Issue 485 March 2021

$5 donation suggested for printed copies at McGinn's General Store.

THE BEACON

"bonum apporto nuntium, tristem nuntium, sed non malus nuntium"

THE BEACON

DONATIONS TO ISLAND CHURCHES FROM BATH LIONS CLUB

Members of the Bath & District Lions Club (Adam Bryant and Fred Brown) delivered a donation to St. Alban's Anglican Church. Islanders Father Don Bailey and Al Caughey are also pictured here. Photograph taken by Kayleigh Graham.

Members of the Bath & District Lions Club (Adam Bryant, Fred Brown, and Dave Bryant) delivered a donation to St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. Islanders Nathan Townend and Al Caughey are also pictured here. Photograph taken by Kayleigh Graham.

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

In a brief discussion with Father Don Bailey, he mentioned the donation from the Bath & District Lions Club will help the Anglican Church provide online services during the pandemic. He explained that there currently was no internet connection at the church, and they plan to install internet and purchase the equipment required to deliver services online.

Since I was a child in Sunday school, I attended church services in my hometown with my family. I never imagined that churches would one day offer live streamed online services. Here is an example where technological advancements can work to improve the options available to our community. During the pandemic online streaming of church services will soon help to supply people with the mental health and spiritual nourishment that many have been missing during these lockdowns.

Perhaps online services will remain available to the population even after the pandemic comes to an end. People who struggle with mobility impairments or the ability to attend a service in person may deeply benefit from online services in the future as well. A heartfelt thank you to the Bath & District Lions Club who has aided the churches on Amherst Island with these donations.

Lions Club Supports the Community

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

Recently, the Bath & District Lions Club members Adam Bryant, Fred Brown, and Dave Bryant all came to the island to represent the club and deliver donations. All members wore masks and remained outdoors and socially distanced to comply with public health guidelines. St. Alban's Anglican Church and St. Paul's Presbyterian Church both received a $500 donation from the Lions Club and are appreciative of the support.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic businesses and organizations have had to alter their operations in order to comply with public health recommendations. These alterations are, in some cases, costly. For example, some organizations have had to purchase and learn to operate technological equipment so that they can continue to offer virtual services. These donations will be helpful for each of the churches as they continue offering services in creative new ways.

FREE FOOD BANK

The Bath & District Lions Club wants the community to be aware of their free food bank, they say; "Don't go hungry, we can help! We are discrete, non-judgemental, and we respect your privacy."

Location: St. John's Hall, Church St. (left side of the building down the ramp to the rear side door).

Time: Open without an appointment every Tuesday, 9:00am – 11:00am.

Contact: Call (343)-363-7222, free delivery available.

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THE BEACON

MARCH DAYS

National Horse Protection Day

MARCH 1ST

March 1st is National Horse Protection Day. Here on Amherst Island, there are plenty of horses happily living out their lives in the countryside. Dave and Linda McGinn (pictured to the right), recently added these beautiful horses to their family.

They have been training and practicing Sunday drives around the island with their horses, and it is a delightful event to watch.

Horses have bonded with humans for countless centuries, and it is important to continue to respect them. In the age of technological advancement and transportation evolution it is beneficial to remember the roles horses played in the past. This old fashionned way of travelling around is still popular amongst tourists and people who appreciate connecting with horses. Happy National Horse Protection Day.

Sunday afternoon drive on the island. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.

Several ice fishers near Drumgooles Lane know how to unplug, they spent all day out on the ice.

OBSERVE

National Day of Unplugging
First Friday in March

This past year many of us have relied on virtual connections and online meetings in order to work, communicate, and experience entertainment. Sometimes it is a good idea to unplug. Gaming systems, televisions, smart phones, computers, tablets…everything. The first Friday of each March is the National Day of Unplugging.

There are many benefits to unplugging more often, one of which is a better sleep schedule. Those of us who spend less time on electronics likely spend more time stretching our legs and burning up energy, this often leads to a better sleep.

Make a plan with a friend or family member ahead of time, so you can both hold each other accountable. Unplug for the day, the whole day if you are able to, and just see where the day takes you. Enjoy!

REMEMBER

Daylight Savings Time in Canada

MARCH 14TH

Daylight savings in Canada begins on March 14th at 2:00am (in most provinces and territories). Although we will 'lose' an hour of sleep that night, we are gaining more hours of sunlight each day. Spring is truly on the way now, and with it more sunlight hopefully!

THE BEACON

SPOTLIGHT SPECIES

Turkey Vulture

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

The turkey vulture, or *cathartes aura*, prefers a habitat consisting of open woodlands nearly anywhere in North America. They are most commonly seen soaring in oblong circular patterns, with their wings held in a distinctive 'V' shape. Sudden changes in topography, such as steep hills or mountainous terrain, allow for updrafts that help turkey vultures take to the sky and soar.

Turkey vultures eat carrion, animals that have been dead long enough to soften again, so they are often seen along highways searching for roadkill. They act like a clean-up crew, as they will eat every part of a carcass. An incredible sense of smell will lead them to their next meal, even if it is kilometers away. Due to their robust immune systems, turkey vultures will consume carrion without contracting botulism, anthrax, cholera, or salmonella.

Nesting sites for turkey vultures are usually as far from humans as possible. They nest in rock crevices, hollow logs, abandoned hawk or heron nests, and abandoned buildings. Nesting sites are often used by the same bird for a decade or more. In one clutch, turkey vultures will lay 1-3 eggs which hatch anytime between 28 and 40 days. The eggs are an off-white colour with gray, blue or green tones, and speckled with purple to brown colours. When they hatch, their young are defenseless.

Based on population statistics gathered by the North American Breeding Bird Survey and other data, the turkey vulture is a species of 'low concern'. Generally, the species is thriving, although they remain threatened by the side-effects of pesticides (specifically DDT). Turkey vultures can also suffer from digesting a carcass containing poison or lead.

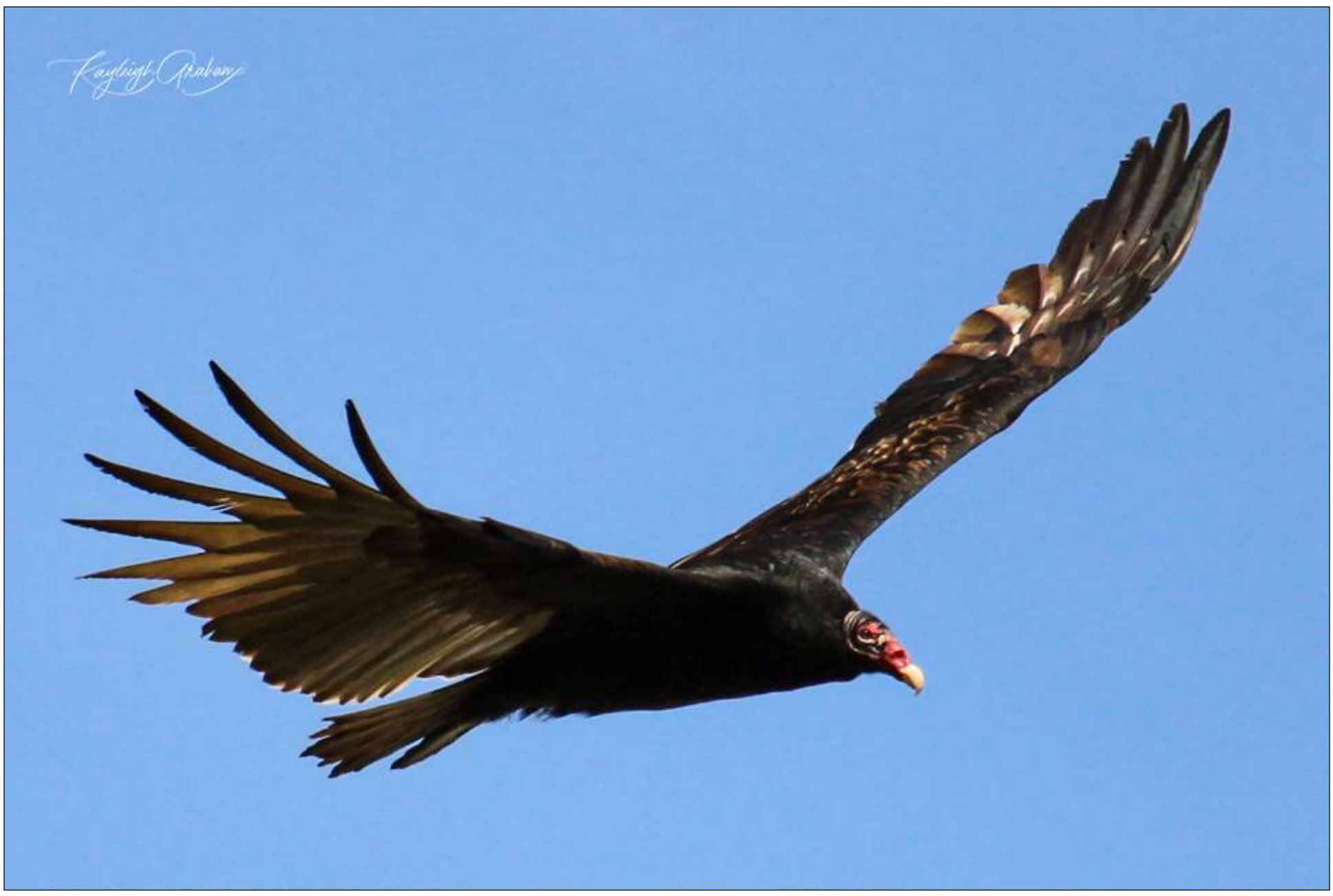
Turkey vultures are smaller than eagles, but larger than red-tailed hawks. Their wingspan ranges from 170-178cm. Their feathers are varying shades of brown, and they can be identified by their bald, red heads and pale beaks.

TURKEY VULTURE FACTS

- The oldest recorded turkey vulture was 16 years and 10 months old when it was found in Ohio.
- Turkey vultures are probably the least picky eaters; however, they sometimes leave behind the scent gland of a skunk.
- Migrating flocks of turkey vultures can include thousands of birds.

Source: Cornell University, "Turkey Vulture", *All About Birds*, 2019.

A Turkey Vulture in flight on the North shore of Amherst Island, ON. Photographed by Kayleigh Graham, editor@thebeaconpaper.com



A Turkey Vulture in flight above the West shoreline of Amherst Island, ON. Photographed by Kayleigh Graham, editor@thebeaconpaper.com

THE BEACON

Obituaries

MARGARET MOONEY (1931-2021)

The below statement was originally published in The Kingston Whig Standard on February 23rd, 2021.

Margaret Mooney died peacefully on Thursday, February 18, 2021, at the Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KGH) after a short illness, just shy of her 90th birthday. She was predeceased by her husband of 58 years, Edgar Mooney, as well as her sister Laura Patriciu. She is survived by her brother James McKay, her children David Mooney and Sheila Mooney, David's wife Emily (née Way), and David and Emily's daughter Clara.

Margaret graduated from Acadia University and was a teacher at QECVI for several years. She and Edgar were long-time members of the Kingston Towners square dance club. After retirement, they bought an RV and travelled around North America, enjoying the fellowship of their friends in the Roadrunners and Glowing Embers trailer clubs. She was the family genealogist, researching and collating data for both sides of the family, and transcribing every stone in Hillside Cemetery in Vankleek Hill, Ontario. She even travelled to Ireland to visit the family homestead!

Margaret Mooney

Margaret was a faithful lifelong Presbyterian. She was a founding member of Trinity Church in Amherstview, where she was a pianist and later a member of the choir. In her later years she attended St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on Amherst Island. Even in her final days, she took great joy from singing and listening to her favourite hymns.

The family appreciates the care and kindness shown to Margaret by the staff at The Windsor Retirement Residence during her final years.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, there will be no visitation or service at this time. A Memorial Service will be held after travel restrictions are lifted. As expressions of sympathy, the family would appreciate donations to St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Amherst Island.

A ferry selfie with David and Sheila.

Her wedding photo with Edgar, August 25th 1956.

Memories of Margaret Mooney

The following statement was provided by Sheila Mooney, Margaret's daughter.

My mother loved Amherst Island and had a long association with it, and many happy memories there. My parents bought their property on the North shore, at the end of the Marshall 40-foot in the mid 1970s but had been coming to the island since the early 1960s due to their friendship with Zander Dunn, minister at St. Paul's, as well as at Trinity Amherstview, where the Mooneys were founding members.

I heard stories about winter ice crossings in the early days, but my own memories of Amherst Island start with childhood summers – planting trees, picking beans, mowing grass, and swimming five times a day. Margaret was amazingly organized and was able to make our little trailer home for extended stretches in the summer. She was hardworking and diligent in canning our summer produce for us to enjoy back in the suburbs during the winter. When my parents joined St. Paul's a couple decades ago, they loved being part of the community. She loved going to the Garden Party and never missed the Canada Day Parade if she could help it.

When driving was no longer possible for her, she relished visits from her kids, which would allow her to attend church, be the last to leave the post-church fellowship hour, and take one or more of her famous ferry selfies on the trip across.

At the Amherst Island Canada Day parade, about 2016.

Margaret's 85th birthday.

ISLAND INFORMATION

Amherst Island Ferry Service

Ferry Schedule

The ferry leaves Stella (Amherst Island side) on the hour each day, 6:00am to 1:00am.

The ferry leaves Millhaven (mainland side) on the half hour each day, 6:30am to 1:30am.

Aerial view of the progress made to the Millhaven dock, from https://twitter.com/a_i_ferrydocks

Fares (cash or cheque only)
***Fare collection is set to resume sometime in early March 2021.**

- Car, truck (under 1 ton), van, farm tractor or small school bus - $10.00
- RV or car with trailer, large vehicles requiring up to two vehicle spaces, or large school bus - $20.00
- Large vehicles and trailers or equipment requiring more than two vehicle spaces - $10.00 per space used
- Motorcycle - $2.00
- Bicycle - $1.50
- Book of 25 round-trip tickets - $100.00

Note: An administration charge of $20.00 will be added to the fare for any motorist with insufficient funds to pay fare. The administration charge is required to cover costs incurred to prepare an invoice.

Ferry Dock Construction Project

The new docks have been backfilled, and the installation of vehicle ramps has begun on both docks. The new docks are expected to be completed in mid-2021, although it may be longer until it is operational.

Factors that hinder the switch over date include; requirements for testing the new electric ferry, training staff at the new docks, approvals from Transport Canada, and ensuring reliable and uninterrupted ferry service to and from the island. Passenger waiting areas and washrooms are still scheduled to open in 2021.

The Amherst Islander II, the new electric ferry, is expected to arrive in Canada in the spring of 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected its arrival.

Information and updates can be found at http://www.amherstislandferrydocks.ca/ or https://twitter.com/a_i_ferrydocks

LOYALIST LANDFILLS

Dump Hours and Protocol

Instructions

- Please separate glass, plastics, paper/cardboard, and metal from garbage.
- Place a garbage tag ($2.50 each, or $25 for 10) on each garbage bag.
- The township offers two free large item drop offs (FILDO) per year.

COVID-19 Precautions: tags are normally sold at the landfill site, but are not currently due to COVID-19.

Amherst Island Waste Disposal Site, 145 Dump Road, Amherst Island.
Garbage tags can be purchased at McGinn's General Store and Fast Freddy's in Bath, Foodland, and many other township retailers, payment at Amherst Island landfill is cash only.

Open Hours	
Wednesdays	11:00am – 2:00pm
Saturdays	10:00am – 12:00pm
Sundays	2:00pm – 4:00pm

Information and updates can be found at https://www.loyalisttownship.ca/index.cfm/residents/garbage-and-recycling/

STORE SERVICES

McGinn's General Store

POST OFFICE

Open Hours

Mondays	9-11:30am, 2:30-5pm
Tuesdays	9-11:30am, 2:30-5pm
Wednesdays	9-11:30am, 2:30-5pm
Thursdays	9-11:00am, 3:30-6pm
Fridays	9-11:30am, 2:30-5pm
Saturdays	Closed
Sundays	Closed

Phone Number: 613-519-2331

COVID-19 Precautions: face mask required, 1 person inside at a time inside (please call before arriving or knock).

GENERAL STORE

COVID-19 Precautions: curbside service only, masks at the curb would be appreciated.

Owned and operated by a 5th generation island family, Linda and Dave McGinn.

Open Hours

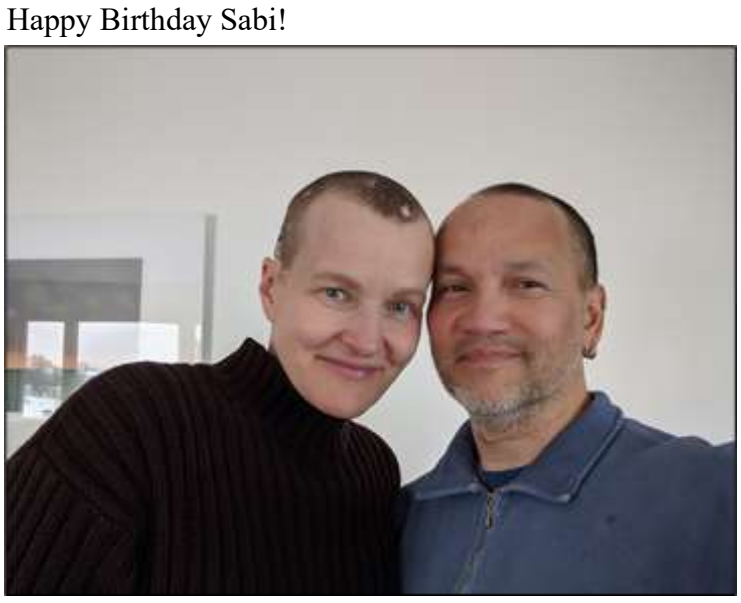
Mondays	9am – 5pm
Tuesdays	9am – 5pm
Wednesdays	9am -5pm
Thursdays	9am – 6pm
Fridays	9am – 5pm
Saturdays	10am – 4pm
Sundays	Closed

Phone Number: 613-519-2331

THE BEACON

Congratulations

Happy Birthday Sabi!



Happy Birthday Nathan Murray!

Happy Birthday Leah Murray!

Happy Birthday Michael Murray!

Poetry for an Island Family

WRITTEN BY ALLAN YOUNG

When the Good Lord made creation,
He said there's got to be
A special Island in the south of L & A County!
He created then he pondered
Bye Gee there's got to be
A caretaker on Tonti to tend the apple tree!
He had to go to Ireland to get the proper stock,
Over came a boat load and they unloaded on the rock.
Again, he sat and pondered. By Gee there's got to be
A Miller in the boat load and he'll find Concession 3!
The Miller's they got busy.
First off they made some clothes.
By trapping rats and critters.
It was cold! Lord only knows!
Soon there were more Millers than fingers on your hands.
These fighting Irish found the place to stand!
They prospered and they multiplied and spread throughout the land!
The stories, they are legion from that Island in the south.
Not all are writ on paper. More by word of mouth.
The Island is a special place.
THE EDEN OF THE SOUTH!

North shore of Amherst Island. Photographed by Kayleigh Graham.

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THE BEACON

INTRODUCING ISLANDERS

Meet Isla Viscount

ISLA VISCOUNT
KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

The column "Introducing Islanders" is a monthly feature in *The Beacon,* focusing on a different person each month. The goal of this column is to create a collection of biographies of islanders based on interviews with the featured individuals. This island is home to many incredibly interesting people. I hope you will all enjoy learning things about their lives as much as I enjoy interviewing them.

A photograph taken by the *Toronto Star* newspaper in 1961 of Isla (at the age of 2, pictured right), with her Grandmother (left), at the opening of a Van Gogh art exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Art was already important to her, even at a young age Isla was transfixed by art as evident in this photograph.

Isla's Family Life and History

Isla Dorothy Saunders is part of the fifth generation of Canadians in her family. She was born at Scarborough General Hospital on August 17th, 1958 and grew up in Guildwood, Scarborough.

Isla remembers many fond childhood memories of sailing on the family boat in the summertime. She said her family would take a trip every summer in the boat, sailing from the Pickering area, up to the Thousand Islands. She spent a lot of time with the family on the boat at the Frenchman's Bay Yacht Club in Pickering. In fact, she met Chris Viscount (her future husband) at the yacht club when she was about 15 years old. She raced the boat with her Father for about 17 years, every week in the Wednesday night races at the club. The photograph below shows Isla and Chris in the very same boat. The boat is called *Illawara*, it is a C&C 35 and was built in 1974. Isla and Chris still sail it in the summers together. Isla and Chris were married in 1988, and they welcomed their daughter, Courtney, into the world in 1991.

Isla went to University of Toronto (U of T), the fourth generation of her family to attend U of T. She completed an honours degree in Medical Anthropology. Isla describes medical anthropology as "the study of medical procedures, systems, and treatments for humans from all over the world, and throughout history". Isla was always focused on subjects like math and science and was drawn to how these subjects were applied to healthcare in different cultures throughout history. After she graduated, she found that jobs in the field of medical anthropology were scarce, unless the job was related to forensic science, which she wasn't interested in pursuing.

Isla decided to follow a job at Bell Canada instead, as they were offering jobs at the time. She ended up working for Bell for 32 years. Isla designed fibre and copper networks within a set territory. Isla's territory included everywhere between Trenton and Pickering, including Peterborough and Kingston for a while as well. Reflecting on her job at Bell Canada, she said that she witnessed massive leaps and improvements in this technology over the period of time she worked there. When she started working at Bell, she was involved in designing phone lines on copper, and step-by-step equipment in central offices (which was a mechanical process). By the time she retired from Bell Canada, everything was digital, and the equipment was completely different, including the delivery of fibre to the home for entire subdivisions. Although her career at Bell Canada provided interesting challenges, there was a part of her that missed spending time studying healthcare and medical anthropology.

When she was 55 years old, Isla decided to retire from Bell and spend more time with her aging Mother. Her retirement also opened up more time for her to pursue her passion for yoga and the study of healthcare and therapy.

Chris Viscount (left) and Isla on their boat *Illawarra* down in the Thousand Islands (Georgina).

Isla's Yoga and Passions

When Isla was 42 she was diagnosed with a very rare genetic illness called Meniere's Disease. The affliction exhibits symptoms including about a decade of vertigo, and permanent hearing loss in one ear. At the onset of the disease, Isla's doctor wanted to prescribe many medications to help with the vertigo, but the hearing loss was unstoppable. She was wary about all of the side effects the medications warned about, and so she told the doctor she would return for the medicine if she really needed it. Then, she

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THE BEACON

INTRODUCING ISLANDERS

Meet Isla Viscount, continued…

proceeded to treat her vertigo with yoga. Although the vertigo could be severe at times, Isla remained focused on treating herself as naturally as possible. She said, “I believe in natural medicine, I believe in treating myself as much as I can through habit, behaviour, and diet”. There are certain positions in yoga that work with the central nervous system. Once Isla learned to recognise the onset of a vertigo attack, she would listen to the signs and do meditation or yoga to treat it. She learned to control her symptoms completely, through practicing yoga.

As she realized how powerful the practice of yoga and meditation can be in the treatment of a variety of symptoms and ailments, Isla decided she wanted to share that discovery with others. Isla then got her first yoga teaching certificate and continued by studying a 3-and-a-half-year program in California in the practice and teaching of authentic Vini Yoga. During her studies and the writing of one of her final papers, she focused on the treatment of patients with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) through individualized yoga exercises and meditation therapy. As Isla worked with these patients, she learned about their structural, physiological, and mental abilities. Through focused practice with these patients, Isla witnessed pretty miraculous improvements in their abilities, mobility, and mental health as their practice continued. Isla also noted that as she continued to study yoga and healthcare, she realised she was coming around full circle from her original university studies in medical anthropology.

Once she became certified as a Yoga Therapist, Isla began offering classes held in a studio through her daughter’s school of dance. Isla mentioned that “you can only do what your brain believes you can do,” and this positive outlook and encouraging tone likely leads many of her yoga students to positive progress in their practice. In order to improve her meditation teachings, Isla took classes in hypnosis. Learning about hypnosis allowed Isla to add a layer to her ability to help people. Studying the human mind has always fascinated her, and she wanted to offer the best service possible to the people that came to her for yoga therapy.

***A Gray Jay*, painted in watercolour by Isla Viscount.**

Isla’s Creative Mind

Isla’s Mother was a painter, so every time her Mother wanted to paint, she would also sit Isla down with her own canvas and set of paints. Because of this hobby, Isla has been painting since she was about 5 years old.

In university, Isla took a few elective classes in art and she got into using watercolour. An extremely difficult media to use, one of her watercolour paintings can be seen on the right (*A Gray Jay*).

More recently, Isla has switched to using acrylic paint for pieces, one of which can be seen to the left (*A Poppy*). Isla mainly likes to paint natural objects, which she can observe closely because of the lovely garden at her house on the island.

Moving to Amherst Island

Isla and Chris Viscount moved to Amherst Island (on the West end of Front Road, in Elsie Densem’s old house) on September 27th 2017. Ever since her childhood Isla remembers seeing Amherst Island as a landmark of the start of the family sailing vacation. Isla and Chris had long time friends on the island before they moved here, so once they moved here Larry and Sherri Jensen were able to introduce them to the community. Isla had always liked log cabin style houses, so her house on the island is ideal for her. Once her Mother’s family cottage had to be sold, Isla realised she would no longer have a nature retreat to go to, so she began looking for a place. As soon as she saw the house on the island, she knew that was where she was meant to be. Isla has enjoyed participating in the knitting group on the island, as well as the annual bird count. Isla and Chris Viscount are happy to call Amherst Island home now and look forward to many more years here together.

***A Poppy*, painted in acrylic by Isla Viscount.**

Isla Viscount.

THE BEACON

ARTS AND CULTURE

Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat by Vigeé Lebrun

DEREK OXLEY

In a world before photography it could take a long time to have a picture of yourself made. Imagine you could only take one selfie every two to three years, and then only if you had enough extra money for it. You might well then imagine yourself putting a lot of time into planning just what that selfie would capture. What image would you want to portray? How do you need others to see you? Portraits could present your trade and interests honestly, or they could show the world what you wished it to see. In France of the 1780s, when this month's selection was painted, many painters worked in a neo-classical style, consciously idealizing their subjects much like we might photoshop an image today.

The painting I chose to share this month is the *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (oil on canvas) by the talented French painter Marie Louise Elisabeth Vigeé-LeBrun (1755-1842). I chose a self-portrait because I felt it was time to address our culture of saleable self-image with a grain of reality. Prior to the twenty-first century it was fairly impossible for most people to have a curated wealth of self-imagery, either for personal or public use, and I wanted to address this in a climate where we take for granted our ability to represent ourselves. The practice of representing one's self in historic, wealthy, exotic, or fantastic costumes and dress was common in portraiture at least as far back as the 16th century; educated patrons could have themselves inserted into a favourite era or recognized story, or depict themselves as far more wealthy, or pious, or attractive than they may have actually been. In a culture and world that put up innumerable roadblocks for women in the arts, Vigeé-LeBrun is a rare story of success and fame. She was exceptionally shrewd, capable, charming, and had an innate talent for painting that emerged at a young age – even as a teenager there was growing demand for her portrait work. She was fortunate in her situation that her father was also a portrait painter who encouraged her pursuits. She established artistic connections around Paris and by the time she was twenty-four she was making portraits for the French royal family and particularly of the Queen Marie-Antoinette. Throughout her career she worked for royal courts in Austria, Prussia, Russia, and England. Many of her subjects are depicted as classical gods or characters and are placed in fantastic settings, depending on the taste of the patron. Dedicated portraitists were much like portrait photographers today, and although portraits didn't create the same degree of respect and renown as grand paintings for the salon, they were one of the more reliable ways for an artist to maintain an income.

Vigeé-LeBrun presents a warm and inviting image of herself, comely with her flushed cheeks, shining gown, and flowery straw hat with its peacock feather. In her hand she holds a palette and brushes, the tools of her trade. The sumptuous clothes and ornate hat are likely more of an advertisement for her skills as a painter than a depiction of her particular taste in fashion – that this piece is relatively small (roughly a meter in height) made it easily portable for showing to potential aristocratic clients. One of the biggest things that drew me into this painting is something that I couldn't consciously put my finger on until it was pointed out to me, and then I was amazed at how seemingly simple a thing it was. That she looks at us directly nothing new, interlocutors have done so for centuries. That she presents herself as she wishes to be seen is equally expected in such portraits. But in a rare representation for anyone of this era, the young woman in her straw hat is smiling at us. Not just a demure curl at the edges of her mouth, but a true open-mouthed smile that shows her teeth – a smile that was a source of great controversy in the late 18th Century. It displayed her confidence in a way that was not entirely accepted. Smiling in portraits was not a popular behaviour until the twentieth century and moreover has a tradition of being condemned in classical art circles. We have trouble imagining this today as we all smile broadly for our birthday and Instagram photos.

Now and then every student of art and art history will inevitably become infatuated with someone they see in an image, and so it is with myself and this piece. Whatever the particular alure, you dream that they might step out of their prison of canvas to share with you your space and time, drinking tea, making art, holding hands, and going dancing. That she here reaches her hand towards us in an invitation makes it all the more difficult to finally pull our eyes and intentions away – she reaches across the voids of space and time to engage us. Would that I were two hundred years younger. Should any of you yourselves wish to bid her go dancing, you may make your request directly to her image in the collection of the National Gallery of London, England. If you are lucky, you might get what you wish for.

Sources:
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THE BEACON

JANET'S JOTTINGS

Accipiters

JANET SCOTT

A sharp-shinned hawk photographed by Laurie Kilpatrick.

Now you see them, now you don't? What are they and where do they go?

Accipiters are fast flying hawks that hunt birds. We have three found locally: sharp-shinned hawks, the smallest, Cooper's hawks , the middle sized and goshawks, the largest of the three. Now that more and more people are staying home due to COVID, watching birds at your bird feeder has become more and more popular. Birdwatching has become so popular as a matter of fact, that bird seed has become a commodity that is not always available. Never can I remember calling my seed provider and being told they have no sunflower seeds in stock, but are expecting a shipment the following week.

So, you create, make, or buy a bird feeder. Then you purchase seed, google recipes for seed cakes and suet substitutes, and set up your feeding station with binoculars and guides at hand. It's best to start early and not wait for winter to arrive as local birds establish their feeding areas long before winter arrives. Once you have a few birds feeding nearby you begin to see the myriad of colours and shades on a set of feathers on one bird that you have taken for granted in your previous lives. You never noticed how the colour on a hummingbird's throat changes from ruby to black depending on the angle or the beautiful colours on the mourning dove's neck or the differences in the many " little brown birds" that hang out in your yards and gardens. The feeding noises of our common little house sparrows signal to other birds migrating in, that here is a safe space to feed and winter. The blue jays who quietly spent the previous summer in wooded areas and raised their young on bugs and insects move in, change their diets and claim the exalted positions of bosses of your yard. You think they are greedy, noisy and obnoxious but with their excellent intelligence and fast reactions they become the protectors of the feeding stations. They grab and hide food but also warn every other member that danger is at hand.

You have waited and wondered sometimes it takes more than a couple of years to establish a feeding community. Now you have a good assortment of species and wow you are feeling great. Boy, I have a feeding station and as you are watching six or seven different species and whoosh…….suddenly for no particular reason every bird is gone! The slow flying woodpeckers have frozen under the branches of a nearby tree. The sparrows were gone first and the slowest and least gifted of your twenty-five mourning doves is sitting there on the ground looking around as if to say where did everyone go? All is quiet. Why?

The blue jay hiding his booty has spotted the hiding Accipiter. His warning cry sets the flocks in panic mode, and everyone has escaped. The Accipiter is in motion. Swooping in on the feeding flocks. This small hawk hopes to snag a slow to respond mourning dove or a hesitant starling. They are travelling at 50km/hr, just whipping through the space between your house and feeder trying to trap a confused bird for dinner…when the flock escapes in disarray may be the moment a lost bird crashes into your window and the stunned bird becomes the next meal.

The sharp-shinned (11 inches), and the Cooper's hawk (16 inches) look so very similar it is difficult to tell them apart. Their long tails and short wings make them agile and quick to follow small birds through trees and bushes. They have grey backs and striped tails. The breasts have orange barring. I was not able to identify the difference until once I saw the tan patch on the nape of the Cooper's neck when he landed in Wayne's field after nabbing a mourning dove from my feeder birds. The bird in the photograph provided is taken by Laurie Kilpatrick at her house on the South Shore and I got help from Kurt Hennige, a local expert, in identifying this bird. The third Accipiter is a goshawk and I was able to identify it when it sat right on our railing at 2090 South Shore Road and would chase right after the mourning doves into the spruce plantation on Barr's property right opposite us on the Marshall Forty-foot. As the goshawk would dive into the spruce, the roosting mourning doves would explode out of those conifers in spirals as that agile goshawk chased them out of the conifers. Goshawks are easier to identify because they exhibit a definite eye brow and they are the largest of the three at 21 inches.

As food in the fields gets more difficult to capture, then unfortunately, the Accipiters move in and spoil your feeder watching but present you with a new challenge. Which hawk am I watching? The blue jay sized sharp-shinned hawk with the squared tail and the smaller head? Or is it the crow sized Cooper's hawk with the rounded tail and sandy coloured patch on its neck? Or is it the very distinctive red-tailed hawk sized goshawk with the white eyebrow? There's your challenge.

Good luck all our faithful feeder watchers.
Good birding all,

Janet Scott

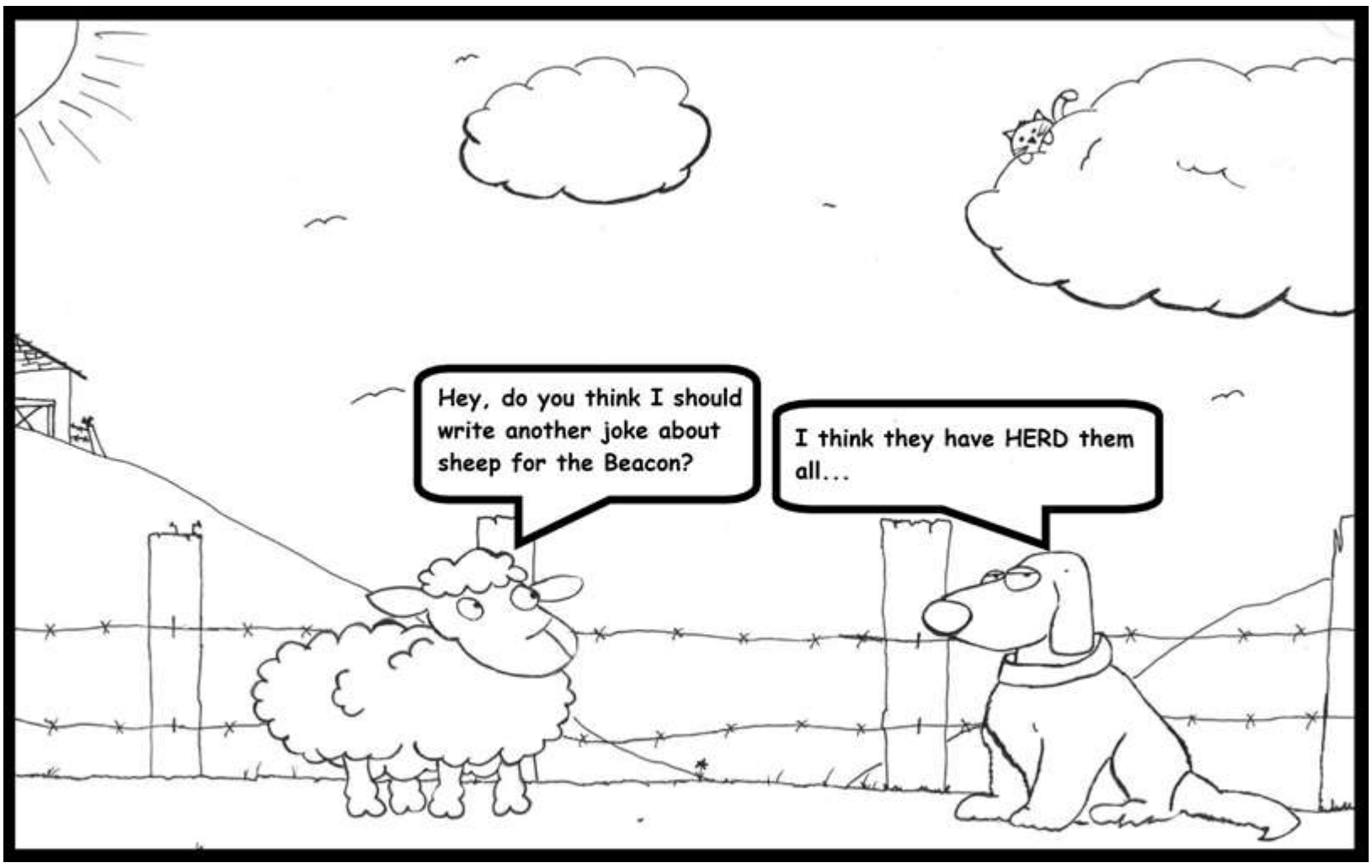
THE BEACON

COMMUNITY CARTOONS

Comics for Islanders

More Sheep Puns

SAM EVES



Submitted by Janet Scott in order to remind us all to practice responsible and ethical behaviour while observing wildlife.

THE BEACON

GARDENING

Must Love Mulch

VANESSA VAN

The first day of spring is almost here. On March 20th we officially say goodbye to winter. Like many readers, I am eager to get back into the garden. In preparation for spring, I have been reading about 'safe dates' for starting various gardening tasks. This month I offer up a suggested schedule for basic garden preparation.

In the Kingston area, the last frost is expected to fall sometime between April 21st and 30th. As so many of you know, this means that plants that need to be started 6-8 weeks before the last frost date should be started indoors during March. If you are up for it, there are other tasks you can check off your list this month.

With spring just around the corner, I plan to proceed with caution and make necessary adjustments based on the actual weather.

Think about Mulch!
As the ground thaws, plan to gradually pull mulch off the ground. As plants show signs of new growth consider removing some mulch over a period of days to slowly give the plant access to light and air. Mulch protects plants from sudden temperature fluctuations. Since March is full of temperature fluctuations, don't rush to take mulch off too soon. Keep in mind, it is better to remove mulch too late, rather than too soon.

March Gardening Suggestions:

Update your Gardening Equipment

Consider giving yourself some extra time to hunt for the best products, prices, and delivery options. Look around and see if you need to update any of your tools and then get to ordering them before the spring rush. March is a great time to replace your tired garden hose (the expandable ones are wonderful), tattered gloves, or dilapidated wheelbarrow.

Sow Seeds Indoors
It is best to stick to your plant variety's schedule as provided by the seller. The Royal Horticultural Society also offers a comprehensive list of vegetables and growing dates: www.omafra.gov.on.ca

Here are some March-specific dates for getting plants ready for early-spring transplanting.

- Early in March: Start peppers in a sunny window and keep them warm in the sun while they are germinating.
- Mid-March: Tomatoes don't need light to germinate. You should move them to a window once they sprout. You can also start many crops, like broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage, indoors around this time. This is a good time to start eggplants too.
- Late-March: Start nasturtium seeds indoors. This edible flower is a perfect filler for sunny areas with poor soil.

Vanessa Van, monthly gardening columnist for *The Beacon* newspaper.

AN UPDATE

Amherst Island Community Alliance

AICA

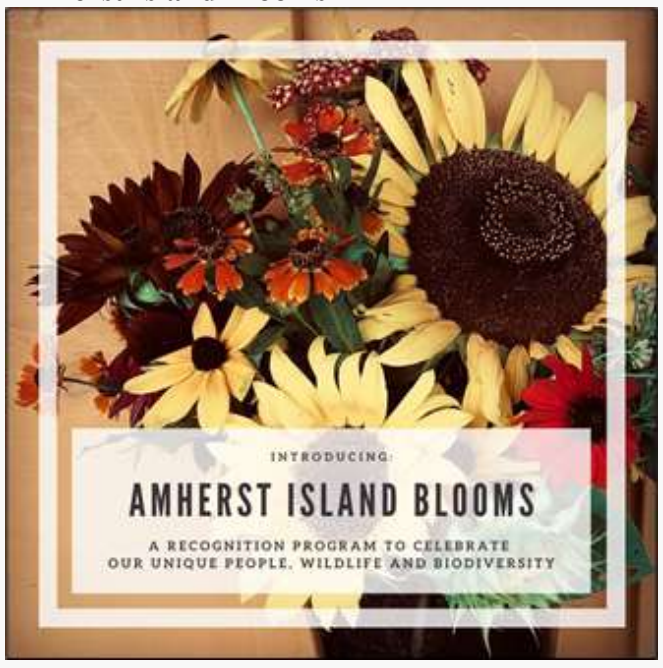
The Amherst Island Community Alliance (AICA) is an incorporated not-for-profit organization that was formed by members of the Amherst Island community to enhance the quality of life on the island. Membership in the Alliance is free. To become a member, click here to fill out the Google form.

AICA also maintains the island website located at http://www.amherstisland.on.ca/. Groups are encouraged to use the website to publicize upcoming events. Once on the website, select the **Events** tab and scroll down to the **Add a New Event** section or email your details to Stéphane (slevac@gmail.com).

Advertising space is also available on the website for groups, individuals and businesses. For more information, contact Stéphane.

AICA is happy to announce multiple initiatives in this month's edition of the Beacon. First up:

Amherst Island Blooms



Amherst Island Blooms (AI Blooms) is a recognition program for any resident (whether permanent or seasonal) that encourages and rewards your efforts to beautify your front garden as seen from the road. By recognizing efforts spent on front garden plantings, we hope to encourage residents to put some thought into how your individual efforts benefit this wonderful place we all call home. Whether you have beds, borders, containers or any combination thereof, as long as it can be seen from the road, it all counts!

Nominations open June 1st and close by July 1st (Canada Day). The nomination can be from anyone and self-nomination is permitted. Nomination forms will be available sometime in May through amherstisland.on.ca - we will let you know when it's loaded onto the site.

This initiative is for all islanders, no matter how green your thumbs might be! AI Blooms is not concerned with back gardens, only the gardens that can be seen from the road. Plantings can be annual or perennial flowers, shrubs or trees, vegetables, fruit - it is totally up to the property owner. Emphasis is on participation!

Assuming the drive-by assessment indicates that a reasonable effort has been spent towards gardening then the property will be awarded an AI Blooms recognition marker with the year inscribed on it.

We hope this gets your gardening ideas percolating. Additional details to come! To hear more about AI Blooms and join in the discussion, please tune into CJAI 92.1 FM on Monday mornings between 8:30-9:00 am.

Amherst Island Blooms Markers - Request for Proposal

In conjunction with AI Blooms, we are looking for an island artisan or craftsperson to conceptualize and produce recognition markers for this new initiative. It's important to us to offer this project to an island resident who possesses the creativity, fabrication knowhow, and interest to deliver on this portion of our project.

The deadline to submit your proposal is March 31, 2021.

We look forward to what our creative people come up with!

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Amherst Island Plant Sale

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A NEW HOBBY

Keith Miller Creations

Keith Miller figured he would take the opportunity the global pandemic provided to begin making unique coffin shaped urns. Recently he learned about the exorbitant prices of coffins and urns these days, and he just didn't feel it was right to charge grieving people such high costs simply to store the ashes or remains of their lost loved ones.

As a new hobby, and to perhaps fill a need in the community, he set to work designing and making these wooden coffin boxes. Some of the wood was collected from Amherst Island itself, so perhaps one day a lifelong islander will come to call this piece of the island their final resting place.

Keith says if you or someone you know has lost a loved one, and is in need of a coffin or urn, you can give him a call at (613) – 389 – 2588.

Keith Miller and his unique woodworking creations. Photographs taken by Kayleigh Graham.

AN UPDATE

Amherst Island Women's Institute

Updates from the Amherst Island Women's Institute

The Amherst Island branch of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (A.I.W.I.) last met on February 24, 2021. In keeping with physical distancing rules, the February meeting was held via Zoom.

Members of the branch have been hard at work on the new A.I. directory. A new branch logo and branding standards are in the works. In light of the success of recent fundraising efforts, discussions about reviving the idea of a fundraising committee were brought to the table.

The date for the next meeting has not yet been set. As always, all will be welcome to attend. Please contact the A.I.W.I. via email (amherstwi@gmail.com) for more information.

THE BEACON

PHOTOGRAPHY

Views of the Island

Some colour for a white day. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.

Heading Home. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.

THE BEACON

The island's most wanted family, an image captured through the fog on February 28, 2021. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.

A little freezing rain. Amherst Island, Ontario. Photographed by Fred Lemire Photography, www.fredlemirephotography.com.

THE BEACON

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Thank you, George Gavlas!

Islanders enjoying the community skating rink. Photographs taken by a variety of islanders.

George Gavlas generously spent much of his time shovelling and maintaining the community skating rink in recent days. Thank you for your hard work and efforts spent in order to provide islanders with such a lovely spot to safely skate!

CLASSIFIEDS

Support Local Businesses

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Come see for yourself. Get dirty, leave happy, stay cozy. Follow the adventure @topsyfarms, and www.topsyfarms.com

"Rosie Peeking Out", photography by Don Tubb.

The Lodge Coffee House

THE LODGE COFFEE HOUSE

Visit The Lodge at 376 Main Street, Bath. Serving coffee, teas, artisan sandwiches, from-scratch baked goods, and more!

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Open daily 9am-7pm, check our Facebook page for holiday hours.

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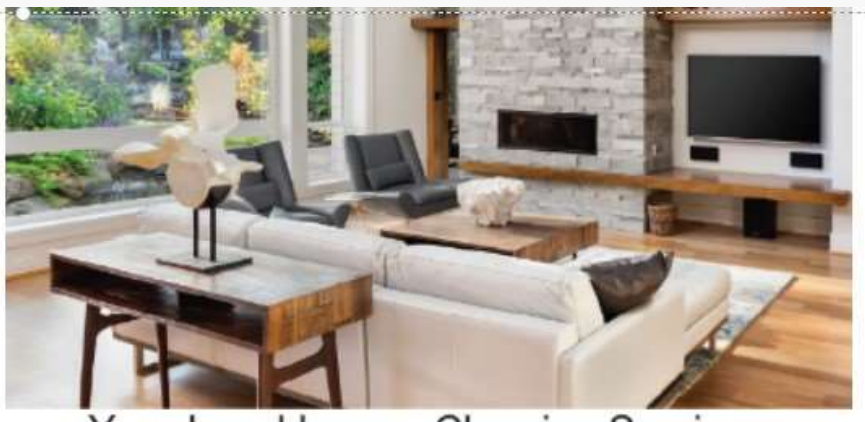

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Services

Thank-you!
Many thanks to Ida Gavlas for all of her hard work organizing the flu clinic on the island, and looking ahead to organizing a potential vaccine clinic in the future!

Medical Supplies
The Amherst Island Women's Institute has a medical equipment lending cupboard. We have crutches, rollators, walkers, raised toilet seats, and wheelchairs. We also have an upholstered electric lifting chair. We ask that you kindly return the equipment when you are done with it. If you would like to donate to the W.I. that is appreciated.

Contact Sharen English or David Pickering at (613)-384-6535.

Landscaping
Ken Rock is looking for work on the island. He has a background in landscaping, forklift operation, masonry, concrete, and cement. He has very reasonable rates.

Contact him at (343)-996-4850, or reach him through his Aunt, Norma-Lynn Colson at (613)-445-3456.

The Beacon

Available to Read at:

- Issue 485 of *The Beacon* will be available in print, for a $5 suggested donation, at McGinn's General Store, Stella, ON.
- *The Beacon*'s new website will host the current issue for reading without the need to download a PDF at https://www.thebeaconpaper.com/ .
- This edition of *The Beacon,* as well as archived editions will be available as a downloadable PDF files midway through the month on http://amherstisland.on.ca/Beacon/ .

Submissions:

The Beacon eagerly welcomes community participation! If you have **photographs, stories, events, articles, comics, drawings**, or anything else you would like to share in the newspaper, please send files to editor@thebeaconpaper.com
The submission deadline is the 25th of the month.

If you are interested in advertisement space, contact editor@thebeaconpaper.com for more information.

Thank you!

An afternoon photograph of the Amherst Island Beacon, the namesake of *The Beacon* newspaper. Photograph captured by Kayleigh Graham.