

## War of the robes

I hate my bathrobe. Well . . . I should say I have a love/hate relationship with my bathrobe.

It's a white, fluffy, fleece bathrobe that makes you feel warm and snugly. It was a Valentine's Day gift many years ago that my sweet husband gave me from Victoria's Secret.

However, since I moved here from California, in this very dry, cold weather, when I take the robe off and touch a door knob or light switch, I get zapped with a charge of electricity.

I hate that.

You'd think that once that happens to you, you'd become a Pavlov devotee; but apparently, I am a slow learner and am getting dotty to boot. You see, I keep getting zapped, over and over again.

One night, having turned off the light switch to go to bed, it was a battle royal just trying to get out of my robe. The static electricity was crackling; you could almost see it. The robe was clinging desperately to my body. I was pulling the robe off and the more I tugged, the more the robe stuck to my body. It just would not let go.

For a moment, I had a mental image of Casper the Ghost being possessed by Dennis the Menace. I felt ridiculous, spending all this time, in the middle of the night, trying to get out of my robe to go to bed. I mean, it was surreal.

I had to figure out some way to outsmart this "thing" because it became obvious to me it was not going to allow me to lay my robe neatly across the cedar chest as I normally do.

### Musings of a transplant Maria Stolz

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No, the obsessive compulsive neat freak that I am was going to have to adopt a new strategy.

Then, it came to me. Quick as a flash I said to myself, "Wind it up in a tight ball."

Once that was done, I looked around and across the room. The cedar chest is snug against the foot of the bed, and no, I don't want to put it there. It might roll and stick to me again. (Okay, I know that's ridiculous, but I wasn't going to take any chances).

I saw the white clothes hamper. Great. It is 5 feet away. I took aim and I tossed it and it landed perfectly.

Whew.

You know, I never had to worry about dry air or static electricity or being careful about touching the car door when I slid out from the car seat. Now, in un-lady like fashion, I have to use my foot to close the car door to avoid getting zapped.

My house is not a zap-free zone either. One day it got so bad, I told my husband that I felt like I had enough electrons in my body to light up all of Toledo.

So off we went to Menards to get a humidifier. Nothing too expensive, just something to put a little moisture into the air. It's a noisy little sucker. However, it does help enormously

with the chapped hands and lips.

I have salted the house with Vaseline Lip Therapy tubes, in the bathrooms, my purses, kitchen sink areas and car doors, where I can reach them while driving. I've also done the same thing with hand creams.

What is it with men about hand creams? "Make sure it doesn't smell like I fell into a vat of pureed gardenias, will ya?" my husband says.

That took nearly a day of my time, unscrewing and screwing on caps of lotions to smell and find the least noxious one that he and I could tolerate.

One other tidbit to muse over: In this kind of weather, I love to make soups, and with soups it is so wonderful to have good baked breads to eat with the soup.

In Santa Cruz, we had a plethora of bakeries. I don't know what it was, but they were extraordinarily creative adding all kinds of grains, nuts, fruits, and spices, and avoided whenever possible using white flour. White flour or white bread, as you know, is considered not healthy or good for you particularly if you're a diabetic or have cholesterol problems.

There were places where you could eat nothing but soups of all varieties and believe me, you can't imagine how many there were, including the breads. That's what we miss. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had something like that around here? It sounds so "Minnesota," doesn't it?

We could call it Stone Soup. Oops . . . someone's got the copyright on that one, right?