Pity the magazine home writer. Of all the people who write for publications, the one whose beat is “homes” faces unique challenges. First, the reporters have to find a home worth telling a story about. (Usually there is no shortage of suggestions about worthy homes, though the beauty is sometimes blurred through the glasses of the homeowner.) Then after having found a worthy home, the necessary arrangements have to be made, including contacting the owners and giving the usual assurances not to publish the address or any other priority household secrets.

Next there is the set up—arranging the house to look camera perfect, perhaps with a strategic placement of flowers in one spot and a little less clutter in another place.

Then there is the day of the shoot, when the photographer must twist and turn for the right angles and the appropriate splashes of sunlight. Meanwhile owners explain the virtues of their dream houses and reveal their favorite nooks. Designers and architects add their anecdotes. And, oh yes, the family dog, what is his name?

Finally there is the publication itself, where, if all went well, the charms of the home will impress the readership. Perhaps someone turning the pages will be inspired by the photographs, uttering such comments as:

• “That’s an interesting place for a love seat.”
• “I love the arrangement of the bedroom.”
• “What a great location for an armoire.”
• “Look at how spacious the kitchen is.”
• “Wow, a piece of Mallard furniture.”
• “A double walk-in shower! Mmmm.”
• “More closet space—that’s what I need.”
• “What a cute name for a dog.”

As someone who lives in an old house, built in 1910, I know what a personality they have: draped in elegance and history but a tad ornery with their continued need for something to be fixed. Yet they are to be admired for having withstood more than a century of hurricanes, wars, recession, vandalism, modernization, and streets shaking from monstrous trucks.

Cities are made of blocks. Blocks are made of homes. The
survivability of cities begins at front doors.

Bonnie Warren has been covering homes for *New Orleans Magazine* and then its sister publication, *Louisiana Life*, for more than forty years. There is no one in the region with more experience in home coverage than her; no one with such a well-trained eye to sort out the good house; no one who has walked under as many transoms.

Cheryl Gerber is a talented photographer in many ways and has made home photography one of her specialties. She is simply one of the best.

Our region is blessed by having both so many great homes and talented people reporting about them.

_Errol Laborde, executive vice president and editor in chief, Renaissance Publishing_