

Grace Notes

"God's grace for everyday living"

What a difference love makes

By: Debora M. Coty

I married Fabio and ended up with Wally Cox.

Yep, it's true. The muscle-bulging, athletic, young man with wavy, shoulder-length locks (hey, don't smirk; it was the style back then!) who won my heart nearly 30 years ago has morphed into a bonafide computer geek. For Christmas this year, he bought me, the most unsavvy computer person on the planet, a laser mouse. I would have rather had a tennis racket. I suppose I now have to get an electronic cat or I'll have little laser mice droppings all over my desk. What do you *feed* a laser mouse, anyway...cheese bytes?

I'm not complaining, mind

you. I wouldn't trade my slight-of-build, balding, bespeckled husband for all the John Travolta's or Kurt Russell's (my long-ago heart-throbs) in the entire world. Maybe it's because I've morphed right along with him. The Michelle Pfeiffer with whom he vowed to love for better or for worse (never envisioning, "worse" of course) has somehow turned into the wicked witch of the west.

Who'd a' think the sweet, soft-spoken, "Whatever you say, dear" he initially got from his bride would eventually become, "I don't care what you're doing, DROP IT RIGHT NOW and come help me scrape the dog vomit out of the carpet!"

We met under



idyllic circumstances in the '70's on the USF campus...me, a hick from the sticks of north Florida and him, a displaced Yankee from New York. I thought the way he strummed his guitar was groovy, far-out man, and he thought it charming the way I made two syllables out of words like "door" and "pen." And we both loved the Lord.

A match made in heaven. Truly. I've come to realize that fact over the years when our mutual faith in God's omnipotence was the one binding cord that held us together through life events that threatened to tear us apart...numbing grief, heart-wrenching disappointments,

confusing changes, and unmet expectations.

God knew what He was doing when He matched us up, although we've never been one of those pal-sy, wal-sy little couples who do everything together. Chuck's into quality. I'm into quantity. He will painstakingly fix a broken fifty cent item if it takes all week. I'll throw it away and rush out to buy two more.

We learned long ago that we can do home projects together, but not simultaneously. I slap the wallpaper on the walls within twenty minutes and He enters and methodically does all the precise trimming and detail work for two hours. We then return together and congratulate each other on a job well done.

When Chuck makes dinner, he carefully slices a fresh pineapple into perfect, half-inch cubes to be savored individually, while on my night, I randomly chop apples, strawberries, tomatoes, and anything I can find remotely fruit-like (are onions fruit?) into a hodgepodge salad, many strangely shaped pieces sporting bits of peel clinging to their backs. Could these different styles of ours annoy one another? You betcha.

Yet love is a many splintered thing. God often chooses to bring "odd couples" together, and the only way we can make a relationship work is to follow His guidelines:

"Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude.

Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of

wrongs that others do.

Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil.

Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting.

Love never fails" (I Corinthians 13:4-8, CEV.)

So, even through the years of weird Valentine gifts—the red, kissy-lipped boxers, heart-shaped pizzas (with pepperoni's cut into little hearts), heart-shaped chocolate chip cookies and meatloaf outlined with red ketchup hearts—Chuck knows I love him. Because in my own warped way, I'm trying to be supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting.

I draw comfort in God's promise that love never fails...even if my heart-shaped hamburgers did. (After shrinkage and burnage, they looked like two-headed black frogs.)