

A laid-back approach—almost

As the calendar flipped over to 2008, I decided to take a more mellow and laid-back approach to life. It's not really a New Year's Resolution, more of a lifestyle adjustment to enjoy life a bit more.

Let's face it, getting all bent outta shape over some stupid little issue ain't really productive, and can only inject stress into one's life.

So that was my goal—become laid-back.

Waking up New Year's Day, I peered out the window to see what the weather was like. We'd driven home in a snowstorm hours before, so I was expecting a hefty accumulation of the white stuff in the driveway.

I wasn't disappointed—it was pretty deep.

The Sidekick and I took a hike over to the shed to plug in the tractors' block heaters, amid a blowing whiteout storm. Looking at the conditions, I decided it might be wise to get the snow blower out and get rid of some of the snow, and then blow it again later, after the storm had subsided.

I fired up my trusty old tractor and snow blower, ready to do battle with anything Old Man Winter could toss at me.

That tractor is my favourite, bought new in 1972. Climbing into the cab and sliding behind the controls is sort of like greeting an old friend.

The same with the attached seven-foot wide snow blower—it's 25 years old, looks like it's 5 years old at best, and hasn't given a smidgen of trouble in that quarter century of use.

I have full confidence in that tractor and blower combo—so much confidence that years ago a lady considering renting a house on my property indignantly asked if I had 'adequate equipment to clear that long lane of snow.'

I recall my curt reply, "If the snow is so deep that my tractor and blower can't handle it, then you really shouldn't be trying to go to work."

That thought in mind, I smirked like some fanatical operator, as I pulled out of the shed, engaged the blower and the snow started to pour out of the spout in a long white stream. But after clearing only 25 feet, the blower suddenly quit.

Returning to the sanctuary of the shed to

Ted Brown



investigate, I found the PTO drive shaft had separated.

Years ago, this might have been the point where I'd have let rip with a long line of profanity, threw things and got all bent outta shape.

But I didn't. Not a word. Not even a head shake. Instead, I tenderly thought how that dear old snowblower had given all those years of dependable service and never once complained.

I borrowed a shaft off a neighbour's blower, but it didn't fit, so I climbed aboard my other tractor equipped with a loader (but without the comfort of a cab) and spent several hours punching a hole through the deep snow in the driveway.

I had to clear it again early Wednesday morning in the dark, after the snow had blown in overnight. But not once did I get even the teeniest bit upset. In fact, I actually reveled in the fact that I'd engaged 'Plan B,' and got the job done—laid-back.

Thanks to Bill Brooks of Brooks Farm Service, the shaft was repaired Wednesday afternoon, and I had the blower back in service later that night.. A couple hours of cleaning up the piles of snow in the dark and things were back to normal.

Actually, I was damn proud of myself.

During that entire ordeal, not one word of profanity passed through my lips.

Okay, we won't count that one single, solitary, very brief moment, when I nailed my finger while re-assembling the blower drive shaft...

(Ted Brown can be reached at tbrown@independentfreepress.com)

Cash Back Now On Your Car Insurance

Insurance company rates are \$100's, even \$1,000's apart for the same car and driver.

For Free...InsuranceHotline.com instantly quotes you the best price available from over 30 of the top insurance companies. 80% of drivers that go on-line find an average savings of \$780, instantly.

Then you decide if you'd rather wait for your insurance to renew, or get your money back NOW by switching to a better priced insurance company.

Make no mistake...It's easy to switch. InsuranceHotline.com emails you your quote and gives you the name of the insurance company that has the best rate, along with their contact information.

Lee Romanov
President, InsuranceHotline.com



All you need to do is call the contact provided by InsuranceHotline.com. The insurance rep will do the rest.

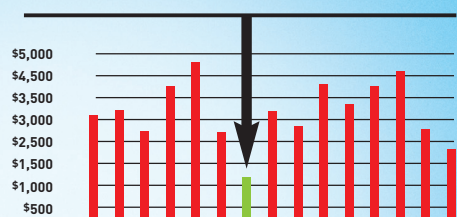
Look at this chart...There's a spread of \$1,000's from the insurance company offering the lowest rate to the highest rated company.

30 Insurance Companies Quoted - Lowest to Highest Rate			
Driving Record	Vehicle	LOW	HIGH
Good Record	Pontiac Grand Am SE 4DR	\$1,313	\$4,698
2 Tickets	Chevrolet Blazer S Series 2DR 4WD	\$1,588	\$5,509

The probability of you being insured, right now, with the insurance company that has the best rate for you is low.

InsuranceHotline.com directs you to the best priced insurance company.

InsuranceHotline.com finds this rate for drivers!



Go to www.InsuranceHotline.com and get your money back now.

Our **BIGGEST** Year End Closeout Ever!

25 to 50% off+



#1 Selling Serta Perfect Night in Canada

50% off

Serta PERFECT NIGHT

999⁹⁹

Reg Price. \$1999.97 pntraqpk Plus Do Not Pay For **15 Months***

King Sleep Set Reg Price. \$2599.97 - SALE PRICE \$1299.99 pntrakpk

MADE WITH SPACE AGE MEMORY FOAM & PRESSURE RELIEVING LATEX

#1 Selling Simmons Beautyrest at The Brick

40% off

Simmons Beautyrest Queen Sleep Set

Reg Price. \$1999.97 diam4btp Plus Do Not Pay For **15 Months***

King Sleep Set Reg Price. \$2599.97 - SALE PRICE \$1599.99 diam4btp

MADE WITH SPACE AGE MEMORY FOAM & PRESSURE RELIEVING LATEX

#1 Selling Sealy Posturepedic in Canada

30% off

Sealy Posturepedic Plush or Firm Queen Sleep Set

Reg Price. \$1499.97 aqua2pqp/qaq2kpk Plus Do Not Pay For **15 Months***

King Sleep Set Reg Price. \$2099.97 - SALE PRICE \$1469.99 aqua2pqp/qaq2kpk

MADE WITH SPACE AGE MEMORY FOAM

The BRICK mattress store

Mattress Specialists Since 1971

shop our entire mattress selection@thebrickmattressstore.com!

Brampton
547 Steeles Ave East.
547 Steele Ave East,
in the Orion Gate Plaza
(905) 453-6359



Milton
1220 Steeles Ave E.
Hwy 401 & James Snow Parkway
(905) 864-3303



BRICK CARD PLATINUM

INSURANCE OFFER

The BRICK

PRICE GUARANTEE

We will beat any competitor's comparable offer on a comparable product by 10%.

See in-store for complete details.

*All credit offers available O.A.C. only on your Brick Card Platinum, minimum purchase \$250. Any Brick delivery charges, applicable taxes and administration fee (\$99.95) are payable at time of purchase. Balance due April 2009. Interest may accrue for the final 25 days prior to the promotion's payment due date but will be waived if the payment of the balance is made in full by the due date. Product may vary by location. We reserve the right to limit quantities by store and per purchase. *This offer cannot be combined with any other free gift or discount offers. One FREE gift per purchase. †Free Delivery and removal of old sleep set with purchase on Brick Card Platinum. ‡Does not apply to products that are exclusive to The Brick. ** With minimum purchase of \$999 sleep set and the purchase of an appropriate bed frame. *** When you purchase a mattress pad or UV3 protection. Effective January 1st -31st, 2008 or unless otherwise indicated. See in store for complete details.