



A fall harvest from Matthew Townsend and Kate Crane’s front yard garden. The couple typically grow greens, tomatoes, carrots, squashes, and beans, but they also cultivate edible weeds like lambsquarters and perennial violets (viola). (Photo: Matthew Townsend)

Meet the neighbours growing food in their front and backyards

By Kathleen Mifflin

Many Woodside residents now have a shorter commute to reach their nearest grocery store thanks to the recent opening of the No Frills establishment on Pleasant Street. The freshest vegetables in town, however, might be growing in your neighbour’s garden this spring and summer.

Neighbourhood residents Bill Kidney and his wife grow a variety of vegetables and fruits on their small urban lot, last season producing enough carrots and green beans to still be enjoying their harvest today.

For Bill and his wife, vegetable gardening is not about saving money. Bill chooses not to add up all of the costs associated with necessary purchases like soil and instead to focus on the satisfaction he gets from knowing that he has the skills to bring some food from seed to his table.

On top of the costs of gardening, there’s a lot of trial and error that goes into a successful harvest. For Bill, this means that the fruits of his labour — his tomatoes — are worth far more to him than the price you might expect to pay at a grocery store.

“It really goes to show you that we are probably not paying farmers enough for growing our food,” Bill told the *Post*.

Down the hill from Bill, gardeners Anna and Kevin Ramsay run a

fruit and nut tree nursery, Haoma Selections, out of their front- and backyard gardens. When they started growing trees on their urban Dartmouth lot 15 years ago, Anna and Kevin began by selecting varieties that grew well in areas with similar climate and environmental conditions to Nova Scotia. Today, their curiosity continues to motivate them to explore growing new perennial varieties, both to sell to clients and feed their family at home.

If you’re looking to start your own vegetable garden this year, it’s not too late. Vegetables that are native to warm regions, like tomatoes and peppers, shouldn’t be planted outside until mid-May to early June, depending on frost forecasts. And many other vegetables, like peas, carrots, and beans, can be seeded directly into the ground during the springtime for a summer harvest and during summer months for a fall harvest.

You can purchase many of the supplies you’ll need — including soil, fertilizer, seeds, and seedlings — at any of several locations in Dartmouth: Kent, Walker’s Feed & Supplies, and Lakeland Plant World.

As the spring temperatures continue to warm, you can expect to see more of the neighbourhood gardeners out in their yards. If they’re anything like me or the gardeners that I know, they’ll happily give you a tour and answer any of your garden-related questions. □

New health services, family doctor prognosis unclear for Dartmouth South

By Christian Ensslin

If you’re doing a check-up on family doctor coverage in South Dartmouth — how long is the waitlist, and how bad is it right here — you can easily get lost on public data dashboards and photo-rich plans published by Nova Scotia Health (NSH). You will also find detailed information about measles vaccinations, and upbeat stories about people who give, support, and receive care in Nova Scotia.

What you won’t find, however, are the hard numbers needed to conclude whether family doctor waitlists are shrinking or growing in our area. And in that you’re not alone.

“Nova Scotia Health is no longer giving us detailed information on the waitlist for family doctors, so we only have this anecdotal experience of people coming to our office,” Claudia Chender, MLA for Dartmouth South, told the *Post*. According the Chender, we do know there are “many people who aren’t attached to primary care. It

continues to be a challenge.”

The situation might be improving. A new family doctor’s office, the Dartmouth South Primary Care Clinic on Portland Street, has been seeing patients since 2024, either as “Primary Care Provider” (family physicians and nurse practitioners, looking after a roster of attached patients), or as “mobile clinic,” an interim solution NSH puts in place for people waiting to be attached to a family doctor.

“We know there are needs in Dartmouth,” said Ashley Harnish, director of primary health care for NSH. Harnish told the *Post* of a planned future expansion of existing services in our area as well as a yet-to-be constructed “access location” planned for South Dartmouth. “South Dartmouth will see a growth in primary care. Folks having access to care within their community is such a critical component of our planning, and that is what we are striving towards.”

Details and timelines for the new “access location” have not

been released, but Harnish notes that timelines are “not imminent.” Similarly, NSH did not respond to questions about how many patients the new Dartmouth South Primary Care Clinic sees, or how many residents of South Dartmouth are left without a family physician. With many new homes under active construction in the area, and without data, it is unclear whether these new and planned services will be enough to future-proof the system.

Harnish said NSH is aware of the change underway in the neighbourhood. “We know Dartmouth is an area that is undergoing significant population growth. We are planning for the future.” In the meantime, if you are not attached to a family doctor, Chender recommends: “Stay in touch with NS Health, advocate for yourself. And that is what we also do on behalf of our constituents.”

Do you have a waitlist or related experience to share? Write the Post at tips@southdartmouth.ca.

WHAT IS WITH...

Those deep ruts caused by sidewalk plows?

By Hannah Main

I have lived on Pleasant Street for five winters and five springs. Each spring, the snow melts and I survey the damage to the front lawn. For five springs in a row, I have found the lawn badly torn up from sidewalk plow damage, making it prone to erosion. I call 311 about this issue each year, and someone comes to repair the damage. I then install reflective markers each fall. In spite of these calls and preventative measures, the damage returns every spring. A walk around the neighbourhood in springtime reveals that this happens along many local sidewalks, front lawns, and retaining walls.

Prior to 2013, sidewalk clearing in HRM was the responsibility of property owners, but since then, it has been a service provided by the municipality. But the people who plow the streets and sidewalks are usually not municipal employees. Of the approximately \$37 million the municipality spent on winter

operations in the 2024/2025 year, approximately \$31 million went to contractors. These are companies who, as the result of a tender process, receive a contract from the municipality to be on call with equipment and labour after each snowfall. There is no one company that handles street and sidewalk clearing in HRM; instead, there’s a patchwork of different contracts by zone.

According to Laura Wright, HRM spokesperson, “The contracts are lump sum, so there are no changes to the contract value due to frequency or amount of snowfall.” Elmsdale Landscaping has held the contract for sidewalk clearing in our neighbourhood since 2019.

Sidewalk clearing makes sense for a landscaping company: summer equipment can be repurposed in the winter for sidewalk clearing, and winter work offers more stability in a seasonal industry. And the majority of Elmsdale Landscaping’s business is in selling sod and soil. Repairing damaged sod is bread



The author points out a deep gouge in her yard caused by plowing. (Photo: Hannah Main)

and butter for them.

I reached out to Elmsdale Landscaping for this story to understand more about the equipment they use and training for plow operators, but they did not respond in time for publication. A Facebook post from the company from December of last year indicated they were hiring Kubota sidewalk plow operators in Dartmouth at a wage rate of \$35 an hour, for 12-hour shifts.

If you have an issue with sidewalk clearing — either in the winter or the spring— you can call 311 or email contactus@311.halifax.ca. □

Understanding access to justice for tenants in Nova Scotia

Dalhousie Legal Aid Service wants to know about the housing and justice issues that Nova Scotian tenants face!

We are looking for people aged 19+ who have lived in a rental unit in Nova Scotia within the past year to fill out an online survey. The survey will take approximately 25-30 minutes and participants will have an opportunity to win a \$100 grocery store gift card.



Need more info? Contact Dalhousie Legal Aid Service program analyst Hannah Main at Hannah.Main@dal.ca or 902-423-2158. Dalhousie REB#2025-7727

<https://www.tenantsrightsguide.ca/tenant-survey>

Woodside
BEVERAGE ROOM & GRILL

Your
Neighbourhood Pub

~ since 1963 ~

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Little Free Library scavenger hunt:

The *Post* hopes to publish a map of all of the “Little Free Libraries” in the neighbourhood. Send a list of the ones you can find to our email address (tips@southdartmouth.ca) and get mention in the *Post*!

Looking for local weather without all the clickbait? Browse over to southdartmouth.ca/weather

Next Community Meet and Greet:

June 18, 6 p.m.-8 p.m., Woodside Tavern. Fun, informal chance to meet neighbours. Kids welcome!

Got a story to tell? Contact us with ideas for the August issue!



The Woodside Tavern: A lasting ‘third place’

By Trinity Gadway

Sometimes I tell people that I reside in a house across from a bar, and I joke that the bar is the living room.

Our house has a living room, but it does not provide the same *living* as living in the Woodside Tavern. We eat lunch or dinner there when it’s quiet and the lowering sun casts a warm light inside. On weekday nights we can play pool, and if Hari joins in then he always wins against the boys. We can see music there on weekend nights, and it’s music that belongs to us. Some musicians in the neighbourhood call it “home base.” It’s this feeling of belonging that classifies the tavern as one of those final, persevering “third places.” One is lucky to find comfort in the “first place,” which is home, and especially fortunate to feel content in the “second place,” which is work. To even have third place at all is a lottery win.

These classifications come from American sociologist Ray Oldenburg’s 1989 book *The Great Good Place*. He writes that the third place hosts “the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.” He necessitated that it is inviting, informal, convenient, and unpretentious; it has frequent regulars, conversation, and laughter. Without a third place, community is just a concept — out of reach from people caught in the clockwork between home and work. In this absence of belonging there remains a gaping hole, often filled with screentime: mindless scrolling, parasocial online interactions, streams of fictional third spaces like Cheers and Central Perk, now themselves an aging vintage.

The Woodside Tavern is no sim-

ulation nor sitcom; it’s real. Places like the tavern render community tangible. The people of Woodside drink the same bottles within the same Canadiana-lined walls, and so the community of Woodside exists.

Like many *great good* things, the third place is facing threats in the 21st century. Increasing commercial rents mean affordable, casual establishments struggle to stay afloat. The café where one must buy, consume, then leave cannot be a third place in any meaningful sense. The tavern is fighting related threats of its own, too. It is surrounded by property it doesn’t own in a neighbourhood that is changing. Lately, the door is plastered with warning signs:

**WE DON’T OWN THE
PARKING ON THE SIDES.
THE GUY WHO DOES,
LOVES TICKETS!**

**USE ARTHUR, STEPHEN,
& THE SIDESTREETS.
DON’T LET THE
BULLIES TAKE YOUR
HARD-EARNED MONEY!**

We used to call the Woodside Tavern *the cube* because of how it stands alone in that parking lot. Although resolute, the nickname didn’t stick because *the Woodside* is pleasant and *the tavern* is warm and welcoming.

The tavern is these things — but it also stands resolute, like its owners. “I just can’t be bothered by someone who has nothing else better to do,” Junu told us one night while shining glasses behind the bar. “He’ll spend his time worrying about the parking, and we’ll still be here,” she shrugged.

Then she looked at us and laughed: “And you’ll still be here.” □

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHIT-CHAT

‘I paint anything that deserves a little spotlight’

By Kate Crane

Lizz Miles is an English-born artist who lives in South Dartmouth. Lizz and I sat down to talk about art, having an art business, and the special relationships within local economies. Here is our chat, edited for brevity and clarity.

How did you come to be an artist?
I’ve always been an artist—I would do art as a girl when I had to stay home during school holidays, in my father’s car garage. I went to art school in England, but it wasn’t until the pandemic that I started pursuing art as a career choice. I had started to sell cards in the florist shop I was working in at the time, and then when the pandemic hit, I began to paint daily, auctioning off the pieces on Instagram.

What is your medium, subjects and style?
I paint in gouache, and I paint anything that deserves a little spotlight on it. It could be a view, flowers, or trees; I’ll look at something and say, “I should paint you!” Often, it’s something that the light is hitting in a special way. I also paint cozy things. Things that feel like home. I’d say my style is colourful, vibrant, nostalgic. Often older women like my work. They say it reminds them of something, which I find so special.

What do you like most about par-



Artist Lizz Miles shares a print on the eve of Halifax Crafters. (Photo: lizzmiles_art/Instagram)

ticipating in the craft shows and farmers markets?
Customer service is one of my superpowers—I love having a connection with someone, even if it’s just for one minute. I also love being surrounded by other vendors; everyone just “gets” it and respects it. Money and pricing can be the icky part of having an art business, but it can also be reflective of mutual support. Often price isn’t questioned; vendors and customers respect that the price is actually reflective of what went into it. The shows are not just for money exchange, but it’s also like an energy exchange. I think people here have a real awareness of what it means to buy and support local. I’ve been so much more supported in this province than anywhere else I’ve

lived, because I think people here value peoples’ time spent on something. The markets are their own tiny little economy. I always go in and intend to put a bunch of money down at various booths. I don’t have a bunch of money, really, but I know it’s coming back to me, at some point. It was an incredible moment for me when I could finally buy my first original piece from another artist—a traditional Nova Scotian hooked tapestry.

You can find Lizz and her art at the Halifax Brewery Market, the summer Wolfville Farmers Market, and at annual shows like Halifax Crafters and Dartmouth Makers. You can buy her art online at lizzmiles.com and follow her on her Instagram at @lizzmiles_art.

Plans for trail extension take shape

By Luisa Ensslin

For four years, plans have been in the works to extend the Dartmouth Harbourfront Trail, closing the three-kilometre gap between its terminus and the start of the Shearwater Flyer Trail. Those plans are now shaping up, as Pleasant-Woodside residents learned at an April community engagement session.

The proposed multi-use pathway is slated to run alongside Pleasant Street, allowing cyclists and pedestrians easier, safer travel through the area. The city began studying the project in 2021 and held its first community engagement session in 2023. The second and most recent

session revealed a plan for a three-metre wide multi-use pathway.

David MacIsaac, HRM project manager for the trail planning, expanded that description, telling the *Post* that the pathway would be a sidewalk and a bi-directional bike-way from Everett Street north to the Woodside Ferry Terminal. A multi-use pathway would be installed from south of Everett Street to Hines Road. The trail offers an easy connection to Lawrencetown Beach and would create another link in the Trans-Canada Trail.

The project is estimated to cost \$10 million, with funding coming from federal, provincial, and municipal levels. Construction will be

timed to coincide with a large-scale rehabilitation of Pleasant Street.

The proposal requires the removal of one of the southbound lanes on Pleasant Street, as well as the acquisition of a small plot of land (about the size of a few parking spots) at the Woodside Ferry Terminal. MacIsaac said this plan requires “almost no property acquisition,” meaning that relatively little land will have to be purchased to make space for the trail.

The project is expected to reach the Regional Council this summer. Construction is slated to begin in 2027 and 2028, continuing for multiple years.

[Full story at southdartmouth.ca]

Lobster dinner to benefit DGH ultrasound program

By Matthew Townsend

The Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation will hold its annual Lobster Dinner & Auction on June 14, with all proceeds going to the hospital’s Emergency Department (ED) ultrasound program.

Now in its 40th year, the ocean-front fundraising dinner will serve up freshly cooked lobsters (two per plate) at Fisherman’s Cove in Eastern Passage. Diners can also opt for steak, vegetarian, or surf n’ turf. Ticket options include three experiences at different price points: sailing from the Halifax Waterfront to the cove aboard the Kawartha Spirit, parking at Fisherman’s Cove, and drive-thru takeaway. For those

dining at Fisherman’s Cove, the event includes live entertainment, auctions, and a balloon blitz.

Though Canadian health care is publicly funded, charitable foundations work with donors and government to improve quality of care beyond what can be publicly provided. At Dartmouth General Hospital (DGH), the foundation raises funds through direct donations, media broadcasts, and special events, like the dinner. Tina Murphy, senior communications advisor for the foundation, told the *Post* that the dinner is an “easy way to get involved” in the foundation’s mission.

Last year, the foundation and its donors helped DGH purchase the hospital’s first MRI unit, which

went online last summer. The foundation has also helped purchase DGH’s first surgical robot for orthopedics and helped launch Atlantic Canada’s first pelvic health suite, a new palliative care unit, and a first-in-Canada ED Vital Signs Wearables project.

Sponsors include Conrad Brothers Ltd., which helped launch the annual dinner in 1985, and Ocean Contractors Limited. The J&W Murphy Foundation will match all proceeds up to \$150,000.

Ticket are available online at dghfoundation.ca/lobster or by phone (902-460-4149). Prices range from \$179 to \$359. You can also make one-time or monthly gifts of any amount on the website. □

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