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"It's A Guy Thing"

by  
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Hello again, time sure is flying by... summer's almost gone and school will be starting again... did I just hear a few mothers saying, "Yea!!!" Anyway, I thought it was time for me to break away from the heavy stuff for a spell and interject a little fluff into the column. Judy and I, along with three couples from our neighborhood, are leaving today for our annual trek to Myrtle for seven days of golf, good food and tomfoolery. It's a great getaway from getting up every day to tomfoolery, good food, and playing golf in The Villages.

Have you ever watched an interview with some pro athlete summing up how he got where he was, "*Gosh, this is what I always wanted to do. I can remember standing outside the ball stadium when I was growing up... dreaming about one day being a big league ball player... and here I am today (then a long sigh of accomplishment.)*" You won't believe it but I've always felt the same way when I'd walk through a hardware store. Well, maybe it wasn't the same thing... I never really grew up wanting to be a hardware store owner, but I did always have a fascination with all things mechanical. As a kid I always wanted to take things apart and see if I could put them back together again... which, of course, I couldn't... but I still had a fascination with them. I always marveled at those who could just look at a machine and figure out how it worked and be able to fix them if they were on the blink.

Maybe it's the pre-historic, hunter-gatherer genes in me that makes me get a thrill everytime I walk into a hardware store looking for a 3/16<sup>th</sup> drill bit, or a metric ratchet set or whatever they're called. Oh, the excitement of the hunt and the thrill of victory when I find what I'm looking for without asking directions to the right aisle. Up one aisle and down the next... never quite sure what awaits around the next corner. C'mon guys... you know what I'm talkin' here. I try to discourage those store employees who come up to me asking, "Do you need any help?" "No thank you," I reply, assured in my mind that I can do this... I can find that elusive tool, screw, bit or even something a little more exotic like a sheet of extra-fine, 400 grit sandpaper for that final rubdown before applying the last coat of paint on your ride. Some of the larger stores that have huge hardware, plumbing and/or electrical sections are especially exciting to visit because you never have to worry about someone asking if you need help.

Now, you ladies out there who don't go to a hardware store for the thrill of the chase you might want to forego the large superstores because you would be lost. You need to stick to the smaller specialty hardware stores where you're greeted at the door with six or eight guys with earphones and mikes on their head ready to give you immediate directions to the proper aisle for the

item you're seeking, and if they're not sure they'll call "Ted," the super, walking encyclopedia of all things hardware, to answer your questions.

I will admit I've run into a few ladies, like Sarah, who loves to go into a hardware store as much as I do, but for different reasons. She likes to roam the aisles ready to pounce on some new gadget or thing-a-ma-jig that has come out to make her life easier at home.

Not asking directions is truly a man-thing... its been proven. I recently read there are several other things you will never hear "real guys" say, such as:

- 1) I bought that PC (computer) because it matches the décor of my room.
- 2) I bought that PC at Walmart.
- 3) Let's call tech support (Remember, that's asking for directions.)

Some call it stupid pride for a guy to not ask directions, but ask any guy and he'll tell you it's an adventure... like searching for buried treasure, or looking for the six differences in that silly cartoon next to the comics in the newspaper. It's a challenge and one that must be met head on. Don't give up the ship. Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead. (Clark Gable said that... didn't he?) It's like pressing on the golf course when you're two holes down with one to go, or tying the knot in the end of the rope and hanging on... you can do it. I guess to say it's a "guy thing" would be oversimplifying a truth that's older than life. Look at Moses, did he stop and ask directions when he was wandering around in the desert? Absolutely not.

Hang in there guys. Be who you are and be proud of it. Semper Fi , Semper Paratus and Montani Semper Liberi!!! I gotta go now. I need to return a drill bit I bought at the hardware store... it was the wrong size.

See you next week.

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