall health and wellness. The initiative was developed in 2007 by the City of Richmond in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District #38. The Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association has been a key partner from the start, initially providing leadership on all walks, and then hiring a Coordinator to lead walks, coordinate volunteers and liaise with the City, since 2008.

The Walk Richmond Initiative encourages individuals to be active in their daily lives through participation of guided walks. Currently, these walks are held on Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings, rain or shine. Leaders guide participating walkers through heritage sites, parks and trails, highlighting the natural beauty and historical sites within the City of Richmond.

Walk Richmond is a free drop in program for the entire community, operated by volunteer leaders who are directed by a the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association's contracted Coordinator. Walk leaders facilitate the walks which all include warm up and cool down sessions. Though walk leaders are volunteers, they also go through rigorous training, including First Aid and CPR certifications. These opportunities are funded through the RFWA to promote growth and development of its volunteers who dedicate their time to the initiative.

In 2009, Walk Richmond completed 42 guided walks averaging 70 participants per month. Since the beginning of 2010, 150 new walkers have joined the program which brings us to a new participant high of 848 walkers.

For 2010, Walk Richmond's goal is to further enhance the community's awareness of the program and its initiatives. Since January, the Walk Richmond Coordinator and volunteers have attended several community events, including Move for Health Day (May 12<sup>th</sup>), City Works Yard Open House (May 15<sup>th</sup>) and a visit to a local community kitchen (April 7<sup>th</sup>). Throughout this year, the program plans to attend special events such as the Steveston Salmon Festival (July 1<sup>st</sup>) and the Richmond Maritime Festival (August 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>).

Walk Richmond program information is available on the City of Richmond's website. The information includes walk schedules and a walking guide book that highlights 14 of Richmond's popular walking trails. To support the diverse community within Richmond, the walking guide book and schedule has also been translated to Chinese.

Since the beginning of this year, Walk Richmond has completed 14 guided walks with a total of 251 participants. With the recent \$5,000 dollar grant awarded to the RFWA by the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association, Walk

Richmond will continue to further enhance the program initiatives, and strive to promote active living and reach walkers of all backgrounds and abilities.