

# Amateur magician's practice session didn't end well for his wife



**America's Heartland**  
**Roger Alford**  
RogerAlford1@GMail.Com

You might have heard about the amateur magician who, while practicing new tricks in his living room, accidentally turned his wife into a La-Z-Boy recliner.

He tried all the magic words he knew to turn her back, but nothing worked. In a panic, and not knowing what else to do, he rushed her to the hospital.

The doctors ran all kinds of tests while the magician paced back and forth in the waiting room. Finally, a doctor walked out.

"How's my wife?" he asked nervously. "Is she alright?"

"She's comfortable," he replied.

Most children who have ever read a fairy tale have dreamed of being able to use magic words to get what they want. While magic doesn't work, words often do. Sometimes all we have to do to get what we want is to ask.

The Bible tells the story of a young man who asked his father to give him his inheritance early. Having gotten it, the young fellow then left home and went to a faraway country where he wasted all his money throwing wild parties for his fair-weather friends. When the money was gone, so were those "friends."

The young man was literally starving. He took a job working for a pig farmer, thinking he might at least gnaw on some of the husks tossed to the animals.

In such dire circumstances, his thoughts turned to home and to his father. The young man thought how disappointed his father must be in him. He thought his father may not want him as a son any longer. But, maybe ... just maybe ... his father might be willing to take him in as a servant. Maybe, he thought, some appropriate words might convince his father to do just that. The young fellow rehearsed what he would say:

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of they hired servants" (Luke 15:18-19).

As the young man approached his family home, his father caught sight of him and ran to him as fast as could, hugging and kissing him.

Then the young man started reciting his planned lines, but his father interrupted, turning to his servants and telling them to bring the best robe and put it on his son, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. And the father told the servants to prepare a great feast to celebrate his son's homecoming.

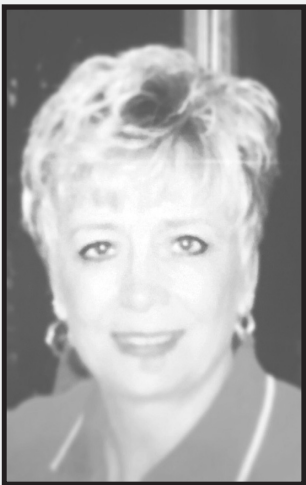
That young man had rehearsed words that he had hoped might magically cause his father to show compassion toward him.

Like that young man, known to the world as the prodigal son, we have a Father in Heaven who is waiting, watching for his wayward children to come back to Him. He longs for that day.

Let me share some words that others have used: "Father, I know that I have sinned against you, and that I have made a mess of my life. I am so very sorry that I have disappointed You, and I ask for your forgiveness. I trust fully in Jesus, knowing that He died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. I now ask Jesus to come into my heart, to make me a Christian, to save me from my sins. In Jesus' name, amen."

Such words, spoken to Almighty God in prayer, have the power to transform, not into a La-Z-Boy recliner, but into a born-again believer. Try it. You'll see. And, by all means, let me know you did so by sending an email to the address below.

**Roger Alford offers words of encouragement to residents of America's heartland. Reach him at [rogeralford1@gmail.com](mailto:rogeralford1@gmail.com).**



**Times Remembered**  
**Betty A. Young**  
BYoung505@Outlook.com

Valentine's Day is a day of love, romance, and of course, the market place. Marriage ceremonies and engagements are popular and roses are a pricey gift for sweethearts.

We hear about romantic marriage proposals, engagements, and weddings taking place on Valentine's Day. After all February is the love month. June is the only month with more people getting married with February coming in second.

Valentine's Day is the traditional day on which lovers express their love for each other by sending Valentine's cards, love letter, flowers, jewelry, lingerie and candy.

One of the most memorable Valentine's Days was when Bob and I were dating and I'd been TDY to Anniston, Alabama for training. When I got home he had a huge bouquet of roses with purple heather. He also gave me a gold heart necklace with fourteen diamonds.

Another Valentine's memory was when he gave me a hand-made wooden linen trunk and when I

# Valentine's Day

opened it; it was filled with red roses. What a wonderful surprise!

One of the best Valentine's surprises was when Bob took me to a nice restaurant in Chevy Chase in Lexington for Valentine's Day the second year we were married. We had prime rib dinner and complimentary roses. The "Trendells" band provided 60's and 70's music. They were a great group!

Also, we had the most expensive dinner one time at Ruth Chris's in Louisville. They had the best steak I ever put in my mouth, but also the most expensive. The waiters wouldn't let you get one little crumb on the table before they would scrape it off; this annoyed me, at least they could have waited until we were finished with our dinner.

The most embarrassing Valentine's Day several years ago was the year we went to dinner at Ruby Tuesdays at Lexington Green. We arrived at the restaurant and immediately I saw his sister in another booth with her husband. I thought, I guess they are celebrating too; because they lived in Lexington. It wasn't just a few minutes that Bob got up from the table and said he was going to the restroom. I didn't think nothing about it, but all of a sudden I heard his voice come over the PA system, and he said, "This is Valentine's Day and I'm going to sing a special song for my beautiful wife who is sitting in the back booth."

The song was, "You Are So Beautiful to Me." By Joe Cocker. Little did I know but his sister, Julie Rae was film-

ing my reaction. I wanted to crawl under the table I was so embarrassed; he can sing, (Thank God), and it sounded beautiful. After he finished singing, several guys came up to him and told him that he had a lot of guts to get up in front of everyone in a restaurant and sing to their wife. It was great even though I was surprised and embarrassed. It rates up at top as one of the most precious things he has ever done for me.

Bob has always been thoughtful and romantic. He has a big heart and loves doing surprises and pranks. He keeps my life interesting. Yes, we have our ups and downs but no marriage is perfect and you really have to work at it. We have been married 32 years. Most of all; get into church, make Jesus the Lord and love of your life and he will always be with you through trials and troubles.

Another one of the best Valentine's Day was when my daughter gave me a precious little baby boy. Colton Tyler Helton was born at 9:30 P.M. on Valentine's Day, in 2009. He will be celebrating his birthday on Valentine's Day; he will be 10 years old. I can't believe it; years are flying by. In six more years he will be driving. He's an avid basketball, football, and baseball player, plus he is a straight "A" student. I love him so much; I am so blessed to have a special grandson like him.

Happy Birthday Colton!!

**HAPPY VALENTINES DAY 2019**

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## ESTILL COUNTY SCHOOLS MENUS

Milk is included with every meal; plus assorted juices included with breakfast

MONDAY Feb. 18	TUESDAY Feb. 19	WEDNESDAY Feb. 20	THURSDAY Feb. 21	FRIDAY Feb. 22
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### SOUTH IRVINE EARLY LEARNING CENTER BREAKFASTS

Breakfast Pizza Orange Juice Milk	Pancake Porky Apples Milk	Cinnamon Toast Crunch Cereal Peaches, Milk	Omelet & Toast Oranges Milk	Blueberry Muffins Fruit, Grape Juice Milk
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### SOUTH IRVINE EARLY LEARNING CENTER LUNCHES

Chicken Nuggets Biscuit Green Beans Applesauce, Milk	Turkey Sandwich Tater Tots Strawberry Cups Milk	Chili Grilled Cheese Carrot Sticks Apple, Milk	Chicken Pattie/Bun French Fries Peaches Milk	Pizza Corn Pears Milk
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### ESTILL SPRINGS BREAKFASTS

Cinnamon Poptart Cocoa Puffs Pears Asst. Juice Milk Choices	Pancake Porky/ Syrup or Cinn. Toast Crunch/Graham Snacks, Applesauce Asst. Juice, Milk	Yogurt & Cheese or Frosted Flakes Graham Snacks Mandarin Oranges Asst. Juice, Milk	Biscuit, Sausage Pattie, Gravy or Lucky Charms Pineapple Asst. Juice, Milk	Funnel Cake or Fruit Loops/Strawberry Pop tart, Peaches Asst. Juice Milk Choices
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### ESTILL SPRINGS LUNCHES

Chicken Legs Roll, Green Beans Mashed Potatoes Mandarin Oranges Milk Choices	Breadsticks/Marina- ra, Frozen Carrots Normandy Blend Sidekicks or Pine- apple Tidbits, Milk	Sloppy Joe/Bun French Fries Steamed Cauliflower Applesauce Milk	Pizza Hut Pizza Corn Steamed Broccoli Pears Milk Choices	Corn Dog Potato Smiles Pork 'n Beans Peaches Milk Choices
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### WEST IRVINE BREAKFASTS

Pancakes & Syrup or Cereal Strawberry Cup Juice, Milk	Ham & Cheese Slider or Cereal Peaches Juice, Milk	Sausage & Egg Biscuit or Cereal Pears Juice, Milk	Donut w/Topping or Cereal Mandarin Oranges Juice, Milk	Assorted Muffins or Cereal Apple Juice, Milk
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### WEST IRVINE LUNCHES

Chicken Legs Mashed Potatoes Green Beans Pear Halves Milk	Walking Taco Taco Meat, Salsa Shredded Cheese Refried Beans Pineapple Tidbits	Chicken Noodle Soup, Gr. Cheese 3/4 c. carrots/dip Oranges Milk, Crackers	Hot Dog/Bun French Fries Baked Beans Peaches Milk	Pizza Hut Pizza Corn Tomatoes/Dip Apple Milk
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### ESTILL COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Dutch Waffle Choc. Mini Wheats Cereal Bars, Pop Tarts, Mixed Fruit	Breakfast Bosco, Frosted Flakes Cereal Bars, Pop Tarts, Sidekicks	Biscuit & Gravy Lucky Charms Cereal Bars, Pop Tarts, Juice, Milk	Scr. Eggs & Toast Cocoa Puffs Cereal Bars, Pop- tarts, Orange Slices	Donut, Apple Cinn. Cheerios Cereal bars, Pop- tarts Peaches
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### ESTILL COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL LUNCH

Popcorn Chicken Roll Cheesy Potatoes Steamed Broccoli Apples/Mixed Fruit Milk or Juice	Hot Dog on Bun or Turkey/Cheese Sandwich, Slaw Potato Wedges Orange Slices Sidekicks	Pizza Hut Pizza Corn Carrot Sticks w/Dip Grapes Strawberry Cups Milk or Juice	Lasagna w/Garlic Toast or Calzone Garden Salad w/ Grape Tomatoes Green Beans M. Oranges/A-sauce	Mini Corn Dogs or Mr. Rib on Bun Baked Beans Broccoli Bites/Dip Peaches Pineapples
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### ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Breakfast Honey Bun Cereal, Cereal Bars Pop Tarts, Mini Chocolate Donuts Apples or Oranges	Pancake Porky Pop Tarts Donut Holes Yogurt Parfait Apples or Oranges	Bacon, Egg, & Cheese Biscuit Pop Tarts, Yogurt Parfait, Donuts Apples or Oranges	Chicken Biscuit Pop Tarts, Yogurt Parfait, Donut Holes Oranges or Apples Juice, Milk	Dutch Waffle Popartars, Cereal, Cereal Bars Mini Choc. Donuts Oranges or Apples
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### ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL LUNCH

Pepperoni Calzone Chicken Quesadilla Marinara Sauce Glazed Carrots Normandy Blend Tropical Fruit Sidekicks Juice/Asst. Milk	Hot Ham & Cheese Pizza Hut Pizza Tater Tots Baked Beans Strawberries Blueberry Apple- sauce, Juice Asst. Milk	BBQ Oven Roasted Chicken w/Roll Spicy Chicken/Bun Mashed Potatoes Green Beans Pineapples Peaches Asst. Juice, Milk	Chef Bradley's Spa- ghetti w/Breadstick Mr. Rib on Bun Garden Salad Corn, Pears Applesauce Juice Assorted Milk	Asian Chicken, Roll Fish on Bun Egg Roll & Rice Stir Fry Vegetables Glazed Carrots Mandarin Oranges Pineapples Juice, Asst. Milk
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Offered Daily: Pizza Line  
Sandwich Box, Salad Box