

# The Sweet Spot

**R**ecently, a friend of mine told me of an experience she'd just had. Waiting for an appointment, she wanted something to read and decided to buy a magazine in a small store. She looked at several magazines, but none of them contained much to read. She remembered magazines from the past as always having several interesting feature articles. Not now, not in the magazines at this newsstand. She finally bought one, but was disappointed when she flipped through it without finding much to spend time on. She said that by contrast, our magazine always has a good amount to actually read.

We work hard to deliver the goods: big, rewarding photographs, captions that are informative, text that engages and perhaps even teaches.

We've been publishing this magazine a long time. With so many print publications closing, we get asked for the secret to our success. There's no secret, but there may be some things we do a little differently from other magazines.

## Supporters Come First

We always aim for excellence in magazine journalism. With my work life dedicated to freelance writing, editing

and even teaching magazine writing for community colleges, I have always cared about the quality of writing. In addition to that, we are grateful to those who support our magazine: our advertisers, subscribers and purchasers of our products. As an example of our appreciation, we mail copies of each issue first to our advertisers and subscribers. Next, we deliver copies to advertisers for people to pick up for free. We don't immediately put our current issue online. We want to drive traffic to our valued advertisers, to give them the experience of seeing people react to our work. If people can see our content right away online, why would they ask for the magazine from advertisers? We've had people who weren't advertisers, contact us to say that customers have come into their locations looking for the magazine. Valuing our print copies motivates people to spread the word about our magazine.

Print simply works for us better than digital versions because of our big, beautiful photography. Online articles are tiny on a phone and don't give the same rewarding experience as print does. We do store our past issues on our website as a free library

for all to access, because most of our content remains of interest indefinitely. We keep our printing costs reasonable because our issues are a standard magazine size. Our issues aren't crammed full of large, intrusive ads. We have fewer ads, that tend to be smaller and more discrete. They never detract from our content. We seem to have found the "sweet spot," a balance of ads and editorial that works.

I think it helps that the area we cover is unusually large for a small publication: the entire length of the Niagara Escarpment in Canada. This means that there are usually always new subjects to explore. We hope that there will be interesting reading material for a good while yet. Does this issue deliver for you?

## In This Issue

Our cover story is by Art Weaver, who shares the locations of previous versions of the Welland Canal. The canal is needed to get ships past the obstacle of the Niagara Escarpment between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. There are still some remains of canals to be seen and Art's photographs capture some of their most interesting aspects.

Naturalist Bruce Mackenzie teaches us about talus, the

rocky area along the base of the whole Escarpment. It turns out that this area is vital habitat for plants and animals. Who knew?

After Neal Bonnor received a gift of a kayak, he put it to amazing use, cleaning up all sorts of debris in his Dundas-area creeks and rivers. He created the term "kayakcleaning" to describe his mission. We are impressed by and grateful for his work.


Our last big feature in this issue presents some urban gardens. Hamilton's Grand Durand neighbourhood at the base of "the mountain" puts on a spectacular garden tour. Last year, 12 houses both great and small showed off their yards, pools and patios. It was a scorching hot day and visitors were sorely tempted by the many resort-like facilities. It was hard not to have "an accident" and fall into the beautiful water of those swimming pools!

*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!



Keep in touch with Escarpment news between issues at our website. We have unique content not seen in the magazine, and you can leave comments in response. See [www.NEViews.ca](http://www.NEViews.ca).



*Niagara Escarpment Views* is on Facebook as:  
[www.facebook.com/N.E.Views](http://www.facebook.com/N.E.Views)

# New!

Follow me  
 on Instagram:  
[@gloria.hildebrandt](https://www.instagram.com/gloria.hildebrandt)