

THE WAY WE WERE

This photo taken June 21, 1910 shows the junior and senior graduating classes from Glen Williams Public School. Courtesy of Esquesing Historical Society.

EHS photo



OPINION

FINDING THE 'PERFECT PLACE' FOR MY BIRTHDAY GIFT

WHERE DO YOU SHOWCASE A WORKBENCH, TED BROWN ASKS



TED BROWN
Column

I had a birthday last week.

And for the most part, I'm OK with birthdays. I hang onto my dad's adage, "having birthdays sure beats the hell outta the alternative."

But I do sometimes feel a bit "old" with the passing of yet another birthday.

The Sidekick absolutely loves birthdays. She almost dances on the table when her birthday rolls around.

Geez, she even loves it when someone else has a birthday.

But her favourite one to plan for is my birthday.

However, this year, she was in a bit of a quandary.

She had no ideas for my gift.

I get it, for those of us approaching that 70-year mark in the next couple years, there's not a whole lot of things we need.

My kids often buy concerts tickets for me - and I love getting them. This year was no exception.

The Sidekick, however was at a loss.

"What do you want for your birthday?" she asked. "I'm out of ideas for you this year."

Of course, as we males all know, replying with, "Oh, I don't know - surprise me ..." is NOT the correct response.

She talked to my daughters for ideas, but they'd al-

ready bought my gift. Time was running out.

A long time ago, I realized that if The Sidekick is with me when I'm shopping, I never, ever show any interest in an item that is on sale at Canadian Tire - it will invariably become my birthday/Christmas gift.

And she's not alone - my daughters are the same.

Years ago, I went Christmas shopping with one daughter. I looked at a Skil-saw for a couple minutes. Christmas morning it was under the tree.

Another time, another daughter, I received a Porter Cable cordless drill - a super gift, and all because I was caught "looking" at it.

So I'm careful.

A year ago, The Sidekick caught me perusing an item

in Canadian Tire. It was a super-duper deluxe workbench.

Actually, we both discussed it.

In the end, I decided it was too pricey - I just couldn't justify buying it.

Fast-forward to two weeks ago.

Somehow, the weekly Canadian Tire flyer escaped my gaze - it might even have been "misplaced."

And in that flyer was the aforementioned workbench - on sale for about half price.

I never saw it, but obviously it didn't escape The Sidekick's gaze.

She purchased it.

Now this item is pretty heavy duty. It can support 700 pounds of tools, etc. and has a great finish.

It also features heavy du-

ty casters as well - it can be moved like a baby carriage.

Such a shop item is perfect on the polished concrete in the shed or garage.

I was blown away when she opened the hatch of her Escape SUV, displaying two six-foot-long boxes weighing a ton.

"Do you like it?" she asked, looking like a happy puppy, wagging her tail.

"Yes, it's wonderful," I replied, "But you shouldn't have ..."

Of course, her next question was the tough one.

"So, where ya gonna put it?" she asked, tail wagging even harder.

Now that takes some thought.

The shed its most convenient - everything is in its place.

But in the garage, I have the option to "show it off"

when someone comes to visit. "So, ya wanna see the workbench The Sidekick gave me?"

I spent my birthday on the concrete floor of the shed, assembling the workbench.

It really is a work of art. When The Sidekick arrived home from work, we made our way to the shed. I opened the door and flipped on the lights.

The workbench glowed in the lights - truly magnificent.

"Wow," she gasped. "It looks wonderful."

"Yup," I replied, "And after seeing it assembled, I think I know the perfect place for it."

"And where would that be?" she asked.

"It'd make a perfect 'buffet' in the kitchen ..."

Ted Brown is a freelance journalist for the IFP. He can be contacted at ted-bit@hotmail.com.

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