

Rural Route 4 Scary Tales

At times, Rural Route 4 could be a scary place, especially for a kid whose imagination would often carry him into the unknown. I suppose every community has its share of tall tales that make the hair on your neck stand up, and you may have a few you could also share. But when I think of my childhood, two scary stories stand out and are permanently etched in my mind.



Phillip Burgess

The Hoop Snake: It was enough to make me have nightmares. I heard the story at Rip's Needmore Grocery while sitting with the old-timers around the pot-bellied stove in the back of the store. They were talking about a huge snake that had been seen slithering around Sand Mountain. But it was not your ordinary snake: folks up in Fyffe claimed it was a "hoop snake" that would bite its tail and could roll around faster than a man could run.

I almost dropped my RC filled with peanuts while listening to this sobering story. It sent chills down my spine. I imagined I was walking through the woods and that dadgum snake suddenly rolled toward me from behind a tree. It was a frightful sight.

I dropped my rubber Bowie knife and ran while yelling for Pedro the Dog to follow me. I ran through a blackberry patch, enduring the briars that tore at my arms as I sought to escape. But I looked back, and he was gaining on me. Thankfully, Daddy Grand jolted me back to reality by yelling from the front of the store and telling me it was time to go home. But for the next couple of weeks Pedro and I never left the yard. We did not want to tempt that big 'ol "hoop snake."

(Continued on back)

Drinking Water Week

More than 420 people joined us for tacos, prizes, and games as we celebrated Drinking Water Week on the TUA grounds on Cinco de Mayo.

For more than 40 years, the American Water Works Association and its members have observed Drinking Water Week to recognize the vital role clean water plays in our daily lives.



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Watts Happening

Water is Life

From the time we wake up in the morning, take a shower and brew our coffee, to the time that we brush our teeth and go to bed, water is a resource that most of us rely on well beyond our bodies requiring it to survive.

As your water utility, TUA is committed to delivering safe and reliable water for all our customers' needs.

TUA's 10,500 water customers use an average of 3 million gallons of water each day. TUA purchases potable water from the Duck River Utility Commission, whose source is Normandy Lake.

The DRUC water treatment plant uses advanced water treatment technology to remove both particulate matter and dissolved compounds from the water before it is disinfected and pumped to the TUA distribution system.

TUA and DRUC are proud to report that water produced by the DRUC filtration plant met all federal and state standards for drinking water in 2021. In fact, TUA and DRUC have never violated any US EPA or state standard or regulation since it was formed in 1976.

(Continued from front)

The Peg Leg: I do not remember what I was doing that rainy day in the barn loft when I found a wooden peg leg. It was on top of a pile of old lumber in the back of the loft. What was it doing there? Whose was it? I was afraid to get close to it. Heck, it scared me to death just looking at it.

As the rain fell on the tin roof and the wind blew, I suddenly heard another sound that resembled someone walking with crutches. The wooden leg! Someone was looking for it! I hunkered down in the hay. Closed my eyes. I grasped my rubber Bowie knife that I wore on my belt and expected the worst.

A gust of wind swirled around the tin roof, and it groaned. Enough already! I jumped from the barn loft and hit the mud below. I did not mind being pelted with rain as I ran across the dirt road to the safety of the back porch where Mama B was stringing beans.

Shortly thereafter Daddy Grand decided to clean out the barn loft. We had a big bonfire in the pasture from all the lumber that had been stored there for decades. Daddy Grand threw the wooden leg atop the burning heap. Smoke rose toward the sky. The fire danced. And in my mind, I saw a terribly angry, legless man shaking his fist at me.

Daddy Grand finally told me about the wooden leg. He had bought our farm from a man who had a wooden leg, and he had mysteriously left it in the barn loft after the sale was finalized. But even today, when I hear a knocking sound coming from the dark, remember the wooden leg, and I think of that day that I found it in the barn loft.

Philip Burgess' book, "Rural Route 4, The Good 'Ol Days Were Never Better," is available on Amazon .

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