

# The North Fulton Marriage Newsletter

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## I Can Still Make Cheyenne

One of my all time favorite songs is "I Can Still Make Cheyenne" by country music legend George Strait. The song tells a simple yet poignant story of a rodeo cowboy who has not been able to balance his career and personal life very well. After a long time on the road, the cowboy calls up his spouse and says: "It's cold out here and I'm all alone, I didn't make the short go again and I'm coming home. I know I've been away too long. I never got a chance to write or call. And I know this rodeo has been hard on us all. But I'll be home soon. And honey is there something wrong?" His spouse responds: "Don't bother comin' home. By the time you get here I'll be long gone. There's somebody new and he sure ain't no rodeo man." The cowboy, with a hint of resignation then says: "I'm sorry it's come down to this. There's so much about you that I'm gonna miss. But it's alright baby, if I hurry I can still make Cheyenne." Realizing his relationship is now over the cowboy "aimed his truck toward that Wyoming line" and heads off to the next rodeo.

Balancing career and marriage is a daunting challenge. And balancing career, marriage and children is even tougher. We all have to work to support ourselves and our families. But when is too much work, too much? My wife often tells me that she has never met anyone with a work ethic quite like mine. I tend to be very tenacious and my motor never stops. I am always driving and pushing to build my business and lay a solid foundation for our family. But my work ethic extends to other areas of my life, as I always strive to work hard at being a husband, work hard at being a father, and work hard at being a son, grandson, uncle and nephew. I get my work ethic primarily from my dad. In 1968 he started his own construction business at the age of 30. Forty years later his business is still in operation. I am so proud of him and thankful for him as a working role model. For a snapshot of my dad in his prime, imagine a husky guy with a black beard wearing blue jeans, a t-shirt and muddy boots (unlaced), knuckles and hands bloodied and a mixture of sweat, grease, red clay and diesel fuel smells. Neither my father nor myself have ever served in the military, but I have often thought if I were going off to war, real war where people die, my dad would be my very first choice as someone to fight beside me. He is one part Clint Eastwood, one part John Wayne...but tougher. Dad is also one part Alan Alda, sweet and sensitive, wrapped around the finger of his grandchildren. Despite working so much, my father always made time for myself and my sister. He seemed to be home every night, though sometimes late, and as an adolescent I spent countless days with him hunting and fishing both here in Georgia and across the globe. Dad always knew how to play hard too. I think I do as well. We need to play in order to have balance in life.

As my daughter nears the age of 2, I find myself *working* to spend as much time with her as I can. To say my time with her is precious would be a tremendous understatement. I work at being both an active and contributing father. I feel that is what God directs us to do. My wife, now a stay-at-home-mom, takes on the majority of the parenting workload. She is a hard worker too. She is a nurturing mother, and my daughter and I are blessed to have her. Recently I asked my wife if our daughter will appreciate my efforts to build this business, i.e., will my career efforts be meaningful to her someday? My wife, the daughter of a dentist, said, "Oh yes, she will be very proud of you." Awesome. I will continue to work hard at making her proud.

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