

Love Story: Grafton Couple Shares Story of Enduring Love and Commitment

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GRAFTON - Steve and Jackie Duty of Grafton say their relationship has endured because it was built on what Jackie Duty described as “a real story, rooted in commitment through the ups, the downs, the tragedies, the rebuilding, the laughter.”

The couple met on Feb. 21, 1998, at Riverbend Billiards and Grill and married on Nov. 3, 2000, in a small courthouse ceremony, according to Jackie Duty. She said the relationship began in an “ordinary, hometown” way and grew as they “chose each other,” “grew up together,” and became parents.

“What makes our relationship so special is that it isn’t built on a ‘perfect’ story — it’s built on a real one,” Jackie Duty said. “A lot of couples can do the highlight reel, but we’ve done the whole thing — the ups, the downs, the tragedies, the rebuilding, the laughter, and the seasons where we had to hold on tighter than we wanted to or thought possible.”

Jackie Duty said she first saw Steve Duty in 1997 when he was a lifeguard at Raging Rivers.

“I didn’t know then that one glance would become the beginning of the greatest love story of my life,” she said.

She described their wedding as simple. “It wasn’t fancy. It wasn’t a big production. But it was ours,” Jackie Duty said, adding that it marked “the start of a marriage built on commitment, friendship, and the kind of love that grows stronger through every season.”

Years later, she said, the couple marked their 10-year anniversary during a local radio station promotion at Villa Marie Winery, where they were remarried by radio personality Delilah. Jackie Duty said she wore a wedding dress that day, something she did not have at their courthouse ceremony.

“That day, I finally got to wear a wedding dress — something I didn’t get the first time — and it felt like God gave me a beautiful ‘redo,’ not because our beginning wasn’t enough, but because He loves to surprise His children with joy,” she said.

Now, Jackie Duty said, the couple has “two grown sons” and continues forward “as a blessed and happy couple,” crediting “resilience, tenacity, forgiveness, laughter, and a faith in God” for carrying them through difficult times.

How to submit

Submitting your love story is easy. You can fill out our Love Story form at <https://contribute.riverbender.com/page/tell-us-your-love-story/> or email us at news@riverbender.com.