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by Ken Proctor

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A year's gone by since last July, when we gathered with the kin,
to celebrate my father's life and to try to honor him,
to rest his last remains up on cometary hill,
to shed a heart felt tear or two... and to listen to his will.

My sister got the china that Mom used on Christmas Day.
and the linens and the silverware that Mom had stashed away.
My brother got the savings bonds, the bank accounts and cash,
the car, the house, the property and everything else, I guess.

But the one thing that my daddy left, that no one cared to own,
Was the only item on the list that I'd be dragging home.
Now I'm convinced that at some point my dad musta hated me...
'Cause his only gift to his wayward son was the Golden Sarah Lee.

It was 24 feet of peeling paint, with tarnish on the brass.
and 24 feet of rusty trailer sunk into the grass.
24 feet of leaky planks that somehow stayed afloat
It was 24 feet of "money pit". My dad left me his boat.

Well I tried to make the best of it and I hitched it to my ride,
then discovered 5 miles down the road that the trailer wires were fried.
The officer said, "Your lights don't work, there's no tread on your tires,
and this other ticket's on account o' the license plate's expired."

"See you in traffic court, son....oh, and have a nice day."

I headed home to show my wife what my Daddy left for me.
She went upstairs, climbed into bed and cried herself to sleep.
I showed it to my neighbor when I saw him step outside.
At first he tried to hide the smile, but then laughed until he cried.

But not deterred I set about to make that boat my own.
I slathered on a coat of paint and polished up the chrome.
I had the outboard motor tuned and replaced the anchor lines.
I got the license plates renewed and paid the traffic fines.

I bought insurance for the boat, and for the trailer, too.
and all the safety gear they stressed in boater safety school.
Then mooring fees and parking fees and fees to launch my boat.
I'd spent a 1000 bucks before I got the thing afloat.

Sinking more gold into the Golden Sarah Lee. My dad musta really hated me....

Come mid July I thought I'd try my boat out on the lake.

I backed 'er down the concrete ramp and set the parking brake.

Then some old dude came amblin' up and said, "You must be Jim.

I know this boat, and before she's afloat, better put the drain plug in."

His name was Earl, his boat was "Belle", and he knew a thing or two.

He showed me how to launch and load, and steer a course that's true.

He taught me knots, he shared his lunch, he had a beer with me,

And by day's end, I'd found a friend, on the Golden Sarah Lee.

Next morning I found a crusty character leanin' on the stern.

"I knew your dad. You must be Jim. And you can call me Vern."

He sorta invited himself aboard and made himself at home.

But he brought a cooler full of Buds, and he shouldn't drink alone.

We spent a six pack talkin' sports, and another on politics.

Vern scrutinized the work I'd done and made a list to fix.

I shared my extra ham on rye, and we washed it down with beer.

We spent the whole day on the Sarah Lee, but never left the pier.



Good thing the moorage has a restroom.

By Labor Day I'd met at least a half a dozen men
who knew the Golden Sarah Lee and called my dad their friend.
They took me under their flannel wings, and onto their various boats,
And shared the skills I'd need to keep my Sarah Lee afloat.

But more than that, I've come to feel a camaraderie
Among these guys who'd known my dad and now adopted me.
I must have been Dad's pride and joy, 'cause at the very end
Dad left me more than his fishing boat... He left me all his friends.

My dad musta loved me.

Thanks for the boat, Dad.

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Ken Proctor Spirit Driven Author

A friend of Spirit Driven Leadership introduced Ken Proctor to us because Ken has a gift of communicating valuable lessons through stories and poetry. Fortunately, Spirit Driven Leadership has the wonderful opportunity to bring to our audience Ken's work. This material will come primarily in the form of articles, poems, short stories, lyrics and books.

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