July 12, 2010

In 1955 we graduated from the University of Wisconsin—Madison, got married and headed West so John could attend the Stanford Graduate School of Business and Tashia could start her teaching career. All of our possessions fit into our 1950 Ford and all of our wealth fit into a back pants pocket. It was the start of a glorious adventure!

But we left the Midwest with much more; with the values, confidence and capabilities learned from our parents, our community, our early public schooling in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, and from the University of Wisconsin. Early on we learned the art of giving small checks to causes important to us. Through hard work, good fortune and the opportunities offered by our amazing country and the world, we have prospered beyond all expectation. As a result, we have been able to add many zeros to the amounts of the checks we are now able to write.

In 1992 we formed a family foundation with our children and the two of us as board members. It has been a learning process, but in spite of heartaches and setbacks, we have all learned to become involved, effective philanthropists. We have teamed with talented people and with many of the organizations that helped to form us. The more personally involved we have become with the causes we support the more effective we seem to be.

Through our foundation and also personally, we have now given away over half our net worth. It is our intent to remain involved and to continue to give. Our children intend to carry on their work after we are gone. The adventure continues.

Tashia and John Morgridge