

On the Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary of Michael and Rebecca McGoodwin

Today we celebrate fifty years of an enduring marriage that has stood the test of time. It began on a hot Texas summer day, on August 30, 1966. We were pleased to enter this honorable estate by means of a moving and sacred ceremony at Katy Methodist Church, followed immediately by a heart-warming and sober reception at the same church. We were both only 22 years old. We have to this date the same gold wedding rings we exchanged then—simple circular bands, the circle being “the perfect, first, and most beautiful form” according to Aristotle. Two days later, I returned to my studies as a second year medical student, while Rebecca began full time high school teaching. Our honeymoon was deferred until Christmas of 1967, when we drove and camped in Mexico.

Our earliest years of marriage were arduous yet harmonious for us both. Rebecca played several indispensable roles by providing economic, emotional, and loving support, somehow building a warm and caring household in the midst of her teaching duties. Even in our courtship years, 1964 to 1966, Rebecca’s growing love and steady encouragement had made all the difference in helping me to set important goals and achieve a degree of success that would have been utterly impossible without her.

By our fifth anniversary (August 1971), we were enjoying a two year assignment in Alaska, with Rebecca savoring the sweetness of motherhood with our recently born first child Wendy, and myself working hard to help some of Alaska’s aboriginal population. Life was sweet, if a bit risky for me, and deeply satisfying. These were some of our best years as a couple.

Our tenth anniversary (1976) found us newly moved to Bellingham, living in our first purchased home, working hard at our respective jobs, with Becky in charge of Wendy and now Christie as well. Our marriage was strong, but we felt a bit incomplete in Bellingham, and welcomed the opportunity to move back to Seattle in 1978.

By the 20th anniversary (1986) we were in our new and current home, and in some ways were near the zenith of our family life and my professional career. By our 25th silver anniversary (1991), we were struggling mightily with a new challenge, the progression of the debilitating condition which in a few years (1994) would end my medical practice career. We were very worried about our long-term future, and Becky rose to the challenge with determination, by beginning (in 1988) the stressful but rewarding training to become a medical sonographer.

By the 40th ruby anniversary (2006), we celebrated our marriage—and my survival from lymphoma surgery and chemotherapy—by hosting a joyous gathering of friends and family. We had things to worry about, yet Becky’s steadfast love and support was all that I could ask for.

Now for our 50th golden anniversary, we reflect on further concerns and disappointments—Becky’s brush with cancer, and my ongoing limitations that have reduced our travel opportunities. Yet we have so much to praise and give thanks for in our enduring and productive marriage. We have remained faithful to each other and have always been highly supportive, we have survived medical challenges that could easily have done us in, we have raised and educated two fine daughters, one of whom has married an intelligent and very hard working man, we have now two precious granddaughters, and we have two fine homes to occupy much of our free time.

I could ask for no better wife than Rebecca. She was the only girl for me when I married her, and I am eternally grateful that she decided to take a chance with me. I believe our skills and interests complement each other’s remarkably, and I trust that she finds me acceptable even today with my shortcomings. I could wish on my children no finer fate than to have the kind of marriage we have enjoyed.

Michael McGoodwin
Married for 50 years on August 30, 2016