

To Aunt Afton and Uncle Paul,

With my ~~depest~~ love
and appreciation.

- Martha

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MARTHA MARIE HARRIS MARTIN

by Martha Marie Martin

**MEMORIES OF LEONARD
FATHER, GRANDFATHER, AND FRIEND**

(Things About My Dad I'll Never Forget)

Dear family,
I never claim to be a poet or writer
with much skill, yet writing my
feelings...stories of milestones in my children's
lives...
all the funny little things they say and do,
creates for me a special joy.
I'm writing about Dad now as therapy for my soul.

I began writing: poetry, prose, stories- funny little
incidents-when I brought Matt, my first baby
home.
Since then, this tradition, has been for my children.
A special way for our family to bond and
communicate.

Very seldom have I stepped from the comfort
zone of my family to share something I have
written.
For I feel very vulnerable-my words are my heart
displayed on the page.

This is my tribute to Dad, and because I know
you cared too, I'm entrusting the innermost part of
me, with you.

I am also sharing to say, "Thank you,
for the way you enriched Dad's life."

Love,

MEMORIES OF LEONARD FATHER, GRANDFATHER, AND FRIEND

What was that saying of his? Oh, yes..I'd ask him - if he could do something and his reply was: "Don't worry, I'm off today."

Unexpectedly, a Thanksgiving blessing on the food became his testimony.

A testimony like I've never heard.

His words were of faith, humility, and family love.

When Dad spoke of his mother it was with genuine reverence, love and respect.

Dad's actions over the years were of service to his family.

He also had a great spirit of generosity.

How Dad could innovate, design and change!

Like gardening methods made to adapt his decreased mobility.

He found a hollow, plastic pipe could dig a hole, the seed would drop through, then pushing earth with the pipe, he'd cover the seed up.

With this innovation (his speciality) ---

He needn't bend down or struggle back up!

What fun it would be to see cat and Dad--cat on his lap together on the "flying-machine." Cat at night contentedly slept at the foot of Dad's bed.

I'm watching cat: Crying- Lost- Sad. He searches the house meowing...

Looking everywhere for Dad.

Right now, he is confused and displaced. Cat feels just like me--or Perhaps, I should say, I feel like cat.

One thing, I secretly liked to do, was look through his glass kitchen door.

There I could see Dad with "his little family."

That's what he affectionately called Craig and Jen.

They helped Dad to the kitchen table;

Made him comfortable and said a prayer.

With Criag and Jen, dad took his turn and blessed the food.

Perhaps the greatest dinner struggle for Craig and Jen

Was keeping cat off Dad's lap.

Sometimes dinner turned into a comedy.

Dad encouraging cat to come on his lap - join at him the counter and he cut "cat size" portions to share from his plate.

I'll never forget when we brought home our new baby Scott.

Sure enough, Dad returned from a fishing trip that day.

With his humor he got the best laugh---for the fish he caught was bigger than Scott!

When lying on Dad's bed, I'd prop up my head and we would talk. About trips, feelings, problems, and the "Funny Seth Story" of the week.

How we laughed the day Seth came home from school and I went to my purse for Seth's lunch money. He said, "That's OK mom, I don't need it."

I looked at Seth. What? What did you just say? Seth said he still had \$2.50 from the first day. (I usually pack him a sack lunch) but that week I couldn't. I've missed some days packing your lunch, have you skipped lunch? Just been going out to play? "No," he said, "I eat." Me again: "Seth I just don't understand!?!"

Well---

Seth explained:

When lunch time comes,
I find a place on a bench, and sit down-
Then I look a little sad.
Pretty soon kids sit by me.
They know I have no lunch sack or tray,
So they gave me the best of their lunches that day."

"So mom, don't worry," he repeated again

"That \$2.50 you gave me will last all year!

Dad let out a laugh and I think a cheer,

A junior con-artist was going to survive this world and be just fine!

When visiting dad, I'd often think, "Where do you get the courage to smile?

Each and every day it seems more and more limits come your way.

Dad's attitude was the key--it was a wonderful example to me.
In wisdom he expressed, "Whether you think you can or you can't-
You are right."

I could have learned a lot more from my dad.

Growing up at Christmas time, Dad and I would go looking for "the
perfect
tree." Sometimes it took all day, and we would drive as far as Nephi.
For this tree was Dad's and my delight.
It had to be tall- tall indeed
The purpose of this tree was to fill a vault
A space no less than eighteen feet!

When it was time for me to learn to drive, Dad taught me--yes he did--

Stick shift, November, inches and inches of snow. I'd complain and
he'd
say, "You live in Utah, you know. You'd better learn to drive in
snow."

How Dad loved to tell stories, especially of his families' early years.
Grandfather moved his family from place to place and he built
bridges
in Texas, the family home
was in a tent.....

Grandpa also built Strawberry Reservoir, while Grandma and the
children
lived at Strawberry
in a tent...

Grandma washed clothes in a big black kettle, cooked meals over a
fire,
Older sister LaVerne--dad would say--helped our mother in every
way.

What joy we shared the night Matt received his Eagle Scout Award,
And much to Dad's surprise he received his too!
(Of course Dad had earned his at age twelve)--
But while Grandpa Harris was warden of the Utah Penitentiary
A precious foot-locker of Dad's was taken and the hard earned
awards?
Only proud memories.

Matt felt things needed to be "set right" and did so for his grandfather on his own Eagle Award Night.

Dad and I had a running gag, He'd look at me, "What was that I was going to say?" I would look puzzled and repeat:
"Gee Dad, darn it all, I forgot to bring my crystal ball."
"Well," he'd then say- "If you'd remembered, I would know what I want today."
I'd laugh and say, " Don't know what it was,
But how about a great big hug!"

This is a favorite memory of mine- for it shows the tender part of Dad.

When receiving greeting cards, it went like this:
He'd get out his little knife and open each one slowly, even gently, you might say. He read the messages out loud. The sentiments inside meant a lot to him. He kept them for months on top of the T.V.

Where "giving" was concerned, Dad liked it a lot.
Little starts of plants, parsley, tomatoes, flowers....also, home-made jellies and jams.
Dad never liked to be caught without something to give -never wanted
a friend to leave with an empty hand.

WORK!

What the word, "work" meant, no one, and I mean no one, defined it better than my Dad.

I learned pretty young - (my job was cleaning our cement botany pond.)

Anyway, unless I did the job right by Dad
I'd be doing it over and over again.
I learned his standards were very high.

Upon discovering gardening books filled the entire space under his bed,

I questioned him.

"I never like to throw a good idea away."

I have files and files of clippings I keep
Just in case someday a "good idea" comes my way.
Did I inherit that too from dad?

When Matt was young, Grandpa planted geraniums for him to sell. He started the flowers by seed in the winter in his greenhouse. By that spring-large, full, red geraniums were ready for Matt's "summer money" project.

Matt did do his part by going door to door with a red wagon of red geraniums. That summer Matt wouldn't have had a cent without grandpa's green thumb and love for his grandson.

When Matt was older, it was his turn to help out . If grandpa called for help, Matt was a minute-- and I'd say, he was never more than thirty seconds away.

Matt was strong enough, when I was not, and he picked up his Grandpa And some days would say, "I got a little weight training in today."

I would have to bite my tongue, when I'd pick up Dad for some appointments....

He be ready, dressed to go- in a striped shirt, checkered pants-- also plaid vest.

On his face was a grin, he'd be all set on his "flying-machine."

I think he was tickled pink when he managed alone.

I never had the heart to suggest a change

We just went some places looking strange.

I watched--as first came a cane, then a walker, a wheel-chair at times.

Finally, I'd hid my tears as down the ramp he came, happy, but confined

To his flying-machine.

I saw a man with courage and innovation manage a severe handicap, With every skill he had acquired over the years.

While little (in elementary school) I hated being tickled! It was the truth.

But, if Dad was the tickling torture machine, Rex and I would compete to see who first got the tickling lap!

Why Mom and Dad loved Sunday rides I'll never know.

The Sunday car rides I liked the best
ended at the "Frost Top."
Girls brought frosty mugs of root beer and
hooked a tray to the window of our car.

One Sunday I was with mom and dad for a "little ride".
I found myself in Wyoming for dinner that night!
Suddenly I seemed to find a great deal of homework
each and every Sunday afternoon.
They could have just said, "We'd like to be alone!"

When strikes hit Geneva, we didn't see Dad.
Not for days or even weeks. He slept on a cot at "The Plant."
I never understood until I was much older the dedication
"Management" had to have when labor forces refused to work.

While in high school, I watched with great dismay, my Dad move
muscles in
a mutilated hand. This was the infamous "gyro-copter" accident. He
had
built it and forgot safety a split second that day.

"Why are you moving your hand?
I could see the pain on his face.
He said, "If I don't move it now, it will never work again."
After that, I just looked away when Dad worked the muscles in his
hand.

I knew Dad was brave.

What a Cougar fan Dad was! A fan true blue. Doug would be packing
for a
BYU trip and Dad would say:
"Son, you tell Lavell to win for me--OK?"

Coach Lavell Edwards of Oak Hills Fifth was probably the only
"home-teacher" to get through our door.
Lavell and Dad did discuss religion -the religion of football-
That suited Dad just fine.

When I was very small I remember Dad was patient and kind. He
would hold open the car door while I climbed in and then he'd wait
for my imaginary friend "Mary Jane" to also get in the back seat.

When celebrations or special days came around, Doug was the strength
to lift Dad and the flying-machine... up the porch and through our door.
Those were very special times, watching Dad and Doug, watching ball.

Once dad came home from a Canadian fishing trip. Excitedly he showed me his cooler full of fish.
I asked what they saw ,what they did-
And by the way, how did you get around? How did you catch all those fish?
Why we fished from canoes - on beautiful streams with indian guides.
My buddies helped me in and out.
Talk about buddies, Dad's are first rate.

Another memory from days when I was small, was about a new, shiny, black Buick. It was Dad's pride. The car was washed by hand.
One dreadful day, Rex decided to paint it white.
Glad to say Rex survived!

Many favorable things have been said of Dad. But I like Jon Pfunder's
quote the best.
As Jon and Dad gardened- talked over fence to fence, they got to be pretty good friends.
Anyway, one day Jon said to me, "When I grow up, I want to be just like your Dad."

As things got tougher, Dad in bed more and more,
I noticed Scott and Seth didn't like to check on Grandpa.
They didn't respond when I said to them, "It's your turn to go and check on grandpa."
I said nothing;
But observed the coaxing, cons and tricks until an agreement with each other
they reached.

Two brothers, together, checked on Grandpa.

Who came through every year, when Christmas money panic set in?

Dad gave us each a check. No matter how old, how many years,
As long as he was living he wanted to protect- Kay, Rex and I.

When Scott Douglas was baptized, he was confirmed at home. This helped

Dad be a part of the event. Family members bore testimonies to Scott. Dad stood and bore his too. It was all about scouting, honor and code.

Dad admonished scouting.

He said it was designed to help young men become men-men with honor.

Further, if Scott obeyed the Scout oath, he wouldn't go wrong.

Then he repeated every motto, promise, and Eagle oath.

He knew them all-word for word.

When it came to being self sufficient, Dad knew how. He would have frozen to death in Idaho, but his dedicated scout training and his gritty

Self discipline saw him through.

Once gypsies robbed Dad of fruit from his stand,

He ran them down---

Stood his ground.

They must have sensed that Dad was tough,

He got money and some fruit back.

Within the last couple of years Dad became more confined.

He couldn't get to his door fast enough to greet a visitor.

Also, he couldn't hear the doorbell anymore.

Some visitors stopped calling by, but others, true friends persisted.

Lost and bewildered looking, they knocked at my door.

A little embarrassed they'd say, " I can't figure out how see Leonard.. Will you help?"

So the friend and I would take a little walk.

I'd take them through the basic: "How to get to Leonard talk."

I explained, "it takes time for dad to get from bed to the flying machine."

So be patient and here is what to do.

First, just walk in the sliding glass door.

Second, you walk down the hall, turn right to his room;

And last, you just yell! "Leonard, it's me.!"

Each year before Halloween, he planted a very large pumpkin patch.
We would call and let all the neighbors know when it was time
For the children to come and select their very own pumpkin
From Grandpa Harris' yard.
He would serve punch and watch each little one with delight.

The "North Forty" was purchased and maintained for the children
too.
I remember how sad Dad was one summer when the well went dry.
The grass wasn't watered-wouldn't stay green.
The "North Forty" was the unofficial training grounds for many a
neighborhood football, soccer or baseball team.

When your dad dies it is a very hard thing.
Especially when your mother is also gone.
I was an orphan in an instant one night.
My security system shaken to the core. No longer the identity-
No longer, "Daddy's Littlest Girl."
There is so much dad left to me,
But nothing, oh nothing as important as the knowledge
That he truly loved me.

I hope in heaven that dad is the first "newest arrival" to ask
For a Mormon investigator card.

Well Dad, this tribute is finished-although I know it is not complete.
For words, mere mortal thoughts are a poor and small attempt
To treasure, cherish, and remember
One who has moved beyond this mortal place.

I say not "goodbye", but watch for me.....

Love,
Martha Marie

I thought this plan was fairly simple, but to some not so.

My doorbell would ring once again, and there stood the baffled friend.

"He looks like he's sleeping, what should I do"?

I advised them to wake him up...

Not be shy

So he could have a reason to wake up.

Special people, like Richard Smith, get an A+ in my book.

He got "Martha's little lecture" and basic route, then-

On his own, and because he cared, he got through the "Seeing Leonard Maze."

He was sincere about Dad and took the time

To sit on the flying machine and visit

Dad while he was in bed.

It was quite easy to tell if Aunt Afton had been at Dad's that day.

Usually it was the smell of bread, or the grin on Dad's face.

Guess who I saw today? In spite of many times when she herself could hardly walk;

She stayed in touch. Afton and Paul were wonderful support for both

Dad and I.

What funny days we'd sometimes have. I'd check on Dad and he'd be asleep. An hour later, check again-still asleep.

Once I saw him sleeping straight up.

I carefully walked toward him and watched him breathe.

Dad was a night owl. .

At 1:00 -2:00 -4:00 -A.M. --- through by bedroom window I'd hear him

Hollering, "Here kitty kitty kitty...here kitty kitty."

I wondered if he couldn't sleep without his furry friend.

Cat liked to sleep at the end of Dad's bed, and Dad liked it too.

When we first got cat, I envisioned finding "cat pancake" somewhere stuck to a wheel or pressed into the carpet-but it worked out well.

It was truly sweet to see cat comfort Dad.

Spoiling cat was one of Dad's latest hobbies.

Dad loved his neighbors, especially the children.