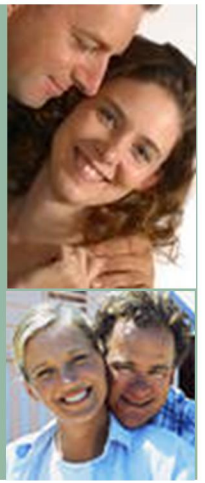


March 2011



# Marriage Matters



Great Marriages for Sheboygan County | 601 South 8th St., Sheboygan, WI 53081 | Ph: 920-783-3660 | www.Great-Marriages.org

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## HEALTHY Marriage

You can view our award winning cable television show on WSCS, in the Sheboygan cable area every Tuesday at 9:30 am and Thursday at 8:30



## “Laugh Your Way” Event at Stefanie Weill Center a Great Success!

What an evening! Great Marriages sponsored the best selling show yet this season at the beautiful Stefanie Weill Center in Sheboygan on February 19th. Mark Gungor kept a nearly “sold out” crowd of over 1000 people laughing and enjoying the show with his musical skills on the piano and his insight to marriage with segments from his Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage Seminar. Guest jazz singer Janet Planet added to a wonderful evening of fun and entertainment.



We would like to thank all of our sponsors for the show including the Vollrath Company (diamond sponsor), Sartori Foods (gold sponsor), and our silver sponsors: Wigwam Mills, Children’s Eyecare Center, Riverside City Streets and Margaux.

A very special thank you to all of the churches who supported us. Without them we would not have filled the theatre; their continued support of our organization and programs is much appreciated.

It was truly a night to remember.

### *Celebration of Marriage Banquet*

The “*Celebration of Marriage Banquet*” is an opportunity to honor and celebrate marriage, whether you have been married for one year or sixty years! Please join us for a very special evening of dining and dancing.

Date: Saturday, May 7th, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

The Bull at Pinehurst Farms  
Sheboygan Falls, WI

Call 920.783.3660 for more information or to make your reservations today!

Save the Date!



## The Editor's Corner



Commitment is not a one-time event it's an ongoing process.

-Linda and Charlie Bloom

Do you have a story about life and love for our Marriage Moments and Memories column? Married life has many surprises, joys, and challenges. What are yours? We would love to hear the secret to your success. It can be kept anonymous. Send your story to [editor@great-marriages.org](mailto:editor@great-marriages.org) or stop by our office.

## Marriage Moments and Memories

### Conflict in the Kitchen

The experts say that the key to a happy marriage is healthy conflict resolution, which means expressing how you feel honestly and respectfully. No problem, I do that daily, sometimes every hour on the hour depending what my husband is up to, or should I say not up to.

I recently made the transition from being a "stay-at-home mom" to "overscheduled mom", juggling children, housework, marriage, friends, dog and now a career. With this life-altering change, came the need for my family to step up and pull their weight. When it comes to chores around the house, or raising our two boys, there is no doubt that my husband and I have our likes and dislikes. Not to mention we have our thoughts about how the other performs the task at hand.

We are the first to admit that we do not have a perfect marriage, yet we both know that it will stand the test of time. Like many other couples, we have the occasional resentments and arguments, over your typical topics and our communication is a continual work in progress.

Take this morning for example. It was not unlike any other Thursday morning. My husband got up for work, read the paper, ate breakfast, watched the morning news, and then made his lunch before heading out to work. Let me repeat that last section for you just in case you missed it, made "his" lunch.

I've read that research studies show couples who suppress anger are twice as likely to face early death as those who express it, I opted for living a long life and decided that tonight was the night for us to hold a discussion about "our" new daily routines.

Following dinner that evening, I put my communication skills to the test by starting the conversation out right. "I feel...so annoyed by the fact that you are incapable of seeing the bigger picture."



Knowing that brooding on the things that irritate you, suppressing your anger, and giving your partner the "silent treatment" are not components of healthy conflict resolution, I redirected the conversation. "Did it every cross your mind that if you are making lunch for yourself, that you could also make it for the boys?"

"To be honest, it didn't. But, I can do that".

And that was it. Conflict...Resolution. What a concept. This now makes my morning routine just a little less hectic with the kids. Since it was so easy, I think that I will turn my efforts to addressing underwear on the floor, crumbs on the counter, leaving the toilet seat up and wet towels on the bed.

**Married 15 years**

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Ultimatum

After six years of marriage to a man in the military, I felt overwhelmed. I knew my husband loved his military role, but I felt left out. Wasn't I important? He was gone so much, leaving me alone with our two children. As a young mother I often felt very frustrated and I didn't enjoy the role of a single parent that I quite frequently had to fill.

So, I gave him an ultimatum. "Pick me or the military," I told him. Of course, I expected him to pick me. He didn't. This was not what I had in mind. I realized that we had a lot to talk through and work out.

We made a decision. If the military was so important to him, he shouldn't have to give it up. We decided to get more involved in each other's interests. I got involved in his military life; helping other families survive and learn the skills they needed to live as military families. He became more involved in my church activities and began to realize just how important having God in the center of our marriage was. We grew together while appreciating and supporting each other's personal interests.

**Married 37 years**

**Retired from the military 20 years**

Your greatest weakness can become your greatest strength.

-Linda and Charlie Bloom

The real issue is usually not the one you're arguing about.

-Linda and Charlie Bloom

Quotes were found in:  
 101 Things I Wish I Knew  
 When I Got Married;  
 Simple Lessons to  
 Make Love Last  
 by: Linda and Charlie Bloom

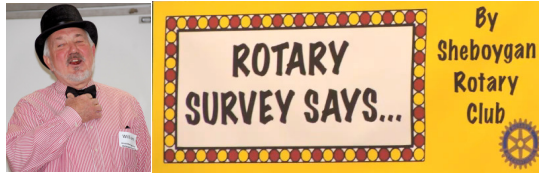


**Become a fan of GMSC on Facebook and follow us on Twitter: gm4sc**

# Great Marriages 2011 Team!

## Six Marriage Tips

1. Take a break from your role as spouse/parent.
2. Keep the communication lines open.
3. Remember your sense of humor.
4. Be open to advice from your spouse or other sources.
5. Never say "divorce."
6. Really listen to your spouse and be open to their viewpoint.



Great Marriages had a team participate again this year in the Rotary "Survey Says" Event. This year our team was sponsored by Wells Fargo Financials, and we thank them for their support!

A great time was had by all who participated and by those who attended the event to cheer us on. We had a slow start, but then with some serious team power, and a little help from our laser-light packed engagement rings, we came back strong and went on to a great victory in the third round!!! Yeah team!



2011 Team Members:

Bill Gagin (GMSC supporter... "yes man number two"), Suzanne Fink (programs and special events coordinator), Charlene Lammers (director), Aaron Lammers (#1 spouse... "yes man number one"), Patti Kopf (data specialist & outreach program coordinator)

## *The Love Dare* by Stephen and Alex Kendrick

### DAY 28—Love makes sacrifices

Most of us are quick to notice our own challenges. Life isn't easy, but we are not the only ones to feel unappreciated or mistreated.

We don't notice our spouse's challenges the same way. Life might be hard for them also, but we often don't pay much attention unless they start complaining. Then, do we help them or do we say they have a poor attitude?

Love pays attention. Love is sensitive to the needs of your mate. Love sees the distress signs of your spouse.

Love makes sacrifices. It does not focus on you. Even when you are being accused by your spouse, love does not become defensive. It shows compassion. Jesus taught us to make sacrifices and meet the needs of others.

What needs might your mate have? Does your spouse need your attention? Do they need support? Are they fearful or physically tired?

Remember, making sacrifices for your spouse also helps you since they are a part of you.

Ask them how you can help. Put their needs first. They may just need a listening ear or the solution may be much more complex.

Show them you will be there for them. Show them you truly care.

### DAY 29—Love's motivation

Sometimes we do not feel motivated to love our spouse. Sometimes your spouse may not even accept your love when you offer it. That is a normal part of life.

Our moods and emotions are changeable, but one thing isn't. God's love. If you accept God as the source of love, your motivation to love your spouse remains constant even when your mate's likeability does not.

Has your spouse been difficult to live with? Has your spouse been brooding or withdrawn? Does your spouse argue with you a lot? Love them any way.

Mere duty does not motivate love for the long term. If God is the primary focus of your love—its potential in your marriage is unlimited.



In every newsletter we include a synopsis from the popular book:

### *The Love Dare*

A 40-day challenge to couples to learn how to love unconditionally.

# Upcoming Events, Seminars and Programs

**Getting to the Heart of It** The Gift of Marriage...a marriage retreat

Get away from day-to-day pressures and reconnect with the person you love the most! Attend this year's Gift of Marriage Seminar—"Getting to the Heart of It". You'll be treated to a day full of activities that you can truly enjoy and share with your partner. Become better communicators, conflict managers, partners, and friends.

**Date:** Saturday, April 16  
**Time:** 1:00-3:45 pm  
**Location:** Plymouth, WI

"A good marriage is one which allows for change and growth in the individuals and in the way they express their love."  
 — Pearl S. Buck

**Great Marriage Family Day at Camp Y Koda**

Enjoy an afternoon at Camp Y Koda with your family. We have a variety of different activities planned for all ages. Selections include boating, fishing, archery, climbing wall, hiking and much more. It's a great way to spend quality time together while bonding through new family-enriching skills and fun activities! Cost is \$5 per person or \$20 for a family.

**Date:** Saturday, July 9  
**Time:** 1:00 - 4:00pm  
**Location:** Camp Y-Koda, Sheboygan Falls, WI

"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."  
 — I Corinthians 13:7

**"Fun"draiser Golf Outing**

Get together a foursome and join us for 18 holes, on the Meadow Valley course at Blackwolf Run. Have fun, knowing you that are contributing to our great cause.

**Date:** Thursday, July 14  
**Time:** 3:30 pm  
**Location:** Blackwolf Run, Kohler, WI

**Fighting For Your Marriage**

Based on the widely acclaimed PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program) method, *Fighting for Your Marriage* is a skill-based marriage enrichment and communication program designed to help make good marriages even better and to prepare engaged couples for a life-long happy marriage. The PREP program emphasizes strategies under two crucial frameworks: strategies geared toward lowering risk factors and strategies for raising protective factors to help marriages succeed.

**Date/Time:** TBD  
**Location:** Sheboygan, WI

"Ultimately the bond of all companionship, whether in marriage or in friendship, is conversation."  
 — Oscar Wilde

**Visit Our Relationship Resource Library**

A variety of books and DVDs are available to be checked out at no charge at the Great Marriages office. Topics include general communication and enrichment; sex, intimacy and infidelity; parenting and families; singles, engaged couples and newlyweds; divorce prevention; finance; devotionals; and empty nesters. We also have limited resources available in Spanish.

**Prepare & Enrich** *\*\* (call for appointment)\*\**

Unlike our regular monthly programs, this program is *not* a group program—couples meet with marriage mentors as a couple and it includes a marriage inventory that is specific to them. Prepare and Enrich is for both engaged couples who are preparing for marriage and married couples that may be struggling in an area or who just want to strengthen and enrich their marriage. This program is the most advanced couple assessment tool available. A marriage or pre-marriage inventory, specific to the couple helps identify their individual strengths and challenges. The couple will learn skills that aid in overcoming the challenges and building a happy, healthy relationship and strong marriage.

**NOTE: Most programs are free. Registration is required. Call (920) 783-3660.**

