

Amherst Island Beacon



Issue 477 There's always another boat. April 2020

Editor's note

Ummmm sitting here at my table at home thinking what will I write this month. Well I have been working on a lot of projects. I'm shopping for 5 seniors. I wear my mask and keep 6 feet away from everyone. I set up my stained-glass bench in my She Shed. Anthony has been busy putting dirt on our raised beds. We have some seeds planted inside but not as many as Terry McGinn and Frank. We need a green house. I have been crocheting a lot, toques and bags and bowls. Watching TV, Netflix and Crave. Birding by myself and really enjoying the reports from Janet Scott, Ida Gavlas, Sharen English, Sherri Jensen, Susan Filson, Bonnie Livingstone, etc. Reading, listening to audio books, bicycling, walking, baking and cooking. Spending a lot of time on the phone checking in with people who are living alone and isolating alone. Painting rocks, sketching. Hope to do some music sometime. What are you doing during this time of isolation? I would love to hear.

Mom is doing fine in Selby. I have visited her through a window a couple of times.

Please send submissions for the Beacon.

Thanks to Janet for 'Janet's Jottings.'

Thanks to all the people that are helping other people during this time, the ferry crew, roads crew, post office, McGinn General Store, CJA, the churches making their message available on line, people that post on Amherst Island Community Facebook page, etc. Keep safe. Judy

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Spring Photo
From Patricia-Craig Harris-Vincent

Amherst Island BEACON Issue 477, April 2020

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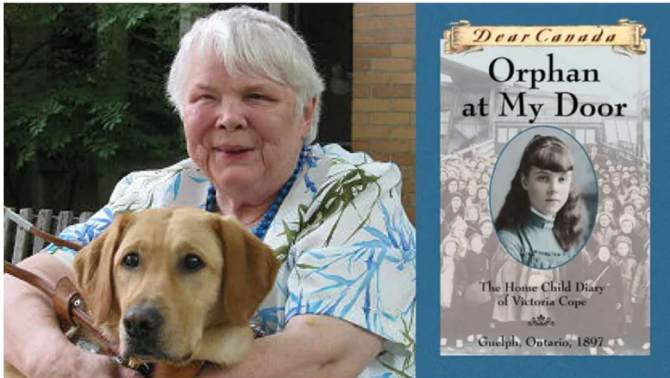
Submission Deadline 25th of mth

Provided via: Amherstisland.on.ca/Beacon

(Operated by the Amherst Island Community Alliance)

Passings

Jean Little has died at 88. Jean Little was the author of more than 50 books. Jean is a relative of Brian Little's.



Janet's Jottings

Janet Scott

April 2020

The Spring of lonely birding and self-distancing. We will probably recall 2020 for the rest of our lives. We have been forced to stay at home, work from home, isolate only with our own household for the safety of our fellow Canadians. When there is no vaccine developed as yet, the only protection of our vulnerable friends and relatives is to stay away.

While my variety of busyness and various volunteer activities have been put on hold, I have not been denied my favourite hobby: birdwatching. In spite of delayed Spring warmth and unstable temperatures our faithful bird friends are returning and responding to the eternal call of Nature, to migrate, mate and nest. As human activity slowed and Earth took a big breath and started cleaning herself. The bird activity continued as usual.

This is the time of the Big Sit in birding. Birding from your chair, from your window, from your yard or from your car, as long as you are alone. My faithful birding friends on Amherst Island have continued to send out to the group weekly, if not daily reports of the birds that are being seen.

Song Sparrow: a few Song Sparrows stay all winter if they have shelter and food but as the snow melted and March days warmed more Song Sparrows returned to our yards and lawns to sing incessantly in the dawn chorus. Most of the year he is quite secretive but if you see a strongly streaked Sparrow with dark marks on its face like mutton chops and a central spot that doesn't fly away when you step out on the deck but quickly dodges in under the nearest bush, then you are probably looking at a Song

Sparrow.

Ducks: All kinds of ducks are returning to Amherst, some to nest and some to rest before migrating further north. The handsome Pintail with his graceful white neck and stately paddle can be seen in Lance Eves marsh along with lots of our year-round Mallards and newly returned Green-winged Teal. Hopefully, I'll get to see Blue-winged Teal as well. Mergansers and Buffleheads are meeting up and mating. Some will stay, most will travel north. Our rather exciting yard bird for Bonnie, Lyn-Anne and myself was the visit by Wood Ducks. They are a common nesting bird here in the Kingston region but first time for me to have a pair in my yard. They are cavity nesters so looking for a convenient hole in a tree in which to nest. As birds arrive our Snowy Owls are leaving. The owls wearing transmitters took off for the north. Many nest in Ungava.

Amherst trapped, banded and fitted with a new up to date Argos transmitter (Feb. 2020) left a week ago and checked in near Cobden in the Ottawa Valley in the same area where Baltimore and Hardscrabble spent two winters there. No neon signs flashing to tell Snowies that a good area to stop and feed is just ahead. They don't carry maps or gps apps on a phone and yet they know the way. Our other owl Simcoe has slipped off the radar. She may be well on her way and hasn't checked in with a cell tower. Stella who was last on the Island April 24, 2018 has been staying in Southern Manitoba. Weather has not been good in Saskatchewan and Manitoba so the Snowies are staying put! Follow our owls on Project Snowstorm . Google it and click on Owls to see maps and check in points as they travel to the Arctic. Susan Filson reported a Snowy still at their property on April 18.

Enjoy your armchair birding. Even a pandemic can't stop the Spring migration. Good birding everyone.

Birds



**Yes there are still 2 Snowy's on the Island
Photo from Frank Cervenka via Janet Scott**



Spring Photo from Patricia-Craig-Marris-Vincent



Song Sparrow Photo from Sherri Jensen



Birds found on AI Spring Photo from Patricia-Craig-Harris-Vincent



Merganser pair Photo from Sherri Jensen

Municipal Announcements

Amherst Island Ferry

Washrooms Closed to Public

Effective April 10th, the washrooms aboard the Amherst Island Ferry are closed to public access. These measures are being put in place to ensure the safety of our passengers and crew. Earlier this week, the Amherst Island Ferry implemented additional measures at the direction of Transport Canada.

Amherst Island Flood Damage Repair Project **Road Repairs to Amherst Island Flood Damaged Roads**

Update April 15 - Loyalist Township Staff is continuing work with its consultant to design the repairs to flood damaged roads on Amherst Island. At this stage of the project, a draft design has been prepared and is available for review below.

A project letter is being circulated via Canada Post to Island residents in the project area. Enclosed with this letter is a Site Access Construction Agreement authorizing Township staff to complete flood damage repair work on property outside of the travelled portion of the road, without prejudice to the right of either party to dispute the ownership of any portion of the shore of Lake Ontario in the future.

Township staff are booking appointments for meetings with property owners to discuss the Site Access Construction Agreement and any other project information or concerns. If you intend to execute the Site Access Construction Agreement without a meeting, please return it to:

Joe Gratton
Project Supervisor
18 Manitou Crescent W
Amherstview, ON K7N 1B7
Tel: 613-386-7351 Ext. 172
Email: jgratton@loyalist.ca

Site Access Construction Agreement

April 15 Letter to Amherst Island Residents

On Tuesday, November 26, 2019, a Public Meeting was held at the Amherst Island Fire Hall to gather public input on initial plans for road repairs to Amherst Island roads.

Loyalist Township hired BTE, a civil engineering firm, to compile reports outlining the areas and extent of the damages sustained in 2017 (PDF,

10MB) and in 2019 (PDF, 15MB). Maps of the project areas can be viewed by clicking the following thumbnail images:

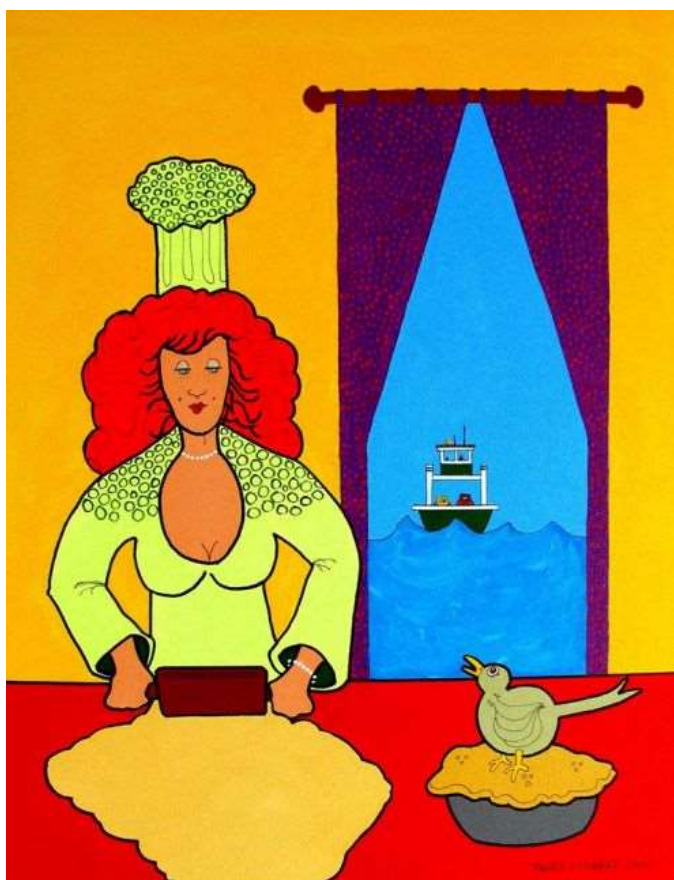
The planned repair work relates to damages sustained on shore roads as a result of high water levels in 2017. The repairs are being funded, in part, by the province of Ontario under the 2017 Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance (MDRA) program. This program provides financial assistance to help Ontario municipalities recover from natural disasters and is a claims-based program that, when activated by the province, offers financial assistance to qualifying municipalities. The MDRA program places very specific limitations on eligible costs for which the province will offer assistance. Operating costs incurred are limited to those that protect public health, safety and access to essential services, while capital costs include only those required to repair public infrastructure or property to pre-disaster condition. Municipal claims are only accepted by the province if the eligible costs under the claim reach a provincially defined threshold of 3% of the municipality's Own Purpose Taxation levy. The eligible costs associated with the Township's 2017 claim met this threshold and the Township is able to access support under MDRA for 2017 damages. As such, the province will provide funding for the eligible costs associated with these damages using a sliding-scale, cost-sharing formula between Loyalist Township and the province. More information about the MDRA program can be found here: [MDRA Guidelines](#)

A careful review was undertaken by the Township's civil engineering consultant in 2019 to determine the extent of eligible costs for incremental damage caused by 2019 flooding (i.e. damage to public infrastructure in addition to pre-existing 2017 damage that is already covered under the 2017 claim). This work determined that the Township did not meet the claim threshold for the 2019 program, which continues to be 3% of the municipality's Own Source Taxation. As such, the municipality is also not eligible for the Climate Resilience Incentive, which is only available to municipalities under the 2019 program. More information on the Climate Resilience program can be found in the attached document: [Climate Resilience Incentive Info Sheet](#)

If you were unable to attend the information meeting, you can sign up at the link below to have

your name added to the Project Update distribution list. You'll receive email updates as soon as new information is available.

Island Art



All of these are the work of Terry Culbert





Terry Culbert lived and worked on the Island for a number of years. He has since moved to the mainland, but his work still occasionally features island themes.



It's been awhile since we showcased some of Brian Little's work. Here are some lovely examples. Brian maintains a studio on the 2nd.

Shed on Number 2



Napanee Train Bridge



Old Barn



Old Mill



**Old Barn
between Napanee and Bath**

These two pieces, by Don Woodiwiss and Brian Little respectively, are wonderful renditions of natural beauty.

**For something a little more harsh,
also by Brian Little,
see the next page.**





More Birds



Eastern Bluebird
Photo from Kathy Eardley

Right: Bald Eagle
Photo from Kim Arnold

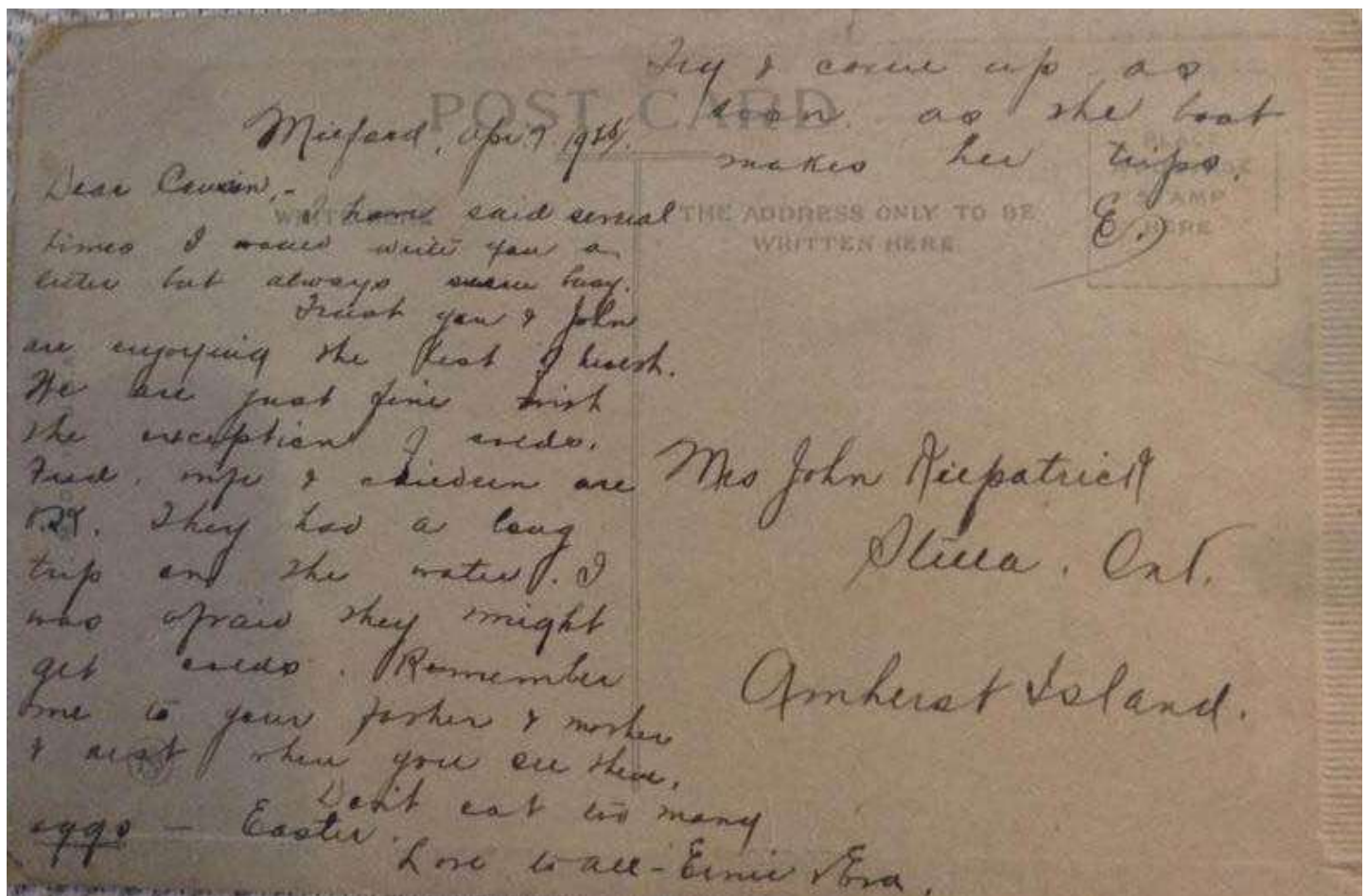
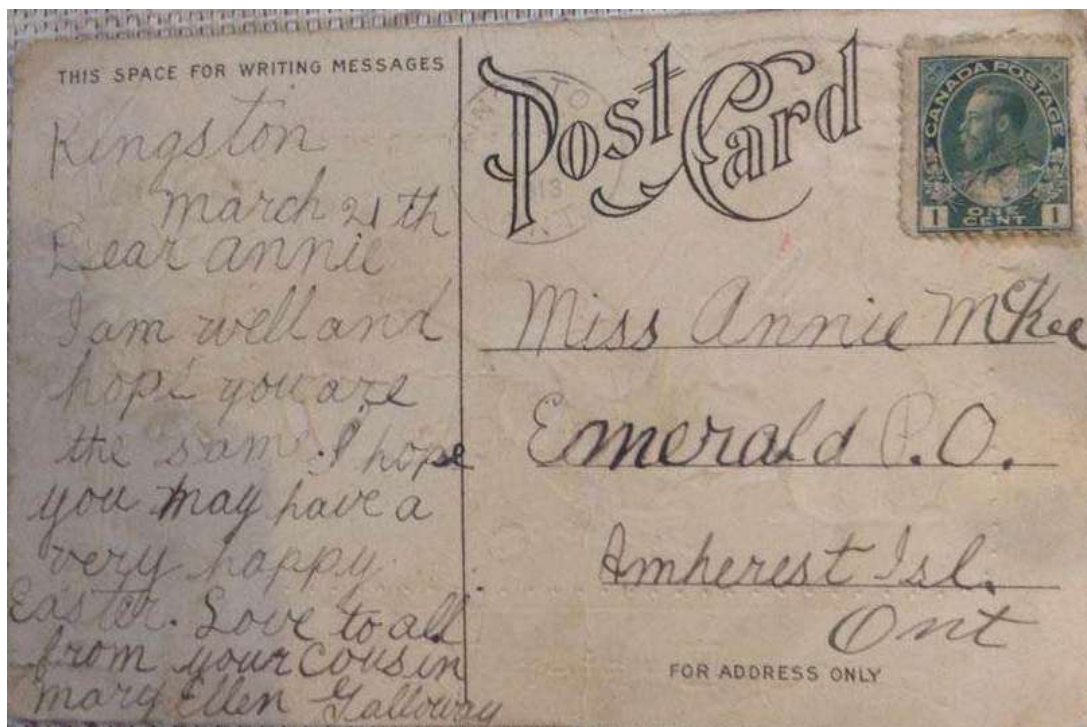




Clockwise from above:
Easter Meadow Lark from Donna Jaye Jerry
American Goldfinch by Bonnie Bailey
Red-winged Blackbird by Bonnie Bailey
Great Yellowlegs by Sherri Jensen.
Great Horned Owl Photo by Laurie Atkins Brown



Blast from the Past



Old Post Card Some more Easter post cards, The one dated 1913 was sent through Emerald Post Office. The second dated 1925 sent through Stella P.O. All cards from Warren Kilpatrick



Wouldn't it be interesting ...

If we celebrated Easter with Dragon Eggs instead of Bunny Eggs?

The scene is in a warm inn, situated at a crossroads in a wild and ancient land. Valiantry, honour, sword and sorcery still rule, and nomads are seldom what they seem. But tonight, the fire is pleasant, the food is good and the company is congenial. Dravin, a frequent story teller here, considers the date, and thinks back on something that relates.

"Do you remember," he asked, "of my tale of The Dragon's Egg? "It talked about the how dragons lay their eggs and how those deadly vessels absorb power."

I see we have some new friends here tonight, so I'll review.

Dragons are creatures of great age and power. Normally - they look upon the affairs of humans with amused disdain, but very little interest. Despite claims to the contrary, I've never known of anyone who has ever defeated a dragon in combat, or has managed to subjugate one to his will. They are immense beasts; armoured with scales and powerful magic and all but invincible.

Since dragons possess strength, wit, wisdom, and old powerful magic, they are extraordinarily dangerous. Their only saving grace is that generally they don't care about us. We are insignificant.

They only recently gained a small measure of respect for us with the advent of the age of wizardry; and then only as a source of power for their eggs.

A dragon's egg, you see, is a wondrous and deadly thing. Since the dawn of time, a female dragon would lay her egg in a place of power. Sometime on a mountain top, sometime deep within the earth; wherever the flow of magic was strong. There it would sit; slowly absorbing magic and feeding the tiny being within.

The egg itself was protected by the mother's magic. It was hard as diamond; it could not be destroyed nor harmed. The tiny dragon cocooned inside would draw upon the life of Mother Earth until it had enough power to burst forth and take its position among the living.

Some dragons preferred places of fire; placing their eggs in volcanos. Some in places of air, such as the cleft of mountain passes. But air, water, fire, or earth; it didn't matter. Still the young would feed and grow strong.

This could take centuries.

Many years ago though, an egg was found by a human wizard. He realized that it possessed power - and he was determined to have it. He poured over it for weeks. Spell after spell he launched; attempting to break loose the forces he knew lay within.

Each and every spell disappeared. Sucked up without a trace, like a rock falling with a 'plunk' into a deep deep well. Over time, the wizard became weaker and weaker; his magic absorbed by the hungry beast within the egg. Eventually, the wizard died and his studies were taken by another who died as well.

The dragon was born some years later, normal in every regard. But what normally would have taken centuries, had been accomplished in mere decades. It was a fact which the dragons noticed with interest and later capitalized upon.

In any event, that is the background of another story; which you can read at your leisure. It is not what we shall discuss tonight. Tonight, we will speak of Fursa and Metorial.

Fursa was a dragon. Young, and female. Because she was young, she was also small; barely fifty feet long. A tall man might reach to her shoulder, though few would want to, for like all dragons she was powerful and invulnerable. As was normal for her kind, she had been many years away from others; exploring this world, and the others she could travel to using her magic.

Her mating flight had been almost a decade before, and it had probably been too soon for her. It had been a burst of passion, too quickly over, and she had almost forgotten about it except in pleasant memories. So, it came as a surprise to her to find herself becoming gravid.

Normally, this would not have been a problem; but Fursa was young and inexperienced and far away from others of her kind. She missed the first warning signs, and the second ones. She didn't realize her condition until it was almost too late. And when she did, it happened that she was far away in a different aspect of reality. It was a distant place she had to struggle back from in a rapidly weakening state.

One has to remember that the egg, once laid, is protected by a massive magic spell to ensure its survival. But this spell is generated, and empowered, by the mother's instinct. It leeches off her as she comes closer to term. So, as her time came nearer, Fursa found herself, for the first time in her life, growing weak.

Her wings would barely hold her and her sight was blurred. Her breathing was laboured and the once gauzy veils between the worlds now parted only with the greatest degree of effort. Yet her instinct drove her unrelentingly, back to the mountainous land in which she was born. Despite her exhaustion, and her confusion, and her terrible terrible fear; it would not let her rest.

Finally, her waning strength failed her and, still many leagues short of her goal, she fell from the sky with a massive crash to land in a farmer's field. In silence and in terror, she wept; betrayed by her own weakness (and her own ignorance); and fearful that she was incapable of protecting her babe.

Now, Metorial was a farmgirl. She was young, barely in her teens, and had yet to blossom into her womanhood. She tended the animals, worked the garden, minded her parents and generally acted as would be expected for one of her age and station.

Mind you, this suddenly changed when one morning she found a dragon in the barn.

With a shriek she grabbed up a haying fork, holding it before her like a weapon. I suppose the ironic thing is, this may have been the only time when she might actually have been able to injure the massive beast. Poor Fursa was greatly weakened and her once strong magic was depleted as it focused on the egg awaiting inside her.

Still, we shall never know if her strike would have marred the armoured skin of the dragon, for the blow was never struck. It may have been terror, or common sense, but I would like to believe that it was the fearful sobs of the young dragon which stroked a cord of compassion in the mind and heart of the young girl. In any event, a bond was formed, based on a respect for life and a knowledge that some things are more important than the separation of species.

For weeks it lasted, with Metorial constantly concealing the presence of Fursa, while at the same time trying to acquire



enough food to fill her mighty belly. There were many 'challenges' to this, and more than a few excuses had to be made. Metorial was quite sure the family dog would NEVER forgive her.

But when finally the pulsing glowing humming egg was laid, Metorial was there to offer comfort to her friend. She smiled and told her it was lovely, and held a hand against a massive talon as she sang a soft song of benediction.

The next day Fursa was gone, as was the egg. With the laying complete, the dragon's magic had reasserted itself; making her strong and whole again. So she had left, to bear her egg to her chosen incubation point; somewhere where the magic was strong and her tiny offspring could feed, and grow.

Metorial never saw the beast again, for humans are only that; human, and hardly worthy of the attention of dragons.

As was the way of humans, her life continued and Metorial grew older. She met a man, and fell in love. They spoke vows over clasped hands, and she went to his bed and sometime later she became with child. Time passed; flicking for humankind, and after a short nine months the babe was born.

It slid into the wrinkled hands of a midwife, while Metorial's strong and loving husband stood near; holding her hand. And as it squalled its first cry, from outside the house a great cry of fearful voices rose up. And gasps of awe. The wetnurse rushed to the window and threw open the shutters. She stood stunned, as across the sky they saw it; a pharynx of seven dragons; a sight never before witnessed by the eyes of men.

It dominated the sky, a massive wedge in golds and greens; so wondrous as to grip the heart. It passed only once before it disappeared in the distance, but when the midwife, and the nurse, turned back towards the babe there was respect and reverence in their eyes. Metorial thus knew that a debt had been repaid and that evermore her daughter was blessed.

Topsy

Topsy Turvey: a bunch of dirt worshipping heathens.

**Randi Kennedy, Kyle Murray, Leah Ruth Murray, Rick Suz, Ian Murray and Sally Jane Bowen at Amherst Island
Photo from Jacob Murray**

Below: Will



**HEADLANDS COMMUNITY
KYLE, JACOB, LEAH, RANDI,
DON, RICK, IAN, SALLY &
CHRIS**



Weather is the unknown; it is impossible to know how the grass will grow and its future caloric value.

Will they be eating homemade guacamole or roadside french fries?

We use 48 years of experience and then guess at the rest.

It's nearly time to allow the ewe flock out of the barnyard for some early grazing.

March to April is the only time the flock is penned up.

They are desperate to get out on to the green grass.

We have to be very careful how we open and close the gates.

Can you guys empathize with how they are feeling right now?

Stuck inside while the world goes green out there without you.

The barnyard is best for several reasons:

1) The hay we are feeding them currently has invasive grass seeds in it that we don't want to spread out of control.

2) The sheep have just had their winter coats removed and it has been snowing and windy and cold, it takes time to adjust to the new reality.

3) The fields themselves are too saturated to drive on without causing compaction damage and cutting deep ruts that will require repair later.

This is the time for patience.

Topsy Farm

We are almost out of hay though.

Thank goodness there is something green growing out there.

Green means hope.

Even if it is not very much.

Currently Shepherd Kyle is repairing the fences on a piece of land that we rent called Lot 64.

A short walk through the mixed forest that the ewes know well.

The trees are a water filter, a shady place in the heat, a wind break in the cold.

The flock will return in mid May.

We will divide them into their lambing fields.

This must be timed exactly right to avoid lambs born in the wrong place.

A ewe following other ewes can forget that she had lambs only moments before.

The instinct to follow occasionally overrides the instinct to nurture.

Our responsibility is to ensure this doesn't happen.

The weight is immense.

Hold on.

Everything is going to be okay.

The shepherds are coming.

Shepherding is an art. To balance who lambs in which pastures in what time frame. There are simple algorithms x number of sheep, consume Y volume of forage, in Z time. But it is also so much more:

Life Bond

Sliding to the earth

Protective, life-giving fluids coating

She clears the snout and face first

There are no opposable digits or towels

Nature intends for this to be dirty

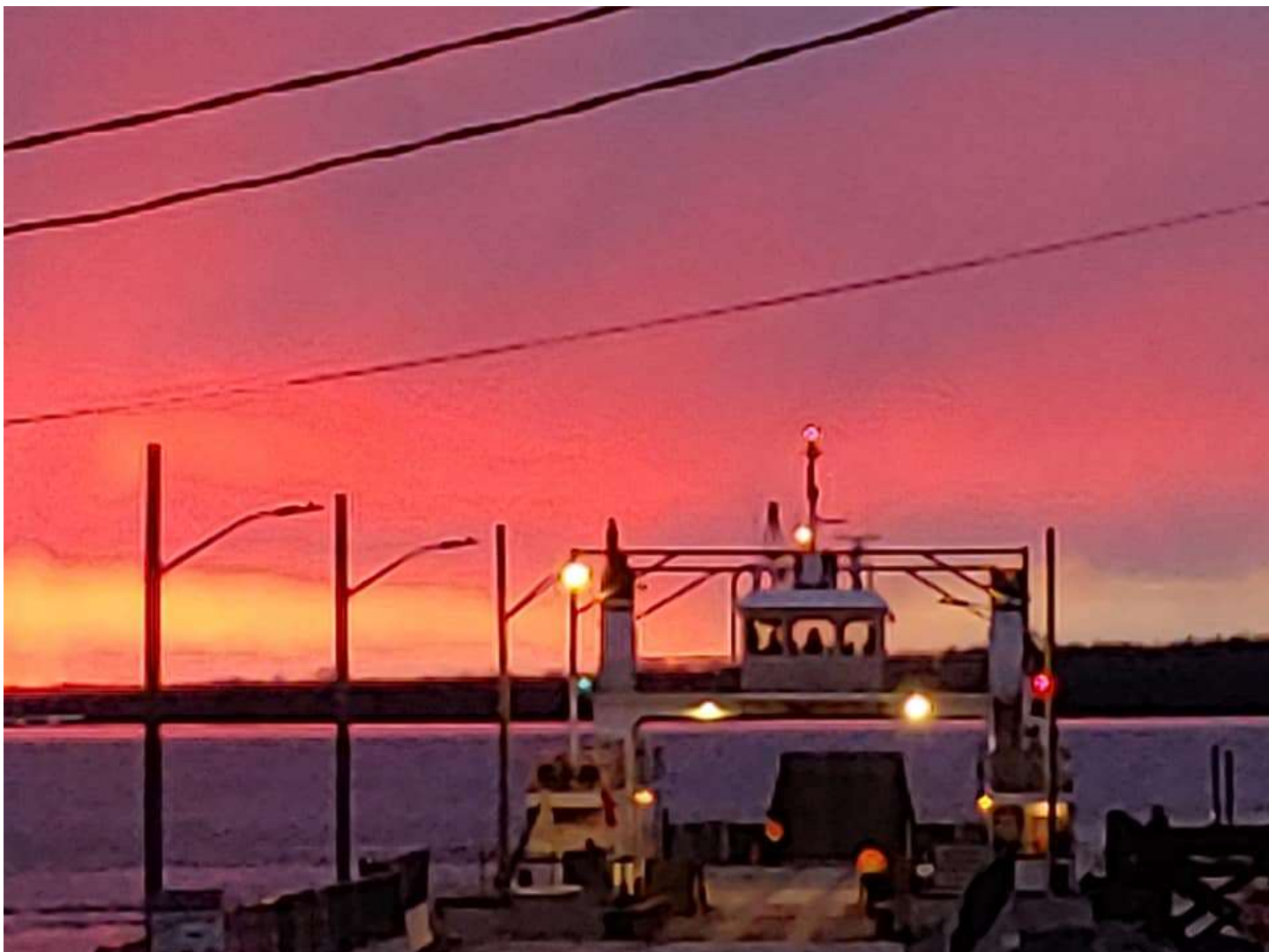
This is how a life bond is formed

Mother; licking, sniffing

My lamb



"Out of all the 1000 lambs that you might mix with little one, I now know your scent"
She makes guttural noises
The vocalization of love
Mine
I will protect you from anything
Curious puppies come near
The throat noise changes to one of warning
Stomp
Right foot hits hard-pack clay
Stomp
The well-intentioned dog pausing in forward, wagging, playdance
Instinct and knowledge trigger
The puppy's binary code fires with new information
Is this slimy, delicious smelling thing my new playtoy?
Farm kid intervenes
A child, simply out doing chores comes across this beautiful, little drama
His intent was to read Calvin and Hobbes cartoons to the chickens
True story
He asks no adult permission to intervene
Nor does he leave the scene to find help or reassurance
Simple, shepherding, presence
He risks not the chance of the puppies breaking these crucial first few bonding minutes
The shepherd's voice
Even that of a 12 year old is one of calm command
"Puppies, to me"
The three sit together
The new mother goes back to her ministrations
Her body contracts
A nose and two tiny, pointy, hooves poke beneath her tail
A second lamb
She enters the world like an Olympic diver
This is done in silence
The ewe makes no protest
Sounds of pain attract predators
She will not add to the lamb's impossible vulnerability
Lamb number one basks in the morning sunlight
Not quite ready to stand
It loses sight of mom and makes its own vocals
The mom will now add sound to the scent information
"I will know you from the thousand"
She responds with a brief nuzzle and throat noise
"It's okay, I am still here, I am just seeing to your little sister"
Lamb number one tries its feet for the first time
Impossibly wobbly
It leans against mom's frame
She nudges it back towards her udder
The lamb begins to nurse
The life bond is complete.



Our Frontenac II at sunset. Photo by Val Koenders Wolfreys



Dayle here. Well, we've been home a little more than a month now, and pretty much settled into the self isolating routine. At least the weather has been decent on many days, allowing a start at gardening and yard clean up. If you have to stay home, it's good to have something to do, and somewhere to do it.

For several years I have intended to build a Martin house, but there was always something else to do first. Well, no more



excuses.....started it about a week ago and today finished the installation.

I'm happy with it...the question is "will we get any Martins?" There are 14 lovely large apartments, 72 square inches of open floor space, each with a private balcony and some with a lake view. What's not to like??

Hello Friends and Neighbours. I hope everyone is staying safe, and healthy during this disastrous Corona Virus episode. It looks like it might be getting close to its peak. Let's hope so, as Cabin Fever is almost as bad. Sure miss the Music and fellowship with all our Friends. Good Lord willing, we'll see you all soon.

I have chosen a program for replay, from September 5th, 2018. We had Terry Spilchen and Friends in our Studio to do a live program, and what a program it was.

The Friends were Kenny Kovach, vocals and lead guitar, Sid Prescott doing vocals, fiddle and steel guitar, Dave Lloyd, with vocals and rhythm guitar, and I think Stan Hicks with vocals and rhythm guitar. I did not have the friends written down in my schedule book, so I am sort of guessing. Terry has been over a few times, and always does a great program with the friends he brings. Can't wait for them to return, to grace our studio again.

God Bless you all, and please keep safe. Stay Home, this will end soon and we can get together for some more music and fun.

From Mary Lou & Ellis Wolfreys, and Amherst Island Radio, CJAI 92.1 fm.

Families



Happy 4th Birthday Archer McGinn
Son of Alecia and Keith McGinn, Grandson to Val and Dan
Wolfreys and Jane and Russell McGinn

Below, his brother Alex is now 2.





**Happy Birthday to Bella Rose Madden,
Joan and Dan Simpson's granddaughter
Photo from Renee Begin**



Happy Birthday Reta Brown

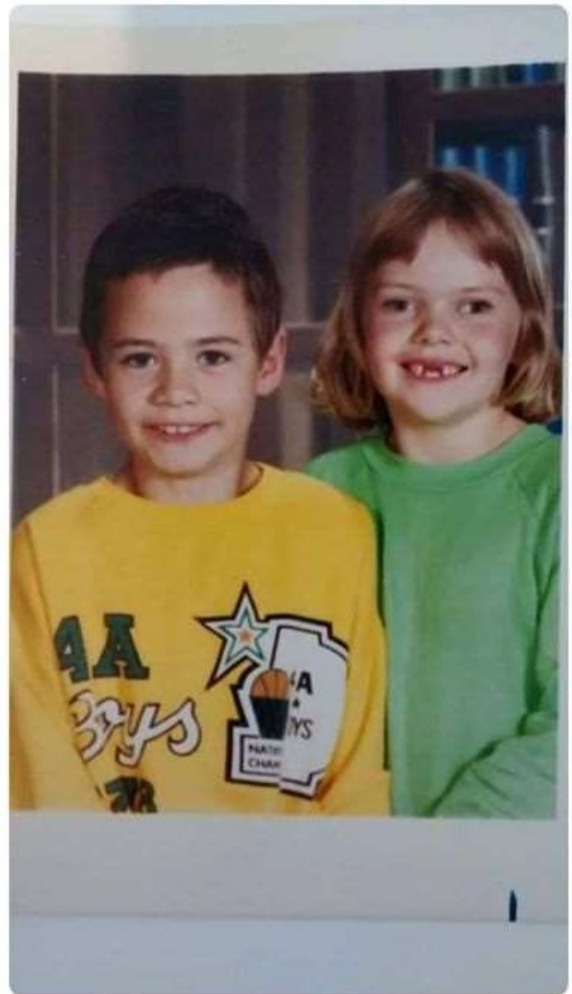


**Happy Easter V and Jess Rybka; George and Ida's daughter and granddaughter
Photo from Jess Rybka**



**Paul and Carol Glenn's
great granddaughters at Easter**
Photo from Torri Davison

Happy Siblings Day
Jess Rybka Gavalas and brother
Photo from Jess Rybka



Happy Siblings day to my big bro Doug
N Kim

Sarah Vanstone and brother Sam
Photo from Sarah Vanstone



**Siblings Month
Sheila and David Mooney**



**Above:
Lincon McGinn**



**Koenders Family Sibling Week
Left to right and top to bottom
Ellen, Jim, Maryanne, Ray,
Val, John, Mike, Pat, Zelma,
Theresa and Mary
Photo from Maryanne Mercer**



Siblings from Eric McGinn



Siblings Katherine, Angus, Jack and Daniel Little
Photo from Katherine Little



Siblings at younger time. Do you know these guys? Photo from Eric McGinn

Siblings
Photo from
Jane McGinn





**Lynn and Larry's grandchildren
Cooper in blue, Lynn,
Braden in the red hat,
Hudson and Tia
Photo from Lynn Fleming**

The Kennedy Kids:

**Clockwise from top left:
Mairi, Rowan, Liam,
Ainsley, Vaughn, Julia**



General Store

For those who didn't know, the McGinn general store is still running and providing faithful service to our community. Just phone ahead, or right from the front door, and David or Linda will bring out your items and their payment machine. It's a GREAT service, and much faster than you will get from ANYWHERE downtown. For this, we thank them very much. We look forward to when we can once again browse the shelves, but for now, here's some of what's available for you:



A Note from the Museum

Janet on behalf of the NSMCC.

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre

We need your help and cooperation.

For a long time you have been graciously supporting us with your bottle returns. Unfortunately, during the present shut down we cannot turn our bottles in. We are overflowing with your generosity. Would you please consider holding on to your LCBO returns for us until a later date when we can handle your donations again? Thank-you so very much.

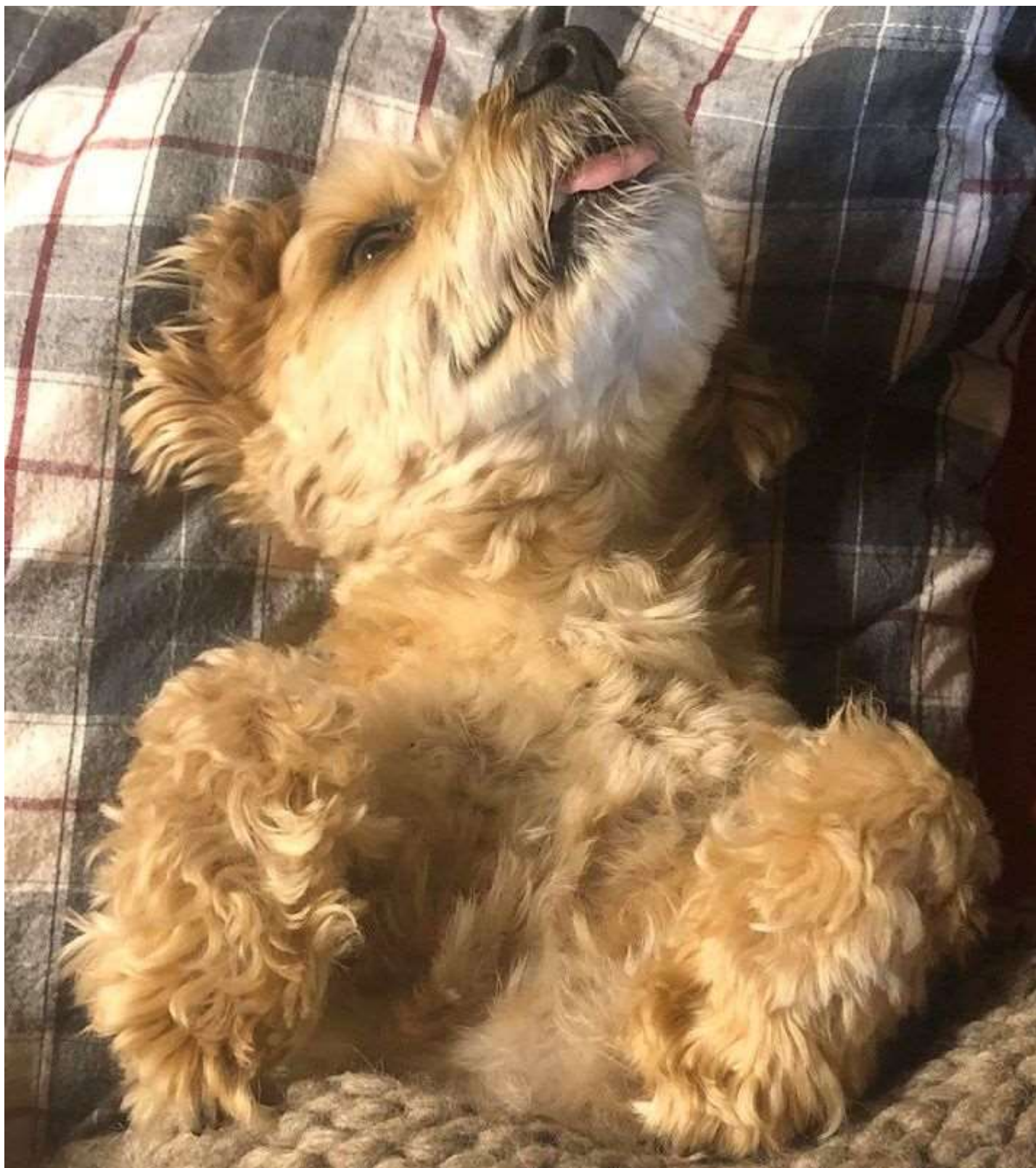


Amherst Island in a full moon Photo by Robert Willis

Our Pets

**Anyone know if this is really
Butterball?
Photo from Warren Kilpatrick**





Cheeky is being a bit cheeky today. Well, actually that's every day since his dental surgery. He has no more front teeth to hold that tongue in. Still, he does a great job of keeping all birds, bunnies, cats, foxes and deer at least six feet away. Darlene Martin



Bogart
Somehow... what ...well ok
Photo from Cara Daley Nye

From Jo-anne Watts

I am more than pleased to announce the birth of Isla and McGinn's new family. They arrived earlier than expected on day 59. There are six lovely well marked black puppies. Three females and three males. The first five arrived in two hours starting at 5:15 am Friday morning. The last one came two hours later. She didn't even contract with this one. All six are big and healthy. Five are 1lb 5 ozs and the last one was 1 lb 4 ozs. These are the heaviest puppies I have ever had. The females are wearing pink, red and yellow. Green, blue and orange are males. Isla and the puppies are doing very well. I cannot thank Sarah Duff enough for coming here early and helping Isla birth these puppies. — with Char Carentz and Sarah Duff.



Nature's Bounty

Dandelion Greens - Randi's Story

Foraging is in, and by "in" what we mean is that there are organic veggies growing at your feet, for free! When coupled with simple gardening, a person can stretch their grocery budget very far. Make a game of this; these greens we tell you about will not have been touched by human hands, and the grocery store certainly can't claim this.

We have spoken already of Garlic Mustard; but today, the dreaded dandelion. Most people want to get dandelions out of the garden space in spring, so why not eat them? These greens are good for you. They are a great source of vitamins A, C and K. They also contain Vitamin E, folate, and minerals: iron, potassium, magnesium, and calcium.

(Warning: avoid roadsides, dog parks, and the lawns of golf-course-type housing; these will have been sprayed in multiple ways.)

Greens can be eaten raw or cooked, especially in spring. Flower heads can be made into wine or "lemonade" and roots can be roasted. Search for lots of ideas online.

The greens may be bitter to some palates. If so, they can be made less by blanching - plunging them into boiling water for one to two minutes, then a quick bath in cold water and a good drain to get rid of the water. There are lots of recipes online for using the greens, so be creative. They can be a substitute for spinach or kale.

Here are two recipes to try:

Pesto Dandelion Greens:

Forage, then wash thoroughly about three cups of dandelion greens

Add to a pot of salted, boiling water for 2 minutes

Drain and cool quickly in cold water, then drain again

Whiz the greens with 2 or 3 cloves of garlic, 1/4 cup of olive oil in a food processor – (if you have one) - get chopping if you don't

Add, grated parmesan cheese and extra garlic to taste

Serve with pasta and top with whatever else you put in your favourite pesto such as pine nuts or more grated parmesan

Pasta and greens:

Wash and blanch greens as in previous recipe

Chop greens

In a skillet, sauté any combination of garlic, mustard seeds, red pepper flakes, diced onion, cherry tomatoes, sliced mushrooms, spicy salami

As for the sauté oil, use a couple tablespoons of olive oil or duck fat or bacon fat or chili oil

Toss all with warm cooked pasta



A Lifetime in Self-Isolation

Quarantine Diary

From Andrea Cross

Day 1 – I Can Do This!! Got enough food and wine to last a month!

Day 2 – Opening my 8th bottle of Wine. I fear wine supplies might not last!

Day 3 – Strawberries: Some have 210 seeds, some have 235 seeds. Who Knew??

Day 4 – 8:00pm. Removed my Day Pajamas and put on my Night Pajamas.

Day 5 – Today, I tried to make Hand Sanitizer. It came out as Jello Shots!!

Day 6 – I get to take the Garbage out. I'm SO excited, I can't decide what to wear.

Day 7 – Laughing way too much at my own jokes!!

Day 8 – Went to a new restaurant called "The Kitchen". You have to gather all the ingredients and make your own meal. I have No Clue how this place is still in business.

Day 9 – I put liquor bottles in every room. Tonight, I'm getting all dressed up and going Bar hopping.

Day 10 – Struck up a conversation with a Spider today. Seems nice. He's a Web Designer.

Day 11 – Isolation is hard. I swear my fridge just said, "What the hell do you want now?"

Day 12 – I realized why dogs get so excited about something moving outside, going for walks or car rides. I think I just barked at a squirrel.

Day 13 – If you keep a glass of wine in each hand, you can't accidentally touch your face.

Day 14 – Watched the birds fight over a worm. The Cardinals lead the Blue Jays 3–1.

Day 15 – Anybody else feel like they've cooked dinner about 395 times this month?



Spring Easter Tulips
Photo from Sarah Vanstone

Spring on Amherst Island
Photo from Patricia-Craig Harris-Vincent

**Anyone know who is
handing out the rocks?**

**Many thanks.
Lots of people are having fun
receiving them.**

Photo from Janet Scott



**The Red Fox on the Third
Photos from Warren Kilpatrick**

