

Rural Route 4 Treasures

Like most folks my age, I've tucked away a variety of personal treasures that have grown in meaning to me with the passage of time. I've kept them in a small metal box that I got as a young man when I bought an insurance policy. The other night I sat in the floor and let myself go down memory lane.



Phillip Burgess

Inside are the important papers that will be needed after I'm gone. Insurance papers. My passport. My birth certificate. It's in good condition after being lost for a long time. My Little League coach needed it when I registered to play. He unknowingly kept it, and when renovations to his house were made, my birth certificate and other papers ended up inside a wall. I got it back when I was in my 30s.

I rubbed my fingers on daddy's gold watch given to him when he retired from Republic Steel in Gadsden, Alabama. He treasured that time piece, and he wore it all the time. A velvet-lined box protected a small ring. Along with the ring there was a note from my mother: "Phillip's Infant Ring." Obviously, I don't remember wearing it, and mama had adorned me so I would be the coolest baby in the nursery!

My country life on Rural Route 4 rewarded me with medals from the Future Farmers of America (FFA). A chapter pin from Douglas FFA; a state farmer pin recognizing chapter projects that I have long since forgotten; and the FFA Marshall County Home Improvement Award. I toiled under a hot sun to remove and replace all the shrubbery around our house. I remember earning it!

(Continued on back)

Energy

Saving Trees

At TUA, we are committed to a greener, healthier world. Trees around homes will not only help reduce the amount of energy your home requires, but they also add to your property value, reduce your carbon footprint, improve the air quality, and more effectively catch stormwater runoff. It is our intention that the free trees we provide be a gift to you and to our community.

In conjunction with the Arbor Day Foundation's Energy-Saving Trees program, TUA will be giving trees away to the first 100 TUA electric customers who sign up.

Customers may choose one of the following: Brandywine Maple, Kousa Dogwood, Gala Apple or Northern Red Oak.

Visit

www.arborday.org/TUA
through November 13

Trees will be delivered to TUA for distribution in November.



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Watts Happening

Christmas Parade

The Tullahoma Christmas Parade will travel down Jackson Street on Friday, December 2. If you can't be there, you can watch it **LIVE** on LightTube Channel 6 and on our TUA LightTube Facebook page. Replays will air throughout the month on LightTube Channels 6 and 15.



TUA Says Farewell to Longtime Director

In late August, TUA employees and fellow directors honored outgoing director Steve Cope. Cope recently served on the TUA Board for nine years but served previous terms dating back to 1989. Cope's strong leadership and motivation will be greatly missed. Although his time with TUA has come to an end, his public service will continue as a member of the Duck River Utility Commission Board.



TUA thanks Steve Cope for his dedication and valued contributions to the City of Tullahoma, TUA employees and the TUA Board of Directors.

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So Fast, It's Spooky!

(Continued from front)

I found a key to the city of Albertville, Alabama, given to me, I think, by the late Buford Cryar, mayor of the city in the '70s. We knew each other well. I was a reporter for the local newspaper and city council meetings were on my beat.

I found my press cards and my registration for the draft back in '71 in a worn envelope. I had registered for the draft and college the same day. I was classified 1A, meaning draft eligible. About 13 months later I was re-classified 1H, meaning I had received a college deferment. That card bearing the good news also was in the envelope.

There were athletic letters earned on the basketball court, a silver dollar Pa Burgess gave me at Christmas, and a broken arrowhead. And an old cigarette lighter. It has a remarkable story.

My daddy's older brother, Uncle Charlie, like my father, Earl, joined the Army in 1941. He carried the lighter with him the entire time he was deployed. At the conclusion of the war, Uncle Charlie and Daddy came home. In November, 1946, on his birthday, Uncle Charlie died in a house fire.

Later, when Uncle Arthel died, he left behind a house on Rural Route 4. That old house was being torn down, and workers were demolishing the old chimney. They found a hidden compartment nestled between the rocks. Inside it were letters to Uncle Charlie from a long-ago girlfriend, official looking documents and even some clothing. And there in its original box was his cigarette lighter. It was inscribed "CGB." My Uncle Charlie.

I held these treasures in my hand. They are a testament to the pain, failure, perseverance, dedication, and, yes, success, of days long gone. I carefully placed them back in the deposit box for safekeeping. But the memories attached to them are stored in my heart, and that just may be the safest place of all.

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