# This is my love song to you

# Dalton & Shelby Ridenhour, Oct. 23, 2021

by Roxie Murphy, Maries County Advocate Staff Writer

f you ask Shelby James how she first met Dalton Ridenhour, she'd tell you that she was 14-years-old and he was 16-years-old and he first caught her eye walking through the halls at Belle High School.

"We met when I was a freshman in high school and he was a junior — we met through mutual friends, saw each other in the hallways and just started hanging out more," Shelby said. "Then we started dating in 2014."

Shelby remembers that they weren't friends first and only knew each other two weeks before Dalton asked if she would be his girlfriend.

"I wanted to be his girlfriend but said, 'you will have to ask my dad,'" she laughed. "So he asked my dad and dad said 'yes' and then he asked me again and I said 'maybe!' I was joking. We started dating."

#### You're the only one I see...

But if you asked Dalton Ridenhour how he first met Shelby James, well, he goes back a little further.

"She was a great bully to me," Dalton claims, talking about the first time he saw his future bride at the fair.

Dalton was attending a church function at the fair.

"We were trying to get people our age to join our church group and she and a friend with the church came over to check on us," he remembers. "I was building with Lincoln Logs."

Dalton says pointedly, "Someone may have come over, looked me dead in the eyes and may have pushed them over. I was so stunned because she was the prettiest girl in the world. I never thought to ask someone who she was. I had never met her before."

But two months later, Dalton dropped by to pick up a friend so they could go swimming.

"My friend was like 'go pick up my sister and her friend before we go," he said, adding that he was reluctant. "So I do. Then I realized it was her and figured this was going to be nerve-wracking."

Dalton recalls that maybe she thought he was standoffish because he swam to the opposite side of the water as Shelby, but in truth he was nervous. Eventually, he got up the nerve to ask her out though.



### You're always hoping that we make it

Fast forward to Sept. 14, 2020, as the couple planned to celebrate their sixth anniversary. Dalton and Shelby have lived through two high school graduations, she was nearly done with cosmetology school, and they were starting their careers.

Dalton decided in the months before their approaching anniversary that he was going to propose, but Shelby's stepdad, Doug Butler, had a major surgery scheduled on their anniversary and Shelby was worried.

"We had been dating for five years," Dalton said. "I had been searching for a ring for about three months before I found one. Then I hid it in the house for another six or seven months."

Dalton said she wanted a teardropshaped diamond and that is what he eventually found. He was waiting for the right moment and wanted to ask her parents for permission.

"I had planned months before the official six years to talk to her dad (Larry James) and stepdad, but knowing he was going to have surgery on our sixth year anniversary, I didn't ask either one of

them," Dalton said.

That was until Sept. 14 arrived and Shelby was on edge about the surgery when they received a call from her mom.

"We got a call that they didn't have to have surgery and everything was fine," Dalton said. "Then something hit me and I figured, 'hey, it's time."

He started calling the dads.

"I called her real dad first and said 'hey, I know I am supposed to do this in person, but it feels right," he recalls. "Her mom knew I had a ring but hadn't seen it."

#### **Every time I see you looking** back at me...

Since the surgery was canceled, Dalton contacted his employer and told him that "today is the day" and he wouldn't be in. He was thinking on the fly and decided they could go to Jefferson City and take pictures at the Governor's Garden near the capitol then take Shelby out to

"When mom said it was gone, I was like, 'ok, Dalton and I can go out to eat," she said. "I didn't even put on a

On the way to Jefferson City though,

Shelby found out that XM Radio was going to raise her membership rates and tried contacting the company to dispute

"I had a fight with Sirius XM on the way to Jefferson City because they wanted to raise prices," Shelby remembers, still boiling about the conversation. "Then I called my dad about it, and my dad assumed I was calling him to tell him the good news, and I didn't know about that. So dad answered and I was like 'I am mad at Sirius XM' and he was like, 'what?'"

Looking back, Dalton was glad that Shelby's dad kept his wits about him and didn't give anything away before they arrived at the Governor's Garden.

#### All the right words at the right time and you know 'em 'cause you know me...

"I told her where we were going and that we were going to take some pictures," Dalton said. "I like to take pictures of her. So I told her nonchalantly that we were going to take pictures."

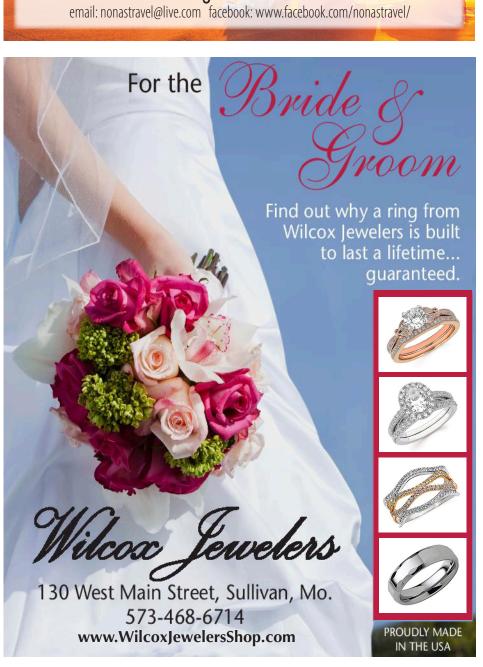
When Shelby started walking up the

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garden stairs, Dalton took a knee.

"I was so worried about the surgery, I wasn't thinking about our anniversary," Shelby remembers. "When the surgery was canceled between 10 and 11 a.m. and we went to eat for our anniversary — it was so unplanned it was unreal."

Looking back, she remembers the signs that she missed.

"Dalton was always two steps behind me while we were taking pictures," she said. "Then he proposed and he was crying and he was so nervous he could barely get the words 'will you marry me'

Of course, she said yes and then called her parents, Wendy and Doug Butler and Larry and Diane James.

"Then after we got engaged we called my dad and he was like 'yeah, Shelby, I thought you were going to tell me you were engaged and it was all about XM!"" Dalton admits he is a romantic.

"I had so many things I wanted to say and it did not come out," he said. "I didn't get to say it later either. I wear my emotions, unfortunately, so she gets bubbly affection all of the time."

#### Caught up in the moment...

Just like that, Shelby's mom, Wendy, was in full wedding-planning mode.

"We immediately booked Red Oak Valley (in Owensville)," Shelby said.

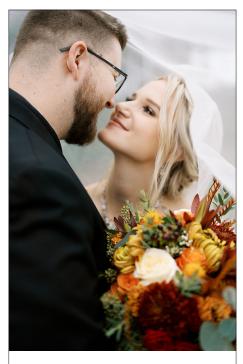
She was already working at the hair salon in Belle and several of her clients had mentioned the location.

"It was actually in construction when we heard about it," Shelby said. "We went and toured and they only had one date left in October the following year (2021) and we wanted October so we took what they had."

They bought bridesmaids gifts and asked their people to be part of the wedding party. She had an idea of what she wanted in a wedding.

"I wanted something very 'boho' and comfortable-feeling," Shelby said. "I wanted it to feel romantic like a big family gathering.'

The contrast was also important.



"It's more neutral with pampas grass and textures," she said about the flowers. "I really wanted moody, dark, but with very contrasting colors. Our wedding party is in black and the flowers are very bright."

Dalton added that she was constantly on Etsy, looking up ideas, researching photographers.

Originally, Shelby wanted to have the bouquets made with silk flowers because she thought they would be cheaper. Then a friend mentioned that they had requested bids for real and silk flowers and the real flowers were cheaper.

Armed with her ideas and pictures, she went to Judy Morris at Old World Creations.

"So I asked for a bid on the real ones, and they were cheaper," Shelby said. "I had different pictures of bouquets and she married them all together."

They hired Dillion Verhoff to DJ.

"He was my client when I was in a salon in Jefferson City and he followed me (when she changed locations) to Belle," Shelby said. "He has been doing (DJ) for three years and his business name is Night Moves Entertainment."

Due to the couple being one of the first groups to use the wedding venue, they had a different experience than what is offered now.

"They wanted us to use their caterer, but we had family who would serve the meal," Shelby said. "We basically got our food for free because they charged us for the food we had to buy and they cooked it and brought it in," she remembers. "I think now the venue requires you to use their caterer."



#### **Champagne & Lace**

With boho and comfort in mind, Shelby and her girls went dress shopping.

"I didn't want to plan anything around my dress," Shelby said when asked if she had wanted her bridesmaids to wear a style similar to her own dress choice. "Originally I wanted them to wear rust. I told them that. They weren't rude, but they were like, 'you seriously going to make us wear orange?""

Since she was really after the moody contrast, Shelby heeded the advice of her bridesmaids.

"I figured too much would be going on with fall-colored flowers and rust dresses and decided more on the black bridesmaids' dresses," she said.

When she floated the idea to some of her clients at the salon, they were asked, "is it a funeral or a wedding?" But Shelby laughed. She had a picture of what she wanted.

Her picture of the day included a dress from Breeze Boutique in Columbia that she found on the boutique's Instagram

"I wanted a boho dress, but I was also drawn into the plain white silk dresses," she said. "The very first dress was one I found on their Instagram page. I tried it on, it was just lace and simple, and I was like 'no."

The dress was so plain that it wasn't enough.

"I tried the plain silk, white dresses," she said. "I wanted long sleeves, 'cause, October."

After rejecting the dress she thought she would love, she found an off-white gown with a champagne-colored underlay and a white overlay.

"The train was long, lacey, and it had a low-cut back," Shelby said. "But it

also had spaghetti straps instead of long sleeves.'

She told the ladies working at the boutique that the dress was perfect and she would buy that one if it had sleeves.

"So they said they could add the sleeves and came out with a pair of sleeves!" she said. "You wouldn't know it, looking at the dress. There is lots of beading and a lot of detail work.'

The men acquired their tuxes from Mimi's Bridal in Sullivan.

Venue, dresses, music, and food planned the couple was ready to take a

#### Take a moment just to take it in The outdoor wedding was scheduled

to begin at 4 p.m. on the lawn at Red Oak Valley. The morning of Oct. 16 dawned rainily and it wasn't forecast to

"I don't think I was nervous once," Dalton said. "We all got up at 8:30 a.m. or so. Pictures with the groom and groomsmen were scheduled to begin at 1 p.m."

Shelby couldn't say she wasn't nervous at all.

"I am a ball of nerves the whole morning," she says. "I felt like I was not myself. I wanted to joke, but I was so nervous — so comfortable marrying Dalton, but there were so many people."

The venue included housing on site. "We stayed at the farmhouse for the weekend," Shelby said. "The girls were on the main level and the guys stayed in the basement."

When the girls woke and headed to "The Henhouse" to get ready, Shelby said the first drama of the day began.

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"Both my stylists pulled in and they had hit a deer on the way over, and one of the girls was nine months pregnant," she said.

Despite the stall in the morning, her stylists who were also coworkers were able to get everything in and begin working.

"Everyone was watching me and asking me questions and I was like 'leave me alone and stop looking," she remembers. "A lot of brides have a person who does things for them. Mom helped a lot. I was waiting by the window for Judy (Morris with Wold World Creations) to show up and help bring in flowers. Anything to stay calm."

As the day progressed and their photographer Michayla Slone Photography out of St. Louis and the videographer traveled back and forth between the bride and groom, Shelby felt herself growing more nervous. It got better when Dalton's letter arrived.

"It was like doing a first look, but instead it was a letter exchanged," she said because they didn't want to see each other beforehand.

"Hers talked about the love she has for me and always had for me and like how the "heys" in the hallways led to this and how she was going to be the one in white," Dalton said.

Shelby read her letter from Dalton while she was alone in the bridegroom but didn't share what he wrote.

About an hour before the wedding was scheduled to start, the rain stopped and Shelby did get a first look with her dad and stepdad.

"My dad's first look, that was the first time I cried," she said. "I walked up to my dad and he was turned around — it had rained the entire day. It was completely overcast during the ceremony — but the sun came out one time that day when I was with my dad."

Shelby's grandmother passed away when she was nine and she was wearing her grandma's wedding band that day, along with four charms with pictures of other grandparents who passed.

"Dad said 'grandma sent the sun," she said, and they both stood and cried. Her stepdad and bridesmaids also had a first look photo.

#### You still get my heart racing...

With 45 minutes to go, Dalton's groomsmen told him the rain had stopped and employees at the venue were outside using leaf blowers to dry the grass. Chairs and decorations were hastily put into place. More guests than expected were arriving and there was a scramble to add chairs.

"All of the bridesmaids were standing at the back door where we could see down to where the ceremony was," Shelby remembers. "Then I saw all of the groomsmen walking over and I was like 'I need a glimpse of Dalton and I will be fine.' Then I started bawling and I was like, ok, I feel better. I can do this."

A Polaris picked Shelby up behind the Henhouse and drove her to a treeline a little was back from the aisle and the seated guests.

Wearing black on black — black shirt, black tie, black pants, black shoes — Dalton was waiting for her at the front of the ceremony.

"A while later, I was standing at the altar and still not really nervous," Dalton said. "People always asked me if I was nervous and I wasn't 'cause I knew she was the one."

A family friend, Jonathan Wooley, served as their officiant.

"Jonathan kept giving me mints to make sure my mouth wasn't dry so I could talk," Dalton laughed. "We were up there for 20 minutes and I kept asking for another mint."

Dalton knew he wanted to wait to see Shelby while she was walking towards him and asked Johnathan to tell him when to turn around.

"It was just a matter of — I couldn't wait for her to walk down the aisle and that the weather would hold out, and it did but it didn't," he said.

Their grandparents, parents and siblings walked down the aisle to The Bucket List by Mitchell Tenpenny.

As the bridesmaids in black dresses began filing down the aisle to Dan & Shay's Glad You Exist holding bright colored flowers, a moody sky in the background, the flower girls and ring bearers lined the aisle to blow bubbles.

#### It's just us in this room...

The music changed to God Blessed the Broken Road by Rascal Flatts as the

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Photos by Sederburg Photography

# Vienna couple has perfect day for beautiful wedding

Jeremy & Kiley Neubert, Oct. 24, 2020

by Laura Schiermeier, Maries County Advocate Staff Writer



t was on the campus of Lincoln University in Jefferson City when Kiley Kerr first laid eyes on Jeremy Neubert. She saw this good looking, tall, blond haired young man in a ROTC uniform. She liked how he looked. She thought he seemed as though he would be nice and he certainly "had a nice charm to him."

Through a mutual friend on Facebook she found his name and she sent him a message. That was in February 2016. He didn't respond and she thought he wasn't interested in meeting her. Then, in May all of a sudden she heard from him through Messenger. His message to her said, "I just now saw this."

#### The two began to talk.

Kiley, 26, is the daughter of Chad and Kim Kerr of Jefferson City. Her dad is a college softball coach and the family has lived in Iowa, Texas, Kansas and Missouri. Kiley and her sister both played softball on LU's team. She earned a degree in elementary education from Lincoln University and is a teacher in a diverse school in Jefferson City. She loves teaching, saying it's a very meaningful profession.

Jeremy, 27, is the son of Ken and Peggy Neubert of Vienna. He earned a degree in agri-business and military science from Lincoln University. He works at ABB in Jefferson City and is a member of the Missouri National Guard. He is also a farmer.

Kiley said they began talking and getting to know one another and when she came back to school in July, Jeremy invited her to come to see the farm where he lived in Maries County. She remembers it was July 13 when she came to the farm and he showed her piglets. She was not raised on a farm and it was all new

Three years later, it was on that farm, close to where the piglets had been and near the pond, when he took her on another four-wheeler ride. It was very hot, about 97 degrees. Jeremy stopped the four-wheeler and got off. The next thing she knew he was down on one knee with a ring in his hand, asking her to share his life with him. Kylie said she kept Jeremy waiting for a few minutes because she was so shocked, having no idea at all that the moment of his proposal would be that day. Incidentally, she had asked him to marry her a couple of times and he'd said no. "He kept me waiting awhile." On that hot day, she said yes. They had waited until they were both finished with school. She graduated in Dec. 2018 and him in Dec. 2019.

Kiley said she knew she and Jeremy Neubert "had a very special bond." Jeremy said, "I was hoping she was

the one." It's hard to get married during a global pandemic. They set the wedding date for June 27, 2020, right in the middle of the pandemic. It was challenging because churches were not having

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Sunday services never mind weddings. Their alternative was to have an outside wedding. But, two weeks before their wedding date, Jeremy's church, Visitation Church in Vienna, opened back up. They had a small, intimate service with a total of about 20 people who sat in groups social distancing from the others. Fr. Matthew Flatley performed the wedding, the last one he did in Vienna before moving on to another church posting in Hannibal.

Kylie was beautiful as she walked down the aisle in the historic Vienna Catholic Church. Her wedding gown came from Gracie's Bridal in Springfield. She loved the first dress she tried on. It was all lace, ivory in color with capped sleeves and a long train. It fit her perfectly and she loved it. "I felt pretty good in it," she said. While at the bridal boutique she tried on other wedding dresses, but chose the first one. Her bridesmaids bought her cowboy boots to wear with her dress, and she added a bejeweled and gemstone belt to the dress. On her wedding day, Kiley wore a sunflower headpiece with an added butterfly broach that belonged to her grandmother. Kiley's mom prepared all of the flowers for the wedding.

The navy blue bridesmaids dresses came from an online source, azazie.com and were the perfect incorporation of her theme of navy blue with sunflowers, baby's breath and daisies.

Jeremy looked sharp in his military uniform and his groomsmen wore tuxedoes from The Flower Basket in Vienna.

A co-worker's wife, Amanda Musselman, was the photographer for their wedding. She got some great shots at the church. Kiley said she really likes the photo of her and Jeremy at a stained glass window in Visitation Church. She wants to take that photo again when they've been married 50 years. Kiley said she's told Jeremy, "He's not allowed to pass away first because I can't live without him."

From the church they went to the Neubert farm and took more photos there, which turned out "so pretty." Two big tents were set up and the wedding guests parked in the hay field. They rented a dance floor and unlike the limited number of people who could be in the church, they had a big crowd of people at the wedding reception.

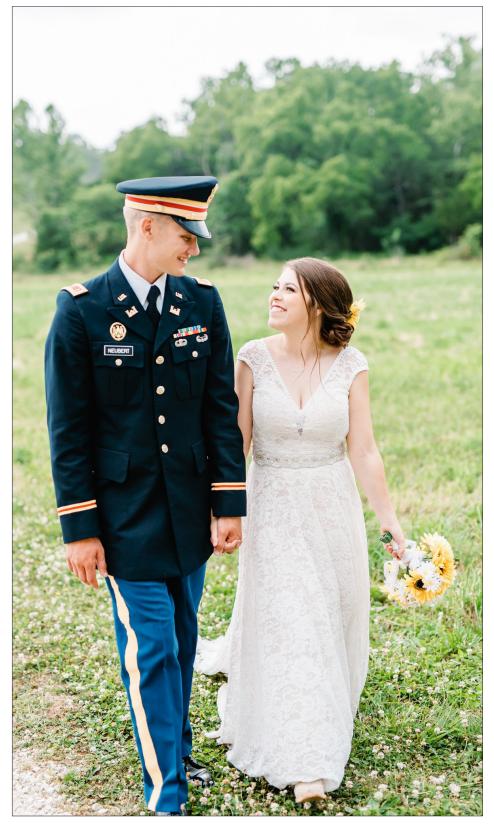
After the photos were finished, Kiley and Jeremy lighted a unity candle and shared more personal, less traditional vows. Jeremy said he will take her on side-by-side rides, and she said on good and hard days she will be his rock to lean on. "I cried when I read mine and laughed when he read his," she said.

The meal was catered Mexican cuisine. Kiley said they wanted something different and the food was really good. Her mom made the wedding cake, which was a cheesecake, and they had cupcakes from Sam's Club.

The couple hired DJ Dylan Verhoff from Freeburg, owner of Night Moves Entertainment, to provide the music for their reception. Kiley said there was a 100 percent chance of rain the whole day and it held off until about 11 p.m. and by that time, they were finished with the reception. About the day, she says, "It was perfect."

Four days after their beautiful wedding, Jeremy left for military basic officer leadership course at Fort Leonard

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the Broken Road by Rascal Flatts as the Polaris dropped Shelby and her dad off a little way up from the aisle.

"There were bubbles on the grass," Shelby remembers as she and her father approached the aisle. "When dad and I got to the end of the aisle where it began, that is when Jonathan turned Dalton around."

His first glimpse of his wife was something he will never forget.

"I turned around and I died," Dalton said. "The pictures will show it. I bawled like a baby and I wasn't uncomfortable. I just bawled in front of 200 people."

The couple didn't have a unity candle ceremony or write their own vows.

"When I asked Dalton about doing the vows, he was like 'I am already going to be crying," she said.

There was some comic relief during their emotional ceremony.

"As we are getting married, he messed up a part and then it was my turn," Shelby said. "I messed up the same part"

"Shelb did the exact same thing and paused and I called her out and was like 'you have to say it too!' and everyone started laughing," Dalton added.

#### **Back In Black**

"The bridal party walked into the reception to Back in Black by ACDC," Shelby said. "We thought it was funny and Dalton and I walked in to Don't Stop Believing by Journey and everyone who knows me thought that was hilarious."

Dinner was harrowing because more guests came than were expected.

"We had just enough," Shelby said. Their best man gave a memorable speech.

"The best man's speech made everyone super emotional and it was the shortest speech ever," Shelby said. "My sister did a speech and it was hilarious. She wanted us to have her nieces and nephews. I was like 'please, stop.""

Their first dance was to their song.

"Our song since we very first started dating is Never Stop The Wedding Version By Safety Suit," Shelby said. "Every time anyone asks us what our song is, no one knows what it is."

She danced with her father to I Loved Her First by Heartland and he danced with his mother to My Wish by Rascal Flatts

"I was going to pick Daddy's Girl (by Red Sovine, but dad called and said he liked this one," Shelby said.

The group had fun and even their parents were able to pull a prank. After the first dances were over, the DJ said they were going to pull the bride and groom out for one more dance.

"One of our friends not in the wedding coordinated with my dad and stepmom and he bought a wedding dress from Goodwill," she said. "The DJ cut the song and he ran out and pushed me out of the way and he put underwear on Dalton's head."

Their friend has a giant eagle tattooed on his chest.

"Then there was the wedding dress," Shelby laughed.

"I thought it was classy," Dalton added.

#### I'll never stop holding your hand, opening your door, choosing you, babe...I'll never get used to you

The following Monday, Dalton and Shelby left for their honeymoon to Gulf Shores, Alabama.

"We have always rented in Belle and now are getting ready to buy our first home by this summer," Shelby said. "We are both settled in our careers, he is Belle's Territorial Sales Manager for Johnstone Supply. I am a Stylist at Southern Roots Salon."

#### You are my life, I don't deserve you...

Dalton said he wouldn't have done anything differently, but then again Shelby did most of the work.

"I didn't want to do something and then her be disappointed," Dalton said. "I wanted her to have the wedding she wanted."

Even the rain added to the picture Shelby wanted for her big day.

"No sooner than bridesmaids and groomsmen were done with speeches it was pouring again," Dalton said. "It felt like God was like 'here you go. You wanted it, here it is."

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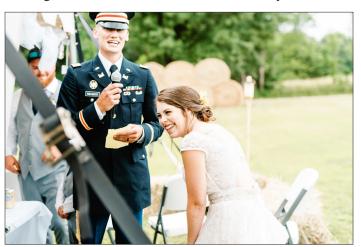
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Wood. He was busy with this until November. The couple waited until March when she had spring break from school and they took their honeymoon in Florida. It was a tiny, tiny beach studio hotel in Madeira, Florida, which Kiley said was very romantic and cozy. They enjoyed the small beach community, walking the boardwalk and taking in the local attractions such as Harry Potter World where they bought wizard wands and rode some interesting rides.

The couple has a lot of compassion for each other. Kylie said about her husband, "He is so caring, funny and makes me feel safe. He's my best friend and an amazing father."

About his wife, Jeremy said he loves her personality and likes that she's a "big reader."

They've settled on a small farm they bought along Highway 28. "I love it now," Kiley says. She's learning about being a farmer, saying she does the inside, house things and Jeremy does the outside work with the chickens, turkeys, and working on the fence needed for some cows. Kiley said it's nice to stay in one



place as she moved so much in her young life. She wanted to have roots, to start a family and raise children while being part of a community.

They welcomed a baby boy, born Dec. 12, 2021, whom they

named Remmington Mathew Neubert. Kiley said as a new mom she was nervous about bringing the baby home but it all worked out.

The couple has plans to add on to their house, buy more land, and to raise Remmington to "be a kind human being." They want to grow their family in the future, and "grow our faith and love for each other."

Kiley said their wedding day was a dream come true. Even though it was held during the pandemic, it all worked out. It was a beautiful wedding and nobody got Covid-19 from the event. In years to come, she is among the people who can say, "Let me tell you about the year 2020."







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