

It's all about the hidden potential

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

There are times when things around us become so familiar we often ignore their potential.

At Brown Farm, we have a two-car attached garage, which, for decades, or more, has been the target of catching everything that was in the way somewhere else.

Blue boxes, garbage cans, cardboard boxes and all sorts of other stuff have landed in the garage, and simply accumulated, rather than having been taken out and disposed of.

About a month ago, (much to The Sidekick's joy), I had one of those moments of inspiration and decided to clean out a few things that were piling up in the garage.

Several visits to Leferink's Disposal later, I found I could now actually walk all the way around the Lil Red Rocket when parked in the garage. In fact I could actually pull into the garage and The Sidekick could get out of the car when it was parked inside not having to get out before I pulled into the parking spot as in the past.

I could now walk all the way around both vehicles when parked inside, and never once did I trip on something in the way.

I discovered the advantages of hanging a few shelves on the walls to store items like car wax, windshield washer antifreeze, oil, and a mess of things that just seem to go along with a car being parked inside.

Geez, I could even wax the Lil Red Rocket while parked inside!

That hasn't been possible for decades. I'm actually in a state of euphoria, when I see what I've gained in usable space.

Now this building wasn't always a garage. Originally when it was built by my forefathers in the mid-1800s, it was a wood shed, a place where the firewood was stored for the winter. In the fall, several cords of wood were sacked in there, all cut in stove lengths, to keep the farmhouse warm for the winter.

When I was a little kid, there was one set

of swinging doors on the front of the woodshed, and the rest was storage.

When we graduated to stove oil heat and later a forced air oil furnace, wood storage was redundant, and a second door was opened up, and two garage doors were installed.

It became a full-fledged garage.

Last weekend I hosted a Brown family event, and part of the event was set up in the garage and utilized as a serving area, as some big dark clouds were spotted earlier that day.

Fortunately the weather was gorgeous, and we could have operated without the use of the garage but better to be safe than sorry.

However, as my family members picked up their hamburgers and slathered the condiments all over them, one of my nephews surveyed the various enclaves of the garage and made an observation.

Uncle Ted, I never realize just how big this garage was until you cleaned it out.

Okay, I had to grin to myself. I know it was a compliment, but a backhanded one at that.

But he was right. At 24 by 32 feet, it's a pretty good structure, and has a ten foot ceiling as well.

I've been at friends' houses and shared a beer while standing in their garage and never really thought the old woodshed could be as useful or productive, simply because I'd never viewed it that way.

Whether we're people or a building, we all have hidden potential. Sometimes all it requires is for someone on the outside looking in, to point out to you what that potential might well be.

So after a few more trips to Leferink's, I might well be on my way to having a pretty decent man cave I never knew existed.

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