

The Black/Kean Family Year in Review

December 2024



Maggie and Em at a local sunflower farm

Happy holidays from our family to yours!

My daughter Em has been living with their partner Nita, on Cape Breton Island, for just over two years; my Mom, Barbara, the pets and I moved to Cape Breton almost a year-and-a-half ago. We are all loving east coast living!

Barbara

This year, Barbara has enjoyed sewing, scenic drives to the ocean, lighthouses, nearby towns and the Cabot Trail, and attending “Men of the Deeps” (Live) & Andre Rieu (Cineplex) concerts. She cheered on the Blue Jays during baseball season, and is now feeding Blue Jays on the back deck and watching professional women’s hockey (PWHL).

Barbara’s 2024 Highlights

- Cataract surgery, which she calls “life-changing!”
- A visit from daughter Mary’s family who live in Ontario.
- Gardening in a raised planter and several containers on the back deck



Barbara’s 90th in Baddeck!

In May, we went on a family getaway to a cottage in Baddeck, to celebrate Barbara’s 90th birthday!



Maggie

Since I arrived in Cape Breton, I've been exploring and learning about coastal environments and species.

In the Spring, I planted several native trees, and constructed new native perennial gardens and a vegetable garden.

I am currently engaged in volunteer work with three Nova Scotia-based environmental organizations. I am a board member and do monthly stream water testing with the *Atlantic Coastal Action Program*, I'm a beach patroller for the *Canadian Sea Turtle Network*, and I'm an on-call volunteer with the *Marine Animal Response Society*, which rescues stranded whales, dolphins & seals. I am also taking online Marine Biology and Marine Paleontology courses.

The highlights of my year were a "bucket list" retirement trip to the Galapagos Islands, and seeing whales in the wild at the top of the Cabot Trail.



Me with a 150-year-old Galapagos Tortoise!



Em & Nita

Em

Em, age 24, recently celebrated their second anniversary working at the Cape Breton branch of the *SPCA*. In addition to animal care and reception, Em is now the shelter's volunteer coordinator and health and safety rep.

This year, Em and Nita took a trip to the Dominican Republic with Nita's parents, for a family wedding, and flew to Toronto to see a concert and explore the city.

In December, Em retired their old hand-me-down car and purchased an SUV!



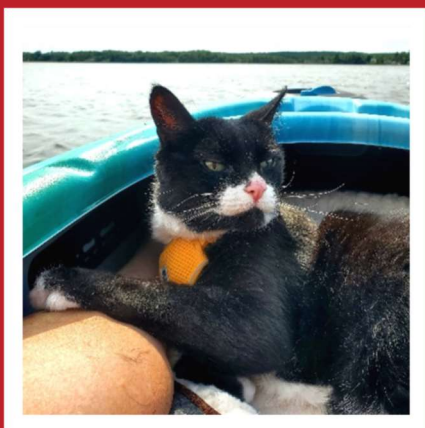
Em with their new wheels: a 2022 AWD Ford Escape!



Barbara's 90th, with grandchildren Natalie, Jason & Em



Maggie with her official beach patrol vest and toque



Dexter (16) out for a kayak ride



Sloan (14) & Romi (4), on the Louisbourg Lighthouse Coastal Trail