

Emily Weir – 2nd Place

Congressional District Five

Teacher: Mrs. Collier

Discovery Middle School

“The Best Marriage I Know”

My parents Mark and Lisa Weir have the best marriage I know. They give me hope for my future relationship. My parents have been married for twenty-one years, and if you add that to the four years they dated before they got married, they have been together for twenty-five years.

If you look around you'll see examples of many not-so-successful marriages and relationships. There is unfaithfulness, selfishness, and thoughtlessness all over the place. But my parents seem to have figured out the right way to have a happy relationship. I notice the affection in their eyes whenever they look at each other, and their body language shows affection as well. Even after all these years, they still pick seats next to each other on the couch when the family is watching movies or out for a family outing. It's not uncommon to find them holding hands or smiling at each other.

When my dad talks to my mom or she talks to him, you hear the respect in their voices and in their words. They build each other up instead of tearing each other down. They don't talk “at” each other, but they listen to what the other has to say as if it is important to them. When they disagree, they choose their words very carefully so they don't hurt each other's feelings. Even if they do hurt each other's feelings, they are really sorry and try to make it better.

My mom and dad bring their unique strengths to their marriage. My dad is very intelligent and organized and because of this he can budget the family's finances so that the bills are always paid and there is usually some money left over for spending. He is very helpful to my mother with her photography business He has a healthy attitude and a good sense of humor. He takes good care of himself so that he'll be able to grow old with my mom. My mom's softer side balances out my dad's rough edges. Through her he has learned the value of demonstrating affection. She has used her thoughtfulness and creativity to show her true love to her husband. Often one will find little love notes on mirrors

written in lipstick and on post-its around the house. She brings a little humor and spontaneity to their relationship because she is so silly.

My parents are best friends and that may be one of the biggest secrets to their special relationship. They don't only love each other, they like each other. They still sneak away to have dates together. Just like when they were teenagers, they continue to enjoy taking long drives together, going to the movies, meeting for lunch, and browsing antique shops. They can also sit and talk for hours, forgetting everything around them. Over the years they've created many happy memories and they seem to look forward to many more.

Like all other relationships, theirs has had its ups and downs but their marriage shows that love, forgiveness, and determination go a long way to overcome obstacles. Marriage is no fairytale, but my parents have something truly special.