

THE HALTON HILLS **WEEKEND**

KEN NUGENT
Publisher

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The price tag of life

The word leniency comes to mind when a Toronto man received only \$8,500 in fines after pleading guilty to 20 charges of fire code violations.

But still justice was served, and the man will now be forced to comply with the new fire code regulations which became law more than two years ago. That will make the Acton building of which he is landlord much safer.

But the whole mess could have been avoided had the man worked with our local fire officials to better the situation. The local fire prevention officers who are responsible for enforcing the new regulations, prefer to work with landlords, instead of taking people to court. Their goal is not to harass landlords, but to save lives.

However fire prevention officer Don Maveal points out in our page one story that there could be more landlords out there who have not complied with the new regulations.

While we realize that meeting the new minimum safety regulations could cost landlords money — maybe a lot — the alternative could be tragedy.

Can you really put a price tag on a life?



My wife gets stressed when I start measuring

Every once in a while, I get the bug.

The renovating bug, that is.

As much as it annoys my wife, I seem to have this deep-rooted need to occasionally rip the house apart.

Nothing major, mind you, just a new door here, a bit of drywall there, or maybe a short wall or closet.

And it seems my wife becomes stressed every time I start measuring.

"Why don't you finish your last project first, Ted," she says sarcastically, "I don't know if I can stand putting up with the house in a mess, if you start tearing a room apart."

Now I'll be the first to admit, over the years, I have had one or two projects that tended to linger a bit longer than initially planned.

But most of those delays were for good reasons, like running low on money, or an unexpected obstacle popping up in the middle of the construction, (usually due to a lack of vision on my part).

But this time, in spite of my track record, I assured her things will be different.

She wasn't easily swayed.

"Oh, I've heard that line before," she replies, "but the same thing always happens. You find something that needs more work at the same time, and the 'project' ends up taking forever."

So, in an effort to convince her, I headed to my trusty computer for assistance.

After searching numerous file servers on the Internet, I found and downloaded a

computer program that vanquishes all the fear and stress my better half tends to experience the moment I start measuring the length of the room.

It's called Home Plan 2.7, and is used to draw detailed room plans to a predetermined scale on a computer.

Now, she was skeptical at first — she always is.

But after I drew up a plan of the room to be renovated, drawn to scale, complete with all the measurements and furniture in place, she was forced to take a second look.

screen, right before her eyes. She was putty in my hands as I manipulated the room through the magic of Home Plan.

"That does look like it might work..." she cautiously acknowledged, as the plan spewed from the printer. "And the closet would be... how long?"

"Forty-eight, no, actually 49 inches wide," I replied. "The plan is only accurate to an inch, so I could be out by a half or three quarters of an inch."

She was impressed. "Well then," she said, "if it fits that well, I guess there's no reason why we shouldn't go ahead with it. After all, I'll admit it looks good on paper."

At that moment, victory was mine.

Now I'm waiting for the arrival of cooler weather, as I don't enjoy building a wall, hanging a door or taping drywall in 30 degree temperatures.

So my project is tentatively slated to begin this fall.

Until then, I'll look over the plans, and my better half will check out wallpaper, and bring home paint color chips.

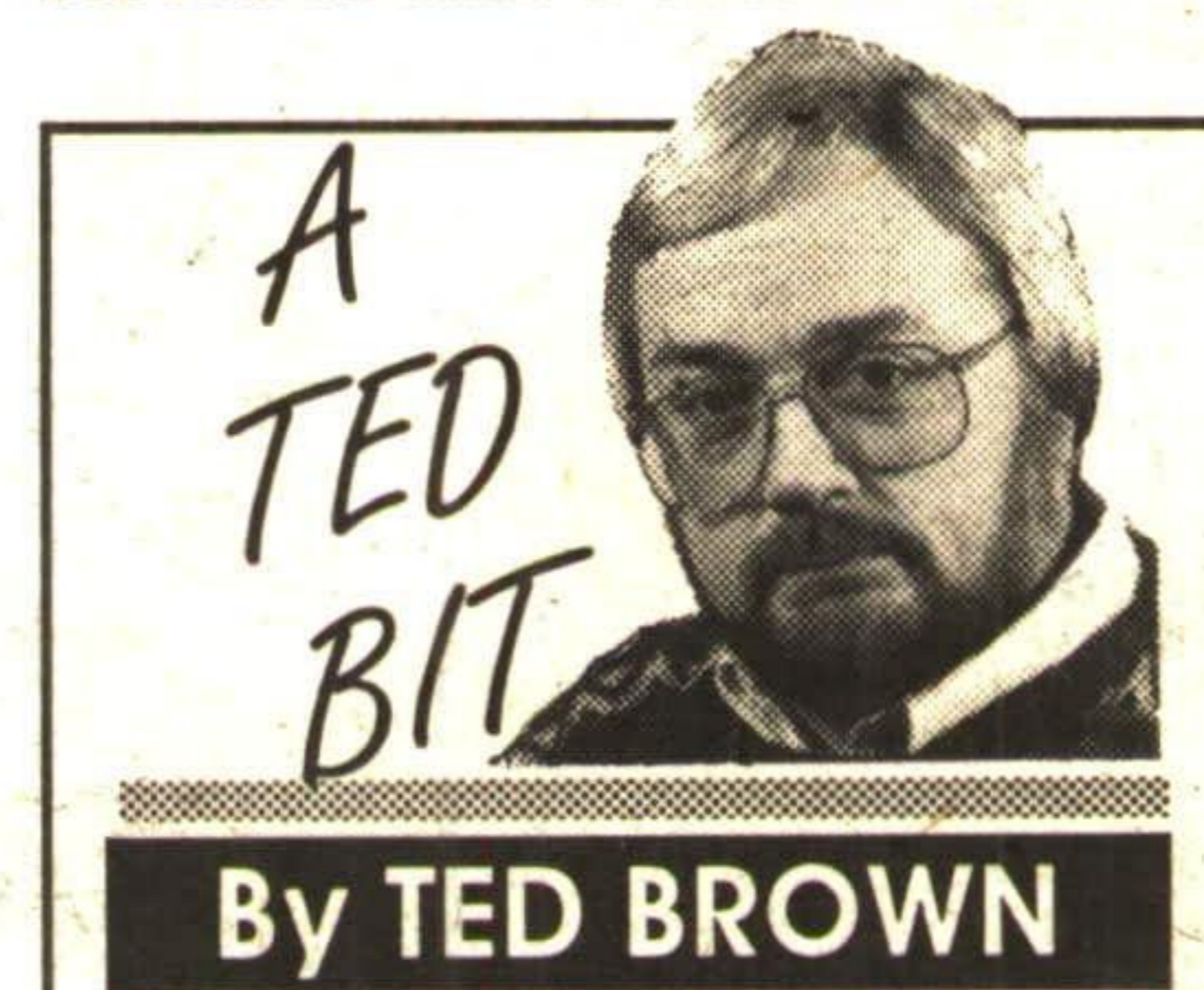
But I do have one small concern — one I haven't shared with her.

And it evolves around the Home Plan program.

You see, the program is only as good as its operator, working with the measurements entered.

And I'm just hoping I measured that room correctly. Because if I didn't, who knows?

That closet could end up only 18 inches long.



"How do you know that door will fit?" she questioned, a tad defensive.

"Cuz this plan is drawn to scale, so we know a 36 inch door fits that opening," I replied, with an air of authority. "We can also fit a closet on that wall as well, with lots of room to spare. In fact, we'll have 29 inches clearance between the closet wall and the bed."

"Hmmm," she said, studying the plans. "How about having the closet face the other way?"

"Simple," I smirked to myself, as I changed the direction of the closet on the

Did you know?

Many people actually short-circuit their brain power by getting too little sleep. In fact, nearly half the population (47 per cent) believe the brain rests while the body sleeps. However, the opposite is true. Sleep allows the brain to go to work, filing and storing the day's event. Neuroscientists now say that sleep is absolutely critical for key brain functions including learning, memory and performance.

NAPS

RR2



You know there's a generation gap when they ask what does 'VJ Day' mean.