



GROWING YOUR MARRIAGE

## The Marriage Almanac

September 2021



*That's My Jam...*

*By Toni Rose*

We anticipated harvesting grapes and making wine this year. Our vines are now three years old and have reached the maturity stage to bear fruit. Well, that didn't happen. In mid-summer we were hit with a fungus called Black Rot. We thought the entire crop was lost. After reaching out to a friend for advice, (thanks, Jim) we were able to respond with the appropriate fungicides and by mid-August the grapes looked WONDERFUL! We planned to harvest our beautiful grapes over Labor Day weekend. Well, that didn't happen. During the two weeks preceding our pick date, little fruit flies burrowed into the fruit and the sweet nectar beckoned every wasp and yellow jacket in the surrounding three counties. Nearly 90% of the grapes were damaged by birds, bees, and bugs. I was crushed and shed a few tears as all the hard work was for nothing.



You know what they say though, about life handing you a lemon – make lemonade or jam. We didn't have enough good fruit to make wine, only 8 pounds. However, with the grapes we salvaged, my grandson and I canned 14 delicious jars of Harvest Heights Red Blend Jam. You won't find this stuff in a store. It's made from Norton, Chambourcin and Cab Franc Grapes. That's my jam. It's REALLY good and I had a blast working together with my grandson. I find that these lessons learned from the land are often applicable to my marriage.

### **Lessons:**

1. I must remain diligent and attentive to the crops (and my marriage). Becoming lackadaisical, even for a short time, can lead to devastation.
2. Seeking input and advice can help you get back on track.
3. It's okay to lament for a while when expectations are not met, but only for a little while.
4. Positivity and creativity are game changers.

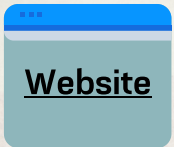
"I live and breathe GOD; if things aren't going well, hear this and be happy: Join me in spreading the news; together let's get the word out. GOD met me more than halfway, he freed me from my anxious fears. Look at him; give him your warmest smile. Never hide your feelings from him. When I was desperate, I called out, and GOD got me out of a tight spot. GOD's angel sets up a circle of protection around us while we pray. Open your mouth and taste, open your eyes and see— how good GOD is. Blessed are you who run to him." - Psalm 34:2-8 (MSG)



## FARM TO TABLE MARRIAGE EXPERIENCE

Growing Your Marriage Leaders will facilitate you and your spouse through a unique and fun experiential "date night" that culminates at the table with delicious food and rich conversation. The Farm to Table Marriage Experience will provide an opportunity for connection, reflection, and growth.

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## FREE MARRIAGE WORKSHOP (Weathering Storms in Marriage)

**Tuesday, October 5th, 2021**

**8:00-9:15 PM EST**

Sometimes in our marriages it's "smooth sailing" and at other times inevitably "storms" come up. How do we weather life's storms in a way that is healthy for our marriage relationship?

Join Don and Kelly Keehner, as they share practical ways that they've persevered during some turbulent times in their own marriage of over 30 years. You will go away from this intentional date night feeling refreshed and encouraged in your relationship with your spouse!

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