

It's a loooooong way to the ground below

With the passing of Labour Day, there's a feeling that summer is long gone and fall is well on the way.

And at this time of year, I walk past the air conditioner unit in my bedroom window and concoct yet another reason why I shouldn't remove it— at least not yet.

I have a tendency to procrastinate about removing the air conditioners from the windows.

I guess it's a combination between admitting fall is here, and the fact the damn things are always wet and drippy, not to mention full of slimy gunk and dead bugs.

And whenever I do finally remove them, I'm reminded of that fall, decades ago, when I was a little tardy with that annual task.

When I was a young adult, living with my parents, the only form of air conditioning we had at home was an old oscillating Sea Breeze fan, blowing hot air on already hot bodies.

I decided to take a rebellious step and purchase my very own air conditioner. I installed it in the den window in the house, so we could all enjoy the cooling breeze.

I tell ya, the den was THE most popular room in the house after I bought that unit.

I took full advantage of it, sleeping on the sofa when the humid nights made the upstairs bedrooms of the old farmhouse too hot for sleeping.

We endured that first summer with that little 5,000 BTU unit purring away, cooling the room, thinking we'd all died and gone to heaven.

And even after I got married, and lived in a mobile home next door, that little air conditioner was still faithfully installed in the den window every spring and removed every fall— by me.

But one fall, after the summer heat waves had

A
TED
BIT



Ted Brown

long subsided, my mother repeatedly suggested it was time I removed it from the window.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'll get to it," I said.

But I just never got around to it.

Because the window in which it was installed is about 10 feet above the ground, removing that air conditioner was a little

tricky.

It's a long way down to the ground below.

Mom continued to pester me, and I continued to ignore her, until the middle of October when she decided to take things into her own hands.

I came home from work that evening, to find she'd left a message for me to go up to the house.

Apparently, when she attempted to take out the air conditioner, she lifted the window, and watched it take off.

To the ground 10 feet below.

The battered little Electrohome had been hauled into the basement, and all the little pieces from its expanding sides were gathered up.

It wasn't very pretty and mom was quite meek about the ordeal. I plugged in the smashed appliance which had made summers tolerable.

Miraculously, it still worked, blowing cold air through its cracked grill, just the same as always.

And it continued to work for another decade, held together with duct tape and plywood, until it gave up the ghost and headed off to that big window sill in the sky, where all good air conditioners go after they've cooled their last breath.

Since that fall so long ago, I've lifted many air conditioning units in and out of that same window sill— it's now my bedroom window.

But every year, as I prepare to lift it out, a little voice still echoes in the back of my head.

"Ted, hang on to the damned thing!"

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Important West Nile Virus Information


Risk of West Nile virus infection increasing

Local monitoring indicates that the risk of Halton residents becoming infected with West Nile virus has increased, particularly in south Burlington and south Oakville. Therefore, it is especially important to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites. Although many people associate Labour Day with the end of summer, mosquitoes continue to pose a threat until colder weather sets in.

For more information about personal protective measures, please call:

The Halton Region Health Department
at 905-825-6000 ext 6187 or
visit the Health Department's Web site at
www.region.halton.on.ca/health

1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, ON L6M 3L1
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