Clean environment, a Charter right

The Richmond Blue Dot organization's pitch to council for a civic declaration is being held in conjunction with the launch of David Suzuki's upcoming nation-wide Blue Dot Tour

Brandon Kostinuk / Richmond News
August 20, 2014 01:03 PM

Ellen Niemer, core member of the Richmond Blue Dot organization, stands in front of Science World which was transformed into a giant blue dot, an homage of sorts for the group seeking official recognition that citizens have a right to a healthy environment. Photo submitted

Every citizen of Richmond has a right to a healthy environment, according to a group of local volunteers. Moreover, they want city council to recognize that right in some official manner.

Exactly what that means ... well, they haven't got that far, says Ellen Niemer, senior editor at Alive Publishing Group and one of eight core members of the 30-member Richmond Blue Dot volunteer organization.

The Richmond Blue Dot organization's pitch to council for a civic declaration is being held in conjunction with the launch of David Suzuki's upcoming nation-wide Blue Dot Tour, in which the iconic environmentalist will touch down in 20 cities across Canada with the penultimate goal of amending Canada's Charter.

The amendment: to include access to a clean environment, fresh air, water and food, as a Canadian Charter right.

Richmond was selected as one of five cities across Canada to kick off the tour. (The others: Waterloo, Winnipeg, Montreal and Halifax).

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The goal of the local chapters is to do a similar thing, at the civic level -— push for some kind of recognition that Richmond citizens have a right to fresh air, safe and available food and clean drinking water.

"That may come as an official declaration. But we're not sure exactly where this is going," admits Neimer.

But, it is going.

Carolyn Quirt, another core member of the group, says the plan is to put together a presentation for Richmond council some time before the upcoming municipal election.

Currently, the focus is on their Steveston Postcard Campaign, which is the same as signature-gathering for a petition, just in postcard form, explains Niemer.

The aim is to have at least 1,000, hopefully closer to 2,000 signatures on individual postcards to hand to council as part of a general presentation and tangible underpinning of the cause's support.

"A physical stack of (signed) cards just carries more emphasis," says Niemer.

"So far it seems to be going well," adds Quirt. "Very good reception." Though no official tally was relayed.

A dialogue with the city has been initiated, according to Quirt and Niemer, with councillor Harold Steves reportedly in support of the initiative, at this stage.

Steves could not be reached for comment.

Quirt says a door-to-door campaign may also be in the works, but added it is too early to tell. The group will continue to canvass Richmond public spaces such as parks and the beach in search of local support.

To get better acquainted with the local movement, readers are encouraged to view the organization's Facebook page (tinyurl.com/p6dhjh9).

Quirt says they are also looking for more volunteers so don't hesitate to reach out. Details are available on social media.

Regarding Suzuki's national tour, the plan is to sweep across Canadian communities to affect local decision-makers, in hopes of inspiring provinces and the federal government to pursue a constitutional amendment, or at the very least, a new environmental policy (or policies, if province by province).

This will be Suzuki's last national tour with the first date set for Sept. 24 in St. John's, Nfld.

Three B.C. dates are scheduled for early November, with the final celebration set on Nov. 9 at the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver.
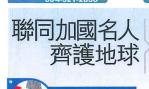
And Suzuki won't be alone; an all-star cast of Canadian talent — from rock legend Neil Young to poet, Raffi, and painter Robert Bateman — are part of an eclectic mix of performers and artists to help amplify the cause.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting the Blue Dot website or Ticketmaster. Prices range from $39 ($29.50 for students) to $250 for premium seating. Presale VIP tickets can be bought for $500.

Supporters can also log online to sign the petition, which, at the time of this writing, has accumulated just under 26,000 signatures.

藍點橫加之旅 大衛鈴木打頭陣

聯同加國名人齊護地球

本報訊

綠色救地球已是人類共識，問題在於怎麼辦。加國綠色運動領袖之一大衛鈴木博士（Dr. David Suzuki），今秋決定再度身體力行，聯同一群加國不同界別名人，從東岸省份紐芬蘭及拉布拉多出發，展開藍點橫越加國之旅。屆時鈴木身先士卒，冀能喚醒國民，齊為子孫後代全力締造可持續未來。

大衛鈴木博士早於1989年在他得獎電台節目《It's a Matter of Survival》指出，地球正面對重大環境污染的挑戰。報道播出後，超過一萬七千名聽眾寫信給大衛鈴木，表示希望改變環境污染能出一分力。當時，鈴木和妻子Dr. Tara Cullis的朋友，也大力鼓勵他們成立非牟利環保組織，不但為公眾提供正面環保及科學資訊，更鼓勵國民努力保證空氣、水和食物不受到污染。

網上Facebook朋友逾30萬

鈴木夫婦跟著了1990年9月14日創辦大衛鈴木基金會（David Suzuki Foundation）。20多年過去了，地球污染情況有增無減，該基金會決定今秋展開一趟藍點橫加之旅（Blue Dot Tour），盼再喚醒更多民眾加入保護地球的行列。

現年78歲的大衛鈴木，在加國土生土長，而Tara Cullis則小小英國移民加拿大。由創立至今24年後，基金會聘用逾90位全職員工，網上Facebook朋友超過30萬，以及有逾200萬個英語網上讀者，主要分布在全國四大城市溫哥華、多倫多、滿地可和渥太華。

在1992年，鈴木夫婦為聯合國地球峰會撰寫了《互相依存的宣言》（Declaration of Interdependence），現已譯成23種文字，詳情可上網瀏覽：https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeOU5vydSBY&feature=player_embedded http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/downloads/2012/Declaration_of_Interdependence_Chinese.pdf。

雖然環保工作為鈴木帶來不少民眾的掌聲，但他決定加強推廣綠色工作，冀為加國民眾確亨受不受污染的空氣、飲用淨水及進食健康及安全的食物。他說強調：「這三種基本權利應該是每個加國國民都應擁有的，令到我們的言論自由和不受歧視權利一樣，納入加國的人權憲章裏。」

為了履行承諾，大衛鈴木決定今年義務為基金會率領藍點橫加之旅，推動R2HE（Right to a

倡健康環境納入權憲章

大衛鈴木說：「我已經走到人生最後一段路，但我的孫兒、我的孩子有權享受我所享受的基本權利——呼吸新鮮空氣、飲用潔淨水及進食健康及安全的食物。」

圖1：大衛鈴木（右二）鼓勵國民，須為保護健康環境而努力。
圖2：亞省一牧場主人發現，牛隻的尿液導致草原的草死去。

■溫哥華科學世界（圖）也舉辦藍點之旅。

Healthy Environment）健康環境權利，推動保護地球訊息。取名「藍點旅程」，因為從太空所拍攝地球的影像，就是一顆小藍點（http://bluedot.ca/the-tour/）。

9月24日從大西洋省份起步

藍點橫加之旅將於今年9月24日，從大西洋省份紐芬蘭的聖約翰（St. John's）出發，大衛鈴木到時

聯同加國各地燈友，包括加國殿堂級作家馬格列特艾活（Margaret Atwood）、前加拿大駐聯合國大使劉易斯（Stephen Lewis）、舉辦慈善家暨加拿大癌幹得土壤康康中心始創人王裕佳醫生，準備花一個半月，前往加國二十個城市，與國民分享擁有健康環境權力的重要。

藍點之旅將於11月9日晚上，在溫哥華市中心奧芬大劇院（Orpheum Theatre）舉行結束儀式。

■大衛鈴木基金會藍點之旅，倡議把健康環境納入加國憲章。

■列治文義工Gavin參與推動環保活動。

自己做起 合力守護藍點

保護社區

由亞省駕車到卑詩省列治文市約需13小時。今夏開始，一群熱愛環境和社區的列市居民，開始為推動R2HE展開簽名運動。好像列市居民Ellen和Tyler，深信保護地球和自己社區環境，就等於保護自己和家人。兩人與基金會的Right to a Healthy Environment義工，在簽名行動之前並不認識。現在他們每星期都見面。他們熱愛使用公共交通工具和單車徑，重視食物安全、傳統文化及社區農地、綠他發展、廢物回收保留市內綠地及大自然環境。而列市學生每年在地球環日舉行的青年峰會（REaDY Summit），更成為每年輕人引以為傲的事情。

跟其他城市一樣，列市同樣面對挑戰。以增埠輸油管計劃和英花園城市用地發展計劃為例，都給居民的環境擡利構成壓力。增埠輸油管計劃在在號路的Silvercity附近，儲存大量燃油以及通過農地，輸油到飛機場，對居民及生態造成高風險。另外，現已發展快速的花園城市用地，原是罕有的濕地，如果把剩餘濕地再發展，居民的空氣和生活質素勢必受到影響。

在參與Richmond Blue Dot行動的同時，一群列市居民也行動起來，覺有助加強保護環境。讓我們由一個家庭、一個社區、一個城鎮起步，共同守護藍點。至目前為止，已經有超過2.6萬國民簽名，支持藍點之旅行動（http://bluedot.ca/take-action/）。

鑽油台三年暴增百倍 亞省農場遭油砂礦污染

能源代價

對於住在亞省Cochrane市的Howard和Nielle Hawkwood而言，大衛鈴木藍點之旅，可說來得正合時。

Howard和Nielle的農場位於採油田附近，近年採油業發達，他們家附近的油田，由二年前一座鑽油增至目前110座，以及注入450萬公升的服裂液（fracking fluid）到地下。開採油砂不但影響了附近物業

■居住在亞省Cochrane市的Howard和Nielle Hawkwood（圖），他們的農場近年飽受採油田污染，面對艱重的環境污染挑戰。

地基，所用化學物更影響了水源及空氣質素。

「大約三年前，我開始大量脫髮」Nielle說。「後來我們發現很多鄰居的太太和女兒，都有類似現象。」

土壤驗出含裂石化學劑

兩人打理牧牛場已經24年了。除Nielle脫髮以外，近年她健者也出現健康問題。

「兩年前，我的牛隻開始離奇死亡」Howard指出。「到了去年，我們的牛場損失了一成的牛隻。」

最近他們發現牛隻的尿液導致草原的草死去；化驗土壤後，顯示泥土含有Strontium，這是一種常用的裂石化學劑，通常用於開採油砂。

鄰居也面對同樣挑戰，但部分人為保住物業價值而選擇出售物業。Howard和Nielle面對重要的抉擇，但兩人表示：「我們不可以只顧採油，而不理好環境和我們孩子的未來。」

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City of Richmond Municipal Declaration
The Right To A Healthy Environment

Whereas the City of Richmond understands that people are part of the environment, and that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the well-being of our community;

The City of Richmond finds and declares that:

1. All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, including:

    The right to breathe clean air

    The right to drink clean water.

    The right to consume safe food.

    The right to access nature

    The right to know about pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment.

    The right to participate in decision-making that will affect the environment

2. The City of Richmond has the responsibility, within its jurisdiction, to respect, protect, fulfill and promote these rights.

3. The City of Richmond shall apply the precautionary principle: where threats of serious or irreversible damage to human health or the environment exist, the City of Richmond shall take cost effective measures to prevent the degradation of the environment and protect the health of its citizens. Lack of full scientific certainty shall not be viewed as sufficient reason for the MUNCIPALITY to postpone such measures

4. The City of Richmond shall apply full cost accounting: when evaluating reasonably foreseeable costs of proposed actions and alternatives, the City of Richmond will consider costs to human health and the environment.

5. By Dec 31st, 2015, the City of Richmond shall specify objectives, targets and timelines and actions the City of Richmond will take, within its jurisdiction, to fulfill residents' right to a healthy environment, including priority actions to:
    a. Ensure equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens within the municipality, preventing the development of pollution "hot spots";
    b. Ensure infrastructure and development projects protect the environment, including air quality;
    c. Address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing adaptation measures;
    d. Responsibly increase density;
    e. Prioritize walking, cycling and public transit as preferred modes of transportation;

f.   Ensure adequate infrastructure for the provision of safe and accessible drinking water;
g.   Promote the availability of safe foods;
h.   Reduce solid waste and promote recycling and composting;
i.   Establish and maintain accessible green spaces in all residential neighbourhoods.

The City of Richmond shall review the objectives, targets, timelines and actions every five (5) years, and evaluate progress towards fulfilling this declaration.

The City of Richmond shall consult with residents as part of this process.