Issue 486 April 2021

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THE BEACON

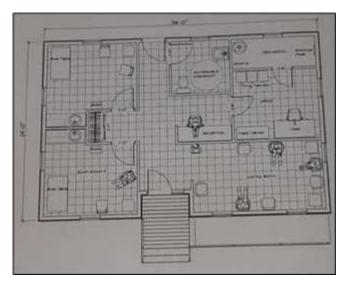
"bonum apporto nuntium, tristem nuntium, sed non malus nuntium"

THE

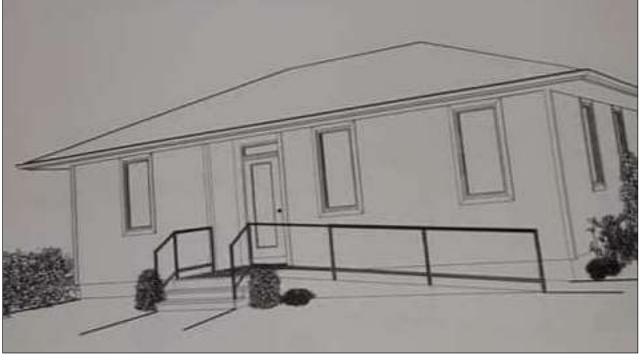


BEACON

THE AMHERST ISLAND COMMUNITY MEDICAL CLINIC



Conceptual drawings of the future not for profit Amherst Island Medical Clinic. Drawn by Woody Woodiwiss from a sketch Molly Stroyman suggested.



Conceptual drawings of the future not for profit Amherst Island Medical Clinic. Drawn by Woody Woodiwiss from a sketch Molly Stroyman suggested.

CATHY SHOWALTER

Amherst Island Community Medical Clinic (AICMC) is officially incorporated and applying for charitable status. The main goals for the clinic are to provide medical services, activities to promote healthy lifestyles and social relationships and programs to improve the overall health and wellness of Amherst Island residents. Stay tuned as there will be a survey and more news coming in the near future.

Email: <u>aicmc2021@gmail.com</u>.



Community Medical Clinic Plans

IDA GAVLAS

After organizing the flu shot clinic on Amherst Island in 2020, Ida began thinking of the benefits of having a clinic on the island. This one, convenient location on Amherst Island could potentially; offer vaccinations including the flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine in the future, host medical staff, provide foot care and other services, and even encourage Life Labs to do blood tests there. Amherst Island residents would also be able to organize prescription pick-ups at this location. As the population on Amherst Island collectively ages, it would be beneficial to have a local medical clinic that could address some of the needs on the island while avoiding a trip to town.

Ida Gavlas began work on this initiative; Cathy Showalter volunteered to do the paperwork for it to be an incorporated nonprofit organization with charity status, and both Judy Greer and Wendy LaPoint contributed healthcare knowledge. Some residents have expressed frustration about having to take a trip to town to pick up a prescription or see a doctor at a walk-in clinic. Several islanders may ignore or delay addressing minor health concerns, due to the hassle of travelling to the mainland to deal with them. Health and wellbeing should be made more of a priority, and a service that is easily accessible to everyone on the island. Opening a medical clinic on Amherst Island one day will help to fill the void in accessible healthcare services for island residents.

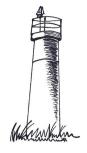
Many people have many reasons that contribute to their vaccine hesitancy with regards to the COVID-19 vaccines. Although some people are hesitant for valid medical or religious reasons, the ease of accessibility to a vaccine should not be a reason to avoid being vaccinated. If the convenience of having a medical clinic on Amherst Island would encourage more residents to be vaccinated, it would do us all a world of good. Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay tuned for more news on this community project!

IN THIS ISSUE

SPOTLIGHT SPECIES: RED FOX (3)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BY SALVADOR DALI (8)

INTRODUCING ISLANDERS: JON NYE (7)



APRIL DAYS

National No Housework Day

APRIL 7TH

Every year on April 7th, the housework can wait. National No Housework Day is a day to focus on self-care. No dishes, no laundry, no sweeping, no washing, no tidying, no vacuuming, no chores whatsoever.

This may not be a good habit to get into, but once in a while it is important to take a break and focus on what brings you joy. Go for a walk, read a book, take a nap, make some art, bingewatch a show, just do whatever you want to do.



OBSERVE

National Zoo Lovers Day

April 8th is National Zoo Lovers Day, so in a normal year people would celebrate by visiting local zoos and learning about animals. During the global pandemic many zoos have struggled financially without the proceeds from the usual admission fees and visitors. The animals, so accustomed to interacting with the public, have also seemed to be affected by the lack of interaction. Therefore, some zoos have decided to get creative with different types of animal enrichment they are providing. One zoo even brought their penguins to an art museum to take in a different environment. On their social media they shared pictures that looked like the penguins were appreciating the art. Maybe they were. It was an adorable and unique way to provide the animals with some more interaction and stimuli.

So, on this National Zoo Lovers Day, check out what your local zoo is doing to help improve the lives of the animals in their care. First the penguins are going to art galleries, next the giraffes will be birding on Amherst Island.

REMEMBER

National Haiku Poetry Day

APRIL 17TH

Celebrate National Haiku poetry day by practicing your writing! Remember, Haiku poems have 5 syllables on the first line, then 7 syllables on the next line, and 5 syllables on the last line. A famous example of a Haiku is:

- (5) Haikus are easy
- (7) But sometimes they don't make sense
- (5) Refrigerator.

If you come up with a Haiku about our island, send it to editor@thebeaconpaper.com and it may be included in the next issue!

Enjoy these random island Haikus:

Looking at birdies and obeying traffic laws; some things do not mix. ~Cole Meakings

Oh, Amherst Island
Why, oh why is it thusly?
Seems about right though.
~Anonymous





SPOTLIGHT SPECIES

Red Fox

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

The red fox, or *vulpes vulpes*, is often confused with the gray fox because of visual similarities and shared habitat. Red foxes have long snouts, red fur across their backs, sides, and tails, black feet, black ear tufts, and a white tipped tail.

Red foxes can be found throughout North America in the woodlands, rural and suburban neighbourhoods, wetlands, and fields. They are classified as omnivores, as they eat both flora and fauna, and are not picky eaters. Rodents and rabbits are their preferred prey, but red foxes will also eat birds, amphibians, fruit, and some garbage. Their ability to scavenge and find food in the wintertime is impressive and contributes to their reputation for being cunning.

Mating season for red foxes occurs in the winter and is followed by the female fox building a den. Red foxes give birth to a potentially large number of young, 1-12 fox kits can be reared in the same litter. The pups are born with gray fur and gradually turn red. The parents care for their litter until fall, when the young wander out on their own.

The habitat loss and building development that has caused other predatorial species to suffer, has not affected the red fox in the same way. Instead of retreating from civilization, red foxes have adapted well to suburban life. The foxes usually prefer living in a park or rural community close enough to people that they are somewhat protected from coyotes and other large predators that prefer to dwell in the wilderness.

Red foxes have excellent hearing. Due to their ability to hear low frequencies, they can hear rodents digging tunnels underground.

Livestock farmers tend to despise red foxes because of the havoc and devastation they can bring to small livestock, preying on chickens, lambs, ducks, and other young animals. Conversely, crop farmers tend to appreciate red foxes, since they consume crop-destroying insects and small rodents.

RED FOX FACTS

- Young, male red foxes travel far from their birth site in the fall of their first year. Some have been traced while making a journey over 250km away from the den they were raised in.
- Red foxes make a high-pitched, sharp barking sound to warn other foxes of danger.

Source: The National Wildlife Federation, "Red Fox", Wildlife Guide, 2020.





Red fox kit siblings at about 5 weeks of age, just outside their den on Amherst Island, ON. Both images were photographed by Kayleigh Graham, editor@thebeaconpaper.com



Why Gas-Fired Electricity Has to Go

ANGELA BISCHOFF

Written by Angela Bischoff, the Director of Ontario Clean Air Alliance. The below article includes links to external resources with more information and explanations available.

We are in the fight of our lives, and in that fight our battle against Covid is going to look like a skirmish. The real battle is to stop the worst impacts of climate change, and to do that we need to use all the forces at our disposal to reduce climate pollution now before it's too late.

Unfortunately, Ontario is currently headed in the completely wrong direction. The province is planning to hugely increase the use of gas-fired power plants to replace aging nuclear. This is a disastrous strategy for our climate and will result in a 300-500% increase in the electricity sector greenhouse gas pollution. If that happens, it will be impossible for Ontario to meet even its already inadequate climate targets.

It doesn't have to be this way. We have many other ways to keep our lights on. We can start by getting back to pursuing strong energy efficiency measures. Ontario was a leader in energy efficiency until the current government slashed program funding by 60%. This was very shortsighted because avoiding the need to generate electricity in the first place is one of the lowest-cost ways to meet our energy needs and address climate change. In 2017, Ontario paid less than two cents per kWh for energy efficiency measures, a fraction of the cost of supplying power. A more efficient system also means we can make better use of the power we do generate, especially from renewable sources like wind, solar and water. Ontario's early history with renewable energy has been controversial, but a lot has changed since the days of the Green Energy Act. Costs have fallen dramatically, with wind and solar now boasting average costs that are half to one third of what we pay for power from nuclear plants. In fact, solar and wind are now so cost competitive that the International Energy Agency predicts that 95% of new power supply worldwide will come from renewable energy in the next five

But the sun doesn't shine at night, and the wind doesn't always blow, so we need a way to backstop our renewable supplies. Ontario Power Generation, after investing billions of dollars to buy a fleet of gas plants, would like you to believe that the answer is gas-fired generation. We have a far better solution right next door; Quebec has a massive surplus of low-cost water power, and is keen to make an export deal with Ontario at very friendly prices. Quebec can use its giant system of reservoirs to store water when other green energy sources are available and release this water to generate power when they are not. An MIT study found that pairing renewables with Quebec's waterpower system was the

most cost-effective storage solution available, a lesson Ontario should quickly act on.

According to the Independent Electricity System Operator's own reports, we have enough transmission capacity to bring in sufficient power from Quebec to replace what we currently generate from gas. In fact, we have enough transmission capacity to replace the power from the Pickering Nuclear Station with water power from Quebec, which should be closed ASAP given recent revelations about major safety concerns.

Allowing greenhouse gas emissions to skyrocket by ramping up gas-fired generation will severely undercut the climate leadership Ontario displayed by phasing out dirty coal. That's why 22 municipalities (and counting) across Ontario and 63 organizations have endorsed our call to phase-out gas-fired power generation. With renewable alternatives readily available at low-cost, there is no reason to ramp up gas or rebuild old and build new nuclear infrastructure.

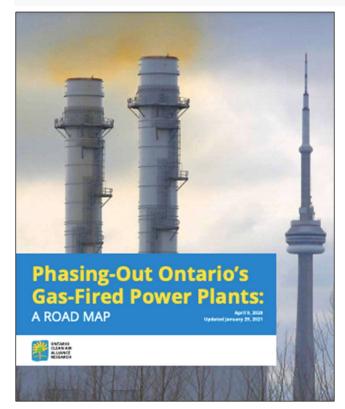
Ontario led the world in phasing out coal. Now we need to catch up to a world that is ready to phase-out gas, including our American neighbours who have embraced a goal of having a zero-carbon pollution power sector by 2035.

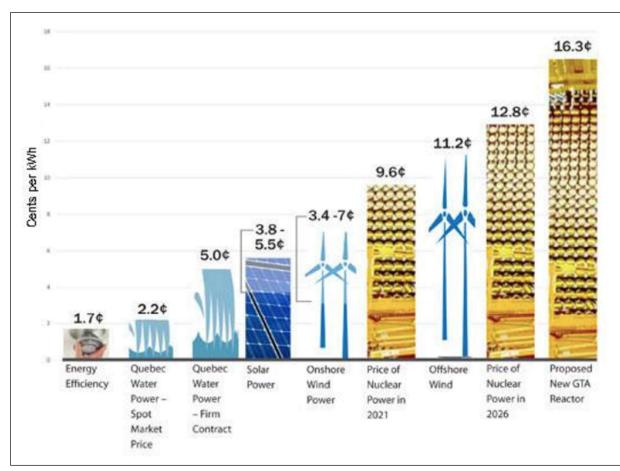
Please sign our petition at: OntarioClimateAction.ca

Affiliated Links

- Concerns surrounding Pickering
 Nuclear Station's Safety:
 https://www.cleanairalliance.org/stunning-revelations-about-pickering-nuclear-stations-safety/
- Ontario's Electricity Options, Cost Comparison:

 https://www.cleanairalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/options-2021.pdf
- Nuclear building plans: https://www.cleanairalliance.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/12/GTA-Reactor-Fact-Sheet-online-dec-10-v 01.pdf
- Link to sign the petition:
 https://www.cleanairalliance.org/hampipe/







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.



Fares (cash or cheque only) Fare collection resumed March 8th, 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

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.

LOYALIST LANDFILLS

Dump Hours and Protocol

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





Congratulations

Congratulations to Harley Fleming, granddaughter of David Fleming. She and three friends won the Audience Favourite Youth Short Film award at the Kingston Film Festival. Harley is a student at LCVI high school. The title is "Elliot Shepard's Concerto in D Minor", and it can be viewed on the Studio L.C. YouTube webpage. Way to go Harley!

Cinematography by Harley Fleming.

Here is the link from which the film can be viewed:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omHjYkgP1wA&list=PLHsEkJUq
A9vFKn3oBH1TppDjClixo2GhU&index=5





Photographs are screen captures from the short film "Elliot Sheard's Concerto in D Minor".

Amherst Island Women's Institute

AN UPDATE

The Amherst Island branch of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (A.I.W.I.) last met on March 17, 2021, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. In keeping with physical distancing rules, the March meeting was held via Zoom.

Last month marked one year since the beginning of the pandemic in Canada. During this year of upheaval, loss, and distance, the A.I.W.I. has communicated with the island community by sharing these written updates, posting on social media, and connecting with people through our first digital fundraising event.

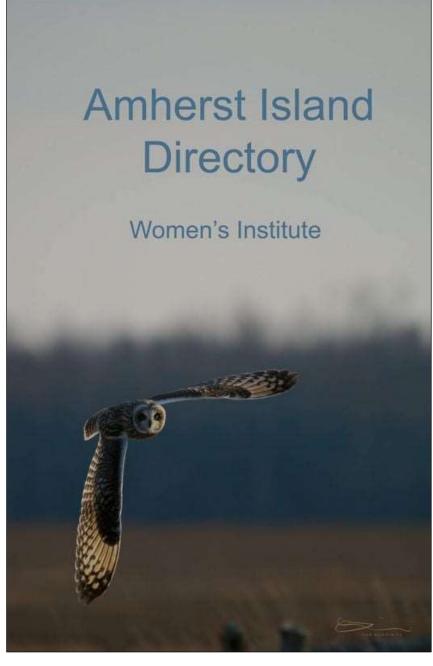
Over this past year, members of the A.I.W.I. have also been hard at work creating the 2021 edition of the Amherst Island Directory. Countless hours went into updating contact information, reaching out to advertisers, writing new text, designing a new look, getting the books printed, and selling the final product within our community. This tremendous effort resulted in a refreshed version of this vital tool that helps so many of us stay connected.

For anyone who has not yet purchased a copy (or two), the 2021 Amherst Island Director is available for \$10.00 per copy. To get your copy, please send an Interac e-Transfer payment to

amherstislandwomensinstitute@gmail.com (include your name and address in the message). You can also pay by dropping off a cheque (payable to A.I.W.I.) in the A.I.W.I. Treasurer's mailbox at 11450 Front Road. After your payment has been received, your directory will be delivered to your Island mailbox or doorstep.

With the directory update completed, the A.I.W.I. will continue to manage other initiatives that support our community. The Home Medical Equipment Library, for example, continues lending items each week. Located right here on Amherst Island, this unique and well-established service provides everything from safety seats to canes. There is no charge for using the equipment, and we just ask you to bring it back when you are done with it. To learn more, reach out to us (amherstwi@gmail.com) for more details.

The next meeting of the A.I.W.I. is scheduled for April 20, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. As always, all are welcome to attend. Please contact the A.I.W.I. via email (amherstwi@gmail.com) for more information.



The Amherst Island Directory, created by the A.I.W.I., with cover art by Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.



BEACON

INTRODUCING ISLANDERS

Meet Jon Nye

JON NYE 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.

Jon's Family Life and History

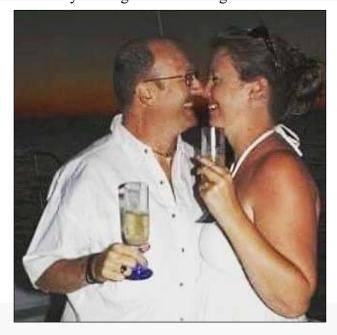
Jonathan Richard Cecil Nye was born on November 2nd, 1966. He received his two middle names as tribute to his grandfathers. He was born and raised in Toronto and attended Bedford Park Public School. He recalled, "when I was in grade two, my grade two teacher was dating a director at the National Film Board, and I got cast in a movie he was producing called "Christmas in Pioneer Days". I got to spend about a week on a film set learning about how they celebrated Christmas in the pioneer days.

Jon couldn't play sports when he was growing up due to a Petit Mal Epilepsy diagnosis. This created barriers that meant sports and other physical activities were difficult for safety reasons. Thankfully, he grew out of this condition in his early teens.

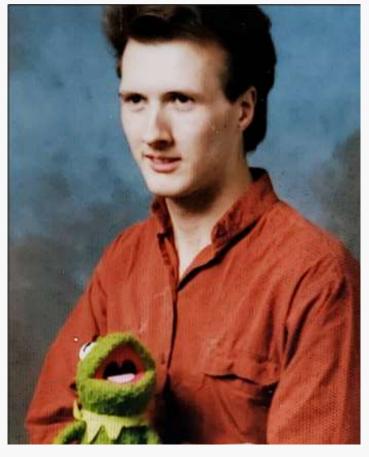
Music has always been important to him, and he participated in the school choir as a child. Jon took music lessons for guitar, piano, and violin. After basic lessons he continued to experiment with the instruments. To this day music is still extremely present in his life, and he continues to play drums, guitar, and bass along with other instruments.

Jon attended North Toronto Collegiate Institute and Northern Secondary as well. Jon explained that he was easily distracted during high school, and not the most focused on academics. A major contributing factor to his distraction was the fact that he met Cara Daley (later, Cara Nye), during high school.

After high school, Jon spent a couple summers in London, and later Cara and he moved in together in 1987. Jon attended school for Marketing at George Brown College. He married Cara the year he graduated college and affirms



Jon and Cara Nye.



A candid photoshoot of Jon Nye as a teenager, hanging out with Kermit the Frog.

that she is the love of his life, and she completes him. They recently celebrated their 31st wedding anniversary! Jon and Cara then had two children, Kaitlin was born in 1993, and Jackson, who was born in 1995. Their children were both raised in Toronto as well and continue to live there currently. Jon said that no matter what his children wanted to pursue as their hobbies, they were supported wholeheartedly. The family always took the summers off and spent time at the family cottage, and later, the family trailer.

Keith and Maryanne Mercer lived next door to Jon in Scarborough in the past, and they remained friends after Keith and Maryanne moved to Amherst Island. After one of their visits to the island to see Keith and Maryanne, Jon and Cara noticed a house up for sale. Soon afterwards, Jon and Cara bought the property on Amherst Island (their current home) in 2017. For several years, Jon and Cara worked in Toronto during the week and traveled back to the island on the weekends.

It had always been their plan to transition to full time life on Amherst Island, so when several other time behind the camera. He enjoys taking aspects in their lives in Toronto began to align, they decided to sell their house in Toronto in



Jon Nye, jamming.

2020. They became full time residents of Amherst Island in late 2020, and say they absolutely love it. Jon said he has always dreamed of living on an island, as he enjoys the necessity of the ferry ride for travel.

Jon's Life on the Island

Jon has always dreamed of having a radio show so he reached out to CJAI shortly after unpacking the moving boxes. He began hosting his Tuesday morning 8-10am radio show in January 2021; "Talk O'Tuesday", and is loving it. Cara is his producer and they work on it as a team. He says it's been a really fun project.

His involvement in The Back Kitchen has increased this year, as he has joined the Board of Directors. He eagerly anticipates the return of the Saturday morning doughnut sales.

Lately, Jon has been spending more pictures of the foxes and sunsets from his yard.



One of Jon Nye's sunset photographs, taken at the end of March, 2021.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Portrait of Abraham Lincoln by Salvador Dali

DEREK OXLEY

When I was not quite ten years old my parents lost a pair of good friends - a married couple who were about their age and who died young. I have only a few rough recollections of them and the house they lived in. I remember it had a pool - the first pool I ever swam in - in a backyard that had a very tall ivy-covered fence. I remember that they had a small organ in their hallway with a wedding photo on it, and I remember the print that they had hanging in their bathroom where we would change into our swimsuits. Decades later, when I happened to see the image again, (interestingly also hanging in a bathroom) I had a surge of old memories, and I took a picture of it in hopes of finding out what it was and who had made it. The answer was a complete surprise.

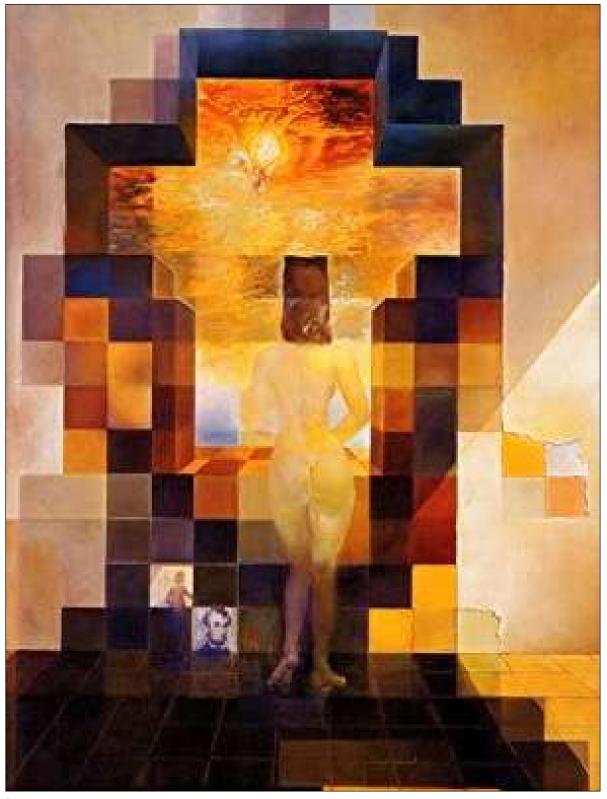
The full title of this piece is Gala Contemplating the Mediterranean Sea which at Twenty Metres Becomes the Portrait of Abraham Lincoln, and it was created by none other than Salvador Dali in the later part of his career. I was truly surprised. I had owned the quintessential college student print once upon a time, and after years of study I thought one could sum up Dali with melting clocks, ants crawling out of a pocket watch, and skybound elephants with spindly little legs. But Dali's artistic output continued on well beyond the classic Surrealist work of his youth. Although surreal imagery in popular art has been a constant for the past century, Surrealism (with a capital "S") was an artistic movement popular in Western art between the World Wars. Those who practiced it were steeped in the ideology of its manifesto and engaged in practices specifically designed to stimulate immediate creativity. Surrealist literature used a stream of consciousness approach which juxtaposed unrelated concepts which was often jarring and thought provoking. It aimed to tap into the subconscious and promote dream-like imagery. Although Dali never formally branded himself as a Surrealist, it is hard to ignore this quality which appears so frequently in his work. Whether or not it was overt, Dali rarely made a piece of art that did not hold some erotic meaning. This Classical representation of the human form was a favourite of his, heavily inspired by the surviving sculpture and statues of antiquity. The woman represented here was Dali's life partner, and muse, Gala, who became present in many of his works since their meeting in the 1930s.

Although it might look at first like a photomosaic, this piece is combination of paint and lithography. Lithography is a modern technique that uses oily inks drawn on a stone or aluminium surface which are treated with nitric acid and arabic gum. The paper is pressed down on the inked surface once the design is finalized. As early as 1960 Dali was experimenting with this type of tromp l'oeil perspective and he was particularly fond of using an electrocular

monocle which translated a televised image onto a translucent screen, allowing the viewer to see the televised image layered over whatever scenery was placed behind the screen. This translated on the canvas into inspirations that were true to the roots of surreal practice; the overlap of different images would kickstart his creativity. In this case he overlaps Gala standing by a window with a portrait of Abraham Lincoln, painting the former as a concise figure but treating the latter as a pixelated impression. Far more mature than the imagery he is best known for, I daresay that at this point Dali had the patience needed to execute more subtle and singular ideas.

Dali passed away in 1989 at the age of 84, but he maintained a prolific output of thoughts and images through his later years. He lived long enough to watch astutely as much of the meaning and practices poured into the modern art movements of his earlier days slid ever further out of vogue and into obscurity, especially as social movements in the 1960s and 70s led to evolutions in popular taste.

Surrealism did survive, but in very different ways as we will examine in a future article - Pop Surrealism and Lowbrow art requires an examination onto itself. I dove into this month without realizing how complex and controversial Dali's oeuvre truly was, and I have to admit that there is a lot of depth that I now realize I need to probe. This month's pursuit has reinvigorated my interest in Dali, and I look forward to returning to his work in the future. Although there are many prints of this work available, the original copy is in the collection of The Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.



Sources:

- Davies, Denny, Hofrichter, Jacobson, Roberts, Simon. *Janson's History of Art: The Western Tradition*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 2011.
- Descharnes, Robert, and Gilles Néret. Dalí: The Paintings. Tr. Michael Hulse. Taschen GmbH, 2006.
- Hults, Linda C. *The Print in the Western World: An Introductory History*. The University of Wisconsin Press. 1996.



JANET'S JOTTINGS

Okay Everyone, Let's Get Our Ducks in a Row

JANET SCOTT

On our recent birding outing on March 25th, 2021, Bonnie Livingstone and I stopped by the dug out pond on Keith McGinn's land just north of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. We know from many years of birding on Amherst Island that you never know what surprises may await you in that wee bit of water.

Of course, the biggest and most noticeable at first was a pair of our local Canada geese. The high flyers will continue north to the lakes and sloughs of the north, while our island population have completely lost their genetic mapping for migration and will just nest right here on the pastures that snow has finally left bare, or on the little islands, or even in broken trees. Mother can be seen flattening right to the ground so only her shiny black button eyes can be seen watching you, and Daddy is on patrol, a 'don't mess with me' kind of big guy. Mom sits on her nest of as many as ten or more oval, creamy white eggs tucked in a grassy down lined nest made by the female with sticks, cattails, and reeds. She incubates alone for 28 days, eating the grasses she can reach from nearby. Here on the island, a late snowfall or severe cold snap, might reduce the number of viable eggs, but there she sits. When the goslings hatch, they will be imprinted on the Mother geese by sound and sight. Sometimes as the geese gather in fields or along water edges, a more dominant mother goose may round up a few extra goslings from nearby pairs and you will see a family of different sized goslings together. The parents are quite zealous as guardians of the family. When you travel the South Shore Road just west of Andrea and Bruce's home, there is a place that Canada geese gather on Plank's farm and then guide the goslings across to the lake. On one occasion while driving the school bus, a gander challenged me. He stood right in the middle of the road while several families of geese crossed in front of the bus. When we thought the parade was done, I prepared to move on, and he still got very agitated. One of the students noticed a single gosling was having difficulty climbing up out of the ditch. We cheered him on and watched as he struggled up through the grasses and crossed the road. At that point the anxious father joined the others in the lake, and we went on to school.

A rather showy duck in this pond was the ring-necked duck. You will recognize the drake by his showy, white, vertical stripes uo his shoulders that appeared to be like white bars against his blank breast as he sailed towards us. Bonnie picked out the white ring around his beak which has a black tip, and neither of us could see the ring around his collar that gives him his name. His dark purple tinged blank head is slightly pointed at the back, the sides are grayish, and the back and sterns are black. His female counterpart is all brown with the ringed bill and while at the top of her beak. Both sexes have a gray wing stripe. They will build their nest in a freshwater marsh close to the edge sometimes

building it up as the water rises with bent down grasses, sedge, and down. Mother incubates for up to 29 days and the drake accompanies her when she leaves the nest.

There was a pair of mallards resting on the grassy island. Mallards have been known to choose rather different sites for their nests, such as the rain gutter on a roof, the garden inside Welborne Avenue Public School, and the garden at Hotel Dieu Hospital for example, but usually in tall grass, reeds, or in fields. They lay 8 to 15 oval, light green, buff, nearly white eggs. The duck will incubate for 23 to 29 days in her concealed nest tucking them in with the down when she decides to leave. She is streaked with shades of brown like the grasses in which she hides but shows a royal-blue speculum, lined in white when she opens her wing. No guarding drake here. You wouldn't want a showy Daddy anywhere nearby your protection camouflage. Male mallards have an emerald green head, sporting a white clerical collar set off by a distinctive reddish brown breast, pale body, gray wings with a bright blue speculum, and a black backside. We used to notice the bachelor males gathered along the South Shore Road, hanging out together as they slowly eclipsed into duller feathers.

Another exciting pair of ducks in that same pond was the much smaller hooded mergansers. They were swimming together at the back of the pond and mating. The drake is black with a white crest, that during this

season is raised to show a large white crescent with black edging which he lowers when not trying to attract the ladies. The three mergansers we saw here on the island are common mergansers. They measure 25 inches, have a white front and sides, with a smooth green head, and a dark back. The 23inch red-breasted merganser has a tufted green head, white collar, red breast, and white and gray sides. The hooded mergansers only measure 18 inches. All three have serrated beaks for catching fish, as they are diving ducks. The common and red-breasted mergansers have orange beaks, but the hooded merganser has a black beak. Our hooded merganser will be looking for a tree cavity or a man-made wood duck box in which to nest. The duck will lay 10 to 18 almost round eggs and will incubate alone for 31 days. Common mergansers and goldeneye are also cavity nesters, while the red-breasted mergansers nest on the ground. I found it interesting to read that hooded mergansers will sometimes lay their eggs in with wood ducks or goldeneye. I suppose suitable cavities are getting harder and harder to find. The female was ducky coloured with a warm brown crest and the dark serrated beak.

We had a wonderful birding day that Thursday but were especially thrilled by the activity in that pond. Work on learning your ducks. The colours, the habits, the shapes and the calls will help you get your ducks in a





(Above) A local pair of hooded mergansers, photograph taken by Vicki Keith.

(Left) A drake hooded merganser.





DARLENE'S DICTÉES

Announcing 'Cultivate': a new segment on Amherst Island

DARLENE MARTIN-STUART

Radio's 'Udder Morning Show'

Hello everyone! For those of you who don't know me my name is Darlene Martin-Stuart and I live on Amherst Island with my husband Ross and my daughter Samantha.

In 2020, I found myself having more time to spend on-island as opposed to travelling to juried art shows throughout the province.

I love living here. I love being here. And I love the idea of doing something positive and meaningful for our community; our people, our landscape, and our wildlife. So, I began volunteering, for the first time in my life.

I offered to help with this January's Christmas Bird Count, and was paired up with my dear friend, Janet Scott, our very own bird lady. I met Janet at The Neilson Museum and Cultural Centre on the day I became a member a couple of years ago, and she enthusiastically showed me around. I began inviting Janet to tea on my deck with the hopes she would teach me a bit about birds. I, in turn, began teaching Janet a bit about flora.

The heritage of this gem of Lake Ontario is of great interest to me. Acknowledging it, understanding it, and preserving it has become a great passion of mine.

When Janet asked me if I would help her with Amherst Island Radio's Udder Morning Show back in January, I drew a deep breath, and accepted.



Janet and I in my cutting garden. I love flower arranging and Janet graciously takes my experiments home to rate how well they hold up. Win-win!

The Udder Morning Show airs Mondays from 7-10am on CJAI, Amherst Island Radio.



SAVE THE DATE!

THE HOME GROWN

AMHERST ISLAND PLANT SALE

May 22 10am-2pm The Lodge

For the last couple of months, Janet and I have been discussing Amherst Island's birds, heritage and aspects of gardening on the show. I have recorded a few interviews; one about Canadian folklorist Edith Fowke, one about monarchs and milkweeds, one about herbs, one about maple syrup, and one about dry stone walls and crevice gardening. Janet's thirty minute segment 'Just For The Birds' is repeated on CJAI, and my interview segment 'Cultivate' should be following the same format in the near future.

There are two things we have been discussing at length on each Monday's Udder Morning Show. The first is a plant sale that will be held at The Lodge on the May long weekend. A first of its kind, this sale is 'rooted' in island residents donating plants, most of which will hopefully have been grown right here on Amherst Island.

I have taken on an ambitious plan to grow from seed several different types of herbs and flowers and plan on donating half of what I am able to successfully propagate to the sale. Easier said than done! But I'm giving it my best shot.

Some island residents have graciously risen to the challenge and have let me know what they are planning to donate.

So far, we have some seeds, bulbs, tubers, seedlings, perennial divisions, herbs and a small selection of vegetables on offer, all at very reasonable prices.





DARLENE'S DICTÉES

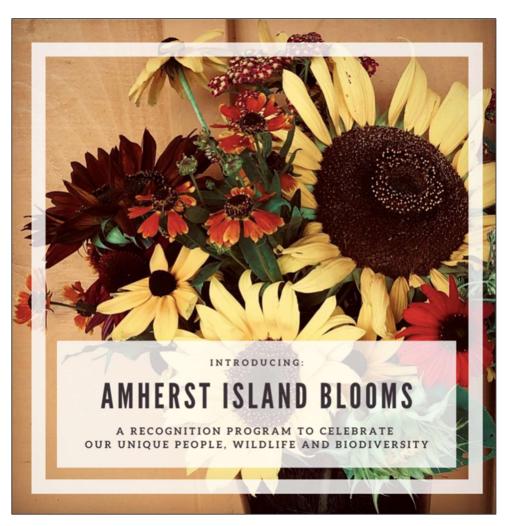
If you would like to help us 'grow' our plant offering, or volunteer in the days leading up to and including the sale day, please let me know! You can email me at cultivate@rosslandgardens.com. I'd love to hear from you.

I believe this plant sale can create a horizontal link between us all. Imagine what it will feel like to see a plant that you donated growing in your fellow islander's garden this year - perhaps for years to come!

The second thing gardening related that we've been discussing on the show is Amherst Island Blooms; an island-wide initiative for all island residents who may be interested in spending some time this spring and summer beautifying their front gardens as seen by the road.

A criteria for becoming an Amherst Island Blooms Recognition Garden are being developed as I write this. Nominations forms will be available on June 1 on amherstisland.on.ca. In the meantime, please tune into the show between 8:30-9am each week for more information and updates. The aim is for the Home Grown Plant Sale and Amherst Island Blooms to be realized as multi-year programs that will become a new piece of island heritage we can all be proud to take part in each year.

Gardening offers a multitude of benefits. I know it really helped my own mental and physical wellbeing during this pandemic. Front yard gardens obviously contribute to property value, but one of the biggest benefits is to pollinators and other wildlife that could really use our help. By incorporating herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees, or water features, or bug hotels, or birdhouses, (let me know if you can think of another feature) we provide food, shelter nesting materials and protection for all manner of wildlife, creating a robust ecosystem here on Amherst Island that can have an immediate and appreciable impact on our environment. So get those ideas percolating and tune into The Udder Morning Show to hear weekly updates on both of these projects.



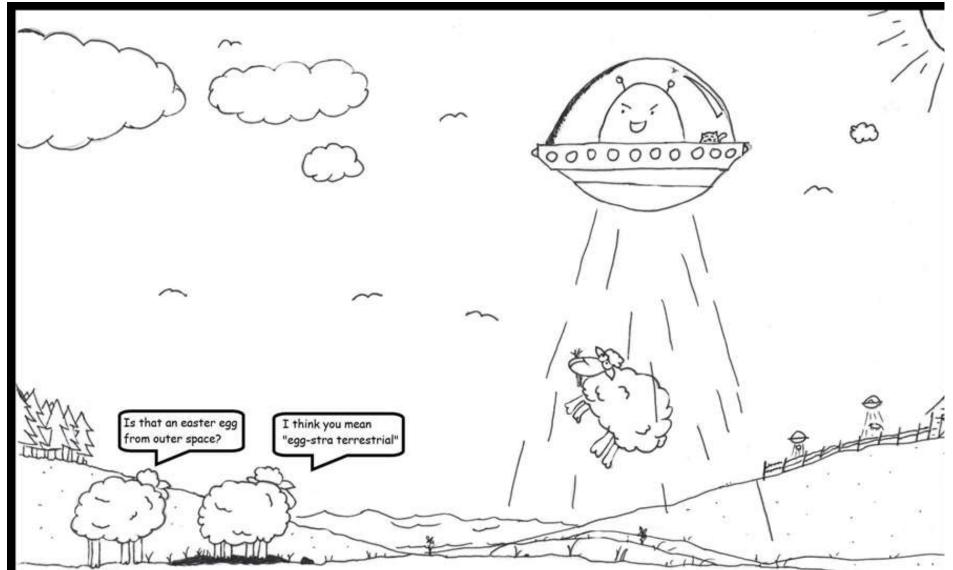
The Udder Morning Show airs Mondays from 7-10am on CJAI, Amherst Island Radio.

COMMUNITY CARTOONS

Comics for Islanders

Puns that are Out of this World

SAM EVES





GARDENING

Must Love Mulch

VANESSA VAN

Spring is here, and I am emerging from a long winter. As I return to the garden, I remember I am not the only creature venturing back outside. As my body-temperature, heart-rate, and metabolic rate all kick back into a non-winter mode, my mind turns to a pest I had all but forgotten. The iris borer (the Macronoctua onusta moth's larvae) is also now waking from its winter slumber.

For those fortunate neighbors who are unacquainted with this voracious beast, I can tell you that the larvae of this moth eat away at the leaves, rhizomes, roots, and shoots of the glorious plants named after the Greek goddess of the rainbow.

These borers live just one year and cause an awe-inspiring amount of damage. During the late summer and early fall, as adults, the nocturnal moths lay eggs on leaves and any debris around the iris plants (up to 1000 eggs per female moth). These eggs then overwinter on the remains of plants left on the ground. The larva hatch early in the spring and are just getting their first bite of new iris leaves at this time of year. By mid-summer, they have changed into pupae.

The iris borer tunnels into the rhizomes and introduces a bacteria that can cause a fleshy smelling rot. This soft rot stresses or destroys the plants. If the borer is present, you may see dark streaks on the plant in the spring and yellow/dead leaves in the summer. If you are brave enough to cut open a smelly and mushy rhizome, you will find the little borers eating away.

This month I devote my column to this tiny and mighty pest. I have collected a short list of organic tips for ridding your garden bed of iris borers. I started this debugging process last summer and will continue it again this spring, summer, and fall. With any luck, our bed will be completely back to good health by next summer. Wish me luck!



March Gardening Suggestions:

Tips to help get rid of iris borers naturally:

- In the spring, remove all the previous year's dead foliage and a thin layer of mulch. You can do this by cutting and peeling the dead foliage down to the rhizome. These easy sanitation practices will remove overwintering eggs. Prevention is your best strategy with the iris borer.
- During the spring, if you see signs of chewing, pinch leaves to kill the larvae inside.
- In the mid to late summer, cut out damaged parts of the rhizomes and then replant. Wait until after blooming is over to dig out the rhizomes. Dip the undamaged portion of the rhizomes and roots in a solution with a splash of bleach (about 1 part bleach: 9 parts water) before replanting.
- In the late summer, dig up the soil in the garden bed and look for the pupa.
 Remove the pupa by hand from the ground.
- In the fall, cut, remove, and destroy dead stocks, leaves, and flowers. Also, in the fall, add a layer of mulch (to be removed in the spring).

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





RECIPES

Savoury Stinging Nettle

RANDI KENNEDY

Time for a spring tonic?

Consider the lowly stinging nettle (*urtica dioica*). Tea made from dried stinging nettle leaves has been used since Roman times and is said to aid in clearing toxins from one's body, controlling blood sugar, supporting bodily systems, and several other functions. It is rich in iron, calcium, potassium as well as Vitamins A, B, C, D, E, and K.

Don gardening gloves, grab scissors and a bucket, and head to a nettle patch while they are young. Do not underestimate their ability to leave a painful and lasting sting or rash! Snip tender tops, 3 or 4 inches, of plants which are under a foot high. For soup you will need about 3 to 6 cups of leaves (a rough estimate only). Fill a bucket with warm water and swish to remove dirt and tiny livestock. This may partially render the stingers useless. Drain and strip the leaves from the stems (I still use gloves at this point). For tea, just dry the leaves. For cooking, treat like spinach.

Sally makes this soup for Ian each spring!

Sally's Stinging Nettle Soup

- Gather enough nettles to yield 3 or 4 cups of packed leaves.
- Wash and strip leaves from stems.
- Steam in a little water.
- Make a roux with flour (1tbsp) and butter (2tbsp).
- When completely blended, stir and cook for a few minutes, then whisk in 3 (+ or -) cups of milk and whisk until thinkened.
- Add nettles, salt, and pepper.
- May also add cooked potatoes, baby peas, julienned carrots, rice; anything you like really!
- Top with cheese, spring onions, and croutons (or not).

Steamed nettles may also be served as a side dish, with grated parmesan, lemon, butter, salt, and pepper.

Because nettles are full of nutrients, they make a dandy plant fertilizer. Caution: keep and use it outside as it is known to get very stinky! Cut mature nettles, chop and bruise them into a bucket and fill bucket with water. Put a lid on it and let it steep outside for 6 weeks or so. To use, dilute 1 part nettle water to 10 parts fresh water and use on the garden.

If you do get stung, be aware that the hairs on the nettle are hollow, like a hypodermic needle, and produce irritants causing itching, pain, and a rash. Wash with soap and warm water. Try not to scratch, as scratching will drive those little stickers in even deeper. Curly dock or jewel weed may alleviate symptoms if applied like a poultice.





Images of stinging nettle to help with plant identification while harvesting. Below is an example of stinging nettle soup.





PHOTOGRAPHY

Views of the Island



 $The \ majesty \ and \ presense \ of the \ Snowy \ Owl \ never \ ceases \ to \ amaze. \ Photographed \ by \ Don \ Woodiwiss \ Photography, \ woodiwiss photography. com.$



 ${\bf A}\ swan\ in\ flight.\ Photographed\ by\ Don\ Woodiwiss\ Photography, woodiwiss photography.com.$





A close up of the March ice melting away, photographed by Vicki Keith.



A close up of the March ice melting away, photographed by Vicki Keith.



A snowy owl on a rainy day. Photographed by Fred Lemire Photography, www.fredlemirephotography.com.



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"Rosie Peeking Out", photography by Don Tubb.

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If you are interested in advertising and showing support in *The Beacon*, e-mail editor@thebeaconpaper.com for more information.



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:

- A limited number of copies of Issue 486 of *The Beacon* will be available in print, for \$5 at McGinn's General Store, Stella, ON.
- *The Beacon*'s new website will host the current issue for reading starting on March 15th, 2021, 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 <u>editor@thebeaconpaper.com</u>
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.