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Marvin Elston was born in 1933, in small-town Missouri in the heart of what *Time Magazine* has labeled the “Silent Generation.” He grew up as the suffocated child between two of the most horrific events in world history: the Great Depression and World War II. Following high school and an early elementary education in a one-room schoolhouse, Marvin enlisted in the military as a way to escape the small town claustrophobia. After four years of service in the US Air Force, he was able to qualify for the GI bill, which afforded him an education in electrical engineering.

Marvin's personality was digital and factual. He worked hard, saved all of his money, and lived a very frugal life despite the extraordinarily large bank account that he had squirreled away. He took the city bus around town to avoid the rising cost of fuel, shopping for bargains and using coupons. Marvin was one of two children. He never married and his childless brother passed away in his early 50's of colon cancer. Marvin's introverted personality made him the town's most eligible bachelor, but he never married.

He spent his time working hard as an oceanographic engineer at sea, and in his later years, he continuously traveled around the world on container and cruise ships for up to 6 months at a time. With no immediate or extended family, the John Martindale family became his surrogate family. They spent time with him at his home on the sandy beaches of San Diego several times a year, and he would travel to Utah to spend the summers with them.

Being around the Martindale family, especially their young children, opened him up to a different way of living life. The Martindales are much more outspoken and verbally communicative, and Marvin was pressured to step out of his silence, from time to time, and share his stories.

Marvin had determined that he would gift his entire estate to the University of Missouri where he obtained his engineering degree.

This is a common way to pass on an estate, absent any family or children.

Marvin was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in 2005, mirroring his brother's fate. Many medical advances and treatments prolonged his life for seven additional years. The cancer continued to spread throughout his body at a consistently slow pace. Towards the end of his days, the Martindales began speaking to him about leaving a legacy. It seemed like a foreign concept initially. Marvin was such a loner; it hadn't registered with him that his life had value, meaning, and that every ripple mattered to others. The Martindales discussed several charities that could benefit from his money, leaving a mark of great service on the future, and setting an example for the family's children who had come to love and look up to him as "Uncle Marvin."

In the last days before his passing, Marvin left a sizable percentage of his estate, in the care of John. He was to use this money for a charity near and dear to him, Mountain Shadows Community Homes in San Diego, which is a supervised independent living facility for adult children with developmental disabilities. These residents are able to live an independent life in a home with structured activities and community.

The sizable donation to this organization will change the future of not just this generation, but those who are yet to come. In addition to leaving a living legacy with Mountain Shadows, John was appointed as steward over a sum of money to be used for what we now coin "*Marvin's 50.*" Each donation is like a pebble thrown into a still pond. The ripple begins at the point of impact, but as it travels, it journeys to the edges in all directions. One memorable moment occurred when John was traveling on business in Houston, Texas, just weeks after Marvin's passing. John, just off a plane and was walking out of a CVS Pharmacy, when a man in the shadows called out asking for money. John said, "I ignored him, as I walked quickly through the parking lot, but as I opened the car door, I was prompted to look back and ask what he needed. He came running to me, still

with his hospital discharge wristband, bag of belongings and bloody clear tape attached to his chest. He said, “Sir, I need \$40”. No beggar has ever asked for a specific amount of money, it is always spare change. John was taken aback by his request and asked why he needed exactly \$40.

He said that his wife had died a few months back and that he had health issues requiring attention at the hospital, but he realized his kids could not tend to themselves more than a few days so he checked himself out, AMA (Against Medical Advice). “I need to feed my children. They have school in the morning and my 14-year-old daughter needs personal care products,” he exclaimed. What homeless person can make up that kind of story? John felt compelled to believe that his request was true.

John rarely carried cash in his pocket, but it just happened that he had a \$50 bill in a front pocket. John gave it to the man. He did not get his name, but wished he had. They just sat in the darkened parking lot at 10 o’clock at night hugging each other as the man further explained. “I called out to you as you left the store, but assumed that you did not hear me. I asked God at this moment of desperation to send me an angel to help me in my dire need. Please God, send me an angel. Then you turned around, sir”. As they parted company and John drove off, suddenly he just hit the brakes, slumped over and cried. He shouted aloud, “Is that you Marvin?” He then knew that it was Marvin who had prompted him to turn around in the parking lot. It was Marvin who was the angel.

Now, John carries an extra \$50 in his pocket of Marvin’s money and prays that Marvin directs him to someone in need.

The Martindales write, “Our family has had the gift of creating ripples with Marvin’s 50, time and time again. When funds were

needed for the Victory Light at the new high school in Draper, that familiar prompting came knocking once again. Every time that light shines, our family, and the people of Draper will know of Marvin. He spent time in this community and as a homeowner in Big Cottonwood Canyon, paid taxes to our schools. We feel honored to bestow this memory and living legacy of a man who continues to live through the greenbacks that represent a life of hard work, and frugal living. We believe that as we leave legacies of our friend in the places where he spent time, it is lifting the curse of the silence that he carried like a yoke for an entire generation of post-war, depression-era children. The days of children being educated in one-room schools like Marvin are over. Today, we leave our children with the gift of superior education and with the opportunity to spread those ripples to our children's children. Let the light of Corner Canyon High School shine as a symbol of opportunity for excellence in education, sport, and citizenship. May we realize that we are all connected, and may we all be inspired to create ripples that will change the future.”

John & Tresa Martindale and family