

This is Lieutenant Roger McCort from The Salvation Army in Eureka for today's Community Comment.

I am, among other things, a treasure hunter. I love to take a shovel and pan out to dig for gold or to hear that tell-tale buzz in my headphones which says I've got a hot target under my metal detector. But there is a kind of treasure hunting close to home too. One that produces dozens of stories of amazing finds, like these from the last few months. See if you can hear the common thread which brings them together.

A man in Indiana found a small, yellow-glazed vase in a Goodwill store. He debated for a few moments whether it was worth \$4.99, but decided to go ahead and bring it home. Looking for more information about it, he discovered that it was a rare piece of Overbeck pottery, which is now expected to bring up to one-hundred thousand dollars at auction. Not bad for a \$5 investment!

In a Toronto thrift store, mixed in with a pile of used blazers, lay another \$5 treasure: a green jacket from an early 1950s Masters Golf Tournament. While it couldn't be connected to a specific player, since the owner's name was cut out, it was authenticated and went to auction earlier this month, where it brought a closing bid of \$139,349.

Last month, a friend visited me from Sacramento. He's a rare book dealer and the two of us spent an hour wandering through some of our local thrift stores so he could hunt for treasures. And he found them. Oh, nothing he can retire on, but one or more books in each location, most worth far in excess of what he was charged for them. In one spot he even found a set of half a dozen collectible titles from a specific publishing house. His investment: Three dollars. Value? Somewhere around a hundred bucks.

By now I'm sure you've figured out that the treasure hunting site in our backyard is any one of our amazing local thrift stores. Hey, maybe you or I won't be the ones who turn up an original copy of the constitution hiding behind that ugly canvas you bought just to get the frame. But a used-but-new-to-you blender that you snap up could keep you in smoothies for years to come for about the price of your favorite combination at the corner coffee shop.

In an even more practical example of treasure hunting, consider how much happier your wallet would be if you built up your wardrobe from the dollar rack instead of purchasing the same name brand items at a retailer for an arm and a leg. And most thrift stores use any proceeds

to support good causes in the local community as well, such as animal shelters, cancer research, or helping people transition from homeless to housed.

You can help in another way too. Think about that pair of pants you wore once or twice and shoved to the back of your drawer because they never quite fit you right. There are others who would love to have them, but couldn't afford what you paid. Why not do a little spring cleaning in your closet and offer up anything you haven't worn in the last month or two? Thrift stores and clothing closets are always happy to take donations of gently used items. That dress wasting space in your house would look great on the woman who can't afford nice clothes to go to the job interview she has tomorrow.

A chance to help others while you help yourself? That's a win-win for all involved, which is the kind of treasure we need more of.

Grace and peace to you today. This has been Lt. Roger McCort with today's KINS Community Comment.