

Men and Their Man Caves

by Kenita Gibbins

The idea of having a man cave seemed strange to me. The term 'man cave' came into use in 1992 as a metaphor for a room in the house.

Some retreat centers in the home can be simple with a comfortable chair, and maybe some men-type magazines or investment updates. It can even be a quiet place to get job work done or meet up with his tools.

The woman may never want to go into the mess and even strange smells. In our household, I could break a leg trying to get from point A to B, if I entered my man's domain. He and Serena, our cat, seem happy in their clutter. The stacks of stuff came with us after we sold our house. I make sure the door remains closed when company comes. I don't mind honoring his space. I think being tidy would make the cave more comfortable, but that is none of my business.

One day I went downstairs at my friend's home to see a movie. I didn't know the bookcases could be pushed open. Lo and behold there was a complete office where the resident doctor can do his research with no disruption. We have another friend who found his space in what was a closet.

We three wives tied with the above three men have no problems honoring their space. We all need our private area. In the last 20 years, more and more professional designers create only man caves.

The five men in the Windsor Gardens Writers Group must have their quiet time in an escape place to write their weekly essays. My women writer friends and I need man caves too. Therefore, it makes sense for us to create She Sheds for ourselves. Our oasis can be anywhere we choose. I think all we need to do is agree with our live-in-partner or friend down the hall when we need to escape. My husband and I like to meet up when it is time to cook dinner, have conversation with the meal and then plop in front of the TV. When necessary we can call out to each other like for a telephone call or if the mail arrives. We also follow our daily calendar to make sure we don't miss appointments. It won't work to be in my shed if I don't have the time clear.

Somedays my She Shed is just my recliner and my laptop and I also have a reading place in my bedroom. I love my tools as much as my man treasures his listening device, upside down back stretcher and peculiar filing system. He thinks his underwear belongs in the file cabinet and multiple boxes are for organizing IRS papers!

We exist in a happy marriage perhaps because of his Man Cave and my She Shed.