

ah!

AT HOME

on

THE NORTH SHORE

Summer 2016

At Home

with Susan Weeks.

The Buzz on Bee Hotels

Opportunity, taking
a chance and loving
every moment at the
MacDonald cottage
in Braeshore

Knocking on Summer's Door



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editor's Letter

Photo by Tara Gillis, Pure Images Photography.



Our little summer haven set up for a family celebration.

When I was a kid growing up in Westville my best friend and her family would pack up on Grading Day and head to their cottage. I remember walking up her driveway with our report cards in hand and her mum would be packing the car with laundry baskets filled with neatly folded packets of shorts and t-shirts that would outfit her four beach bums for the summer. Even though I was lucky enough to have swimming pool in the back yard that my Dad kept so clean you could tell if a quarter was heads or tails in the deep end, I couldn't wait to get an invite to join my pal at the beach. I loved going to visit and oh how I loved that cottage. As much as I enjoyed the sunny days on beach with my friend and her cottage buddies and exploring mysterious places like "Soap Rock Caves," I think it was the rainy days I loved the best. The days that we spent inside the sun porch playing Risk and singing along to the Bay City Rollers and Cat Stevens on the record player. I loved the smell of the wood burning in the fireplace that mingled with the salt in the air and the way my sandy feet connected with the colorful braided mats on the floor. Some day, I told myself, I would have my own cottage.

Well I am still waiting for that someday to come. My husband and I missed a couple of great opportunities when our children were young and then sports started to hijack the summer calendar. Our answer like my own parents to was to put a pool in the back yard and buy a pop up camper for weekend get-a-ways. While I am still besotted with owning a cottage or maybe someday having a permanent home at the beach I will never regret those nights cozied up in our little camper and trying to bathe my babies in a sink not much bigger than a mixing bowl. The swimming pool in the backyard became our little oasis and I am

pretty sure the S'mores made around our backyard campfires were just as good as if the marshmallows were toasted on the beach.

But it is still my infatuation with cottage life that inspired our summer issue and we take you for a visit to two very special places in Braeshore, Pictou County. The images of Doris Young with three of her great grandchildren will melt your heart faster than a popsicle on a hot day in July. Doris and her family now four generations deep have celebrated over fifty years of summer time at their cottage on the Northumberland Strait. It's a legacy that is not over yet. A little further down the beach the MacDonald family are really just starting their story and have created a haven of happiness complete with their own putting green.

It's summer time. I really hope that we land on the right side of the jet stream for the next couple of months and we are blessed with "Sunny Days."

Wherever your summer takes you I hope you find your happy place. Whether you find yourself at the cottage, a favorite campsite or simply with your feet up on a lawn chair in the backyard, I hope your summer sparkles with a little magic, because just like a good trick it will be over in a blink of an eye.

Crystal Murray

ON OUR COVER:

Thank you to the MacDonald family for opening their cottage a little early for our cover shoot and digging out their summer clothes even though there was still ice in the air and blowing in from the Strait that day.

www.athomeonthenorthshore.ca

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Your Letters & Comments

Congratulations!

I found your magazine at Tall and Small Cafe today. Very impressive! Great paper, great colour, great articles, great photography your advertisers must be thrilled.

Dr. John Chaisson

I read your magazine this morning and I thought it was absolutely lovely, every article was so interesting and the entire magazine just has a wonderful feel about it, that made me want to sit down with a coffee and read it from cover to cover.

Marilyn Roy, New Glasgow

I just had to email you while I am still deeply engrossed with the newest issue. These issues have been steadily building steam but I think you have done it with this one! This issue was chock full of info that you could actually learn something. I hate those snippets of TV usually on News shows that promise to tell you something you didn't know but never seem to deliver. Loved the interview with Jake Chisholm – we need more of this – loved the last issue with Nicole ER LeBlanc. I think that showcasing the local talent is just marvelous – we need to see their work front and center.

Deborah Lecreux, New Glasgow



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The BUZZ on Bee Hotels...

By Rachael McLean

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Photography

Bees are in trouble. We need them to survive, that means we are in trouble. Pollination is an essential part of food production. With bee population rapidly disappearing we need to snap out of it and do our part to help the situation.



Building a bee hotel provides a place for solitary bees to hatch their young. It is easy to make and fun to do with a little person and a great learning opportunity. Kids really care about their environment. They get it, very simply. Helping to save the bees is the perfect cause for your budding environmentalist to get behind.



1. Build or find a simple frame for your hotel. In our example we've tacked together 4 pieces of 1x6 roughly 8"x8". You could cut the ends off a milk carton, a big can, use a piece of PVC pipe, plenty of options.
2. Collect dry, hollow or pithy stems, reeds, grasses even a bamboo stake cut to length will work. The bee will be laying eggs the whole length of the tube, creating cells and leaving nectar or pollen for the larva. Different sizes from 2mm up to 10mm diameter will do.
3. Cut them to fit inside your hotel and layer them randomly until full.
4. Position your hotel so that it receives mid to late morning SE sun about a meter off the ground. Make sure that it is stable and not swinging so don't hang it on a branch.
5. In the winter place the bee house somewhere dry. Cold will not bother the bees, its the dampness. Hopefully there are lots of bee babies in the hotel so treat it well!



Alternately, you could drill holes in a piece of wood following the same principles as above.

Things to remember:

- DON'T pick/spray your dandelions. They are the first food in Spring for the hungry bees.
- if birds or other pests after the grubs become a problem, put chicken wire on the face of the hotel to discourage stealing.
- replace the stems every other year in case mould or parasites are present.



Liam Russell gets "buzzy" with Rachael building a be hotel for his own backyard.

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Jennifer Hatt lives and writes in New Glasgow, with occasional dashes to her cottage in Pictou when cravings for quiet mornings and fresh rhubarb can no longer be ignored. She shares daily schedules, joy and well-chosen words with three musical children and a sweet fuzzy geriatric cat. When opportunities arise for engaging conversation – like in this month's profile of Susan Weeks – she is there with pen and teacup in hand.

Jennifer Hatt



Lori Byrne

AT HOME Design Consultant
Hey everyone, Lori here of Farm Fresh Style. I had the privilege of doing some great DIY projects in my studio for this issue, plus sourcing some great summer finds for you in *Thresholds*. I also had fun writing *Royal Flush*, because, let's face it, everyone loves indoor plumbing!! Happy Summer!!

Photography Editor
Steve Smith was behind the camera for just about every image captured for the summer issue of *ah!* It seems that every season we put Steve to the test. It's hard to shoot a summer issue in April. Don't worry Steve, we are planning ahead for next year!

Steve Smith



Debbi Harvie

Debbi is the pen behind the *Cottage Conundrum* on page 31. She is going to be busy making her own summer memories with her little man Fin this summer.

Sarah Butland was born in Ontario, the year was 1982. She was moved to New Brunswick for over 15 years and now resides at home in Nova Scotia, Canada. Butland has been married to her high school sweetheart and has a superstar son named William. Besides home-schooling and working part-time, Sarah finds time to follow her dream of being an author and teaching others that they can do the same.

Sarah Butland



Leigh-Ann White

Leigh-Ann shares her story *Oh My Aching Fabulous Feet*. She has been a massage therapist for 13 years and has given over 13,00 treatments. She spent 10 years living in Montreal but is happy to be back in Pictou County making a life and close to her family. She is a firm believer in paying it forward and reminds herself everyday how smile to others can bring so much to life.

Deelle Hines is a wife, mom, personal trainer, nutrition consultant, track coach and lover of all healthy things. Her article on grounding opened her eyes to yet another healthy thing to love and after putting it to the test, she is hooked. Grounding is so beneficial, don't be surprised if you find her walking around barefoot all summer.

Deelle Hines



Rachael McLean

Rachael was back again with two great features for the summer issue of *ah!* She has the Buzz on how our friendly pollinators are adapting to changes in our environment and in her feature *Night Light* she lets you in on a little secret but you will have to read it to find out.

Todd Lockhart had a little extra fun in the editing suite at Visionfire preparing the Buzz on Bee Hotels video for our web site. Todd's nephew Liam Russell made a guest appearance for the feature and had the entire studio buzzing with excitement!

Todd Lockhart



Jackie Jardine

Jackie Jardine is a writer, editor and fledgling home cook and she is now an expert on security. She writes *Dogs and Deadbolts* for the summer issues and takes a look at the latest in high tech gadgets that give a new twist to the old lock and key.

Off the Wall

By Crystal Murray




It's 3 pm on a blustery day in May when I catch up with Luke Naylor at a coffee shop on the Halifax waterfront. He's a man in transition, getting his footing with new job in the digital space and exploring endless possibilities. There is a little hint of awkwardness as we start to chat about his art and the influence that northern Nova Scotia still plays in what he creates while the harsh sounds of city construction booms on the streets behind us. Our meeting place and conversation is well defined but a contrast to his work that creates questions and a narrative that is open for interpretation.

While life and his imagination have taken him many places, Luke is still very attached to his Pictou County roots. He says that his paintings are an attempt to make the local more visible with the inclusion of figures always referencing the shoreline. "My work is rooted in

the experiences of particular people in a particular time and place.

This painting which Luke has named "I Wish I Was the Moon Tonight," leaves the viewer with certain questions. Why are there two people at night wearing shorts? What are they doing, why are they looking at the moon?

Luke says that he also uses the figures in his paintings as a way to explore the process. "The painting itself is a narrative. Layers of paint can be seen, texture that takes time to dry, time to contemplate, and time to lay on another layer are visible on the canvas – decisions of the process of painting itself is revealed to the viewer. The work then in both its process and its subject matter is very authentic and honest. I want my work to stand as an honest attempt for other people to recall memories of themselves, a testimony if you will of a time and place". 

Luke Naylor graduated from NSCAD in 2000 with a major in painting. Since 2000 Luke has been in numerous group and solo shows in various galleries including the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and Argyle Fine Art in Halifax, NS. For more on Luke and his art visit www.naylorfineart.com

Thresholds

By Lori Byrne

Oh, the lazy days of Summer! When the living is easy and the fun never ends. Since Summer on the North Shore is so short lived, we need to make the most of it while we can. Get in the garden, lighten up and soak up the sunshine.



WATER COLOURS

If chores need to be done, they might as well be done with a brightly coloured watering can! This beauty is from West River Greenhouses, which has two locations in Pictou County. Give them a call at 902.925.2088 or check out their website at westrivergreenhouses.ca



FLOWER OF THE YEAR

The Anemone has been named Perennial of the Year and it is easy to see why – this simple flower is very elegant and understated making it a classic to add to your flower beds this season. Check your local greenhouses to see what varieties they stock.



WOODEN IT BE NICE

This tray is perfect for bringing all you need out to the patio, poolside or BBQ. The divided section keeps everything in its place and the handle makes carrying it so convenient. This handy tray comes from Winners but the bright napkins, the citronella candle and interesting fern can all be found at Atlantic Superstore. There are various Winners and Atlantic Superstore locations throughout the North Shore, so stop by today and see what they have to offer.



GATHER YE ROSE BUDS

... and put them in a vase crafted by Ceramic Artist Denise Lynch. The handcrafted ceramic vase inspired by gothic architecture is hand built with sculpture clay, twice kiln fired, textured with coloured slips then treated with stains, glazes and wax. You will be able to find other creations by Martin Ceramics this summer at the New Glasgow Farmers Market. Visit deniselynch.ca for more information.



DREAM BIG NECKLACE


Forget the weight of big, chunky jewelry during the heat of summer and instead go for the dainty 'Dream Big' necklace from Beck & Boosh. Beck & Boosh has a sweet store front at 43 Forrester Street, Truro or they can be found online at beckandboosh.com where they sell great fashion accessories.

Journal Your Way Through Summer

By Sarah Butland

Journaling, at any age, is the perfect escape and opportunity to simply be. It has no rules of rhyming or structure, no word count requirements or dreaded topics to choose from. Writing free-form is a freeing way to express yourself and keep tally of where you've been and what you have to be grateful for.

On rainy days in the summer you can stay inside with your notebook and dream. Create a wish list of things you'd like to do when the skies are clear again. On hot days, take your writing to the beach. Journal about what you see, feel, smell or a favourite taste you've experienced. Do you remember the first time you fell in love with the song of your season? Tell your future self about it by recording how you feel, what song it is and what you were doing when you heard it.

Expressing yourself through writing is a wonderful way to understand who you are now and who you were when you wrote it and read it in the future. There is plenty of opportunity for you to get started today so go do it! 

8 Health benefits of Journaling:

- Lowers Blood Pressure
- Improves Mood
- Lowers Stress
- Improves Lung Functions
- Improves Appreciation
- Improves Optimism
- Improved Memory
- Better Sleep



Finding the Poet Inside You

**Be brave, be bold!
Let your burst of ideas be told!
No need to find a rhyme
The words, the music are inside you.
Don't be afraid. Step outside, but reach in
You never know what you will find.**

Find a little inspiration from these young poets who shared their words at the Writing on Fire workshops held at the River John Hub School earlier this spring. For more poetry and tips for getting your own words on the page head on over to www.athomeonthenorthshore.ca

Hero

By Warren Cameron

Smile cocked like a loaded 12 gauge
walk like the world's my stage
don't feel like I'm my age
sometimes too old.
the stress grows on my mind like a mold
like a plague
just don't want to be seen as a fake
think I'm going have to catch the snake
if I want to win the race
so I can stick it in their face
all I need is to be best of the best
better than the rest
but wait – I already am
is it confidence
or cockiness?
both radiate from him
like a bomb
his wisdom will make you think
everybody needs a hero
and mine is far from a 10
but definitely not a zero.

Hands

By Burke Murray

Hands are for thumb wars and rock
paper scissors
Hands are for gripping your pencil and
writing stories
Hands are for saving lives
Hands are for pulling the trigger and
protecting our country
Hands are for helping other hands.

Someone

By Claire Wilson

I know there's someone out there
Someone who appreciates the muscles
Someone who thinks having rough, calloused
hands is a good thing
Someone who listens to all of your rants and
stories without complaining
Someone who takes your weirdness as a part
of you and loves it because they are weirder
Someone who understands the language of
your favourite sport because it's theirs as well
Someone who doesn't think you're weird
or scary because you like dark clothes, bold
makeup and heavy music
Someone who gets excited over the little
things and too excited over the big things
Someone who you can talk to for hours and
never get bored
Someone who likes you from the inside and
thinks your looks are just a bonus point
The thing is you see... I've already found my
someone but I'm afraid they haven't found theirs.

A Broken image

By Torrie O'Brien

I stare at my body.
Through a mirror that is broken and
shattered in places.
I look into my reflection but all I see is a pale
imperfection.
I hit the mirror again hoping the image will
change but it never does.
Disappointing me day after day.
I give up trying, you know trying to be beautiful

Hobbies

By Alex McCulloch

"What are your hobbies?"
He asks.
"The woods"
I reply.
"The woods can't be a hobby"
I lean back in my chair and look him
in the eye...

I like to believe it takes something to walk
beyond the border of the trees,
beyond our so called boundaries of safety.

To take the unknown depths of the trees
and turn in to something well known
to yourself.

I find it comforting to be among other creatures
and to know, no matter where you go,
you are surrounded by this everlasting source
of flourishing life.

I like to believe it is a hobby
to find comfort in a place where others only
find fear

At Home with Susan Weeks

By Jennifer Hatt

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Photography



Susan Weeks remembers the moment of silence with vivid clarity. It was 1990, one year after a man in Montreal shot to death 14 female engineering students at École Polytechnique. Susan was among 40 members of the first-year chemical engineering program at TUNS (Technical University of Nova Scotia, now DalTech), half of them women. In that moment she felt sadness for the victims and their families, heard every creak of the room and hallway beyond, but felt a sense of safety. The classroom was her domain; the field of engineering and male-majority workplaces, she had grown up with those, along with the mantra her father shared as he raised both his family and his company. “He said that to finish an engineering degree meant you could accomplish anything you wanted.”

More than 20 years after her graduation and her father’s passing, she holds and guards her memories closely, something learned in childhood as her family name evolved into a household name. Weeks Construction for more than 40 years has been a visible part of Nova Scotia’s construction industry, paving roads from Cape Breton through Hants County and working in sewer/water installation, crushing and concrete. As his company grew, founder Scott Weeks himself became a notable member of the construction industry and Pictou County community, taking an active role in local events and organizations, and generously supporting charitable causes. An annual golf tournament and the Weeks

Crushers hockey teams continue to honour his name.

It is a legacy of which Susan is proud, but admits it took years for her to discover the connection uniquely hers.

Growing up in New Glasgow’s south end with her older brother and younger sister, Susan did well in school, from her days at Temperance Street Elementary through new Glasgow Junior High and High School, and played every sport available. After high school graduation she headed to Acadia University to earn her science degree and engineering diploma. Her future with the family business, however, was undecided until her graduation from TUNS.

“I wanted to come back home. It was a good place to raise a family, and there was a job waiting for me,” she reflects, curled on the couch, watching for a moment the gentle flames through the tempered glass of her wood stove. “It felt safe.”

Her initial work with the company, however, just made her feel confused. “My first job was inspecting gravel. The next day, (my father) sent me to watch how some piece of equipment worked. The next day, I was assigned somewhere else. It seemed like I was doing a whole bunch of nothing. Then he and I talked about it, and everything I learned suddenly all fit together.” She smiles at the recollection. “That is the way he was. He believed in learning by experience first, then having a conversation that let you figure it out for yourself.”

His sudden illness and death came just a year after



“I slowly began to realize that I was trying to fill the role of a man I didn’t know – yes, I knew him as my father, but I didn’t know him the way his colleagues or the public knew him.”

she joined the company. As the community mourned the loss of a business leader and philanthropist, she was left to grieve not only the loss of her father but her career compass as well. “He would never say ‘do this’ or ‘don’t do that’, but he was my sounding board,” she says. “I went to my mom for many things, but for work, it was my dad.”

And because her father was so admired and renowned, she felt a pressure to maintain the image and operations that her father had so carefully crafted. “I slowly began to realize that I was trying to fill the role of a man I didn’t know – yes, I knew him as my father, but I didn’t know him the way his colleagues or the public knew him.” A turning point for her came when she accepted that she and her father were different and her contributions to company and community would need to be hers, not his, to be successful.

Susan is now Safety Supervisor for the company, inspecting all sites and recording activities to ensure the well-being of their 200 employees. It is far removed from chemical engineering yet she embraces her work, eager to impart knowledge and enact systems that supports workplace and personal safety. It is also a job that is demanding, both mentally

and physically. Winters are spent in the office, completing stacks of paperwork for compliance to various industrial and government regulations. Summers are spent visiting paving and construction sites from Cape Breton to the central mainland. It's a world of steel toes, big trucks and men. Yet being in the constant gender minority works for her because of her sense of belonging and the family feel, especially within her company. "Our connections run deep. We have families whose grandfathers, fathers, nephews, and sons have all worked for us." And while she is tasked with keeping this work family safe, she has found safety there as well. "At our 40th anniversary I was presenting a painting to my mom, and partway through the speech I started to cry. I figured everyone would be shocked. Afterward, though, several of our supervisors came up to say they were really moved, and felt like they were part of something really important."

Authenticity, she discovered, was a powerful asset in the workplace and in life. In the years since she has embarked on a personal path to rediscover her spirit and her passions. "I realized I was saying 'I can't' a lot of the time, making excuses that would keep me in my comfort zone." Her continued involvement in sports and fitness, for

example, allowed her to hide her secret love-hate relationship with food, which led to years of yo-yo-dieting, fresh Monday starts and weekend binges. "When I'd walk home from school I'd stop in the Peter Pan Motel, buy a chocolate bar, and have it eaten by the time I got home," she said. "I got very good at hiding, and it went on for years." When her daughters were small she discovered the Beachbody system of clean eating and daily exercise. As she'd complete the daily routine a voice would whisper 'I want to be a coach.' Her outer voice disagreed. "I was doing the workouts but couldn't stick to the eating plan. I kept telling myself I'd be no good as a coach." Last year, she was reintroduced to the program by employees in her office, and the whisper became louder. She made contact with a friend and coach in Halifax, and her resolve strengthened. "I discovered that I didn't have to be perfect to be a coach. I had to be passionate. And I've been passionate about health and fitness my whole life."

As a Beachbody coach she leads home-based programs that combine clear direction for healthy food choices and daily 30-minute exercise with the motivation and accountability of her daily check-ins. A closed Facebook group allows participants to meet, chat and





Susan with rescued kitties Piper and Percy.

share with each other in private. As a coach, though, Susan is expected to post her photos and progress on her personal page for all her friends to see. That's rattled her comfort zone, but she's grateful.

"The entire program has normalized my relationship with food. I feel better when I eat well, my attitude is better, I have more energy, and I know if I want to keep feeling this way, this is what I have to do." Coaching has the potential to earn income, but for now, her motivation is personal. "I was one of those people that looked fine from the outside, but everyone, no matter what they look like, has a struggle. This program is a way to help identify that struggle and put it out there so it can't hurt any more."


And her down time?

"I like my privacy," she affirms, and her home reflects that. A new build 18 years ago on New Glasgow's west side, the home felt too large to her at first. "It's a lot to clean," she observes, "but the location I wouldn't trade for anything." Located at the end of a town street, their lot is surrounded on three sides by thick stands of trees, giving home the best of both town and country living. Their gazebo is among her favourite summertime hangouts.

The interior, however spacious, is kept cozy and bright year-round, with a wood stove in the main floor living area and banks of windows that let in the peaceful forest view and sunlight while keeping out the chill. Orchids bloom above her kitchen sink, nourished by the home's warmth and diffused light of the northwest corner window. The

floor plan also allows her plenty of room for quiet time, even while sharing the house with daughters Ryan and Mackenzie, partner Jonathan MacLean and two rescue cats, Percy and Piper. "I never liked cats because they were so unpredictable," she muses as Piper snoozes contentedly on the back of the couch, gaining energy for Susan's early-morning wakeup call. Her favourite spaces? Her bedroom, where she likes to relax, read – Brene Brown and Jeff Olson are recent choices – or watch a movie with her girls. Her other spaces are the TV room (if no one else is in there) or the basement, where she does her daily workouts.

"I'm pretty boring," she claims. Others would say she's settled, in who she is and how she chooses to live her life. Her community involvement revolves around family activities, most recently school concerts and rugby games, as well as service through her coaching and conversations furthering her exploration of inner self. A great night is a night in, although she loves on occasion to dress up. "I have a closet full of heels and when I get to dress up, it feels really special," she chuckles. "The walk isn't the prettiest, though, after wearing workboots 90 per cent of the time."

With both her daughters headed to university in September, her home will be a type of quiet that she is beginning to dread. With her discovery of safety within, however, (and her engineering degree), anything is indeed possible. "Turning can't to can; it's a lifelong process." 



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Let's get grounded

By Deelle Hines

It's summer! Finally a time to kick off your shoes, put your feet in the grass and feel the tickle on your toes. Go for a barefoot walk and connect with the earth you just might feel better because you did!



It's a known fact that we do not spend the same amount of time outdoors as we used to. Thanks to evolution, we have traded in walking barefoot for shoes and sleeping on the ground for a nice comfy bed. But the truth is, our bodies are designed to come into contact with the Earth on a regular basis. The air we breathe, the water we drink and the ultraviolet light from the sun are all important ways we connect with the Earth and our survival depends on it.

Grounding is an important Earth connection we are missing out on these days due to synthetically soled shoes, living in homes and working in offices. Luckily, summer is just around the corner, so we have plenty of opportunity to put this amazing health benefit to the test.

What is grounding?

Grounding or Earthing has been advocated by Europeans for many generations. The theory is the Earth is a grounding force that our bodies are meant to come into contact with on a regular basis. Our bodies and cells have electrical energy and with so much contact with cell phones and Wi-Fi, many of us have a high amount of positive electrons built up in our bodies. The Earth provides a negative grounding charge, which then balances everything out.

Jeanette Gormley, a local reflexologist says "our feet contain approximately 25% of all the nerve endings in the body, as well as reflex points that represent all glands, organs and tissue of the body, thus making the feet the most effective access point for grounding."

The best grounding surfaces are sand, grass, soil, ceramic tile and unpainted or unsealed concrete or brick. Asphalt, wood, rubber, plastic and vinyl are surfaces that will not ground you.

What are the benefits of grounding?

It is important to note that grounding is not a "treatment" or a "cure" for a disease or disorder, but the scientific evidence to back up the health benefits are plenty. Many doctors in the medical field consider grounding takes us from disease mode into health mode.

Grounding has the ability to calm the sympathetic nervous system, which supports your heart rate variability (or time between heart beats)



and any time you do this you are improving the health of your entire body.

Some other amazing things grounding can do are reducing inflammation (the root cause of almost all disease), reducing chronic pain, improving sleep issues, lowers stress, improves blood pressure, reduces snoring, relieves muscles tension and headaches, etc.


Also, walking barefoot can help strengthen your core, lower legs and feet by forcing you to balance yourself.

Combine grounding with a good pair of shoes.

Karey at Health Walks Foot Orthotic Clinic in New Glasgow says “people complain of foot pain more than any other part of their body. To look after your feet, it means inspecting them regularly (particularly if you have diabetes), wearing properly fitted, good quality footwear

and exploring alternative treatments such as energy based grounding and reflexology.”

So after a long day of work, sticking your bare feet in the grass or sand may work wonders for your aches and pains. Going barefoot for as little as 30 to 40 minutes a day can significantly improve your health.

You may be skeptical about the many benefits of grounding, but I encourage you to go outside on a beautiful summer day and put your feet on a grounding surface. See if you end up sleeping better that night, have reduced pain or end up with an increase in energy. Grounding may explain why you feel energized and sleep well while on vacation by the beach. Just like eating right, exercising and sleeping, grounding can be considered yet another lifestyle habit that will support optimal health. 



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Oh my aching fabulous feet

As told by
Leigh-Ann White

Leigh-Ann White uses the “F” word lot. In fact it’s her favorite word and it might even find its place on her head stone some day. Don’t worry she’s not a potty mouth, just the opposite, Leigh-Ann is absolutely “Fabulous” and it is her one word mantra for living and helping others. Leigh-Ann is a Massage Therapist in New Glasgow. She is a believer that everyone can make modifications in their life and adapt to their challenges and discomforts. She practices what she preaches and has learned to adapt and create fitness goals for herself as she manages foot pain from a degenerative condition known as Metatarsophalangeal Joint Pain.

I have pain in my metatarsal-phalangea. It is pain in the metatarsal bones in the foot. It affects the long bones and short bones that connect into the arch of my foot. For me, my long bones are short and my short bones are long. So my joints are just slightly misaligned.

When I was about ten years old I noticed that I had a lot of callouses on my feet and I was very sensitive to walking barefoot. But when you are a kid you just go and you don’t think about having an issue with your joints. When I was in my 20s and into my mid thirties I led a very active life style. I was very involved in the fitness world. I spent a lot of time lifting in the gym and I loved cardio classes but then I started to experience a lot of pain. At the time the worst thing was that I couldn’t wear high heels. I didn’t really think about going to see a podiatrist or an orthopedic doctor until it got to the point that had to ice my feet every night. I had to stop running, I couldn’t do any cross


training. I had to stop any activity that put me on the front of my feet. I couldn’t even go for a nice walk in the park. I knew that this was going to become a real challenge for my fitness and health. With my hereditary genes if I do not take care of myself I will be obese. I have a very high sensitivity to sugar even the sugar that is in a carrot so I knew that my diet was not going to be enough to keep me healthy. Then there is the psychological part of it as well that anything I did was going to be painful.

The lesson that I learned from all of this is that I had to learn to modify. Fabulous is one of my favorite words but the other word is modify. We all have to modify at some time or other in our lives especially as we get older. If we have a problem in our personal lives we find another avenue to take.

With my feet I had to stop many things that I loved. I had to stop any cardio training and I turned to weights but eventually that

wasn’t working out for me either. I went to a local chiropractor and I had my feet adjusted. It was on his suggestion that I ask my doctor about metatarsophalangea. I went to see an orthopedic surgeon. He told me that I had poorly constructed feet and that my days of heavy lifting are over. I have arthritic changes, I have hammer toes. The configuration of my feet in the last three years has gone from very normal looking to very claw like.

Now I get cortisone shots and they are working. I follow all of the rules. I have to. I am on my feet all day for my work as a massage therapist but the challenge is I still want to be active. I found modifiers. I use a lot of resistance bands. I use slower motions and the only cardio I do is on the recumbent bike.

It has been a very successful journey. For so many people it comes back to saying I can’t do, I don’t believe in this I say find a modifier and say yes I can do! 

Keep Calm and stay motivated.

Here is a little DIY for your summer run bling. Running event medals are becoming works of art. It's a shame to toss them in your sock drawer after all of that hard work. Use your medals of achievement as a way to keep motivated for the next run on your roster. For some of the finest bling on the block you will want to register for the Johnny Miles Running Events. Go to www.johnnymiles.ca



Photo by Steve Smith

Remembering the Run

By Lori Byrne

Anyone who has ran a race or two probably came home with a race bib and medal and wondered what to do with them. I'm a firm believer that any race completed is a race well ran and deserves to be celebrated. This fun display board is the perfect way to track your past races by showcasing your bibs and medals and keeping track of your Personal Best times.

SUPPLIES:

Empty frame
Hardboard cut to fit
inside your frame
RUN letters
Hooks
Clips



Small screws
Chalkboard Paint
Paint for frame and letters
Sandpaper
Wood glue
Popsicle sticks



Sand your hardboard and coat with chalkboard paint. Paint your frame, too, and let them both dry. If you need to paint your letters, do this now, as well. Apply second coats of paint as needed and let dry. Once your items are dry, decide what race distances you want to add and lightly pencil them onto your chalkboard and then go over the letters with paint. Allow this ample time to dry (there's nothing worse than smudging a letter or two by being impatient!)

When your letters are dry, screw in your clips and add the hardboard to your frame. Now is a good time to add your hangers to the back of your frame, knowing it'll be carrying some weight with all that race bling!! Attach your hooks to the bottom of your frame, as many or as few as you want.

Glue your letters together where they touch, using wood glue. Let these dry and then glue them along the top edge of the frame. Add supports to the back of the letters and frame, if you feel that extra support is required. (I used popsicle sticks glued between each letter and the frame to reinforce them.) Let everything dry and set.

You are ready to hang your race display up somewhere so it can continue to motivate and inspire you to get out and run and to challenge yourself to improve on your times! 🏃‍♂️



Doris and great-granddaughter Sophie Young.

LEGACY BY THE SEA SHORE

By Crystal Murray

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Photography

A cottage full of memories with Doris Young

Every summer cottage has a story and for every story there is a little magic. It's the same magic that makes the light in the firefly flicker and glows white in the hottest flame of the campfire. It's the magic that is in the air on that first long weekend in May and in little faces when they become bewitched with tales of Ghost Ships and graveyards. It's the magic in the light of the moon as you tuck your sandy feet into bed at night and you know that summer is just beginning.



For over fifty years Doris Young and her family have been charmed by the simple magic of their own seaside retreat not far from where the Pictou Harbour meets the Northumberland Strait. Her cottage, built almost a century ago is nestled in the birch trees in an area known as Seacrest. It was once the trendy spot for summering, with families from Pictou, Truro and Halifax returning to the shore every year. Today it is not the summer hot spot that it used to be when dozens of children were beating down the paths between the cottages. Many of the cottages are gone or replaced with newer structures and the children that once traipsed up and down the bank to the beach are grandparents now who look forward to a few days in July or August when they can share their summer legacy with the next generation.

The Young cottage remains much the same as it was almost one hundred years ago when the Fullerton family built it. For a while it was owned by the Fergusons who owned the Pictou Shipyards before Doris, now in her ninety-fourth year and her husband Clarence, purchased the property in the early 60s. The couple was living in Sydney where Clarence was practicing Internal Medicine when they bought the cottage on the urgency of Clarence's brother Fraser, who owned a property a little further down the shore. A year or two after purchasing the cottage Doris, Clarence and their three children Gordon, Robert and Joan moved back to their

hometown of Pictou, where Clarence continued with his medical practice.

"Fraser just seemed to really want us to have this cottage," remembers Doris as she shuffles through a small stack of cottage snaps. "We had rented a cottage in Caribou for a few summers and when he heard that this one was for sale he made sure that we bought it."

The cottage is not grand by today's standards but it is very typical of the cottage design of the era. By the early 1900s cottages started to gain popularity in different parts of the province. The railway made it easier to travel and as vehicles became more accessible and affordable holidays and cottage life was quickly becoming part of the summer experience. By the 1960s when the Young's bought their property in Pictou, cottaging was part of the Canadian culture.

The cottage was built as a single story with a verandah that wrapped around the four sides. Doris said that she was told that the original builder, Mr. Fullerton wanted a place to get out of the sun as it moved through the sky. "I think there was also an outdoor kitchen and the Fergusons would have moved the kitchen inside along with the plumbing."

In the centre of the cottage the original fireplace made from beach stones still stands as the backbone of the dwelling. There is a gentle sway in the floor from the weight of the fireplace and which calls for the occasional hoist on a jack to level things out.



A deck and screen porch replaced the aging verandah and when Doris and Clarence replaced the windows in their house in town they installed them at Seacrest. Small panes of glass and old brass latches under thick layers of white paint are adorned with sun catchers and trinkets held by tiny suction cups that almost appear like they are holding everything together.

In the window beside a croquet board as old as the cottage itself is an overstuffed rocker once belonging to Doris's father Vernon MacKay. "That was Dad's chair. When he passed my mother said Ok Doris that is your chair now. We took it to the cottage but it was never my chair after that because Clarence took a liking too it," she says with a little grin and a twinkle in her eye making you think that there is even more to the story.

The view from her cottage window has changed a little over the years. A few hungry storms gobbled up some of the bank and swallowed the tree line but in doing so cleared the sightlines towards Pictou Island. And as beaches do, the sandbar where Clarence and the kids once practiced their golf swing driving balls into the ocean shifted further down the shore into the harbour.

"I swear there was one terrific storm that came in years ago that picked up all of our sand and moved it down towards Lowdens Beach. I remember walking down to Nonie Murrays and saying, 'you have all of our sand' and there was a big sand dune in front of their cottage!"

Just as the beach changes with each ebb and flow of the tide so did Doris' family. Her children who were in elementary school when they bought in Seacrest grew up, went off to school and began their own families and her husband Clarence passed away.

Where she once packed up and moved her gang to the cottage when school let out for the summer she now only visits the cottage during the day. Her daughter Joan

Kitchy collections (top and left) and sharing a story with daughter Joan (below).






The cottage then and now (top).

Doris and great granddaughters Sophie, Lila and Rose (above).

who lives on the other side of the harbour keeps up with most of the maintenance and grandchildren and great grandchildren come and go when they need a little escape to the shore.

It's a cool day and the sun is just starting to warm up the little panes of the window, it is still a few weeks before the cottage will come back to life. She looks around her space and points out a few paintings. "This is one that Joan did, she didn't want anything thing in the painting but the cottage." There are a couple of small pieces completed by her son Robert and one of the Blue Nose sailing into the harbour that she painted a number of years ago. She admires an embroidered tablecloth that her son in law took home from a trip to Poland and she makes note of a name carved into the frame of another old family rocking chair by a mischievous little boy many years ago. They are the priceless accumulations of four generations.

"You know you never really know what your children are thinking and I didn't really know how much this old place meant to the kids until they were grown up," says Doris. "We always had so much fun here and you know there were things that the kids did that I never knew until years later. When I hear them tell stories about sneaking out at night to meet up with their friends I just laugh and they are still all friends. That's what makes it so special."

The sun catches the dust that is hanging in the air. It sparkles a little and there might have even been a little flicker of magic. 

KNOCKING ON

OPPORTUNITY, TAKING A CHANCE
AND LOVING EVERY MOMENT
AT THE MacDONALD
COTTAGE IN BRAESHORE



SUMMER'S DOOR



Kysac getting a little love from his sisters.

Tim, Abbylou, Ellen, Kysac and Lorraine settling in for another summer (left).
Chilling out in the Bunkee (above).

By Crystal Murray

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Photography

Anyone looking for water front property in Nova Scotia knows that when opportunity knocks you don't hesitate a moment to open the door.

In 2000 Tim and Lorraine MacDonald, of Halifax were looking for one of those opportunities in the Pictou area. For Tim, a Specialist Representative for Oncology Pharmaceuticals, Pictou was home and Lorraine's roots were only 50 km down the shore in Antigonish. As kids they both grew up loving the outdoors. Tim spent his summers on the criss-crossing fairways of the Pictou Golf Club and Lorraine honing her skills as a competitive soccer player. Not long after they married and starting a family, the young couple knew they wanted their kids to find a sense of belonging and place in their childhood communities. Cottage life in Pictou County was the answer.

Having spread the word in a few choice

areas that they were on the hunt for property they received a call that an old farm lot in Braeshore was being re-surveyed. In Tim's mind that could only mean one thing. Someone was ready to sell. They made a call, looked at the property once and bought it. Tim says his next three years were spent slinging a bush cutter and a chain saw. "The land had been farmed for years but it was over grown with alders and all of the most unwanted vegetation known to man," says Tim with a laugh looking out at his now clear view of the water. "Several times during the clearing process I would have gladly sold to a reasonable offer. Thank goodness that offer never came."

Two years after purchasing the property and whacking weeds Tim and Lorraine put in the 500 meter drive way that would wind down to a small outbuilding that they called, "The Shed." For the next three

summers "The Shed" became their seaside palace. Three bunks, a chemical toilet and an outdoor shower and they couldn't have been any happier.

"It was amazing," says Tim. "It was meant to serve as glorified camping with two little ones. We never anticipated how beloved it would become. We would often drive to "The Shed" for a quick visit and end up spending 1, 2, or 3 nights. The kids loved it and so did we!

However when news the baby number 3 was on its way "The Shed started to lose a little of its shine. Tim and Lorraine discussed the purchase of a large travel trailer with a few more amenities or another form of "temporary cottaging." A permanent cottage was option number eight. But opportunity came knocking again when the contractor they had approached with a plan to perhaps build for them in a few years said that he had



an opening in his schedule and could start right way. Tim and Lorraine said that they laughed at the offer. “Not a chance, we told him but three weeks later the foundation was poured.”


Fast forward ten years. Tim, Lorraine and their three children Ellen 15, Abbylou 13 and Kysac 9 have created an amazing retreat. Even though the kids are involved in sports and activities in Halifax when Friday hits they can’t wait to jump into one of the families SUV’s for the hour and half cruise down the 104 to Pictou. A quick stop to Sobeys at the Rotary and into Crown Pizza to pick up their order and they are ready to settle in. Lorraine, a Social Worker employed by the Nova Scotia Health Authority working with the teen health centres in Halifax schools has her summers off. She and the kids move down as soon as school lets out and Tim does a little commuting and weekend trips, but tries to carve out a few weeks in mid summer for a real vacation.

Tim and Lorraine say that when they made their impulsive plan to build the cottage they did have two

considerations that they kept to. The cottage was to be modest and it had to be a design that would easily accept a renovation upon retirement.

The cottage sits on a foundation that has four foot frost walls on three sides and an eight foot frost wall on one side which will allow for a full basement addition on the north side in the future. The main level of the house is designed to transition to a garage. The walls are framed for two standard garage doors and the concrete floor has a three degree slope. No walls are load bearing and a center I beam extends the entire floor length.

While a future build is something they will eventually consider they are too busy soaking up summer in northern Nova Scotia to focus too far ahead. Tim and Lorraine passed their love of recreation and the outdoors to the kids. Their days are spent kayaking, on the paddleboards or hanging out in “The Shed” that has been transformed into a kitchy little bunkie for Kysac his teenage sisters and their friends. In the evenings Kysac and Abbylou trek into Stellarton to play with the North Nova United Soccer Club. It was a sad day for Tim when the Pictou Golf Course closed shop. For a little solace he built his own putting green and has been collecting Club memorabilia. And if all of the activity gets to be too much there is also the giant hammock swaying between two strong birch trees in the back yard. “Its perfect, says Tim. “See this...the leaves give you perfect shade but you can see the front yard leading to the beach and a perfect view of the water.”

Yet another perfect opportunity... to catch a nap on a warm summer day. 

THE COTTAGE CONUNDRUM

WHAT TO DO WHEN IT IS TIME TO LET GO.

By Debbi Harvie

A family cottage is where you spent your formative years, swimming in the cool ocean water, learning to ride a bike, perhaps, and spending time with family.

The sale of cottages has remained fairly constant over the last five to 10 years, according to Peter Fraser, realtor.

"The number remains close to constant pretty much year over year for the past few years. There are two spikes in cottage listings, first when the season is close to opening in spring and then in the fall when people are done for the season. This year we are seeing the beginnings of consistency in that trend," he says.

The price of cottages took a drop about two years ago and is starting to show signs of a slight recovery.

Fraser adds, "The hot market for cottage country is of course on the water, or with a good view and access to the water. The shore from pretty much Caribou Island to Malagash Point is prime with demand high in Caribou Island and the Seafoam/Tony River areas," locally.

But what about families who have had a cottage for years and are wondering what to do with it when the time comes for estate planning?

"The family cottage is always an issue when people come to make wills because of the emotions surrounding family cottages," explains Harry Munro, QC, who deals with estate planning. "People have happy memories at the family cottage so it's hard for parents to decide who to give it to."

There are various options according to Munro.

The first is give the cottage to all of the children equally.

"The problem with this is that a cottage is an expensive thing to look after when you take into account taxes, insurance costs, maintenance and utilities. It works out to be about 10 per cent of the value of the cottage each year."

Also one person ends up with all of the responsibility in terms of upkeep and maintenance and then there's the issue of cleanliness and standards of care.

The issue then becomes, who pays for that? Then you have to work on usage and who gets to use the cottage when.

"Generally speaking, everyone wants to be at a cottage in July and

August, so who decides who goes and when and what about a child that doesn't get to use the cottage as much as the others?"

Then there's the issue of tension between siblings and their spouses.

Another option is creating a trust where the cottage is entrusted to one or more individuals for the benefit of a group.

"The current owners often give a sum of money to cover some of the expenses like the taxes and insurance. The trustee basically becomes the 'boss' of the cottage and has control over how it is used."

In this case, the trustee would decide how the cottage is to be shared amongst the siblings, for example putting weeks in a hat and drawing them. The expenses related to occupancy would then be shared amongst the children.

"This can work quite well, but there must be a provision in the trust on how a new trustee is to be appointed in the event the trustee dies or does not want to do the job anymore," explains Munro.


The problem with this is that every 21 years, the trust is deemed to have sold the cottage by the government and a capital gains tax is charged, 50 per cent of which is taxed as income.

"In a will, the simplest way of dealing with cottages is to say to the executor of the will, offer the cottage for sale to the children and have it appraised by a quality realtor and allow one of the children to buy it at a reduced price, say 95 per cent of the value."

If more than one child is interested, flip a coin and the child that calls the coin toss correctly purchases the cottage. Essentially they would be buying out the other siblings so, for example, if there were three children and the value of the cottage was \$180,000 the purchaser would pay \$120,000, the other two shares of the cottage.

"We suggest a reduced price off of the value for the purchase price because no realtors are required because it's family, so you take off the realtor's commission, which is usually five per cent plus HST."

Munro says many parents come and don't know what to do in their wills, and it all depends on how well the siblings get along and if they all use the cottage.

As for leaving a cottage to one child, you have to consider the value of the asset and what you have to leave the other children to even things out. 

Summer work. C

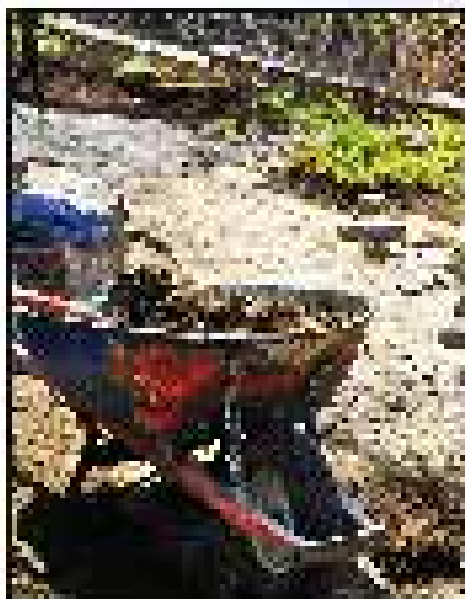
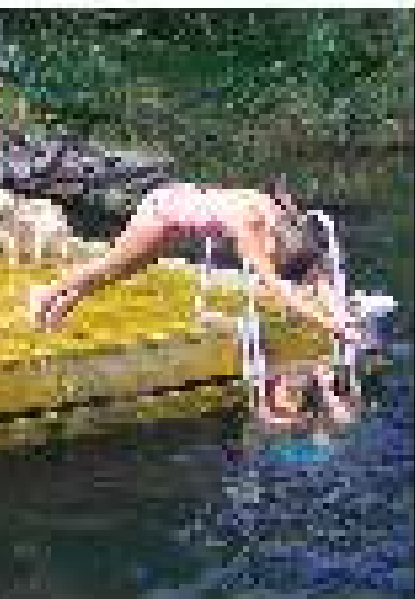


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APPLIES



Highland Ford, 100 years of history in Pictou County

Family owned businesses are the backbone of many communities. They add another dimension to progress and the sustainability of the economic landscape. Pictou County continues to stand out as a place where family businesses prosper. It's a place where dedication and loyalty ignites the drive forward while keeping an eye on the past in the rear view mirror.

This June, Eric and Linda Barker, their children Matthew and Carolyn and the Highland Ford family will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Ford in Pictou County. It's a legacy that brings them great pride and they are excited to share their story.

In 1916 a car dealership from Antigonish expanded into New Glasgow and opened a garage on Provost Street. Car buyers could drive a new Model T off the lot for about \$500. It was a new age for transportation. While horses and buggies still rolled along the dusty streets of town they were starting to compete for parking space with a different type of horsepower.

In the early 1920s the original New Glasgow dealership that was owned by the Eastern Automobile Company also sold Hudson and Essex vehicles. When the company transitioned ownership to Eastern Auto they decided to focus solely on the Ford brand. By 1928 the dealership had grown and the owners determined that it was time to expand. Automobile manufacturing and sales had excellerated. Only a little more than a decade earlier there were only 25,000 automobiles in Canada. By 1928 one out of every two households had a car.

The 1928 expansion saw the dealership relocate to the top of Archimedes Street. The owners sold and serviced vehicles there for the next 61 years. In 1938, to keep up with the advancements in the design and power of the Ford vehicle the owners renamed the dealership Vee Eight Motors.

The commercial district of the community started to shift. By 1989 New Glasgow had two shopping malls and fast food joints were challenging the Cozy Corner restaurants of

the world. Traffic patterns were changing and the Westville Road became home to several dealerships. Fred de Decker was now the licensee of the Ford franchise. He constructed a new building on a site directly across from the Highland Square Mall. The dealership title was changed once again in 1999 and was rebranded Highland Ford Sales Limited.


The next year at the turn of the millennium, Eric and Linda Barker seized an opportunity and bought the dealership from the de Decker family.

"We were excited about our new venture," says Linda Barker. "We had a vision that focused on providing excellence in sales and service. We wanted to continue to build the loyalty that had already been established in the community and surrounding area."

It didn't take long for the vision to payback. The Barkers investment in their staff and customers earned them a Blue Oval Certification, the Ford Motor Company's highest award for customer satisfaction.

Only three years into the business the Barkers were noticing signs of growing pains again. They needed a new space and they wanted to give their dealership a look that worked with the future vision of the Ford Company. In 2004 they completed construction on a new modern facility. Their need for space and innovation in design again moved them a little further away from their roots in the downtown core to the outskirts of New Glasgow along side the Trans Canada Highway where thousands of vehicles race past them every day.

The Barkers understand their role in the community and are grateful for their customer loyalty. They believe in giving back and in many cases paying it forward. In recent years, Highland Ford embraced a new program that offers local schools and charities a chance to raise funds by simply test-driving a Ford vehicle. To date they have funded \$80,000 for the local community and the program continues.

The Highland Ford story follows much the same road as the automobile industry and the Ford legacy. They moved with the times. They felt the pinch of the recession and had to be Ford Tough, they answered the call for satisfaction where customers could “Feel the Difference, they have found a place in their community where they are “Designed for Living and Built to Last” but perhaps the slogan that fits the Barker family and the staff at Highland Ford is one of their own—Proud of our Heritage, Committed to our Future. 

Happy 100th Birthday Highland Ford!



“While horses and buggies still rolled along the dusty streets of town they were starting to compete for parking space with a different type of horsepower.”



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DIY

This DIY wreath is the perfect way to display all those treasured memories from Summer.

By Lori Byrne

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Photography





The chicken wire makes clipping photos or postcards easy and yet, so fun. Hang this little wreath somewhere you can see it often to keep the memories fresh.



SUPPLIES:

MDF wreath form from Michaels

Jute rope from Central Supplies

Chicken wire from a farm supply store

White paint


Hot glue gun

Gloves (for working with the chicken wire)

Wire cutters

Pretty little clothes pins from Michaels

Start by painting the MDF wreath form and chicken wire with a coat of white paint. This will help mask any gaps in the rope. Once the paint is dry, start wrapping the form with the rope and hot gluing it in place. You don't have to glue down each bit of rope, every two or three wraps is plenty. When you have the rope glued down, mix some white paint with a bit of water and brush it onto the rope. This softens the look of the rope and gives it a more weathered look. The rope soaks up the paint so add more coats if you feel it needs it. While your paint is drying, trim your chicken wire with the wire cutters to fit neatly on the back of the wreath. Once the paint is dry, hot glue the chicken wire on, making sure to bend those sharp ends of the wire into the rope as much as possible.

After all your glue is dried, you are ready to display your treasures so Summer can live on long after the sand has cooled off! 



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Royal Flush

By Lori Byrne

Oh, indoor plumbing, how we love thee! According to a quick browse of Google, we spend an hour and forty-two minutes on the toilet each week. Since we do spend so much time in the loo, what is out there to make life with on the toilet more enjoyable? I think you may be surprised, there is a toilet feature for everyone!

Let's begin by looking at the part of the toilet that is closest to us, the seat. You may think a toilet seat is a toilet seat, but, wait until you find out what your toilet seat can do for you!

Maybe you are someone who likes to be warm and not sit on that cold toilet seat, then you'll love the availability of heated seats. Heated seats are available with adjustable levels so your seat is just the right temperature for you. But, you will need an outlet handy to plug this seat in, so keep that in mind if you are considering this type of seat.

If you are someone who doesn't want to turn on the lights in the middle of the night, but still want to hit the target, then you need a toilet seat with a built in nightlight that will illuminate the bowl. This feature can also be found on the heated toilet seats, so you can have the best of both worlds.

As a parent, I want a toilet seat with a self-closing lid. No slamming down of lids and yet when I walk in the bathroom, the lid is closed. If the lid was meant to be left open, toilets wouldn't have lids, in my way of thinking. Soft-closing or slow-closing lids are readily available through many toilet accessory suppliers.

There's toilet seats with two sizes built-in, one adult-sized seat and one child-sized seat, making the toilet easy for those potty-training years. No lifting off the kiddie seat or fishing your little one out of the bowl.

There are toilet seats that will raise the user up, adding height to a toilet that might be too low for some. This feature will make it easier for those with mobility issues to lower and raise themselves off the seat.

As far as the outward appearance of the toilet, there are so many neat looking toilets on the market. High seats, round seats, elongated seats, low backs, no backs, and my personal favourite – concealed traps.

Concealed traps are the dream of anyone who has scrubbed the

outside a toilet before. All those curves and awkward spots are now one easy surface to clean. And besides being easier to clean, they look so much better without the visible trap.


The low back toilets are a more contemporary look, they can add so much style to a bathroom. The toilet no longer needs to be a big, heavy hunk of porcelain in the bathroom. It can be a sleek, stylish feature now.

I asked Heather Gates, Showroom Consultant, of the Eddy Group in Truro to share some of her favourite features and this one struck home, extra smooth glazing. Why, you might ask? A smoother finish means a cleaner toilet. And to top it off, these American Standard toilets also have anti-microbial properties. A perfect feature, really.

With keeping water conservation in mind, most tanks are also now a smaller size, less water needed means the tanks don't have to be as bulky as in the past. There is also the two flush options available, meaning you can decide the amount of water used in a single flush.

One thing to watch for, if a sweaty toilet turns you into a sweaty, frustrated mess, is whether or not your toilet tank is lined. If sweating is an issue, then be sure to get a lined tank. This may mean that your toilet tank is larger but if it saves you the frustration, so be it.

The last feature I want to share is the hidden tank with a wall-hung toilet. This has got to be the most stylish way to set up a bathroom. Having a wall mounted toilet would allow a full view of a stunning floor, plus easy cleaning. The hidden tank means just a sleek panel on the wall for the actual flushing of the toilet. Less exposed surfaces means a tidier look and more stylish space.

So, when it comes to your next toilet purchase, don't just run out and buy the first one you see. There will be the toilet and toilet seat that will suit all your potty needs perfectly. Once you uncover all the various features that are out there to purchase, you'll be able to make your decision based on the function, form and the style of your toilet....not just on how bad you need to use it. Long gone are the days of the only choices being the pot under the bed or running to the outhouse in the cold! And, boy, that's something to be thankful for! 

Picture Perfect Picnics

Photos by Steve Smith, Visionfire Studios

Food styling by Heather Wyatt, Take Thyme Catering

Chairs compliments of Angela's Attic, www.angelasattic.ca

One of the greatest pleasures of summer are the stolen moments when you can slow down, unplug and simply enjoy being outdoors. You may have to chase a way a few industrious ants and shoo away a few flies but picnics are more than just a chance to grab a little lunch in the sunshine. Elegant and elaborate or simple and small make your picnic an experience. We asked two local restaurants to create their ideal picnic menu.

Take your pick or try them both. Enjoy!

“I was brought up in rural Cape Breton, and for me food was just food. It was comforting having a hot home cooked meal. So when I got older and started getting an interest in cooking I always used that same mentality. No matter how you apply it, comfort in food should always be number one. Simple recipes with a home cook touch takes the fear out of trying new things even when you are planning a picnic menu.”

– Mike MacIsaac, Chef Owner Brownstone Café Antigonish.



MENU

Chicken liver pate on pumpernickel crustini with apple onion chutney

Smoked macaroni and cheese salad

Walnut and sundried tomato pesto chicken

Quinoa salad in a curry turmeric vinaigrette

Chocolate eclair with caramel drizzle





Chicken liver pate

A very simple but super delicious recipe. It warms the soul.

1lb chicken livers cleaned
1 cup diced onion
2 cloves garlic chopped
salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp sherry
1/2 tsp allspice
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1/2 lb butter

Heat butter and add livers and sauté until almost cooked through. Remove from heat. add remaining ingredients and cook until onion is tender. add livers back in and process in a food processor until smooth. Place in individual containers and pour a little melted butter on top of each to seal pate. Let cool and enjoy.

Apple onion chutney

1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped apple
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp nutmeg

Add all ingredients to sauce pan and reduce until thickened. Adjust seasonings if too sour/sweet.

Smoked mac & cheese salad

1 large onion peeled cut in half and smoked
1 large red pepper seeded cut in half and smoked
1 large green pepper seeded cut in half and smoked
1 lb cooked macaroni
1 lb sharp cheddar
2 tbsp butter
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup sweet mayonnaise
1/2 cup whole milk

Dice onions and peppers. Saute in butter quickly. Add cheese, milk and mayo and stir until fully melted, remove from heat. Add macaroni. Cool and serve. Top with some sliced green onion. You can substitute liquid smoke if necessary.

Walnut and sundried tomato pesto chicken

This is my pesto recipe we use at the Brownstone. Hope you like it. It can be utilized so many ways.

1/2 cup oven roasted walnuts
1 cup sundried tomatoes sliced and soaking in 1 cup boiled water
1 cup olive oil
3 cloves garlic
salt and pepper to taste
2 oz fresh basil
1/2 cup shredded asiago cheese
1 tbsp lemon juice

Add walnuts and garlic in processor until smooth. Add basil and some of the olive oil. Add remaining ingredients. Blend until smooth.

Pan sear chicken breast until cooked through, rub a thick layer of pesto on chicken breast and then place pesto side down in panko bread crumbs. Bake in oven until crumbs are browned.



Chocolate eclairs

Choux Paste
1/2 cup butter
1 cup water
1 cup flour
pinch salt
4 eggs

Bring water and butter to boil, add flour and stir vigorously until dough doesn't stick to sides of pot. Let cool until it is cool enough to touch. Place in mixer with paddle attachment and mix in eggs one at a time until well blended. Pipe onto baking sheet in 4 inch logs. Bake at 400°F for 15 mins then 325°F for 25 mins.

Chocolate filling

3 egg yolks
1 1/4 cup sugar
3 tbsp cornstarch
1/2 cup semi sweet chocolate
2 tbsp cocoa powder
pinch salt
2 cups milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 tsp vanilla
2 tbsp butter

Add all ingredients except chocolate and butter. Cook in heavy bottom sauce pot or double boiler until cooked through and thickened. Remove from heat and add chocolate and butter, stir until melted in. Cool. Cut eclair shells in half and fill each half with chocolate filling. Place together and top with your favorite topping.



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Peddler's Picnic

“Sometimes it is just nice to grab a few moments for yourself. Take a little peddle to the beach or hit the trails. At BaKED Food Café we believe that the only thing that should be left behind you after your picnic are your footprints ... or your bicycle tracks:) Pack everything in reusable containers, take your cutlery from home and for-go the paper napkins for some pretty linens.”

— Stephanie Cooper, BaKED Food Café.

Cruiser Bike provided by
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MENU Quinoa Salad in a
Curry Turmeric Vinaigrette

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Peddler's Picnic recipes...

Quinoa Salad in a Curry Turmeric Vinaigrette

1 cup quinoa, rinsed
2 cups water
1 cup diced carrot
1 cup diced apple (Stirling Fruit Farms)
1/2 cup green peas fresh or thawed
1/2 cup toasted pumpkin seeds
1/3 cup diced green onion

*add more of anything to taste 😊

Curry Turmeric Vinaigrette


1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon honey (Cornect Family Farm)
2 garlic cloves minced
1 teaspoon curry powder
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
pepper to taste

* add more of anything to taste 😊

Prepare quinoa according to directions. Let cool and combine with apple, carrot, peas, pumpkin seeds and green onion.

Prepare the vinaigrette by whisking together the vinegar, minced garlic, curry powder, ground turmeric, onion powder, honey, salt and pepper. Slowly add the oil and continue to whisk until blended.

Add half the vinaigrette to the salad, mix well. Continue to add the vinaigrette until all ingredients are coated, or, to taste. Leftover vinaigrette can be kept in a sealed container in the fridge for a few weeks. Serves 4. Prepare your picnic basket using reusable containers and utensils. No waste left behind 😊.

Wash this salad down with BaKED's refreshing and house made Blueberry Basil Lemonade. 



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Some things are just better outside. Popsicles, Frisbee, lawn bowling...you get the picture. But nothing beats a refreshing cocktail on the patio on a warm summer night. A refreshing cocktail takes fresh ingredients and for fresh ingredients you want to find them close to home. In Nova Scotia you are not going to get much closer than Trenton, the home of the Nova Scotia Spirit Company. An award winning distillery that has something to say about the way we live and work on the east coast. This summer raise your glass and toast the people who put the spirit in your community. Cheers!


Stout East Wind:

1.5 oz Fishermans Helper White Rum
4 oz Propellor Ginger Beer
0.5 oz Fresh lime juice
Sugar (we used a Big Spruce Cereal Killer Stout infused sugar)

Rare Blue Lobster Caesar:

2oz Blue Lobster Vodka
Celery Salt rim of glass
Worcestershire Sauce to taste
Tabasco Sauce to taste
Clamato Juice
Lobster Claw (use tail, claws, legs etc)



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Dogs and deadbolts

By Jackie Jardine



That's what home security consisted of when our parents and grandparents were raising their families.

Even a decade ago, home security meant windows and doors wired to protect against intruders, motion sensors, video surveillance, punching a security code into a panel mounted on a wall, then scrambling to exit the house before setting off the alarm.

To quote the 1978 hit for country music crooner Loretta Lynn, We've come a long way, baby.

Today, thanks to advances in wireless technology, home security has given way to home automation and security platforms are getting smaller yet with a wider reach than ever before.

Developing a security plan for your home is simply a matter of identifying needs, say local security experts.

Take, for instance, a growing family with young children and both parents working outside the home. They may need remote door locks and security cameras. The security needs in that situation may be vastly different from those needs of a retired couple – perhaps snowbirds – who enjoys travelling or spending summers at a family cottage. And those needs may not be the same as those of a working couple with teenaged children.

"Security needs are different for everyone, depending on needs, family and lifestyle," says Brad Crawford, sales and service rep with TechPad Home Automation & Multimedia.

It all boils down to a needs assessment and family routine, concurs Shelby Janes, sales manager Atlantic Canada for ADT. "When meeting with a client, we look at their living situation and address their concerns," she

explains, "then design a solution around that."

Homes can be more interconnected now than ever before and a feeling of security can come at any time of the day, any place, at the touch of your fingertips.

"Home automation is still a fledgling industry and is still evolving, but we believe it's growing by leaps and bounds. Today, we need to make our homes work for us and home automation helps make our homes smarter," Crawford says.

"Every month it seems there is a new device coming out that is able to connect to your home WiFi and be controlled by a smart phone app. There really is no limit to what can be automated these days."

The couple with young children may find peace from the knowledge that they can use their smart phone, while enjoying date night at a nearby restaurant, to watch their children sleeping soundly while under the watchful eye of a baby sitter. A working couple may use their phone while at work in a neighbouring community to turn up the heat and lights and unlock the doors to their house at the same time the school bus is taking their children home from school, then watch those kids enter the house and have the doors lock securely behind them. Snowbirds can log into their laptop or tablet while sitting poolside in Florida and check to make sure their home is not buried under three feet of snow. Or, for a family away on vacation, a "ghost visitor" will turn lights on and off in different rooms at different times of the time to give the illusion that someone is home.

"Security companies are not selling on the 'scare factor' anymore," notes Blake Smith, head of marketing with Wilson Security

Limited. "Convenience and peace of mind are important to today's consumers."

Within the last two years, Smith says the 'wellness factor' has been a big boon to security companies in that it can help keep seniors in their homes longer and "help loved ones feel safer at home."

He explains, "For example, for someone who is working out west but has elderly parents here, they can have sensors put on the doors of their parents' home to alert them if someone goes out at an odd time of the night, or they can have sensors on medicine cabinet doors to keep track of medications or on ovens to alert them that their parents are eating."

The possibilities are endless, says Janes – from traditional security to home automation.

The beauty of the new home automation platforms offered by companies like TechPad, Wilsons and ADT is they can be easily integrated with the older type of security systems.

TechPad uses a wireless z-wave technology in their installations and home automation controllers that have the ability to control up to 200 or more different devices in your home. These devices can be anything from light switches to thermostats and even garage doors. The controllers support a wide range of other devices such as IP cameras, existing security systems and more. Whether a consumer is integrating new home automation solutions into an existing security system or building a new home and installing it during the build, companies like TechPad, Wilsons and ADT are there for, well, peace of mind.

If you can dream it, they can secure it.

Home Security Gadgets


Some of the latest gadgets that are available to the tech savvy home security seeker make securing your home available at the touch of a finger.

One of the new gadgets out are smart locks, which attach to your door and use Bluetooth to allow you to lock and unlock the door via a Smartphone. Proximity features are also included on some of these locks to allow your phone to automatically lock or unlock the door within certain proximity.

Video monitors that alert your phone to sounds, temperature changes and motion are also available to hook up to Smartphone and allow you to view your home from your phone as well. Some security systems also allow for DIY installation of sensors around doors and windows that alert you when the window or door is opened and the system is armed.

HOME SECURITY SYSTEMS HAVE MORE THAN JUST A SAFETY BENEFIT TO THEM.

For users looking to save some money, discounts from insurance agencies are often given for working home security systems that are monitored. A monitored system counts as a security system that contacts the police or other appropriate first responders when there is a burglary or fire that the system detects.

Debbie Maclaughlin of MacLeod Lorway insurance in New Glasgow said most insurance companies will give a discount for a monitored system. Some discounts are increased depending on if you have both fire and burglary protection. 



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Night Light!

By Rachael McLean

I've got a secret... I'm afraid of the dark. Being outside at night in the dark, kicks my imagination into over drive. Now just to clarify, I live and have grown up in the country, there are no street lights. We had one light in the yard that didn't always work, It is (and was) dark! I should be used to it, comfortable even. I'm not. I always run from A to B. I am certain there are starving coyotes just waiting for me to trip. AND Now that I'm a parent, I'm supposed to remain calm! It's only a matter of time before they see through this sham.

My own (real) fear aside, the natural environment at night is a beautiful and spectacular one, fun even! Another element of landscape design to play with. Actually it's an entire industry in itself. One that has come a long way in recent years. No longer is the one flood light an accepted standard.

In a recent project, I was asked to design a residential landscape down in Braeshore. When I initially sat down with the property owners, Dave and Cathy Hanley, we made a list of everything they wanted included. Lighting was on it.

"We are looking for functional and aesthetic. I want the lighting to direct guests and define our patio space" Cathy told me. "Once the trees are established I'd like them to be highlighted as well" Dave said.

I was excited to have clients thinking ahead!

The design took on a very strong axis with broad pathways and rectangle gardens. The challenge was to not turn this into a runway. I was once told by a seasoned lighting designer that the goal (in most situations) is to see the light, the effect, not the fixture. That has always stuck with me. See the action, the result, not the source.

In some cases, people prefer the flood light for security purposes but often lighting your landscape, house or property can be accomplished with strategic positioning that gets the job done and doesn't contribute to another (real) problem, light pollution.

Light pollution has different categories. The one that you have the most ability to help, is Light Trespass. Shine lights down on the desired path or area. Keep it close to the ground this way, the light isn't being sent up and lost in the darkness. You see where your feet are going. Plan ahead and install the lights properly so that they are located where most effective. Pay attention to the range and requirement for the lights being installed.

My favourite landscape light? The campfire! I am looking forward to warm nights around the fire this summer, S'mores, singing but NO ghost stories!!



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