

# *The North Fulton Marriage Newsletter*

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## **Takes a lot of Gall**

In January of this year I awoke one morning at four AM doubled over in abdominal pain. At first I thought it was just indigestion, but after the pain lasted for over an hour I thought I might be having a really long contraction. But, my wife and I have not been trying to get pregnant, so that was out. My thoughts then turned to getting to a hospital sooner rather than later because pain and I just don't get along too well. I could have called 911 and had an ambulance come out. That would have been the sage play. But, oh no, not me, Mr. Frugal. I knew an ambulance ride would cost me \$500 plus out-of-pocket. To complicate matters, there was an ice storm that morning. In a calendar a year in which I broke my toe stepping on a toy wooden block and had my house fried by lightning, the fact that the roads were treacherous this given morning should have been NO surprise at all. My next option was to have my wife drive me to the hospital, but that would have involved waking our three-year-old at four in the morning. When faced with the choice, any parent would rather drive alone in an ice storm, in extreme abdominal pain, than wake a soundly sleeping three-year-old. So, I sledged down the driveway to my truck which was parked on the street in anticipation of the ice storm. When I arrived at the ER the parking attendant told me I could not park there unless I was dropping someone off.....yeah. After I calmly explained to him (and anyone else within a 100 mile radius) that I WAS dropping someone off, that someone being ME, he let me park. Once in the ER they hit me with morphine, and I then realized how much pain I was in—the morphine did not make a dent! They began to run a series of tests which included an ultrasound. After the ultrasound began I dryly asked the technician, "Well, is it a girl or a boy?" For whatever reason, she did not find this funny. Given that I was drunk on morphine after driving three miles in an ice storm, doubled over in pain, could she have not just humored me and laughed? Guess not.

After about four hours the doctors finally told me that my gall bladder had "sludge" in it and that I would need to have surgery. Gall bladder removal. Great. Because of other personal things going on in my life (see my February newsletter, "Sundown and Payday") I decided to delay the surgery for a while to see how I felt. But after several weeks of discomfort and single-handedly improving Smoothie King's 2010 Q1 profit margin by about 5%, I decided to schedule the surgery. On March 5<sup>th</sup>, my gall bladder was removed thru laparoscopic surgery. Outpatient surgery, in and out of the hospital, in under 6 hours. And, now a month later, I feel great. I actually feel better than I have in a long time. Looks like the doctors did a good job and my quality of life should improve. See, as it turns out the body does not need a gall bladder. The gall bladder filters out fat, but if removed, the liver takes over as the fat filter.

What are some traits or habits that your marriage could live without? If you eliminated a trait such as jealousy, insecurity, or selfishness, would the quality of your marriage improve? If you eliminated some bad habits such as blaming, denying or withdrawing, would the quality of your marriage improve? It just might. At this point you may be wondering, "How can John expect me to change something about myself, how dare he confront ME, my spouse is the one that needs to change." Well, keep in mind to be a marriage counselor, sometimes it take a lot of gall.

**John H. Pruett, Jr., MS, EdS, NCC, CPCS, LPC**

Website: [www.georgiaprofessionalcounselingcenter.com](http://www.georgiaprofessionalcounselingcenter.com)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/johnhpruettjr](http://www.linkedin.com/in/johnhpruettjr)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/CounselorGA>

Facebook: <http://ow.ly/11PKG>

Email Subscription: [marriagenewsletter@licensedtherapy.com](mailto:marriagenewsletter@licensedtherapy.com)

*Georgia Professional Counseling Center, Inc.*

602 Abbey Court, Alpharetta, GA 30004

Locations in Alpharetta & Peachtree City

Phone: 770-656-9711