

# 'Where can we mark our initials?'

Every time I return from a week of vacation, I find I need time at my desk—just to get rested up.

You see, I'm one of those people who likes to use vacation time as an opportunity to do projects at home—ones that have been waiting for that time when I'm not hindered by a commitment somewhere else.

Last week was that time.

The Sidekick took time off too, and we agreed we'd do a few day trips, but also tackle some of those jobs we've both been looking at for ages. One job has been waiting for us since last November—November 25, 2007, to be exact.

You see, last year we had a load of concrete delivered to level out the floor in the barn, making it accessible for a skid steer loader or a tractor to drive in and out.

We poured half of it last year.

And the other half of the barn floor has been sitting there, crying out to be finished.

Before we even started our week off, I established the date of the pour—August 8, 2008, at 3:30 p.m.

I had to set a distinct date and time for the project to make sure I had called in a few favours so I had some help with the job.

For those who haven't experienced the joy of pouring concrete, there is a lot to be considered.

It's heavy, it's backbreaking (especially on a wheelbarrow) and it's a bit intimidating, as you set your tiny wheelbarrow under the spout of a cement truck that has a capacity of

## Ted Brown



hauling 11 cubic metres of the flowing, enveloping stuff.

Always enthusiastic about any project, The Sidekick wanted to get right into the fray.

With a stature of 5' 2", I knew the possibility of putting her on the end of a wheelbarrow wasn't going fly. She's simply too little.

And there were three of us guys, with a grand total of three wheelbarrows available.

So, doing the math, it wasn't gonna happen.

She spied the cement rake.

"I can use the rake!" she said affirmatively.

"Okay, we'll dump the concrete into the forms and you can rake it level before we trowel it," I explained.

After the first of the concrete oozed out of the chute into my wheelbarrow, I wheeled it over to the forms. Behind me, a second load filled the next wheelbarrow, followed by the third. It was a smooth-running operation, with one wheelbarrow following the other like a well-

oiled assembly line.

About 25 minutes into the pour, I looked over at The Sidekick. She was suddenly looking pretty used up.

"You okay?" I asked.

"I never knew that concrete was so hard to rake," she said. "I think both my arms are pulled out of their sockets. And my back's killing me!"

(Okay, that's something like what she said... in truth, it might be deemed unprintable.)

She took a much deserved rest and I took over what was left of the raking, and then started to float the service of the cement.

In 40 minutes total, we had the truck empty and the concrete in place. The time-consuming part of troweling the concrete continued for another hour, as we put the finishing touches on the pour.

As the four of us proudly surveyed the finished project, the inherent difference between man and woman became so clearly apparent.

The three of us guys stood there, pleased with ourselves, thinking how serviceable that area of the barn is now, as visions of skid steer loaders moving material danced in our minds.

But The Sidekick, adding her female perspective, peered across the shining wet, freshly-troweled cement, and asked that burning question.

"Where can we mark our initials?"

(Ted Brown can be reached at [tbrown@independentfreepress.com](mailto:tbrown@independentfreepress.com))

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In our August 14th flyer the front cover indicates 'over 200 colours to choose from' the number of towel colours were incorrectly stated. On Page 11, the Large Popcorn Machine states \$200 off reg. \$599.99, this is incorrect. The regular price is \$399.99 therefore, the \$200 off will not be applied.

Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

stop

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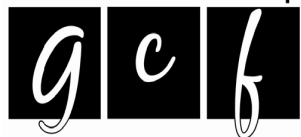
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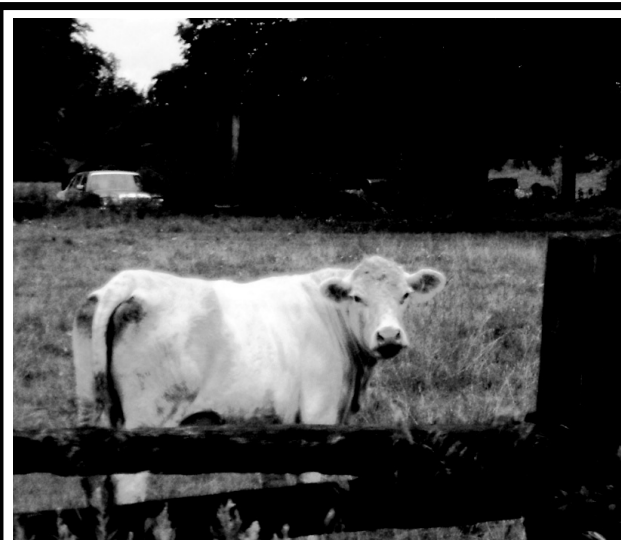
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