

1953

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Lewiston, NY 14092-1309
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Golden Honeymoon Memories
c/o Niagara Gazette
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PO Box 549
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Attention: JUDGES

OUR HONEYMOON STORY

May 16, 1953 was our wedding day. The festivities went smoothly beginning from the wedding ceremony at St. Joseph's R. C. Church in Niagara Falls, New York to the breakfast at the Old Casa Columbo, to the dinner at the Como Restaurant, to the evening reception at Mt. Carmel Church Hall.

It was a beautiful day until late in the evening when it began to rain.

Prior to our wedding day, I had told my husband-to-be that we should make reservations at the Statler Hotel in Buffalo. He scoffed and said it wasn't necessary as they had over 1,000 rooms! Would you believe when we arrived there, they told us they were all sold out! We then drove to the Hotel Markeen (no longer in existence) and they too were booked but they jokingly offered a cot in the vestibule! For our honeymoon?

We then proceeded to drive from one motel to another in the Buffalo area, in the teeming rain. My new husband caught a dreadful cold that night which stayed with him all the way down to Florida. "No Vacancy" signs were everywhere! They told us it was the Queen's birthday and all the Canadians were here across the border, and if we wanted a room, we should go to Canada! Undaunted, we then proceeded to drive back to Niagara Falls via Route 62, all the way home until we came to the Elaine Motel in our city, and there we spent the first night of our honeymoon.

In order to save money, rather than flying to Florida, we arranged to borrow my brother's car and drive to Florida. Little did we know his car was not in the best of condition and we began to experience one thing after another, causing us to spend our money for repairs to the car. First, the engine oil was spilling all over the engine. We stopped in Jessup, Georgia to have this fixed. Then, in Tampa, Florida, the speedometer went dead. More money! Then, we got a flat tire and had to buy a new tire. It was 115° F. in the shade in Clearwater Beach, Florida where our motel was.

We took beautiful pictures in Florida and unthinkingly kept the camera and films in the glove compartment. The films all melted and we have no pictures of our honeymoon. One night, we went to the movies to see "Anna". When we came out, we found we had another flat tire due to the intense heat. We had to buy another new tire. Traveling to Tampa one night, we got another flat tire. We were warned not to stop anywhere between Tampa and Clearwater Beach due to the high crime there. So we drove and drove the distance until the rubber all wore off and we were driving on the rim! Needless to say, we were stopped by a policeman who told us we were breaking some ordinance and told us to park the car at a nearby gas station for the night. We had to take a cab to our motel, and on the morrow, we had to buy another tire! All-in-all, we purchased a total of 5 tires! All our honeymoon money was being spent for car repairs.

The worst scenario was yet to come. As we drove through all the winding hills and mountains on our return trip, little did we know that the brakes were so worn down we could have been killed! But we made it home, a little poorer, but safe and sound.

40 years have gone by. Many joys and many sorrows have filled our days, but we have weathered the storm and are still in love with each other. We were made for each other! It would be wonderful to spend a second honeymoon for our 40th anniversary!

Carmela M. Alati

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Anthony Alati

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