

I get a man cave - she gets a clean floor

A summer project is in the eye of the beholder, writes Ted Brown



TED BROWN
Column

This column represents a bunch of "firsts" for this year.

First of all, I'm writing while sitting on the veranda and the sun is shining. (I am wearing a jacket, but I just might remove it.)

Secondly, I'm writing this column on an old beater laptop that I'm certain Noah had on the ark with him.

My technically proficient grandson Andrew decided it was a total waste to have a perfectly good laptop that didn't work, so he spent 10 minutes with it and voilà - it's working.

(For years I've been trying to keep it running more than 10 minutes before it shuts down.)

Good work, Andrew! My other challenge is writing against the clock. The battery meter in this laptop "claims" it's good for one and a half hours. I'll believe that when I see it.

So if I suddenly wrap up this column, well it will probably be as a result of a low-battery warning message.

As spring finally arrives in Ontario, The Sidekick and I started discussing projects we might undertake with the coming of good weather.

We talked about replacing a window, we talked about refinishing a floor, and a host of other projects.

Then we discussed a 60th birthday celebration

we attended last fall, where I spoke with a contractor I've known for decades. His specialty is concrete.

I asked him what it would take to pour a new concrete floor in our garage. He gave me a ballpark figure.

The Sidekick suggested it might be a good project.

I must admit, The Sidekick is a bit unique in her priorities.

Most women I know would lobby toward having something renovated in the house.

Not her.

As we discussed it, she became excited with the prospect of having a smooth, polished concrete floor in the garage.

Our garage was originally the woodshed, where firewood was stored to heat the house back when it was originally built in the 1830s.

When the oil furnace was installed in the 1950s, the woodshed became a garage.

In my earliest recollections it had one door, and my grandfather installed a roll-up garage door in place of the old swinging wooden doors.

A few years later they installed another garage door, officially making the building a two-car garage.

When I was a little kid, it had the original dirt floor.

And as most people know, dirt floors tend to track a lot of stuff into the house.

A few years later, family friend Dick Appleyard came to the rescue.

Dick drove a ready-mix truck, and from time to time, after delivering his load, he'd have some concrete left over.

Ready-mix drivers were always looking for a place to dump extra concrete, so occasionally we'd get a call from Dick letting us know he was on his way with another "dump" of cement.

As time went by, the area where the two cars were parked was paved - sort of.

And today, there is still concrete on the floor - but it isn't pretty. It's pretty broken up.

In addition, the original concrete doesn't extend all the way across the garage.

We have a few sidewalk slabs to walk on, but the dirt still tracks in.

In addition, The Sidekick is wary of those sidewalk slabs, especially when she's wearing heels. More than once she has caught her heel in the sidewalk slab crack.

So she has an ulterior motive supporting this project, in spite of the fact the garage has the potential of becoming an entry level "man cave."

She sees it as a win-win deal - a clean floor and no sprained ankles.

And now, as I look at the battery level on this laptop, I think I might actually make it to the ...

- Ted Brown is a freelance writer for the Independent and Free Press and can be reached at tedbit@hotmail.com.

THE WAY WE WERE



7 | The IFP - Halton Hills | Thursday, May 10, 2018

EHS photo

Representative of a Gothic Revival style commercial building, 511 Guelph St. in Norval was the home of R. Watson Groceries and Bakery. In this 1912 photo, various members of the Watson family pose in front of the building, which still stands today as a private residence, and is listed as a cultural heritage property.

OPINION

Protect our food and water

It's spring and the provincial election is in the air. What better time to think about our expectations for our children?

Ontario is losing 175 acres of farmland to development every day - that's roughly two million acres by 2050. And demands for water by private interests are

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growing stronger. Yet Ontario's population is increasing so we need to be able to feed and supply more people.

I ask you and your readers, when you vote

on June 7, to make sure you choose a representative with a plan to protect Ontario's food and water for future generations.

Donna E. Baylis

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