

Ready for that first blizzard

Last weekend, I told The Sidekick I thought I was getting better with age.

(She was quick to agree, but since she became Mrs. Sidekick two weeks ago, she may have misunderstood me.)

Last weekend, I put the final touches on the old farm tractor— you know, that conversion thing, from being a turf terrorizing grass cutting machine to kick-ass snow blower.

And there really hasn't been so much as a snowflake to inspire me to do so.

I simply did it just 'cuz I felt like it.

For those unfamiliar with the joys of country living in the winter, this is significant, particularly for me.

There have been years I've been found out in the driving shed attaching the blower and tire chains— as that first blizzard raged outside.

Not this year.

The week of Thanksgiving, I not only hoisted the tractor cab up onto the tractor as I usually do— a week or so later, I installed the tire chains and attached the snow blower!

Now think about the weather in October— I was actually dressed in a T-shirt while doing all those changeovers.

As always, the snow blower received a set of brand new shear bolts in the drives, the gear boxes were topped up with oil and the bearings were greased and packed.

Last Saturday, I performed the final phase, connecting the electrical wiring from the cab to the tractor, so the auxiliary lights, heater and windshield wipers will operate.

I tell ya, that baby's just itching for snow.

Now I'm not sure what's come over me—the older I get, the more prepared I've become.

Honestly, it kinda scares me.

'Older' and 'smarter' are words that I like to use to describe my actions.

But I do sometimes fear it might just indicate I don't have a life.

Oh sure, I've had my snow tires installed on

Ted Brown



the car fairly early in previous years, but I've always had to be hit with a tiny snowstorm to encourage me to take that bold step.

But not this year.

With the temperatures running in the positive double digits up until a week or so ago, some people thought I was nuts, being at this level of preparedness for the coming winter.

Some even thought I was jinxing things, encouraging winter to hit with a passion.

I disagree. If anything, I figure my actions are likely holding Ol' Man Winter back.

After all, what fun is it for him to hit us with a major blizzard when I'm sitting there, tractor and blower ready, looking up to the skies, just waiting for a foot of snow to land on the lane?

So I'm ready!

The Sidekick said she's quite happy the snow removal equipment is ready to go.

She's one of those people who loves winter while peering at it out the window— not facing it by pulling on heavy boots and coats, then plugging through a foot of snow to get to work.

For those who feel I'm overly prepared, I can only respond with one fact.

One morning, in the not-too-distant future, when we least expect it, we'll wake up to a world of white winter wonderland.

And when that happens, one thing's certain.

I'll be the one grinning from ear to ear.

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

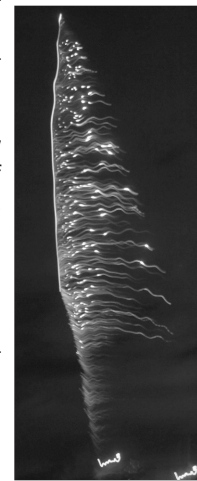


Festival of light



Maureen Andrew had some henna artwork applied to her hand by cosmetology Grade 11 student Alicia Madill at the recent Diwali festival held at Christ the King School. The event was presented by the Diversity Awareness Team at the school. (Left) Mary Lozowsky of CtK samples some of the treats offered at the festival which ended with a fireworks display.

Photos by Ted Brown



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