

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE FOX

# BETTER *living*

Homes evolve. Technology changes and our needs shift, yet we all want our homes to be safe, secure and comfortable. This spring, we focus on people who can help transform the way you live, and make where you live better.



**John Raimondi, P.Eng., M. Eng.**  
**Meridian Design Build Inc., Barrie**

**WHAT SHOULD EVERY NEW HOME INCLUDE?** If home is where the heart is, then every home needs a heart. The heart of a home can be different for everyone. For some it is the kitchen and others the family room or a combination of both. It is a place that friends and family can be comfortable, social, individual and most important, together.

**WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR BUILDS?** Our homes are unique in the sense that they are truly a reflection of the personality and life of the homeowners. We are able to make anything a reality through our creativity and our technical knowledge. The finishing touches say something about an individual's life, past, present and future. Our projects become homes at the start of the design phase not just after move in.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO BUILDING CUSTOM HOMES:** Our project management approach is a true partnership between the homeowner and builder. It is based on honesty, transparency and a common goal to provide the highest quality home for the best value. By "opening the books" from the preliminary quoting stage right to the end of the project and carefully comparing budget to actual construction, homeowners know where every hard-earned dollar goes. I am most proud of the fact that with this approach all of our homeowner/builder partnerships have become lasting friendships. *Continued on page 68*



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**Glen Prairie**, Owner, Sales & Design Consultant  
**Total Living Concepts, Barrie**

**WHAT SETS YOUR COMPANY APART?** We are a full service renovation company from design to construction of the finished product; whether removing interior load-bearing walls or constructing an addition to your current place. We have a certified kitchen designer on staff as well as two interior designers to handle all your design concerns. With our project management and three experienced carpenters on staff, we are able to handle the complex details of the project from start to finish.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:** We carry two distinct lines of kitchen cabinetry that have hundreds of door styles and colours to choose from. We carry fixtures and fittings from Kohler, Toto, Grohe, Moen, Delta and many more. We offer a two-year limited warranty on all products and labour that we supply and install.

**WHAT'S THE MUST-HAVE FOR 2014?** Must-haves include energy-saving LED lighting for pot lights and under-cabinet lighting. All homes should have USB ports in wall plugs for charging your iPad, iPhone and other electronics.



**Rob W.H. Thorburn**, Executive Vice President  
**& Kevin Leonard**, President & CEO  
**Huronia Alarms, Midland**

**WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE GOOD HOME SECURITY?** Good home security is about protecting people and property correctly. The products and services we recommend depend on clients' reasons for wanting home security. Is it to deter burglars, or alert clients to smoke, water leaks, low temperature or a broken window? At the heart of the security services is 24/7 monitoring through our locally owned and operated ULC listed monitoring station. The best system needs the best installation, monitoring and 24-hour on-site service, and that's what we offer.

**CAN HURONIA RETROFIT MY HOME FOR OUR FAMILY'S AUDIO/VIDEO NEEDS?** We recommend hardwiring our systems wherever possible to ensure our client isn't dependent on wireless connections. But in some instances hardwiring can mean a lot of drywall repairs. In those situations, we recommend a wireless solution called Sonos. Sonos is comprised of HiFi wireless speakers and audio components. It's easily installed and delivers outstanding sound, providing music to every room of the house.

**WHAT NEW SMART-HOME TECHNOLOGY SHOULD EVERY HOME HAVE?** Smart-home monitoring.

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**Jeff Partridge, Owner**  
**Fast Forward Audio Video Unlimited, Midland**

**WHAT'S HOT RIGHT NOW?** 4K TV – stunning, ultra-high resolution TV with 8.3 megapixels, which is four times the current high-definition television. The other hot topic is home control by Control4, which is as simple as a universal remote control or as advanced as whole-home automation. From your smart phone or tablet you can control your whole house, which could include audio, video, door locks, lighting, window coverings, thermostat control, surveillance and security.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR SERVICES:** Fast Forward Audio Video is a full-service specialty retailer and we install everything we sell. We have three full-time installers on staff. Specializing in installation, we will set up your AV equipment in homes of all shapes and sizes as well as restaurants, medical offices, cars and especially your boats.

**WHAT PRODUCTS DO YOU RECOMMEND?** Sonos – the multi-room music system. This wireless HiFi system streams music from Internet and network sources. The sound and range is incredible and we offer the complete line.

**Leanne George, Owner**  
**Fresh Flowers By Leanne, Midland**

**FRESH IS CELEBRATING A MILESTONE, TELL US ABOUT IT:** We will be celebrating our 4th anniversary on May 28th! It has been an amazing four years! During those years we were awarded the Chamber of Commerce New Business of the Year, nominated three times for Business Woman of the Year and voted #1 Florist by Readers' Choice. It all couldn't have been achieved without dedicated and wonderful staff, the support of family and friends, and the motto to "Do what you love, love what you do."

**WHY ARE YOU A BRIDE'S BEST FRIEND AT THIS TIME OF YEAR?** After getting engaged, the excitement is followed by a lot of planning and decision-making. We make choosing the floral and wedding décor easy for the bride. We offer a no-fee consultation and design a mock bouquet for the bride. So often we have a bride say, "I have no idea where to start (with flowers)." After the consultation they leave saying "I am so excited! Thank you!" That's a good feeling.

**HOW HAS BABY CHARLOTTE CHANGED YOUR LIFE?** Oh, where to begin... Charlotte has enriched our lives in so many ways. But she too has an enriched life. She has the proudest father ever. The most adoring big brother. "Aunties" that dote on her. Family and friends that just love her to pieces. I truly feel she has been waiting all these years to come into my life. She reminds me, just as my son Ethan does, to take time to stop and smell the roses. *Continued on page 72*







Jodie Lefaive, Heather Hill, Carole Schmidt, Deborah Marshall (Front L-R)  
 Lisa McMann, Jeanette Fittrion, Corie Flear, Don Lefaive (Rear L-R)  
 Noble Insurance, Barrie

**HOW DOES NOBLE INSURANCE PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL INSURANCE SOLUTIONS?** We look at our client's situation as a whole to work out the best package available. As our companies offer a wide range of products to insure everything from a client's business to their toys, we give our clients peace of mind that their assets are protected in the event of a loss.

**TELL US HOW YOUR ADVICE IS TAILORED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE SIMCOE COUNTY COMMUNITY.** As our brokers all live, work and play in the area, we understand the unique insurance needs of someone living in our beautiful four-season communities. Not only do we have expertise in home and auto insurance, but in cottage, marine, ATV and snowmobile insurance. Noble insurance has also recently partnered with Gore Mutual to provide an exclusive insurance program to snowbirds who rent out their home while they are away.

**WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF OUR NEW OFFICE?** Of course we all love our open and bright new workspace, and having our own parking lot. But from a client perspective, the combined staff from the original Barrie and Elmvale locations makes a great team with a wide range of expertise to provide the best service to our clients. **OH**

See Our Directory For All Contact Information

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