

“bonum apporto nuntium, tristem nuntium, sed non malus nuntium”

THE



BEACON

CAPTIVATING, CREATIVE CAPTURE OF A COYOTE



A coyote on Amherst Island. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.



A coyote on Amherst Island, at the moment it sensed the photographer’s presence. Photographed by Don Woodiwiss Photography, woodiwissphotography.com.

Wonderful Wildlife Photography

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

The coyotes that we often see on Amherst Island are also referred to as prairie wolves or brush wolves. Coyotes are smaller and lighter than wolves, but as the territory of the coyote has expanded throughout North America, subtle changes have occurred in the appearance of local coyote populations. People have noticed this shift and re-named these strange coyotes ‘coywolves’. Coywolves are a hybrid of the eastern wolf and the western coyote, and coywolves are now the dominant species in Ontario. Geneticists confirmed this in the early 1990s and chances are, if you have seen a coyote in Ontario, you’ve probably seen a coywolf.

The name coywolf may not be entirely appropriate for these coyotes in Ontario though, since the genetic testing has revealed they would be more aptly named

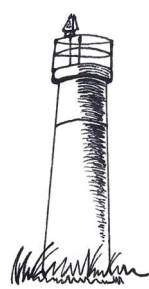
‘coywolfdogs’, but this name is not as catchy. The testing revealed that most coyotes in Ontario are an approximate genetic combination of 60%-84% coyote, 8%-25% wolf, and 8%-11% dog. No matter the nuanced genetic changes that have occurred over approximately the last 100 years, ‘coywolfdogs’ or coyotes in Ontario continue to be an impressive predator.

Coyotes plague the nightmares of livestock farmers, since their predatory lifestyle has not been significantly affected by their genetic development. Coyotes continue to prey upon easy targets, such as backyard poultry, newborn livestock, and even adult sheep and goats. Many a farmer would likely prefer to never see a coyote, or signs of one, ever again.

Despite the dispute over the evolving appropriate way to name this species, and putting aside tense emotions for this predator, the images here display the animals’ quiet power. Thank you to Don Woodiwiss for sharing these photographs.

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DECEMBER DAYS

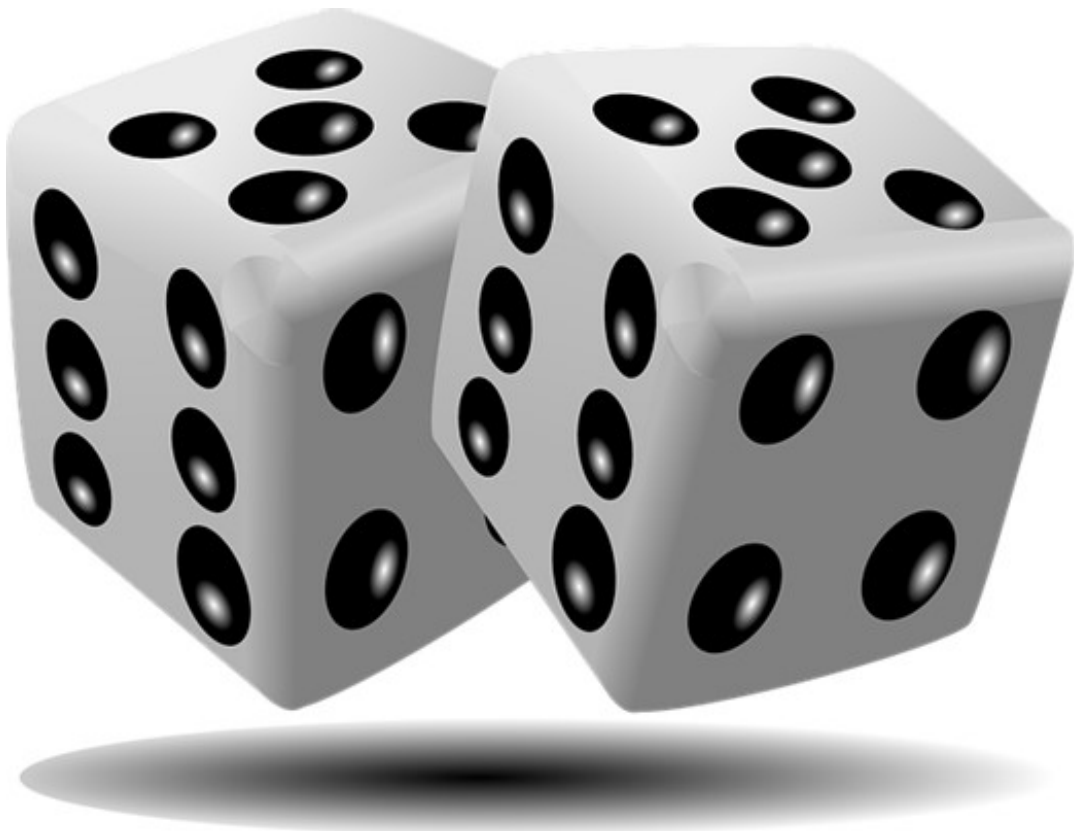
National Dice Day

DECEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>

Celebrate National Dice Day this December 4<sup>th</sup> by playing dice related games with your friends and family! This gaming tool has ancient origins, as six sided dice and may date back to around 3000 BCE. In those times, dice were made out of bone, but they were still used as gaming tools. The ancient dice were made out of the ankle bones of hoofed animals (the talus). Given the number of hoofed animals on the island, we could likely recreate these ancient dice quite easily.

The dice are often thrown from hands or a cup onto a flat surface. The uppermost side of the dice upon landing determines the score or result of the throw.

Dice are often used in games of chance, strategy, or in board games to determine a measure of distance.



OBSERVE

Gingerbread House Day,  
December 12<sup>th</sup>



EXPERIENCE

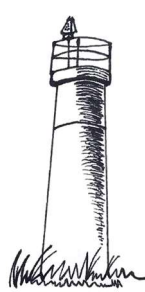
Cat Herders Day

DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>

This day recognizes the people whose jobs it is to ‘herd cats’. Yes, you heard correctly, but this day is talking about ‘herding cats’ metaphorically. The saying used to describe a frustrating or difficult jobs is that it is ‘like herding cats’.

If you know someone who is employed in a position that is ‘like herding cats’, remind them that they are doing a good job. Appreciate the difficult jobs on this December 15<sup>th</sup>.





SPOTLIGHT SPECIES

Shagbark Hickory

KAYLEIGH GRAHAM

The shagbark hickory, or *Carya ovata*, is a unique tree found in southern Ontario along the St. Lawrence River and into Quebec. The shagbark hickory tree can also be found in other areas of North America but is indigenous to Ontario. It is named for the appearance of the bark, since it peels off and sticks out as the tree ages, making it easily identifiable for this ‘shaggy’ quality (shown in image to the left, below).

The shagbark hickory tree is considered incredibly difficult to transplant, due to its long, heavy taproot, which can be 50cm or larger. After a successful transplant it will still take approximately 2 years for the tree to recover and create new growth. The tree will begin to produce at around 10 years of age. The tree is quite slow growing, but it is also long lived. A single shagbark hickory can live to be 200 years old and 25m tall. They grow well in valleys as they prefer moist soil.

The nuts on a shagbark hickory tree are edible. They are about 3-4.5cm long and are delicious. This nut is a favourite food of squirrels. The nut meat is encased in a thick, 4-part shell that can be difficult to remove.

The leaves of a shagbark hickory are about 20cm long and comprised of 5 leaflets on one stalk. The leaves are green on top, but paler and hairy underneath.

This tree provides shade and is often planted alongside highways throughout Ontario. Unfortunately, it is incredibly sensitive to de-icing salts that are routinely used on the roadways during the winter months.

The shagbark hickory is related to the pecan, but the nuts have slightly more flavour, and a much tougher husk. It can take up to 4 hours of work with a hammer to unveil just 1 pound of shagbark hickory nutmeat. The labour required to shell these nuts partially explains their absence in many supermarkets.

Toasted shagbark hickory nuts are a favourite, as they have been described as a combination of pecans and walnuts. A thin layer of hickory nuts on a metal baking sheet are delicious after about 5 minutes in the oven at 250°F.

The most threatening risk to a crop of shagbark hickory nuts is the pecan weevil, or *Curculio caryae*, which deposits their eggs inside pecan and hickory nuts. The weevil drills a small hole in the shell in which to lay eggs. The young grubs hatch inside and feed on the nuts, destroying them. This weevil will often use the same breeding grounds year after year, destroying each crop of nuts from the same stand of trees. If the crop of nuts is collected very early, the lack of hickory nuts on the ground may prevent the next generation of weevils from destroying the crop.

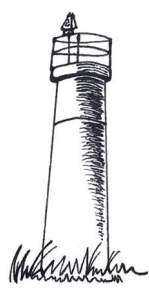
SHAGBARK HICKORY USES

Different uses for shagbark hickory in the kitchen:

- Hickory nut oil: boil the nuts in water for about 30 minutes, the nut oil will float to the top, and you can collect it with a spoon
- Hickory nut butter: put the nut oil in the fridge where it will solidify into butter and can be spread on toast
- Hickory nut cake: making a hickory nut cake with maple bourbon frosting will always be a hit
- Roasted hickory nuts: lightly roasted, hickory nuts are much tastier than they are raw
- Hickory nut syrup: boil the nuts in oil and add sugar to create syrup

Sources: Landscape Ontario, “Shagbark Hickory”, 2013.  
The Art of Eating, “The Shagbark Hickory Nut”, 2004.  
Society of Ontario Nut Growers, “Shagbark Hickory”, 2003.





Obituaries

Memories of Anna Hitchins

SHIRLEY ALLEN MARTIN  
(1930-2021)

The below statement was published on the Arbor Memorial website on January 2, 2022.

Quietly and peacefully with loving family by her side on Thursday, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at Kingston General Hospital, in her 92<sup>nd</sup> year.

Beloved wife of Orvin Martin of Seeley’s Bay. Predeceased by her parents Ernest and Genevieve Fleming, her brother Harry Fleming (Syke), and sister Winnifred Jamieson (Raymond). Shirley was cherished by her many nieces and nephews, their families, and by the Martin family, and is lovingly remembered by her many dear friends. Shirley had no children of her own but was a second mother to her eight nieces and nephews, Larry, David, Wayne, (and the late) Debbie, Tim, Linda, Mark, and Pam.

Shirley was born on Amherst Island and for much of her career worked as a federal civil servant.

Throughout her life she selflessly participated in organizations such as Beta Sigma Phi, The Royal Canadian Legion, and the Red Hat Society. Upon retirement she and her husband lived between New Westminister B.C. and Seeley’s Bay and then finally she resided at the Conservatory Pond retirement residence.

Shirley had an unwavering, positive outlook on life, instilling grace and kindness towards others, and was cherished by her extended family and many dear friends. Please honour her memory by spreading any small act of kindness in the world around you.

A memorial service will occur on Sunday, January 9<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 2:00pm and will be streamed online at that time. Please visit Shirley’s page at reidfuneralhome.com for the link to watch the service live. Internment and a celebration of her life will take place at Glenwood Cemetery, Amherst Island at a later date.

Her family wishes to thank the dedicated staff on the Cardiac Ward, Davies 3, Kingston General Hospital for their compassionate care during the final weeks of her life. As expressions of sympathy, please consider donations to the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation, Cardiology Department at KHSC.



Wayne Fleming, Shirley Martin, and Mark Jamieson (two of her nephews).



Aunt Shirley with Braelynn Arsenault, her youngest great, great niece.



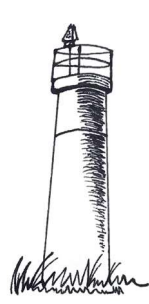
Shirley Allen Martin.



Shirley Allen Martin.



Shirley Allen Martin.



# Merry Little Main Street 2021

## A COLLABORATIVE HOLIDAY MARKET IN BATH

This has become an annual holiday shopping event in Bath, Ontario that brings together local businesses and encourages community spirit and shopping local. This year, the event took place in early December 2021, and all local businesses contributed while paying respect to the public health recommendations with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Photography by Kayleigh Graham.**



Isabelle Desnoyers of *Artizen Oils*.

Elevate your life with essential oils that are vegan, customizable, and made in small batches. Contact *Artizen Oils* at [artizen.oils@gmail.com](mailto:artizen.oils@gmail.com).



*The Lodge Coffee House* team on the night of the event.

The Lodge Coffee House continues to serve the community distinctive and creative espresso-based drinks, specialty teas, smoothies, and food items made from scratch. Located at 376 Main Street in Bath, ON.



*Flamingo Baby*.

Flamingo Baby Co creates organic cotton and bamboo muslin, ethically made clothing.



Jo-Ann McGraw, owner of *Heritage Point Antiques & Gifts*.

There are a delightful selection of unique gift ideas at this shop, located at 384 Main Street.



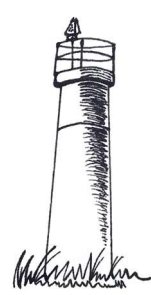
David Bergeron, of *Bergeron Estate Winery & Cider Co.*

Local winery from the nearby county, located at 9656 Loyalist Parkway, Bath, ON.



*The Books on Main* family.

*Books on Main* is located at 368 Main Street, Bath, ON, and offers a wide variety of books and games.



Merry Little Main Street 2021



Laura Anderson, of *Anderwood Studio*.

Anderwood Studio is a locally owned studio that sells handcrafted home décor, including woodwork, framed fine art, birdhouses, pottery, refurbished items, and much more. The studio is located at 363 Main Street, Bath and can be learned about more thoroughly online at [www.anderwoodstudio.com](http://www.anderwoodstudio.com).



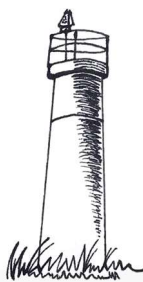
Sarah Anderson, of *Lakeside Studio Gallery*.

The curator and artist at *Lakeside Studio Gallery*, Sarah Anderson, welcomes you to visit the art gallery. This gallery combines the concepts of a studio and a gallery, as it both hosts local emerging artists working on-site, and displays local artists’ creations on the walls. The *Lakeside Studio Gallery* can be found at 363 Main Street, Bath and can be browsed online at [www.lakesidestudiogallery.com](http://www.lakesidestudiogallery.com).



Allie, founder and owner of *Pure Balanxed*.

The *Pure Balanxed* clothing line designs feel good basics for everyday use. These clothes are designed and sustainably made in Canada. Find out more at [www.purebalanxed.com](http://www.purebalanxed.com).



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](https://twitter.com/a_i_ferrydocks)

Information and updates can be found at <http://www.amherstislandferrydocks.ca/> or [https://twitter.com/a\\_i\\_ferrydocks](https://twitter.com/a_i_ferrydocks)

- Fares**  
\*cash, cheque, and contactless payment options available now.
- 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 use of the new docks has begun. The paving of the new docks has been completed.  
The Amherst Islander II, the new electric ferry, has arrived in Canada. It is currently in the Picton area.  
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 2022.

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).

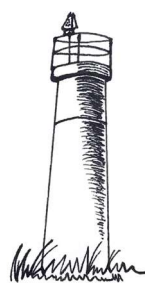
GENERAL STORE

**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

Phone Number: 613-519-2331





A NOTICE FROM THE TOWNSHIP

Loyalist Township



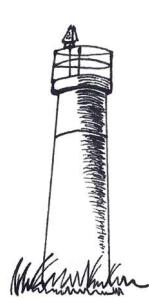
Public Notice  
Conditions Re Use of Back Beach

Loyalist Township advises that effective January 1<sup>st</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, Back Beach is available for public use under the following conditions:

- 1. All terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, dune buggies and other motorized vehicles and bicycles **are prohibited**. All vehicles must be parked in the designated parking area.
- 2. No persons shall be allowed to camp, light fires, hunt or discharge firearms on the Beach.
- 3. Use of the Beach is permitted only during the period from January 1<sup>st</sup> to Labour Day and at no other time.
- 4. Persons using the Beach do so at their own risk as the Beach is unsupervised.
- 5. Keep the area clean by placing all garbage in the garbage receptacles provided. Users are encouraged to take their garbage with them when they leave the Beach.
- 6. No one shall use the Beach for sleeping or residential purposes or for the storage of personal effects or articles.
- 7. No trees of any nature may be cut or destroyed in the Beach or adjacent areas.
- 8. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- 9. Management reserves the right to make such other and further reasonable rules and regulations as in its judgment may from time to time be needed for the safety, care, cleanliness and appearance of the Beach.

For information concerning this notice, please contact the undersigned.

Kari Lambe  
Manager, Recreation and Facilities  
The Corporation of Loyalist Township  
263 Main Street, P.O. Box 70  
Odessa, Ontario K0H 2H0  
Phone: (613) 386-7351 ext. 203  
E-Mail: [klambe@loyalist.ca](mailto:klambe@loyalist.ca)



ARTS AND CULTURE

Napping Pumpkin by Yayoi Kusama

DEREK OXLEY

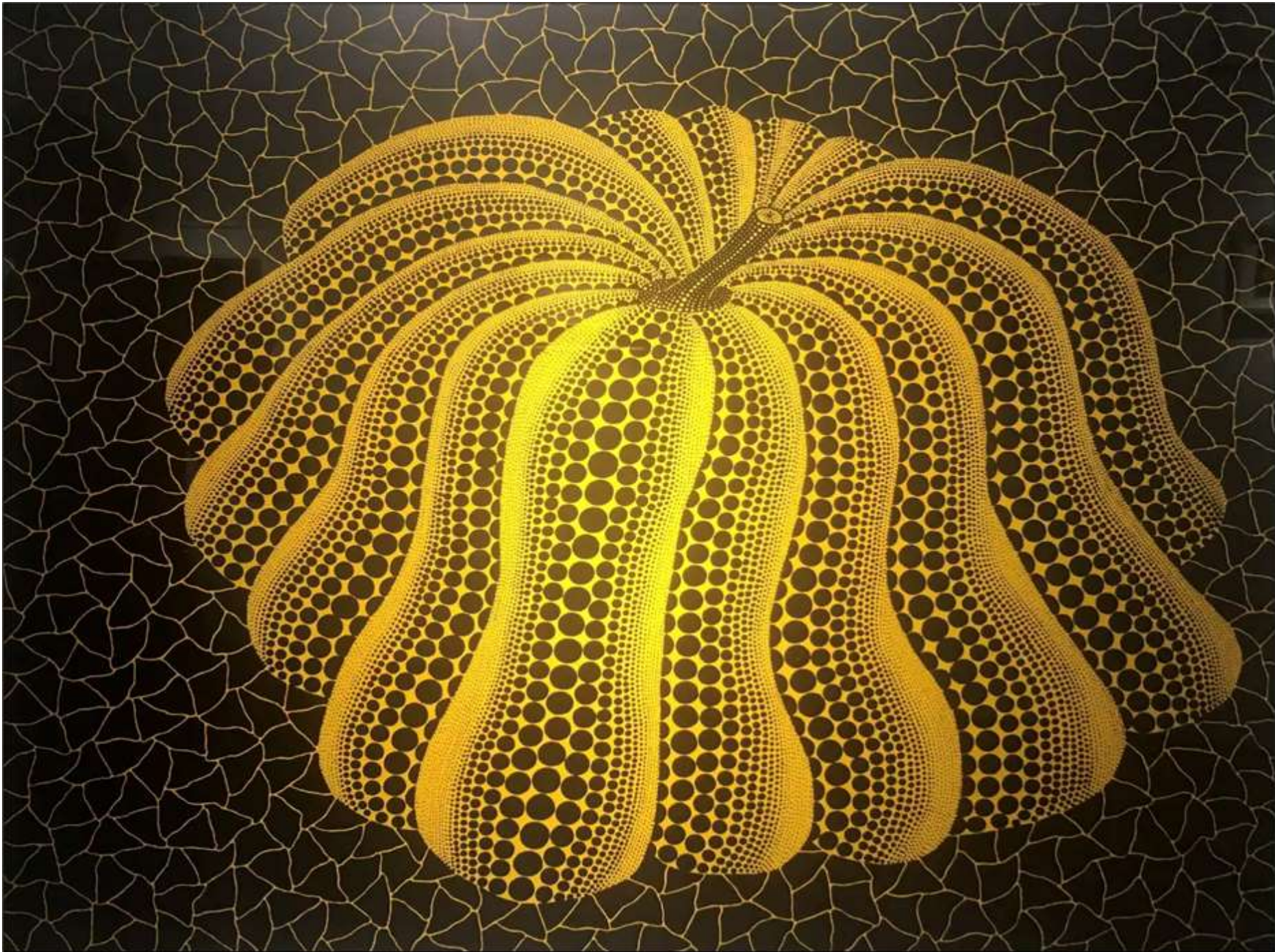
This month I want to explore a piece by a Japanese artist whom I have admired for many years. Her particular talent for visually jarring imagery appealed to me even before my pursuit of art and history. Although I didn’t know her name then, I used to have two prints of her images decorating my living spaces when I was younger, hanging beside prints of other colourful and creepy images. There is a colorfully psychedelic and staccato quality to her art that has always appealed to me, and in turn been an enormous influence for my own amateur paintings.

Yayoi Kusama was born in Matsumoto, Japan, in 1929 and her life has been much shaped by the cultural politics and attitudes towards mental illness present in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Although it began with hardships, we will see what Kusama has been able to build from her lot. Her parents, although wealthy, were abusive and not happily married, and this caused a great deal of stress and strife during her childhood years. Her experiences in Japan during World War 2 were not positive – she was sent to work in a factory, an experience which she describes as being

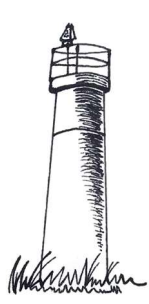
“closed in darkness”. The experience can only have been made more difficult with the onset of a condition that she could not explain. I can’t exactly name the condition, but it has been widely labeled as a ‘nervous disorder’ throughout most of the literature, so for lack of a better name let’s stick with nervous disorder. The condition manifests as visual hallucinations and periods of obsessive compulsions. At age 10, just prior to the war, her neurosis began to manifest. She would see flashes of light and the appearance of hundreds of spheres in her field of vision. Often these fields of patterned spheres were experienced as a swarm trying to engulf the young Kusama, terrifying her each time it would occur. Kusama has dealt with panic attacks, periods of anxiety, and deep depressions throughout her life.

After the war, at age 19, she was able to begin studying at the University of Arts in Kyoto. Despite Kusama’s aptitude for art her parents never supported their daughter in this pursuit, calling it inappropriate for women to pursue the arts. Her mother is noted for having destroyed her drawings on several occasions. Despite this, she found that one

of the best methods for dealing with the hallucinations was to draw what she was seeing. At school she was trained in a traditional Japanese painting style, however as she passed through her twenties, she came to reject this approach as too rigid and biased on the part of her masters. She expressed a growing frustration in the face of the very conservative tastes of the Japanese art market and was exasperated by the sexism she experienced in 1950s Japan. As she looked to other artistic traditions for inspiration, Kusama developed a correspondence in letters with American artist Georgia O’Keefe through the late 1950s, and it was the elder artist who encouraged Kusama to move to the United States to find a less constrictive environment in which to explore the arts scene. She moved to New York when she was 29 and, as promised, found the art scene there much more liberal and to her taste. She is considered an important member of the New York avant-garde throughout the 1960s, organizing many performance art events and creating images and ready-made sculptures in abstract expressionism and pop-art styles. She rubbed shoulders with many prominent artists of the day including photographer Hal Reif and artists Yoko Ono and Eva Hess.



Yayoi Kusama, *Napping Pumpkin*, painting, 1993. Yodo Gallery, Osaka, Japan.



ARTS AND CULTURE

# Napping Pumpkin by Yayoi Kusama, continued...

DEREK OXLEY

Her best-known output in the west comes from her sculpture, events, and installation art, but she has been making paintings since her early twenties. To my eye this piece owes more to abstract expressionism than pop art, which tended to be obviously critical of consumer culture (we will revisit pop art more closely in a future article). This selection is called *Napping Pumpkin*, painted in 1993. Pumpkins have been a constant theme for Kusama over the decades, with hundreds of them produced as acrylic paintings and screen prints. She sees pumpkins as a symbol of childhood and life and has stated in later years that creating them helps her feel at peace. She was attracted to pumpkins because she felt they were proud of their humorous and unpretentious forms, and over the years she has come to think of pumpkins as a symbol for representing herself. This is interesting to me because it opens up the idea of considering a personally symbolic totem as a self-portrait, somewhat like how a family crest can represent an entire family. Kusama's work tried to create a dialogue with the viewer wherein imagery related to food, sex, and consumerism, were associated with anxieties and compulsive behaviour. If it wasn't polka dots by the thousands, it was still often the repetitive use of a motif, like with her more famous *Accumulation* sculptures (shown to the right) wherein she covered everyday objects with unsettling and suggestive-looking stuffed stockings, aiming to portray consumerism as a fantasy nightmare. Kusama intentionally repeated the images and shapes that frightened her as a way of trying to confront her fears and anxieties, a process which threads through her entire oeuvre.

The use here of fields of dots and abstraction is visible right away. The slumbering gourd is composed of series of different-sized black dots that create the impression of contouring for each ridge of the pumpkin's surface. As the dots get smaller it creates an impression of depth. The overall shape does feel like the pumpkin might be melting, or perhaps when it sleeps it is meant to resemble a deflating beach ball. Kusama is particular that her creations should maintain some semblance of infinity, and so the whole thing is comprised of an accumulation of spheres. It is the same sort of imagery that Kusama experiences visually: an overwhelming flow of spheres smothering everything beneath them including the artist herself, reducing the distinction between them until she was absorbed; conceptually obliterated. Even the background is a contrasting accumulation of triangular-ish shapes that could be leaves or grass.

When she turned 70 Kusama wrote an autobiography, which filled in her work through the 1980s and 90s. Her 15 years in the United States had been crucial to her artistic development, but unfortunately this time saw a fair share of depressive episodes and struggles to survive and care for herself. Also, her nervous disorder was not

a secret, which had the unfortunate consequence of stigmatizing her work in that era. Kusama returned to Japan in 1973 in her mid-forties, possibly after a nervous breakdown, and has resided in a care facility in Tokyo since 1977. Since then, she has found good health and a long life, and has a studio a short distance from her home where she has continued to sculpt, write, and paint prolifically. During this time Kusama eventually came to stop fearing her visual experiences and now wields them as a major part of her creative drive. In her view now the swarms make her one with her artwork, becoming part of her experience while creating something new. She now feels her polka-dots carry a symbol of renewal and unity. In the book Kusama also discusses her views about her nationality and her gender, naming them as other key factors in the symbolism of her artistic output as she pushed for more acceptance for female artists in both the United States and Japan.

I think we are fortunate today, at least for now, to live in an era when mental illness is being much more realistically and responsibly addressed. The twentieth century gave us a lot of modern advancements, but for those suffering from varied mental health issues there was not a great deal of sympathy or understanding.

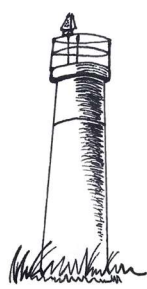
Kusama's art faced critical marginalization because of the attitudes towards mental health in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many critics dismissed her work as merely the by-product of a nervous condition – her approach to imagery as a helpless victim of hallucinations and obsessive, compulsive behaviour. Today I think we should take a wary view of this. It is unfair to boil down a unique and interesting way of seeing and representing the world as unimportant because it was born of an anomaly – this undermines the real presence of an artist who was both well trained and creative and who engaged her art into the social dialogue of each era. There are too many examples of critical thought, creativity, and functional collaboration through her career to dismiss her oeuvre or her place in the history of art. We don't do that to Van Gogh, and yet he suffered greatly from mental health issues; we don't do it to Kandinsky, whom we know lived with synesthesia, so I don't think we should do it here.



Yayoi Kusama, *Accumulation No. 1*, sculpture, 1962. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA.

Sources:

- Hoptman, Laura, and Akira Tatehata and Udo Kultermann, *Yayoi Kusama*, Phaidon Press Inc., New York: 2000.
- Kusuma, Yayoi, *Infinity Net: Autobiography of Yayoi Kusama*, translated by Ralph McCarthy, University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Worth, Alexi. "Kusama Dot Com." *New York Times*, 24 Feb. 2008: 266(L).



JANET’S JOTTINGS

What is a Christmas Bird Count?

JANET SCOTT

Why, oh why, do crazy people dressed in layers and layers stand at the side of the road lugging heavy binoculars on a frosty, December morning? Their glasses are fogged and their fingers numb. Are they completely stir crazy from Covid-19 lock down and just need to get out or is it some kind of addiction?

Since December 23, 1990 this phenomenon has been happening right here on our wonderful Amherst Island. For over thirty years I have been fortunate to partake in this madness except by once missing it while in Kingston General Hospital with pneumonia and the second time by breaking my wrist the morning of and spending that exciting time sitting in the Emergency Department of Napanee Hospital instead. Meanwhile, my faithful and diligent friend Bonnie has been there recording the data, greeting mainlanders and visitors from as far away as Mexico and the Yukon so that Amherst Island and its fabulous bird population can once again be included in North America’s Christmas Bird Count.

Way back in 1900 Frank Chapman, born in New Jersey, started the very first Christmas Bird Count. His cry was, “count not shoot”. Most large farms would have family and friends over for the Christmas holidays. One of the entertainment activities was a shoot. Teams would go out and kill every bird they could, and the winning team was the group with the most kills. Frank Chapman, an ornithologist and writer of field guides suggested they count and list the birds they saw rather than shoot them. Thus, the Christmas Bird Census began. Five years later these 27 men formed the National Audubon Society and about twenty years later the term “birder” was coined. From that first count on Christmas Day 1900, it has grown from one circle to over 2000 circles right across the continent with Costa Rica leading in species numbers with 417 species and 12, 665 birds.



Photograph of a hairy woodpecker.

In the eighties my husband Alex and I took part in the Christmas Bird Counts centered in Kingston. A circle is 24 kilometres. Only the gravel bar at the east end of the island fit in that circle and the rest of Amherst Island’s wonderful species were not included. Ron Weir, a Kingston Field Naturalist and author of Birds of the Kingston Region and Alex worked to get Amherst Island included. Finally, in time for the 1990 Christmas Bird Count Amherst Island was added. Ron was able to squish Kingston’s circle a bit to the east and shove Napanee over to the west and the twenty-four Km circle was created with Yorkshire Island as its centre and all of Amherst Island could now be counted. That first year 63 species and 6,533 individuals were counted on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December by 16 observers.

The Christmas Bird Count is held the three weeks around Christmas. Birders have 24 hours to count all the species in their assigned area and the data is sent to Bird Studies Canada. This is a 121 year ongoing study carried out by volunteers right across the country. Numbers fluctuate. Sometimes we get seventy species and sometimes only 50. Weather can be sweatshirt or arctic wear and blizzard or clear and cold. The choice of time means most migrants have settled down and hopefully we are not counting the same birds here as were counted last week in Northern Ontario. Last year and again this year for the safety of our island and ourselves we will have to bird in family or friendly bubbles and cannot meet together at the school to enjoy Sally’s muffins, Bonnie’s chili, Sherri’s soup, Dayle’s bread or all those other island delicacies that are provided. Sob, sob, but we will once again follow the guidelines and maybe next year we can flock together.

If you live on the island and wish to participate please read the insert below and call or contact either Bonnie or myself.

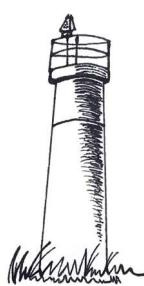
Good birding everyone.  
Janet Scott

Dear Bird Lover,

Bonnie Livingstone and I have been working together on the Amherst Island Christmas Bird Count for more than twenty years, but once again, we find ourselves having to deal with COVID-19 in a safe manner for all. To keep things clean and simple, we will try and solicit help from Amherst Islanders only to cover our Island. Our chosen date is **Thursday, December 30th, 2021 – 8 am to 12 noon**. We ask that participants travel in one car, only in their existing bubble. Bonnie or I will deliver bird checklists and maps of your assigned areas to your mailbox before the count.

As some folks do not feel “expert”, identify as many species as you can in your area. Jot down descriptive points if you find a bird you don’t recognize, or even better, take a photograph. We know this is not the usual way to do the CBC, but we live in unusual times. We’re simply looking to do our best. Once again, we will miss the early morning hospitality and our traditional lunch gathering at the end of the morning. Please let us know by **Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>** if you plan to join us this year. Thank you so much for your interest and assistance.

Janet Scott 613-389-4608  
Bonnie Livingstone 613-389-8516



OUTDOORSY OPINIONS

# Controlled Hunting for Healthier Deer

JEREMY EDDY

Normally when you talk about hunting related issues, the first one that comes up isn’t deer population management. So why bring it up at all? While it isn’t always the issue, it does tend to be a solution. Too many deer on roadways? Deer population management can bring that down. Difficulty convincing someone that hunting is ethical? Deer population management is a decent explanation. Tired of picking ticks off your dogs every day? You get the idea where this is going.

Management of deer can take a lot of different forms. This ranges from options like fencing and land management all the way to the large-scale deer culls seen in predator-free areas like Scotland. In Canada, the go-to solution is often controlled hunting.

So, what is controlled hunting? Traditionally speaking, a controlled hunt in Canada is based on giving out a specific number of tags per year based on expected population growth and the desired density of deer in the area. The idea being that while normally nature does its best to keep populations stable based on available food and number of fawns born in the year, in a lot of cases the deer populations can boom to be too large for the available plant life to support. At a basic level, this means that the deer will be focused on food competition above all else. Leading to more starvation deaths, smaller deer, less antler growth, and overall, an unhealthy deer population.

Beyond the direct impact to the health of the deer themselves, an overpopulated area can have significant issues that spill over into the environment and the communities nearby. Deer are often a cause for increasing tick numbers and the Lyme disease that comes with them. Over browsing of the local vegetation can not only impact sensitive crops, but also the long-term productivity and growth of forested areas. Minnesota, for example, has long studied the negative impacts of an undesirable increase of white spruce in their forests due to unchecked deer populations.

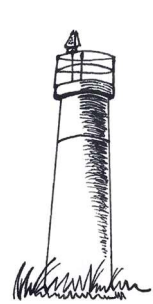
But does controlled hunting work to manage this kind of overpopulation? The answer unfortunately ends up as a definitive “maybe”. While there’s a lot more to managing a wild free-roaming animal than just putting out a few tags, the growing consensus has seemed to support that a hunted population tends to be a healthier population.

Less deer tend to be spotted in crops and on roadways, limiting risks of negative impact and the frequency of car accidents. Also, the number one factor for antler growth is generally agreed to be nutrition, so a smaller and better fed deer population tends to be one producing big bucks.

Particularly in the eastern United States, an increase in deer management has been determined to be critical to forest restoration and helping to ensure the forest itself is able to grow and produce in a healthy balance. So far in Canada we haven’t been able to give quite as definitive of an answer.

Wildlife management is a complex topic in general. It’s one that polarizes people on the ethics of hunting as well as on the proper way to keep our forests healthy. There are no solid right or wrong answers yet and more studies are underway across the country and the continent on how to handle this issue. For the time being, the best solution seems to be a controlled hunting program that will allow communities to put food on their tables, support the traditions and economy of hunting, while still directly ensuring the wildlife in their region are healthy and as close to balanced as we can make it while still sharing the land. That might change in the future, but it seems to be the best option for us so far.





Amherst Island Community  
Medical Clinic  
WENDY SHELLEY



November was a busy month for us!  
On November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, the AI Community Medical Clinic, in partnership with Loyalist Pharmacy (Amherstview), held a **Flu Vaccine Clinic** at The Lodge. In all, 118 islanders got their flu shots over the two days. We had many positive comments about the Flu Clinic and some that we need to work on. The most common comment was that people were pleased not to have to go off the island for their flu shot. We also heard that some people did not receive timely information about the Flu Clinic. We are already working on a better communications strategy for next year. We hope to see you then.  
Many thanks to all the **volunteers** who helped make this possible ... the AIWI, The Lodge, and special thanks to **Jen Baker**, Pharmacist, and **Maureen McGinn RN**, for ‘doing the jabs’.

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, **Trish Beckett**, gave an informative talk on **Living with Arthritis**. Trish is a retired Physiotherapist who lives part time on Amherst Island. Trish gave us great information, which created good discussion. Her main message was to keep active, get regular exercise and to take medication if you need it in order to decrease pain and stay active.  
Twenty people attended the presentation and we received \$122.00 in donations. There was good feedback from those attending. We plan to hold more of these informal and informative talks in the near future.  
Many thanks to Trish for volunteering her time and to St. Paul’s for providing the space we needed.

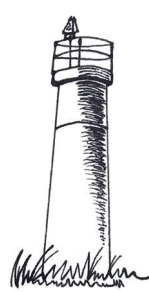
We have started investigating **grant applications** and **fundraising**. Remember, though we are still in our infancy. The Amherst Island Community Medical Clinic, is a federal Not for Profit corporation, have received its Charitable Status and is now able to issue tax receipts for donations.  
We are planning to arrange **public information events** on a variety of **health and wellness** subjects in the near future. More information to follow...

We wish everyone a safe and happy **Holiday Season**, with best wishes for happiness and good health throughout **2022**.

We will soon be on **Facebook**. Keep your eyes open for further information on our: **Website:** <https://amherst-island-community-medical-clinic.constantcontactsites.com/> should you want to contact us, our **email** address is: [aicmc2021@gmail.com](mailto:aicmc2021@gmail.com).



A short-eared owl, Amherst Island, Ontario. Photographed by Fred Lemire Photography, [www.fredlemirephotography.com](http://www.fredlemirephotography.com).



AIWI UPDATE

Amherst Island Women’s Institute

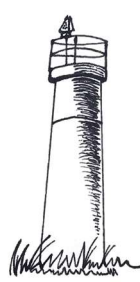
WENDY SHELLEY

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our projects over the year.

Merry Christmas to all. See you in the New Year.



A snowy owl after rainfall, Amherst Island, Ontario. Photographed by Fred Lemire Photography, [www.fredlemirephotography.com](http://www.fredlemirephotography.com).



CLASSIFIEDS

Support Local Businesses

Pharmasave Bath Family Pharmacy

We provide free drop-off of prescriptions to the Amherst Island ferry.  
We have a virtual walk-in clinic inside the pharmacy.  
We are also providing the flu shot this season, no appointments necessary.

PHARMASAVE®

Bath Family Pharmacy  
in your neighbourhood

1-220 Main Street  
Bath  
Email: bathfamilypharmacy@gmail.com  
www.pharmasave.com

Tel: 613-352-7700  
Fax: 613-352-1177

Store Hours:  
Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm  
Saturday: 10am – 3pm  
Sunday: Closed



Store Services

- Quick & Easy Prescription Transfers
- Convenient Medication Packaging
- MedAlign – Manage, Review & Synchronization
- Free Local Delivery\*
- Diabetic & Ostomy Supplies
- Vitamins & Supplements
- Home Health Care Products
- Footcare Clinic
- ...and more! \*see store for details

Reward Yourself  
Collect points. Redeem  
and SAVE. Join today!



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good doctors  
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Regular Priced Items In-Store  
the last Thursday of every month.

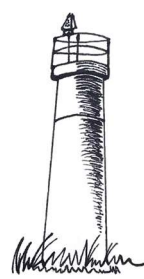
\*To be eligible for the discount, a customer must be at least 60 years of age. Valid at participating Pharmasave Ontario locations only. Does not include prescriptions, products with codeine, insulin, Ideal Protein products, lottery tickets, gift and phone cards. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. See store for details.

Buy 2 Get 1 Free

Pharmasave  
Brand  
Product



\*Subject to applicable taxes after discount. One coupon per customer. Not valid in conjunction with any other offer. Excludes codeine products, sale items, gift and phone cards. Valid only at Bath Family Pharmacy. Valid until December 31st, 2021.



CLASSIFIEDS

Support Local Businesses


**The Lodge Coffee House**



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

Currently open Tuesdays-Fridays 9am-2pm and Saturdays 11am-2pm. Check us out at [www.lodgecoffeehouse.com](http://www.lodgecoffeehouse.com)

**Rossland Gallery**



**rossland gallery**  
rosbilt.com · bijouxbead.com

stringed metal instruments  
artisanal glass jewellery

by appointment  
[gallery@rosslandgardens.com](mailto:gallery@rosslandgardens.com)

**Topsy Farms**





In 1972 a boatload of free-thinking, peace-loving hippies showed up at the West end of Amherst Island. Since then, Topsy Farms has prioritized stewardship of the land and harmony with nature above profit.

Topsy raises happy sheep; winter makes better wool. Topsy offers 100% Canadian sheep wool blankets and natural products to the eco-ethical kindred spirits out there. Our ‘Connect to the Land’ programs give back to the community by offering green spaces of calm and quiet to visitors.

Come see for yourself. Get dirty, leave happy, stay cozy. Follow the adventure @topsyfarms, and [www.topsyfarms.com](http://www.topsyfarms.com)

**Your Ad Here!**

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

## Services

**Thank-you!**

Many thanks to Chad Osmond, who re-lamped the star on Dayle’s silo, where the various antennas are now. We all appreciate having that star shining once again.

**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 494 of *The Beacon* will be available in print, for \$5 at McGinn’s General Store, Stella, ON.
- 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](mailto:editor@thebeaconpaper.com) The submission deadline is the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

If you are interested in advertisement space, contact [editor@thebeaconpaper.com](mailto: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.