

Brides & Bouquets 2024



Let the Planning



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BRANDON VALLEY
Journal

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Living in harmony

BVMS band, choir directors tie the knot in November

Jill Meier
Journal editor

Devon and Lauren Melillo were destined for a life of perfect harmony.

That may be a bit cheesy for the Melillos, who are respectively, the band director and choral director at Brandon Valley Middle School.

The newlyweds, however, were in tune years before teaching in side by side classrooms. As fate would have it, their paths had crossed numerous times in high school and intersected as college students at South Dakota State. But as their story tells, it was post-college when the two educators finally met their match.

"We knew of each other and we had lots of mutual friends and kind of caught each other's eyes," recalls Devon, who grew up in Sioux Falls.

As their story goes, Devon had just wrapped up student teaching in Rosemount, Minn., in the middle of the 2019-20 school year. With the pandemic about to strike and Lauren about to embark on her student teaching assignment at Sioux Falls Washington High School, the music educators crossed paths at — of all things — a concert.

"I said, 'Since you're in Sioux Falls now, of course we have to go out for coffee,'" Devon remembers proposing.

Lauren eagerly accepted the invitation, and soon after, they realized just how in tune they were with one another.

Throw in a pandemic, where time was literally on their side, as one may anticipate, their relationship deepened.

"With an abundance of free time all of a sudden and not being able to work, we had gotten to know each other well enough that we knew we were pretty serious about each other," Devon said.

As the world "stopped", together, they embarked on new hobbies, exploring the outdoors hiking, gardening and building a deck together.

Lauren, who hails from Huron, said she felt their relationship developing into more than just a friendship.

"I whoped for that," she said. "We didn't really connect until after college, but Devon was always someone that I looked up to and I really respected, and I also thought he was very handsome from the beginning."

The proposal came on a hot — and somewhat chaotic — day in June. You see, it was the day they were moving into their first apartment together. Now nearly two years into dating, they had spent the entire day "sweating, moving, hauling things upstairs" Lauren tells. Once the heavy lifting was done, they had planned to meet family members who helped with move for dinner.

"Everyone had left at this point to go reserve tables and Devon asked me if I wanted to freshen up and put on some cute clothes and not my gym clothes that I was all sweaty in," she said. "I'm like, 'Who are you to say I should freshen up?'"

Devon took his own suggestion by taking a shower and putting on "some cute clothes."

And then, came the moment that he got down on one knee.

"Then, I understood why he wanted to look a little nicer," she said.

As it turned out, their family and friends were waiting at the restaurant to celebrate the engagement.

Let the planning begin

In her search for the dress, Lauren said she tried on about eight dresses, which she narrowed down to two. On the advice of a friend, she made her selection.

"She said, 'I think you'll look back on this dress in 30 years and be happy with it,'" Lauren recalls. "I liked both of them a lot, but the one that I ended up choosing, I think can stand the test of time and still be beautiful and timeless."

continued on page 3B

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DEVON & LAUREN MELILLO cont. from page 2B

They each had six attendants and a personal attendant

Initially, the couple believed it would take two to three years to plan and save up for their wedding.

“Thank goodness we did not (wait that long),” Devon said.

“Intimate” and “personal” were the focus in planning their special day.

“We had so many people near and dear to us playing active roles in our wedding,” he notes.

Their brothers and sisters sang and played the piano.

Lauren’s mother made the food.

Her sister created all of the flowers, from the bride’s bouquet to the boutonnières and corsages to the table arrangements.

And her grandmother wrote a poem about the couple, sharing it at the ceremony.

Their wedding day

“It was perfect for us,” Lauren reflects of their Nov. 25, 2023 nuptials at the Old Courthouse Museum in Downtown Sioux Falls.

Lauren describes their wedding day as perfect.

“I think in a lot of ways it was better than what I had imagined, especially having those personal notes and having our friends and family be so involved. That was really, really nice and my favorite part of the day, honestly,” she said.

Devon describes the day as “amazing.”

“I was surprised with so many things,” he shares.

For starters, he found himself surprised by both the nerves and emotions that he was experiencing that day.

“I’m in front of people and I’ve done public speaking many times, but that was different for me. All of a sudden, I had felt like I was really light-headed and nervous and I had butterflies in my stomach,” he confesses.

Despite the nerves and emotions, both Devon and Lauren soaked it all in.

“The Thanksgiving wedding was so special for us because it was just after my parents’ anniversary and Lauren’s

continued on page 4B



Submitted photo

Devon and Lauren Melillo share a passionate kiss following their nuptials on Nov. 25, 2023 at the Old Courthouse Museum in Sioux Falls.



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DEVON & LAUREN MELILLO cont. from page 3B

grandparents' anniversary, plus, with the holiday break, we could have extended family come in," Devon said. "And, as if the wedding itself wasn't crazy enough, we had invited 40 of our family together to have a Thanksgiving meal on Thursday and then the rehearsal, so it was busy, but it was such quality time for all of us."

In following tradition, Devon did not see Lauren's dress until she was coming down the aisle. There were several occasions he could've caught a glimpse.

"There were many accidents of her showing family and friends on her phone, and me almost seeing it," Devon said.

When he first laid eyes on his bride in her gown, he was speechless.

"Tears were in my eyes and my heart was beating very fast, but it was a really great moment," he reflects.

As for Lauren, she remembers a feeling of pure bliss.

"I was so happy that the day was finally here. The



Submitted photo

Devon Melillo and Lauren Kattner took outdoor wedding photos at Falls Park in Sioux Falls.

few months leading up to the day, we were both so excited and ready for it to be official, so I was just filled with joy," she said.

They chose a classy color scheme of black and white and made decisions for the day together.

"We didn't stress about the planning very much," Lauren said. "We took

our time with decisions, we made them together because we knew that was important to us and all of us just being together and having a special day," Lauren said.

Once the vows had been exchanged, the focus turned to the reception and dance. Their first dance was *Come What*

May, a number from the musical *Moulin Rouge*, which was sung by Lauren's two sisters and brother-in-law.

The song came out of their joint appreciation for musical theatre.

"Lauren's family exposed me to so many musicals," Devon shares. "The first time I met Lauren's family, we saw *Rent* at the Pavilion, which was so much fun. It was a little edgy for a first-time meeting, but the show was so incredible."

And it was on a trip to Minneapolis to see *Moulin Rouge* on stage when they heard what would become their first dance song.

"It's a song about come hell or high water, we'll be together and be there for each other," Devon tells.

The little surprises

Knowing nothing in life is "perfect," the couple knew there could be a few hiccups on their wedding day. Devon said their day included "two unexpected surprises" that day.

The first, he noted, was

Lauren's wish for a light dusting of snow.

"I said, 'You can't wish for that. It's all or nothing,'" Devon said.

As fate would have it, Lauren got her wish, as a light dusting of snow fell to decorate their day.

"So, we had this gorgeous snow, but we had planned to take our pictures before the ceremony outside at Falls Park," Devon said, which they did. "I thought Lauren was going to have hypothermia."

The next glitch held off until the dance.

"This was probably 25, 30 minutes after (it started). We had just turned the lights off, had our first dance and had just invited everybody onto the dance floor, and from the ceiling a bat came and flew round and was swooping right above our heads. That was just one of those things that you shrug your shoulders and you think, 'It's a memory'" Devon said.

They are a musical couple

Devon is in his third

year as the band director at Brandon Valley Middle School, and Lauren joined the BVMS staff this school year as the choral director.

"It was very intentional to come and work here," Lauren said. "I taught at Harrisburg North Middle School for three years and when I saw an opening at Brandon Valley, we knew we wanted to be together and be here long-term."

Devon said they have the luxury of car-pooling to work, and although their classrooms are side by side, they don't see each other as often as one may think.

"It's nice to be together and we have the perk if something needs to be addressed ... we're only a step away," Lauren said.

The Melillos plan to take an extended honeymoon after the school year wraps up.

"We know we want to travel somewhere far away and relax somewhere warm," Devon said.

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Let the planning begin!

Recently engaged, couple starts preparing for their 'I do's'

Jill Meier
Journal editor

They grew up on opposite sides of town. He was a grade above her in high school at Brandon Valley. She was a cheerleader. He had a passion for percussion. She went off to college at Minnesota State University, Mankato, transferring to South Dakota State for her final year. He opted to remain in South Dakota, also venturing to SDSU. And yet, their paths didn't cross until after both were in college. She is Haley Sanow, 24. He is Tanner Burkman, 25. And they are engaged to be married Sept. 14, 2024. "We knew of each other in high school," Haley tells.

It was after they began dating they learned of the connections their families already had. "My dad is really good friends with his uncle, and I used to go out to his grandparent's farm and garden, and we just never crossed," she said. That was, until a night out on the town shortly after New Year's. They met at a bar and began talking, and haven't stopped talking since then.

It took about three months before Tanner asked Haley out on an official date. "We hung out a lot. We were not seeing



Tom A. Savage/BV Journal

Tanner Burkman popped the question to Haley Sanow in an intimate setting at Calico Skies Winery near Canton.

anybody else and he was always over at my house and I was always over at his house. We got to know each other's friend groups," Haley recalls.

Tanner says he knew early on that Haley was "the one."

She, too, admits to having an inkling he was "the one."

"The next day after we met, I remember this is the funniest guy I have ever spent time with. We were in my car and he was making me laugh the entire time," Haley said. "And that was just the day after we had met, so I kind of knew he's going to be fun, and I should probably keep him around."

Tanner said he was drawn to Haley's personality, which he said, matched his.

"Even though we didn't know each other, it took a very short amount of time," he said.

As it turned out, Tanner is the first young man that Haley had ventured into a serious relationship with.

In high school, she enjoyed hanging out with friends and was highly involved in the competitive and sideline cheer programs at Brandon Valley.

He was a percussionist in the band, therefore, kept busy during the school year beginning with the marching band season.

Three years later following that chance meeting in a downtown bar, the couple moved in together following college.

"It's one of those things," Haley shares. "For me, it was a super-easy decision. We

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TANNER & HALEY cont. from page 5B

just got along so well. Some people were like, 'Oh, be careful, it's different when you live with somebody.' for us, it was never a problem at all. It was also one of those things to where you move away for college and you don't necessarily want to move back home or back in with your parents, so it just made sense for us to do it that way."

Tanner echoes her words.

"It was an easy decision for me to say, 'Let's take that next step in our relationship to live together,'" he said. "It's kind of a big decision, but for me personally,

Haley's my girl."

A year ago, the two added a dog, Ava, into the mix.

Tanner and Haley said they talked about marriage.

"I was constantly ask-

“It was an easy step in our relationship to live together. It's kind of a big decision, but for me personally, Haley's my girl.

- **Tanner Burkman**
Groom-to-be

ing him, 'When are we going to get married?'" she said.

"Along with everybody else," Tanner tosses in.

As Haley tells, she was ready to say "yes."

On the day Tanner chose to propose, Haley

said caught her off guard.

There were some things leading up to the moment that had her questioning if something was going on.

For starters, he wanted to know what color polish would be on her nails.

"This is weird," she thought. "He typically doesn't care what color my nails are."

While doing some last-minute Christmas shopping with her brother's girlfriend, Tanner she said, called multiple times.

"He typically doesn't do that either," she said.

He masked his ner-



Submitted photo

Tanner Burkman and Haley Sanow and their puppy, Ava.

vousness by telling her he had a surprise date planned for them, asking if she could be home by 4:30 p.m.

His plan for the date was a trip to Calico Skies Winery near Canton.

"I was like, that's a surprise in itself, because

he doesn't like going to wineries and I do," she said.

Tanner, as it turns out, has more of a taste for craft beers.

She remembers Tanner being more chatty than usual. Yet, the thought of an engagement eluded her.

The moment

"It's a big moment, a very big moment," Tanner reflects. "It's something I'll never forget. You do it once in your life and you just hope it is the way you want it to go."

They grabbed a glass of wine and began talking about what they envisioned for 2024.

"We talked about our

continued on page 7B

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TANNER & HALEY cont. from page 6B

faith and how we want to grow in that,” she said. “I still wasn’t thinking that he was going to propose to me. I thought it was just normal conversation.”

But on this day, which happened to be the last 50-degree late-fall day, Tanner suggested they take a walk through the vineyard, which something they’d done before.

As they stepped outside, Haley took notice of a wine barrel decorated with a pair of wine glasses, a bottle of wine and a rose.

“I looked at him and was like, ‘Oh, that’s cute. Somebody must be ...’ and then I stopped ... in my head, I’m like, oh, my gosh, that’s for me. Honestly, after that, I don’t know what we said,” she said.

Haley said she appreciated the intimate setting.

“It was just the two of us. There was nobody. He didn’t have a photographer. He didn’t have family and friends there. It was just him and I and it was perfect,” she reflects. “But luckily, people saw it through the window and woman walked out and asked to take a picture.”

Tanner and Haley gathered with their parents, siblings and significant others later that night for dinner at Crawford’s. The gathering, Haley says, was surely a moment she won’t soon forget.

“I had to tell my dad when he gave me a big hug the first time I saw him, I said, ‘I’ll always be your little girl.’ That’s kind of been our thing.”

Tanner, doing his due diligence, had asked Haley’s dad, Paul, for his daughter’s hand in married.

“We just kept it between man and man,” he said.

He also did the ring shopping on his own, although he had a clear picture of the ring his bride-to-be favored.

“I knew what she wanted (because) she kept reminding me,” he said.

The followed in family tradition, purchasing the ring from a gentleman who provided the rings for his grandparents and his own father’s wedding ring.

“There’s some kind of sentimental value there,” he said.

Moving forward, they needed to decide when and where the festivities would occur. Did

I had to tell my dad when he gave me a big hug the first time I saw him, I said, ‘I’ll always be your little girls.’ That’s kind of been our thing.

- Haley Sanow
Bride-to-be

they want to wait or make it happen in 2024?

“There was a lot of pressure on us to get it done,” Tanner said, adding they didn’t want to wait until 2025 to make the “Mr. and Mrs. Tanner Burkman” official.

As luck would have it, the venue – a new event center in Lennox – Prosper Country Warehouse and Event Hall had just opened and had an available date in September.

“It’s brand new and I love that it’s black,” Haley said.

The couple is planning a “good-sized” wedding with an estimated 400 guests on the invite list.

“We both have very big families and it holds the amount of people that we want to invite,” Haley said.

They are scheduling a meeting with their pastor at Embrace Church in Sioux Falls where they attend, and are hopeful they can exchange their “I do’s” in one Embrace’s locations.

They’ve also decided on their caterer and the menu.

“For me, the food is not really a big deal,” Haley said. “It’s not as important to me as other things when it comes to the wedding. I know that it’s important to feed our guest, but we had to find something that is within our price range but still has good service and everything.”

“We jumped on it quick,” Tanner said.

What’s most important to the couple for their special day are the people they choose to celebrate it with.

“Cutting people out of our guest list is not an option to save money,” Haley said.

“We would rather cut it out elsewhere so that we can have all of our friends and family there.”

They’re in the process of asking friends and family to be part of the wedding party.

For those who know Haley, she’s not a “color person.”

“I love neutrals, so we really don’t have a color,” she said.

Her bridesmaids will don champagne-colored gowns and the groomsmen will wear black and white tuxes.

As for the venue itself Haley said they plan to transform it into a “fairy tale.”

“My idea is to have just a ton of candles everywhere, and I love pampas grass, so we’re going to mesh the two,” she said.

A dance will cap off their special day. They have yet to select their first dance song, but do know that *The Blessing* by Kari Jobe will be sung at the wedding.

“We’re going to worship to that song with our friends and family,” Haley said.

As the months and weeks go by leading up to their wedding day, Tanner said he looks forward to the beginning of bring two families together.

“As far as the day itself, I think just having our friends and family and getting to celebrate the day is huge for him and I both. I have a few surprises up my sleeve that I think are going to mean the world to our family and our parents, so I’m excited for that,” Haley said.

Grooms have a role, too. Here’s the checklist.

Staff report

The idea that grooms don’t want anything to do with wedding planning is a totally outdated mentality. It’s the 21st century and grooms are equal partners in putting together the big day, with duties that go far beyond just creating a playlist and tasting cake. But as anyone getting married knows, it can be difficult to know where

to start and what exactly needs to be done.

So, without further ado, here’s a guide – courtesy of the know – to help the guys through the planning process:

- 12 Months Out
- Decide who’s paying and set the budget
- Create a priority list and evenly divide responsibilities
- Manage your family
- Book a venue

- 11 Months Out
- Research and book vendors
- Enlist your wedding party
- Finalize the guest list
- 10 Months Out
- Book room blocks
- 9 Months Out
- Take engagement photos
- 8 Months Out
- Create your registry
- Build your wedding website

- Plan the honeymoon
- Buy wedding insurance
- Send save-the-dates
- 7 Months Out
- Plan the rehearsal dinner
- 6 Months Out
- Order attire
- Check marriage license requirements
- Arrange transportation & check on passports
- Shop for wedding bands

- Attend premarital counseling
- 5 Months Out
- Order your invites
- Set the menu
- 4 Months Out
- Plan the playlist
- 3 Months Out
- Buy gifts
- Send invitations
- 2 Months Out
- Enjoy the bachelor party
- Attend attire fitting
- Purchase accessories

- Book pre-wedding appointments
- 1 Month Out
- Apply for the marriage license
- Confirm groomsman attire
- Create the seating chart
- Delegate day-of logistics
- 2 Weeks Out
- Track down RSVPs
- Attend final meetings

continued on page 12B



Move over sheetcakes, make way for cupcakes



When it comes to the cake, let your personalities shine

Jill Meier
Journal editor

When it comes to the wedding cake, Mary Oren of Mary's Cake Creations, believes the cake should reflect the personalities of the bride and groom. "The beautiful thing about doing wedding cakes now is that you can pick whatever fits your personality," Oren said. "We've been putting fountains and bridesmaids and all of that kind of stuff on it for several decades now, but I would say they should definitely look for a cake that fits their personalities."

reflect the couples' personalities.

"My very first cake was a baseball-themed wedding cake," she said.

The three-tiered cake mimicked a stack of baseballs.

Oren said she initially turned down the couple's request, telling them that she typically creates

wedding cake that looks like baseballs."

For a Halloween-themed wedding, she created a cake that featured "eyeballs" in the center of flowers.

"So, it really is personalized to whatever they want," she said. "Some brides do a fancy front and a fun reveal

way.

"It is a detail that you can get out of the way ahead of time, which is comforting for some couples to ... have one detail out of the way," she said.

While some couples choose the more traditional wedding cake and sheet cakes to serve to guests, Oren said the trend over the last several years has gone the way of cupcakes.

"I would say 85 to 90 percent of couples who are ordering something to go along with their cake are going with cupcakes," she said.

The reason?

"I think the ease of serving and the variety of flavors available really add to the appeal," she said.

Oren offers 22 different cake flavors, but said Turtle, Cookie Dough, Chocolate-Peanut Butter

and Raspberry Lemonade are among the top selections.

And while cupcakes are taking the place of

continued on page 9B

“

The beautiful thing about doing wedding cakes now is that you can pick whatever fits your personality. We've been putting fountains and bridesmaids and all of that kind of stuff on it for several decades now, but I would say they should definitely look for a cake that fits their personalities.

- Mary Oren
Owner of Mary's Cake Creations

cakes that looks like other stuff.

It was that very comment that turned into her first wedding cake business venture.

"Oh, perfect," the bride-to-be told her. "Because we want a

in the back," Oren said. "Maybe it's superheroes or farming or camo."

For inspiration, Oren will sometimes turn to Pinterest and Etsy websites.

She advises couples to get the cake out of the

Valley Springs Legion Hall

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WEDDING CAKES cont. from page 8B

sheet cakes, Oren said couples still lean toward traditional flavors.

“They will get our vanilla, which I have dubbed ‘white velvet’, because it has a light, delicate texture and is just a beautiful cake,” she said.

Fondant and butter cream frostings are familiar frostings of choice.

“And naked cake is still a popular option,” she adds.

Naked cake, Oren explains, is a very thin layer of butter cream, so that you can see a portion of the cake layers,” she said.

Naked cakes are often times drizzled with a white chocolate drip or fresh flowers to “dress them up,” she said.

Also, thanks to Pinterest and

Etsy “and people’s innate creativity,” Oren said, “The sky’s the limit when it comes to cake toppers.”

The couple’s name or sometimes their pet is featured on the cake topper.

“One couple that were both fitness-oriented had barbells and a silhouette of themselves in their wedding clothes with their set of barbells,” she said. “So, it could be anything.”

Selecting cake flavors and design is typically choices made by the bride and groom together.

“That is the one thing that most grooms are really excited to come and do,” Oren said. “If I book a tasting with a wedding couple, I bring a sample of six flavors of

continued on page 10B



Submitted photos

On the day of her daughter’s wedding and dressed for the occasion, Mary Oren found herself adding some last-minute details to the cupcakes. (Above, right) Cupcakes are replacing sheet cakes at weddings.

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It's OK to ask for cash in lieu of traditional wedding gifts

Staff report

Yes, it's acceptable to ask for money instead of traditional wedding gifts.

Whether you've lived together for years and don't really need to upgrade your kitchen appliances and linens, live in a tiny space and don't have room for new purchases, or are planning a honeymoon that's getting pricey, sometimes all you really want as a wedding gift is an envelope of cash. If you're wondering how to ask for money instead of physical presents for your wedding (and whether or not it's appropriate to do so at all), you should know that it's perfectly fine to request monetary gifts instead of tangible presents.

How you do it is what really matters.

To start, it is not appropriate to ask for cash on your wedding invitation. In fact, registry information of any kind should be avoided on the invitation. Instead, include the address of your

wedding website on an insert card within your overall stationery suite and detail your registry preferences there.

To ensure you don't rub any family members or friends the wrong



way with your financial request, here are tactful ways to ask:

- Ask family members and close friends to spread the word. Chances are guests will ask them what they should

get you, and this will prepare them to share what you're saving for.

- Be specific about how you plan to use the cash. Cash or a check can feel impersonal, so letting guests know where the money will go helps your guests feel more connected to the two of you and your plans. If you're in the middle of a big project, like renovating your home or moving across the country, let guests know about it on your wedding website. You may also want to personalize your explanation, sharing how the project got started, where it stands in the process, and perhaps a snafu you've run into along the way.

Your wedding website is a great place to share this information.

- Use a cash or honeymoon registry website. Your tech-savvy guests may appreciate this venue. There are several cash registry websites available.

- Mind your manners when asking for monetary wedding gifts.

- Be sure to create a traditional registry, too. You're guaranteed to have some guest who prefer to give a physical gift. By registering for a small selection of items, it will make the return/exchange process simpler and will help to avoid duplicate items.

- Have a box for cards at the reception. Buy or craft a box designated for cards at the reception. Make sure to designate someone to keep an eye on the box throughout the night.

- Thank guests for any gifts you receive. Although you may have requested monetary gifts, it's likely that you'll receive physical presents as well. Always remember to accept these gifts with gratitude and appreciation, and be sure to thank every gift-giver for their generosity. A written thank-you note sent within a few months of your big day is essential.

WEDDING CAKE

cont. from page 9B

cake, some of the most popular flavors from which they can pick and choose or ask questions."

Grooms, she said, do have their opinions when it comes to the cake.

"You know, carrot cake is my favorite" or "German chocolate was my grandpa's favorite, and I really want to honor him by having it," she tells.

If kids will be attending the reception, she advises white velvet and some cookie dough.

"Those are fun flavors that kids gravitate toward," she said.

When it comes to price, they vary greatly, said Oren, whose home-based business has less overhead than a brick-and-mortar bakery, for example.

The amount of time she invests in cake orders varies, too.

"It takes me at least three to four days to do a wedding cake and cupcakes and to make the fillings and frosting and assembly," she said. "My cookbook and

" I wanted to make them extra special and just what they wanted for their big celebration day.

- Mary Oren

Owner of Mary's Cake Creations

my calendar is a spreadsheet."

Two of her most memorable cakes are the ones she made for the wedding of her own daughters.

"I wanted to make them extra special and just what they wanted for their big celebration day," Oren said.

Her oldest daughter requested a four-tier cake that featured fresh flowers, pearls and rose gold décor.

Her younger daughter's green color scheme was showcased on the cake that featured a tiny topper of the bride and groom made from Legos.

"There's not really many rules anymore. You can get what you want, and I think that's kind of how it is, whether you want the big production wedding or the small production, it's all acceptable," she said.

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You've exchanged your 'I do's', now it's time legally change your name. Here's how in South Dakota.

Staff report

If you want to get a name change after marriage in South Dakota, read on.

The name change service, HitchSwitch can take care of much of the process for you. Simply fill out the online form and then HitchSwitch will fill in the legal paperwork for you. The next step is signing them, adding your personal details (like Social Security number) and follow the website's personalized instructions for sending it all in.

For most people changing their name, the first step will be getting a marriage license before the wedding. Apply for a marriage license in the state or country where you're getting

married, so that your union is legal and so the official name change is pretty straightforward.

Marrying close to home and wondering how to get a marriage license in South Dakota? You and your future spouse should visit any Register of Deeds office in the state to apply.

What forms will you need?

You'll need to fill out a South Dakota marriage license application. Bring along a valid photo ID with your birth date on it, too. Your driver's license, mili-

tary or state ID will do.

A marriage license in South Dakota will run you \$40. Certified copies of

ages couples to explicitly indicate their choice of a new middle and/or last name while completing their marriage license application.

The new designated name will be officially documented on the marriage certificate, acting as the legal instrument for the name change.

• Your wedding officiant should turn in the completed marriage license to the Register of Deeds after the ceremony. Then, the marriage certificate will be issued.

There are some instances where a court order may be necessary for a name change. This would be the case if you

didn't have a legal wedding ceremony. Anyone wanting a name change that isn't to their spouse's name or a hyphenation or combination of the two names may need a court order, too.

To get a court order, you'll have to petition for a name change. You can find full instructions on how to legally change your name in South Dakota at the Unified Judicial System website. It also has South Dakota name change forms for you to fill out to file your petition.

Quite possibly the most important step in a name change in South Dakota is changing your name on your Social Security card. That's because this

continued on page 12B




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CHANGING YOUR NAME cont. from page 11B

switch makes your new moniker official with the federal government, and it's a huge aid to changing the name on any of your other IDs.

You'll need to fill out Form SS-5. See the SSA's instructions for getting a corrected card for full details. Chances are, you'll be able to mail it to your local Social Security office, but some people may need to bring theirs in person. You'll also need to submit: Your legal name change document (usually, the marriage certificate or court order); Proof of identity (current driver's license, state ID or passport will work); Proof of citizenship (your birth certificate or passport). This is only necessary if you haven't already proved this to the SSA; and Find the nearest office to you with the Social Security Administration office locator.

Please remember that you will need to provide original or certified copies of your documents to the SSA. Photocopies are not accepted. If you don't have them, you'll have to request certified copies from Vital Records or other record holding offices, which usually costs a small fee.

Updating your U.S. passport can take eight to 11 weeks, so it's wise to start early.

How to Change Your Name on Your U.S. Passport

Next up? Update your U.S. passport, recommends Wolff. This process can take eight to 11 weeks, so it's smart to start it early. If you do, not only will you have it in case you need to travel, you'll be able to use your passport as additional proof of your name change if necessary. Complete instructions for the passport name change can be found on the U.S. Department of State website.

It's also important you change your name on your driver's license. A South Dakota driver's license name change requires a visit to a Driver's Licensing location. Make sure to bring along your legal name change document (marriage certificate or court order), plus two documents that prove your South Dakota residency, such as a utility bill or bank statement.

The fee is minimal at \$15. The driver's licensing office won't accept photocopies, so bring originals or certified copies here, too.

With all of the legal documentation completed, remember to update all important records and accounts that reflect your name. That includes your employer, your insurance policies, your bank and credit card accounts and more.

THE GROOM'S LIST cont. from page 7B

- Attend final meetings
- Write vows, speeches and love note
- Pick up attire
- Confirm wedding party responsibilities

The week of

- Share final headcount
- Clean the wedding rings
- Pack your bags
- Practice vows and speeches
- Get a haircut

The day of

- Organize payments and tips
- Give wedding bands to the best man
- Present gifts to loved ones
- Rehearse the ceremony
- Give your officiant the marriage certificates
- Attend the rehearsal dinner



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