

Editor's View of

SIGNS OF GROWTH IN SPRING



Most of the Niagara Escarpment has had a fair bit of snow this winter, so it may take a while for the spring melt to clear it all away. I have seen snow in some dark, shady pockets of forest as late as May!

But March starts to show signs of spring. Despite cold temperatures and hard-packed snow trails, the sun is strong in a blue sky where crows fly and call. If you stand near a big maple tree on a sunny day, you may hear a dripping, tapping sound. Sap is rising and the excess is falling to the ground, unless a cold snap freezes it into delicious sapcicles. Maple syrup festivals will be in full swing this spring, and writer Trudi Down explores a couple of them starting on page 20.

It will likely be April before we start to see lovely bare earth. Eager gardeners like my father will be planting cool-weather vegetables like radishes, peas and lettuce, as soon as they can crumble the soil. Flower lovers will look for forsythia, daffodils, tulips and all the other wonderful bulbs to burst forth in glory. This issue is our annual gardening special, with a gorgeous centre spread to inspire you, and an in-depth feature on an amazing and award-winning Escarpment-area flower garden to give you ideas. Begin touring this enchanting garden on page 14.

If you prefer plant life wild, free and perhaps difficult to find, Gary Hutton's thorough look at the ferns of the Niagara Escarpment, from page 11, will introduce you to a surprising variety.

This issue also sees the return of our special theatre columnist Seana McKenna. I know of no other publication that has a working actor as a contributor, let alone one as articulate, thoughtful and as talented as Seana, award-winning and internationally known. I read somewhere that someone called her Canada's Meryl Streep. She reminds me more of Helen Mirren. This season at Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Seana's husband Miles Potter directs *Richard III*, in which she takes on the role of Richard. The king. A male. Read her approach to this latest challenge of a lifetime on page 31. You and I, all of us in the *Escarpment Views* community, are extremely fortunate to be able to read her thoughts. And if you can get a ticket to the show, you'll be witnessing history.

There's even more to enjoy in this issue, our biggest yet. Like all of nature in spring, we're growing! And as all the birds and animals show themselves again, please try to protect them.

Gloria

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