

Practically trivial

Next time you are in one of those home renovation-type stores, take notice of the men around you (there'll be no shortage of them). Observe carefully and you'll soon realize that almost all of them can be placed fairly accurately into one of two categories.

First there is the type of guy who struts about the store confidently, picking up supplies along the way and never, ever consulting a list. He's got a swagger and an aura about him that says to all, "When it comes to home renovations, I got game!" He has 2 x 4's balanced over his shoulder, a tape measure clutched securely in hand and a tool belt dangling about his waist. This is a guy who was born knowing how to fix things, who never reads instructions and who easily balances the several work projects going on around his house at any given time. Undoubtedly his pick-up truck awaits him in the parking lot. This, ladies and gentlemen, is Practical Man. Do you know him?

Then there's the other type—exemplified by the guy who wanders aimlessly about the store looking not unlike that

deer that keeps getting caught in the headlights. He hasn't a clue as to where to find what he needs—especially since he's not sure what that might be. When he finally happens upon the right department and asks questions of the store associate, he does so apologetically while using terms like "thingamajig" and "whatchamacallit". He is out of his element. Rather than being in a place like that, he should be home, relaxing, in front of the TV, watching "Jeopardy". This is Trivia Man. I know him well ... for I am he.

To be fair, there are others like me—although membership in our club is strictly limited to those who know almost nothing that has any practical value. It's not that we are knowledgeable. It's just that what we know is useful to no one. Our heads are crammed

full of information that could charitably be described as "inconsequential". Trivia Man knows the capital city of every U.S. state, the phone numbers of people he hasn't called since 1964 and the height (in feet and in metres) of Mount Kilimanjaro—although you'd be astonished at how infrequently those topics come up in casual conversation.

Practical Man, if left alone on a deserted island with only a pocket knife at his disposal, would plan and construct a bi-level shelter, hunt successfully for food and, eventually, design and build his own ingenious means of escape. Trivia Man, as the buzzards swirl overhead, would be unable to get the pocket knife open.

Of course none of us is really either

100% Trivia Man or totally Practical Man (think Tim the "Tool Man" Taylor for being about as close as it gets). We all possess some trivial knowledge and some that is at least vaguely practical. For example, I now know that, when wiring a new light fixture, there is considerable merit in first turning off the power.

I wish that I could say that I come from a long line of Trivia Men and that genetics must thereby be held to account. The sad truth is that my grandfather, father and uncle were Practical Men through and through and two of the handiest and most proficient guys that I know are my brother and my son. No, in my family I must bear this burden alone.

I have come to realize, however, that there is one benefit to attaining Trivia Man status and that is that we rarely get Saturday morning calls from friends or neighbours asking for our assistance with an all-day project. We leave those calls to you, Practical Man. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm trying to recall the exact number of Stanley Cups won by the Maple Leafs since 1967. . . .



i've got issues

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Three airlifted to hospital after Pelee Island accident

Three local people were airlifted to a Windsor hospital Aug. 19 as a result of a car accident on Pelee Island. A report from the Essex detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police states that Justin Mullins, 20, of Lakeshore was traveling

southbound on Henderson Road south of Parsons Road when he lost control of a 2003 Chrysler Sebring at around 7:15 p.m. Aug. 19, OPP officers state. The car rolled several times on the roadway. Three of the four occupants of the car were ejected, according to the report.

Mullins, and two back seat passengers, Kent Hergott, 21, of Lakeshore and Lindsay Moskal, 18, of Essex were airlifted to Hotel Dieu Hospital. The front passenger, Nicole Mahon, 18, of Lakeshore was treated for a fractured ankle and released, the report states.

Const. Janet Hayes said alcohol and speed were factors in the accident and that some members of the vehicle were not wearing seatbelts. Charges are pending, the officer said.

William "Bill" Gay

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