

News Column  
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## GIFT IDEAS FOR YOUR WIFE?

Over the years, I have purchased some pretty special gifts for my wife for her birthday and for Christmas. I should have kept a list because I'm sure I'll miss mentioning a good one – we've been married 25 years, so a lot has happened in that amount of time.

One year, many years ago, I bought Pam an adorable, long red sweater with just the cutest little puppy dog knitted on the front. It was amazing and she wore it everywhere. Then, just last year, one of our kids wore that very same, adorable puppy dog sweater to school on “ugly sweater day.”

In 2009 I ordered two loads of driveway rock that arrived really close to Pam's birthday. Ryan, who was in kindergarten at the time, told his teacher that mommy got rocks for her birthday,...and he apparently thought it was OK.

One of my personal favorites is a gift I got for my wife shortly after we were married. My dad and I attended a cattle sale in Nebraska where I bought a nice Gelbvieh cow. It happened to be close to her birthday so we decided to tell Pam that the cow was her birthday present.

Now that you see the pattern, Pam's 2007 Christmas gift will surprise you. That year she got a \$3,000 oak table and chairs for Christmas. Pretty nice, huh? Just when you were thinking I was a rotten husband and never got her anything nice, I throw this one at you!

Wait till you hear the rest of the story. I'm not really the good guy that the new table might suggest.

We built our house in 2006 and anybody who has tackled that project knows you're really broke when you get done. Yet, in June of 2007 – after repeatedly telling my wife that we couldn't afford a dining room table just yet, and the white folding table was just fine – I spent \$1,000 to buy a new ram.

I think you might be able to guess how much fun June through December was for me that year. Never mind that \$1,000 is a pretty cheap price for a ram, and \$3,000 bought a really nice, solid oak table and chairs. In her mind, it was an even deal!

After 25 years of marriage we've kind of fallen into a routine where she picks out whatever she wants and tells me what I got her. I'm not a great shopper so that's usually OK, but occasionally there will be something that I want Pam to have and I'll just buy it without her approval.

I've been threatening for several years now to sign my wife up for the Women Involved in Agriculture class that Extension hosts, targeting women with an interest in farm business management. I've checked her work schedule and I think it's finally going work out. It will be an after-Christmas present.

This is one of those deals that Pam doesn't know she wants, but I know she will enjoy. Actually, I know she'll enjoy part of it and I think she'll be OK with the parts that aren't really her thing.

Pam will love the True Colors session, learning about her personality traits (and mine), and learning why she and I get along sometimes and clash other times. Being a landowner, Pam will also enjoy the session on Kansas Lease Law and Developing Equitable Leases.

The Estate Planning session will be another highlight for her, and she will also be surprised how understandable Farm Service Agency programs are once they are explained in

detail during the FSA Programs session.

Even though math isn't her favorite thing, I think she will appreciate the Understanding Financial Statements session. And, the Marketing session may give her an appreciation of the pain I go through marketing crops. If I'm lucky, maybe she'll just take over that chore and give me a break. You never know.

Finally, I'm confident my wife will like the session on Family Dynamics and Communication. There's no guarantee that it will help our marriage, but Charlotte Shoup Olsen is sure to make us laugh at the ways we communicate,...or don't.

In all, the Women Involved in Agriculture class is six sessions, Thursdays from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m., starting February 11 and concluding March 17. Each meeting starts with lunch and some social time, with the actual educational sessions starting around 1:00 p.m. The \$75 course fee includes meals and all course materials.

If you see Pam, give her some encouragement. I'm not sure she's convinced that spending afternoons in class with me is a good idea, but I think she'll love it.

Help me out if you can, and maybe you or your spouse would like to attend too. We have room for 25 participants.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmcclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmcclure@ksu.edu).

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