



... Uncle Mort Always Ready to Help...



The "sock-assister" Helps With Socks...

### **THE IDLE AMERICAN**

#### **Mort and His 'Sock-Assister'...**

Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury

Column #1,102 for Release Week of July 29, 2024, or Later

**Uncle Mort's** contraptions and inventions usually are "far-fetched." Finally, he's come up with one that is "near-fetched." And, it may be of considerable help to those among us who daily dread what used to be a thoughtless and effortless routine: putting on socks.

Some of us have basically surrendered, choosing to go barefoot at home, remaining sockless unless attending church, funerals or weddings.

This time, my ancient uncle has, uh, designed what he calls his “sock-assister,” a device requiring only a child’s jump rope, PVC pipe, a saw and a drill. With minimal safety efforts, this project may be attempted at home....

\*\*\*\*\*

First off, simply hearing the word “sock-assister” sounds like sibling abuse. What next, “brother-bonking?”

Mort says his device helps men get their socks on, no matter the distance between hands and feet.

He claims that most men already have the items needed to make “sock-assisters.” This is particularly true if children leave jump ropes behind. Looks to me as if this is a “slam dunk” home project....

\*\*\*\*\*

**Formerly, Mort** would have mounted a campaign to sell these items for \$9.98 (plus postage and handling).

Here lately, though, he’s been overcome with benevolence. “I guess I’m feeling like the Red Lobster seafood people who figure they may as well share the recipe for their larrupin’ cheddar-flavored biscuits since customers are hard to come by,” he said.

Yep, this is definitely “the new Mort.”...

\*\*\*\*\*

**Here’s what** Mort suggests: Find a piece of PVC pipe about a foot in length. Cut longitudinally in half. For most men, 4” PVC works fine; for wider feet, use 6” and beyond that, visit a plumber. Cut a child’s jump rope in half, attaching bare ends and knotting inside holes drilled near end of PVC pipe. If it is a long way down to your feet, splurge and use two jump ropes. (You can also use clothesline rope and whatever wooden scraps you like to fashion handles. And, one can glue on felt strips if edges seem rough.)

Now, for the critical first-time use. While sitting down, pull a sock over the bare end of the PVC pipe. Insert foot, well into the sock, then pull the ropes, thus removing the gadget from the foot and leaving sock in place, perhaps already half on!

This may require a bit of practice. If help is needed, consult a grandchild....

\*\*\*\*\*

**Let me** emphasize the importance of practice. My first attempt was made during a recent speaking engagement in Borger, where members of the Panhandle Press Association met.

I couldn’t quite remember how to use my “sock-assister,” which I had assembled a few days earlier. As the noon hour approached, I was still “sockless,” so I rationalized.

First of all, I had on long pants, so that was one step toward propriety. Further, I was to be among friends, most of whom would dress “summer casual.” After all, it was a luncheon, not a formal dinner. And the event was held at Frank Phillips College, where I am sure students move

around campus--whether blazing hot or blizzard conditions--in shorts and sandals. I took the easy way out; I wore sandals....

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wouldn't you** know it? Members of the heralded Borger Honor Guard, all men past age 80, were smartly dressed, sporting cowboy hats and boots as they posted the colors and led pledges. Now why didn't I think of boots? No one would have known if I had on socks or not.

Turns out one other guy also was shod with sockless sandals, and he even had on short britches. Granted, he didn't have a speaking part. Mike Hodges, president of the Texas Press Association, "dressed down" from usual attire at his Austin office.

Finally, an aside to the guy who whispered that I'm "old and eccentric." I was eccentric several decades before I got my AARP card....

\*\*\*\*

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, continues to speak and write. He is Texas' longest-running syndicated humorist whose column began in 2003. Contact: 817-447-3832. Email: [newbury@speakerdoc.com](mailto:newbury@speakerdoc.com). Website: [www.speakerdoc.com](http://www.speakerdoc.com).