

# Engaging Our Audience

Someone once asked my co-publisher Mike why we publish negative or critical letters to the editor. The first response is to think why wouldn't we? It's the truth, what people think. I understand the argument that it's good to have positive, flattering comments, but including negative ones proves that we don't make these things up. We're delighted to get a good number of letters and notes. They show that people care about the magazine. In this issue, we have a letter about a missing apostrophe in a place name! I love that care, concern and attention to detail. It's important to get things right, because our issues are around for the long haul.

We recently had an online order for two copies of *Winter 2010!* We had to dig into our archives to get those copies, but we're in awe that someone, make that two people, are still interested in that issue.

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It's more proof of how engaged our readers are with the magazine. We have pages on our NEViews.ca website that show comments we've received. One, called *People Respond*, is from

readers. The other, *Why Advertise*, shares notes from or about our advertisers.

You can even see this engagement on our subscription form. When thinking about what would attract more people to consider subscribing, we finally realized that nothing would be as powerful as the words of our viewers and readers themselves. So the comments on the subscription form are ones we have actually received over the years. They tell better than we could, why people want to subscribe. Our recent reader survey is another source of validating notes. Some people referred to the subscription form, writing that they agree with everything that is written there. Mike has much more about the reader survey in his column this issue. You can see the subscription form on page 41.

Audience engagement is important to the success of a publication, helping to create or strengthen a sense of community among readers. **Ethics, excellence, engagement** — three defining words for the magazine that I've written about before, which remain our guiding principles.

Putting this magazine together four times each year, to the high quality standard that we set for ourselves, is a lot of work. But doing it and garnering the response we get, is a privilege and sometimes a sheer joy.

## The Joy of Spring

Creating our Spring issue, with its annual special focus on Escarpment-area gardens, is a great joy for me. My own rural garden has become completely overgrown and out of control, so I love seeing the gorgeous gardens created by better gardeners. In this issue we poke around four



spectacular country gardens.

Taking a virtual tour of these special places while relaxing in an armchair is delightful — no sweat, no bugs, no hard work, no getting dirty. And it inspires me to try once again to bring order to my 23-year-old garden. I think it's time for a big renewal of the garden beds.

In these pages we also take you behind the scenes of Mountsberg Conservation Area's Raptor Centre, part of Conservation Halton, in Campbellville. We suggest what you might witness if you take part in a private

raptor encounter. Getting close to magnificent birds is educational and breath-taking.

If you like what you see here, or don't, or know of a great garden we should visit, or have anything to share with our community of readers and viewers, do send us a note by Canada Post, email or Facebook. Engaging with you keeps this magazine going.

*Gloria*

**Gloria Hildebrandt**

*P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.*

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!



Write us at [editor@NEViews.ca](mailto:editor@NEViews.ca) or *Niagara Escarpment Views*, 50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2

## More Online!



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