

Taking the worry out of death preparations

Everyday Cheapskate by Mary Hunt

Attending the memorial service this past week for our much-loved family friend Marshall Swoverland gave me a lot to think about. High on the list was how his wife's diligence in preparedness and attention to all the details ahead of time helped to ease the stress of the past few months. Of course, there is no way to prepare completely for the grief we all feel, but somehow, knowing that the logistics were covered left precious little to worry about.

During the recent past, several excellent resources have come to my attention - tools that can take the pain out of the preparation for life's final act. I have found each of these to be extremely well produced and reasonably priced. As such, I mention them here for your consideration.

"If Something Happens to Me" by Joseph Hearn and Niel Nielsen (Proviso Publishing, 2004). This oversized 120-page paperback workbook is filled with forms to fill out and all kinds of important information. Once completed, this becomes the repository for everything your loved ones will need should something happen to you. The authors are an estate-planning attorney and financial adviser, respectively, which gives me a great deal of confidence in the advice this excellent workbook offers. It's available at bookstores and through Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com/>). You can also order directly from the authors at <http://www.ifsomethinghappenstome.com/> or by phone at (888) 391-4344.

"Ready or Not" by Julie Edstrom (Butterfly Publishing) is another kind of record-keeping device. It's available in several formats, and I have the CD version, which makes it easy to download into my computer. Now I can complete the worksheets and store all of our important information electronically. This is a comprehensive way to manage important paperwork and information in an easy-to-use way. Categories include legal, banking, investments, insurance, home and personal areas of importance. The pages are easy to fill out. You can learn more by logging on to www.readyornot.biz.

[biz](http://www.readyornot.biz), where you can also order this excellent resource.

"Creating the Good Will" by Elizabeth Arnold (Portfolio, 2005) is not a record-keeping device but rather a hardcover book that will guide you through both the financial and emotional sides of passing on your legacy. If leaving your family peace of mind is important to you, this is a book you may wish to read. Whether you have already prepared your will and testament or need guidance with that, this book shows how to leave the best of yourself to the people you care for most. You can visit the author's Web site at <http://www.sowingseeds.com/> to learn more.

For 64 years, Marshall Swoverland taught us how to live, and now he has shown us how to die - with dignity and great anticipation of his final reward.

Rest in peace, Marshall.

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Publication date: 07-04-2006