

HE'S QUITE A HAND AT TYING KNOTS

Columbus Dispatch, The (OH) - February 14, 1990

- Author/Byline: Rich Bloom, NeighborNews Bureau Chief
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GAHANNA - Mayor James McGregor has become quite a hand at tying knots over at City Hall.

And though he likes to think they'll last a lifetime, he offers no guarantees.

During the past 60 months, McGregor, not unlike other East Side mayors, has sidestepped routine city business from time to time to usher some 120 couples into the bliss of holy matrimony.

And appropriately enough, he'll marry three more on this Valentine's Day.

"I think if you look at it from our Jewish and Christian traditions, you'll see the family has become such an integral part of our lives. So I enjoy anything I can do to help reinforce that principle."

And that means trying to accommodate couples like Robbie Ray Parsons and Cynthia Lorraine Forshee, both 21.

"We really didn't have any religious preference, and we thought it would be nice because we heard Mayor McGregor is a nice man," Forshee said prior to her wedding. "I don't know that it matters how big the wedding is, and maybe it's more personal this way."

"And we also understand that the money couples give him goes to charity, and that's really nice."

In fact, about a half-dozen central Ohio community agencies have collected extra cash over the years thanks to McGregor's marrying ways. Couples have donated anywhere from \$6 to \$50 for the mayor's services, with an average falling between \$20 and \$30.

Since 1983, he has given \$2,000 from newlyweds to such agencies as Toughlove, the Open Shelter, RAAH (a group that helps troubled women get a new start), Kidscope and the Food Pantry.

And so, on Jan. 19, Cynthia and Robbie, with their parents looking on, stood before McGregor as he offered the standard state ceremony. It was over in less than three minutes.

"I was a little disappointed," Cynthia admitted. "I didn't know it was going to be so brief. I'd probably write my own vows like my sister and do it a bit differently."

"But as long as we're married, I guess that's all that counts."

McGregor, who's ranged from his office to the Fraternal Order of Police hall to join the marriage-minded, admits his role has its shortcomings.

"Churches and synagogues almost always encourage some study before a couple marries, to ask the tough questions people don't ask when they're head over heels in love," he said. "Those questions ought to be asked and answered, and you really don't have that in a secular ceremony."

"And I think the church serves as something of a psychological anchor in a couple's ceremony because it is such a major event. The underlying goal is that this union is a one-shot deal and the atmosphere helps to emphasize the sanctity of that union."

McGregor averages about two weddings a month, but October 1987 turned out to be a banner month for mayoral marrying. McGregor united seven couples between Oct. 2 and Oct. 24.

Yet back when McGregor was fresh off his candidacy announcement for mayor in 1982, one antsy groom-to-be didn't hesitate locking in his services.

"He wanted to make sure I'd marry him, but I had to tell him I wasn't mayor yet and didn't know," McGregor said. "And he said that's OK, because he'd done the same with (then incumbent mayor) Judie Peterson."

"I guess he just wanted to all his bases covered."

• Caption: PHOTONEIGHBORNEWS PHOTO BY TOM SINES CYNTHIA LORRAINE FORSHEE AND ROBBIE RAY PARSONS BECAME MR. AND MRS. PARSONS AT A CITY HALL CEREMONY CONDUCTED BY MAYOR JAMES MCGREGOR.

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WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

Columbus Dispatch, The (OH) - March 8, 1990

- Edition: HOME FINAL
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- Page: 02C
- Correction: CORRECTION

Harding Hospital's 24-hour hot line is 885-0746. Yesterday's Dispatch incorrectly gave Harding's main switchboard number as the hot line number in a list of where to seek help for drug and alcohol problems.

A drug hot line for Union County was omitted from the list. The number, at the Charles B. Mills Center in Marysville, is 513-644-6363 or 614-873-8610 for Columbus residents. The center provides inpatient and outpatient drug and alcohol treatment.

Places offering help for drug and alcohol problems:

24-HOUR HOT LINES (614 area code unless otherwise noted.)

Alcoholics Anonymous, 253-8501

The Campus, 895-1000

Harding Hospital, 885-5381

HOPE Hotline, 228-HOPE

Saint Anthony Mercy Hospital, Cocaine Hot Line, 443-2653

Narcotics Anonymous, 252-1700

Riverside Hospital Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service, 261-4718 or 1-800-451-3000

Saint Anthony Medical Center, Talbot Hall, 251-3760

Suicide Prevention Service, 221-5445

Teen Suicide Hotline, 294-3300

TREATMENT, COUNSELING IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

Al-Anon, AlaTeen; alcoholism referral; 253-2701.

Alcoholics Anonymous; meetings, referral; 253-8501.

Amethyst Inc.; women, transitional housing; 463-1330.

Buckeye Boys Ranch, court-referred, youth, prevention, self-help; 875-2371.

CALLVAC Services; information, referral, crisis intervention, Mothers Against Crack, 24-hour referral; 221-2255.

The Campus; youth treatment; 24-hour hot line: 895-1000.

Center for Alternatives; alcohol information, women, minorities; 461-6645.

Central Ohio Regional Council on Alcoholism; referral; 274-1218.

Children's Hospital Guidance Centers; alcohol, drug services; 431-7255.

CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence; women's shelter; 224-4663.

Columbus Area Council on Alcoholism; outpatient facility, prevention, education; 464-1091.

Columbus Health Department Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Program; counseling, outreach, women, public inebriates; 645-7306.

CompDrug; counseling, women, blacks, elderly, 24-hour Hope Hotline, Youth to Youth program; 228-HOPE (228-4673).

Concord Counseling; drug abuse, alcoholism; 882-9338.

Dublin Counseling Center; intervention, counseling, teen suicide prevention; 889-5722.

Family Counseling & Crittenton Services; counseling, outreach, child care; 221-7608.

House of Hope for Alcoholics; halfway house, treatment, counseling; 291-4691.

Kidscope; counseling, teen suicide prevention; 231-5437.

Lawyers Assistance Program of Ohio State Bar Association; intervention program for lawyers statewide; 421-2121.

Maryhaven; residential facility, halfway house, detoxification; 445-8131.

Mount Carmel Medical Center SHARE; counseling, outreach, programs for women; 224-6700.

Neighborhood House; blacks, elderly, youth, counseling, child care; 252-4941.

NETCARE Corp. Substance Abuse Program; crisis intervention, treatment, deaf people; hot line: 274-7000.

North Central Mental Health Services Drug/Alcohol Program; treatment, counseling, central intake; 299-6600.

North Central Mental Health Services CALM Satellite Office; teen suicide prevention, intake, counseling; 263-2216.

Northwest Counseling Services; crisis intervention, teen suicide prevention; 457-7876; Hilliard: 876-9919.

Ohio Employee Assistance Program; referral for state employees, families; 645-8545.

Parkside Lodge; residential treatment; 471-1601, Dublin: 761-8400.

Project Linden; blacks, women, youth, counseling, intervention; 294-5678.

Riverside Hospital Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service; self help, treatment; help for women and health professionals; hot line: 261-4718.

Saint Anthony Hospital CareUnit, Talbot Hall; women, youth, cocaine; 251-3760.

Saint Anthony Mercy Hospital CareUnit; crisis intervention, detoxification, counseling; 445-5168.

Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center; halfway house for adult males; 221-7324.

Southeast Community Mental Health Center; crisis intervention; 444-0800.

Teen Challenge for Girls; counseling, support; 294-5331.

Urban Minority Alcoholism Outreach; blacks, women, youth; 469-1223.

Volunteers of America; residential facility for adult males; 224-0128.

Whitehall Counseling Center; youth, women, elderly, teen suicide prevention; 239-9965.

Women's Outreach for Women; crisis, child care, intervention; 291-3639.

OTHER COLUMBUS PROGRAMS

Action for Children, 224-0222.

Columbus Police Crack Hotline, 645-4850.

Columbus Police Crime Solvers Anonymous, 222-8477.

Columbus Police Community Relations Bureau, 645-4610.

Columbus Foundation, overseeing Columbus Drug Education and Prevention Fund, 1234 E. Broad St. (application deadline March 15),

251-4000.

Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, 294-4901.

Columbus Urban League, providing family services, housing programs, youth services, 221-0544.

Directions for Youth, 294-2661.

Franklin County Children Services, 24-hour number, 464-4000.

League Against Child Abuse, 464-1500.

Parents Anonymous Turning Point, 899-4700.

Mayor's Action Center, 645-2825.

Victims of Crime Program, 1-800-824-8263.

YMCA, providing programs for children and teens, 224-YMCA.

YWCA, providing programs for children and teens, 224-9121.

OTHER COUNTIES

Fairfield

Fairfield County Health Dept., Lancaster; 1-687-4500.

Fayette

Fayette County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Choice Recovery Center, Washington Court House; 1-335-8228.

Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center Fayette County Office, Washington Court House; 1-335-7155 (hot line).

Knox

Alcohol and Drug Freedom Center, Mount Vernon; 1-397-2660.

Licking

Center for Alternative Resources, Newark; 1-345-4357.

Licking County Alcoholism Prevention Program, Newark; 1-366-7303.

Shepherd Hill, Newark; inpatient treatment; 1-800-223-6410.

Madison

Halterman Center, London; inpatient treatment; 1-852-1372.

Marion

Marion Area Counseling Center, Marion; 1-387-7200.

Marion County Halfway House; custodial, men only; 1-387-5210.

Community Med Center Recovery Program, Marion; 1-383-7830.

Muskingum

Good Samaritan Medical Center, Alcoholism and Drug Unit, Zanesville; 1-454-5927.

Muskingum Alcoholism Center, Zanesville; 1-454-2536.

Muskingum County Drug/Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council, Zanesville; 1-454-1266.

Pickaway

Pickaway County Alcoholism Program, Circleville; 1-477-2579.

Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center, Pickaway County Office, Circleville; 1-477-2579.

Pike

Pike County Recovery Council, Waverly; 1-947-7581.

Union

Union County Alcohol Program, Marysville; 1-513-642-9978.

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