

# *The North Fulton Marriage Newsletter*

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## **The Only Human Interested**

Marguerite Cline, former Cherokee County school superintendent and the current Mayor of Waleska, Georgia, has been writing a human-interest column in the Cherokee Tribune for several years. In 2004 Ms. Cline published a book, "I've Been Thinking," which is a collection of her columns. In her book, Ms. Cline writes that there are days when she thinks she might be the only human interested in her column. I know that feeling as well. So, to all you humans who remain interested in my newsletter.... thank you!

Marriages need humor. It sounds simple, yet it is so important. Humor is like salve for a hurting heart. My life has always been filled with humor, and quite frankly sometimes it is the only thing that gets me through the day. About 20 years ago, on April Fools' Day, my father faked a heart attack in our kitchen. He set us up the whole day, complaining about not feeling well, saying his chest hurt, etc. As he lay face first on the floor, my mother (screaming), sister and myself rushed to turn him over. We quickly found that he was engulfed in laughter. About ten years later he had a real heart attack, no joke this time. We are so thankful that he survived. But, you need to have fun in life, especially within the context of your marriage. Humor plays a large role in my own marriage. I spend a good majority of my time attempting to make my wife laugh. I often tell her the more I try to be funny, the greater the odds will be that something I say will actually be funny. You can imagine how painful my wife's everyday life must be. She has a great sense of humor as well. Last night I was sharing with her the news about declining crime rates in Cherokee County. I told her that I had read that for the second consecutive year there had been no murders in our county. Giggling, my wife responded, "That may change this year." In other words, I better watch out! Now that is funny. I laughed out loud. Apparently she sometimes wishes that death do us part thing would come sooner rather than later. Ha! It reminds me of what Waylon Jennings once wrote, "I've always been crazy, but it's kept me from going insane." Amen. We have to keep things loose to prevent us from getting wound up too tight. And humor can play a key role in developing one of the most crucial characteristics of a healthy marriage: friendship. I often ask couples, "Are you friends?" If the answer is "no" then we have some work to do. If the answer is "yes" then we probably have less work to do.

A cautionary note here: some people may think they are being funny with their spouse when they are actually using sarcasm as an emotional weapon. Remember that the word sarcasm comes from a Greek word which loosely translated means "flesh tearing." Ouch. We don't want to tear into our spouse's emotional flesh! As you assess your own relationship, do you find that humor plays a role? If not, begin to look for ways to integrate some humor into your life. Play a practical joke or send a funny card, or if all else fails make fun of yourself. If you are like me, there is plenty of material to work with! I will close with the words of comedian Ron White, who when asked why his previous marriage ultimately failed, responded: "We lived in a house and the house had a thermostat." I hope that you and your spouse continue to find common humor, common ground and most importantly a common indoor air temperature.

Reference: "I've Been Thinking."

Marguerite Thigpen Cline. Inkwater Press, 2004.

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