College's 49th anniversary inspires socialist club to mobilize

By KATHRYN TINDALE

Students pay for cutbacks

By KIRSTEN CLARKE

Culture hub will rebuild

French institution in Vancouver rallies to rezone

By KATHERYN TINDALE

Students try a new protein bar with a special ingredient.
langaravoice.ca
Renter union grows

Vancouver-based advocacy group opens chapter in New Westminster

By CLOE LOGAN

New Westminster renters will now have a chance to advocate for their rights as tenants with the Vancouver Tenants Union setting up a new chapter in the small municipality.

An organizer with the tenants union said the new group wants to cater to specific needs in the city. Although the Vancouver monthly meetings in the Downtown Eastside have been open to everyone, it’s a long commute for renters in New Westminster.

“A lot of tenants are older, a lot of them have disabilities, they’re on pensions, and that kind of stuff. So they’re not super-mobile,” said David Hendry, who lives in New Westminster and has been involved in the Vancouver chapter for a year.

Although New Westminster is the first chapter of the tenants union outside of Vancouver, Hendry said the group is looking to expand further in the future.

In New Westminster, several rallies outside of older buildings and information sessions organized by the Vancouver-based tenants union have taken place in the past year. Renoviction, which is when landlords evict their tenants to do large-scale renovations and hike up rents, has been one of the prominent housing problems in the city.

Many renters have experienced renovations.

“I was very happy living where I was living, but new owners bought my building and issued a notice to all tenants that they would be renovating the new suits,” said Meryl Heppner, who was renovicted in her New Westminster apartment in 2016. “I wasn’t able to pay the new rent price as it was double what I was paying before.”

— MERYL HEPPNER, NEW WESTMINSTER RESIDENT

Heppner thinks a tenants union might help people like her, who were put in a tight spot with few resources and little information.

The Vancouver tenants union group was formed in April 2017. It aims to educate tenants about their rights and advocate for them when possible.

The chapter in New Westminster, where renters make up 44 percent of the population, is the first outside of Vancouver.

New Westminster Councillor Mary Lois Jackson said that the recently elected city council will work together to figure out what else can be done about housing affordability. While there are no recreation centres in Tsawwassen First Nation, Delta has six. Surrey has seven recreational centres. In Delta, Surrey and Richmond, the adult drop-in fees are nearly identical, with Surrey and Delta charging $8.90 per person and Richmond charging $8.90.

Natalie Okano, a resident of Richmond who uses Delta’s Sungod Recreation Centre with her children, said she is simply choosing the closest option.

“Sungod is the closest community centre for me, Richmond is not. I’m just going by location that’s the most convenient for my family, so obviously I don’t want to see my rates go up.”

But Manav Bhardwaj, a resident of North Delta, believes there should be a way to deter the perceived heavy use of Delta facilities by outsiders.

“I don’t use any of the facilities in Delta anymore because it’s just not worth it because it’s just so busy,” Bhardwaj said.

“If we are getting other people from other municipalities coming in and using the facilities then maybe we should charge them a premium.”

Delta plans outsider fees

Residents fed up with crowded recreation centres

By CAMERON THOMSON

Delta’s new mayor plans to set higher rates at recreation centres for people coming from outside the city.

George Harvie, Delta’s newly elected mayor, said the Delta Optimist last week that he would ensure there is a separate rate for people outside of Delta.

Lois Jackson, Delta’s previous mayor of nearly 20 years who ran successfully in the recent election for a council seat, said the move to charge different fees will address a problem that has suddenly surfaced.

“What has happened in the past year and a bit is all our programs are all full and, upon analysis, there’s many people in our programs that don’t live in Delta,” Jackson said.

This issue is less pronounced in areas like Tsawwassen but more prominent in the part of Delta that borders Surrey.

“The folks in North Delta are becoming very concerned that they aren’t able to get into their own facilities that they’re paying for,” Jackson said.

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“I don’t use any of the facilities in Delta anymore because it’s just not worth it because it’s just so busy,” Bhardwaj said.

“And if we are getting other people from other municipalities coming in and using the facilities then maybe we should charge them a premium.”

Surrey slammed for pot policies

Illegal sales will grow if stores not allowed, says pot advocate

By NIKITHA MARTINS

A prominent cannabis-rights advocate says Surrey will see an increase in black market drug dealing because of the new city council’s plan to do nothing about dispensary regulation.

During the recent civic election campaign, Doug McCallum and his party, Safe Surrey Coalition, took the position that regulating cannabis would not be a priority.

McCallum and his team said that, because they plan to replace the RCMP with a municipal police force, they do not want to compli-

cate things by getting the current police force to grapple with regulat-

ing legal cannabis storefronts in the city.

But that’s a huge mistake, said Dana Larsen, who has spent much of his life advocating for cannabis reform and ending the global war on drugs.

“Let’s be clear, even if [McCallum] does manage to shut down storefronts in Surrey, there is not going to be one gram less cannabis sold in Surrey. It’s just not going to be sold in a storefront where there is some sort of oversight and re-

sponsibility and accountability to those who are running it. They are going to be sold in alleyways and living rooms and other places,” Larsen said.

Surrey is one of three B.C. cities experiencing the highest number of illicit drug overdoses this year, according to 2018 B.C. coroner statistics.

Larsen said one of the key ben-

efits of legal stores is that canna-

bis helps prevent overdose deaths from opioids.

“Targeting dispensaries that provide a beneficial herbal medi-

cine to people that need it in the middle of an overdose crisis is es-

sentially going to kill people be-

cause they’ll be turning to opioids because they don’t have access to cannabis,” Larsen said.

One worker from a Surrey dis-

pensary also emphasized that pro-

duce will be exposed to unsafe drugs if they are forced back to buying on the street.

Mia, a staff member at YuYu who would not give her last name, said the dispensary sends the product for testing to make sure it is safe to consume.

Unlike McCallum, other new mayors in the region said they would work on systems for legal dispensaries.

Burnaby, Port Moody and Vancouver politicians have indicated they will move for-

ward with those plans. However, Richmond city council has op-

posed legal cannabis stores.
Lifebus shuttles students to donate

The bus runs Thursday and Friday, every hour from noon to 4 p.m.

By ALBERTO TUFANO

Langara students are getting on board with a new initiative to encourage blood donation. From Oct. 24 until Nov. 16, a shuttle bus operated by Canadian Blood Services will carry eligible students from the Building T to the Oak Blood Centre.

This is the first semester that the shuttle bus is being offered at Langara.

Karen García, a territory manager for Canadian Blood Services, said they hope the bus will make it easier for more students to donate. “If you donate blood you are not alone,” she said. “There are ten thousand donors every month who support hospital patients in need in British Columbia.”

Despite the large number of donors, there are often shortages.

Trillian Mitchell, a Langara student who boarded the bus on Oct. 25, said “I want to donate now because I understand how difficult it is for hospitals to provide blood for their emergency patients.”

García said that not all students who want to donate blood are eligible.

People who have come to Canada from India or Pakistan, countries where malaria is a huge problem, must wait three years before donating.

Recently, there were several changes to eligibility for blood donation. García said one of them is that the time that people must wait after getting tattoos and piercings has been shortened from six to three months.

Serenia Sharma, another Langara student who took advantage of the shuttle bus, said “I am glad that it’s so easy to access from Langara. I feel like if you have something that you can do that can help other people, why not do it?”

Ishbir Heir, a student in Langara’s social service worker program, failed a course after being found guilty of plagiarism last year.

Process cheats students

Langara allows shortest time for appeal in Lower Mainland

BY KELSEA FRANZKE

A student accused of plagiarism says that Langara’s policy to appeal academic misconduct doesn’t give students enough time to process the news, let alone act on it.

In September of last year Ishbir Heir’s social work instructor told her that she had plagiarized an essay. “I was very distraught and I ended up crying while I was talking to her. When she told me I had two days to appeal I didn’t even know what that meant. I didn’t have enough time,” Heir said.

Timeframes to appeal academic misconduct decisions vary at colleges in the Lower Mainland.

At VCC students are given 10 days, at BCIT students are given 30. At Douglas College students are given four months. At Langara the timeline for academic misconduct appeals has now been extended from two business days to five, according to Maggie Ross, Director of Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs.

The policy change was approved on Oct. 22 and will come into effect within a couple of weeks.

“I ended up crying while I was talking to her. When she told me I had two days to appeal I didn’t even know what that meant. I didn’t have enough time”

—ISHBIR HEIR, LANGARA STUDENT

“It’s a reasonable period of time to think about it, consult with others, or ask professors for reconsideration,” said Ross. “It’s appealing a specific point in time, so five days is more than adequate.”

Heir says it’s unfair that students at other colleges are given so much more time to appeal.

“If I had 30 days I would totally be able to appeal my paper and I’d be able to do it comfortably and not worry about only having two days, which is so overwhelming and frustrating,” she said.

Robyn Lougheed, BCIT’s student advocacy manager helps students navigate the appeal process.

“We listen to their story, we’re non-judgmental, to us it doesn’t matter if they cheated,” she said. “We just want to make sure they’re being treated fairly.”

Lougheed said that five days is not enough time for students.

“It’s a really short amount of time in my opinion because it’s barely enough to even get over the shock of being accused, especially if the student has not actually plagiarized or cheated. It takes a while for a student to have that news sink in and decide what they’re going to do,” she said.

Controversial therapy is a touchy subject

Practice uses body’s energy to promote healing

By NATHAN DUREC

A controversial certificate program offered by Langara College claims to provide healing through the balancing of biodynamic energy. Cheryl Larden, a registered nurse and therapeutic touch instructor at Langara, is a strong proponent of its benefits.

“I’ve used it in the hospital,” she said. "I’ve used it in emergencies. I’ve used it in so many different situations and it can really be helpful. It really helps relieve stress and anxiety for people too and that’s really so critical.”

Langara is the only B.C. college that offers a therapeutic touch practitioner certificate program. The website describes it as a “holistic, evidence-based therapy.”

Bernie Garrett, associate professor at the UBC School of Nursing, said, “To claim it’s evidence-based is deceptive.”

In 2017 Garrett co-authored a literature review of available studies, including the three that Langara cites as evidence in favour of the practice. The review found one was based on “low-quality science and low-quality evidence.” Another had a “hulking” study-design and an “un falsifiable” hypothesis. The third was “not a scientific study” and cited “recent evidence” from 1888.

Dr. Lloyd Opped also questioned the science behind this therapy but offered an alternate perspective. “We derive a lot of benefit from practices that can’t be substantiated,” he said. “There’s great value.”

Larden is aware of the controversy but she’s seen it help people.

“It can make such a positive difference to people and I don’t quite understand why there seems to be so much negativity,” she said.

Critics don’t object to claims that there are benefits, they take issue with the claim that those benefits have been scientifically proven.

“If they were to run it as a recreational course…that would be reasonable,” Garrett said. “But to run it as a therapeutic course that trains practitioners to deliver healing therapy is problematic for a public educational institution.”

Langara has been offering courses in therapeutic touch for decades but launched the certificate program in 2015.
Happy Diwali

Dewan's Diwali Fest

Event offers 'forgiveness and reconciliation'

After completing their prayers and decorating their home in traditional Diwali decor, Kriti Dewan and her family will go to temple to meet other family members, friends, and members within their community.

At temple the traditional prayers are sung for King Rama, and the whole community connects, often with people they otherwise might not get the chance to. The temple will often have a display of fireworks near the close of the ceremony, and a festive dinner will be held afterwards.

"It is a time for forgiveness and reconciliation. Personally, I take that very seriously," said Dewan.

As the Board Chair for Diwali Fest, an annual South Asian arts and culture festival, Dewan is a key member in planning many of the performances and celebrations that take place throughout the Lower Mainland.

She first became involved eight years ago with what was then called Vancouver Celebrates Diwali Festival, looking for an impactful community organization. An important objective of theirs was to ensure that new generations do not forget the various cultural art forms of the South Asian community.

Dewan said that Diwali Fest’s mandate is to affirm the light over darkness theme, and to exemplify unity and diversity by providing a platform for multicultural artists to perform. Celebrations start about a month leading up to the date, with two performances having already taken place last week.

The first event was held at the Fraserview Public Library and focused on the dance performances by Ashritha Royyuru and Niki Patel. The performance lasted roughly an hour and had been arranged as a preview for the upcoming event on the following Saturday at Roundhouse Community Center in Yaletown. The event at Fraserview Public Library was described as a colourful, fast-paced Bollywood and Indian classical fusion dance performance.

Ashritha Royyuru, an Indian classically trained dancer who’s been with Diwali Fest for three years, is honoured to be apart of the organization and its mission to spread awareness of the festival.

Royyuru said, "It’s great for artists like me to be able to have a platform and perform. Local talent is always encouraged by them and is amazing to see."

The second event was held at the Roundhouse Community Centre last Saturday and featured multiple performance artists. Other artistic workshops at the event included henna tattoos, painting Diya candles, and scarf wrapping. Dewan said the Roundhouse event helps to educate those who may not know much about the festival, and offers people from South Asia who may not have a place to celebrate Diwali a familiar atmosphere that feels like home.

The Roundhouse event lasted four hours and ended with a brilliant fireworks display.

Kim Young, who had attended both the dance performance at Fraserview Public Library and the Roundhouse Community Center, said, "It was fun. I enjoyed the performers and music and everything. Diwali is a good time."
Diwali will be celebrated on Nov. 7 this year. As Diwali marks the onset of the new innings it is a time for new beginnings that symbolizes light over darkness, good over evil and prosperity over poverty.

The date changes annually in accordance with the lunar cycle. Many of the public events are held before the official day of Diwali to offer opportunities for larger cultural celebration, which allows for a more intimate family celebration on the day of Diwali.

In Hindu mythology, Diwali marks the day of King Rama’s return to his hometown. After 14 years of banishment, and after rescuing his wife from a demon king, the town welcomed them back by lighting traditional Diya candles to ensure they would find their way back home.

“Diyas are still a very crucial part of Diwali,” said Kriti Dewan.

In preparation for Diwali, traditional values include various duties around the home and within the community. The traditional rituals include various tasks such as cleaning one’s homes in spirit of renewal, buying gifts for loved ones; and exchanging sweet desserts to one another.

It is considered an auspicious and positive time of the year where people allow themselves to make important purchases, such as new furniture, new cars or new houses. It’s also the time of year to let go of any misgivings or broken relationships.

Festival full of colours
Celebrates culture, family, spiritual renewal and light

“Diyas are a very crucial part of Diwali.”
— Kriti Dewan, dancer

UPCOMING DIWALI EVENTS IN METRO VANCOUVER

Nov. 2 Canucks celebrate Diwali night from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Rogers Arena.

Nov. 3 Celebrations by Inter-Cultural Association Vancouver 6 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at Bollywood Banquet Hall & Convention Centre Ltd.

Nov. 4 Diwali lunch and dance at Trout Lake Community Centre from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Nov. 4 Diwali in Kitsilano from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Kitsilano Community Centre.

Nov. 8 Diwali at Evergreen Cultural Centre at 6 p.m.

SOURCE: DIWALI EVENTS VANCOUVER
Keep French alive

Living in Vancouver means the window of opportunity to practice my second language is small. The catch with having a second language is once you stop using it, you will eventually lose it. That is why places such as the Alliance Française de Vancouver are important.

This year 54,603 students are enrolled in French immersion programs across B.C., according to the ministry of education. When students in the program graduate, their opportunity to speak their second language drops dramatically. This might inspire us to some extent that French as a second language isn’t all that useful — why would we need a skill we can’t use? Because those of us that grew up in the French immersion program lose the community we gave us once we graduate, the Alliance Française presents an opportunity for folks like me to have that community.

The French immersion program is a distinct English Canadian experience. Like the house hippo commercial, French is something nostaligious. All the Alliance Française is there and ready to fight to appeal if they feel that the decision is wrong or unfair. It is important that students appeal document everything they can provide basic procedural information. International students can go to the International Education and Information office for some advice. Anyone who has been accused has to decide what they need to say, but don’t hesitate to do it. Submit your appeal and stand up for yourself. Make sure you seek help and guidance, it is there and available for you to use. Avoid having to retake classes. I know what I’d prefer to do.

Accused need more time

Students like Ishibir Heir, who was accused of plagiarism, need more time to face allegations of academic misconduct. ALLAN FRANZKE PHOTO

Students like Ishibir Heir must be afforded more time to appeal when it comes to being accused of committing academic misconduct, specifically plagiarism.

Post-secondary institutions have processes in place so that students can make an appeal against academic misconduct accusations. Douglas College allows four months. BCIT allows 30 days.

Each student needs time to fully understand their case and the grounds on which they are appealing in order to argue in their favour. It’s unreasonable to expect students to appeal when it comes to academic misconduct, specifically plagiarism.

Although each institution wants to make sure that their procedures are followed and that students are educated about their options, the appeal process at Langara simply isn’t long enough for a student to process the information in time. Each student is given time to submit a letter of appeal, which is sent to the dean of students, who reviews the appeal to see if the grounds for appeal fall within the policy. Compared to other institutions in the Lower Mainland, Langara has by far the shortest timeline of any college for no apparent reason other than it being a long-standing policy.

Any student who finds themselves in this position will need to think about it further. If they want to appeal they may need to talk to friends or colleagues for further opinion, or take time to read the policy implemented at their institution.

The appeal itself requires a strong letter to argue their point. Each student needs time to fully understand their case and the grounds on which they are appealing in order to argue in their favour. It’s unreasonable to expect this to be completed sufficiently in only a few days.

As a student you need time to decide what you’re going to do and show your appeal might be in the middle of an exam or a personal crisis, which affords you little time to focus on anything else. In this instance, it’s not wrong to say to your instructor, “I need a bit more time, this is what’s going on, can we just be flexible on this?”

Most people will need time to get over the shock of being accused, especially if the student has not plagiarized or cheated. For those students from another country, who don’t have a really clear grasp of what that really means, or don’t know what the repercussions of it might be, having more time would be really beneficial.

It is important that students document everything they can do to help prove their case and stay calm. They must ensure they obtain clarity on what happened, figure out what makes the instructor believe this outcome, and then ensure they gathered enough documentation to support their case. All Langara students who find themselves in this difficult position should fight to appeal if they feel that the decision is wrong or unfair or unfounded. The ESLU can provide basic procedural information. International students can go to International Education and Information for some advice. Anyone who has been accused has to decide what they need to say, but don’t hesitate to do it. Submit your appeal and stand up for yourself. Make sure you seek help and guidance, it is there and available for you to use. Avoid having to retake classes. I know what I’d prefer to do.

OPINION

“A places such as the Alliance Française are more than cultural hubs, they’re a chance to reconnect with something close to many of our hearts.”

Places such as the Alliance Française are more than cultural hubs, they’re a chance to reconnect with something close to many of our hearts. Kids who grew up in the French immersion program lose the community it gave them once we graduate, the Alliance Française presents an opportunity for folks like me to have that community.

In a province as diverse as British Columbia I believe it’s important that we promote all the cultures that comprise our communities. The events offered by the Alliance Française are more than cultural hubs, they’re a chance to reconnect with something close to many of our hearts. Kids who grew up with the French language deserve the chance to keep that language. In a province as diverse as British Columbia I believe it’s important that we promote all the cultures that comprise our communities. The events offered by the Alliance Française celebrate French culture in an accessible way for all in the community and, to a great extent, those out side of it. If you want to brush up on your skills or even if you want to pick up the language, the Alliance Française can do that for you. The promotion of the French language only serves to benefit our communities.

OPINION

Darren Amner

Students like Ishibir Heir, who was accused of plagiarism, need more time to face allegations of academic misconduct.
Syrian refugees in Vancouver are looking to preserve and share their culture through a series of cooking workshops. An event held at the Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre Oct. 27 was the latest in a series of culinary events run by SEACHS.

"Lots of people who are Arab or Syrian or Lebanese came to our shop and said, 'Oh my goodness, we've seen home.'" — Enas Alsaleh, co-owner of Syrian Gourmet Bakery

"Our community needs it," said Alsaleh. "I remember when we opened our shop, lots of people who are Arab or Syrian or Lebanese came to our shop and said, 'Oh my goodness, we've seen home. We've seen home.'"

Shared meals are an important aspect of Syrian life and community, says Mohammed Alsaleh, a refugee resettlement worker with Immigration Services of B.C.

"People have an opportunity to come together and feel a sense of togetherness," he says. "On a personal level, it's a reconnection with our ancestry, and a renewed pride."

Music played a fundamental part of the SEACHS event, represented anywhere from orchestras utilizing the traditional Vietnamese Đàn Đao, boisterous twenty-person choirs, or even A capella acts. "We've got the past, the present, and we've got music from many countries," says Dan Nguyen, who is part of the male a Capella group The Bánh Mi Barbershop. "I think this is a statement that the Vietnamese people in Vancouver are as diverse as any community."

A strong connection with one's native country is very necessary, says renowned Vietnamese actor and co-founder Thai-Thai Le, as a connection that will strengthen the individual's confidence in their own multiculturalism amongst Canadian society.

"The main goal of SEACHS is to preserve, promote, and enhance Southeast Asian culture," says Le. "When asked about the effects of events like this, he goes on to say 'For some of us, it has contributed to a reconnection with our ancestry, and a renewed pride.'"

South East Asian cultural organization premiered a special concert last week at the Norman and Annette Rothstein Theatre, which showcased the experiences of Vietnamese-Canadians through a wide array of performing arts.

The show, called Mai Đào: A Glimpse into Vietnamese Culture, was created by the Southeast Asian Cultural Heritage Society (SEACHS) and displayed the historical roots of Vietnam through music, dance, and theatre.

"Our community needs it," said Alsaleh. "I remember when we opened our shop, lots of people who are Arab or Syrian or Lebanese came to our shop and said, 'Oh my goodness, we've seen home. We've seen home.'"

"The event also served to abolish negative stereotypes. The stigma from western civilization towards Vietnamese people in Vancouver are as diverse as any community." said Le. "The event showcased a variety of writers from all walks of life and stages in their careers, from Governor General Award winners to Poet Laureates of Canada — always closing the night with a reading from a featured Langara student."

"I've seen the success of Langara in helping its students and it's really difficult to take that first step," said Polukoshko. "What I love about my undergrad and I was starting a project, having the support from instructors was absolutely invaluable."
Like father, like son

After 36 years a dad will pass down jersey No. 9 to his son

Falcon’s athletic history will be made at the Langara men’s basketball season-opener on Nov. 2 when a son will suit up for the same team his father played on nearly four decades ago.

In 1982, Ed Anderson became a member of the Falcon’s men’s basketball team. 36 years later, his son Tyler Anderson will take to the court, making them the first father-son pair to both have played on the team, according to athletic director, Jake McCallum.

For the men’s basketball coach, Paul Eberhardt, it’s always special to see alumni keep their families connected to Langara athletics.

“There’s such a tradition here,” Eberhardt said.

Ed and Tyler are not the only example of a family legacy at Langara. Jake McCallum and his father have both worked as Langara’s athletic directors.

“It’s always great when you can have those alumni connections,” Eberhardt said.

More than an alumni connection, the reconnecting of family will be a special moment for Ed as he gets to see Tyler play for the Falcons after he spent his freshman and sophomore years for the Brandon University Bobcats in Manitoba.

“The last few years he’s played out of town,” Ed said. “Knowing this year that his games are in Lower Mainland, just a short drive away, my wife and I are really looking forward to go and watch him.”

Distance and other circumstances may have kept the two apart, but they have been connected by basketball throughout the years. Both were provincial high school all-stars and both will have worn the #9 jersey.

One thing is for sure, though, Tyler wants to be the more accomplished athlete in the Anderson family. “I’m here to compete and have fun,” He said. “But, at the end of the day, I’m trying to beat [my dad] so I can have that one-up on him.”

Athletes bounce back

New basketball coach has a fresh perspective

By MATHILDA DE VILLIERS

Langara Falcons women’s basketball team is beginning their season with a new coach and a fresh perspective.

Currie Nelson, the new head coach, said he is excited to be part of the Langara Falcons team.

His method of coaching involves focusing on improving each day, instead of setting a goal to win a number of games in a season.

“I always think a proper team, one that’s successful, is going to be greater than the sum of their individual parts,” Nelson said.

Paige Olsen, one of the assistant coaches on the team, played at Douglas College for five years and had Nelson as a coach for the last year of her college basketball career.

This will be her first year as an assistant coach and says that she shares similar points of view and coaching philosophies.

“We share the same vision and want all the players to succeed off and on the court,” she said. Amsleigh Mensah is a veteran college basketball player, this year being her fifth year playing. Previously, she played at Douglas College for four years, where Nelson coached before he came to Langara College.

That will be their third year working together.

“It’s an opportunity that I didn’t even think I would have again,” Mensah said.

Doing more in the community is something that the team is going to focus on, Mensah said.

One of the things the team offers is coaching clinics for younger players. Where they get to meet players and coaches.

“Maybe they’ll come out to one of our games and support us that way,” Mensah said.

The Falcons will open their 2018-2019 PacWest season on Friday, Nov. 2 against the Douglas Royals.

Search, rent, sweat

A new company is inviting Vancouverites to lend and rent sports equipment near them

By ROXANNE EGAN-ELLIOTT

A website that facilitates the sharing of economies of goods through the website.

Launched in February 2017, Quupe invites users to sign up for free and post photos of items they want to lend, or browse for items they’d like to use. Similar to Uber and Airbnb, all financial transactions take place through the website.

Edwin O’Shaughnessy, Langara student, works at MEC and hasn’t used Quupe, but thinks it has the potential to remove barriers for young people to get outdoors.

“I have access to something like that through my work and I find that everyone that’s used it, they rave about it,” O’Shaughnessy said.

“Having a place where you can access all that stuff for a cheap price gives the whole idea a lot more ease.”

Co-founder Angela Hamilton said that in winter months ski and snowboard gear tops the list of most popular items to borrow, and that the average borrower is a young urbanite who generally doesn’t have the storage space for outdoor gear.

Hamilton said that Quupe hopes to shift people’s ideas around access and ownership, in the same way that Netflix and Spotify have normalized accessing content over owning personal media libraries.

Hamilton also emphasized the importance of the community aspect of the site.

“The real love for people that engage with the platform is that moment of connection. I’ve found it myself when I use the platform,” said Hamilton, who has rented through the site a few times.

Paul Verlaan was one of the first lenders on the site. He’s lent a couple of bikes and snowshoes.

Verlaan said he had thought about the idea of getting together with his neighbours to share household items in an effort to confront “needless consumerism.”

Then he read about Quupe.

“Those guys have figured out a really good way to do that,” Verlaan said.

Quupe received an innovation award earlier this year from the Re-cycling Council of British Columbia for its sustainability efforts.

Team members of Langara Falcons women’s basketball team doing drills during practice in the Langara gymnasium. — MATHILDA DE VILLIERS PHOTO