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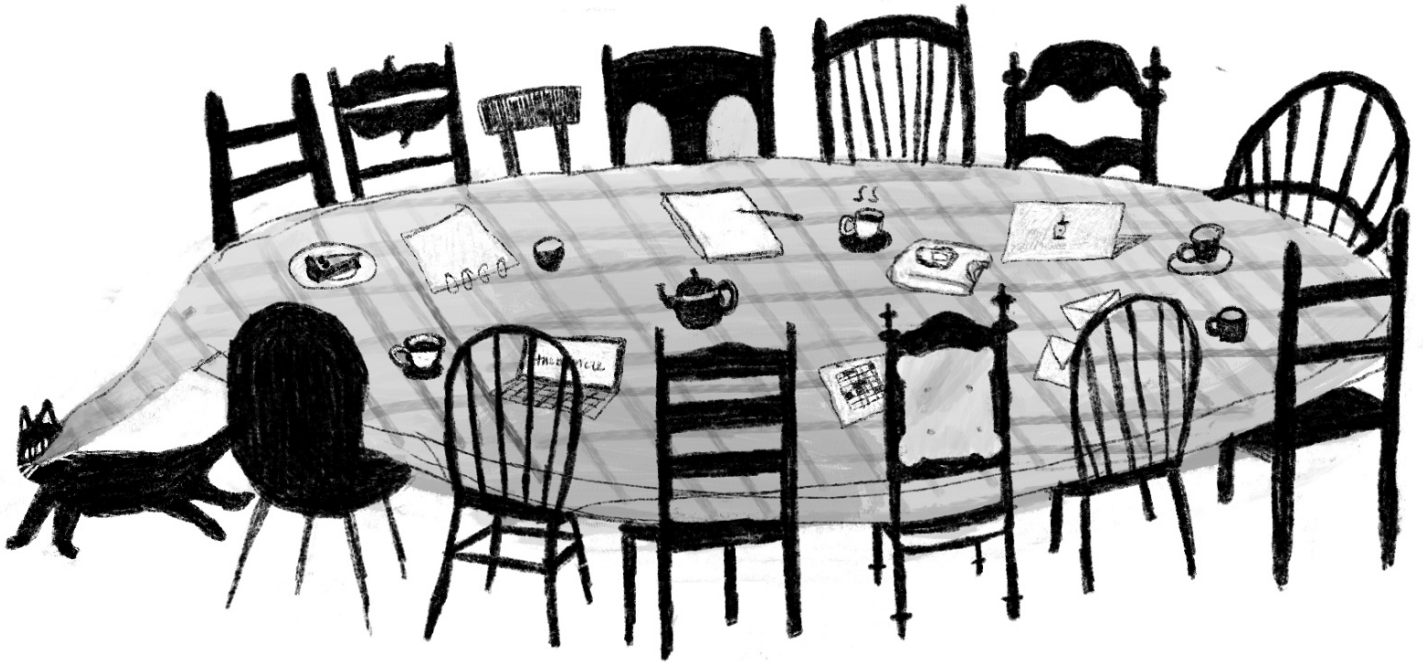
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🌐 www.thebarnacle.ca

THE FINAL ISSUE

SERVING LUNENBURG COUNTY SINCE 2023

JANUARY 2026



Dedicated to the People Who Made It

SAL FALK, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF // JESSIE MCLAUGHLIN, ILLUSTRATOR

Three years have gone by since the first issue of The Lunenburg Barnacle. Our passion for this county, our resolve for a better world, and most importantly, the number of seats at our table have all grown larger since then.

Five young Lunenburg County-ites (Carmen Cumming, Sal Falk, Carley Mullally, Issie Patterson and Jesse Ward) that started this endeavor in winter 2023 could not have imagined the impact this paper would have on them and their communities. The first issue spoke about Cornwallis Street, the South Shore Players, and shared the first leaderboard from The Knot Pub trivia with Joelle.

For three years, the Barnacle continued to keep tabs on local politics, arts and culture, sports, trivia winners, local environmental issues, and so much more. This was only possible because a wide community rallied around this project and saw the value in local, independent journalism.

Nearly 100 pairs of hands worked on the Barnacle.

These volunteers shared expertise in research, writing, illustration, design, editing, and non-profit management.

The Barnacle was set-up under cooperative values that meant everyone who wanted a seat at the table could provide input, direction and suggestions that were taken seriously by our dedicated board of directors.

This number doesn't include the countless individuals and organizations who were willing to speak with our writers, the monthly donors who made sure we had funds to print each issue at Printer's Corner in Blockhouse, the 73,000 people who visited our website or the thousands who followed us on social media. All of these people are equally important in the story of how the Barnacle got made.

This project, as much as it was tossed together by an unassuming trivia team, grew into a deliberate and meaningful passion project. It wasn't accidental that our communities craved what this project was proposing. We are all capable of carrying forward the sentiment and values of curiosity and community that ran deep through the Barnacle.

The Barnacle will live on through each person who worked on, engaged with and supported it. Thank you.

DEVELOPMENT

New Community Health and Wellness Facility on the South Shore

TIFFANY POPE, CONTRIBUTOR

Lunenburg County residents are all too aware of the pressing issues in our region, with access to healthcare being a critical ongoing challenge. Driving to Halifax for an appointment is common, but not affordable, accessible or feasible for a large portion of the population.

To reduce service barriers, there are big plans for the community development called Osprey Village in Cookville, near the Bridgewater Walmart. An anchor of this development is WellTide Health, a community health and wellness facility set to officially open in September 2026.

Operated by Partners for Care (PFC) – a nonprofit partner of Nova Scotia Health – WellTide Health is being established to begin to address health

access gaps identified on the South Shore.

PFC is currently leasing space in the facility to a variety of providers in the region. Stacey McCarthy, PFC's Manager of Marketing and Communications, says they are carefully selecting services that address identified gaps from community consultations held in the summer of 2025. The building's service providers could include mental health providers, orthopedists, dental services, senior health coordinators, sexual health resources, a modest exercise space, and more.

To encourage community gathering, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) is leasing a large space on the main floor of the two-floor facility, which will include a café, commercial kitchen, events space, and a large boardroom.

Dave Waters,
MODL's Director of Economic

Development, says he is "happy and encouraged by the addition of health-care services in the district." Osprey Village has been a key area of development in the last few years, given its well-serviced land and proximity to the 103, retail outlets, and more.

This is Partners for Care's first major project outside of the HRM. McCarthy said that the South Shore had an immediate need given the region's aging population and fragmented care, though this facility and the PFC Hub provide a model that could be replicated across the province and adapted to meet the needs of various regions.

To learn more, visit <https://www.well-tidehealth.ca/>. To follow the MODL's plans for Osprey Village, visit <https://engage.modl.ca/osprey-village>



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LETTER

Letter to the Editor

SOUTH SHORE CHAPTER OF THE
COUNCIL OF CANADIANS

The South Shore Chapter of the Council of Canadians wants to express our sadness about the end of the Barnacle and our gratitude for all you've done.

We remember your first edition on Feb 9, 2023 and we have watched each month and have been so impressed with what you have accomplished in three years. You and the contributors became an important part of our community, providing coverage of every aspect of local life, including political matters. A free press keeps our democracy strong.

An example of your diligent coverage that we especially appreciate is the

story in the first edition of the Barnacle about renaming Cornwallis St. because

of the bounty he put on Mi'kmaw residents. As of the last regular edition, three years later, the street is still Cornwallis. Sal Falk wrote that the town council is ignoring the harm done to Indigenous people by keeping that street name. We agree that renaming the street is the least we can do in a gesture of reconciliation.

Other highlights that particularly resonate with us include the coverage of the excellent work of South Shore Ceasefire Now, the review of donations to the campaigns of the most recent provincial election, the probing questions to the candidates in the last federal election, and, of course, the

vigilant attention to municipal politics. It would be an interesting exercise to calculate how many local stories were broken by the Barnacle and not touched by other media.

We will miss the Barnacle, not just because it was fun and funny, but because you did actual journalism, holding those in power accountable, and seeking out diverse voices.

We look forward to seeing how the Barnacle team will contribute to the community in the future. New, young voices with different perspectives and openness are a welcome addition to the community. We would happily collaborate with you in any capacity in the future.

CONSERVATION

Seal You Later!

LIA ROBLES GIL, SCIENCE COMMUNICATOR

WILL MACLACHLAN, ILLUSTRATOR

Some 290 km offshore of eastern Nova Scotia, perched at the edge of the continental shelf, lies one of Canada’s most unique islands. A strip of sand 42 km long and 1.3 km wide, Sable Island is home to many unique and even endemic species – species that can be found nowhere else on Earth.

Zoe Lucas, who lived and worked on the island for many years, describes it as “an island of sand, far offshore and exposed on all sides to the full force of the North-west Atlantic. [...] an irreplaceable platform for studying and understanding our atmospheric and marine environments.”

While the island is best known for its population of wild horses, some 400 to 600 strong, these are not the only mammals to call this island home.

Grey seals, which can reach about 2 m long and 350 kg, use this island as a key breeding ground. In December, grey seals arrive on the island to give birth to their pups, who will triple in weight in just 16 days.

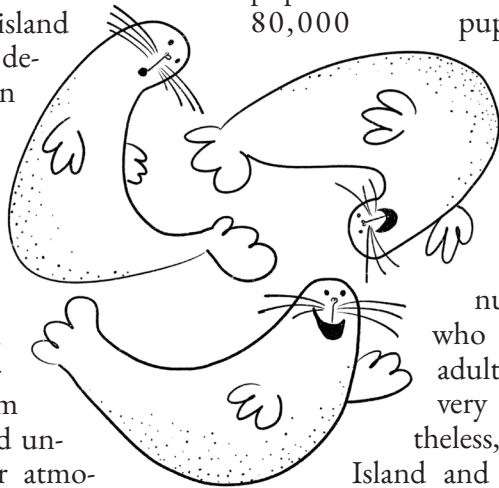
Yet, from the 1940s to the 1960s, the species was thought to be all but extinct in south-eastern Canada, following about 170 years of intensive commercial sealing, mostly for the seal’s oil. In the 1960s, only

about 100 seals were observed on Sable Island. Then, in the 1960s, the beginnings of marine mammal protection in Canada emerged with the 1966 *Seal Protection Regulation* under the *Fisheries Act*. Under this Act, sealing permits became mandatory, and quotas dictated how many seals could be taken. These regulations continue to be fine-tuned and were amalgamated into the 1993 *Marine Mammal Regulations*.

Today, Sable Island is the birthplace of about 85% of grey seal pups born in Canada, with some 80,000 pups being born yearly. As with most wild animals, juvenile recruitment – meaning the number of pups who make it to adulthood – is not very high. Nonetheless, the Sable Island and coastal Nova Scotia populations have increased from approximately 2,300 animals in 1960 to an estimated 380,000 animals in 2017. The total number of grey seals in Canada is about 424,300.

Conservation work to manage commercial sealing and to protect key breeding and feeding grounds, such as Sable Island, is the cause of this rebound. Recent census data suggest the increase in population may be slowing and potentially nearing a plateau as competition for resources, such as food and space, intensifies.

Learn more about Sable Island’s grey seals at <https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/ns/sable/nature/animaux-animals/phoques-gris-grey-seals>



RESOLUTIONS

New Year, New Me

LYLA BELLIVEAU WOOD, YOUTH CORRESPONDENT

In the new year, I hope to find more motivation within myself. I am strong and capable, but for some reason, I can’t get around to doing the most basic tasks, because I lack the motivation.

My priorities seem to have gotten a little skewed this past year, only motivated for school and nothing else, leaving my room to suffer, looking like a bomb went off inside it. Pouring everything into my schoolwork, doing more than the best I could, often left me empty when I came home, so naturally, all I wanted to do was lie in my bed and doom scroll.

Anyway, thank Mother Nature for this wonderful thing called “New Year’s resolutions.” They have always given me the chance to work on myself. I think I’ve told myself “new year, new me” enough times that my brain automatically registers the new year as a time for self-growth. But opposingly, it also gives me a real excuse to wait on doing a basic task I need to do because “my resolution hasn’t started...” That mindset can be dangerous.

Basically, to sum this up, a resolution can be a great thing, but try not to be like me and delay beginning a good habit until “next year.” Change doesn’t need to wait for a date on the calendar. We’ve got this.

What’s your 2026 resolution?



DEVELOPMENT

Looking forward with the Lunenburg Community Health Board

SABRINA GANNON, LUNENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD CHAIR

Lunenburg County Community Health Board (LCCHB) would like to take the opportunity in this final issue of the Lunenburg Barnacle to thank the team who brought this publication to life for the past three years and brought the opportunity for the LCCHB to connect more directly with community. 2025 was a year of growth and ambition for the board, which saw us double in size, launch a new health plan, provide wellness funds for projects to help address and improve food security, senior wellness, and equity in our county, and also share the ongoing work of the Thinking Beyond Band Aids Coalition. We would not have been as visible without the Lunenburg Barnacle and its readership. Thank you! The LCCHB will remember our contributions to this project fondly as we move into the new year and look forward to supporting the next wave of community-focused projects in Lunenburg County. 2026 brings a lot of promise for new projects and partnerships with the LCCHB that we'd like to share.

We have an updated timeline for our community wellness fund grants that provides a bigger application window for community groups seeking funding for their new projects! This year, our wellness fund application website will open on February 16, and the deadline to apply will be April 15 at 5 pm. More information on these funds is available at <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds>, and our coordinator's contact information is listed at the end of this article if you have any questions.

We are working to bring Elder Wisdom Benches to Lunenburg County. LCCHB member and secretary Larissa Darrah had this to say about the Elder Wisdom Benches project: "I am most excited to see the development of our Elder Wisdom benches project and supporting our community partners in bridging intergenerational communication gaps. This project is especially interesting because we will be reaching out to both youth and elders to participate in shaping the project, allowing them to have a say in how their resources are developed. I hope this project will be effective at connecting our youth and elders to each other and to their community by building a place where they can both belong together." This initiative was brought forward by another board member and supported through our existing community connections. Stay tuned for updates on the project progress by checking the LCCHB Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/lunenburgcountychb>. If you have a space or interest in hosting a future bench,

please reach out and let us know.

When asked, "What is something joining the LCCHB has brought to your life?" Darrah shared that, "Being a member of the Lunenburg County Community Health Board has brought me closer to my community. I grew up in small communities not unlike the ones in Lunenburg County, and when I moved to the city, I felt disconnected from the people and world around me, but moving back to a rural area, I feel those grounding connections once again. Joining the board gave me a way to be part of this community and even use my skills to give back to it. Being a member of the board has also helped me grow as a person, opening new opportunities for learning and has made me feel like my actions have meaning."

In 2026, the LCCHB will continue to be a community connector, providing this kind of enrichment for both our members and the community, and we look forward to supporting community efforts in Lunenburg County.



ILLUSTRATION: @SOUTHSHOREGOBLINS

HUMOUR

I Saw a UFO in Hebbville and Now the Lunenburg Barnacle Is Shutting Down? This Can't Be a Coincidence.

BRYN POTTIE, CONTRIBUTOR

ADÈLE NICHOLS, ILLUSTRATOR

Since 2023, the Lunenburg Barnacle has told the truth to the people of Lunenburg County. I believe they did this right up until November of 2025 when they announced that publication of the paper was coming to an end. According to their official story, the Barnacle staff decided to wind down so they could focus on other projects. However, I have reason to believe this is all part of a massive cover-up operation.

Consider this evidence: In October of 2025, I reported to the Lunenburg Barnacle staff that I saw a UFO in Hebbville. A month later, it was announced that the paper was shutting down. I'm sorry, but this can't be a coincidence!

Let me start from the beginning. It's well known that Exit 14 is the best place to secretly eat Arby's in the car. One night, I was driving past Indian Garden Farms and peeling back the foil on my second Beef 'N Cheddar, when I saw something up in the sky that almost made me spit out my curly fries. There were some lights flying around up there! Must have been a friggin' UFO, no doubt about it!

At first, I thought it might be just some teenagers playing with a drone, but when I got out of the car to get a closer look, the hovering lights started speaking to me in a strange voice. The aliens said they were from planet Skibidi and commanded me to buy some cigarettes at Ultramar and leave them in the bushes behind The Blarney Stone. They needed them to conduct some sort of experiments, they said. Then

the spacecraft flew away into the cosmos, emitting a strange noise, almost akin to human laughter.

Before the alien ship went into hyperspace, I got a video of it on my phone. But when I put it up on YouTube, they made me take it down because there was copyrighted music in the background. CKBW was playing "Break My Stride" on All 80s Friday, and I did have that cranked up pretty loud, so fair enough. But to make sure nothing like this ever happens again, now I only listen to

the national anthems of different countries, since I'm pretty sure no one owns the rights to those.

I told my mom about it when I got home, but all she asked was, "What were you doing out in Hebbville? You weren't eating Arby's in my car again, were you? You got horsey sauce all over the steering wheel last time and the doctor says you're supposed to be watching your sodium!" I lied and told her I was out there to chaperone a dance at Hebbville Academy, but that didn't go over any better, so I just dropped it and went up to my room.

Having been rebuffed by the internet and my own family, I had only one place left to speak my truth: the local volunteer-run newspaper. I got the editors of the Barnacle on the horn, and told them the whole story. I admit that I tried to impress them by changing "eating Arby's" to "eating vegan rhubarb squares from the Blockhouse farmer's market," but the rest was true!

They told me they would probably run a story about it in their next issue. Just to make sure, I followed up with them twice a day for the next two weeks. That's when strange things

started happening. First, they stopped answering my calls! A month later, they announced that they were ceasing publication entirely.

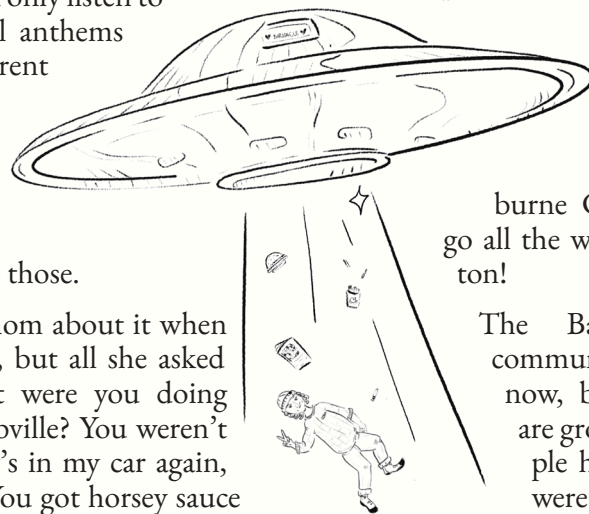
It's clear to me that some sort of secret government agency found out how close the Barnacle was to the truth, and shut the paper down. I drove to the UFO Museum out in Shag Harbour, pitched this idea to the lady at the front desk, and she agreed that it could be true. But when I asked her if she wanted to discuss it further over cocktails, she suddenly became very quiet.

That's when I knew the conspiracy reached all the way out to Shelburne County. It might go all the way to Tim Houston!

The Barnacle Truther community is small right now, but our numbers are growing. A few people have told me they were tired of hearing about this, and that they would agree with me if I would just stop talking. I am counting these people as converts.

So as you read through this final issue, I hope you'll shed a wistful tear as you reflect on all the great stories the Barnacle has brought our community over the years. But I hope you also shed a tear of rage at the sinister clandestine forces that shut the paper down for getting close to proving the existence of extraterrestrial life in Bridgewater.

No matter the reason, it's a shame to see them go. The Lunenburg Barnacle has been an important part of my life here on the South Shore, and I'll really miss them. I wish all the writers and editors all the best in their new projects. Unless, of course, these projects are assisting the aliens in their quest to colonize us for our cigarettes.



Let the Credits Roll

CLARE HEGGIE, CRUCIVERBALIST

CROSSWORD RATING SYSTEM



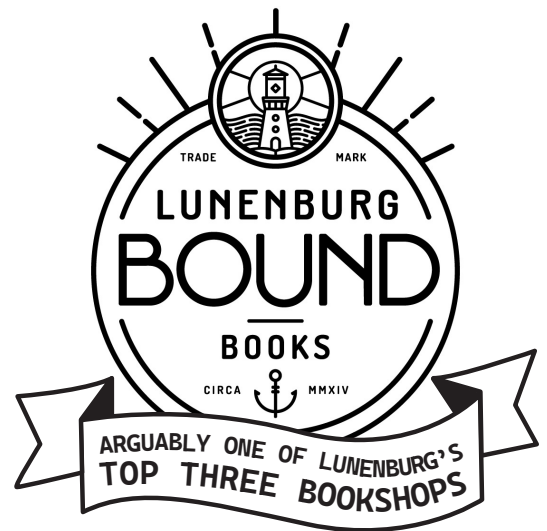
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| 63 | | | | | 64 | | | | | | 65 | | | |

DOWN

- 1 Apple product
- 2 Half a spa treatment
- 3 Latin 101 word
- 4 A little hard to find
- 5 Least busy
- 6 Intimidate
- 7 "Lord, is ___?":Matthew
- 8 Frat letters
- 9 With 48-ACROSS, Dinner reservations and murder confessions (2000)
- 10 Distress call
- 11 Nobelist Wiesel
- 12 Actor Rickman
- 13 Sour
- 21 Zilch
- 23 Apiece
- 25 Stratum
- 26 Tale with a moral
- 27 Set to rest
- 28 North Carolina waterway
- 30 Ainer of Lakers games
- 31 French relative
- 32 Piece of paper
- 34 Cobbler's inventory
- 35 St. crosser
- 38 Uses the HOV lanes, perhaps
- 39 Greek dark olive
- 41 Piglet's pal
- 42 Article's start, in journalese
- 44 Bulb holder
- 45 Superficial appearance
- 47 Boxing match loss(1976)
- 48 ___ market, betting website
- 49 Pump, for one
- 50 Time long past
- 52 "My turn!"
- 53 Endure
- 54 Lodge members
- 57 Pilots' org.
- 58 Hairy TV cousin

ACROSS

- 1 Bitter brews
- 5 Singer Menzel
- 10 Showdown at LAX (1995)
- 14 Fast-spreading idea
- 15 Bit of info
- 16 Singer Fitzgerald
- 17 First man
- 18 Oscar winner Rainer
- 19 False witness
- 20 With 39-ACROSS, Sad end to a sled (1941)
- 22 Show contrition
- 24 Take a break
- 25 Actor Neeson
- 26 Drawing sent to a celebrity, e.g.
- 29 Decorating details
- 33 Oldsmobile model
- 34 Doctor's order
- 36 Scrooge word
- 37 With 45-ACROSS, White picket fence and a happy ending... or is it? (1986)
- 38 Witches' group
- 39 See 20-ACROSS
- 40 ___ Vegas
- 41 Less tanned
- 42 Foamy drink
- 43 Blight on the landscape
- 45 See 37-ACROSS
- 46 "My bad!"
- 47 Hawthorne's scarlet letter
- 48 See 9-DOWN
- 51 Race distance
- 55 "I see now"
- 56 How some drinks are served
- 59 Barrister Clooney
- 60 Folk wisdom
- 61 Potato pancake
- 62 1979 Fleetwood Mac release
- 63 WWE catchphrase
- 64 Bacchus attendant
- 65 Rental units: Abbr.



PUZZLE EDITORS: CLARE HEGGIE & ANALIA SILVEIRA

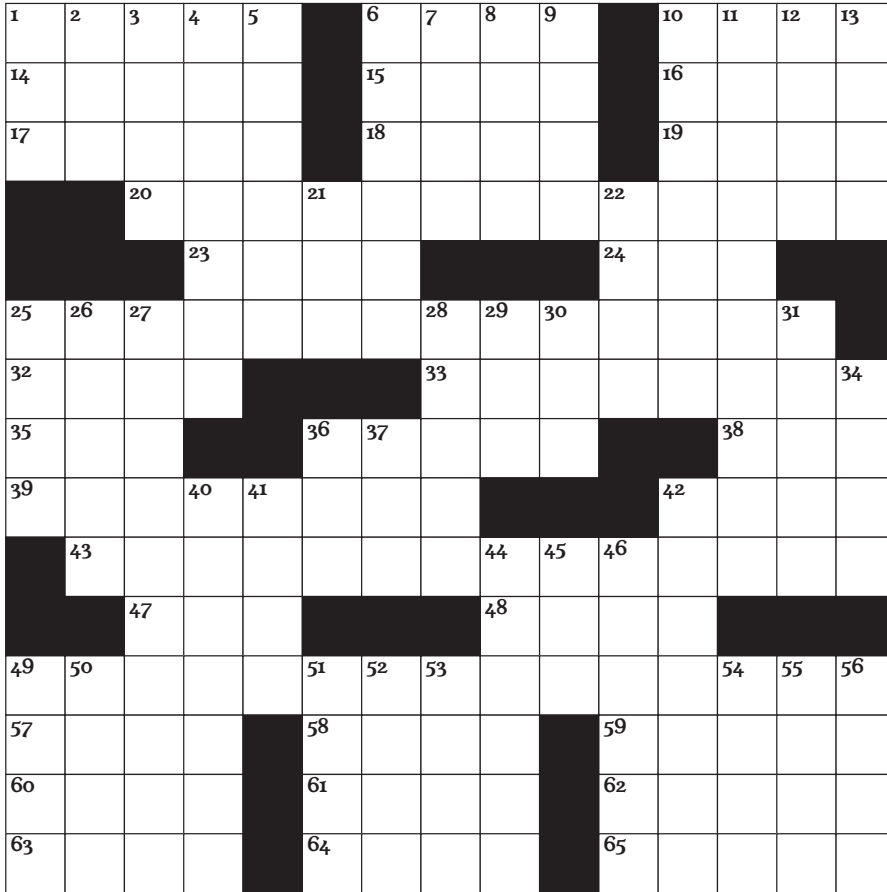
DIRECTORS: ISSIE PATTERSON, SAL FALK, CARMEN CUMMING, EMILY SOLLOWS

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So Long, Lunenburg Barnacle

ANALIA SILVEIRA, CRUCIVERBALIST

CROSSWORD RATING SYSTEM



ACROSS

- 1 Disidentify, digitally
- 6 Best part of a lobster, to some
- 10 "No _____", start to Simple Plan's 2002 album
- 14 Type of terrorism seen in recent news
- 15 Gas stop
- 16 "Beauty and the Beat" rapper
- 17 Iliad and Beowulf
- 18 Sans ice
- 19 Rating of many HBO shows
- 20 Fine departure from Miller Point Peace Park

- 23 Dress feature
- 24 Sounds from Santa
- 25 Must leave The Gold Bean Cafe
- 32 White stuff in Monopoly
- 33 Excites
- 35 Language test for healthcare professionals, briefly
- 36 Hummus brand
- 38 Training for teaching tots, abbr.
- 39 Oft used dish during the holidays
- 42 Being, in Barcelona
- 43 See ya from Shubenacadie Grand Lake

- 47 Half a score
- 48 Varangian prince of Kiev
- 49 Ciao from an isle in St. Margaret's Bay
- 57 Fixed hourly charge, say

- 58 Oxen attachment
- 59 Ballet bottom material
- 60 Hailey Bieber's uncle
- 61 Bring home the bread
- 62 _och _ _ _ _
- 63 Late pregnancy urge
- 64 STEAM program for high schoolers
- 65 "And you?", en francais

- 22 SNL alum Hartman
- 25 Paltrow's brand
- 26 "___ by land..."
- 27 French connections
- 28 Defame
- 29 Wildlife dep.
- 30 Mortgage Corp.
- 31 Straight, in Spain
- 34 Observed
- 36 See's partner
- 37 Did amazing, in modern slang

DOWN

- 1 Quebec article
- 2 Siesta
- 3 Calc cousin
- 4 Confronts boldly
- 5 What Malik did in 2015
- 6 Care for
- 7 Many a fisherman
- 8 In my opinion...
- 9 Many in a subdivision
- 10 Sky line in Weir's "Project Hail Mary"
- 11 Careful consideration
- 12 Curse
- 13 Hitch
- 21 Into

- 40 Senior student at Hogwarts, perhaps
- 41 O'Brien's predecessor
- 42 Holiday tradition
- 44 Far from chic
- 45 Indisposed
- 46 Get comfy
- 49 Raisin _____
- 50 Rory Gilmore's school
- 51 Bakery buys
- 52 Wyle of "The Pitt"
- 53 Cajun staple
- 54 Missing letters in om_ _ _ _ te (Hint: see 42-Down)
- 55 Too
- 56 He loved Lucy

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FOOD

Planting for Tomorrow: We Feed Lunenburg's Next Chapter Takes Root

EMMA DAVIES, CONTRIBUTOR

When I last spoke with the We Feed Lunenburg team in September, the organization was already bearing fruit. Since then, the pace has only quickened. What began as a grassroots response to food insecurity has continued to grow, putting down deeper roots in the community while building firmly toward the future.

Over the past several months, We Feed Lunenburg has increased both the volume of food shared and the ways the community connects around it. Fundraising and awareness-building remain central, with a sell-out comedy night at the Lunenburg Fire Hall, regular presence at the local farmers market, and a growing group of volunteers cooking meals through individual and group cook-offs.

As the organization has grown, so too has its leadership structure. Alicia Van de Sande of The Water Market, a key supporter since the earliest days, has stepped onto the board as site representative. Recognizing the rapid growth of its volunteer base, We Feed Lunenburg also created a new role, chair of volunteer management, held by Simon Martin Van de Sande, who describes volunteers as “the heartbeat of We Feed.”

The focus has shifted for the

organization from planting seeds to ensuring the conditions are right for sustained growth. With Simon noting that “much of We Feed’s growth “has come from the willingness of people to give their time and care so generously. That same spirit will allow us to sustain our momentum.”

Looking ahead, 2026 promises to be pivotal. A \$45,000 grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage helped bring the long-anticipated Food Hub to completion, with a grand opening set for January 10.

The Food Hub represents more than a physical expansion. It deepens We Feed Lunenburg’s role as a place of connection, dignity and shared effort. Simon hopes the Food Hub “will be a place where people enjoy one another’s company and leave feeling connected and fulfilled.”

As I wrote this article, I reflected on a recent Globe and Mail piece noting that the strength of community plays a key role in the longevity of Lunenburg residents. While We Feeds work may appear to be about food, its true heart is community, showing that when care is cultivated collectively, the harvest reaches far beyond the table.

UK-born, world-traveled, now anchored in Lunenburg—Emma Davies teaches mindfulness for calm living and leadership. Find more of The Rebel Flock on Substack or Insight Timer.

✦ Hello from the Cold South!

PRINCESS, AMATEUR ASTROLOGER
JESSIE MCLAUGHLIN, ILLUSTRATOR ✦

Our feelings speak the truth, whereas our words do not -

Remember to sing into the ears of your loved ones, turn to face the wind, laugh so they can hear you and dance around the maypole in spring - Life is a relentless abomination if you refuse to capture the whims of time! The frays! The extras! The scraps! The outsides! Your Princess promises mirth and resilience this year. Mankind could not be held by Aaragorn alone, though you know he would certainly try his passionate best with relentless sacrifice - alas, he needs fellowship. Let us look bravely into the Mirror of Galadriel this dry, cold January and fear not for that which may not yet come to pass. At this moment, I channel while seated in a chair, listening to a record I love. I’ve pulled the four of cups to remind us that love and happiness must first be noticed before accepted. I give you my Sun summary of the year ahead

✦ HOROSCOPES ✦



Capricorn - Somewhere on the wind, several times this year, tides will change and you will start to love poetry again and look at the world through the lens most natural to you - shrewd, clear, objective and true.

Clairvoyance could be possible, maybe even creation. Though creation is not necessary if you have something that already needs your time and attention to grow. You work so hard and are loved for that!

✦ Hold time for observation and lore.

Aquarius - It is your time now.



Pisces - Anxiety is both a driving tool for repair or distress and we manipulate it as a psychological emotion to survive! Sometimes anxiety can make you combative in a conversation, or retreat into tears. It can also prepare you to pay attention and really listen with curiosity and genuine interest. It can help you have the guts to ask questions and actually absorb the answers. It can help you speak in public! Your goal this year could be to give more time to pondering the ‘kind’ of fear your body responds to versus the fear your thoughts can create. Bask in understanding before you react. ✦



WILD TALK

Wild Talk: Seven Questions with American Bittersweet

KATHERINE BARRETT, CONTRIBUTOR
VANESSA MCKIEL, ILLUSTRATOR

What’s your favourite colour?

In winter, I go bold: bright orange for my seed capsule — which is like a jacket — and deep red for the fruit inside. When my seed capsule dries, it splits open but stays attached to the fruit. This gives me an eye-catching, carefree look, like wearing your coat unzipped in the middle of winter.

Your name is also quite striking. Can you tell me about it?

My botanical name is *Celastrus scandens*, and I’m also known as staff vine. The name bittersweet was likely given to me by mistake. It seems early European settlers confused me with bittersweet nightshade, *Solanum dulcamara*, which actually tastes both bitter and sweet.

So you have lived on this land your whole life?

Yep, born and raised here in what is now North America. And while early settlers confused me with bittersweet nightshade, I am now confused with *Celastrus orbiculatus*, sometimes called Asian bittersweet. We look a lot alike, but this plant was brought to

North America as an ornamental in the late 1800s and grows more vigorously than I do. It’s considered invasive in Nova Scotia and across Canada.

That’s a lot of confusion. How are you coping?

Great — and not so great. I like my new name. Bittersweet suggests embracing life’s contradictions, which I think is very healthy. On the other



hand, I’m having a rough time in the wild. With loss of habitat, pollution, over-collecting, and competition from plants like *Celastrus orbiculatus*, I am considered endangered in many areas. In fact — here’s the kicker — you will have a hard time finding me anywhere in the wild in Atlantic Canada today.

Do you have a best friend to help you through all of this?

Oh, I have lots of friends, thank you.

Over 15 species of birds, as well as rabbits and foxes, love the seeds and fruit of American Bittersweet. I help so many animals get through the long winter, and yet bittersweet is poisonous to humans. So strange!

How about a hidden talent?

My real talent, as I’ve mentioned, is to see both sides of situations: the great and the not-so-great. Bittersweet is poisonous to humans but a bounty to other animals. Populations of native bittersweet are declining, but awareness is growing. In Nova Scotia, you can find me in several nurseries (be sure to look for *Celastrus scandens*) and in many gardens. I’m not really bitter or sweet, but my name suits me perfectly!

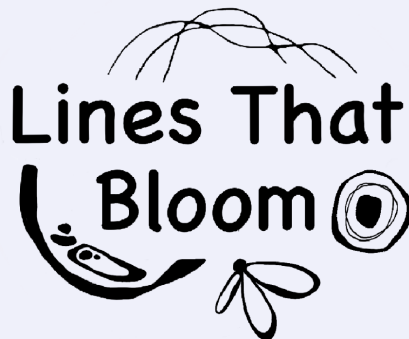
One wish?

I wish for even greater appreciation of the beauty and importance of native plants. Of course, that’s what “Wild Talk” has been about! My second wish, if I may, is that everyone try to see the good in things that might not seem so at first. It’s true, the Lunenburg Barnacle is closing, but what a wild ride it has been! Our community is stronger. I know you’ve had a ton of fun, and I can’t wait to see what sprouts up next.

The Wild Talk chapbook is here! Twelve columns collected into one little book. Contact us at wildflowerpress@proton.me for details.



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People often dream of living in a cooperative community. Well, Anne Macleod Weeks did for 40 years. As a teacher, dorm parent, guidance counselor, coach, principal, and advisor to faculty and parents in boarding schools, she pretty much experienced all that life can throw at you.

Dear Anne,

How can we maintain community, connection and friendship even though things are going to rapidly change? What are some ways we can keep the spirit of the Barnacle alive after it has concluded?

- Barnacle Staff & Readers

Dear Barnacle Staff and Readers,

The Barnacle began from a core friendship, and there's no reason why the spirit of the Barnacle cannot continue through those same friendships and the new ones that have formed throughout its three years.

Intentionality is the key to this. Reaching out to each other for a Sunday supper or just a coffee and chat, sharing thoughts on key local issues, periodically gathering people together to discuss issues of importance and how we, as local citizens, can exact change, or help to steer viewpoints in a productive manner, can keep alive that positive community the Barnacle fostered.

This doesn't have to be a burden in terms of organizing, especially when we all have such

busy lives. Putting up a poster at No 9 or posting on IG that all are welcome to drop by for an hour or so to talk about something of importance in town can communicate the desire to keep the conversation going, even if the publication isn't happening. Maybe even a crossword puzzle session? Or a stitch and bitch session? Doing this once every other month could keep the spirit and those human connections alive.

The Barnacle has had a vital impact on our community, embodying the importance of good reporting, good humour, good art, the environment, our history, and the core responsibility of being a good citizen. Its legacy will remain for many years to come.

- Anne

SALTWATER STILLNESS

Saltwater Stillness: When the Tide Turns

EMMA DAVIES, CONTRIBUTOR

There is a particular stillness that comes with low tide. If you've ever stopped to notice the shoreline as the water pulls back, you'll know it. The sea doesn't disappear; it simply retreats. Rocks emerge. Seaweed settles. The landscape looks barer, quieter, almost unfinished.

Endings can feel like this, too. When something comes to a close — a season, a role, a life chapter — there's often a moment where we stand in the exposed space it leaves behind. What once felt familiar has shifted, and we're left noticing what remains.

And yet, low tide is not loss. It is part of a rhythm. The ocean is still moving. Currents continue their quiet work, shaping journeys far beyond what we can see, creating ripples that travel outward in ways we may never realise. What looks like stillness or absence from the shore is, in truth, part of a larger motion. A trust in rhythm and cycles.

For us, endings invite reflection. To notice what mattered. To recognise what shaped us. Gratitude, not as nostalgia, rather as integration of all that we learned and gained. A moment to allow yourself to acknowledge what mattered. And to ask, what do I want to carry forward? Because when the tide turns, it doesn't erase what was. It reshapes it.

A Low Tide Reflection

Perhaps, today, take a slow breath and reflect or journal on:

- ☞ What am I grateful for from what is ending?
- ☞ What do I want to carry with me into what comes next?

Choose one word that sums up what you want to take forward (curiosity, community, courage). Whatever it is, imagine placing it gently back into the water, trusting the current to carry it forward, because sometimes, new beginnings form quietly, beneath the surface, long before we see them rise.

UK-born, world-traveled, now anchored in Lunenburg—Emma Davies teaches mindfulness for calm living and leadership. Find more of The Rebel Flock on Substack or Insight Timer.

ADVENTURE AWAITS

Put Your Golf Balls in First

LYNETTE DE MONTREUIL,
CONTRIBUTOR

As the calendar turns and we enter another year, time is top of mind for me, and I'm not alone. Most working adults in North America feel they are time-poor, meaning there is too much to do with too little time, and nearly half report having no free time at all.

Time scarcity doesn't just reduce happiness and well-being; it reshapes how we show up in the world by eroding connection and community. When people feel rushed, they become less patient, less generous, and less altruistic.

As Cassie Holmes, author of *Happy Hour*, says, "The real answer isn't about being time-rich. It's about making the time you have rich." One of

the practices she recommends is recognizing how finite our meaningful moments truly are. When I did this exercise, I was shocked by the results. Based on our current in-person meeting frequency, I have only 19 visits left with my best friend, who lives in BC. We've already spent 99% of our time together. Knowing this immediately makes me want to savour those visits more deeply and find ways to create additional moments of cherished connection.

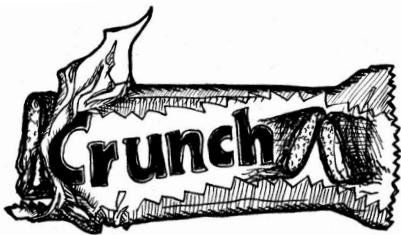
A good visual representation of time as finite is the golf ball jar video. An empty jar is first filled with golf balls, then pebbles, and finally sand. The sand is the small stuff, and the golf balls are the important things, like health, relationships, and passions. If you start with sand, there's no room left for the golf balls. When we don't plan intentionally, the soul-nourishing things get squeezed into whatever space remains.

I recently visited a friend who had a massive year-long calendar mounted on their kitchen wall. I was awestruck. Concerts, weddings, and smaller day trips every month were all mapped out for the year ahead. Seeing the year at a glance made it obvious what deserved a yes and what didn't. Saying no then becomes easier. One of my favourite responses is "That's just not workable." No explanations. No guilt or justifications.

Planning your time offensively and putting the good stuff first may look selfish, but I assure you it isn't. When you anchor your life in meaning and joy, you show up more present, generous, and alive for yourself and for others. Instead of being directed by external validation, choose what's intrinsically rewarding to you. As Mary Oliver asks, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

THE CRUNCHY MOM

What does it mean to live in a Playbourhood?



KELLY LINEHAN, CRUNCHY MOM
ONYA HOGAN-FINLAY, ILLUSTRATOR

Joan Didion once said, "I don't know what I think until I read what I write." I feel the same way. Turns out... I'm pretty passionate about outdoor time. Dear reader, thank you for putting up with all those articles. Here is one more.

Since moving to Old Town, I have made a point to walk as much as I can. This means schlepping with three kids, the dog (and sometimes the cat

follows!?) to the store, to school and the trail. I take the kids to Blockhouse Hill to sled, and the playground near Town Hall is to burn off before-dinner steam. And usually, unless I text a friend to meet up, we don't run into any other families or kids. I always think to myself, "Where is everybody?"

So in my last column — and let me tell you, I have been paralysed by the idea of what to write in this important last issue — I kept coming back to this same idea of outside time. I wonder if you would consider cancelling that weekend lesson that keeps you in the car, spending money decorating your yard instead of your living room, giving your kids a radius where they are free to explore and letting them go knock on a friend's door to play. The key is, we need to be home more to answer the knock. It's the only way we can make the real world more fascinating than the PlayStation or TV inside. I fully admit I am far from perfect, and

this is a goal of my own this year.

Let's make this town a Playbourhood (the book by the same name is very good). Wouldn't it be so amazing to see bands of kids roving the streets again, bikes scattered on lawns, friendly neighbours keeping an eye out? The real world isn't as dangerous as we have been led to believe, and your kid is more than capable of handling independence. (As a counsellor, I would argue this is crucial to building resilience and beating anxiety.)

"Go play outside" sounds incredibly boring if kids are being sent to wander empty streets or knock at empty houses. We need to be able to find each other, or better yet, bump into each other.

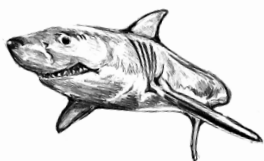
Thanks for reading this column. It has been such a privilege to have had my ideas join you at the cafe, the kitchen table or picnic bench the last few years.

I can't wait to bump into you in real life.

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Barnacle Yearbook

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The Barnacle Editors



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