

2510 comes full circle

Life is composed of a series of coincidences and the choices we make within the boundaries of the twists of fate determine who we are. That theory certainly applies in this amazing story of two self-made, successful businessmen and their love of the same John Deere tractor.

Gomer Jones from northeastern Pennsylvania originally owned a beautiful 2510 John Deere built in 1967, and when he passed away, his son, Cecil Jones, inherited that tractor as well as the family farm. Cecil's wife, Christine, needed a car, so he traded their tractor for cash and a car. Guy Parrish, a lifelong resident of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, bought the tractor from his fellow local farmer Cecil in 1995. The motor was broken, but since Guy had the expertise to fix tractors himself, he was able to get it operating again and was able to use it for many years.

Guy and his lifelong friend, Dave Stone, had started a tractor repair shop together in 1991, so fixing this tractor was right up his alley. In addition to fixing tractors, Guy also was an entrepreneur, farmer, excavator, mulch distributor, independent trucking owner, John Deere parts provider and businessman, so this tractor was put to good use for many years.

Eventually Guy bought a house in South Montrose, so he sold the tractor in order to furnish the house.



**Thor and Guy by "Cecil,"
the John Deere tractor.**

Fifteen years after he sold the tractor that he loved, Guy decided that he wanted to buy a tractor just like the John Deere that he had. His business partner, Dave Stone, said that there was a tractor similar to his old one over by the Jersey Hill Church, not far away in the same county. When Guy went to look at it, he thought to himself, "Man, this looks familiar." As he was looking at it, a gentleman came out and said that he used to work for someone named Bob, and after Bob passed away, he bought it from him. That rang a bell for Guy, so he asked,

"Did Bob live over here?" as he motioned to the area where Bob resided.

The man selling the tractor responded, "In fact, yes, he did!" So after Guy bought it and brought it home, he knew it was the exact one he owned 15 years ago. Right down to the specific decals in the exact same spots, he knew it was his old tractor. He vowed that since now he had bought the tractor for the second time, he would never sell it again.

Never say never, because fate was about to intervene yet again. One day, Guy decided he needed rye for



Thor in younger years, again with the 2510.



a cover crop as a conservation effort, so he saw an ad from a New York state farmer with a "607" area code who was selling rye. A lot of places had rye for sale, but that area code led him to think that this seller was about two hours away compared to the other ads with area codes that looked four hours away. Consequently, Guy called the gentleman who placed the ad and found out that his name was Thor Oechsner from Newfield, New York. When Guy met him, Thor noticed that Guy had Pennsylvania plates so he asked him how far Montrose (where Guy lived) was from LeRaysville, where his own mother's father grew up.

Thor's great-grandfather was a coal miner from Wales, and after he eventually settled in the United States, one of his sons ran a dairy farm near LeRaysville. Although Thor grew up in Hudson Valley, New York, his uncle ran the farm and Thor used to go to that farm as a child for a couple of weeks every summer and play on their tractor with his brother, sister and cousins. In fact, the tractor they played on was the inspiration for why he had always wanted to be a farmer. It was why he went to school for agriculture, plowed his parents' lawn and slowly rented land and equipment from 1988 until 2003 before he could have 100 percent of his income derive solely through farming full time.

Today, his 1,200 acre certified organic farm is an established leader in

the organic grain movement by reducing the environmental impacts of grain farming. He also runs a flour milling operation and bakery. This fulfilling career of building his own farm instead of inheriting one all started because of that first tractor he saw that loomed large in his childhood memories. Thor said that his uncle's name was Cecil Jones, who owned the farm as well as that treasured tractor. Guy couldn't believe it! Guy said he owned that exact tractor that Thor used to play on—the exact tractor that inspired his calling in life!

Thor was so shocked and excited! In fact, Guy has named some of his tractors and he always called that tractor Cecil. If he asked someone to, "Go get Cecil," Guy's employees knew which tractor to bring. After talking about the stunning coincidence, Guy graciously offered for Thor to come look at the old tractor for nostalgia's sake. Thor was thrilled with the chance to get to see his family's tractor again, and once he got home, he sent Guy pictures of the tractor with him, his siblings and his cousins on it from all those years ago. Guy couldn't help but notice even the tires are the exact same ones on it now that were on it all those years ago.

In March of 2018, Thor traveled to Guy's business to see the old beloved tractor. Thor further explained how incredibly unlikely their chance meeting happened because in 11 years of selling grain, the ad that Guy responded to was the only ad they had

ever placed to sell rye. Additionally, Guy was only one of two people who even responded to the ad!

After hearing Thor's heartwarming story, even though Guy had promised himself that he would never re-sell "Cecil" after buying it twice, Guy decided to sell the old John Deere since it had more sentimental value to Thor. Guy thought it should stay in the family where it originally belonged. Thor was grateful for the offer and jumped at the chance to buy his family's tractor.

Six degrees of separation is the idea that all living things and everything else in the world are six or fewer steps away from each other. That theory could certainly be applied to this story! So many crazy coincidences, or interventions of fate, kept the tractor turning up in the hands that would appreciate it the most. Just an unforeseen chance meeting brought the tractor back to its original family where it will certainly be cherished. Cecil and his father, Gomer, would be proud of their nephew, who built a large farm from scratch into an organic food grade and craft beverage farm where he'll be able to use the same exact tractor they used and grateful to the generous neighbor and friend of the family who graciously parted with the tractor he loved in order to complete the dream that was meant to be.

*Submitted by,
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