

Yule gift makes for clean sweep

Last Christmas, my husband gave me a special present — a ticket to England to visit my mother, who's celebrating her 70th birthday in May.

For the first time in nearly 11 years, I'm going to cross the pond unaccompanied, my single suitcase crammed with essentials like hair sculpting lotion and impractical, fashionable shoes instead of the entire contents of both children's closets, including rubber boots, ski jackets and a plethora of artist's materials, which by themselves could fill a 747.

By the time I arrive at Terminal 2, I'll really need that holiday.

Before I had children, taking a holiday was a spur of the moment affair, which consisted of throwing a few things into a suitcase at the last minute and heading for the nearest train or plane. Forward planning for this little jaunt, however, would make a military strategist blanch.

I may know where everything is in my rather dishevelled household, but even Sherlock Holmes would have trouble tracking down a pair of scissors at Chateau Gilderdale without my help.

The first thing I've had to do therefore, is clean out the closets so my family can continue to function during my absence.

It's certainly been an exercise in nostalgia. The linen closet yielded a long-lost shirt and a veritable treasure trove of single socks; the companions of those accumulating by the washing



KATE'S CORNER
Kate Gilderdale

machine over the past few years — the very ones I threw away in despair last week during my mammoth clean up of the basement.

While I'd rather not ponder what I found during my rehabilitation of the fridge, I can

now see at a glance there's nothing edible in there, except yogurt cartons of an uncertain vintage, numerous little pots with bacon fat in them and jars of mayonnaise labelled "best before June 30, 1987."

My husband's even thinking of downgrading his life insurance, now that he can open kitchen cupboards without fear of being rendered unconscious by a shower of precariously balanced pots and pans. And my daughter is constantly opening the food cupboard to advertise to her friends the amazing fact that there is some kind of unnatural

order within. And where do you keep the little bits of paper with maps on them, showing you how to get to someone's house, or the scribbled down phone numbers you plan to put into your phone book when you've got a minute? In that special place known as the muddy drawer; a sort of holding area, for things you think may one day be required, but which are only ever needed the day after you've ruthlessly thrown them out.

I don't want to move, but I think we may have to, because for the first time, my house can bear the scrutiny of a buyer.

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Economist & Sun Tribune



Bard work

Budding Othellos at Stouffville District Secondary School tried their best at offering a gracious bow after a visit by Shakespeare in Action at the school. English Media students were treated to a day of drama workshops and presentations as part of the event. Finally, the students were

taught how to offer a bow that would make the Bard proud. Doing their best from left are Katerina Amallos, Grade 10, Shakespeare in Action member Emerita Emerencia, Marc Lapointe, Grade 11 and Jason Seddema, Grade 11.

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