

COMMENT

Victorinox Swiss Army knife, Part Deux

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

Weeks ago I wrote about losing my Victorinox Swiss Army knife, which had been in my pocket for 23 years.

I lost it on en route to or from the barn. The Sidekick and I searched everywhere, but to no avail.

After writing about it, I received some emails, mostly male bonding comments, like "Hey man, I feel your pain," or "So sad for your loss..."

Various 'pocket knife' stories were also shared—it was kinda uplifting.

Then I received 'another' email, from 'Gene'.

"I had the good fortune of reading your piece on the Victorinox Swiss Army knife this morning" he wrote. "Having worked for the company for over 20 years, your wonderful comments on what the tool has meant to you brought an immediate smile to my face.

"Would it be possible to speak with you at your convenience?"

The signature at the bottom of the email listed him as Vice President of Sales Canada, Swiss Army Knives and Cutlery.

He must have read it online.

My curiosity was piqued—I emailed my contact info.

How did he come across my column? Hmmm, I searched Canada 411; turned out he lives locally. I smiled at the irony—he'd read it in the newspaper, not online.

Later that evening, I received another email from Victorinox Swiss Army Public Relations Manager Leah Pepper, saying she had read my column about the lost knife.

"I really enjoyed your piece today in *The Independent and Free Press*," she wrote, "but was sad to hear you lost your beloved knife.

"That's where I come in," she continued, "I would love to offer you a replacement knife. I know how special the bond between someone and their knife can be and hope a new knife will lessen the feeling of loss a bit."

I was blown away, and replied to both of them, thanking Leah and Gene for their kind offer. I simply assumed Gene had asked Leah to look after it.

Oops, not so fast.

Gene emailed me the next morning.

"It looks like my marketing department down on Connecticut has come across your column," said Gene, "I was going to do the same but Leah beat me to the punch, by offering you a replacement. I said I'd take care of it from here."

What were the chances two people working for the same international company, would come across the same column, and both react to it?

I replied to both, thanking them for their kind offer.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, 'er farm, another development took place.

It was three weeks to the day since I'd lost my knife and The Sidekick and I were at the barn, discussing sheep. Earlier I had moved some bales of straw, and as we talked, I happen to look where the bales had been. Laying in the straw on the floor was my knife, its bright red handle standing out against the yellow straw.

What!!!!???

It must have fallen out of my pocket falling between the bales. When I moved the bales, the knife had slid out from between them, onto the floor.

It was an amazing fluke—it had been buried in the straw for three weeks. The next day I had planned to clean out that pen. If I hadn't spotted the knife when I did, it would have been gone forever, buried in a pile of sheep poop outside the barn.

I fired an email to Gene and Leah, telling them it was found, and told them I wouldn't require their kind gift.

So all's well that ends well, the Swiss Army's back in my pocket.

I've decided to send it to the factory to have the logo reattached. On the swissarmy.ca web page, they advertise a repair service. Once again it'll look almost like the day I opened that plain brown envelope years ago.

But not right away—I'm kinda enjoying it being back in my pocket, where it belongs.

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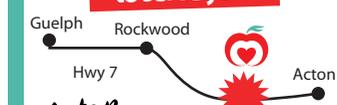
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