

Joyful

Spring/Summer
2026

Living

Joyful Living's Legacy

Cathy Jansen
Passes the Torch
to Robin Littau

Page 4

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Inside

Joyful Living

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Joyful Living's Legacy

By: Dr. Carol Wertz, Ed.D.
Simpson University

04



Seasons

By: Deb Shannon

06



The Divine Artist

By: Elijah Littau

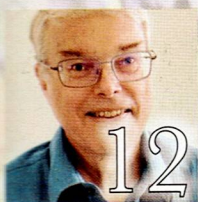
08



The Gold Under All Your Mess

By: Andrea Rockwell

10



The Marriage Handyman

By: John W. Nichols

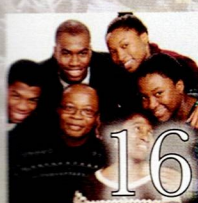
12



Covenant: The Divine Power Behind Your Marriage

By: Salomé Roat

14



A Legacy of Faith, Service, & Compassion.

The Journey of Churchill Odurukwe and New Life Missions

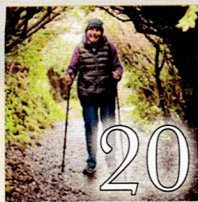
16



Can I Have Your Attention?

By: Catherine Madera

18



LET IT RAIN

By: Angela Haar

20



Open Road, Open Mind: Summer Road Trip Adventures

By: Naomi Velez

22



Grief With Hope

By: Kerrie Koon Faubert

24



Who's In the Neighborhood?

By: Catherine Madera

26



Comeback Stories Shaping Our Next Generation

By: Rita Renee Davis

28

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Joyful Living Magazine is a local publication intending to connect the community together with inspiring/encouraging articles that: advertise the heart driving local businesses, share resources/local information and shine light on hope filled, love-in-action good works occurring in our community.

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The Marriage Handyman

By John W. Nichols

Men, do you want a vibrant marriage? A contented wife? A happy household? Those desirable blessings often require that you and I stand willing to fix the malfunctioning doofachee!

At breakfast my dear wife asked, "Can you fix the doofachee on the thingy?" No context. No surrounding conversation. No supporting documentation. Her mind is not equipped with a display and keypad where I might scroll up and review her thoughts immediately preceding the query. My first challenge would be to recreate her context and derive the needed answers as to what tools I needed and where my efforts would be best applied.

How does one handle, in a husbandly, loving, and courteous manner, such an unspecific request? The words of the apostle Peter instructing me to treat my wife with honor and respect came to mind. Something in our household was generating dissatisfaction for that lady, something that called for my immediate action. But what?

I learned in my engineering career that often the customer does not know exactly what is needed. Good investigative questions can lead to a mutually agreed upon set of requirements. That up-front effort can greatly reduce disappointment at the time of product delivery. I needed to view my wife as a customer in need of a solution, don my diplomatic best self, and set about to analyze her

requirements. What questions would be appropriate in analyzing a doofachee request? Perhaps we're thinking:

- Can you give a brother a clue?
- Is it animal, vegetable, or mineral?

But be careful and be warned that any hint of impatience in the line of questions is tantamount to declaring all-out marital war. I would then go directly to "husband time-out." My Grandpa explained this penalty to me one day in the confines of his tool shed, also called "the pouting house," that place to which he retreated when he sensed a disturbance in Grandma's force.

If the winds of domestic tranquility are favorable my wife can ask such a nebulous question about a broken doofachee, and, by virtue of our closeness, I might be able to accurately define the particular doofachee and the thingy which were not cooperating. I will know immediately what course of action to take, and she will smile on me with favor as I set out to implement a solution.

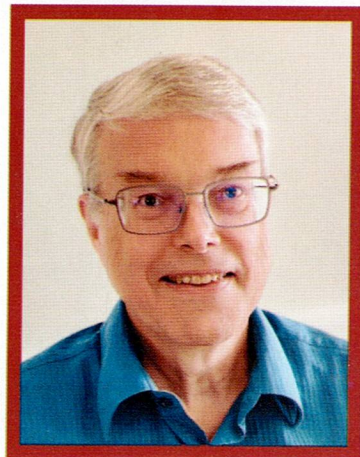
If I haven't a clue, I can jump up (and that key response shows my attentiveness to her needs), grab my tools, and do something, anything—small, big, medium-sized. "Sure, Honey, I will get to that doofachee as soon as I complete these other items." While I morph into a whirlwind of handyman activity I can interject, "What else was it you needed me to do?" Hopefully by that time the word

doofachee and the thingy designation can be replaced with their actual meanings and harmony will continue to fragrance the household.

Once the doofachee repair has been completed, I might comment with a hug, a smile and a wink, "Call me next time the doofachee is whiz-banging against the thingy. I'll run to the hardware store and get an upgraded kookalater valve to fix it right away. Anything for you, Honey!"

I just built into my marriage and communicated by my actions that she truly matters. Men, let's review so that we are prepared next time the doofachee malfunctions. As the marriage handyman I need to:

- Listen carefully.
- Ask questions respectfully.
- Take action responsively.
- Love unconditionally.



Author Bio

John W Nichols invests his time writing and gardening. He blogs at nicholsnotes.com and is the author of **Quest for The Perfect Wife** and **Facets of Manhood: Polishing Our Character**.