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COMMENT

Puttering in the driving shed is like a spring tonic

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

Now that spring is officially here... oops, wait a minute.

Okay, I'm back. Sorry but I just had to check and make sure it hadn't snowed again... or still.

Okay, spring is here and I refuse to believe otherwise.

We're actually seeing a few blue skies, and the temperature is almost 'spring-able.'

You know, after a virtuously 'snowless' winter until late March, we really haven't been in a position to complain— but we still do.

But this week, with that mild weather, I actually looked forward to getting outside to do a few things.

The first place I usually visit when the weather turns mild is the driving shed.

All winter, it's much too cold, dark and damp to go 'play' there.

(Okay, for the record, I'd never admit to The Sidekick that I actually 'play' out there— rather say I'm working on something. I'm assuming that my secret is safe with you guys, right?)

With the weather of this past week, I've spent a fair bit of time there.

I know I could be out picking up the remnants of the winter— the branches, limbs and stuff that was hiding under that bit of snow.

But it's a whole lot easier to convince myself that the ground is still much too soft to drive the loader tractor over to pick up the 'stuff'. And I refuse to use a wheelbarrow.

So I 'putter' out there.

You know, it's so liberating to open all the doors in the shed, let the wind blow through and dry up the damp floor. I tune my beat-up old radio to Q107, and crank up the volume to hear some good tunes.

I tell ya, it don't get much better than that.

There's three tractors in the shed— some of them haven't been started up since November— and I'm really itchy to get 'em running. I

fire up all the tractors up to dry them out and charge the batteries.

It's mild enough now that I can actually hang onto a wrench and not freeze up my knuckle joints.

This week, I was really daring— I took the tire chains off one of the tractors, leaving only one tractor with chains on it.

Maybe I'll tackle it next week... Surely it can't snow again, can it?

The little John Deere lawn tractor fired up immediately, and I backed it out on the lawn, just to give the grass a warning that we're soon approaching lawn cutting season.

And I picked up some 'junk' that has accumulated over the winter, like windshield wiper antifreeze containers, and rolled up the extension cords that I use on the block heaters, and hung them up.

I tell ya, puttering in the driving shed is like a tonic— it makes ya feel alive, and totally excited about the arrival of spring.

It's a time I visually check out the tractors, make sure everything is tight and in shape, and I use the compressor and blow off the dirt and grime from winter.

It's a time to take inventory and make a list of things I need to pick up at my next visit to Canadian Tire to service the tractors— oil, oil filters, and fuel filters.

I think puttering in the shed or garage is a guy thing.

Back in the house, The Sidekick heads into the den and tunes in to Ellen.

Me, I just go out to putter in the shed.

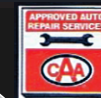
There's really not much difference.

We're both constructively wasting time, kicking back, chilling out— and most importantly, we're both lovin' it.

And in my opinion, that's what life is supposed to be all about...

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