

Wasteful Redecoration

By Pete Clark

The only parade I have seen in recent times is the procession of workmen arriving here on the fourth floor, Floor D in the local vernacular, to redecorate our hallway at someone else's discretion. They were very efficient at tearing out the wallpaper, but not so good at painting to mitigate the damage that had been done.

When my health declined for a few years, I couldn't take care of my house and yard. That didn't really bother me until I discovered it is virtually impossible to find anyone who will actually work for the money he or she is paid for yard work or in home repairs no matter what the job may be. I knew I needed to step down to something smaller and easier to maintain.

Moving to Windsor Gardens was not something I would have considered on my own. I watched some of the buildings here being built while on duty in the Weather Tower at Lowry and I had read the letters to the editor in The Rocky Mountain News about the pornographic statue at the entrance to the retirement community. I am stubborn but I will listen to opposing views and became convinced Windsor Gardens would be a good place to live. Which it is, but as my high school football coach said, "You get a little bit of garbage with every meal."

During my first summer at Windsor Gardens, a few of us would set up folding chairs on the apron before the main doors to sit in the shade of the awning and chat. The activity was relaxing and fun, providing a means to get to know other people in the building. Unfortunately, management informed the Building Rep that we could not sit on the apron as it made Windsor Gardens appear to be populated by old people. I am seventy-seven. Does that mean that management believes me to be some sort of Dorian Gray who never suffers the ravages of time? If so, they need a reality check.

The parade of destruction continued for three weeks. The warm homey papered walls of our hallway, with their faux wainscots are gone, replaced by a dull brown paint, quite suitable for Death Row in a maximum security prison. The paint was applied unevenly and there are ridges where rollers stopped their forward motion. When I look down the hallway at the carpeting, I see what evolves into legions of shark dorsal fins breaking the surface of some murky Cretaceous Period sea, one hundred million years ago. When I look down at the floor beneath my feet, I see a myriad of Rorschach ink blot tests, mixing together, swirling, creating a dizziness that could lead to a fall. Before too long, I will be at home with the ugliness and learn to ignore it.

At least in my building this project was a total waste of time and money, a job that did not need to be done, but I still must pay for it through my ever growing HOA remittance.