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for ring selection**

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designs & colors**

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**A SPECIAL
SUPPLEMENT TO**

**The Cleveland
Daily Banner**

Ring design is personal process

By **CHRISTY ARMSTRONG**
Staff Writer

Whether a man is looking for an engagement ring to surprise his sweetheart with or a couple is shopping for wedding bands together, it is easy to be overwhelmed by all the options available.

However, there are a few tried-and-true things people should keep in mind as they are shopping for their special rings.

“I say if you don’t know jewelry, at least know your jeweler,” said Ellen Wiberley, jewelry designer at Epperson’s Custom Jewelers. “A good jeweler will take the time to talk about what makes sense for them and their lifestyle and budget.”

Epperson’s Custom Jewelers, located at 6190 Georgetown Road N.W., has been in operation for 44 years.

It was founded by the late Larry Epperson, who began designing jewelry after he had developed a lapidary — or stone-cutting — hobby while serving in the Army. This eventually grew into a business which to this day has faithful repeat customers.

The business is now run by the mother and daughter team Armen Epperson and Ellen Wiberley, who carry on the family tradition.

This tradition includes talking to would-be brides and grooms about what they would like in a ring.

Common points of discussion include whether one should buy a small diamond of high quality, or a larger diamond which does not have the same kind of color and quality.



CUSTOM PIECES like this sapphire and diamond ring are among the rings made by Epperson’s Custom Jewelers.

Contributed photo

Wiberley noted that in such cases, the prices are likely similar. However, she tries to steer customers toward the higher-quality ring, as it may be a better investment in the long run.

“A diamond ring is an investment piece,” Epperson said, agreeing with her daughter’s assessment. “It’s a piece a woman will hopefully have forever and ever.”

Nowadays, many couples are breaking tradition by going with stones other than diamonds for engagement rings.

However, Wiberley said consumers should also keep in mind which stones are the most durable. While diamonds are known for their toughness, not all precious gems are.

Sapphires and rubies are generally recommended over “softer” stones like

emeralds. However, the Eppersons have seen many unique stone choices over the years.

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Banner photo, **CHRISTY ARMSTRONG**

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER team of Ellen Wiberley and Armen Epperson pose for a photo outside Epperson’s Custom Jewelers.

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4 Cs of diamonds

MetroCreative — Diamonds are the stone of choice for engagement rings and wedding jewelry.

Anyone who is about to purchase a diamond is encouraged to do their research about selecting quality diamonds. At the heart of the diamond grading process are the 4 Cs of diamond quality. The Cs refer to carat weight, color grade, clarity grade, and cut grade. The Gemological Institute of America helped to create the Diamond 4 Cs and the International Diamond Grading System™. These benchmarks are used to classify all diamonds.

The following is the GIA's explanation of each component of the system.

- **Carat:** Diamond carat weight is the measurement of how much the diamond weighs and is equivalent to 200 milligrams per carat. Each carat is subdivided into 100 points. Therefore, a one-carat diamond is 1.00 or 100 points, while a twenty-five point diamond is .25 carats.

- **Color:** A white diamond is more valuable the less color it contains. GIA uses a D-to-Z grading system to determine a diamond's color value. D would be a colorless diamond and Z the most saturated with color.

- **Clarity:** Diamonds are formed by carbon exposed to heat and pressure. Natural internal characteristics known as inclusions and external components called blemishes are the norm.

- **Cut:** To transmit light and sparkle, diamonds have to be cut precisely and with great artistry. A diamond will be further graded based on symmetry and proportions, as well as how the stone returns light. Brightness, which is the internal and external white light reflected; fire, or the scattering of white light into rainbow colors; and scintillation, or the sparkle the diamond produces, are factored into how the cut is valued.



Contributed photo

THIS FAMILY RING was “re-made” by Epperson’s Custom Jewelers. Two new bands were added to make the end product more substan-

RINGS From page 2

Colored diamonds — like yellow or pink ones — are also options. However, these often have to be special ordered and are more costly.

“Sometimes, a person who comes in wanting a custom [order] has their own stone, and that’s perfectly OK,” Epperson said.

It is not uncommon for someone to want to make a new ring out of a ring that has been passed down through family.

In such cases, a custom jeweler will either place the stones into whole new settings or make repairs and embellishments to existing ones.

Whether the stone in a ring is new or was handed down through a family, the result is a custom piece meant to have greater sentimental value than something straight off a store shelf.

“Choosing the design is a personal



Contributed photo

THIS RING made custom by Epperson’s Custom Jewelers features a 1.62-carat diamond flanked by two trilliant diamonds.

process,” Wiberley said. “We look at it as if this is something destined to become an heirloom. We want it to be special.”

Custom wedding bands for men are also an option. Whether a man chooses a “classic” metal like gold or something like platinum or titanium, there are opportunities to customize.



Contributed photo

NAUTICAL DETAILS are engraved into the side of a wedding band Epperson’s Custom Jewelers made for a sailor getting married.

However, the jewelers cautioned that some “alternative” metals like titanium cannot be resized, thanks to their toughness.

Whether you decides to go the custom jewelry route or shop from a store’s showcase, Epperson advised paying attention to what will be the most wearable for years to come.

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MEN'S WEDDING ATTIRE

New decade brings new colors, styles

By **GWEN SWIGER**
Associate Editor

The tradition in wedding attire for men has remained constant for most of the 42 years Town Squire has been serving the community.

The wedding party would come in, choose the tuxedo, get sized and there would be some kind of special, noted Larry McDaniel, owner of Town Squire.

However, there is a new decade of wedding events now, he said.

“Now they are getting into the fashion tux, which will be slim fit or ultra-slim fit. A lot of people want that more fitted look — a more updated look in the wedding,” he said. “The slim tuxes are here to stay.”

Today's young couples want the newest trends in colors for their wedding. Popular now are medium grays, light grays or charcoal and then there is the new navy, which is a rich navy silver color. Another popular shade is the cobalt blue. The styles and colors are available in either a suit or a tux, because wedding suits don't necessarily have to be a tux any more.

Town Squire offers suits and tuxes, which you can rent or buy, from Jim's Formal Wear. One of the popular fashion lines in men's attire carried at Town Squire is by designer Michael Kors.

The trendy casual or informal weddings offer another fashion niche. The couple may select blue jeans and ca-

sual shirts for the bridegroom and his attendants; but they want to include a vest and bowtie to coordinate with the bride's wedding colors, McDaniel said.

“With the trendy casual weddings that seems to be growing in the industry, we have had to increase our game,” he explained.

“We have tried to adapt to what the customer wants,” he said. “This has made us hopefully the mainstream for wedding parties. They don't have to go out of town (to obtain the styles they want).”

Another thing that has changed in wedding fashion is the shoes. Depending on the type of wedding planned, the groom and his groomsmen may be wearing casual shoes or even tennis shoes. For a more formal or tuxedo look, the shiny patent-leather shoes are still available, but the trend is toward a matte finish in black or cognac.

“For the traditional rental, you would go with black. Now because of the grays and blues, you go with the cognac,” McDaniel said.

“We have to get our information from the tux companies and stay in tune,” McDaniel explained. “The bride magazines already have this information or partial information. They come to us and ask us to pull it together or give them suggestions.

“Knowledge is king,” he said.

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Banner photo, GWEN SWIGER
LARRY MCDANIEL, owner of Town Squire Men's Wear, has a selection of men's fashion attire that ranges from the formal tuxedo, shown at left, to more casual shirts, pants, shoes, ties and suits. The store tries to stay on top of the latest styles and trends.



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Banner photo, GWEN SWIGER

SOME OF THE newest trends in the men's formal fashion are in shades of gray, blue and the new navy. Shoes also have a new look with matte finished joining patent-leather in the dress shoe style.

TUX From page 4

“What kind of questions do bridal couples ask? They want to know what colors we have. Do you offer the gray or the new blue or the new navy? Can we get the color in a vest and tie to match the bridesmaid dresses in a pattern?”

And Town Squires is ready to answer the questions and supply the help needed.

“I just got a tie book — my tie company sent me a whole book of solid and print ties that can be purchased. Some parties now want to purchase them instead of renting,” he said. “This is a new curve in the industry to which we have adapted.”

While some millennials go to the internet and order the tux or rent it, “there is one element omitted — customer service,” McDaniel said. “That is what we have built our store on — with the good Lord's help — customer service.”

“We are competing with price and convenience” with the internet, he explained. “However, if it does not fit, it has to be sent back.”

Then the customer has to worry about getting what they need in time for the wedding.

With places like Town Squire (the local small businesses), the product is handed to the customer ready to go. If there is a problem, it can be corrected and provided as needed.

“It takes the stress out,” McDaniel said. “Customer service is another part of the industry that is king.

“We have to reach the new millennials and educate them. There are stores that exist that can fulfill their needs. They are understood. They don't have to deal with the internet,” he said.

“I call it an opportunity,” he said. “We want to give you service and convenience. We will give you a competitive price. We will take the stress off you. If something goes wrong, we will handle it so your event will be pleasurable and not stressful.”

McDaniel stressed, “If you treat people fair with selection, competitive prices and a willingness to go the extra mile, it will be beneficial to the customer and the store.”

Town Squire is located on Keith Street in the Stuart Plaza.

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In weddings, the '90s are back and better than ever

By **MOLLY SPRAYREGEN**
Associated Press

From butterfly clips to polka dots, 1990s trends have been making a fashion comeback. Now, as '90s babies increasingly reach average marrying age, these trends are popping up all over the wedding industry as well.

An Etsy 2019 wedding trends report declared '90s nostalgia a top trend of the year, with over 300,000 searches for both rhinestones and polka dots on the site in the three months before the report's release in February. Etsy has also seen a 14 percent increase in butterfly clip searches since last year.

Etsy trend expert Dayna Isom Johnson says a '90s resurgence doesn't mean we'll suddenly be seeing huge puffy sleeves and oversize hair. Rather, popular '90s trends are being modernized and updated.

"They give some nod to those styles but they are so much more sophisticated," Johnson says, adding that today's butterfly clips, for example, look more whimsical and romantic than they did in the '90s.

And although wedding-dress sleeves may not be as puffy as they were 25 years ago, statement sleeves are big again. Dresses are breaking from the modern tradition of a sweetheart neckline silhouette, giving brides the opportunity to better express their



Sydney Marie Photography/The Knot Worldwide/The Knot via AP

THIS JUNE 2, 2018 photo taken at Kingwood Center Gardens in Mansfield, Ohio and shows custom bride and bridesmaid jean jackets. From butterfly clips to polka dots, '90s trends have been making a fashion comeback. Now '90s babies are increasingly reaching average marrying age. So it's no surprise these trends are popping up all over the wedding industry too.

Let them eat cake on wedding day

As bridal couples begin planning their wedding they want everything to be just right. One of the more important aspects is the wedding cake.

Whether it is casual or an ornate cake, Teresa Gilbert likes to make her confectionary offerings the best tasting as well as attractive as possible.

Gilbert, who operates the Village Bake Shop, likes for couples should put their cake order in from two to three months in advance.

She likes to have time to decorate and make it special for the couples.

She noted many couples are taking less traditional options in wedding cakes.

Years ago, the bridal cake would be multi-tiered with a bride and groom on top. Today's couples are going for less formal options, like the naked cake.

One of the newest trends, Gilbert said they "ice the cake. Then we take a special spatula and take some of the icing off the sides" to make it "naked."

Also, in vogue is the use of cupcakes, instead of the traditional tiered cakes.

Gilbert noted, the Village

Bake Shop has stands in white, gold and silver. The cupcakes can be tiered like a wedding cake. "At the very top, we place a small wedding cake."

The decorations on the cakes have also become more diverse. Many cakes have fresh flowers and fresh fruit on them.

For the groom's cake, many like to have it decorated with games or a football team. The groom's cake is usually chocolate with fresh fruit.

The popular flavors for cakes are vanilla and chocolate. Many times, the flavors of cakes are enhanced with fillings — raspberry, lemon, strawberry and cream cheese.

Gilbert has a piece of advice for the bridal couple — set aside a little of the cake to take with you after the wedding, when you can relax and enjoy it. She said many times a couple will tell her they did not get to taste the cake. Too many other things were going on at the time to take time to enjoy the cake.

That brings her to another piece of advice for the bridal couple. "You spend all this time and money on a beautiful wedding — relax and enjoy it. Make it a happy day."

See **NOSTALGIA**, Page 9

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Wedding floral formats

By **CHRISTY ARMSTRONG**
Staff Writer

Beautiful flowers are a common sight at many weddings, but a lot of work goes into deciding which floral arrangements would be the best fit.

Dwight Richardson, owner of Fenimore's Weddings and Events, recently shared some tips for brides planning their weddings.

Know your favorite flowers and colors.

A good florist will take a bride's favorite flower into account and may even make that flower the centerpiece of what he or she is designing, Richardson said.

Richardson said he most often works with fresh flowers and will only work with silk at a bride's request. However, silk may be ideal for certain types of hard-to-find flowers.

"One of the other questions I ask a bride is what her colors are," Richardson said.

While many brides choose to focus on using white and muted colors which go with most decor, using additional colors can be a good way to personalize a wedding.

It is important for brides to communicate tell their florist about their color schemes. That way, the colors can be incorporated into the floral designs.

Be realistic about the date.

A hot outdoor wedding can spell trouble for certain floral designs. Richardson said even the best florist cannot always prevent

delicate flowers from wilting in the summer heat.

However, brides can still have nice flowers at summer weddings. Richard-



Richardson



Contributed photo

A BRIDE AND BRIDESMAIDS show off their bouquets designed by Fenimore's Weddings and Events.

son said he always tries to steer summer brides toward flowers which are a little hardier in the heat. For example, delicate flowers like peonies and lily of the valley might be replaced with roses and calla lilies.

He also likes to design bouquets with the stems at the bottom exposed, so the bouquets can be placed in water if need be.

See FENIMORE'S, Page 8

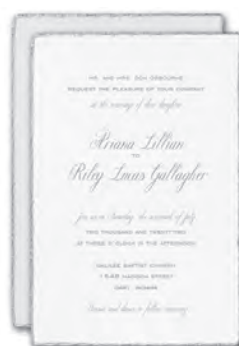
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FENIMORE'S

From page 7

Also, brides on a budget should avoid planning weddings near Valentine's Day or Mother's Day, as that is when flower prices are the highest. Richardson said it's a matter of supply and demand, and florists often have to pass their costs on to customers.

Remember your venue.

While many brides will focus on having the perfect bouquets and boutonnières for their wedding party, one should not forget the venue.

From floral arrangements at the altar to decorations at the edges of church pews, flowers can brighten up the atmosphere of any ceremony — big or small.

"I love to do arches and arbors if they are good, strong and sturdy," Richardson said.

Many brides also choose to have flower arrangements on the tables at their receptions. However, what kind of arrangement is best really depends on the venue.

For example, arrangements with antique or rustic touches might be great for a barn wedding. However, an elegant indoor location might call for a more elegant arrangement.

"The brides I'm working with nowadays are going more toward 'elegant' and not really 'rustic' or 'shabby chic,'" Richardson said.

Don't wait until the last minute.

Though flowers can potentially fall to the wayside in the midst of all the wedding planning, floral designs can take time to complete.

Richardson noted certain flowers can be hard to find, depending on the time of year. If a florist has to make a special order for flowers, the order can potentially take extra time to arrive.



Contributed photos

FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS designed by Fenimore's Weddings and Events adorn a table at a gala at the Museum Center at Five Points.

He added Fenimore's Weddings and Events is a "design studio," meaning each floral arrangement is custom-designed for a specific wedding or event.

"I always want to try to design what the bride envisions," Richardson said. "I want the bride and the groom to have something they can always look back at in photos and enjoy."

Because custom designs can take time, brides wanting custom arrangements are advised to find a florist months in advance of their weddings, rather than mere days or weeks.

Richardson added he is happy to help brides in Cleveland and surrounding areas find the floral arrangements that will add the perfect touches to their

See **FLORAL**, Page 9



LARGE ARRANGEMENTS like this one from Fenimore's Weddings and Events can help set the scene for special days.



FRESH FLOWERS and greenery make this bouquet stand out.



BOUTONNIERES like this one can be designed for the men in a wedding party.

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NOSTALGIA**From page 6**

personal style.

Lauren Kay, deputy editor at The Knot, says she has seen an increase in holographic and iridescent decor, chokers, disposable cameras on tables, and '90s music. Jeffra Trumpower, creative director at WeddingWire, cites the return of '90s styles like neon signs, macramé, and custom jean jackets with monograms or calligraphy on the back.

Los Angeles wedding planner Beth Helmstetter of Beth Helmstetter Events has noticed a return to bridesmaids wearing color block dresses — combining two or more large blocks of bold, typically clashing colors. And Chicago wedding planner Nicole Hensley of Storybook Weddings and Events notes more couples incorporating their favorite '90s snacks into their special days.

"As most of our couples are now in their 30s," Hensley says, "they lived through childhood eating dunkaroos,

pop tarts, ice pops and so many other nostalgic treats. It's been so fun sourcing these items for late-night snack stations or having our caterers put a fun twist to pop tarts... or creating an 'adult' alcoholic version of the ice pops!"

Perhaps the most surprising '90s trend that is resurgent both in weddings and beyond is the fanny pack.

A 2018 report by the NPD Group found that fanny packs account for almost 25 percent of overall growth in the fashion accessories industry. Etsy reported a whopping 62 percent increase in searches related to "bridal fanny packs" in the three months before its trends report was released.

At bachelorette parties, a bride and her crew might wear bedazzled or glittery fanny packs that say "Bride" and "Squad." Couples also are incorporating more chic, fashionable versions of fanny packs into the wedding itself. These classier versions may be

referred to as hip or belt bags. Brides and grooms aren't necessarily wearing them down the aisle, but they are using them at the reception or other wedding events to carry phones and other items.

Johnson sees fanny packs as part of a broader trend toward functionality and reusability. Not only are they handy during the celebration, but fanny packs can be used long after the wedding is over.

Experts agree that couples who want to invoke a little '90s nostalgia into their weddings should do so tastefully and sparingly. Many suggested thinking about no more than one or two motifs from the '90s and putting a more modern spin on them.

"If it's neon fanny packs for example," says Hensley, "take that idea and go a step above! Reinvent the idea. Give fanny packs out as favors filled with a hangover kit for surviving the next morning. Fill it with a mini water bottle, some pain reliever, eye drops and maybe a little 'hair of the dog'!"

In essence, a full-on '90s-themed wedding might be overkill, but including flashes of the decade here and there can make for a beautiful and nostalgia-filled event.



The Associated Press

THIS OCTOBER 2018 photo provided by Etsy Seller Dreamers and Lovers, shows a model wearing a Bell Sleeve Lace Bohemian Wedding Dress in Los Angeles, Calif.

FLORAL**From page 8**

wedding decor.

He once operated a full-service florist shop in Cleveland, Fenimore's Floral Design Studio. However, he decided to focus on his favorite part of the business — designing for weddings and events.

The business, which now operates by appointment only, focuses on the kind of custom designs one would see at a wedding.

"I love seeing the bride's reaction to the arrangements," Richardson said. "If she's happy, I have done my job."

For more information on Fenimore's Weddings and Events, visit www.fenimores.com or call 423-715-0030.



GREENERY adds life and movement to this bridal bouquet from Fenimore's Weddings and Events.

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Wedding costs: What to expect

MetroCreative — Newly engaged couples may experience an array of emotions when they sit down to plan their weddings. Some couples cannot wait to jump into planning and want to catalog every aspect of the process, while others may proceed with caution because they don't know what to expect — particularly in regard to cost.

Many couples find it difficult to create their wedding budgets because they have no previous experience to draw on. The wedding planning advisor CostofWedding.com indicates the average wedding cost in the United States is \$26,720, with most people spending between \$20,000 and \$34,000. Seventh Heaven Event Catering states that, in Canada, the average wedding costs around \$30,000. Such costs can vary greatly depending on couples' preferences, including where they hope to tie the knot.

By breaking down wedding expenses, couples can get a clearer picture of how much they may need to pay for their weddings and where they may need to cut costs.

- **Reception site:** According to The Knot, a premiere wedding planning resource, couples can expect their receptions to eat up the largest chunk of their wedding budgets. Wedding reception venues may cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000. The average price for catering per person is roughly \$70. Bar service may be around \$2,000 for a three- to four-hour party. Some reception sites combine the room cost with the food and beverage costs, while others have à la carte fees.

- **Cake:** Wedding cakes tend to be multi-tiered intricate designs, so they will cost more than birthday cakes. According to Statistics Brain, wedding dessert will come



in around \$390.

- **Music:** The Knot says wedding bands cost around \$3,500, which is more than twice as much as hiring a deejay (\$1,200). Soloists or ceremony musicians may cost around \$650.

- **Wedding planner:** Many couples employ wedding planners to make planning their weddings easier. Wedding planners cost an average of \$1,300, says Thumbtack, a company that matches professionals with people who require their services.

- **Transportation:** Limousines and other transportation prices vary depending on the vehicle(s) couples choose. The Knot notes that budgeting between \$400 and \$500 for transportation might be wise.

- **Wedding gown:** Brides-to-be should expect their gowns to cost around \$1,100 and the veil or headpiece to be roughly \$120, according to the Association of Bridal Consultants.

- **Photography and Video:** Preserving wedding day memories costs around \$2,800 for video and photography services, based on data from Statistics Brain.

The smaller details, such as accessories, gifts, officiant fees, stationery, spa services, and favors can quickly add up as well. Couples should be sure to leave some wiggle room in their budgets for incidental expenses that may pop up.

Things to consider when choosing a wedding party

MetroCreative — Making the important decision to get married can fill couples with joy and excitement as they imagine spending the rest of their lives together.

Naturally, brides- and grooms-to-be are anxious to share the good news with others and include family and friends in the festivities. One way couples exemplify inclusion is by asking their closest acquaintances to be part of their wedding parties.

Being asked to serve as a bridesmaid or groomsman is an honor. Some couples may be tempted to ask every friend, sibling or cousin they have to be in their wedding parties, and some do.

In fact, ancient Roman law required 10 witnesses to be part of the wedding ceremony. However, the larger the wedding party, the more people couples have to coordinate and the more personalities they must manage.

While large wedding parties are in style, there isn't any one-size-fits-all formula to decide which size party is right for a particular situation. Trends vary based on geography and culture. These tips can help couples decide on the size of their wedding parties.

- **Match it to scope and style.** Wedding planners may use a standard ratio for a proportion of guests to wedding party members. That ratio is one pair of wedding attendants

for every 50 guests. This creates a balanced feel where the more people in attendance, the larger the wedding party and vice versa.

- **Consider your expenses.** Wedding party members may be asked to spend considerable amounts of money to be in the wedding, but the couple will have certain expenses tied to the wedding party as well.

These can include limousines to ferry people between the ceremony and reception, photography costs to arrange and photograph large wedding parties, the cost of bouquets and boutonnieres, attendants' gifts, as well as extra mouths to feed at the rehearsal dinner. Small wedding parties can be easier on couples' budgets.

- **Know your expectations.** Couples should discuss what they expect from their wedding parties. Do couples want their loved ones to be very hands-on or waiting in the wings?

For those who want a lot of input from their wedding parties, asking distant friends or family to be included may be impractical.

- **Select reliable, easygoing people.** Wedding party members should be people couples can rely on, and it only helps if wedding party members are not prone to overreacting.

Choose a wedding party that can be trusted and people with whom you get along.

Wedding party sizes are up to the couple, but bigger isn't always better.

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Dr. Eric Gruber
Dr. Wendy Gruber

Plan your wedding day with flowers

By **GWEN SWIGER**
Associate Editor

A wedding is one of the most memorable events to occur in a young couple's life. They want everything to be beautiful and just right — venue, the clothing, lighting, music, food and especially the décor.

Nothing graces a wedding like the right combination of flowers. There are many local florists who work to provide dream weddings for local brides. Among them are Isbill Floral Gallery, Perry's Petal and Misty Mountain Florist.

Misty Mountain is located at 4220 Spring Place Road in Cleveland. For information, call 423-728-5100.

Isbill Floral Gallery is located at 853 Keith St. and may be reached at 423-790-1711.

Perry's Petals is located 1713 Keith St. To contact Perry's Petal call 423-476-

7573.

Connie Isbill, co-owner of Isbill Floral Gallery with husband Ken, noted the importance of florists staying in tune with the latest styles and trends.

"Last year, the color trends were in blush, burgundy and white. This year brides are adding dusty blues," she said.

The favorite flowers for weddings remain peonies and garden roses. While they get some of their roses from Ecuador, a majority of flowers come from local wholesalers.

When working with bridal couples, Isbill starts out with a consultation. "This gives me ideas of the things they like. Many couples will bring in photos from Pinterest that show me their personality and style," Isbill said.

A list of everything they need with possibilities tops the agenda as Isbill confers with the bridal couple. "We do everything they need for flowers from



Photos courtesy of Isbill Floral Gallery

DEPENDING ON the season, bridal bouquets are taking on unique aspects with the use greenery, eucalyptus leaves, as well as fresh and silk flowers.

boutonnieres to table decorations," she said.

Since some venues need more decorations than others, it is important to have the location selected. Some of the venues provide décor items and others depend on the floral designer.

Isbill said she is open to use anything the couple wants to use.

"It is their day. We will work with them. If something is not available, I will give them options as to what can be done."

Another aspect of the consultation is the budget. "I will see how to fit what they need into their budget and give them a quote."

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Photo courtesy of Isbill Floral Gallery

WEDDING DECOR is a reflection of the bridal couple's favorite things. One of the biggest trends is using signs to share inspiration as well as give instructions to guests.



Photo courtesy of Isbill Floral

FRESH FLOWERS ARE being used to give unique style and color to wedding cakes.

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Photo courtesy of
Isbill Floral Gallery

UNIQUE

shaped arbors provide a beautiful setting for a wedding. The flowers have been draped over the arbor. Arbors come in many shapes and sizes.

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She also recommends couples book early. October is a prime month and dates are already filling up. The popular months for weddings are in May, June, September, October and November.

Flowers and design elements should be booked a year ahead. Flowers should be booked no less than six months out from the wedding date, she said.

A lot of couples are opting for outdoor weddings. This is especially true of fall weddings. Another style trend is the “bohoe” wedding. For the florist this is a nontraditional mix of everything. There can be a lot of pampas grass and a mix of dried and fresh flowers included in the floral needs.

While some brides like the tighter bouquets, Isbill said there is a trend back toward “big bouquets and ones that cascade.” More greenery is being included in many wedding displays. A popular inclusion is the silver dollar eucalyptus.

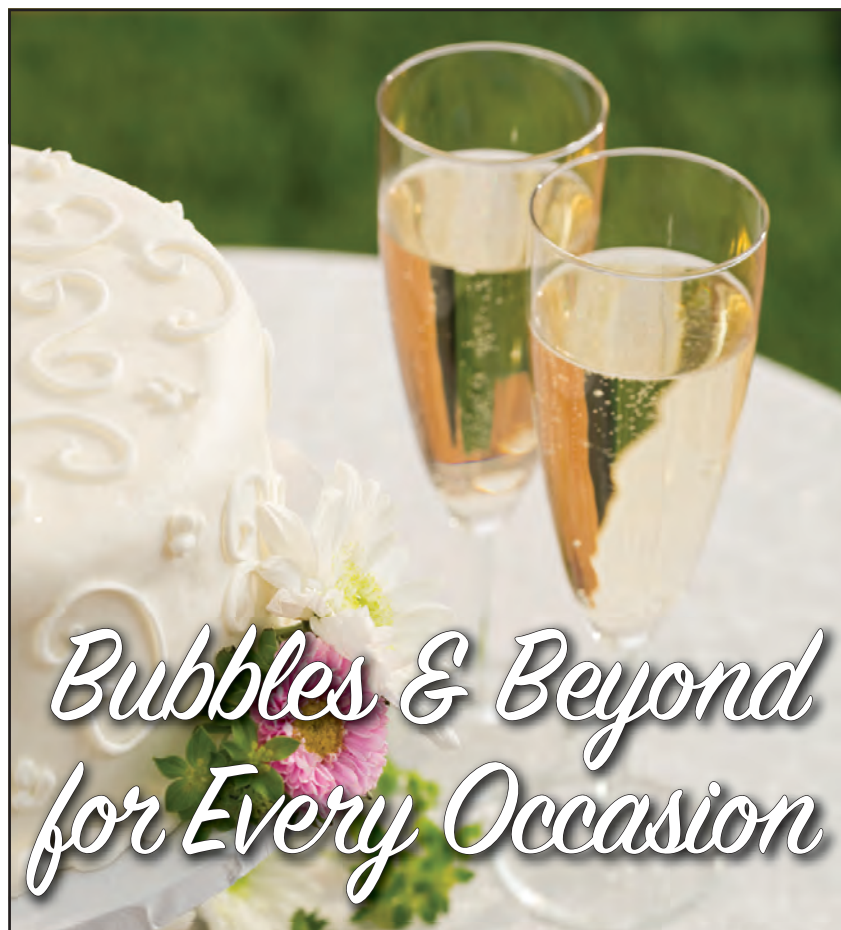
Another style for weddings is the use of floral crowns instead of veils. There is also more use of signs at weddings, from giving directions, showing seating to romantic inspirations.

Flowers can beautify and make a wedding special, and local florists are ready to help.



Photo courtesy of Isbill Floral Gallery

CONNIE ISBILL of Isbill Floral Gallery holds a sample of a wedding bouquet.



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