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July 14, 2006

Ohio Department of Health
Revenue Room, 1st Floor
246 North High Street
P.O. Box 15098
Columbus, OH 43215-0098
ATTN: Vital Records Dept.

Dear Record Keepers:

Today is a special milestone for my wife. You see, my wife turned 40 today. She doesn't look a day over 27 and I think she is beautiful. I didn't "forget" her birthday, I just didn't prepare for it in time. I had planned to plan a great and special surprise celebration for her, but I let the weeks and months slip by -- always thinking that I had plenty of time to come up with something special -- and now the day is here and I have nothing to surprise her with other than a combo bouquet of flowers and a box of chocolates on sale.

I wanted to do something large scale for this big birthday. A friend of mine took his wife on a surprise sea cruise for her 40th birthday. Another guy I know took his wife on a spontaneous trip (for her) to Paris for the big 4-0. Those guys are so thoughtful and romantic and always seem to raise the bar for those of us who are romantically impaired. Meanwhile, I am lagging far behind. Probably the most romantic thing I have ever done for my wife is mow the lawn or put the toilet seat down without being asked. That and turning off ESPN during one of our intimate encounters a number of years ago. She KNEW what she was getting when she married me, but I'm sure that doesn't make her wish that I was more of a romantic fellow.

I finally got the picture and think I figured out how those ultra-romantic husbands do it. They see a big event coming up in the distant future and they secretly plan for it in advance. Those guys that went on lavish vacations for their wives' 40th birthdays are always doing romantic things and always seem to pull it off with such ease and flair. Fred proposed to his wife at a surprise picnic as they walked through the park together. She never even saw it coming. Zeke secretly kept a daily journal for a full year and gave it to his wife on her 35th birthday. She told him that it was the best birthday gift anyone had ever given to her. Zeke also sang a serenade to his bride on their wedding day in front of all the guests at the reception. Fred once surprised his wife by editing together a DVD video of some of their special moments together, complete with romantic background music and the whole works. I thought it was pretty sappy, but I was mostly just jealous.

I want to prove to my Sweetie that I DO have a romantic bone in my body and that I know how to use it. I want to be able to do something especially nice and memorable for her on her 40th birthday. But the only way I can make that happen is if she can turn 40 again next year. I am not talking about those women who always give their age as 39 every single year to every person who asks -- even when they are obviously 40, 50, or even 60-something. How pathetic!

What would it take to legally change my wife's age by one year to officially make her 39 again? Is it as simple as issuing a new birth certificate or will it take more than that? (I think she just got her drivers license renewed this past week. I hope that doesn't pose a problem.) I know there are ways to correct mistakes in vital documents or to legally change a person's name. But will she have to start giving her birth date at the pharmacy pick up window as being in 1965 instead of 1966? I want to make sure she can still get any prescription medications without problems.

I know that it is too late to process this request and issue the new birth record or social security card and drivers license for this year (since her birthday is today and I am mailing this request to you now -- unless you are NASA, this won't get to you until AFTER July 14, 2006), but if you can fast track this request through, I can go ahead and start planning a 40th birthday celebration for next year and it will look to my wife like I really pulled something off on short notice!

A friend of mine told me a story about her mother who lied about her age all her life by two years and the "lie" age was on all her vital documents. Then when she physically turned 65 (when she was known as being only 63 to everyone else) she was worried that her husband would be angry with her. She didn't know if he would be more upset if she confessed to lying about her age all that time and that she was older than he thought she was, or if she continued to keep it a secret and neglected to collect social security benefits when she was truly eligible!

If I turn my wife back to 39 for this year, can I change her age back to the actual physical age in, say, ten more years so that she is back on the right track for collecting senior citizen benefits once we get to that point? She is still quite young at heart and in appearance right now!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rusty Lucas".

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I would like to get my wife a baseball cap. I've told her since day one that nothing is sexier than a pretty lady in a baseball cap. Since this effort is about the most romantic thing I have ever done and ever will do, I would like to remember it and put the icing on the cake, so to speak, by having her wear a baseball cap with some reference to that romantic action on my part. Are there any Department of Health or Vital Records baseball caps available. If so, can you send me one for free for my wife? And also, do you have any romantic birthday ideas for a spouse's 40th birthday that I can plan for next July 2007?