

When paging through a newspaper or magazine, most people look at the pictures first and then go to the text if they think there's a better story behind the picture. I hope that's the case here as I was put in charge of cleaning out the garage for our move to Wisconsin. Wait, what? You're moving where? Portage, Wisconsin. I will still be coming back to West Concord from time to time for important events like Twigfest and the annual flushing of the fire hydrants. I am remaining on the WCHS board of directors so at least once a month, weather permitting, I will be back the second Wednesday of every month. I think it's a state law that starting in October and running through May you are required to qualify any plans with the words 'weather permitting'.

I was in charge of clearing out the garage as it was about 95 percent my 'stuff' in there. This is where I pause to tell you to watch George Carlin's bit about stuff. I was reminded of it every day for the past month. Just cleaning out the toolbox took 3 days. And of course from a toolbox, you can't throw anything away as you might need it someday for something. At least that's what I learned from my dad growing up on the farm. In the picture, there are two old style hacksaws, one with a broken blade and one with no blade at all. That curved hacksaw requires a particular size and length blade which I've not found in my many years of looking for one. The old clothes pin was my mom's that somehow many moons ago found its way to the floor of the machine shed. I asked my dad what to do with it and he said throw it in the toolbox, we might need that out here for something. Well I have not found a use for it yet in the shed or garage but I sure as heck can't throw it now.



At the bottom of the picture is some rolled up solder wire that I might need someday. I haven't had a working solder gun for probably 40 years now but you never know right? I have used it a few times in place of a coat hanger as it's much more pliable. And yes, I do keep a coat hanger in the tool box too. Next to the one hacksaw handle on the right is about a three foot piece of copper wire. I'm not sure how long it's been in the toolbox but it will stay for the foreseeable future and probably to the end of time. In the bottom middle of the picture is an old electric outlet that screws into a lightbulb socket. I'm not sure that these are even made anymore but I have used that a few times. I take the lightbulb out of the porch light and put that in to give me a good place for an outlet for Christmas lights. I think this particular item was in my dad's toolbox back in the 1940's.

The Blatz beer can I found in the far corner of the garage was what gave me the idea to write about all of this. As I was cleaning out my 'stuff' I noticed something hiding between the workbench and the wall. Well I found an old handsaw that was missing for about 6 years and it now hangs with the new one I bought to replace it. There was a caulking gun which also now is reunited with the new caulking gun. Then as I get a flashlight to see if any other items fell in this blackhole of the garage, I found this unopened Blatz beer can. The bottom was round and expanded but it never exploded from freezing every winter. The top of the can has what it calls the EZ Sta Ring. So that would date it back to just after they eliminated those pop-tops' that you peeled off and threw on the ground. There was a date on it that said 1851. But evidently that's when G Heileman Brewing Company was established and not when this beer was made. This item will not be staying in the tool box. In fact it has already been removed. I did not open it because I did not want to bother the hazmat team.

The two other items in the picture include a Maytag nameplate from an old refrigerator and a jacket patch from the Governor's fishing opener in 1990. Jack Hyde, the former owner of KDHL informed me in my first year there that the farm director was to go to the fishing opener and report on it. I found out that Hall of Fame broadcaster Dean Curtiss had set this up many years ago. It was one of the best duties I got in 33 years of farm broadcasting. That along with interviewing Miss America Gretchen Carlson when she was wearing a particularly low cut dress that day.



Well if you ever make your way by Portage, Wisconsin, let me know. I'll take you out for a Blatz beer.