

Since 1970

Amherst Island Beacon

Issue 464

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March 2017



Neighbourhood

- Lynn Fleming

Get well to Joyce Reid and Father Don Bailey.

Following their very successful bottle drive over the holidays, the A.I.P.S. Senior Class continued fund raising for their year-end trip by holding a very successful Spaghetti Dinner, Bake Sale and Raffle in February.

The 19th annual A.I.P.S. Polar Bear Olympics were also held mid-month, during spirit week. Snow arrived just in time to make ideal conditions for our outdoor activities.

February has been a quiet month on the Island. Many have fled south avoid the cooler weather, tho' it hasn't been much of a winter here.

Well, following more freezing rain and school bus cancellations in early February, the bay finally froze over on February 11th – and then was gone again on the 25th! We got a day long snowfall on the 12th, which left us with 8 or more inches of snow. Winter finally arrived on Amherst Island – for about a week - before record breaking mild temperatures returned. Now we wait and see if March comes in like a lamb or a lion.

Issue 464

Amherst Island Beacon

March 2017

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Wooly Bully Run

- Terry McGinn

From Joe DuVall, event originator: the 2017 Wooly Bully is schedule for August 20th, 2017 on the island. The runs will begin, as usual, at the farm of David Willard on the South Shore.

The Wooly Bully includes a 1km, 5km, and 10km run.

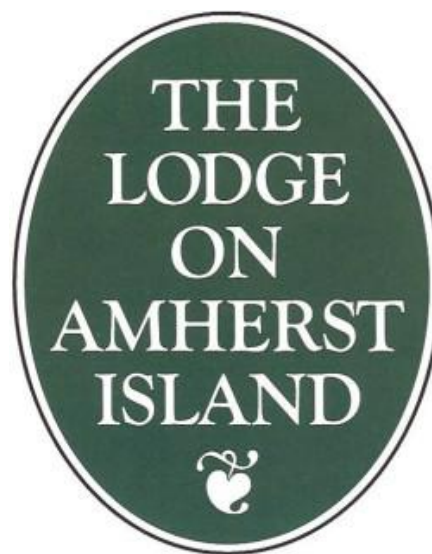
This year's race will be organized by the Neilson Store Museum with Joe DuVall and the after-expense proceeds from race registrations will go to the Museum.

Registration for the Wooly Bully is open now and can be completed through events.com.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Finch, by Dave Rattray



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Women's Institute

- Mary Kay Steel

February being a month when many of our members are enjoying warmer climes, we didn't have a proper meeting, but twelve of us gathered for a movie and a social hour and dinner. Norma-Lynn Colson was generous enough to offer her home and large TV. The movie began about 4pm: - "Sully" which presents the story of Capt. Chesley Sullenburger and his incredible landing of a jet plane on the Hudson River, with all aboard surviving. The movie was followed by a delicious meal of lasagna and accompaniments. Norma-Lynn organized the meal and we all paid our share towards it. A good time was had by all.

Our next meeting will be held the evening of Wednesday March 15th at the home of Ann Adams, beginning at 7pm. Guests are welcome.



*Completed Front Road in front of Topsy Farms,
courtesy Sally Bowen*

Council Gleanings

- Ian Murray

From The 3rd Session of Council, Feb. 13

Data from the Ferry Subsidy Petition: -Subject to year-end adjustments, Loyalist Township paid \$2,438,500 for ferry operation in 2016: \$1,708,300 for salaries; \$366,000 in fuel; \$284,700 for administration; \$33,200 for contracted services; \$25,200 in insurance; \$18,500 for materials & equipment; and, \$2600 in utilities.

The subsidy requested from MTO is \$2,064,845. This is about \$5000 for each full-time Islander in 2016.

We are fortunate to live in such a wealthy province.

Each year at this time, Loyalist staff and elected officials are struggling to create the annual budget. I found this to be a daunting task when I was a member of council for the Township of Amherst Island. I am unwilling, and probably unable, to report accurately on Loyalist's budget process.

Book Review

- Anthony Gifford

Darkness at the Stroke of Noon

by Dennis Richard Murphy, 2009

There's real pleasure in reading a work by a well known writer, whose style and manner you already know will fit your needs. It is another joy to randomly pick a book and find nearly everything you could imagine. For me, this is such a book.

The author is Canadian and the setting and content is as Canadian as it could be. Though not familiar. The protagonist is an RCMP officer who has been assigned to the far reaches (Yellowknife) by the 'higher up' to keep him from sharing information he has learned in a

previous investigation. This is one of the subplots of the action.

The main plot involves the finding of deceased members of the ill fated Frankin Expedition and a journal kept by one of its members, a journal that might be very influential in the claim of sovereignty of the 'Northwest Passage'. Two of the members of the 'dig' have died (one murdered) and our hero is sent north to investigate.

Included in the text of the novel, the for-mentioned journal is read and gives the reader a wonderful picture of just what it would have been like on that doomed enterprise.

But we have to have a female/love interest. That necessity is provided by a jaded ex-FBI sent north by American interests (woefully ignorant of anything Canadian, of course) to retrieve said journal.

The plot thickens and joyfully charges along in a very readable manner. Fun and even some education for all is offered. For me, it was time well spent.

Stone Walls

- Andrea Cross

Make a note on your calendar...

On Tuesday, March 14th the setting sun will perfectly align with the opening in the Celtic Cross dry stone legacy structure across from the Amherst Island Public School.

The beam of light will project on to the carved Claddagh stone on the far wall, which celebrates the connection Amherst Island has with Ireland. Hope to see you there.

Dry Stone Canada is now working with Algonquin College School of Business to assess the feasibility of establishing a permanent International Dry Stone Education Centre on

Amherst Island. The research should be completed this fall.

This year's Dry Stone Canada's Festival will be held in the Village of Barriefield to the east end of Kingston near Fort Henry from September 30 – October 1st. It is close enough for Islanders to visit and enjoy the event. If you have never visited the Village of Barriefield it would be a good time to go – it is a lovely historic village.



Amaryllis from Seed

- Terry McGinn

I've always loved to grow new things. Whether they're things that aren't traditionally grown here – like artichokes and peanuts – or using methods that usually aren't used – like growing citrus trees from seed rather than grafted cuttings.

Three years ago several of my amaryllis flowered all at the same time. This was noteworthy in the first place because I'm usually terrible at forcing the bulbs and getting them to flower when I want, but it also was the first time that it ever struck me that amaryllis can be grown from seed.

I have two varieties of amaryllis: the iconic Red Lion, and Apple Blossom. In this case they were flowering in tandem for the first time for me. I took this as an opportunity to try to pollinate

them, produce viable seed, and grow out the seedlings to see what comes.

And that's what I did.

Using the oh, so sophisticated pollination technique of moving the plants close together and rubbing their flower bits together I then sat back and waited and watched for the ovaries to swell; which would tell me that the pollination had been successful.

From the outset I had no idea whose pollen had ended up where; I wasn't thinking that far ahead. I wanted to get viable seeds no matter what the end result. And viable seeds I got: a lot of them.

They're small papery things, black with a bump in the middle. They fit so tightly in their pods that once you release them you wonder how on Earth there was enough room for that many. They also float.

I took a couple of shallow trays and scattered in the seeds, covered with a bit of soil, and waited. Not long, mind you, because they sprouted almost immediately.

It's amazing to see how quickly little seedlings start to look like miniature versions of their adult selves. Within a few weeks they had grown pea-sized bulbs, and the familiar dark green glossy leaves started immediately.



*Amaryllis seedlings, March 25th, 2014,
by Terry McGinn*



Amaryllis seedlings April 2015, by Terry McGinn

I was excited that they'd sprouted, but I also knew that this was where the excitement would be put on pause – for at least a few years. I had gone online to check how long it would take for an amaryllis grown from seed to flower. The answer: three to five years.

Wow.

I had already been growing a series of citrus trees for several years at that point – my Clementine tree turns seven this year – so I thought I was up for the challenge of the wait.

They have been potted up twice in the time since they were started, and the hundreds of seedlings were bit by bit whittled down to the healthiest fifty.

This past month the first sign of a pay-off appeared when the largest of the bulbs appeared to be putting out new growth that didn't quite match its other leaves.

I almost missed it at first, I hadn't expected the seedlings to flower in the winter – late spring is an amaryllis normal flowering season in its natural habitat. But after a day or two it was clear it was a flower stalk.

The excitement returned!

I have been watching the stalk grow – painfully slowly, or at least that’s how it felt – and just the other day it finally flowered. A beautiful Red Lion.

It is perhaps not the crazy mix of genetic material that I might have hoped for given the potential, but a satisfying result from a fun project none-the-less.

Then again, there are still forty-nine to go.



Amherst Island Beacon

Whether every month or only once in a while

The Beacon is looking for contributors!

Have a submission, idea, or other content? Send it to:
editor@amherstislandbeacon.com

<http://www.amherstislandbeacon.com>

Jeanette Arsenault

Maritime Night Dinner and Concert



Maritime NIGHT Dinner and Concert with Canada's Own Jeanette Arsenault

March 25th, 2017

Jeanette wrote her song, "This Is My Canada/Mon cher Canada" to celebrate her deep pride in being Canadian and to express how much she loves our country and the people who call Canada home.

Excited to announce this very special event at St. Paul's. Two sittings for a light supper (homemade clam or corn chowder, tea biscuit, and blueberry cheesecake).

Reserve your place at 5:00 or 6:00 for supper. Concert starts at 7:00.

\$15 for light supper and concert

Children under 12 free

You won't want to miss this evening in this year of celebration of Canada's 150th.

To help or for more information or tickets, please contact Janet Scott at jiscott@kos.net



Bald eagle, by Dave Rattray

Rossland

- Ross Stuart

Winter Hammock Reverie

It's been just over a year since moving onto Amherst Island: Feb 14, 2016. I sit in my workshop and gaze out into the valley below, through the bare branches of the winter lilacs that form the barrier between the house and Concession Rd 2.

The wind is howling and whining through the cracks in the board and batten, trying to penetrate the inner shell of the house and as I watch, a giant black crow exits the barn across the road. Above me are adze shaped Hickory wood beams and flooring still fastened with hand forged nails. As I muse, I realise I have been here before. Not this exact spot - but somewhere very similar and a memory came back to me when D brought her hammock last summer...

The hammock is a monster thing, with its own iron frame and a swinging bed big enough for two. We carried this Bohemian delight down the hill to the secluded place beside the water well - advertised as 'an ancient apple orchard' on the property listing. The trees are twisted and gnarled, intermixed with many species of

natural growth. The woods begin here, getting denser and more impenetrable as one approaches the property line. In the clearing, under the few crab apple trees, we set up the hammock. We swung, giggled, the sun warm alternately sunny and shady: we dozed. I awoke as a fly crawled down my face and I raised an arm to chase it away - as I did so, a twig cracked in the undergrowth. Instantly I was wide awake and without moving, could gaze directly at the direction of the sound. At first I couldn't see but then, as shapes began to separate, I saw movement: head, ears twitching, it was a deer, standing amongst the underbrush and leafy branches. Camouflaged, watching...

I was walking up the hill behind the house, a boy of twelve, the ground hard baked dirt and dust, the sun hot, not a breath of wind. The property line was close by, remarked by a rusty barbed wire fence and a line of dead pine trees descending the hill and then intersecting with a second barbed wire fence some two hundred feet away. Beyond that second fence lay more pine trees, interspersed with a dense, invasive species of bush called Port Jackson. Oblivious to the world as I walked, it was only when the animal moved its head its head and flared its nostrils did my eyes pick it up, hidden against the pine tree shadow and barbed wire lines. I stopped eyes now fixated on the impossible: a huge beast, on the other side of the barb wire, looking at me, trying to catch my scent. It had two large spiralling horns on its head and was as wide as a cow and as big as a horse. I recognised it. I recognised the horns, I recognised the stripes on its side. An Eland. It might as well have been a Unicorn.

The Eland stood at the border of our small farm between the townships of Paarl and Stellenbosch in the South Western Cape Province of Southern Africa. The farm was situated halfway up a mountain - many-a-days I

spent roaming those mountains alone, with the dogs Boonie and Blackie.

Eternity stood still as reality morphed into a new now. The new reality jerked into motion and everything happened very quickly.

My father arrived first, walking up the hill behind me, followed my sightline and himself standing transfixed. A few seconds later another man, on the other side of the fence, came into view. He held in his hand a piece of broken brick. The man approached quickly. He shouted and hurled the half brick still from some distance away. It arced through the air and landed on the Elands hind leg. The bone snapped audibly, like a dry branch, like whiplash. The Eland whirled, rearing into the air and charged down the hill, thundering with weight and speed until it hit the intersecting fence and went right through it, like it wasn't there. The crashing continued a few seconds more and then silence. My father began to run down the hill towards the now deafening silence: Rossie! Get the gun!

I went to get the gun: 12 gauge, single barrel, lever release. I put three shells into my pocket and one in the barrel, leaving the breech open.

I found him standing in a clearing in the Port Jackson, not far from the blasted fence line. The Eland was lying on the ground, broken leg at odds, trailing on a flap of skin. A fallen tree, mostly rotten was at its back. The Elands eyes were blank and yet sensitive and oddly loving. I handed my father the gun. The Eland looked at the both of us No fear, no anger. Resignation. 'Get behind the tree, it may attempt a charge' my father said. I moved away a few feet. Then my father said: 'I don't know where to hit it'. The Eland blinked and waited to die.

The shot from a 12 gauge cartridge moves in a grey blur, you can see it travel. You can see the hole open up and the blood come out. The hole

in the neck was about the size of a Canadian quarter and the blood was a two foot fountain. The animal laid its head down and died.

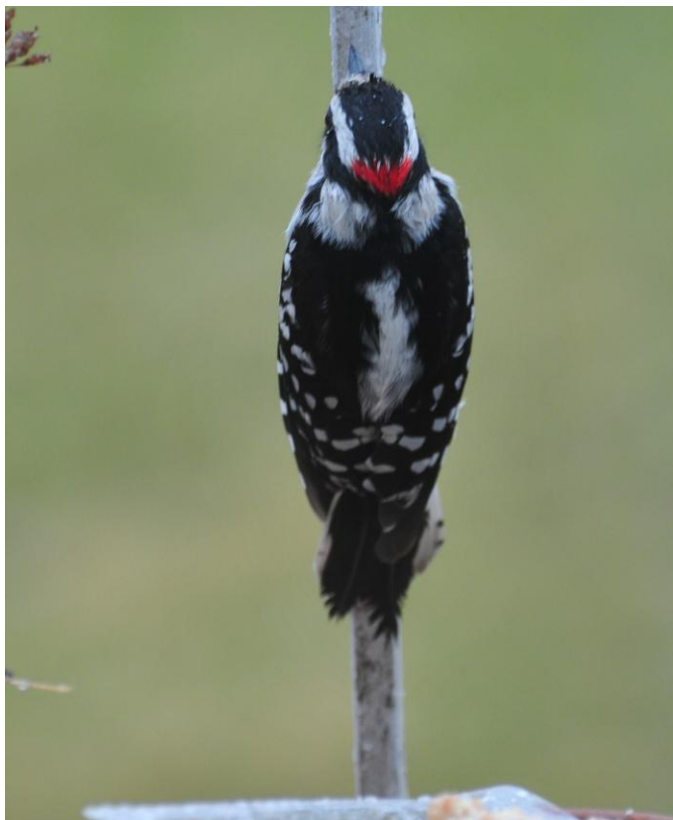
As the gun blast echoed and faded, we were alone. The three of us. And then we were no longer alone: the Headman from the collection of huts at the top of the hill appeared. He spoke with my father. My father told him to wait. My father went to the house and made a phone call. He came back. The police told him the animal was his, it had escaped from the nature reserve on the other side of the mountain and had been tracked for three days by the man carrying the brick. It was shot on our property, with our gun, it was our kill. My father told the Headman we would take a roast and they may have the rest. The Headman produced an axe. A hatchet. Women came with enamel bowls on their heads. They lined up. He skinned the animal with the axe and disembowelled it. A hole was dug and the entrails placed inside. Smell of blood and bowel gas. No words were spoken as the meat was cut from the carcass and placed into the bowls of the seemingly never-ending line of women with bowls. Everything was done with the small axe. The Headman asked my father if 'die Klein Bass' (my working name on the farm: 'small boss') wanted something from the kill. My father asked me. 'Yes' I said 'I would like a small piece of the hide, as a souvenir'. The Headman protested: cutting a piece from the hide would devalue it; my father insisted, I was at the kill, I had the right. Finally, I was presented with a piece of Eland hide, about 2" x 2". A square of Eland hide. Loving eyes. I took it eagerly and went off, far away, into the tall Kikuyu grass to lie down and assess the day.

The sun was warm, tall grass crushed under me and smelled sweet, tall grass alternating sun and shade, sweet and protective. A sniffing, snuffing and Blackie found me out and lay down beside me. I told Blackie how I was going to tan this

piece of hide (those eyes!) and keep it forever as a remembrance and I showed the fatty, hairy piece of hide to her. She flashed her brown doggy eyes at me, sniffed at the hide and faster than I could think, plucked it from my fingers and ate it. For a fleeting second I was horrified and then I saw it, a white light of truth: nothing lasts forever. I saw the Eland, eternal wisdom, looking at me as my father levelled the shotgun. Loving eyes. I hugged my dog and we lay in the grass.

Blackie and Boonie are long gone. The farm is too.

I watched the deer, patiently waiting for us to leave so it could get to the apples. When D awoke, just minutes later, still drowsy in the sun and swaying canvas bed, I explained that the deer were waiting for their turn and maybe we should go up now. We walked back up the hill to our beautiful work-in-progress, here on Amherst Island. The small irregular plot of land we have come to call 'Rossland'.



Woodpecker, by Dave Ratray



Brian Little

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Dare to Dream... and to Share It

- Anthony Gifford

There are some things that all of humanity shares. Dreaming is one of them. I don't mean the wide-awake yearning/hoping/scheming that we do: dreaming of a new job, more money, getting rid of aches and pains, of being young again. I mean the real dreams we have when we're deep asleep, the images and feelings that connect us with our sub-consciousness and the basic earth and meanings of our being. These are the dreams that are remarkably similar throughout the ages and cultures of humanity.

But we try to forget them. We degrade them: They're only dreams! Not real. Make no sense. Ultimately private.

In our cultural ignorance and to our loss, we waste them. Like most other things of value, we don't share them. We are trained from infancy to keep private anything of importance. (Is it any wonder that we're as spiritually deprived and confused as we are?) Literally every ancient culture valued dreams. They were shared, discussed, remembered, sometimes dismissed, and often treasured.

Our modern mental health was based on teachings of doctors who greatly valued dreams. Yet we don't. Why not, I wonder. Is it just too

much for any of us to share on that deep level? I guess that's really the case. Not many of us can afford a psychiatrist's time and goodness knows, we certainly aren't going to share anything of importance or of a personal nature in church, school, or on the ferry!

This world and time in which we live is entering a crisis which is beyond anything we have yet seen. Only if we chose to use all the tools that nature/God has given us, will we have a chance to come through it. Only if we chose to start sharing in all ways will we have the knowledge, strength and wisdom that is needed today and in the future. To me, how we treat dreams, a universal gift given to all, is a test that shows our potential for survival. If we can't share in this, when it costs us nothing, what chance do we have in other aspects?

So, anybody out there who wants to share dreams? It's better with three or four of us.



Bird on a post, by Brian Little



Gloria Hunter-Alcock, by Terry McGinn

Nurse at the Top of the World

- Terry McGinn

"We had a radio. 'XMI416 Tuk calling XMI417 Inuvik, do you read, do you read.' Sometimes they read, sometimes they didn't. Usually when we really wanted them there was no transmission."

Such was the remoteness of the high arctic nurses' station in Tuktoyaktuk at which Gloria Hunter-Alcock spent three years. A doctor – to whom the radio calls often beseeched – was 90 air-miles away in Inuvik. The medical team was herself and a fellow nurse named Jo.

She had begun her talk in the Back Room of the Neilson Store Museum by asking the audience who among them had been to the Arctic. There were a few: mostly visitors and those posted through the military.

"You know about those vast distances, the beautiful sunrises and sunsets; the total darkness. Tuktoyaktuk had six weeks of total darkness. Resolute had three months. That's when you find out if you've got any screws loose." To which she added with a chuckle, "No comment."

Gloria is quite the story teller; she paints a vivid picture of what might otherwise be thought a bleak and cold existence.

"One night a very sick little girl was brought in with a raging fever. We dashed about getting

buckets of snow to put in the tank behind the oxygen tent. We put her on the potty in hopes of getting some urine so we could test it, but to our horror she leaked out a few drops of blood.”

They got on the radio and called for help, but there was no answer. “We hit the textbooks which suggested a very strong anti-biotic, which we had but had been told not to use it without a physicians permission. While all this was going on the little cat sat beneath the crib.”

She paused for an aside: “We weren’t supposed to have cats, but we got a cat. It was a Siamese cat. A pure-bred, in-bred, Tuk-bred cat.

“It was all kind of eerie, because the cat kept wailing, the pitch black of the arctic night, the noise of the oxygen tent, the barely discernible breathing of the little girl, our swift footsteps, and the voice of whichever one of us was working the radio calling Inuvik.

“The night bell shattered this atmosphere. We ran to the door to see who it was. It was Al, the driver from the DEW (Distant Early Warning) line with a big stranger who turned out to be the travelling DEW line doctor. Someone on the DEW line at Bar 3 had heard us calling on his HAM radio.

“Oh, what sweet relief.”



Arctic artifacts, by Terry McGinn



Arctic artifacts, by Terry McGinn

The little girl was treated, stabilized, and transferred along to another medical facility to be healed up.

Most of her stories of medical resourcefulness in the high arctic include a personal side that Gloria relates with easy humour. The doctor from the DEW line, it turns out, was a woman chaser.

She quickly captivates an audience and even though she’s reading much of the time, she is always engaged. A little side note here, some context there, it makes for a wonderful performance. Her copy of her book, the one from which she read, was annotated with sticky notes in many, many places.

In addition to her stories, Gloria brought several artifacts with her to share a taste of the arctic culture. She answered questions from the audience, and mingled afterward with the gathered, but as is so often the case on Amherst Island, before we were ready to see her go it was ferry time and she was off.

The Back Room talks at the Neilson Store Museum are always informative and entertaining, but it’s also nice from time to time to have a visitor come from away and bring with them their own special perspective.

You can read Gloria’s story of her time in the high arctic in her book *Nurse at the Top of the World*, available through Chapters. I highly recommend it.

The Neilson Store Museum & Cultural Centre presents a Back Room Talk

THE GALAPAGOS AND MACHU PICCHU: EQUALLY SPECTACULAR

with photos and drawings

by Margaret Maloney & Peter Large



**on Friday,
March 24th
at 7 pm**

Come join us for an evening of photos and adventure stories with travellers Margaret & Peter.

(Peter's Limited Edition Prints may be purchased, with all proceeds to go to the Museum)

Light refreshments following the talk.



From the Yukon

- Daniel Little

The dark January is over, the long February is done. Winter is ever closer coming to an end. We are still very far from it being warm enough to go outside without a coat, and even as I type this it seems there is a snow storm going on, but still; winter is ending. The sun now rises a little after 8 in the morning, and is completely set by 7 at night. These are not long days, but they are noticeably longer than those days of only a few weeks ago. I don't really have to work when it is dark out now, and I get to enjoy a few hours of sunlight after I get home. I find this makes a big difference on my moral and that of my roommates. The Yukon is a beautiful place and it is nice now that the sunlight is allowing us to see some of it.

Work has also become more engaging. With two months work in my new position at the chamber of commerce under my belt I am starting to feel much more comfortable with all of my varied responsibilities. Not to mention I am becoming a much more familiar face in the community. Through work I am in charge of organizing events almost every week. Many of these are networking events in the evenings where people from the business community meet at a local business and discuss there future plans over drinks and hors d'oeuvres. The hosting business will often do demonstrations depending on the work they do and so,e of them can be very interesting! This past week I organized and attended a Business After Hours gathering at a local glass blowing studio where they made 6 art pieces and then raffled them off. I have never gotten experiences like this through work before! Haha it is very exciting and I feel like I am learning a lot, as well as gaining great experience to put on my resume.

I still miss back home a great deal. There are constant little challenges around every corner here that remind you why everyone doesn't move up to the Yukon. The high cost and limited selection of food at the grocery store, the sparse availability of Internet, the drastic changes in weather that sometimes limit your ability to leave the house, are just some of difficulties every day reminding you that you are way up north! There are bright things just around the corner though! Summer should only be 2 months away now and that has bee something I have been waiting to see since I came up here! The 24 hour sunlight will certainly be a sight to behold!

So until then, like the great song says, I'll just keep on keep on keepin' on.

Yours truly,

Daniel Little



Woodpecker on suet, by Dave Ratray

Reasons to Buy Local

- Growing for Market

The previous 7 points were included the January and February Beacons. They are reproduced with permission from GFM and courtesy of Dave Rattray.

8. Local food keeps your taxes in check. Farms contribute more in taxes than they require in services, whereas suburban development costs more than it generates in taxes, according to several studies. On average, for every \$1 in revenue raised by residential development, governments must spend \$1.17 on services, thus requiring higher taxes of all taxpayers. For each dollar of revenue raised by farm, forest, or open space, governments spend 34 cents on services.

9. Local food supports a clean environment and benefits wildlife. A well-managed family farm is a place where the resources of fertile soil and clean water are valued. Good stewards of the land grow cover crops to prevent erosion and replace nutrients used by their crops. Cover crops also capture carbon emissions and help combat global warming. According to some estimates, farmers who practice conservation tillage could sequester 12-14% of the carbon emitted by vehicles and industry. In addition, the habitat of a farm - the patchwork of fields, meadows, woods, ponds and buildings - is the perfect environment for many beloved species of wildlife, including bluebirds, killdeer, herons, bats, and rabbits.

10. Local food is about the future. By supporting local farmers today, you can help ensure that there will be farms in your community tomorrow, and that future generations will have access to nourishing, flavorful, and abundant food.



Spaghetti dinner at AIPS, by Terry McGinn

Loyalist Township Council Approves 2017 Budget

- Loyalist Township

At the February 13, 2017 Council Meeting, Loyalist Township Council approved the Operating and Capital budgets for 2017. The 2017 budget was developed to align with Loyalist Township's Mission and Vision Statements as well as the Strategic Plan Action Items identified by Council in the Township Strategic Plan. The other main driver in the 2017 budget is a focused approach to funding capital requirements.

The 2017 Operating and Capital budgets are as follows:

- General Rate 2017 Operating Budget of \$13.3 million, Capital of \$5.5 million
- Water 2017 Operating Budget \$4 million, Capital of \$2 million
- Sewer 2017 Operating Budget \$3.5 million, Capital of \$610,000
- Amherst Island Ferry 2017 Budget of \$2.8 million
- Transit Service Area 2017 Budget of \$670,800

The budget incorporates an increase to transfers to capital from operating of almost \$600,000. Just over half of the increase is in the general rate municipal budget and the remaining increase is in the utilities budget. The Township balanced the 2017 general rate and utilities operating and capital budgets within the

projected revenue amounts. Much of the capital budget is dependent on grant funding, some of which has been approved, and some is still awaiting approval.

The municipal infrastructure deficit for Loyalist Township, like much of Ontario's municipalities, is a significant challenge that requires substantial resources and commitment to overcome. Loyalist Township has employed a variety of revenue sources such as debt, grants, and contributions from the operating fund, to pay for the capital program. The Township is positioning itself to be financially sustainable over the long term by leveraging asset management information and developing long range work plans and funding strategies.

Property Assessments are updated every four years and the 2016 Assessment update reflects the valuation date of January 1, 2016 for the 2017 to 2020 property tax years. The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) undertook a comprehensive review with improved assessment quality and better valuation methods and models to deliver assessed values for the 2016 assessment update. Residents with questions regarding their assessment should refer to MPAC's website at <https://www.mpac.ca>.

An average residential property with an assessment value of \$240,750 will incur an estimated annual property tax bill for the Loyalist Township portion of \$1,637 (\$1,586 in 2016) which equates to a monthly bill of \$136 (\$132 in 2016). The County of Lennox and Addington and Education rates are not set yet. The change in property taxes of an individual residential property will vary depending on whether the assessed value of a specific property has increased in value by more or less than the average.

For more information, please see the Township web-site www.loyalist.ca.

Amherst Island General Store

- Terry McGinn

When someone with an Island connection returns to the Island it always seems to create a buzz in the community, but when that return brings with it the chance for the General Store and Post Office to be resurrected it quickly becomes the headline of the month. Dave McGinn, son of Leo McGinn who was a brother of Dennis McGinn (former owner of Dan and Joan Simpson's place), and grandson of Henry McGinn, who once ran the Emerald Store the building for which now resides at the corner of the Emerald Forty-Foot and the Front Road, has returned to Amherst Island with big plans for Stella's General Store.

"Yes, I came here to take on the challenge on the General Store." Dave said at the AIMS breakfast on February 11th at the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. He was the guest speaker that day and a standing-room only audience greeted him to hear what he had to say.



Dave McGinn talks to AIMS, by Brian Little

This wasn't the first time since arriving on Amherst Island that he was sought out for his story and his plans, either. Dave gave his first interview to CJAI's Udder Morning Show, where he joined hosts Susan Filson and Dayle Gowan for more than an hour to talk about his plans for the future of the General Store and what brought him to Amherst Island in the first place.

In his introduction of Dave at the AIMS breakfast, Bruce Caughey had this to say, "So, David has bought the former Glenn's Store and he has got a task ahead of him. He gave me a tour of the store and he really has accepted a challenge, but he's up for it. He's already started to do lots of work on it, and lots of work is what it's going to be."

That that store needs lots of work is no great surprise to anyone in the community. The store has outwardly shown its age for years, and there was little doubt that the inside needed as much work as well. But Dave is optimistic about its future and speaks passionately about the property and the work.

"When I came and looked at the property... I was in love with the property before I got here.... I wanted to do this; I wanted to make it work. The inspection I did when I did the first tour of the store. I did it with my daughter and she walked through the store with her camera shaking her head, shaking her head, shaking her head."

He made his way up into the attic, to get a look at the frame of the building through what he calls the "old part" (the rear of the structure) but, as he acknowledges, is actually newer than the main, front part.

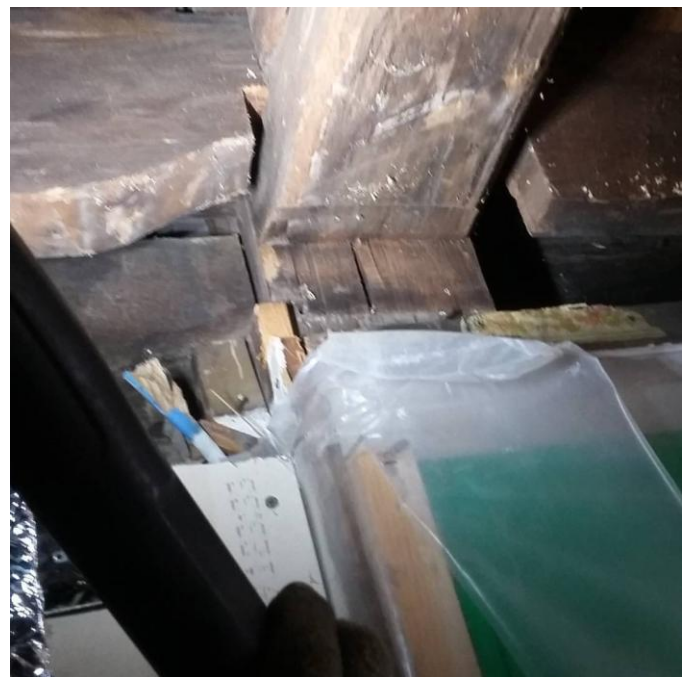
"I got through into the front part of the house and I was standing over this 8" by 8" hardwood beam, 30 feet long, and I could take a step sideways – without bumping my 6'3" head –

either way and I got this great big space, I'm counting there's five of these big, hand-hewn hardwood beams. They could have heard the cheering in Edmonton. I thought 'I could make something out of this', that's the first I knew I was going to rebuild that place."

He's already started the process, but before the construction comes a little destruction – or at least some deconstruction. On taking down a suspended ceiling in the building he states, "I don't think I've done a worse task in my life". He says that there was little wonder why the ceiling was sagging with the amount of debris that was weighing it down.

But behind the bad he's finding some good. There was a plank ceiling of hemlock behind the suspended one and he's removed those planks and has preserved them for a future use. Such is the care and foresight with which Dave is approaching this old Island gem.

"Right from the back to the front," of where the groceries used to go, "I've got the beams exposed. They're beautiful." Dave said.



*Mortar and pinion beams in the General Store,
courtesy Sally Bowen*



The General Store in fall 2016, by Terry McGinn

There are, however, some structural problems that will need to be addressed. Dave noted, “now that I’ve got to the front beam of the house four of the joists have popped out of the main beam,” and that will have to be fixed, but, he asserts, “I’ve got the equipment to do it.”

“There’s hope we’ll get the Post Office back where it belongs,” Dave said during his talk at the AIMS breakfast. As his next project he plans to gut the existing room and drywall the walls.

“Even though I’ve got the major work on the frame I can still start doing what I want to do with the walls and the ceiling in the grocery store. As to when it actually gets running, I’m thinking at the rate I’m going it’ll be late summer, mid-summer at the earliest. Once my wife gets out here there’s a two-man crew there. My wife is in for doing anything I’m involved with.”

When the new store opens the only things we know for sure will not be on the shelves are liquor, cigarettes, and lottery tickets because they’re, “too much trouble.” Asked about whether the store would carry fresh vegetables and such fare, he replied that he was open to suggestions and that closer to the date of the store’s opening he would be looking for input from the community.

“Have you thought about making it a good, old general store?” Asked Judith Harrower.

“That’s what I really want to do. I would really like to have the kind of general store that I couldn’t wait to get out of the station wagon to get in to, to go explore.” Dave replied. “I’m hoping to have an interesting store.”

Poetry

- Bruce Suds

I’ve always loved Hopkins. His poems are like travelling a gravel road - they rock and bump and deliver you to unexpected places. The last stanza of this poem could stand alone as an epigram. I believe he invented a few words for this poem and it’s a testament to his brilliance that we seem to ‘get’ their meaning...

Inversnaid

Gerard Manley Hopkins

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

CJAI’s New Mascot

- Scott Weidensaul

Last winter, our tagged owl Baltimore spent a lot of time hanging out on the broadcast antenna of CJAI-FM on Amherst Island in Lake Ontario, which brags that it’s the smallest radio

station in Canada. (Their antenna is on top of a dairy farm silo.) This year Baltimore's spending the winter west of Ottawa, but he's not forgotten on Amherst. When Janet Scott, one of the CJAI broadcasters, came into the office today to give her weekly bird report, she was surprised to find a new owl — "Harold" — perched on the window, ready to go with what we're pretty sure is not a standard-issue CTT transmitter.

"Thought you'd get a chuckle out of what was waiting for me at CJAI," Janet emailed today. "This must be [Baltimore's] replacement. Everyone misses him."

The post CJAI's New Mascot appeared first on Project SNOWstorm.



*Harold, unofficial mascot of CJAI,
courtesy Janet Scott*

Janet's Jottings - Janet Scott

We pride ourselves on a warm welcome to Amherst Island for all those who come to visit but that was not to be the case on Saturday. When Bonnie picked me up that morning my car thermometer was registering minus fourteen and with the north winds it was more like twenty-four below. The March sun was shining brightly but the breezy dock was not a good place to stand. Gaye and Betsy Beckwith had managed to gather their flock into four cars

which made the guided tour that much easier. As soon as they arrived a Glaucous Gull was pointed out flying east from the dock. As we looked eastwards a lot of the North Channel was frozen over and sea fog was rising from the open water. Mallards and Canada Geese were sleeping on the ice and I imagine that lots of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls followed the churning ferry across from Millhaven.

The usual House Sparrows, European Starlings and Red-winged Blackbirds were visiting the village feeders but the drive through Stella was very quiet. At 4700 Front Road a beautiful flock of Snow Buntings took off from the laneway and circled in front of the cars and then lost themselves against the sky over the fields to the south of the road. Scanning those open fields brought nothing into view and as we have reported this year there is no evidence of voles so no wintering raptors. As we passed Poplar Dell and then drove up the hill a pair of Ravens/ Crows appeared beside us. That discussion was quickly ended when the birds cawed at us! Janice Grant spotted a large bird heading east and we drove to catch up. It was identified as a Bald Eagle. At the Lauret family home, the owners of the Owl Woods, who so kindly let so many of us visit, there are a myriad of feeders and bird houses. Here the many sets of eyes were quick to spot Blue Jays, Mourning Doves, Black-capped Chickadees, Tree Sparrows, Northern Cardinals, Downy Woodpecker, Common Grackle, Red-winged Blackbirds, Eurasian Starlings, House Finches and White-breasted Nuthatches.

We continued east and spotted an Immature Bald Eagle circling with a Raven in pursuit or so I thought. As more eyes honed in on the pair we realized that they were both riding a thermal and climbing higher and higher into the sunlit sky. Susan Filson had kindly invited us to stop at Sandy bay Bed and Breakfast because a



Winter scene, by Dave Rattray

Snowy Owl hung out there this week just over her fence in the KFN property. It was not to be this morning. We travelled south then to see if the open water on the South Shore would give us some duck species. Right away we spotted some Goldeneye who are at present doing their breeding gymnastics that make you think that they will dislocate their necks. A little further along more Goldeneye. Next stop a few more Goldeneye and that continued to the Stella Forty-foot. Where all the varieties of ducks were that morning is anyone's guess but they were NOT THERE! At the corner Gayes' carload spotted an American Kestrel but our three cars ahead missed that sighting of the smallest of our Falcons. Fortunately when we stopped next we were all able to see a pair of Red-tailed hawks in the bush on the east side of the forty-foot. They were soaking up some rays and as I have noticed before the males in Spring seem to sit with white breasts towards the sun and they just glow white. While we were watching a White-tailed deer crossed the road and sped quickly east across the stubble.

Now we turned west along the Third Concession Road and spotted two more deer from the top of the hill. I then guided the group

to the home of Barb and Adam Miller. Adam has recently built a beautiful birdfeeder which I hear that the racoons like but was also of interest to we birders. The reason we had stopped there was to see the large holes that a Pileated Woodpecker is making in the Willow Tree south of the house. Perhaps Barb, Adam and Allan you are about to get new neighbours? By now it was 11:30 so we guided our friends back to my house and scared off about 200 Starlings, Blackbirds in a mixed flock. Our group warmed up and a group picture was taken. Many headed back for the 12:00 ferry that would take them home to civilization but some hardy souls stayed to try the Owl Woods and at least feed the chickadees. We had an awesome time hosting the Kingston Field Naturalists. Please come again (when it's warmer).



Snowy road, by Brian Little

Thank Yous

We would like to thank family and friends who joined us in celebrating our 25th Wedding Anniversary before Christmas.

Special thanks to Tracey Filson for all of her help. And to Laura Welbanks and our circle of friends for the trip down memory lane and help throughout the evening.

Thank you all for the gifts and best wishes! A night we shall never forget!

Kim and Duncan Ashley and family

Notices

As you may be aware, the Ministry of Transportation recently awarded a contract to Rankin Construction Inc. to reconstruct the Amherst Island ferry docks.

The Contractor has established a project website and twitter feed to provide information

and updates about the project. We would appreciate it if you could follow the project on Twitter to help further inform the local community and ferry users.

The Twitter feed is @A_I_FerryDocks

The project website is
<http://www.amherstislandferrydocks.ca/>

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre

In celebration of Canada's 150th year
the Neilson Store Museum is looking for 150 depictions
of life and history on Amherst Island.

Photographs, drawings, documents; all are welcome.

Your original will be scanned for use and
you will retain your original.

We are looking hoping to get as wide a variety of submissions
as possible, from architecture, to events;
from portraits, to landscapes.

Contact Terry McGinn to submit: ttmcginn@gmail.com

Advertisements

MICROWAVE

White microwave, turn table, it's a good size. Like new. Bob Filson.

LOST: One Hairdresser

FOUND: One Hairdresser

If you have been looking for JOAN (formerly with "Changes"), she is now working from her home. She is located north on Speers Blvd. to the FIRST STOP SIGN, left on Kildare (to the fourth house), 160 Kildare. Her phone number is 613-540-1467.

FREE: FLOOR TV

About 45 inches, heavy. Call 613 384 6535.

WANTED:

Excellent quality queen mattress; good quality double bed mattress; small dog or large cat carrying cage (sufficient for 2 smallish lambs). Call Sally 613-389-3444

WANTED: SEEDLING TRAYS

If you have any unwanted but reusable seedling trays I would be glad to have them, please. I can pick them up or I am at the AIMS Farmers' Market on Saturdays. Thank you. Terry McGinn - 613-888-3702, or terry@maplemarsh.ca

WANTED: HELP STILL NEEDED
for the Lennox and Addington S.P.C.A.

Used towels and linens, paper towels and cleaning supplies, pet food and toys, kitty litter, are always in demand; Canadian Tire coupons. We are glad to accept pop cans, beer and LCBO containers too. Thank you for helping to support our animal shelter. Further information needed?

Call Freda Youell – 613-384-4135

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GODDEN WHOLE HOT SAUSAGE



MANY THANKS to our island customers for choosing Godden's Whole Hog Sausages for your BBQ needs this summer! Particular thanks to The Back Kitchen for including our product on your menu! We are freshly stocked at Poplar Dell with 5 lb. cases of both BBQ Sausages (Salt & Pepper, Honey & Garlic, Hot Italian, Sundried Tomato & Oregano, Sweet Chili & Lime) and Breakfast Sausages (Salt & Pepper, Maple). All cases \$35.

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MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN

Amherst Island Women's Institute Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard (wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, bath seats, grab rails, commodes, raised toilet seats). Donations of used equipment in good condition also welcome. Call Sharen English 613-384-6535

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Upcoming Events

Worship at St. Alban's – Sundays 10:30am

Worship at St. Paul's – Sundays 11:00am

Loaves & Fishes

Wednesdays 12:00pm – 2:00pm

350 3rd Concession Road

Internet Cafe

Tuesdays 9:00am – 2:00pm

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre

Setting Sun Experience

March 14, 2017 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Dry Stone Legacy Site

Women's Institute Meeting

March 15, 2017 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Ann Adam's House

Sheep Shearing

March 18, 2017 8:00am – 3:30pm

Topsy Farms, 14775 Front Road

Bach Haus Concert

March 18, 2017 3:00pm – 5:30pm

Bach House, 4545 South Shore Road

Jeanette Arsenault

March 25, 2017 6:00pm – 8:30pm

St. Paul's, 1955 Stella 40 Foot Road

Archives

March 1987, Issue 110

Comments

- A. Bruce Caughey

Contributors to the columns of the Island Beacon, of late, cover many and varied topics, for which I give them "full credit"! May I pass along a few comments expressing my feelings?

How many of our Island residents have paid any particular attention to our Amherst Island Public School of late?

Last year the exterior of the school received a substantial program of repairs and painting, with new exterior lights installed. During the past weeks the interior of the building has been completely re-decorated and from my observations the original "sparkle" of the building has been restored. My sincere thanks and grateful appreciation to the maintenance Department of the Lennox and Addington County Board of Education on their completion of this maintenance programme.

Further I am prepared to comment, that on the basis of my previous knowledge of the schools in this County, that the Amherst Island Public School rates very high, both in the quality of the building itself and in the quality of educational programmes offered. The continued interest and enthusiasm, as well as the cooperation between teachers and parents is something that does not exist in many schools. Education, today is beset with many problems

and if we continue in the path that we are now directing ourselves we are facing more horrendous problems than we have yet dealt with.

I remember very distinctly the opening ceremonies associated with the building of our "new" school, which had been constructed in the face of the usual elements of opposition that are so common in our Island Community. Representing the Provincial Department of Education on this occasion, was the Superintendent of Elementary Education, the Late Col. S. A. Watson, (father of Patrick Watson of T.V.'s "Venture".) I remember asking Sam, at that time, what, in the judgement of the Department, was the estimated life of a building of this kind? He replied "forty years".

Well it is forty years this summer since our school was under construction and my humble opinion is that there are many more decades of "life" in the building because of the initial quality of its construction, coupled with a good programme of maintenance.



David and Paula Pike join Woody and Judy in Placencia, Belize, courtesy Judy Greer



Rita's shed, by Brian Little

I sincerely hope that one of the next projects to be undertaken by the Board, will be the asphaltting of the parking area, perhaps a project that should be shared with the Township of Amherst Island, due to the extensive use made of our Community Centre and the recreational facilities provided by our "Recreational Committee".

In closing may I congratulate my friend Garnet McDonald on his contribution to the last issue of your paper. I am sure Garnet was quoting from the Annual Financial Statement of The Township of Amherst Island for the year 1932. This was a simple readable report of the Township's business for the year which every ratepayer received a copy of and which was the basis of discussions, questions and criticisms at the Annual Nomination Meetings, when elected representatives were required to give an accounting of their stewardship in office.

The very existence of this report, to me, is evidence of the interest that the McDonald family maintained in the operation of our Township Business.

March 1997, Issue 230

How Parents Embarrass Their Teens

- Shawna Phillips

After the age of 10 or 11, everything a parent does embarrasses their children. You can't help it - we can't help it, it's a simple fact of life.

Some parents choose to sit back and deal with their teenagers in a very passive way, knowing this phase will only last ten years or so. Others, like many we know insist on provoking embarrassment to their teens by behaving like someone from Mars.

For instance, while the teenager is having a sleepover, the easy going parent would stay in the kitchen, out of the way. The embarrassing parent will be found in the middle of the pack laughing harder than everyone else at things that aren't even funny. These parents are never offended when they finally clue in that the gang isn't amused. They just move very quickly into the "when I was your age" stories, and follow this up by refusing to go to bed until everyone else has fallen asleep from boredom.



Lonely tree, by Brian Little



Snowy trees, by Brian Little

And what about taking your parents out, like to the mall or a restaurant, or even the corner store. At the age of just 14, I know from personal experience that you should only take your adult out in public when you absolutely have to.

You know what I am talking about. The parent, for example, who tags along with you into the music store and plays chopsticks on the demo piano while you try to take cover by looking long and hard at the CD selection and pretending not to know them.

Shopping for clothes can bring a whole new meaning to the word embarrassment. As we all know, a parent's opinion of suitable attire is slightly different from anything I would ever be caught dead in. Mom and Dad tend to go for the 1950's style frilly dresses and 3-piece polyester suits, while many of today's teens prefer a much different look. When you finally agree to try on the disgusting outfit (which you do just so they will let you go home), dear old Mom can be heard through the entire mall saying things like "don't you think

that's a little tight around the hips?" Or "you're just the spitting image of your Dad in that handsome suit, but isn't it a little baggy in the rear?" That's of course after she has come into the changing room and forced you to step out in front of the big mirrors where everyone in the world can see.

Once you have finally agreed upon a wardrobe, or Mom has agreed to let you shop on your own, what always comes next are the family visits to show off the new duds. Now I don't mind family reunions as a rule, but is it really necessary for the folks to say things like "he's got his father's skinny legs?" Can anybody tell me why they always have to make us dance with Great Uncle Harvey or Great Aunt Harriet at their 150th birthday parties? And why do they have to give us names that none of the old folks can remember?

Even the annual family vacation has been known to cause teenage nightmares. Have you ever gone to a public park where your Dad rounds the family up with a blow of his whistle? Or been to a nice hotel where you have to sneak in the 200 pound family dog? How about Dad honking the horn at the rest stop knowing full well the horn plays the theme from "Love Story"?

As I started out to say at the beginning, there is nothing any parent or child can do to prevent this stage in life. Parents, since nearly everything you do over the next decade will only humiliate us, I have put together a Top Ten

list of things never to do to your teenager. I can't promise this will completely stop you from embarrassing your child, but if it makes one parent stop and think before they do something foolish, it's worth it.

The #10 thing you should never do to your teenager: dance the polka at the annual street dance.

#9 walk the dog in your bathrobe

#8 try to get through the express line at the grocery store with more than 10 items.

#7 seat your teenager at the kiddie table at Thanksgiving.

#6 tell people your kid ate dog food until he was six.

#5 meet the school bus in your robe and slippers.

#4 drive an old car that backfires.

#3 honk when you pick us up from a party.

#2 ask the waiters to sing Happy Birthday to us in a public restaurant.

And the #1 thing I beg you never, ever to do is to say publicly that you have seen Elvis in the past 10 years.

A Letter Home

- Sally Bowen

Weather advisory, 10 to 15 cm of snow, freezing rain all mixed together with a good wind and what have you got? March 14, 1997! Choring this morning required full winter gear. I'm glad we took that

wagon load of hay out to the pasture. At least the animals will still get fed. March always seems to bring at least one Jim Dandy storm. We were all beginning to feel smug commenting on how winter was over. Ha! Mother Nature figured one more challenge was needed and here it is.

In past years we would now be lambing. Some ewes always managed to wait until break time before having their lambs. While the shepherds were in the house for a 15 minute snack, the ewes would find the furthest, coldest part of the barnyard in which to have their lambs. We would return to find a shivering white speck which was immediately whisked off to a warming heat lamp. Some of the older ewes were wiser to the ways of lambing. Those we would find tucked snugly away in a warm, dry corner of the barn. The lambs were obviously appreciative of their mother's years and resulting wisdom.

We are all still very worried about the Township having to take over the operating costs of the Ferry. No matter how the issue is resolved, I'm sure it is going to mean considerable changes in our lives. I wouldn't want to see people moving off the Island because of this but it's a very real possibility.

On that note, I think I wilt withdraw into a good book and be grateful for all that we still have.

Happy Easter

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