

Matthew Griffitt- 2nd Place

Congressional District Three

Teacher: Ms. Player

Nichols-Lawson Middle School

“The Best Marriage I Know”

Trusting, loving, caring, unique, depending, kind, happy, priceless, working together... all these words describe the best marriage I know.

The best marriage I know is my grandparents’ marriage. My grandparents are Daniel and Myrtis Connell. They are both eighty-one years old and have been married for over sixty years! They have been through some very tough times, but they have stuck it out because of their love and dedication for each other.

When my grandparents first married, they lived in a very small house that they shared with another family. They moved several times over the years. They both had jobs and worked very hard to save as much money as they could. When they had been married four years, they had their first child, a son named Larry. They did not have another child for eight years but then had a beautiful daughter named Judy. They bought some land out in the country and built a home. They did as much work themselves as possible, such as building a barn, a pasture fence, and raising a garden. Daniel always worked until dark every evening feeding the animals, cutting the grass, and keeping up with all the repairs after returning home from his job at Farmbest Dairies. Myrtis always had supper hot and ready to eat when he walked in the door. She somehow managed to have the clothes clean, the house straight, gather and prepare the garden vegetables, while working at Pinecrest School lunchroom for thirty years. The whole family always sat down together to eat three meals a day. They never ate a meal without first giving thanks to God for all His blessings. They believed in putting God first, family second, and everything else after that. I believe that is one of the main reasons they have stuck together like glue for this long. They both accepted Jesus into their hearts at an early age and have always gone to church every Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, and knelt by their bedside every night to pray.

Daniel and Myrtis have been through some very rough times over their many years together. Daniel was losing his eyesight, but was able to locate a doctor who could perform a cornea transplant. This operation has enabled him to

have better vision, even better than he had when he was young. It took him having several eye surgeries over the years, but he is now able to drive and see more than he has ever been able to. After all the years of her taking care of him and everything inside the house, now he takes care of her mostly. They have always respected and appreciated everything they each do, and made sure they told each other so.

I have learned many helpful things from my grandparents, but most importantly, I learned to always work things out together. Going separately is never an option. They have taught me that if you have love and god in your heart, you can stay together forever. A lot of people say that, "the family that prays together, stays together." I believe this phrase has been very true throughout my grandparents' marriage.