

Holy Cross School launches sock drive

Holy Cross Elementary School, in partnership with Socks4Souls Canada, will be hosting a sock drive for the homeless in the GTA. Socks 4 Souls Canada is a non-profit, volunteer organization committed to contributing warmth to homeless communities by providing them with new clean socks. According to Sock4Souls, foot problems account for 20 per cent of the medical complaints in

the homeless. New socks minimize the possibility of frostbite and reduce the risk of cellulitis, impetigo, fungal infections, trench foot and skin breakdown. As the school Lenten project, the Grade 8s will be collecting sock donations starting Tuesday, Feb. 9 until Friday, Feb. 26. The goal is to collect 1,000 pairs of socks, preferably black or navy blue brand new men's socks. Drop off at the school.

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COMMENT

Preparing for the onslaught in the coming weeks

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

I like to build things.

And the things I build are usually made of wood, and get used in the barn.

I also go in fits and starts with my building projects. I'll make something, and put my heart and soul into it, then it will be months, maybe even years, before I build another similar project.

Lately, I've been building sheep pens.

Now the time of year is driving this project. It's the first week of February, and that annual crazy, uncontrollable pandemonium called 'lambing' is just around the corner. So I gotta be prepared.

I've been looking at expanding a bunch of the little four-by-five-foot lambing pens into another area in the barn, and this past week it became a reality.

When I build them, I like my pens to all be uniform, to be made of the same material, and be the same dimensions.

Okay, I KNOW it's just a barn. But I'm just a bit anal about it—I like them to match!

Last week, I made the trek to my local building supply store and picked up a whack of materials to construct the pens.

While I was there, I remembered that the new ram needs another pen as well— add a few more supplies to the order.

When the sales clerk tallied up the final total, I did wince a bit.

Back home, I piled my hand-picked boards in the barn, according to size. I like to use the 5/4 treated lumber, often found on decks. It takes screws really nicely, and looks good when I'm finished, as the pressure treat surface has a 'heritage' look of sorts. It resembles old barn boards.

I also try my best to adhere to common lengths— making the pens either 3 feet high or 4 feet high, so there is no waste when I cut the lumber.

I can get four three-foot lengths from a 12 footer, or two fours from an eight footer, or two five-foot lengths from a ten footer.

It just makes sense.

Same with the hardware. I don't skimp on hinges or hooks—I learned a long time ago that you only get what you pay for.

And cheap hardware doesn't seem like a bargain after you enter the barn to find a bunch of lambs running around in a group, and you have absolutely no idea which belongs to which mom... simply cuz ya cheaped out on the hardware.

So I have created some new lambing pens (the place where the mother ewe bonds with her new lambs,) and some bigger pens to house the full-sized adults.

I've doubled the number of lambing pens, from six to 12, and might even make two more if time permits.

It's a great job— the radio pouring out some good tunes, Hamish the dog following me around, from the saw to the pen back to the saw and so on.

And at the end of the day, I can look over the new pens and feel like I've accomplished something, not to mention making the pen layout a whole lot more efficient.

The Sidekick, God bless her, is always a great help. In spite of the fact she can't be there during the day— she works for a living— when she is home, she's always happy to get on the other end of the lumber, to hand me a tool, measure the length, and simply be there for moral support, complimenting me on my latest creation.

And she NEVER says a word about the house needing some work done on it... at least not when we're in the barn.

So I'm nearing the final construction phase in this project, and will be ready for the onslaught of newborn lambs, in the coming weeks.

I only have one wish.

I do wish the ewes could be as methodical and organized as me, when it comes time to have their lambs.

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