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Sewing Sleepy's beard

By Ted Brown
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It's said the eyes are the first to go.

First it was glasses, then bi-focals, and now progressives. And the old eyesight keeps getting a bit more strained.

Trying to read some printed documents, a label on a bottle and well, I sometimes have to pull out a magnifying glass.

Then there's trying to fix something. The most challenging task is tightening up the little screws on my eye glasses. I have to take them off to tighten the screw and I can't see the little screw cuz I don't have my glasses on. You get the drift.

But the latest challenge came Sunday night, when I was working on my Sleepy the dwarf of Snow White fame costume.

Okay, back up a couple weeks.

As a Halton Hills councillor, I was invited to take part in judging the Town of Halton Hills Halloween costume contest held at Town Hall.

The next week, I learned there was a theme for the council judges: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Okay, didn't see that one coming. I chose to be Sleepy.

Back at home, The Sidekick reacted.

I've been trying to get you to dress up for Halloween for years, she proclaimed, And you can do it for council?

Okay, I was caught. So we started a quest to find Sleepy.

On the internet, we pulled up a drawing of Sleepy. He wore earthy colours. That wasn't too hard to replicate. The big challenge was the beard. Sleepy has a long beard, and it had to be white, but not shaped like Santa's beard.

The stores in town didn't have anything close, so we went out of town. I found a long and flowing wig that was passable. If I hooked it on my chin, it was a pretty fine Sleepy beard.

The challenge was making the strap to hook over my head. We purchased some elastic and Sunday evening found me trying

with 65-year-old eyes



A Ted Bit

to anchor the straps to hold up the beard. The Sidekick tried safety pins to attach the elastic to the wig.

I wasn't too excited about having safety pins against my temples. What if they opened by mistake?

I decided to sew the straps onto the wig.

Years ago, I bought The Sidekick a sewing machine for Christmas. To say it isn't used much would be a bit of an understatement. It's possible I might use it more than she does.

So I set up the sewing machine on the kitchen table and started stitching the elastic to the wig.

The first pass went relatively well. It wouldn't pass muster on a *Say Yes to the Dress* episode, but it held.

One problem: as I pulled it out, the thread pulled out of the needle. I had to thread the needle with my 65-year-old eyes.

I yelled to The Sidekick, How do you thread the needle?

Her expression said it all blank.

It's automatic, but I don't use it that much, she started, I'm not sure.

She tried a couple times. Her eyes aren't much better than mine.

She then Googled thread needle Singer sewing machine to see if it yielded any hits.

Minutes passed, as I blindly tried to manually thread the needle. It suddenly went through. I was back in business.

A few more wild swipes through the sewing machine and the straps were attached the beard was safely suspended from my chin.

I put away the sewing machine, and thought to myself, I really should figure out how to thread that needle, but I was struck with reality.

Forget it. It'll be another year before I need to sew another Halloween costume.

And by then, I'll have even older eyes.

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