



Trivia:

With the beginning of a New Year when so many people make New Year's Resolutions (often broken), I ran across this information on the most common regrets of older folks. I thought I would share it with you to see if it corresponds with any of your most common regrets. Check out the link I have provided as I found it to be interesting. Remember, if you do have regrets, *it is never too late to change some things.* Let's just strive in the remaining time we have left to be better individuals, more loving, and healthier in any way possible.

espresso <https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/smart-living/older-peoples-most-common-regrets/ss-AAIWhlq?ocid=spartandhp>

Some of the most common regrets of older folks:

Rebelling as a teen	Not vacationing more
Not visiting a dying relative	Not being more adventurous
Cheating on a partner	Not pursuing dreams
Not keeping a secret	Not staying in touch
Not helping someone in need	Not eating healthier
Quitting school	Not taking better care of one's health
Not choosing a career wisely	Not spending enough time with one's parents
Not taking career risks	Not having children
Not traveling more	Trying to live up to parental expectations
Working too much	Being inattentive to one's children
Not sharing true feelings	Ignoring one's instincts
Who they married	Worrying too much
Not pursuing romantic interests	Not letting oneself be happy
Not saving more money or not saving early enough	

Crozier Brown sent us this wonderful article on Waco that was in the Washington Post.

The Washington Post article below is about the Gaines family of Waco:

"Waco calls itself the Heart of Texas, and Chip and Jo have helped recharge its ticker."

"Out of nowhere, millions of people started showing up," said Ashley Thornton, a longtime resident who runs the Act Locally Waco website. "If I'm traveling and wearing a Waco T-shirt, people will come up to me and tell me that Waco is on their bucket list. It's the most fascinating phenomena."

"The 'phenomena,' by the way, has a name. It's called the Magnolia Effect, after the Gaineses' company and Joanna's favorite tree, which holds a sweet memory of an early date with Chip. (He climbed a magnolia and picked her a flower.)"

The article: https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/waco-tex-needed-fixing-luckily-chip-and-joanna-gaines-had-the-tools/2019/12/05/4e6b7baa-1380-11ea-9cd7-a1becbc82f5e_story.html

In memory of Marcus Otterstad: retirement day, June 10, 2012

Pastor Marcus Otterstad led worship for the last time on Sunday, June 10, 2012 as a full-time pastor. He retired after 40+ years being a great pastor.

(also pictured here with Marcus might possibly be Marcus's son and grandson.)



www.whs60.org

FROM OUR GRADUATES:

Pat Payne: "I marvel at the life stories, cry at items like Bob's reflection of the quarterly luncheons and belly laugh at the aging jokes."

David Dibb: "I am always impressed with how much our classmates are doing and have done"

Tommye Ruth Blair Toler: We have such a wonderful bunch of graduates. Bob Easter summed it up so well in the quote you printed.

Jeanell Buida Bolton: I've noticed that several WHS scholars have been recognized lately so to toot my own horn, I'm going to break the news that Hariadene Johnson, Marybeth Cash, and I were the top female scorers on the ACT test. The top males were Hugh Wilfong, Bill Alexander, and someone whose name I shamefully can't remember. It was all strangely hush-hush back then, and we weren't supposed to talk about it, but I guess I can break silence now.

UPDATES:

Phyllis Brooks: "A recent meeting with oncologist and my angel who is my driver and Sunday School Teacher resulted in a six week rest until December 10 when I will begin receiving only one infusion and not the immunotherapy drug that I am allergic too. He did not want to stop the infusions altogether. After a period of time another PET scan will be made to see results of the one infusion. The last scan revealed more shrinkage. We will meet again on the 13th of December. Thank you again for your uplifted prayers."

Linda Shelby Lyons: Linda is enjoying being home and petting on her fur babies. Both kitties were glad to see "mama".

David Peebles: Linda Shelby Lyons and Jeanne Holland Harman visited with David Peebles on Dec. 28th. David is alert but has been moved temporarily to a nursing facility for 5 days. Not sure what the plans are for David after the 5 days, but he continues to be on Hospice.

Charlie Sligh: Has been staying with his sister, Alice Ogden and her husband, Greg. He is thankful for the support of his friends, many from Waco High, who have expressed concern and given well-wishes.

Tom Kittlitz- new address

255 Liz Ln

Gap, PA 17527

January Birthdays:

4	Malissa Ruth Starnes Baugh
5	Dick Tooker
8	Beth Freeman Holiday
10	Betty Luedeker Gatlin
12	Nanci Stiteler Felice
16	Vince Tusa, Steve Brown
17	Ken Lipscombe
25	Bernie Regian, Pat Gabler Kemper
26	Don Clyde Blackburn



Richard (Dick) Tooker



1960



Today

Well, it took me a long time to gut up to write this after Jeanne asked me to. Not because I'm modest – some of you will remember from the time I ran for the student government of Waco High that I've always been a shameless self-promoter. And it's not because writing is difficult for me. The problem is, it's not easy to string disparate flows of life events into a single, coherent chronological order, because those events often overlap. Life is just messy. So, I won't try to create a single-threaded story. Instead, this Show & Tell will be organized around subject matter categories. That will be a good thing for those of you who are only marginally interested in my story. The sub-headings will let you pick and choose what you might want to read, skipping the parts you think will be boring.

I'M NOT A DICK!

I started using my real name, Richard, in the 1970s, because the name Dick was a derivate of "Dickie", a nickname I had as a child and always hated with a passion. Also, I was beginning to get annoyed all the double-entendre jokes (let's face it, there's no real difference between "Dick" and "dick"). I simply don't answer to Dick anymore. I should note, however, that the audience for this newsletter is the sole exception to that. Since we're all age-challenged, I'll forgive you if you just can't remember to call me Richard, and I promise I won't bring it up.



GROWING UP IN WACO, GOING TO SCHOOL, AND THE HIGH COST OF EDUCATION

I attended grades 1-5 at South Waco Elementary. We lived at 1717 Gurley, in a one-bedroom house with a shower but no tub in the one bathroom. My older brother, Tommy, and I slept on a fold-down couch in the living room. Looking back on that, it now seems really obvious that we weren't very well off financially, but everyone around us lived the same way, so we really didn't know any better. We were happy with what we had. For a time, our family car was a Henry J, if you remember those. Riding in it was kind of like strapping a roller skate to your butt.

In the summer before the sixth grade, we moved to north Waco, to 4016 Trice. Still not much of a house, but a giant leap from where we had been living. Tommy and I slept in an actual bedroom that we still

shared, but we had real twin beds! I attended 6th grade at Dean Highland Elementary, then went on to North Junior High and to Waco High. My Mom and Dad both lived in that house on Trice until they died.

After high school, I went to Baylor, still living at home on Trice Avenue, because there just wasn't enough money for my parents to help me with tuition or housing. I had to work to support myself and pay my own way through college.

That doesn't make me special, of course, and I never begrudged my parents their situation. I was only one of millions and millions of American teenagers in the same boat at the time, including, no doubt, some of you.

There was no such thing as government-sponsored loans like students have access to today, so I had to find a bank to get tuition money from personal loans, along with the liberal over-use of credit cards for other expenses. I managed to get the loans at Community State Bank because I had a reasonably good job, and (mostly, I think) because Tommy had once dated the bank president's daughter, the family liked him, and somehow that magically rubbed off on me. It was only one example of the many ways my brother influenced my life for the better.

That source of funds finally dried up, about the same time I made a major job move, so I dropped out of Baylor just 24 semester hours short of a double-major degree in journalism and broadcasting. I told my parents I'd go back and get that degree in a couple of years.

That never happened, for a variety of reasons. One of them was the \$65,000 in debt that I had to pay off first, which was, as you all know, very serious money in the mid-sixties. Another reason was that career shifts had made my major courses of study in broadcast irrelevant.

I consider myself very fortunate to be a member of the last generation of Americans that could be a college dropout and not have it automatically deep-six the chances for a good career. Only once have I been turned down for a job because of no college degree, and in hindsight, I'm lucky I didn't get that one.

Instead, my career took off in what was, at the time, a brand-new marketing discipline, and I managed to establish a fairly high-profile track record in it in the early 1970s. Since then, I haven't once been asked if I even went to college.

MY WORKING CAREER

Until my retirement at the end of 2018, I have been pretty much continuously employed since I was eight years old. I don't remember a time I didn't work. My first job was selling Spudnuts – doughnuts made with potato flour from a shop on 18th street – door to door. Every week, I was the leading saleskid, probably because of my red hair and freckles. Hey, I was a cute kid! People said I reminded them of Opie.



I went through a long series of kid jobs after that, including a paper route and working in a gas station, all the way through junior high school. One Christmas season, I gift-wrapped and delivered packages at O&H Rare Foods. I even cleaned doctor's offices for a living. Trust me, you don't want to know what that was like.

While I was in Waco High, I worked at Baker's Shoe Store downtown every day after school. The most expensive shoes in the store were \$7.99. My cousin Les Tooker (also in our class at WHS) worked at a competing cheap shoe store three doors up Austin Avenue, so we sometimes hooked up after work to party (he was definitely better at that than I was). I cleaned up the store, sold shoes on Saturdays, and even trimmed the display windows. From there, I took a job as a salesman at Harlik's Man's Shop across the street, where I learned how to sell to people who had money, an important skill. That was right after I started going to Baylor. I stayed with Harlik's through late 1963, then it happened! I got a job I thought could be an actual career.

Earlier, in 1962, I had approached Lee Glasgow, the owner of W.A.C.O. Radio, about doing a one-hour Sunday afternoon show that featured new music and high school news from around Waco. I offered to do it for nothing, because I thought radio was cool – everyone treated Top 40 disk jockeys like they were something special.

He didn't much want to do it, but I had done my homework, and I pointed out to him that the FCC required all radio stations to have educational programming, and W.A.C.O. didn't have any. So he caved, took me up on my offer, and my radio career was launched. I was still working Monday through Saturday at Harlik's, and going to school at Baylor.



It took me a little over a year to parlay that volunteer job into actual full-time employment as the nighttime DJ at W.A.C.O. Of course, I quit my job at Harlik's to become a disk jockey. After starting out with that Sunday afternoon show, I ultimately became a commercial producer, a salesman, and the station's program director, all while still doing a nightly radio show and going to school at Baylor. I was a very busy guy, and my grade point average suffered for it. But I managed.

Those of you who live in and around Waco will be interested to learn that while I was at W.A.C.O., I hired my cousin, Max Tooker (Les' younger brother), for one of his first jobs as a disc jockey. He didn't work there long. Working for me evidently didn't hurt his broadcast career – Max is still a genuine celebrity around these parts because of his long stint on the oldies station here, and from his years as the news anchor at KCEN-TV Channel 6. He's also a truly great guy! He is now running a very successful broadcast ad agency in Waco called AdMax. When we moved to Waco, we reconnected, and we're BFFs.

In 1964, it finally dawned on me that there were about 4,500 Top 40 disk jockeys in the U.S., but only a handful of them made really good money. The only way I was going to succeed in radio was to dedicate myself to the prevailing transient radio lifestyle, working my way up by moving from one radio market to another until I could land a job in a major market like Dallas or Chicago. That did not appeal to me. Besides, as big as my ego was, I had to admit to myself that I wasn't all that great a DJ.

Radio was great fun and I certainly enjoyed being a local semi-celebrity, but my future in broadcasting started to look bleak. I began casting around for Plan B.

I landed at Success Motivation Institute (SMI) in Waco, first as a writer of press releases, then as Public Relations Director, and about 18 months later, Director of Sales Promotion, the person in charge of planning and executing 25+ sales meetings, conferences and conventions a year for the company's distributor organization. That meant every major convention hotel in America saw me as a prospective customer, and would "comp" a room for me – usually, a suite – wherever I went, even on personal trips.

For six years, I never had to pay a hotel bill, anywhere. Paul Meyer, the company's founder, also believed that to be successful, you had to look and feel successful. As a result, the company policy was to fly employees first class at SMI's expense. Man, those were the days!

I learned a lot at SMI. That included goal-setting, how to stay focused on important targets, how to plan and execute business solutions of all kinds in the face of obstacles, and how to develop the confidence to take risks without fear. I also did a lot of public speaking, which leveraged my comfort behind a microphone.

But it wasn't a job that would lead me to upper management at SMI. For that, you had to be a former distributor, and I wasn't. In 1970, I finally came to the realization that my eight years' experience with the company was actually two years' experience, four times. Besides, I had gotten married by that time, and I needed a better opportunity if I was going to support two people rather than one.

The Magic Circle

One of my key criteria for finding a new gig was to get out of Waco. That desire was largely driven by a desire to get away from my parents. I loved both of them, but I was really weary of being at their beck and call and having to show up every Sunday for dinner, regardless of what my own priorities were. I was their youngest, and they just didn't want to let me grow up.

So, I took out a map, drew a circle around Waco that represented the farthest distance my Dad could drive in one day, then confined my job search to companies outside that circle. I wound up in Saint Louis, the only place on earth more humid than Houston.

The company I went to work for, Direct Mail Corporation of America, was a bit of a challenge at first, because I knew nothing about direct mail. I had only heard that, generally, 2% was considered a good response rate to direct mail. That turned out to be a vast over-simplification, of course, but in my ignorance, I figured that if a 98% failure rate was acceptable, how hard could it be? I stayed at DMCA for 2½ years, and did pretty well.

In 1973, I got a job offer from a company in Peoria, Illinois, that was the very first company anywhere in the world to offer Database Marketing services. Computers were just getting powerful enough to handle large databases, and the marketing methodology was totally unique. I joined the company to help formulate and propagate the new marketing discipline, and for a few years, we had a virtual lock on the market because we were the only company anywhere in the world that knew how to do what we were doing.

I stayed at Customer Development Corporation (CDC) for almost a dozen years, ultimately becoming the company's Executive Vice President. I lived in Peoria for a while, and over time moved to Dallas and then Chicago to open new offices for the company. I returned to Peoria a second time when I took over the EVP role.

That job at CDC re-kindled my interest in shameless self-promotion. I figured that the next time I needed to look for a job, a little notoriety couldn't hurt. While I was working for the company, I wrote nearly 100 articles for various business magazines, and spoke at industry conferences in France, Belgium, and Bermuda, as well as all over Canada and the U.S. I guest-lectured about Database Marketing at Temple University in Philadelphia and Columbia University in New York. For five years, I was a visiting faculty member of the Interactive Marketing Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

In 1984, CDC was bought by another company, and the new owners and I didn't mesh well at all. I made a few calls and got a new job in Philadelphia at DMW Direct, a Direct Response Agency that specialized in insurance and healthcare. It was my first chance to work at a real agency, and my assignment was to bring them up to speed in Database Marketing. After about 18 months, I was offered the opportunity to buy into the agency, so I became a partner and part owner.

When I took the job at DMW, I promised my wife, Victoria, that we would only be on the east coast for five years max, because she really wanted to get back to Texas, or preferably, to California where her family lived. She held me to that promise, which only seemed fair after making her live in Peoria for more than a decade (WTF was I thinking?).

So, in 1990, I sold my share of the agency to the other partners and started looking for another new gig. We really liked Philadelphia, but when we left, I sold my snow blower and vowed to never again live anywhere I would need one.

I wound up in Dallas, working for Wunderman, the Data Management hub for WPP Group in London, the world's largest marketing communications company, as the company's lead Solutions Architect. I actually got the job because of all those magazine articles and speeches, so the strategy worked. Wunderman was in the Database Marketing Services business, and they figured I must be an expert. Lucky for me, the job turned out to be exactly what I was best at, and that's where I finished out my business career.

I spent the last dozen years with Wunderman living in the northern California desert valley town of Chico. With the advent of secure computer networks, I could do my job from virtually anywhere, and that's where Victoria's family was. So we moved, with the company's blessing, and we really enjoyed living there. We stayed until I retired, and jointly decided that we wanted to get back to Texas, so we moved to Waco last year. I never thought I'd live in Waco again, but it's a WAY better place to live than it was 40 years ago, and we're really enjoying it. It's a great town. Except for the humidity.

I retired at the end of 2018, for health reasons. I always said I was going to work until I couldn't, and that's what I did. In retrospect, that probably wasn't too smart. Nobody ever said on their deathbed, "Geez, I wish I'd spent more time at the office."

MARRIAGE

I've been married three times. My first two marriages ended in divorce because they needed to, and I'll just leave it at that.

I met the love of my life, Victoria, in 1980, in Dallas, through a "personals" ad in the Dallas Observer, a weekly arts newspaper. That was in the days before Internet matchups. We got married in 1982, shortly after I moved to Chicago. It was the third marriage for both of us, and evidently, we both finally got the hang of it, because we're still married. We're celebrating our 32nd anniversary in January.

Victoria is the kindest, most caring person I have ever met, and patient enough to put up with me, which is saying a lot. She's also my best friend. She is brilliant, very attractive, and since I retired, the family breadwinner. In addition, she has a quick wit and a great sense of humor (see photo).

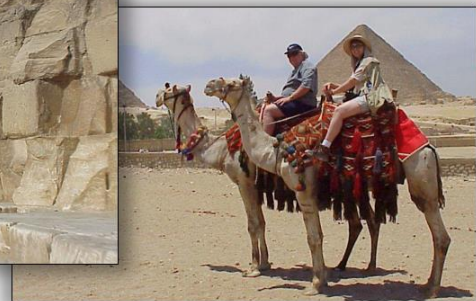
She's currently working at the VA here, with an initial assignment to help them completely revamp the way they handle food preparation and service at both the Waco and Temple hospitals. Big job.



Early on, we tried to have children, even to the point of difficult (and expensive) medical intervention, but it just wasn't meant to be. We're OK with it now, though. We spoil our dogs instead, and they really appreciate it.

THE PLACES WE'VE BEEN

- Mexico (of course).
- Paris.
- Australia.
- Hawaii.
- Belgium.
- London.
- India.
- Egypt. You have to physically stand next to the Great Pyramid of Giza before you can truly appreciate it.
- Bolivia and Peru. The trips also served to help me research my first book (see "Milestones" below).
- Alaska.



SCUBA!

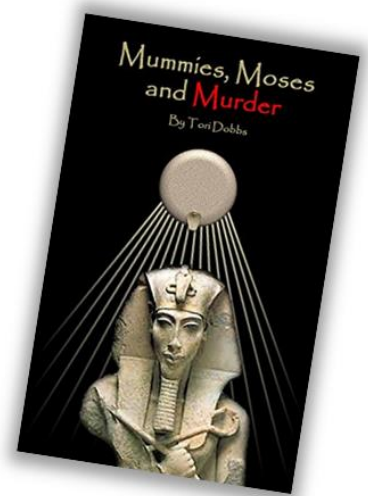
- I've done more than 200 dives as a scuba diver, including:
 - ✓ Pretty much everywhere in the Caribbean, Mexico and the Florida keys.
 - ✓ Hawaii, off Maui and Kauai.
 - ✓ Fresh-water, spring-fed caves in Florida.
 - ✓ A half-flooded, 150-year-old, abandoned lead mine 200 feet underground in Bonne Terre, Missouri. The lake in the underground cavern the miners hollowed out has more than 90 miles of shoreline.
 - ✓ The Great Barrier Reef in Australia, part of a three-week vacation tour of the entire continent.
 - ✓ The Red Sea, from Sharm El Sheikh, at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. The most beautiful dive on the planet, without question. Victoria climbed Mt. Sinai while I was diving. She was researching her book, a murder mystery (see "Milestones" below).

MILESTONES – GOOD & BAD

- **Summer, 1952.** At age 10, I blew the last joint of my right big toe off with a 22-caliber rifle. Now you can say that you know someone who actually shot himself in the foot. Dad never took me hunting again after that.
- **May 11, 1953.** We almost lost my brother in the Waco tornado. Tommy was one of five lifeguards on duty at the Sun Pool when the tornado brought down the ten-story reinforced concrete shell of the old Cotton Palace Exposition building adjacent to the pool. He was the only one who escaped with his life. Even though I was only 11, I helped deliver food and water to the first responders downtown. I'll never forget it.
- **Summer, 1957.** In Junior High, I had started hanging with some bad dudes ("thugs", in the vernacular of the time) and they got busted for robbing a gas station. It was only by chance that I wasn't with them that night. Tommy heard about it, and did an all-day intervention with me to convince me to clean up my act. He taught me how to choose friends wisely, and how to dress, act, talk, and even walk when I got to high school. I respected my big brother, so I did what he told me to. It changed my life.
- **1959.** Selective Service classified me 1-Y because of a heart murmur. That kept me out of Viet Nam, but it also caused a heart problem that required surgery decades later.
- **1960.** Becoming mayor of Waco High, playing the cowardly lion in the "Wizard of Oz" production, and having LOTS of actual friends, decades before Facebook just a few of the many reasons I look back on high school as some of the best days of my life.
- **1967.** I was invited back to Waco High to speak to the entire student body in an assembly, about goal-setting and motivation. That was a very heady experience for a 25-year-old.
- **1973.** The year I became a database marketer, one of only a handful in the world at the time. The skills I developed sustained me for the rest of my business career.



- **January 30, 1982.** The day I married Victoria. I still can't believe she said "I do". We got married at home in the old Brownstone we lived in, in downtown Chicago. We found out later that the judge we hired to do the honors was under indictment for fixing cases, but thankfully our marriage was still legal.
- **2004.** I published my first book, *The Titicaca Effect*, a science fiction novel. It is still available on Amazon.
- **2005.** Surgery for prostate cancer. I'm still cancer-free.
- **2006.** The year I published my second book, *The Business of Database Marketing*. It was a textbook for the Database Marketing Institute for several years.
- **December, 2011.** I broke my back lifting something too heavy for me. The compression fracture in my spine, along with subsequent disk failures and arthritis, have plagued me with unrelenting pain ever since, even after multiple surgeries. Hence my daily use of a cane and, periodically, a walker. I can tell you, however, that Opioids are not as addicting as the media would have you believe. I should know. I've been taking them every day without fail for years!
- **July 16, 2013.** I had a stroke that left me completely blind in one eye. People ask me how long it takes to get used to that. I'll let you know if I ever do.
- **2014.** The year I topped five million miles flying on business. That was never my objective, and it was hardly a cause for celebration.
- **January 14, 2016.** Tommy died of a heart attack. I miss him terribly.
- **July, 2017.** TAVR heart surgery to restore blood flow through my aortic valve. It worked.
- **January, 2018.** Victoria (writing as Tori Dobbs) published *Mummies, Moses and Murder*, a really great murder mystery set in Egypt, with a Texas twang. It is also available on Amazon.
- **December 31, 2018.** I finally retired. About damn time!



WHAT'S NEXT

- Supporting Victoria, in any way I can. My turn to be a househusband.
- Minding my health. I can only walk about 50 feet at a time most days, but I have a three-wheeled, recumbent bike I ride 40-50 miles a week, quite often on the Riverwalk downtown and in Cameron Park.
- Doing good. For now, I am writing the doggie biographies on the Fuzzy Friends Rescue website in Waco. Check it out at www.fuzzyfriendsrescue.com.
- We'd like to do a limited amount of additional travel, because we've already been most of the places we wanted to go. Also, I'm really tired of airplanes.
- Reconnect with old friends. That means you!
- Nap. A lot.

PICTURES:

North Junior High Cheerleaders: 1957

Top row: Bobby Cathey, Susan Stringer, Sharon Marsh, Don Baldwin

Bottom row: Jan Massey, Melynda Ricketts, Anitra Harrell



David and Anita Dibb by their beautiful Japanese Maple tree. David said they have 8 of these beauties in their yard and when the leaves drop, they have a beautiful red carpet on their lawn. Gorgeous!



David and Janie McPhail have recently returned from a trip to Italy. The closest thing I got to a picture of them while there was riding with them in their gondola in Venice. Word was Venice was not flooded during their visit. Still- "water, water everywhere!"



David Rogers sent this pic from fall of 1958. It was Elizabeth Barry's North Junior homeroom class (the Junior class volleyball championship team). Signatures on the back include: Robert Wilson, Jane Rogers, Jeri Boren, Sandra Wooten, Susan Stringer, Judy Lake, Darrell Gill, Larry Trammell, Jan Thrall, David Rogers.

David said he did not get the names of all, so it is everyone's guess as to which one is which. I can identify 6 folks....What about YOU?



Words of Wisdom from Maxine:



The world would be a nicer place if everyone took a chill pill.
It would get even better if some of them choked on it.



There's a certain age where you can no longer use the term "Good girl gone bad".
It's more like "Her old ass should know better"

aunty acid
www.facebook.com/auntyacid

I'm thinking of calling in **GHOSTBUSTERS** coz I'm convinced I live in a **HAUNTED HOUSE.**

Every time I look in the freakin' mirror, this old lady comes and stands in front of me and blocks out my reflection.

© Gerd Beckland 2013

Marriage Jokes:

A man has six children and is very proud of his achievement. He is so proud of himself that he starts calling his wife, 'Mother of Six' in spite of her objections.

One night, they go to a party. The man decides that it is time to go home and wants to find out if his wife is ready to leave as well. He shouts at the top of his voice, "Shall we go home, Mother of Six?" His wife, irritated by her husband's lack of discretion, shouts right back, "Any time you're ready, Father of Four."

A man and his wife were having some problems at home and were giving each other the silent treatment. Suddenly the man realized that the next day he would need his wife to wake him at 5:00 AM for an early morning business flight. Not wanting to be the first to break the silence (and LOSE), he wrote on a piece of paper, 'Please wake me at 5:00 AM.' He left it where he knew she would find it. The next morning the man woke up, only to discover it was 9:00 AM and he had missed his flight. Furious, he was about to go to see why his wife hadn't wakened him when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed. The paper said, 'It is 5:00 AM. Wake up.'

Men are not equipped for these kinds of contests.