

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Volume 1 / Issue 1 – Amherst Island Community Alliance

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."

– Coretta Scott King



A MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR NATHAN TOWNEND

Dear Residents of Amherst Island,

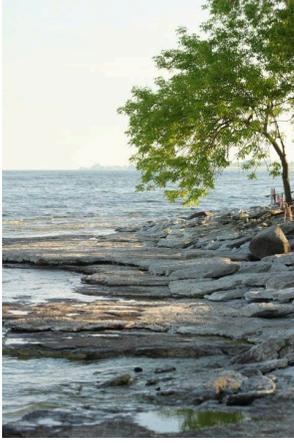
Firstly, I want to assure everyone that as your councillor, **I am here for you** throughout the duration of this public health emergency. Since large public gatherings are discouraged at this time, I have determined to communicate with you once a week by radio. **I will be live on air at 9 am every Friday morning on CJAi Radio at 92.1 FM to provide, among other information, any important updates I receive from various levels of government and KFL&A Public Health.** I remain, as always, available by phone and email for any and all needs or inquiries.

It is important during times such as these for elected officials to offer reputable information as well as sound and reassuring advice. In that vein I would like to state a few important points; most will already be familiar to you, but they are worth repeating.

“For the safety of all, it is paramount that citizens follow the direction of Public Health officials during this pandemic”

Public Health Protocols

For the safety of all, it is paramount that citizens follow the direction of Public Health officials during this pandemic. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention is currently reporting that messaging on COVID-19 needs to be: **everyone is at risk of (potentially) severe health complications from this virus**, as increasing numbers of young people between the ages of 20 and 44 (previously thought to be of lesser concern) are having to be treated in intensive care units. It remains, however, that certain other demographics are at a much higher risk. Of particular relevance to Amherst Island, those most at risk of increased morbidity (from COVID-19) are the elderly, those with immunosuppressive conditions, those with heart conditions, lung problems, and those with diabetes. **To protect the most vulnerable it is vital that social distancing be observed at all times.** Remember: these protective measures are about preventing YOU from becoming a vector of the virus to others. These measures are in place to protect the most at risk among us. **Social distancing means staying at home unless it is necessary to go out.** Going to a friend's place for coffee is not social distancing. When you must be in proximity to someone else, stand at least six feet apart from them. **Again, of note for Islanders in particular, no one is to leave their vehicle on board the ferry unless to use the washroom. Fares have been suspended, so no contact with anyone outside your vehicle is necessary.** This is to protect you and our front-line ferry crew, to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude for their continued service.



Contact Us

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Further, all residents of Amherst Island who are returning from anywhere outside of Canada, **welcome home!** We are so glad you are back, and safe. As you may already know, you are asked to **self-isolate for a minimum period of 14 days**. This means going home straight away and entering complete isolation. Most organizations have already established protocols to protect their staff and workers should they come into contact with persons screened for the virus, such as those returning from abroad. So again, for public safety and to minimize economic disruption, anyone returning from abroad is advised to go straight home and remain there. To help ensure isolated people have what they need when they arrive and during their isolation, there are currently community groups and local business making every effort to supply those persons with basic necessities. Those who are self-isolating are encouraged to phone friends or reach out to some of these organizations, and to pay attention for updates on these initiatives. Amherst Island thrives in such circumstances and no one will go hungry or without basic necessities. **You may be isolated, but you are not alone!**

Anyone who wishes to be of assistance in supplying those who are self-isolating can contact the Amherst Island Community Alliance, who are spearheading these efforts in coordination with other valued organizations of Amherst Island.

Lastly, KFL&A Public Health is discouraging any non-essential travel beyond the region of our public health authority. Whilst there is currently no requirement to self-isolate for those entering or returning to our region from nearby hotspots like Toronto or Ottawa, the situation is always evolving and everyone should be vigilant. **Unnecessary visits from friends or family who live outside our public health region are discouraged.**

Mental Health

In an age of such advanced communication technology and media, it can be overwhelming when exposed to so much disquieting information. **News media profits from social anxiety and preoccupation**, and thus the sheer volume of opinion and information on the topic of COVID-19 has increased steadily. Quite simply it is not helpful to overburden the mind with too much of what is “out there” on the topic. Overexposure leads to heightened anxiety, depression, and feelings of helplessness. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention has four good pieces of advice: **take breaks from news media, take care of your body (eat right, exercise, meditate, get lots of restful sleep), make time to unwind and do activities you enjoy or find fulfilling, and find ways to connect with others and talk.**

Compassion should be our collective response to one another, period.

Community

Lastly, times such as these can create new and difficult challenges for a community. **What is important is for us to remember who we are: we are proud citizens of this beautiful, special place.** Part of what makes Amherst Island what it is, is our community spirit – our best available defence against this pandemic. Although we are physically distancing ourselves from one another, I would ask that we remain connected with one



another as best we can and in as many innovative ways as we can. **Compassion should be our collective response to one another, period.**

This pandemic is indeed “novel” and unprecedented. The unpredictability and rapid evolution of it is genuine cause for concern. However, there is a lot to be confident about, particularly given the country we live in. **We are going to be okay.** We are going to get through this and life will go on. It may be different. How different and in what ways, we cannot really know yet. **The altruism, creativity, resilience, and optimism that characterize “the Island way” ought to be our light in this dark passage.**

I have said many times before, and I will repeat it again: It is the privilege of my life to represent you; it is not a job but a vocation. I will do my very best to rise to this intense occasion, as I know and trust you will, too.

Yours,

Nathan Townend, ntownend@loyalist.ca, 613-217-7371

AMHERST ISLAND COMMUNITY NOTICES – FACEBOOK PAGE

THE ISLAND FACEBOOK PAGE IS WHERE MANY IMPORTANT NOTICES AND DISCUSSIONS TAKE PLACE. HERE IS HOW TO JOIN FACEBOOK:

Create an Account

[How do I create a Facebook account?](#)

Note: you must be at least 13 years old to create a Facebook account.

To create a Facebook account:

1. Go to www.facebook.com/r.php.
2. Enter your name, email or mobile phone number, password, date of birth and gender.
3. Click **[Sign Up](#)**.
4. To finish creating your account, you need to [confirm your email or mobile phone number](#).

If you're having a problem creating a Facebook account, call 613-929-2905

Staying Informed:

Here are a few reliable sources to stay informed:

KFL&A Public Health

www.kflaph.ca

Health Canada

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada.html

Ontario Ministry of Health

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>

If You Are Experiencing Symptoms -

Contact Telehealth Ontario at **1-866-797-0000**, your local public health unit or your primary care provider if you're experiencing symptoms of the 2019 novel coronavirus.

Please do not visit an assessment centre unless you have been referred by a health care professional.

Do not call 911 unless it is an emergency.

New to the island? Do we have your number?

If your number/email is not in the 2017 WI Phone Directory, please send us your information so that we can contact you if needed.

How can you help?

Over the coming months there will be many opportunities to help our neighbours.

Right now, we are looking for volunteers to do the following:

- Call neighbours to check in (call or email us to sign up)
- Pick up groceries, prescriptions etc for those that cannot leave the island
- Assist with deliveries from the General Store. Orders can be placed by emailing mcginnsgs@gmail.com or calling 613-453-8399

Amherst Island Community Alliance

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