

COMMENT

De-cluttering at an industrial level

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

Every once in a while The Sidekick watches programs on HGTV, where someone does a complete makeover of a house, or maybe just a kitchen or bathroom.

(I often remark how I've never seen a total renovation of a garage, or maybe a driving shed. Or how about renovating a barn stable?)

Every time we see one of those makeovers, there is one aspect that the homeowners must go through. It's called 'de-cluttering.'

And the other thing I notice, is that it's pretty much always the guy's stuff that gets 'de-cluttered.'

I think there is some sort of bias— the poor guy has to store his 'stuff' in the basement in the first place, and when it comes time to renovate the house, the over-zealous designer heads to the basement and convinces the wife that it's a perfect place for the kids to play, or for her to set up a sewing room.

The wife and designer are in cahoots and they get to take over the remaining places that the poor husband has had to hide in.

Now The Sidekick hasn't contacted Bryan Baeumler of 'Leave it to Bryan' yet, (that I'm aware of), but she's been on my case about the garage and the basement.

And to be quite honest, she might have a bit of a case against me. I'm not quite a 'hoarder,' but I do hang on to stuff a bit longer than necessary.

Now the garage is an easy fix— the blue boxes and garbage cans are pretty convenient, and we can open the door into the garage, and toss the stuff into the blue boxes.

The basement is more complicated.

When the furnace technician comes to clean the furnace, I usually give him/her a map, and a long string, to be able to find their way in, and more importantly, the way back out, without losing one of them for a couple days.

So last week, in a moment of weakness, I decided to take a few things out of the basement.

It was sparked by repacking the Christmas decorations. On New Year's Day, we took down

the tree, etc, and when I took the Rubbermaid containers full of Christmas stuff down to the basement— well it was a bit challenging to stack everything. The basement was simply too full.

Some of the stuff stored in there dated back to when my dad died, 13 years ago, and it had been moved to the basement 'for a few weeks.'

I decided to fill a few garbage bags, and load them on the truck.

It was a start.

The Sidekick and I then loaded the truck with the garbage from the garage, and headed to town, to drop it at Leferink's Disposal.

Man, that felt kinda good.

Back home, we returned to the basement, and started to re-arrange things, and in the process, found we had a lot more space that we realized.

Okay, please do NOT read enthusiasm in my words here... I still do not enjoy getting rid of 'good stuff.'

But it was a start, and I assured The Sidekick that I'd keep going with the de-cluttering exercise.

We set aside containers that require some sorting. The Sidekick has a few Rubbermaid containers of her 'stuff' stored as well, so we are working together on this project. I'd estimate that we're about 20 per cent done.

We've pulled out boxes of old books (and I know I'm not going to re-read all the books Robert Ludlum and Tom Clancy have written), and I don't think I'm going to need the box that my five CD player came in.

We have had a habit of saving 'boxes' that can be used to wrap Christmas presents; now only the good ones are saved.

It's been a good exercise, and I must admit, in the grand scheme of things, I feel pleased that there's more room in the basement.

But most of all, I'm secretly relieved we haven't found a lost furnace technician in there...

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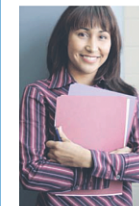


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