

Couples that walk together the ones that stay together

It was a perfect night for a walk in Milton. That's why I was driving.

I don't like to walk, and it shows, but I have no problem if anybody else does. If I could find a way to get stuff from the refrigerator during commercials without having to walk that far, then I'd be all for it. Maybe a conveyor belt?

Anyway, there's something peaceful and serene about couples walking on a summer night -- almost as if they know something the rest of us don't. I could look happy and serene if I had a satellite dish, but that's another story.

I set out to find couples walking around town to see what was up. I had to do it on a Tuesday, because on a Wednesday I figured everybody would be home watching Survivor to see who would be next off the island.

The first couple had never seen it, though. When I saw them, I couldn't believe my eyes. They were in their fifties, I figured, and get this, they were holding hands while they walked.

I thought for sure they were newlyweds in their second or third marriage, or at least having an affair, but it turns out that Pat, who is 59, and Minnie, who is 57, were married May 11, 1963.

Okay, so maybe making up from a fight? They couldn't always hold hands? Spill the beans.

The couple has lived here since 1972, and have two daughters, one of whom gave them a card one time directed at the holding hands business: Are you still in love, or are you holding each other up? Something like that, I couldn't read my writing again, but obviously they do this all the time.

They walk all the time, one or two hours a night even in winter, and during the day they ride their bikes. "You've got to keep active, you can't sit around," said Pat, who looks more fit than any teenager I know.

Well, in the interest of journalism, I had to ask the question. What's the secret to being married 37 years and still being able to walk around holding hands?

A couple that walks together stays together?



On the loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

Maybe, but Pat had another thought, and you'd all best listen. "Whatever you put into it is what you're going to get out of it."

The next couple was walking their dog, Jesse. It might be Jessie. I didn't ask for the spelling, which is irresponsible journalism, notable in this case because Arlene and Romm Dorval have a son who is a newspaper editor.

They were married on Valentine's Day, and are in their 31st year of marriage. They've lived in Milton since 1972, and raised a son and daughter here, although they're building a retirement home and expect to move some day.

They, like other residents I've talked with, are worried about Milton getting too big and losing its small town appeal, although Romm is quick to point out that it was the same type deal when they moved here.

They own a company called Accuplus Precision Metal. Again, I didn't ask for the spelling, so hopefully they won't show their son this column.

Their son should know, however, that their parents don't watch Survivor either, or even television very much. Hard to imagine, I know.

The Dorvals are similar in many ways to the other couple I met that night. They look fit and healthy, and they look happy.

Maybe there's something to this walking business after all.

The next time I get married, I'm going to bring it up with my wife. That way I won't need the conveyor belt to get food from the refrigerator.

Lifeguards must stay fit, keep up first aid training

• from LIFEGUARDING on page 12
allowed in the deep end."

Her one in-water rescue took place when a teen jumped into the water without taking the normal precaution of having learned how to swim first.

"She went off the diving board and didn't know how to swim," recalled Ms Shulist. "So she just went down."

Her land rescue involved a small child who had fallen. Ms Shulist helped to stop the bleeding and call for an ambulance.

To stay in tip-top form, lifeguards are required to take a first aid course every two years, and a cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course annually.

With all accreditation in place, the next task is to stay alert and overcome the built-in obstacles to keeping residents safe.

"You have to make sure you're not tired, that you've had something to eat," said Ms Shulist.

At the Milton Leisure Centre, lifeguards crane to see around a bright red slide installed in the pool. Also, a host of guards are on duty — up to seven at a time — to ensure all vantage points are covered for maximum public safety.

In outdoor situations, glare and intense heat can test a lifeguard's alertness.

And given the need for vigilance, shifts are longish — maybe seven hours a shot.

But they're broken up by small breaks and down-times.

"Our longest swim is two hours, but we've got a few of them during the day," said Ms Shulist.

The profile of the job has been raised in recent years. The popularity of television series Baywatch may have played a part in that. So has the International Olympic Committee's decision to embrace lifesaving as a sport.

For some reason, lifeguarding appears to appeal particularly to women. According to LS statistics, two-thirds of Ontario

guards are female. That's borne out in Ms Shulist's experience, who notes that the majority of students in her lifeguarding classes are girls and women.

When emergencies arise, adrenaline kicks in and there's little time to think, she said.

To keep herself fit enough to take the heat, Ms Shulist swims, plays sports and runs. And after 10 years in the business, she would recommend it to anyone.

"It's fun. You're always interacting with people," she said. "It's a great job."

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