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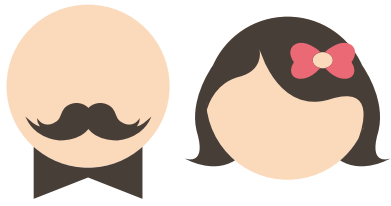
I do contents

SPRING/SUMMER EDITION 2017

- 6 Registry tips
- 7 Ask the expert
- 9 Backyard weddings
- 12 Wear-again dresses
- 16 What's hot for 2017?
- 18 Farm-fresh flowers
- 22 Featured wedding: Alexander + Kilene Knitter
- 26 Planning for a rainy day
- 28 Featured wedding: Nathan + Kaitlyn Derix
- 33 Reception games
- 34 Featured wedding: Seth + Felisha Murray
- 38 Album of Lancaster County photographers
- 40 Secrets to marriage success

COVER PHOTO: NATHAN + KAITLYN DERIX
AT IRONSTONE RANCH IN ELIZABETHTOWN, PA
THOMAS BEAMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

TABLE OF CONTENTS PHOTO
BRIANNA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY



Ask and you might receive

Wedding registries not what they used to be

Registries are a wedding tradition, not unlike a couple's first dance or the best man/maid of honor toast.

But as practical as wedding registries are, many couples approach their registries with a degree of hesitation.

"Bridal registries have changed quite a bit since our grandparents' days, says Sheryl Trower, founder and president of The Etiquette School of Central Pennsylvania. "Today, many couples live together before marriage or live on their own in apartments. They may already have most of the basics and are not looking to receive another blender."

Some couples are fearful that they might appear presumptuous, or they are simply uncertain about what to include on their lists.

The following tips can help engaged couples build a registry to relish and utilize for years to come.

Establish an online registry.

Whereas guests once had to visit a couple's favorite retailer(s) and ask what remained on their registry, online registries now allow well-meaning family members and friends to peruse potential gifts from the comforts of home and ship gifts directly to the couple. Online registries even indicate which items have already been purchased, saving couples the trouble of returning duplicates while reassuring buyers that their gifts are fulfilling a need or want.

Share your registry information on your wedding website and stationery. Guests need to know where you are registered, so share that information on your wedding website and include it on your save-the-date cards and invitations.

Register with multiple retailers.

By registering with more than one retailer, couples can give their guests more options to choose from. Try to include one brick-and-mortar store, ideally one with a national presence, so guests who prefer to shop in-person won't be forced to buy online.

Don't be afraid to list expensive items.

While few guests will break the bank to buy wedding gifts, that does not mean couples should avoid including expensive items on their registries.

"Group gifting is really trending these days, so perhaps a group of friends or family could contribute toward your honeymoon or something experience-based," Trower says.

And while some couples might feel it's inappropriate to include expensive items, it can actually prove practical. Many stores offer couples steep discounts on items they listed on their registries that ultimately were not purchased. If you have your eye on an especially expensive item, include it on your list without worrying about how it may look to your guests. They will understand if you explain that you may be eligible for a post-wedding discount.

Don't limit your registry to expensive items.

Rather, choose a wide variety of items and price tiers, Trower says. Include items at a range of price points for guests working with various budgets.

Don't hesitate to include low-cost items, as some guests may enjoy building a wedding gift basket with various affordable items from your registry.

Keep the registry for things you as a couple will enjoy.

For example, Trower says, a registry shouldn't include things that only one of you would enjoy, such as Gucci shoes or a Prada handbag.

"But if the couple is crazy about scuba diving or camping, then new gear would be fine to have on the list."

Remember that no gift is too obscure.

"The registry field has expanded greatly to reflect what couples find special," Trower says. Thanks to the internet, just about any item can now be tracked down by ambitious gift-givers. If you want to include items that might not be available at run-of-the-mill retailers, choose an online retailer such as Amazon to host one of your registries. Such sites are great places to find specialty items or more obscure offerings that might be out of stock at more traditional retailers.

"Make your list full of things you are excited about," Trower says. "Unconventional nowadays is fine."

Encourage donations.

If you are truly hesitant to ask for gifts or you're tying the knot later in life and already have everything you need, encourage guests to donate to a favorite charity in lieu of making a donation. ■

Ask the expert

Q.

By *Sheryl Trower* Founder and president of
The Etiquette School of Central Pennsylvania

● How do we politely tell guests that their children are not invited?

First, let me say that there is no right or wrong answer to whether children should attend weddings or not; instead, it is a personal decision made by the bride and groom.

If you prefer adults only, then you can address the invitation to adults only and also include names of those invited on the RSVP card. This is the subtle approach.

A more direct approach is to indicate somewhere on the RSVP card or invitation that children are not invited to the wedding. You can say something like, "Adults only" or "Adult wedding and reception" or "We politely request no children" or "Regrettably, children are unable to attend."

If you are fine with children at the ceremony but not the reception, you can say, "Children welcome at ceremony only."

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Tipping is not mandatory or even expected, but it is a nice gesture and sometimes a pleasant surprise to vendors.

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Lisa and Kevin Wiggins, formerly of Lancaster, got married last year at their home in Downingtown, Pa.

— MARGARET GATES
CUSTOM CONTENT EDITOR

BACKYARD WEDDINGS



Getting married at home takes some special planning

When Kevin and Lisa Wiggins began planning their May 2016 wedding, they knew they wanted to have it at a place close to their hearts. The couple, who grew up in Lancaster County, live in Downingtown on four picturesque acres, with a historic home, a barn and pond.

"We absolutely love where we live," Lisa says.

Kevin and Lisa's choice to wed at home is by no means common, says their wedding planner, Melissa Martin, owner of Lancaster-based Stylish Occasions Wedding and Event Planning. But Martin says she continues to do a handful of private-home weddings each year.

"I think it's more personal for the couple," she says, noting that such events are often at a family home.

Deb Erb, owner of Simply Events in Ephrata, agrees that home weddings are largely a sentimental choice. Some couples may even think it's a simpler choice.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MELISSA MORTIMER/CAPTURED BY MISSI PHOTOGRAPHY

But depending on a host of factors including location, guest list and budget, it's not always the wisest choice, the planners say.

"It's funny, people tend to think they might be saving money doing something like that, but it's not necessarily so," Erb says.

In fact, Martin says, at-home weddings often end up being more expensive.

Lisa Wiggins recalls Martin telling them up front that having a wedding at home was more work. "She was a lifesaver," Wiggins says. "We never would have been able to pull it off without her."

For those intent on fulfilling a childhood dream of getting married in their

own backyard, Martin and Erb say there's much to consider:

WEATHER

Unless you are restoring a barn on your property, like one of Martin's current clients, you would be wise to rent a tent as backup, in case it rains on the big day — especially if your home isn't large enough to hold all of your guests.

Consider a smaller tent for the ceremony and a larger one for the reception.

Although Kevin and Lisa have a barn on their property, it's inhabited by bats, which made it a less-than-desirable option for the reception. Martin

convinced them to rent a tent to accommodate their 75 guests, a decision for which they were thankful, Lisa says. The day turned out very warm, and the tent offered welcome shade.

Wedding planner Melissa Martin chose rectangular tables for the reception at this private-home wedding in Hummelstown, Pa.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF BENZON PHOTOGRAPHY

BATHROOMS

Think your guests can use your house bathroom? Think again. "Most times, people don't want 100 people walking into a home using restrooms," Erb says.

In that case, depending on your property and the number of guests, you'll have to consider where you will set up porta-potties or a bathroom trailer.

ELECTRICITY

You will probably need a generator for the DJ or band, the caterer and lights. Speaking of lights, if the reception will continue after dark, additional outdoor lighting will be needed for the tent and other areas.

RENTALS

In addition to tents and bathroom facilities, most private-home weddings also require rental of many of the things couples take for granted at typical venues, including tables, chairs and linens.

LOGISTICS

Can your property handle the influx of guests, delivery trucks and vendors, including everything from caterers to florists to musicians? And, if so, who will coordinate all of them on the wedding day?

For Lisa and Kevin, the challenge was parking — and their quarter-mile long, narrow driveway that curves through the woods. To eliminate a traffic nightmare, they rented a van and shuttled guests to and from a nearby church parking lot.

NEIGHBORHOOD

The considerations for an at-home wedding extend beyond your property, Erb notes. Does your municipality require a permit for a gathering of that size in your neighborhood? Is there a noise ordinance or a curfew?

And what about your neighbors? Is your home fairly isolated, or are there a lot of other homes around?

"Maybe your neighbor doesn't want a porta-potty next to his yard," Erb says. "If you think your neighbors might have a problem ... then you might want to invite them."

Despite the expense and logistics, some couples still opt for a ceremony and reception at home. If it's a very small, intimate gathering, they may even hold it indoors. Martin recently coordinated a wedding for 60 guests, featuring a ceremony under a tent and a sit-down dinner in the home.

Not only are at-home ceremonies more personal, but they also offer some advantages. For one, it often means the bride can get ready in her own home. And, as at many of today's popular wedding venues, having the ceremony and reception at the same location eliminates the need for travel.

"If money's not an issue and you have somebody that can coordinate everything, it can be a beautiful day," Erb says.

Lisa Wiggins would agree. "We hope our kids eventually will want to get married here," she says. ■



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— LIS KING // LNP CUSTOM CONTENT CONTRIBUTOR
PHOTOS BY VINNY TENNIS

The once-in-a-lifetime, white-as-new-snow wedding gown is losing its cachet. More and more, millennial brides are opting for something they can wear again — and again. That means colors, from pastels to jewel tones and even black and prints, in styles that include miniskirts, crop tops and pantsuits.

While Janell Berte, owner of Posh Bridal in Lancaster, concedes that brides in our area are a bit more conventional than their sisters in, say, New York or Los Angeles, the new bridal wear she has brought in from Paris reflects all the new trends, and it's definitely creating a buzz.

"We just displayed the new designs in our windows," she says. "And I have rarely seen brides-to-be so excited. They seem to embrace these new concepts wholeheartedly."



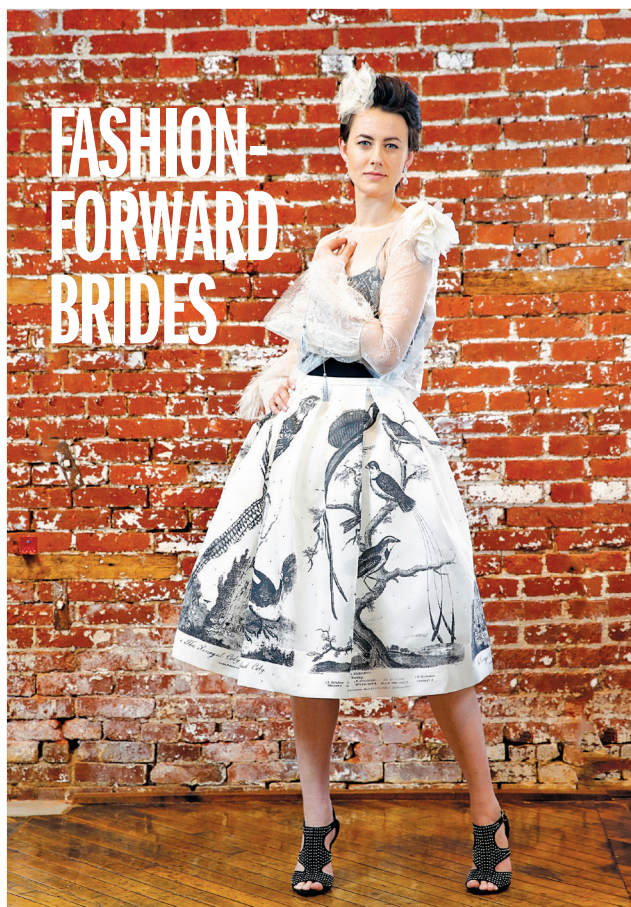
One of the new designs is a yellow just-below-the-knee dress, with a bird motif and a vest of peacock feathers. Another features black pheasants painted on white, with a short skirt and a Chantilly-lace top. A third is a white pantsuit with lace insets down the legs, a riff on classic tuxedo pants, and a lace crop top. Lace is also the theme of a white minidress with a crop top.

"Two-piece outfits are popular because there are so many ways you can wear them again," explains Berte. "Those lace crop tops, for example, can be worn with long or short skirts or even jeans. And a flowing skirt can go casual with sneakers or flat sandals and a T-shirt on top. Dresses, dip-dyed right here, are popular among brides, who feel like rejecting the standard-issue alabaster gown and veil. We dye them in ombré fashion, in colors that may graduate from deep peach at the bottom to ivory on top. We have also done one in orange and recently we had a request for one in purple."

Posh's Paris designs are one of a kind, so you won't suddenly see brides in peacock-feathered vests all over Lancaster County. "At prices around \$2,000 to \$3,000, a bride is entitled to exclusivity," explains Berte.

Some brides choose two dresses, one to wear for the ceremony and another for the reception. But for those who don't want to invest in two different designs, Posh features gowns that can be worn several ways. One gown, for example, features a removable overskirt and a peplum. Without the flowing overskirt and the peplum, the gown becomes sleek and sophisticated.

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



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As an ordained interfaith minister, Karen Shultz of Lovingly Done Ceremonies in Intercourse is exposed to bridal fashions all over Lancaster County, and she, too, sees many breaks with tradition.

"Then again, I marry couples from so many different belief systems, so it seems natural that these brides would choose unconventional wear for their big day," she says. "I see everything, from short dresses at barn weddings to over-the-top mermaid gowns at elegant venues. But I especially remember a white lace minidress; a white sundress on a bride getting married on her horse ranch; a black dress on a very elegant bride; and a champagne-colored gown on a 60-year-old bride."

Recent runway shows reflect the loosening ways of bridal wear. Designers are obviously exploring how to keep a dress or suit romantic while also making it fashion-forward. Many of the trends shown in ready-to-wear also appeared in bridal wear, including shoulder-baring necklines, corsetry lacing and giddily flounced skirts.

Fashion pros like Berte say brides now take their inspiration from red carpet fashions, Pinterest and Instagram feeds rather than their mothers. "They are wearing what they want and the colors they like," she says.

So coming down the bridal runways, you see jumpsuits, bomber jackets, minuscule skirts with over-the-thigh boots, and the off-the-shoulder necklines that will be everywhere come summer. The clothes no longer need a bridal label. They just have to be cool.

Actually, there's plenty of precedent for bridal wear that turns its back on the big, white gown. Marilyn Monroe wore a fur-collared suit when she married Joe DiMaggio in 1954; Mia Farrow wore a two-piece shantung dress when she wed Frank Sinatra in 1966; and in 1971, Bianca Jagger wore a white jacket and tailored skirt to marry Mick Jagger.

Says Berte, "It's actually all very simple. If a bride-to-be has dreamed of being a princess in a big white gown on her wedding day, she can do that. If she wants to shuck convention and do something entirely different, that's fine, too." ■



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REJECTING TRADITION



“It’s actually all very simple. If a bride-to-be has dreamed of being a princess in a big white gown on her wedding day, she can do that. If she wants to shuck convention and do something entirely different, that’s fine, too.”

- JANELL BERGE

PHOTO COURTESY OF
THOMAS BEAMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY

WHAT'S HOT IN 2017?

Weddings seem to follow trends as much as the fashion world, and we're not just talking the style of bridal gowns and bridesmaids dresses. From naked cakes to country chic decor, each wedding season brings something new. Here's a look at a few trends in the wedding world, according to local wedding planners Melissa Martin of Stylish Occasions Wedding & Event Planning and Deb Erb of Simply Events.

BYE, BYE COUNTRY?

Not yet. Barn weddings are still popular, Erb says, but people are looking for something different. “What we’ve noticed is with some of the newer venues, they’re becoming more industrial looking,” she says. “I think the next big thing is the industrial warehouse look.” In addition to the venues themselves, decor is also leaning in that direction, she says, with things like industrial-type lighting and Edison bulbs.

FLOWER POWER

We’re not just talking bouquets, says Martin, but lots of greenery in decor. That includes everything from lush floral table runners to flowers hanging from rafters. Adds Erb, floral arrangements are taking on a more wild and natural look.

BACK TO CHURCH

Although Martin has seen a trend over the last few years for the ceremony and reception to take place at the same location, she says she is now starting to see more church ceremonies again. However, the popularity of having everything at a single location is not likely to go away, she says, largely because it’s so convenient for the wedding party and the guests — and the wedding planner, too.

LET THEM EAT ... DOUGHNUTS

“Sometimes they don’t think it’s important to have a wedding cake,” Erb says. “They just want desserts.” That could mean anything from cupcakes to doughnuts to whoopie pies to pie. One couple, she says, had a cake made from long john doughnuts.

PHOTOS BELOW AND RIGHT COURTESY OF ANNIE SHARP PHOTOGRAPHY



A REALLY WHITE WEDDING

Pippa Middleton wore it for her sister Kate’s royal wedding to Prince William. So did the Kardashians when sister Kim married Kanye West. Years ago, people gasped at the thought of anyone but the bride wearing white, but not anymore, says Erb. Even bridesmaids are wearing all-white dresses these days. And the trend also continues for bridesmaids to wear different dresses, whether it’s different styles in the same or complementary shades or the same style in different colors. “I had a bride get married ... and she had neutrals as her color,” Erb recalls. “One had a beaded dress, another had silk. They were all different, but they were all the same color. They were beautiful.” ■

PHOTO BELOW COURTESY OF CREATIVE INTERPRETATIONS PHOTOGRAPHY/HEATHER ERRINGTON



FARM TO VASE

FRESH AND LOCAL MOVEMENT TAKES ROOT HERE

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIANNA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY

KIMBERLY MARSELAS
LNP CUSTOM CONTENT CONTRIBUTOR

By this time next month, Tara Folker will be winding locally grown tulips, delicate anemones and exquisitely layered ranunculus into her brides' bouquets.

A florist for more than 17 years, Folker has always favored locally sourced blooms. She eschews flower foods and preservative sprays, knowing that fresh-cut flowers are the most likely to look good and hold their shape through the hottest of weddings or the longest of receptions.

In Lancaster, the freshest flowers come from dedicated fields and greenhouses across the county and in central and eastern Pennsylvania, from small operations that don't need to stockpile cut flowers for weeks on end or drive them thousands of miles in refrigerated tractor-trailers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAROLINE LOGAN PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIANNA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY

"Getting the right flower means you get the right longevity," says Folker, a long-time fan of the farm-to-vase movement and owner of Splints & Daisies Floral Design on New Holland Avenue.

Folker says Lancaster brides are taking note and asking for more organic and local options.

Much like the slow-food movement did 10 years ago, the "slow flowers" movement aims to get consumers thinking about where the goods they buy come from and how they can be more mindful of supporting local growers who use sustainable practices.

"It's finally catching on here on the East Coast, especially over the last two years," Folker says.

Slowflowers.com maintains a directory of florists, shops and studios that design with American-grown flowers.

Some of the initial interest was from consumers who wanted to avoid pesticides associated with internationally grown flowers, but Debra Prinzing, founder of Slowflowers.com, says consumers are looking to reduce their environmental footprint.

Often, that means brides are willing to forego roses or other traditional choices if they are out-of-season on their wedding day.

Some of Folker's clients simply give her a color and a budget and then ask her to create within that framework. She turns to small growers like the Rustic Bunch in Berks County — with an acre devoted to rotating yields of peonies, zinnia, dahlias and much more — to help complete the vision.

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

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Trish Snyder has about a half-acre in flowers at her home in East Earl, where would-be spring brides can choose from everything from double tulips to peonies, hydrangea to stock flowers.

Snyder's Flourish.Flowers sells to do-it-yourselfers and other florists, and she helps make arrangements as an added service. She's used everything from larkspur to sunflowers in bouquets and, increasingly, in table garlands used in place of traditional floral centerpieces.

She's also encouraging others to take up the craft, offering classes in her barn in everything from bouquet making (June) to floral crowns for the bridal party or the bride to wear (May) and centerpieces (April and August).

"They call us farmer florists now," says Snyder, who started her business under the name Trish's flowers in 2001. "I didn't even know that was a thing."

Florists who work with local flowers are able to get brides arrangements with blossoms that don't typically travel well, such as delicate dahlias and tender sweet peas. Neither variety likes to be out of water while shipped to cooler climes, Snyder says.

Local flowers are often a great fit for oversized bouquets, their fresh-from-the-garden style named a top wedding trend by Town & Country last year.

Local looks can range from lacy Victorian to rustic and romantic.

Snyder did about 30 weddings last year and has at least that many scheduled for this year already. Though she does sometimes work with wholesalers, she uses whatever she can (including greens) from her own farm and other Pennsylvania growers.

A trend report by the Produce Marketing Association found consumers want locally sourced flowers — citing concerns about the environment, local economy and ethical sourcing — but many retail outlets still depend on international suppliers to meet volume and out-of-season demand.

A related survey found most consumers considered "local" to be within a 100-mile radius of the store or in the same state. Traditionally, mass production has been focused in 14 states and in Central and South America.

But Prinzing points out traditional florists can make it hard to know a flower's source. Those affiliated with SlowFlowers.com pledge to use local varieties and share where their flowers originate.

Folker's local stems are such a hit that she's entirely booked for weekends in 2017, even with packages typically starting at \$2,500. She's worked with brides whose tastes match with The Farm at Eagle's Ridge, the vintage industrial chic of Excelsior and the outdoor charms of Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum.

She's currently booking weddings and other events for 2018. ■





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Photo courtesy of Dwayne Schmidt

I DO *Featured Wedding*

October 1, 2016

CEREMONY + RECEPTION:

Cameron Estate Inn
(Conservatory) Mount Joy, Pa



PHOTOGRAPHER

Erin Lyn Photography

CAKE

The Flour Child, Columbia

FLOWERS

Floral Designs of Mount Joy

HAIR AND MAKEUP

Shear Perfection Salon and
Spa, Mount Joy

Alexander & Kilene Knitter

WEDDING THEME

"Being Knit Together in Love" - COLOSSIANS 2.2



DECOR THEME: *Romance, vintage, lace, pearls*
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

There honestly isn't a thing I would have done differently. Although in the moment I was very frustrated that it rained the entire day, I had to realize that the weather isn't something that can be controlled. Plus, it made the outdoor pictures even more memorable! I think all brides wish they could go back and redo a part of the day or relive their day over and over again; however, if this were the case, the day wouldn't be as special and important. Each part of the day no matter if it went 100 percent according to plan or not, ultimately created the day that will be remembered as the best day of your life forever. - *Kilene Knitter*



**WHAT WAS THE
BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN
PLANNING YOUR WEDDING?**

I think the biggest wedding planning challenge for me was finding the dress. I put a lot of pressure on myself to find "the one." After visiting multiple shops and trying on many dresses, I had to take a step back and realize that I wasn't staying true to my personality, style and wedding theme. Once I was able to take that pressure off myself and pinpoint the main details that I was looking for in the dress of my dreams, I quickly found the perfect one for me.

- Kilene Knitter





K



WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FUTURE BRIDES?

My biggest piece of advice for future brides is to have your big day be a reflection of your relationship. For us, it was extremely important that our wedding was unique to our personalities and love, so we put a lot of thought and time into every single detail. Our family played a huge role in helping this vision become a reality, too. On our big day it was so special to be surrounded by our closest friends and family in a setting beautifully decorated to create the wedding of our dreams.

- Kilene Knitter

A nice day for a wet wedding

Tying the knot outdoors? Have a backup plan

Nature can make a couple's wedding day that much more special. Beautiful backdrops like ocean waves or rolling country hills lend a lot to a wedding, making the day even more special for couples and their guests.

But Mother Nature is the inherent risk of hosting an outdoor wedding. Weather is unpredictable, and couples who hope to tie the knot in the great outdoors must develop a contingency plan just in case Mother Nature decides to rain on the parade.

While outdoor wedding venues often have backup venues in place should the weather prove uncooperative, couples can take some additional steps to ensure their rainy wedding days still go off without a hitch.



PHOTO COURTESY OF A REFLECTION BY SHERRY PHOTOGRAPHY

Provide umbrellas

Some inclement weather may not be enough to deter couples or guests from braving the great outdoors. Couples getting married in the summer may be able to withstand a summer shower, but provide guests with umbrellas just to be safe. The umbrellas will make for a nice wedding gift, and hopefully couples and guests won't even need to use them.

Find a place to take photos

Wedding photos document a couple's big day, and many couples arrange for outdoor photos whether they're tying the knot indoors or outdoors. But couples must arrange for a place to take photos in case outdoors is not an option.

If possible, walk the grounds of your ceremony or reception site with your photographer in the weeks before the wedding to scout out potential areas to shoot indoors in case the weather is not cooperating. Ask a representative from the venue to recommend potential photo locations around the building.

Consider a tent

Some wedding venues are exclusively outdoors, meaning they don't have backup options indoors on their premises. If that's the case, couples can rent tents to serve as their safety nets. Tents can be expensive, and some couples may not want to pay for a tent they ultimately may not use. But tents may be a couple's only option if their chosen venue has no indoor alternatives.

Establish a cutoff time

Depending on how remote the ceremony location is, couples might be able to wait until a few hours before their weddings to decide if they will still tie the knot outdoors. Make the call earlier if your wedding is to be held at an especially remote location. But no matter where the wedding is, establish a cutoff time to let guests know if the wedding will be indoors or outdoors. Include such information on your wedding website and/or invitations. Use a social media platform such as Facebook or Twitter to inform guests of your final decision.

Insure the wedding

Couples who are hosting destination weddings on tropical isles should look into insuring their weddings. Such islands might be susceptible to harmful storms like hurricanes that can prevent weddings from taking place. Insurance can cover couples for a host of unforeseen circumstances, including weather. ■

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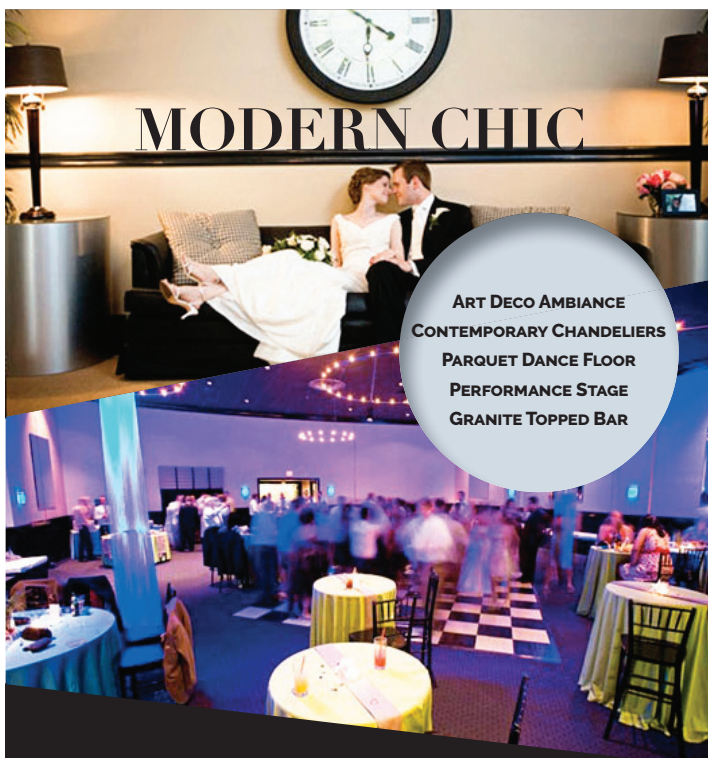
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May 29, 2016

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Nathan & Kaitlyn
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Thomas Beaman
Photography

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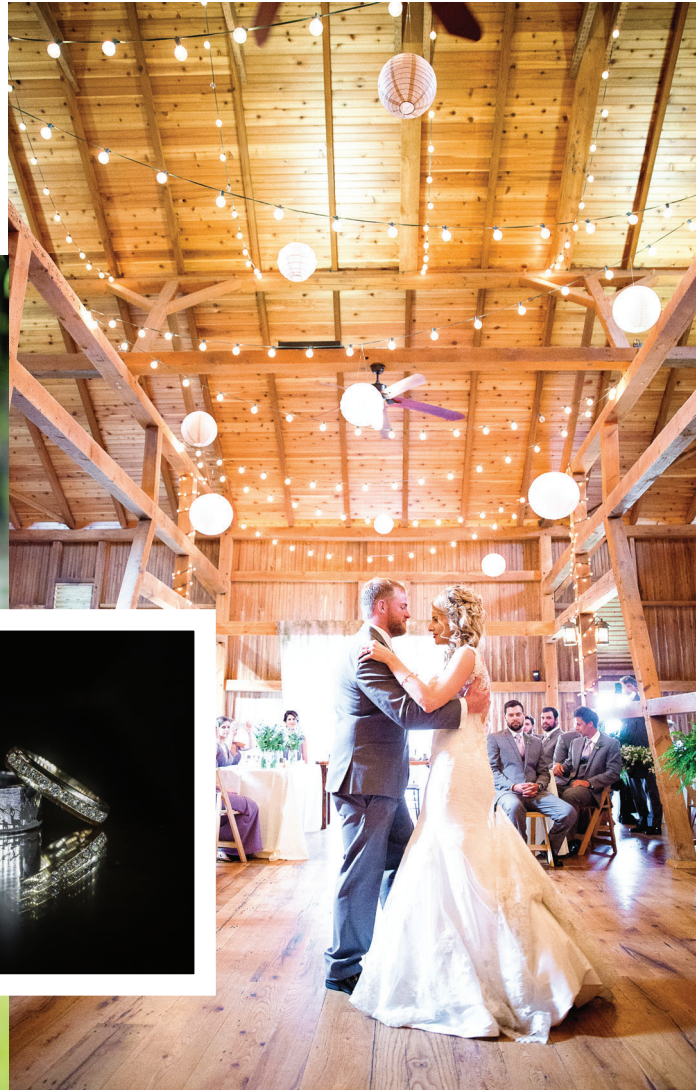
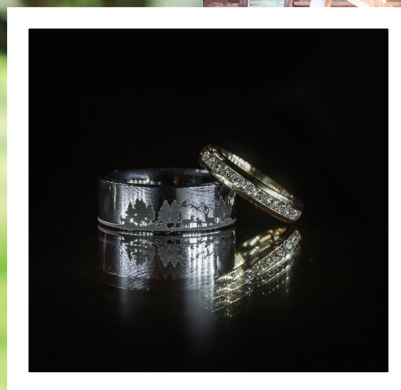
HAIR AND MAKEUP
Jordan Hamje



WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN PLANNING YOUR WEDDING?

Implementing the “look” and theme we were going for without surpassing our floral budget. My husband and I did a lot of the decor ourselves, but wish we would have simplified it and done the arrangements ourselves. It would have saved us so much money and stress!

- Kaitlyn Derix



WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

I would've had less guests and less bridesmaids for a more intimate, casual feel to my wedding. I loved everything about our venue but would have liked to have spent more time socializing with our close friends and family, some of whom I do not see often.

- Kaitlyn Derix

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FUTURE BRIDES?

Do not get so caught up in every little detail that you forget to enjoy the most important part - your marriage! I spent too much of my time planning, stressed and worried about minute details and wondering if our guests would enjoy our wedding that it took me the majority of my special day to actually relax and enjoy what was happening!

- Kaitlyn Derix



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Who says wedding receptions can't be all fun and games?

— MARGARET GATES // LNP CUSTOM CONTENT EDITOR

Eagle Rental in Stevens is used to helping couples plan their special day, supplying everything from tents to linens to room decor, depending on the wedding venue.

Lately, they've also been supplying the fun.

Along with chairs, arches and centerpieces, brides and grooms are renting bocce sets, croquet and cornhole, says Danielle Zaun, manager of Eagle's party division.

"There has definitely been an increase in that over the past two years," she says of wedding game rentals. "Basically, it's lawn games."

Zaun says it goes hand-in-hand with the popularity of outdoor venues and barn weddings with a vintage feel.

"Yard games have been around forever. They are more of a nostalgic, vintage kind of thing," she says.

Among the most popular wedding games these days is cornhole, a type of bean-bag toss. And while couples can rent a set, many bring their own, including some handmade for the occasion, says wedding planner Deb Erb, owner of Simply Events in Ephrata.

Erb even helped plan a wedding in which the bride gave the groom a bocce set as a wedding gift.

Also popular, Zaun says, are horseshoes, quoits and giant versions of Jenga and Connect 4. On a few occasions, couples who are expecting a lot of children at the wedding have rented a bounce house, she says.

"It's just something fun for the guests to do if the couple is still taking pictures," says wedding planner Melissa Martin of Stylish Occasions in Lancaster. She's also seen couples occupying their guests with Mad Libs, those hilarious fill-in-the-blank stories generated by random requests for nouns, verbs and adjectives.

While weddings may seem like they are all about the bride and groom, the bride and groom are increasingly making the reception more about the guests.

For outdoor venues, Erb has seen an increase in fire pits — perhaps even with a s'mores bar and roasting sticks — where guests can relax and chat.

Last year, Martin helped plan a wedding for a couple who brewed their own beer and made their own wine. Instead of a traditional receiving line, they offered samples to guests in mini shot glasses.

"So many couples want to make sure their guests have a great time. (They) just want people to have fun," Erb says.

"That's really cool. We love helping with that." ■

PHOTO COURTESY OF APRIL AND BRYAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Among the most popular wedding games these days is cornhole, a type of bean-bag toss. And while couples can rent a set, many bring their own, including some handmade for the occasion

I DO *Featured Wedding*

10.8.2016

RECEPTION + CEREMONY:

Yorktowne Farms
York, Pa



Seth & Felisha Murray



PHOTOGRAPHER
Renee Heller Photography

CAKE
Bella Manse, Millersville

FLOWERS
Cassie at Eve's Garden, Millersville

CEREMONIAL FLOWERS
Petals by Nadine, Lititz

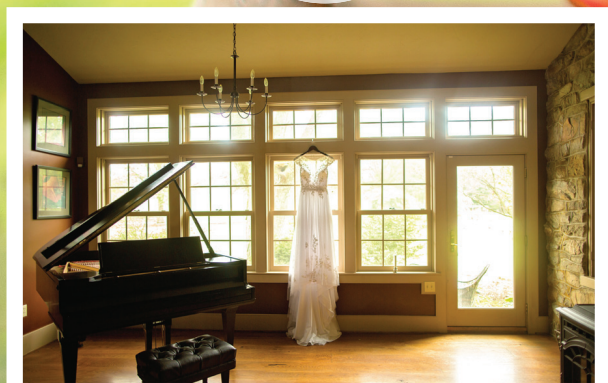
HAIR AND MAKEUP
Nicole Pelletier,
freelance stylist



**WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST
CHALLENGE IN PLANNING
YOUR WEDDING?**

The biggest challenge in planning my wedding was being able to imagine all of the fine details coming together. When I imagined my wedding day, I had such a distinct image of what I was looking for and it was challenging to attempt to have it all come together and to look effortless in doing so. I wanted everyone to be able to know that I had a big part in planning my day and that you could feel my husband's and my character throughout the experience of our wedding.

- Felisha Murray



WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR FUTURE BRIDES?

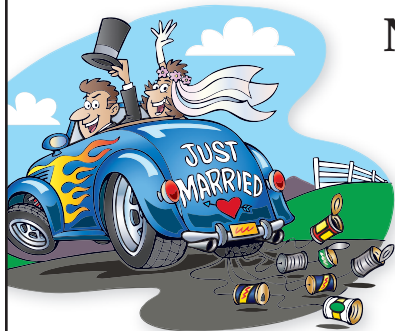
My best piece of advice I could give for future brides is to remember what the day is truly about and to be present for it. With the excitement of the day, you forget to sit back and enjoy the beauty of what is happening. At the end of it, you will have entered in to this wonderful adventure as husband and wife and that is what your wedding day is truly about. I would tell future brides to not worry about all of the details and whether or not people are enjoying themselves. The day wasn't mean for them; it was meant for you to marry your favorite person in this world. I would tell them to take a deep breath, relax and enjoy the short time they get to bask in the glory of the most wonderful day of their lives. - Felisha Murray

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

I think everyone thinks of certain details that they wish they could have or would have changed, but, quite frankly, I cannot think of anything that I would have changed about my wedding. Although the weather was not ideal, that is something that was out of my control and apparently some say it's good luck to have rain on your wedding day. Throughout the day, there were minor details that I felt as if I may have overlooked or wished I would have explored further, but the only person who truly noticed it was me, which made it seem like "no harm, no foul." The one thing I wish I would have been able to do was floating lanterns at the end of my wedding day, but unfortunately due to the price, it wasn't something I felt I could convince myself to splurge on. - Felisha Murray



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Hoping for 'happily ever after'? Married couples offer their advice

— CATHY MOLITORIS // LNP CUSTOM CONTENT CONTRIBUTOR
PHOTO BY VINNY TENNIS

Forever AND Ever

Ask any married couple about the secret to their success, and you'll hear words like **"compromise," "teamwork" and "commitment."** Good marriages take work to keep them strong, and while each marriage is unique, it never hurts to hear what's working for other happy couples.

'We are still friends'

Don and Carole Shellenberger

WEDDING DATE: AUG. 15, 1981

"I think the fact that we were friends for several years before we began to date was a great foundation," says Carole Shellenberger, who actually met her future spouse years earlier when he was a student in her 10th grade English class her first year of teaching. Reintroduced through mutual friends years later, the couple ended up hanging out in the same group and going to concerts and theater events together. "We learned about each other's interests and values without the emotional aspects of dating," Carole says. Eventually, romance bloomed for the Columbia couple. "Once we discovered we were perfect for each other, it was easy to fall in love," she says. She credits her marital success to a strong foundation of friendship first. "After all these years, we are still friends," she says. "I think our marriage remains successful because of that friendship." She echoes the importance of maintaining individuality while being part of a couple. "We each have separate interests as well as the ones we have in common," she says, "and we support and encourage each other with those interests. We have fun together and apart."



‘Give each other space to grow’

Dawn Safko and Connie Bauer • WEDDING DATE: OCT. 25, 2014

Spending time together — and apart — can be a key to a successful marriage, says Dawn Safko. Dawn and her spouse, Connie Bauer, who live in Mountville, met at church. “Take time for each other. Enjoy date nights, but also give each other space to grow as an individual,” Dawn advises. She says the secret to their marriage comes from the fact they rarely argue. “We fight very little due to the fact that neither of us has to be right,” she says. And, she credits several additional factors to her happy marriage. “We are Christ-centered,” she says. “(We share) love, respect and faith in God and each other.”

‘Love and trust’

Bob and Judy Weaver • WEDDING DATE: AUG. 2, 1958

Bob and Judy of Lancaster met at an alumni meeting at Lancaster Catholic High School in 1957 and were married a year later. They’ve weathered ups and downs over the years, Judy says, but have always stayed together because of their focus on commitment. “We are committed to each other, and to God,” she says. “Remembering this has gotten us through many rough spots.” Judy also says she and Bob have focused on being truthful and faithful, and not holding on to grudges. “Discuss any little problems before they become big ones,” she says. Above all, she notes, it’s important to know you can count on your partner. “The foundation of marriage,” she says, “is love and trust.”



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‘Make time for each other’

Keith and Karen Kitchen • WEDDING DATE: AUG. 1, 2014

Karen Kitchen met her future spouse when she trained him at their bus driving job. She says no matter how busy life gets, the Lancaster couple puts a priority on their marriage. “Make time for each other. We put each other first, no matter how much we may not like each other at times,” she laughs. She also emphasizes the importance of being honest with your spouse, and says marriage takes work but is completely worth it. The key to a successful marriage, she says, is “making sure you keep your partner your best friend and your top priority.”

‘Make each other smile’

Jeff and Stacy Marcello • WEDDING DATE: SEPT. 30, 1995

A game of pool brought Jeff and Stacy Marcello of Conestoga together. “A friend and I went out after a rough week at work,” she recalls, specifically not looking to meet anyone. “We just wanted to have some drinks, play pool and be left alone. Two fellas came up to the table and asked if we wanted to play partners, so we didn’t have to give up the table. Jeff was my pool partner.” She says the key to a successful marriage is a combination of commitment, communication and patience. “It’s a relationship built on a solid foundation of friendship, so that once the honeymoon is over, you find that you still actually like each other,” she says. Along with emphasizing individuality as well as partnership, Stacy says it’s also important to be supportive and not judgmental, to listen attentively and be willing to compromise. “Laugh together as often as possible,” she says. “Appreciate each other and every now and then express that appreciation.” Remembering the little things is important, too, she says. “We still take the time to share the little things with each other — a laugh or funny story, calling one another outside to see the stars or wildlife, and we still stand at the window and wave as the other is driving away,” she says. “We still take the time to make each other smile.” ■



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I DO *The Essential* Bride's CHECKLIST

Make sure you've got all the major wedding day elements covered with our at-a-glance checklist

9 months before

- ☐ Set a date
- ☐ Prepare a budget
- ☐ Determine the time and place of the wedding and reception
- ☐ Draw up a guest list
- ☐ Choose members of the wedding party
- ☐ Buy a wedding gown
- ☐ Shop for bridesmaids' dresses
- ☐ Interview photographers, videographers, florists, musicians, caterers and bakers

6 to 9 months before

- ☐ Shop for wedding invitations
- ☐ Decide on attire for groom and groomsmen
- ☐ Start planning honeymoon
- ☐ Decide on florist, caterer, bakery, photographer, videographer and entertainment

4 to 6 months before

- ☐ Register with a bridal gift registry
- ☐ Reserve rehearsal dinner location
- ☐ Arrange accommodations for out-of-town attendants and book a block of rooms for other out-of-town guests
- ☐ Select a wedding ring for the groom

3 months before

- ☐ Address invitations
- ☐ Meet with caterer
- ☐ Firm up honeymoon plans
- ☐ Shop for attendants' gifts
- ☐ Make appointment with a hairstylist

2 months before

- ☐ Mail wedding invitations
- ☐ Meet with musicians
- ☐ Get together documents for marriage license

2 to 4 weeks before

- ☐ Set time for wedding rehearsal
- ☐ Get marriage license
- ☐ Have a final gown fitting
- ☐ Keep track of invitation responses
- ☐ Give caterer solid estimate of number of guests
- ☐ Draw up a seating arrangement for rehearsal dinner and reception and make place cards
- ☐ Make name and address changes on bank accounts, credit cards, driver's license, etc.

1 week before

- ☐ Make final checks with officiant, florist, caterer, photographer, videographer, bakery, musicians, etc.

The day of the wedding

- ☐ Pamper yourself
- ☐ Rehearse ceremony with wedding party
- ☐ Get a good night's sleep

Groom's CHECKLIST

9 months before

- ☐ Set wedding date
- ☐ Draw up a guest list

6 to 9 months before

- ☐ Ask family/friends to be in the wedding
- ☐ Decide on wedding attire
- ☐ Start planning the honeymoon

4 to 6 months before

- ☐ Select wedding ring for the bride
- ☐ Reserve site for rehearsal dinner
- ☐ Arrange accommodations for attendants'
- ☐ Help bride with bridal registry selections
- ☐ Shop for attendants' gifts
- ☐ Apply for passports if needed for honeymoon

2 to 3 months before

- ☐ Firm up honeymoon plans, final payments

4 to 6 weeks before

- ☐ Be sure to have all blood tests & paperwork needed for obtaining marriage license
- ☐ Make necessary changes to insurance

2 to 4 weeks before

- ☐ Apply for marriage license
- ☐ Give wedding party, close friends & family all information regarding rehearsal/rehearsal dinner

1 week before

- ☐ Give restaurant or caterer firm number for rehearsal dinner attendees
- ☐ Double check honeymoon plans
- ☐ Begin packing for honeymoon
- ☐ Attend your bachelor's dinner

The day before

- ☐ Rehearse your ceremony with bridal party & enjoy rehearsal dinner

The day of

- ☐ Bring the marriage license to be signed
- ☐ Give your best man the officiant's check to handle
- ☐ Remember to bring your bride's ring
- ☐ Arrive an hour before the ceremony
- ☐ Have fun & congratulations

The . Marriage License

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Orphans Court
2nd floor Lancaster
County Courthouse
50 N. Duke St., Lancaster
M-F 8:30am-4:30pm

When **YOU** apply:

Couple must apply in person
with Social Security numbers
and government issued ID.
Non-US citizens must provide
passport with current visa.

When **YOU** apply:

In Pennsylvania there is a 3-day
wait period before license is
available. Apply 1 week before
marriage date. License is valid
for 60 days after issue.

— marriage li•cense *noun* —
a license that a couple must obtain before getting married.



PA LAWS

24-hour information line:
(717) 295-3522
WWW.CO.LANCASTER.PA.US

- The state of Pennsylvania **NO** longer requires a blood test or medical exam.
- Applicants who have been previously married must provide information concerning the dissolution of the most recent marriage.
- Blood relatives down to and including first cousins may not marry according to PA law.
- **FEE:** In Lancaster County, the fee is \$60 CASH ONLY.

AGE: 18 or over-no parental consent or birth certificate required. If either is 16 or 17, one parent must be present to issue consent. Birth certificate & additional fee of \$5 required. If either is under 16, an attorney must be present to petition a judge of the Orphans Court for permission for them to marry. A parent or guardian of each person must also be present.

Bachelor/Bachelorette Parties

THE SPORTSMAN'S SHOP
1214 Main St., East Earl
717-354-4311

Bakery

ACHENBACH'S PASTRIES INC.
375 E. Main St., Leola
717-656-6671

OREGON DAIRY
2900 Oregon Pike, Lititz
717-656-2856

Bartending

GOOD SPIRITS LANCASTER
1741 Hempstead Road, Lancaster
717-371-4849

Bridal Accessories

LACE PLACE OF LANCASTER COUNTY
1044 Martindale Road, Martindale
1-877-738-5223

OVER THE MOON RIBBONS
84 St. John Circle, Lititz
717-568-8230

Bridal Fashions

VICTORIA KARR FASHION
1405 Prospect Road, Columbia
717-684-0355

Bridal Registry

THE REGISTRY AT BOSCOV'S
giftregistry.boscovs.com
1-800-284-8155

Bridal Showers

A TEA AFFAIR
8 Sturgis Lane, Lititz
717-626-1776

Catering

ENCK'S CUSTOM CATERING
244 Granite Run Drive, Lancaster
717-569-7000

HARVEY'S MAIN STREET BBQ
304 E. Main St., Mount Joy
(717) 449-0656

HESS'S BBQ
2635 Willow Street Pike, Willow Street
717-464-3374

SCOOPS ICE CREAM & GRILLE
312 Primrose Lane, Mountville
717-285-2055

Floral Design

NEFFSVILLE FLOWER SHOPPE
2700 Lititz Pike, Lancaster
717-569-1801

Hair & Makeup

ENVY STUDIO
24 W. King St., Lancaster
717-435-9343

LANCASTER SCHOOL OF COSMETOLOGY
50 Ranck Ave., Lancaster
717-299-0200

STUDIO TWO 20 TWO
428 N. Duke St., Lancaster
717-397-9290

Honeymoon

TRAVEL TIME
951 Rohrerstown Road, Suite 102, Lancaster
717-945-5032

1777 AMERICANA INN BED & BREAKFAST
301 W. Main St., Ephrata
717-721-9268

Insurance

UNRUH INSURANCE AGENCY
Denver and East Earl
877-854-3309

License

BRIMMER'S LICENSE SERVICE
1354 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, and 3 other locations
717-394-9991

Photography

MADELINE BRODERICK PHOTOGRAPHY
www.madelinebroderick.com

Real Estate

MIKI HANNA
www.mikihannahomes.com
717-538-1618

Rehearsal Dinner

POUR
114 N. Prince St., Lancaster
717-290-8080

Rentals

EAGLE RENTAL
1327 N. Reading Road, Stevens
717-336-3945

Shuttle Services

RED LION BUS
110 E. Walnut St., Red Lion
717-244-4591

Venues

BRICK GABLES
800 E. Newport Road, Lititz
717-627-0080

COUNTRY BARN WEDDINGS
211 S. Donerville Road, Lancaster
717-872-1554

DOUBLE TREE RESORT
Lancaster Willow Valley
2416 Willow Street Pike, Lancaster
717-464-7519

FIRESIDE TAVERN RESTAURANT & BALLROOM
1500 Historic Drive, Strasburg
717-687-7979

FOUR SEASONS GOLF COURSE
949 Church St., Landisville
717-898-0536

HAMILTON BALLROOM
941 Wheatland Ave. Lancaster
717-393-0668

THE IRIS CLUB
323 N. Duke St., Lancaster
717-394-7811

IRONSTONE RANCH
1 Hollinger Lane, Elizabethtown
717-902-9791

LANCASTER ELKS
219 N. Duke St., Lancaster
717-951-7657

ROCK FORD PLANTATION
881 Rockford Road, Lancaster
717-392-7223

STOUDT'S BIER GARDEN
2800 N. Reading Road, Adamstown
717-484-4386



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do!*

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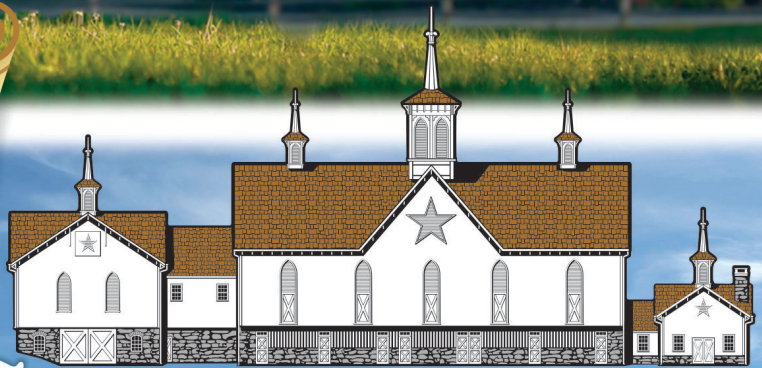
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