

Trust in God for love

For the first time in American history, there are more singles than married folks. Yep, heard it on the morning news the other day! Of course, another statistic reported that most of these single folks still live in pairs; they're just not too quick to officially tie the knot. Interviews with many single women indicated they do still hope and plan to marry someday.

Although marriage may not be uppermost on the minds of all single folks, it does still hold true that singles are looking for love -- a companion, a partner, a date. This is a topic that I can't approach without thinking about my mother.

My mother has buried two husbands and one ex-husband, and at 80-years-old, is currently married to a very dear man. After each marriage, she declared to me, "I'll never marry again." Indeed, as far as I could tell, she never looked for a man and didn't appear to want one. Yet, men seem to be irresistibly drawn to her, like bees to honey. Perhaps my mother has some helpful advice for those looking for love.

Let me introduce you. She's a Georgia peach, as some would say, born and raised in and around Atlanta. She may be among the last true southern belles, but I hope not. She has a welcoming smile, engaging embrace, friendly tone of voice and thoughtful gestures. She has honeysuckle-sweet charm and a mischievous spirit that covers up (at least to the eyes of men) her smart and savvy ability to get what she wants and when she wants it.

She's always been brutally honest with every man she has met. She had one true love that would come first in her life, and she

made this perfectly clear the first time she met a new man. Her relationship with God would have top priority, and nothing would ever interfere with what God wanted her to do.

There's a verse in Psalms that expresses the depth of her love for her Lord. "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God." (Psalms 42:1) Over the years, she has learned all too well that God's love is a lasting love, a love she can count on. She knows God never takes His love away or disappoints, nor does His love die or have conditions. So, she has spent her entire life longing and endeavoring to know God better and cherishing His eternal love for her.

It was the first time she found herself without a husband, that the Bible assured her, "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name?" (Isaiah 54:5) I think she believed these words and never again thought she needed a man to be her husband. Whether or not God thought she needed a companion throughout her life or thought the men in her life needed her, I'm not sure. That God meets our every need, there is no doubt.

Only for very brief moments in her lifetime, has my mother been without a husband.

She's always been able to appreciate the goodness in everyone and, by the way, she's convinced that there truly is good in every person. My mother would tell you that God created us good, that the first chapter in Genesis confirms this. In fact, the chapter concludes, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) My mother



Annette Bridges

has yet to not find goodness in someone. Perhaps the men in her life were attracted to her recognition and appreciation of their goodness.

After a few years of looking for love in wrong places and faces, I decided to try "appreciating goodness" myself and see if this point of view could bring more good into my own experience -- and love life. This was the year before I met the man who would become my husband of soon-to-be 26 years. A previous long relationship was so disappointing that I didn't want to experience that type of heartbreak again. So, the year I met my husband, I decided to focus on completing my college degree and appreciating goodness everywhere and in every one, including in all the men I was meeting, being friends with and dating.

This viewpoint not only changed how I saw others, it changed my view of myself and consequently my actions toward others, too. You might say I started living by my southern belle upbringing, which really is another way of saying living by the "golden rule" -- treating others as well as you would have them treat you.

U.S. teens have weighty problem

American teens have got it pretty good. As a group, they have the world's highest disposable income for their age group. They also have the most clothing, the most computers, and the highest rate of automobile ownership.

But according to new research, they've also got something they don't want: the most excess weight.

Researchers with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services looked at weight data collected for 13 and 15-year-olds in the United States and 14 other industrialized nations. They found that American teens, both boys and girls, weigh more than their peers abroad.

That may not come as a surprise to anyone, given the alarming increase in overweight and obesity among Americans of all ages. But it seems even the natural adolescent preoccupation with appearance and body image hasn't kept teens from growing into bodies they may not really want.

The researchers looked at data on about 30,000 13- and 15-year-olds in the U.S., Israel and 13 European countries. They tracked body mass index, a measurement that is calculated by dividing body height into weight.

It turned out that American kids were the most overweight, by a long shot, for both age groups,

and for both boys and girls. Among the U.S. boys, 12.6 percent of the 13-year-olds were overweight, and 13.9 percent of the 15-year-olds were overweight.

Greece had the next highest proportion of husky lads, with 8.9 percent of the younger group and 10.8 percent of the older boys.

Among the younger girls, the U.S. had 10.8 percent overweight, followed by Portugal with 8.3 percent.

But while the proportion of overweight girls dropped with age in other lands, in the U.S., it rose. Among 15-year-old girls, fully 15.1 percent were overweight, and that's more than double the next ranking country, Portugal, with 6.7 percent.

So why are U.S. teens so much bigger? Some of it has to do with all those computers and TVs. More than a third of U.S. homes now have a computer, and families with children aged 12 to 17 are the most likely to own them. It's a growing factor in Americans' sedentary lifestyles, with emailing, shopping, banking, working, studying and just plain surfing around now adding hours to the time we spend parked in front of a monitor.

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Notice of Request for Permit Modification Texas Electric Cooperatives - Training Division 2440 Bevil Loop Road Jasper, Tx. 75951

Texas Electric Cooperatives is proposing to modify existing industrial solid waste management permit No. HW-50345-000 and existing compliance plan No. CP-50345. The purposes of these modifications are to update the post closure care financial assurance cost estimates and update the ongoing monitoring program.

A public meeting will be held:

Wednesday, 28 February 2007
Holiday Inn Express
123 Some Road
Jasper, Tx. 75951

6:30 pm. Open House/Information Session
7:00 p.m. TEC Presentation
7:15 p.m. Public Comment Session
8:00 p.m. Open House/Information Session resumes

The public comment period extends from **15 February - 15 April 2007**. All members of the community are invited to attend this public meeting and provide comments on the proposed modifications. Written comments, postmarked no later than **15 April 2007**, may be mailed to: Mr. Govardhan Darsi, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Building F, Austin, Tx. 78753.

An information repository, containing copies of the modification requests along with supporting documentation, has been established at 175 E. Water Street, Jasper, Tx., 75951. Interested community members may review the information repository between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The permittee's compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from the agency contact person listed below.

For more information, contact:

Mr. Randy Dorman
Texas Electric Cooperatives
2440 Bevil Loop Road
Jasper, Tx. 75951
409-384-4633

Mr. Govardhan Darsi
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. F
Austin, Tx 78753
512-239-6606

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Things That I Ponder

Reality Check

Here we are seven weeks into this new year, we have just expressed our undying devotion to the person closest to our heart. Where do we go from here?



The next event, already in the stores! Easter, what does that mean? Are there really a whole host of bunnies out there somewhere just waiting to deliver goodies to the children on Easter morning?

What are we teaching our children? That our lives are a series of big events spaced far enough apart to keep the youngsters living in a state anticipation of the next bit of excitement? The next opportunity for them to expect a gift of some kind? What kind of entitlement mentality is this teaching the children? Every event comes bearing gifts? That they can expect more and more with each holiday?

Could we teach them to give? Might we teach that giving is more satisfying than always being the recipient? Would it be wise to instill an attitude of gratitude in the children? Might it be wisdom that teaches one to be grateful for even the smallest beneficial events that come our way every day?

The question has come to me about my surgery. Thank you for your concern. It went very well, minimal pain, only a small scar that may not even be noticed if you were to meet me. The little hummingbird egg sized tumor was benign! I am a very grateful man today!

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The attitude of gratitude is a reward for every person involved.
Jacob Kaufman, RN, DON, is Regional Coordinator of Clinical Services for Consolidated Health Care Services, Inc. He can be reached at 409-379-2268 or kaufman@lpemail.com

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