

Getting it together

Stereotyping turns wives into golf widows

With the sunshine and flowers of summer comes a seasonal tragedy: the golf widow. Mumbling a sleepy "Have a nice time, dear," she watches her once-devoted love-partner racing the Sunday morning down to his tee-time.

And as she pulls the covers towards her chin she feels a twinge of loneliness. A nagging little ache asks: When was the last time he showed that much enthusiasm about doing something with me?

But the answer is too painful, and so it gets buried beneath duties and distractions. The loneliness gets pushed aside by rationalizations: It's the only real relaxation he gets, or it's good for couples to enjoy separate interests.

It's worth a little solace that the golf widow is joined in her summer separation by her cohorts, the sailing widow and the fishing widow. And it should be observed that the shoe is often on the foot of the other sex, too. Summer time also strikes its separating blow to the garden widower and the husband of the sun-worshipper.

ADMITTEDLY, these seasonal phenomena don't sound so tragic. But that's because they are so common that we have just come to accept them as the norm. To question them feels like an attack on apple pie.

The separation of the sexes by summer sports and hobbies seems natural and inevitable—until you see the exception to the rule: that unusual couple that actually shares summer interests. They golf together. They garden together. They fish together.

And even the ineluctable sexual separation looks at them with a spark of envy. For, not only are they recreational partners, they are team-mates, competitors, fishing buddies, best friends, and allies. They relax together and they sweat together. They play together and make memories together.

They are lovers and pals. Having fun adds to their love relationship and their love adds to their fun.

BUT THE SAD PART is that such marriages are so rare.

Why? Ask any Frenchman. He'll explain that boys and girls are different.

end. Women are too fragile and weak for rough male sports. They are into soft, arty, people-oriented activities, not athletic events that mess up your hair-do and break your nails.

And men? They're too physical and obtuse to care about flowers and romantic picnics and long talks about feelings. He'd much rather hike a mountain than paint it. She'd prefer to read by a stream, not canoe it.

So there's no wonder that these different types of people go their separate ways when the sun comes out.

But, for me, it's not that simple. I've seen too many exceptions to these sexual stereotypes to believe that they are natural or necessary. In fact, I believe the opposite, that the innate interests and abilities of men and women are completely compatible.

The real obstacles to being a true buddy with your spouse are your inflexible sexual stereotypes, roles, and expectations. Minor differences in physique and cultural background can be easily overcome by good friends of any sex.

Unchallenged prejudices and rigid social rituals are the real culprits here.

THINK ABOUT IT. Would a man want to be fishing buddies with a friend to whom he is always supposed to be a perfect, door-holding gentleman? Imagine an avid fisherman taking along a male companion for whom he expects to bail hooks, carry his heavy equipment, and unhook his catch.

Worrying about his fragile friend's tolerance for sun, early morning starts, the roll of the boat, and the bugs wouldn't leave much time for him to be a fisherman himself. That kind of fishing companion would add little to the fun of the sport compared to what is lost.

The point is that, if his tag-along friend were a man, no fisherman would tolerate such expectations. A more skilled fisherman might take a little time to teach his friend how to fish, but then the two friends would expect to take care of themselves.

Not so when the companions are of the opposite sex. According to our traditional stereotypes, the male fisherman should feel a gentleman's responsibility for his spouse, even if she doesn't want it.

And the lady fishing companion's proper role is to defer to his expertise and appreciatively accept his strong helping hand, never threatening his male superiority. So our rigid expectations exaggerate sexual differences, robbing couples of fun and friendship.

By BOB TRENZ, Ph.D.



ence of sex-related expectations and roles.

Married pals have learned to replace protectiveness with patient teaching, fostering self-sufficiency rather than boring over-dependency. They've replaced misconceptions about unchangeable sexual interests and physical limitations with an attitude of expanding potential.

Each has learned to extend his or herself past perceived limits with the supportive guidance of a partner, not just as a tag-along, but as an eager, adventurous student.

LOVERS WHO have learned to be buddies realize how poisonous sexual stereotypes can be to their friendship. They've become sensitive to the pres-

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Storytellers take awards

Four area women garnered awards for their art of storytelling in the annual competition conducted by the Detroit Story League.

The winners were Violet Altschuler of Farmington; Barbara Brown and Donna Teichman, both of Redford; and Louisa Butler of Detroit.

The women told their winning stories and given awards during the April meeting, when the chapter hosted members of the Cleveland Story League in the Farmington home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kroepel.

All members of the league are on call to local groups with a repertoire which includes stories suitable for all ages. Summer bookings are being taken now by the Story Bureau, chaired by Mrs. Teichman. She can be contacted by writing to her at 28760 Lyndon, Redford 48239.

The League's May calendar begins when three members—Ms. Altschuler, Mrs. Kroepel, and Roberta Bulough of

Livonia—will head up a workshop at Schoolcraft College's Young Author's Conference May 1.

League members will travel May 6 to be part of the Ohio Federation of Story Leagues' meeting. The group is the only one invited from outside of Ohio.

Members also will serve as advisors for Young Author's Day, May 12, in Saline Michigan Schools.

Another honor came with an invitation to participate in a program scheduled by the Sylvia Burden Story League, in Saginaw, in mid-May.

Ms. Bulough will represent storytellers, May 22-23, when the Wayne County Intermediate School District holds its inner-arts conference called More Ways Than One. She has been hired, along with artists and musicians to participate in the all-arts weekend.

Membership inquiries will be taken by contacting Mrs. Kroepel, 36639 Vicary Lane, Farmington 48024.

Newest member of the group,

installed this month, is Beverly Castars of Redford.

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Providence employees to hold sale

A flea market and boutique is scheduled by Providence Hospital employees 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, April 28, in the auditorium of the

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The sale will include such handcrafted items as oil and watercolor paintings, pottery and embroidered, knitted and crocheted pieces as well as baked goods and plants.

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7	8	9	10 United Airlines Alumni Clipped Wings Flower Sale May 11th thru 13th Proceeds to Mentally Retarded Children	13
14 Mother's Day TEA 2-4 p.m. Center Court Bring the Family • Entertainment • Flowers FREE Admission Reservations Required Call 348-9400 (Limited Seating) A Hill/Keller Production	16 Every 3rd Tuesday Join us for Senior Citizens Coffee 9-9:30 a.m. Music from Anderson Music	23	24 Every Fourth Wednesday Fashion Show 11 a.m. & 7-9 p.m. Center Court	26 Styling Show By Haircut House 7:00 p.m. Center Court
28	29	30	31	

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