

Community Comment 2/3/2014

By Jon Sapper

Early Spring Cleaning

With the nice weather, I'm into early Spring cleaning. I can't stand to throw things away. I'm not a hoarder, just frugal. Maybe it was my upbringing where somewhere along the line I was told to appreciate what you have, fix things, clean things, keep things.

That value resulted in lots of stuff not being thrown away. Well, I jumped into it the other day. I was surprised at what I found when I looked in the closets, drawers and boxes laying around. It was like Christmas. What could have possessed me to keep two small cheap picture frames with broken glass? Did I actually think I would fix those 99 cent frames? Lord only knows what I was planning to do with three rotary phones with long extension cords. I guess I could have taken them to the Fortuna Museum. And what was I thinking by keeping six broken little flashlights? You know, the ones you buy at the checkout counter that stop shining before you get to your car after leaving the store. The light works on these things, just not the button you push. Very frustrating! I keep pushing the button and the light comes on every 9th or 10th push, just often enough to keep me pushing it. I think psychologists call this operant conditioning or classical conditioning or some kind of conditioning. I really hate to think I'm that predictable. Don't ask me why I keep buying them. Psychologists probably have an answer for that, too.

Then there's the boxes with clothes. Clothes with not enough material to go around me anymore. I know we joke about it, but those things do shrink. They really really do.

I came up with a 5 step process for dealing with the stuff. Step 1....Make individual piles. Step 2.....Move small piles to large piles. Step 3.....Combine larger piles into a closet. Step 4....Move stuff in closets to a single vacant room. Step 5..... Move room stuff to the garage.

Then you have three choices...Garage sale, Goodwill or the dump. Some of us get these last two confused. I took some stuff to Goodwill a while back only to be

greeted by, "Are you serious?" Now that was embarrassing. I ended up taking it to the dump.

Going through this type of cleaning made me feel good. It may be just the moving stuff around part and hiding it that made me feel better. Psychologists probably have a response to that, also.

One of the big challenges I do have is to achieve simplicity.....and I think I'm failing miserably. But it's not due to lack of effort. Anybody want some rotary phones, flashlights or picture frames? Call me. I still have 'em.

This has been Jon Sapper for Community Comment.