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 (2007 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card # 3)

**The Entryway**

 Entryways are very important in Canada. Entryways are where one enters and takes off their footwear. Winter, Summer, in between, … no matter, one takes off their footwear. For aliens, this presents a problem. They have been walking around happily since weaned with holes in their socks, and now, Good Grief, *“Everyone’s taking off their shoes!”* Oh well, when in Rome. Canadians excel at this removal-replacement discipline. Dave Adams, a neighbor three removed, never unties the bow on his boots. He hooks a finger under the laces, pulls outward to get some slack and then zigs-zags the laces out of their hooks. Didn’t have a stop watch on him, but think it took about 6 seconds.

 219 Atlantis Ave. has an entry. Its floor is paved with impervious 6x6 ceramic tiles. Weather-related conditions, once tracked in, remained forever; snow, ice, salt, sand, mud. Well, not the snow and ice, they melt, but the resultant water was tracked around none the less. Gee, a carpet might be better. The carpet would soak up tracked in moisture, act as sort of a humidifying offset to the hot air heating system and when it dried out we’d vacuum up the salt and sand. Good plan, … when we had the stairs carpeted we did the entryway also. Not the entry closet, it is still tile, but no one walks through there anyway. It looked beautiful! So beautiful that now we mustn’t get it dirty. Hmmmn. We’d leftover carpet. A sandwich job was called for. A removable wall-to-wall piece was cut, hemmed and placed over the immovable wall-to-wall carpet. Yes, … the carpet installed to take care of messy boots was now covered so it wouldn’t get dirty. Somehow or other this is remindful of ‘Panic Morning’ before the “Molly Maids” come and scourge us with a monthly cleaning. (The cleanees run around like mad straightening up the house before the cleaners arrive so it won’t be messy.)

 Unfortunately, we soon discovered we had a ‘creeping’ carpet which was intent on creeping right out the front door. After two days of normal traffic it had climbed an inch up the front door in its bid for freedom. Hmmmn. Understandably, this made it fairly difficult to open the front door. Compensating behavior was; sit down on the first step of the hall stairs, lift both feet, grab “The Creeper” and yank it back to its proper position. Before cutting it to fit, should have done a test to see whether we had an East or West creeper. An Eastern creeper would have headed up the stairs which would have been less of a problem as we never open/shut them. Anyway, the squat, leg lift and yank get a bit old. Compensation behavior #2: double sticky tape. Ever used this stuff? Hardest part is getting the paper off, but once in place it really slows the ‘creeper’ down. Takes him about 2 weeks to impact the front door. However, taping is a nuisance and we generally just go the yanking route.

 Interestingly, it is not so much the time lapse as the traffic which governs creeping rate. A gathering of any size is something else. The ‘creeper’ has been known to make it up the door from a starting position in the course of several hours, … just about when people are starting to leave. Visualize this.

The entryway at party’s end. Guests balancing on one foot while donning footwear. Ongoing yada yada. Then the inevitable, *“I can’t get the door open!”.*  Followed by, *“Okay, everybody out of the entryway!”* When evacuation is complete, host/hostess assume behavioral compensation stance #1 and yank.

 Another disconcerting entryway occurrence has been stains on the carpet put down to keep the carpet from getting stained. The culprit here; L.L.Bean Stableicers. Ken’s were worn out so he replaced the screws. Unfortunately he did not do so with stainless steel screws. And now, when left wet on the carpet-covering carpet, they leave little orange stain marks. Good Grief!

 Occasionally, it’s all just too much. Sit down on the stairs. Essentials on person? Glasses, wallet, keys, handkerchief? (It is important to do this in sequence, one in outside footgear is not allowed to leave the entryway to go essential hunting.) Change light indoor socks and slippers for outside artic socks and footwear. Stand up. Don three layers of winter outerwear. Gloves? Not yet. Check the ‘Creeper’. Impacting front door? Yes. Squat, grab, yank. Check security system status. We mention this item only en passant as it rates a letter by itself. Now the gloves. A bit of nostalgia enters, … seems just like getting little kids ready to play out in the snow. Ten minutes worth of snowsuit wrestling, five minutes of outside play and then, *“Mommy, we’re cold! Can we come in?”* But we are ready! Let’s open the door and go. Wait a minute, what was I going to do? Good Grief! Can’t remember.

 I’ll save face and check the mail box.

From Ottawa: Lucile, Bailey & Ken.

(Reg. Dist:67)