

The Old Desk Drawer

by Donna Bishop

The center drawer of the old mahogany desk turns out to be a treasure chest of gadgets. The drawer is twenty inches long by twenty inches wide divided into seven separate compartments with lots of room for interesting gadgets to aid in the everyday business at a desk.

Upon opening the drawer the first gadget to catch my attention is a ripper. A ripper in a desk drawer one might think is something to rip apart paper or perhaps rip open an envelope. No this gadget is used to cut threads if you wanted to remove a hem in a pair of pants. The gadget has two prongs one short and one pointed and long. The short prong is covered with a small plastic cap. One slips the long pointed prong under the thread and cuts it with the razor sharp edge between the two prongs. Why is the ripper in the desk drawer? Probably for the same reasons the drawer has one penny, three quarters, three emery boards, a key and a small box of dental floss. Drawers just have a habit of collecting stuff.

The next two gadgets in the drawer are used for removing staples that are in the way. One is shaped like a long flat pencil with a steel pointed end that slips under the staple and pries it up. The other gadget is shaped like two opposing jaws that squeeze under the staple forcing the staple to release its grip on the papers. A small pencil sharpener is the next object to catch my eye. This two piece gadget is about the size of a cigarette lighter with a hole in the bottom half. A sharp blade is attached above the hole. As you twist the pencil in the hole the blade shaves off the wood exposing the newly sharpened tip. The curly wood shavings go into the top of the gadget which separates to discard them.

The drawer contains a variety of gadgets designed to hold papers together like black triangular clips that take some muscle to separate but will not lose their grip once in place and of course the ever useful paper clips in all sizes and colors. Who hasn't entertained an idle mind with a paper clip chain? Now to separate papers a handy color coded gadget of tabs is used to mark each page for future reference.

The desk drawer does indeed have two gizmos called flash drives. They store information between computers but how it is done is a mystery to me.

I'm closing the drawer in the old mahogany desk now while there is still time. The gadgets can stay but the latest gizmos must find a new home.