

Something Benevolent

By Pete Clark

I have been fortunate throughout my life. Whenever I desperately needed something, including, a few times, life itself, it came to me with no questions asked and no strings attached. I have met with misfortune, but in the mean, good tidings have far outweighed the ill winds that have blown through my life.

I bought our first home in 1970, but I must admit that the house on South Wheeling Street was almost given to us by a fellow with whom I had served in the Weather Detachment at Lowry Air Force Base. My friend was buying a much larger house on East Center Avenue in Aurora Hills and needed to free up his VA Housing Loan. We made a deal and I paid \$1350.00 down over a period of time and assumed his debt with my GI Bill Mortgage Benefit. My house payment was less than my rent had been.

When my youngest son was three, it became obvious that he had a speech impediment and we took him to Children's Hospital for examination. The doctor found wax partially blocking his auditory canals. She cleaned his ear canals and set him up for speech therapy which was necessary, but not covered by insurance. We began his speech therapy, not sure exactly how we were going to pay for the sessions. About two weeks later we received a letter from the Scottish Rite Aphasia Foundation stating that we had to pay \$75.00 per month for his speech therapy and they would pay the remainder of the bill each month. We never knew who made the request for their intervention.

A couple of years after the turn of the century, I had been working fifteen to twenty hours of overtime per week and had a very nice sum to deposit into our checking account. When the transaction was complete, the teller handed me a receipt showing a balance of \$500.00. My deposit had been well over \$1000.00 and I asked the teller what was going on. She replied that the account was in overdraft. I realized what the problem was, thanked her and headed for the supermarket near our home. When I arrived at the store my wife was exiting her car, checkbook in hand to go in and buy lottery tickets. She had a bad gambling problem.

The next day I received a check in the mail for more than \$2000.00, sent by my employer. Management could not tell me why the check had been sent, but they said not to tell anyone, because not everyone had received the windfall. That check was temporary relief, but the problem continued. Family said to take away her checkbook. I could not do that. She was up in years, in ill health and I knew she didn't have much longer to be with me.

Since then I have received two more mysterious infusions into my checking account. The last one was from my final employer, more than two years after I had left. It has been said, *God looks after fools and Irishmen* and I am not Irish.