

But local Canadian Tire store rights the wrong

Couple left stunned after strangers impersonate them to snatch gazebo

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Staff Writer

Robert and Judy Lesica are pretty fair people.

They always wait their turn at coffee shops, they don't butt in at the supermarket, and don't even exceed the 16-item limit at the express cashier.

But even though the Brampton couple play by the rules of courtesy and fair play in their every day life, they were recently issued a major kick in the pants.

Accompanied by Judy's sister, who lives locally in Halton Hills, they went shopping at the Georgetown Canadian Tire store, looking for a gazebo.

"We were buying it for a family member, to put it at their cottage," said Robert.

"We went to the courtesy desk and asked if they had one in a box," said Robert, "but they were out of stock. The person at the courtesy desk suggested calling the Milton store to see if they had one in stock there, and as it turned out, they had one left.

"We asked if they could hold it for us," continued Robert. "I gave them the name 'Anderson,' as that was my wife's maiden name, and was easier to give over the phone

than Lesica."

Robert, Judy and her sister continued shopping, then took a drive to Milton to pick up the gazebo.

"When we got there, I noticed a unique truck in the parking lot of the Milton store, and some people were loading something into it," said Robert. "I also noticed a woman who looked quite familiar as she walked around the truck."

Robert dropped off his wife and sister-in-law, and parked his vehicle.

"A few minutes later, I joined my wife and sister-in-law— they were furious," said Robert. "They had gone to the courtesy desk, and asked for the store manager whom they had spoken with earlier. He was outside. When he came in and they said they were there to pick up the gazebo for 'Anderson', he had a strange look on his face.

"A guy (and a woman) came into the store looking for Steve (the Milton store manager) and said he was there to pick up the gazebo they were holding for them," said Robert. "Are you the Andersons?" the store manager asked, to which they answered 'yes', so he loaded it for them.

"We were furious," said Robert. "As I thought about it, I realized why that truck looked familiar, with its distinct lettering on the

side— it was in the parking lot when we went into Georgetown Canadian Tire.

"And the more I thought about it," he continued, "I suddenly realized that the woman I saw in the parking lot in Milton was the same one who stood behind us at the courtesy desk in Georgetown! She obviously overheard our conversation and they headed to Milton to get the gazebo they were holding for us, before we could pick it up."

Robert and the two ladies went home feeling quite cheated, and upset that people would stoop that low, especially when they were picking up the gazebo as a gift.

He contacted *The Independent & Free Press* to send a letter to the editor, but editor John McGhie opted to apprise Georgetown Canadian Tire store manager Tracey Craig of what had happened.

Craig contacted the Lesicas, and told them she would do what she could to track down another gazebo, which were in very short supply all across Canada.

"Coincidentally, we had the exact one returned," said Craig, "and I called the Lesicas, to tell them I was holding it for them."

What the Lesicas didn't know was Craig also had another pleasant surprise for them— Georgetown store owner Tom Kase gave



Robert and Judy Lesica of Brampton recently picked up their gazebo after the one they had spoken for in Milton was picked up by another couple posing as them. Canadian Tire Georgetown store manager Tracey Craig also presented them with a \$100 gift card.

Photo by Ted Brown

them a \$100 gift certificate for their trouble.

"We were overwhelmed by the gift certificate," said Robert. "We were just so pleased that Tracey (Craig) had been able to locate another gazebo, and we'd be able to take it to the cottage. We were really humbled when she gave us the gift certificate as well."

"I felt a bit ashamed by it all," said Craig. "Although it wasn't our fault, I felt like these people had

been taken advantage of, and we wanted to help out. My only hope is that the couple who did this to them are not from Halton Hills—I'd hate to think we have people that low living in town, people who would pull off a stunt like that."

And with the outcome to their story, there is a bit of comfort for fair and courteous people like the Lesicas.

Good guys do finish first after all.

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Katherine Bailey



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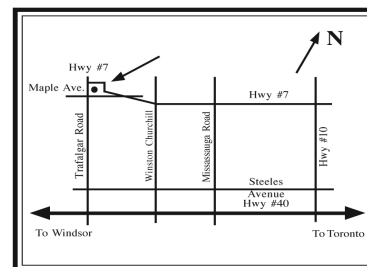
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