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WEDDING GUIDE

Featured Stories

Sammy & Jeff

Burnin' Love

Lauren & Joel

Growing in Love

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Rehearsal Dinner Planning Pointers

Rehearsal dinners are customarily held after couples and their bridal parties walk through the wedding ceremony. Rehearsals may occur one or two nights before the actual wedding, depending on the availability of the wedding venue. Rehearsal dinners tend to be less formal than wedding receptions, but couples should still prioritize planning to ensure their dinner goes off without a hitch.



- Confirm who is paying for dinner. Tradition once suggested that the groom's parents pay for the rehearsal dinner while the bride's parents foot the bill for the wedding. But perhaps due to the rising cost of weddings, many couples no longer feel beholden to such traditions. If couples are financing their own weddings, parents of both the bride and groom may want to pay for the rehearsal dinner. If parents are splitting the cost of the wedding, then couples themselves may want to pay for the rehearsal dinner. Confirm who is paying and if there is a budget to work with before booking a restaurant. This way there is no confusion once the bill is brought to the table.

- Give consideration to bridal party members' dietary restrictions. Couples may not want to book a seafood restaurant if a handful of guests have shellfish allergies. So before booking a restaurant for the rehearsal dinner, couples can ask members of their bridal party and other attendees if they have any food allergies.

- Emphasize location. Couples whose bridal party includes out-of-towners should look for a restaurant that's close to the wedding hotel and/or the ceremony site to host their rehearsal dinner. Ideally, one that's within walking distance of both makes getting to and from a lot easier. Regardless of where the restaurant is located, make sure to arrange for transportation for any out-of-town guests who are not planning to drive to the wedding.

- Inform guests about the dress code. Rehearsal dinners tend to be laid back affairs, but members of the bridal party may be uncertain about what to wear. Couples should inform rehearsal dinner guests well in advance of the wedding if the dinner will be casual, semiformal or formal. This gives guests the time to shop for and pack their attire for the night, and saves couples the trouble of answering wardrobe inquiries in the busy final days before the wedding.

- Toast the guests. Brides and grooms are toasted at their wedding receptions, but rehearsal dinners afford happy couples the chance to thank their closest friends and family members for their love and support. Plan to give a brief toast to loved ones at the dinner. Grooms may also want to use this opportunity to toast their brides-to-be, thanking them for all their efforts planning the wedding.

Rehearsal dinners typically are fun, less formal affairs. But even the least formal dinners require some planning.
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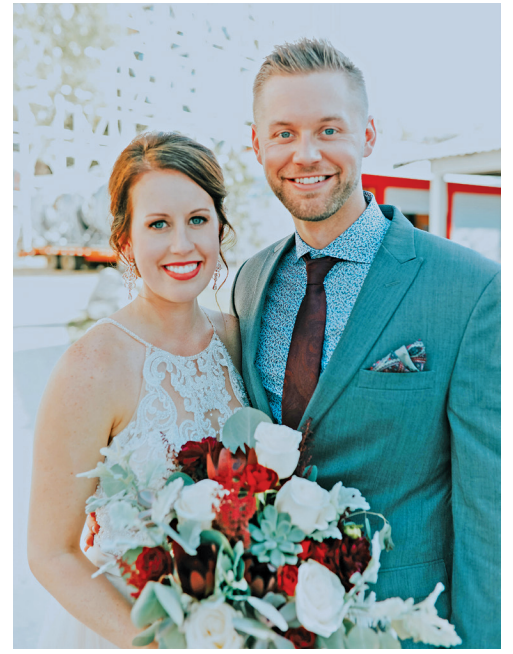
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BURNIN' Love



— by Mary Meinking Chambers

Warm, friendly Sammy Spies was born and raised in Spirit Lake, Iowa. When she went off to study business at Minnesota State University, in Mankato, she brought along her warm-heartedness.

It wasn't long before Sammy was introduced to a fellow business major and Maverick football player, Jeff Burns. "There was an instant attraction and sparks!" Sammy exclaimed. Romance began to kindle in the fall of 2013, after their first date at Panera Bread. They enjoyed weekly bowling outings and dinners at Tav on the Ave. Their love soon heated up when they graduated in 2015 and both found jobs in the Minneapolis area.

During their visit to the Lakes over the Fourth of July weekend in 2017, Jeff decided to fuel the flames on their relationship. On July 2, while walking on the Arnolds Park Pier, Jeff dropped down to one knee right above Sammy's Grandma Nelda's memorial brick. Jeff proposed and Sammy said, "Yes!" when presented with the beautiful pear-shaped Halo diamond engagement ring from Spirit Lake Silver and Gold.

The heat was turned up on bridal plans to make the fall 2018 wedding date. The first hot item on the to-do list was the dress. Sammy found her ivory lace bodice with a gathered tulle skirt gown at Bella Bridal Boutique in Woodbury, Minnesota. The attendants chose various styles of burgundy dresses from there as well. The guys' dark gray suits were from Men's Warehouse. Their fall wedding colors were burgundy, dark gray and light blue.

As the big day approached, they chose Hy-Vee Floral, in Spirit Lake, for the flowers. "We had BEAUTIFUL florals! It was exactly what I had envisioned. Amber used a beautiful mix of silver dollar eucalyptus; succulents; vendela white, ivory and burgundy roses; dusty miller; burgundy dahlias; burgundy astilbe; and leucadendron," Sammy said.

The rehearsal dinner was held upstairs at The Ritz. Pizza, beef tenderloin, fried chicken, mashed potatoes and salads were enjoyed by the bridal party, friends and family.

On the big day, September 15, 2018, Sammy and the attendants were transformed into steaming beauties. They had their nails done at Cali Nails. Their hair was done at Aspasia Salon and Spa. And their makeup was done at Boji Breeze Face and Body, all of Spirit Lake.

Clint Loveall officiated the wedding ceremony at the First Presbyterian Church in

Spirit Lake. This big day was permanently burned into the couple's memory.

After the ceremony, the happy couple and bridal party were whisked away in the Boji Rides party bus to celebrate and tour the lakes. "All our out-of-town guests told us how beautiful and amazing the Great Lakes area is!" Sammy said. After the ride, they were dropped off at their reception at Majestic Pavilion in Arnolds Park.

The delicious food was provided by River City Eatery in Windom, Minnesota. Happy hour included a "Midwestern Dip Bar" with pig wings, chips, veggies and four artisan dips (buffalo bleu, house-made ranch, creamy BBQ and aged cheddar). Dinner included honey balsamic roast beef, parma rosa chicken with green beans, carrots and herb mashed potatoes.

"Naked cakes" on glass pedestals were the centerpieces on each guest table. Kim Ingwersen of Lake Park made chocolate cakes with fudge filling, vanilla cakes with fudge or raspberry filling and lemon cakes with raspberry filling.

The reception ended at the Pavilion and the guests moved to Captain's Getaway in Arnolds Park. The wedding dance featured the live band Flash Mob! who entertained the crowd for hours with their pop/rock songs. The sizzling newlywed couple danced to "At Last" by Etta James as their first dance. They were invited to come up on stage with the band and even surfed the crowd. "We love the band FlashMob! They were everything we had hoped for and more," exclaimed Sammy.

Emma Dau Photography captured the day in pictures. "Our photos turned out exactly as we hoped," Sammy said.

The Burns couple received many lovely gifts from their bridal registry at Interiors of Spirit Lake, Williams Sonoma and Target.

Jeff and Sammy took a "mini-moon" vacation to Duluth for a few days after the wedding. An extended honeymoon is set for April when they'll attend a college friend's wedding in the Bahamas.

Jeff is an IT Project Manager and Sammy is a Social Media/Digital Marketing Specialist in the Twin Cities. They just purchased their first home in Eagan, Minnesota.

Congratulations Sammy and Jeff! May your "Burnin' Love!" last a lifetime and your lives together be filled with much joy and happiness.

"A Joyful Heart is the inevitable result of a Heart Burning with Love." ~Mother Teresa

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— by Jantina Carney

“Marriage... it's a lot like picking raspberries from the garden, you need to work at it every day to not let the fruit get buggy.” Great advice from Lauren's father, given to the bride and groom on their wedding day, September 15, 2018. Like a garden, the story of Lauren Boggess and Joel Christensen has grown over many years as the two started dating over a decade ago in 2004, just before starting their freshman year of high school at Estherville-Lincoln Central. Many nights spent studying together, watching movies and taking hiking trips led to the proposal at the top of Yosemite Falls, and very soon after, the plans for an Okoboji wedding started to take place.

Lauren's first mission was to find her dress, and she didn't have to travel far. A Heavenly Celebration in Emmetsburg had exactly what she was looking for. “The dress sets the theme for the entire wedding,” Lauren mentioned — an elegant deep V neck, champagne dress with intricate floral details. The Maid of Honor and bridesmaids had the freedom to pick their own dresses as long as they stayed within the color scheme — Lauren wanted to make sure the girls were comfortable. She loved their individual style and colors that were chosen, they all did a perfect job when finding their dress. Ferguson's Floral in Spirit Lake provided the bridal bouquets which also stayed within the color scheme of blush pink, peach, mustard and purples.

Joel and his groomsmen kept it simple yet classic in blue suits. Joel mentioned that the entire day was so much fun. As he and his friends prepared for the day in the James Bond Suite at the Okoboji Commons Hotel in Okoboji, lots of laughs and memories were shared between this group of guys who have been friends for many years.

Joel had surprised Lauren in April of 2016, right before their engagement, with the purchase of a new home in Spirit Lake. This provided the backdrop for their first look pictures. The photographer, Hallie Hammer, from Wild Air Studios out of Des Moines, captured the day perfectly, including the ceremony which took place at Parks Marina Boat Club on East Lake Okoboji.

The day was very warm and quite windy, but overall it was a day that Lauren could do all over again. “It truly had been the best day of our life together thus far”. After the ceremony the wedding party took a boat ride provided by Joel's dad, Steve Christensen.

Everyone had so much fun. It was a great time to relax and unwind before the reception at Snappers Turtle Bay Cafe.

Lauren and Joel chose the venue at Parks Marina because it was new and it just felt right the minute they took the tour. They chose 3 different sliders, a salad and dessert bar for their menu. Lauren said “it was perfect. The staff was so accommodating and everyone had fun. The food was tremendous!”

The evening was followed by a reception where Pinnacle Productions and DJ Kellen Moe worked closely with Lauren so she could surprise Joel by singing *Stay with You* by John Legend. That was for sure a moment that they will both remember for many years to come. The bridal party and guests danced into the evening after the Father/Daughter and Mother/Son dance to *Isn't She Lovely* by Stevie Wonder.

The evening continued at the Okoboji Commons Hotel in the James Bond Suite for the after party. Lauren mentioned that it was so nice having a place to go back to where everyone could be together after the big day. “It was perfect”.

After a honeymoon to Thailand for two weeks the couple resides in Spirit Lake with their beloved dog Bella. Joel is employed by Christensen Construction of Estherville and Lauren works at Matt Furniture in Spencer.

My wish for this adventurous couple is a beautiful life filled with traveling the world, lots of laughs and mostly unconditional love.



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Ken & Hope Rimmer of Spirit Lake
Married April 10, 1946



60 Years
Pat & Jerry Westcotts of Milford
Married June 2, 1958



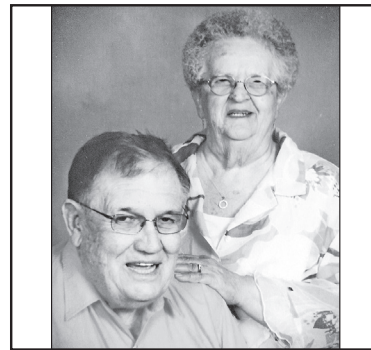
70 Years
Dr. Alfred & Sheila Klein of Spirit Lake
Married June 5, 1948



63 Years
Ronald & Annette Potter of Fostoria
Married June 26, 1955



70 Years
Del & Dee Block of Spirit Lake
Married June 27, 1948



60 Years
Loren & Janice Wilson of Milford
Married August 10, 1958



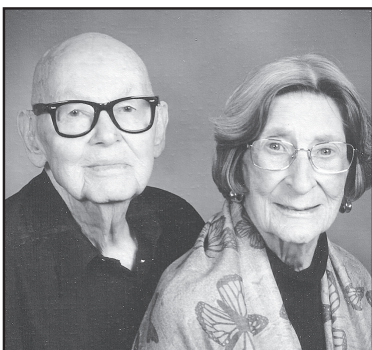
60 Years
Dick & Donna Christoffer of Spirit Lake
Married August 4, 1958



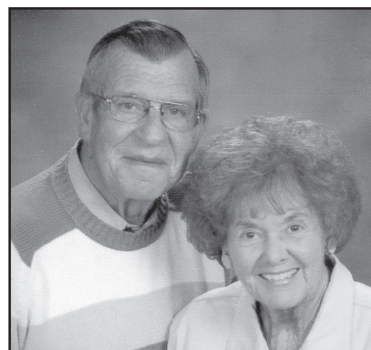
60 Years
Duane & Pat Ellis of Spirit Lake
Married August 17, 1958



65 Years
Ken & Dorene Westergard of Graettinger
Married August 26, 1953



60 Years
Jack & Jean Hardie of Spirit Lake
Married November 8, 1958



65 Years
Clayton & Billie Schuett of Spirit Lake
Married November 28, 1953



66 Years
David (Bud) & Betty McClure
Married February 7, 1954

7 Wedding Tricks To Make The Big Day Easier

Wedding planning is no small task. From sending out engagement announcements to gifting guests with take-home favors, a couple will pour over scores of details as they plan their weddings.

As if selecting a photographer or choosing the right passed appetizers isn't challenging enough, some unknown variables are sure to pop up on the big day as well. Couples can take their cues from others who have walked the aisle before them with these tricks of the trade, which may help couples' wedding days go smoothly.

1. Host everything at a single location. Couples who want to simplify their wedding day can select a site that can host the ceremony and reception and also house guests. The cost of such facilities may be more affordable than couples think, as transportation costs will be minimal and the venue may offer discounts on group packages.

2. Think about a day coordinator. Couples who cannot afford a wedding planner to handle all of the details often find that a day-of-service provider is within their budget. This person can handle all of the details of the wedding day so brides and grooms can fully immerse themselves in the festivities.

3. Bring extra cash. Unexpected expenses may pop up. Couples may have to feed an extra member of the band or a guest who was able to get a babysitter at the last minute. Brides

and grooms may want to offer a bigger tip than anticipated to the waitstaff or deejay who went above and beyond.



4. Learn how to bustle. Walking around with a free-flowing train all day can become tiring for brides. Brides should make sure that one person practices how to bustle the train and will step in to do so for the reception. Also, it may not be the height of fashion, but having a garbage bag on hand can keep the train clean during inclement weather, or if the bride has to trek across grass or soil for photo opportunities.

5. Give an outgoing person a job. Enlist a boisterous friend or family member to wrangle guests for photo opportunities. He or she can be the photographer's helper and give the happy couple one less thing to do.

6. Stock the bathroom. Some venues will have courtesy items for their guests, but couples also should bring their own necessities, such as breath mints, toothpaste, extra pantyhose, hairspray, lip gloss, and/or sanitary pads.

7. Be all smiles. Couples can't predict everything that will happen on their wedding day, but they can help create the mood. Smiling couples can make things better for everyone, even when zippers break or someone gets the chicken instead of the salmon. *@metrocreativeconnection*

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Get the Most Out of Bridal Shows and Wedding Events

Recently engaged couples may be excited to get a jump on wedding planning. Bridal shows can be a great way for couples to meet and familiarize themselves with local wedding professionals, all the while introducing themselves to the terminology of wedding planning. Though they're a great source of information, contacts and samples, bridal shows also can be a bit overwhelming. Learning how to maximize time spent at shows can help couples plan their weddings as efficiently as possible.

- Start small. If the idea of large crowds is unappealing, attend the more intimate, boutique shows that are often held at local reception halls and restaurants instead of the larger installations at convention centers and hotels.

- Scout out vendors. Check the bridal show's website for lists of exhibitors and see if your desired vendors are on the list. But even if they're not, keep an open mind and use the show as a chance to compare offerings. If an event map is available, marking off must-visit booths can help save time.

- Pre-register. Pre-registering for bridal events saves time at check-in, and doing so may make you eligible for discounted tickets.

- Come prepared. Chances are each vendor is going to ask couples for information so that they can follow up with a phone call or email with more detailed offerings and estimates. Couples attending the show can expediate the process by coming equipped with labels that feature their names, contact information and wedding date. They can then stick the labels on sign-in sheets or use them like business cards.

- Dress comfortably. Bridal expos involve a lot of walking and roaming around. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Consider a backpack or hands-free bag so you are not weighed down when collecting the swag and other handouts throughout the day.

- Ask questions. When face-to-face with vendors, rely on their expertise but don't hesitate to ask questions concerning themes, colors, recommendations for honeymoon locations, invitation paper suggestions, and much more.

- Stay for the fashion show. Many shows will offer a runway experience to present the latest gown and tuxedo offerings. This can be an entertaining way for couples to formulate their wedding styles. Wedding shows introduce couples to vendors and set them on the path to making decisions regarding the planning of their weddings.

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Unconventional Wedding Menu Ideas

Traditionally, one of the more memorable aspects of wedding receptions is the food. Whether it was fun, tasty or something entirely new for guests, food tends to leave a lasting impression.

The experts at Boho Weddings say that, more than ever before, couples are seeking menu ideas that reflect their personalities as a couple as they seek to make a statement at their events. Celebrating with delicious, unique foods can make receptions that much more amazing.

Bite-sized bursts - Tapas and a movement toward small bites has started to take hold at wedding receptions. Such a choice allows guests to try many different flavors without filling up too quickly. From sliders to mini grilled cheese to soup shots to bite-sized pizzas, many of these small bites feature flavors

borrowed from familiar comfort foods — just presented on a miniature scale.

Comfort stations and bars - Couples who love comfort food can put it on display with a crostini station, a mashed potato bar, a chicken and waffles station, a gourmet popcorn snack station, or a ramen noodle bar.

Food trucks/carts - Outdoor weddings can be enhanced with the addition of trendy food trucks. These restaurants on wheels can inject burgers, sandwiches, international delights, crêpes, noodles, and so many more flavors into a wedding.

High-end options - Couples may want to give guests a taste of the lavish with olive oil and vinegar tasting stations, whiskey bars, French hors d'oeuvres, Kobe beef sliders, lobster tails, risotto stations, and more.

Childhood favorites - When it comes time for dessert, some couples opt to avoid or downplay wedding cakes in favor of something simpler. A cookie-and-milk bar, doughnut holes, soft pretzel stations, pie pops, or dessert shot jars push creativity and sweetness to new levels. Do-it-yourself dessert stations, such as s'more-making and ice cream sundae stations, also can be big hits.

Couples are increasingly feeling less beholden to traditional wedding reception menus as they look to infuse their personal tastes into the foods they plan to serve their guests. Many catering managers and chefs welcome the chance to work with couples looking to create unique reception menus.

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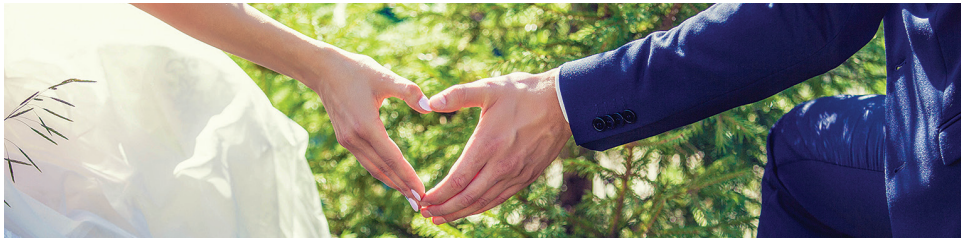
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Romantic sentiments are expressed in many ways come Valentine's Day. Gifts may include sparkling jewels or personalized prose, but a homemade dessert from the kitchen can win over some hearts as well.

Even though chocolate may be expected on Valentine's Day, tiramisu can be a welcome and delicious alternative. Tiramisu is an Italian layered dessert, and the name translates to "pick me up" or "cheer me up." It is made from spongy cookies soaked in coffee and liqueur, nestled among dollops of rich mascarpone cheese. Requiring no baking at all, it is an easy treat to offer a sweetheart. Enjoy this recipe for "Tiramisu" courtesy of the American Dairy Association.



Tiramisu

Yield: 9 servings

- 6 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 ¼ cup mascarpone cheese
- 1 ¾ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 - 12 oz packages Savoradi Lady Fingers
- ½ cup cold espresso or strong coffee
- ¼ cup coffee flavored liqueur (optional)
- 1 tablespoon cocoa for dusting

Combine egg yolks and sugar in the top of a double boiler, over boiling water. Reduce heat to low and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly. This is your sabayon. Remove from the heat and whip yolks until thick and lemon colored. Add mascarpone to whipped yolks, and beat until combined.

In a separate bowl, whip cream to stiff peaks. Gently fold the whipped cream in the mascarpone-sabayon mixture and set aside.

Mix the cold espresso with the coffee liquor, and dip the lady fingers into the mixture just long enough to get them wet; do not soak them! Arrange the lady fingers in the bottom of a 8 inch square baking dish (or 6X9). Spoon half the mascarpone cream filling over the lady fingers.

Repeat the process with another layer. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight. Dust with cocoa before serving. @metrocreativeconnection

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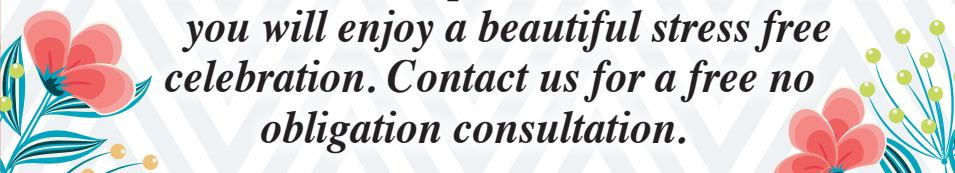


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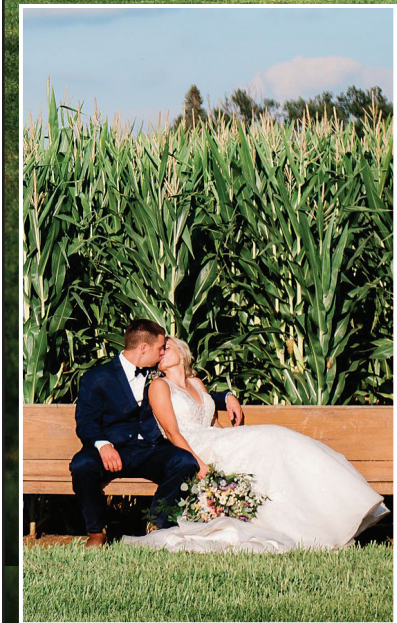
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