

Wedding Bells 2024



GASCONADE
COUNTY

Republican

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14, 2024

TWO FEATURED WEDDINGS INSIDE:

- Rademacher/Keeven – page 2B
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Thresher shows lead to Rademacher union

Colton and Melissa Rademacher, May 6, 2023

by Elise Brochu, Special Correspondent for the Gasconade County Republican

I can see your dreams ...

When Melissa Keeven's parents invited Colton Rademacher to attend a thresher show, neither knew that day would change their lives. "I guess I knew her dad before I met her," Colton said. "Then, really, we met at the show in Rosebud. Her parents invited me to come along with them to another show, then at that show, me and her kind of got to talking, and I asked her if she wanted to go with me to another show that next weekend."

Their first date was on Sept. 7, 2019.

Colton's great-grandfather was a charter member of the Owensville Thresher's Association, so he grew up going to shows. Melissa's family joined later, but the thresher's association has been a big part of their lives. Melissa's parents are Larry and Sarah Keeven, and Colton's are Daryl and Crystal Rademacher.



I wanna spend the rest of my life with you by my side ...

"A couple weeks in, after we started dating, I pretty

much knew she was the one," said Colton, who proposed on April 23, 2022. "We bought a house in February, and we kind of had a housewarming party, and I asked her then."

Melissa wanted a rustic but classy wedding. The couple chose White Mule Winery for their venue and catering. Kathy Echols made their cakes. The photographer was Sunny Sky Photography, and JD Imagery provided videography. The couple did their own flowers.

"We kind of had an idea of what we wanted, and we kind of just went with the flow," Colton said. "It kind of just fell together."

Melissa added, "My parents and sisters really helped out a bunch with the decorating and everything beforehand." Colton used two of his tractors as decorations, and the groom's cake featured a topper depicting a bride trying to

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Wedding photos by Morgan Schoenfeld with Sunny Sky Photography (see advertisement on page 4)

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LLC



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Hinch/Ryerson Wedding
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A special thanks to these couples for sharing their stories.

Rademacher

• from page 2B

pull her groom away from a tractor. Melissa found her A-line, backless dress at Wedding Creations in Washington. “The dress just kind of suited to me,” she said. “I had a day when I was trying on a whole bunch of them, and I just kept saying, ‘No, I think I like that dress.’ And you always want to stick to the gut of what you like because then you’ll regret it down the line.”

I’ve never been this close to anyone or anything ...

They were married on May 6, 2023. Colton said he wrote his vows the morning of the wedding. Melissa wrote hers a week or two in advance. The couple chose not to see each other before the ceremony.

“We kind of both got dressed at the B&B there at White Mule, but any time he was coming in, I went and hid so he couldn’t see me in my dress,” Melissa said, adding that her mom, sisters, and bridesmaids were with her.

The first reveal with her dad on the day of the wedding was a moment Melissa will always remember. “I didn’t let him see my dress until the day of the wedding either, until right before we were walking down (to the) ceremony, and I did a whole first-look reveal, and I made him cry,” she said.

Their wedding song was “Amazed” by Lonestar. Colton said during their first dance, it was like they were the only people in

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COLTON CHOSE Andrew Scheer and Benjamin Bode as his best men. Groomsmen were Colt Peanick, Devon Dowler and Benjamin Bode. Melissa's maids of honor were Abigail Keeven and Cassidy Keeven. Bridesmaids were Victoria Nesselroad, Mackenzie Rademacher and Kaitlyn Bode.



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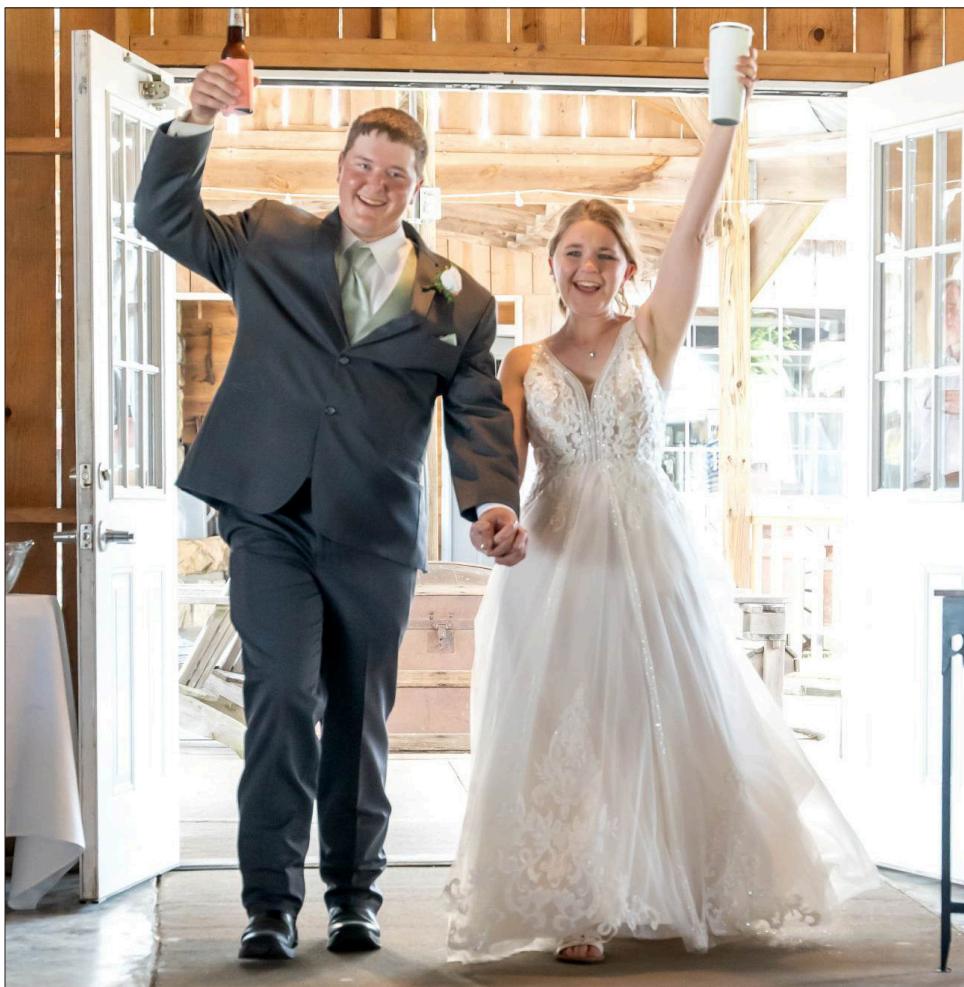
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Rademacher • from page 3B

the room.

It just keeps gettin' better ...

The couple went to Durango and Colorado Springs for their honeymoon. "We've got a buddy that lives out in Colorado," Colton said. "He works on the Durango (&) Silverton narrow gauge railroad, and he got us tickets for a train ride to go up through the mountains, and I thought that was really neat."

The couple lives in Owensville. Melissa works at the hospital in Washington, and Colton drives for Pioneer Truss.

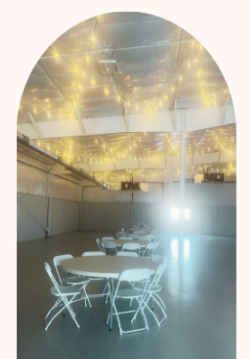
COLTON AND Melissa held their ceremony and reception at White Mule Winery. Behind the couple at the ceremony were two restored antique tractors; a 1942 Farmall H, in memory of Colton's grandparents Ray and Mildred Bock, and Melissa's 1951 John Deere B.



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Songs tailor-made for father-daughter dances

Weddings can be as novel or traditional as couples prefer. Couples who go the traditional route will undoubtedly include certain spotlight dances in the reception.

The father-daughter dance is a staple of a wedding reception. According to the experts at Fred Astaire Dance Studios, the history of father-daughter dances can be traced back decades. The dance once was one last nod to Dad before the bride's husband became the most important man in her life. Now it's more symbolic of general love and affection.

Times have certainly changed from the first father-daughter dances and this tradition no longer carries the same meaning. In fact, despite what the name may imply, father-daughter dances needn't take place with a father at all, especially if he passed away or is not in the bride's life. She can choose any special person, whether a father figure, uncle, brother, mentor, etc. to honor during the dance.

Traditionally the father-daughter dance (and mother-son dance) takes place immediately following the newlyweds' first dance together. However, some opt to have

it after the toasts or before the cake cutting. Couples can make their preferences known prior to the reception and schedule these dances any time they desire, especially since they are frequently preceded by a special announcement.

While many brides prefer to dance to a slow-paced, heartfelt song, this needn't always be the case. In recent years, some daddy-daughter duos have opted to put on shows with humorous dances or even entertaining showcases of fancy footwork to songs of all types. The song should match the vibe of the wedding. That said, certain songs seem tailor-made for the times during the reception when love and gratitude are expressed during these bittersweet dances.

Country

- "The Man Who Loves You the Most," Zac Brown Band
- "My Little Girl," Tim McGraw
- "Just Fishin'," Trace Adkins

Big Band

- "Unforgettable," Nat King Cole
- "The Way You Look Tonight," Frank Sinatra

- "Swinging on a Star," Bing Crosby
- "You've Got a Friend," James Taylor
- "Let it Be Me," Ray LaMontagne
- "Father and Daughter," Paul Simon
- "Wildflowers," Tom Petty
- "Constellations," Jack Johnson

Rock

- "Sweet Child O' Mine," Guns N' Roses
- "When You Need Me," Bruce Springsteen
- "Scarlet Begonias," Grateful Dead

R&B

- "Ain't that Love," Ray Charles
- "Daddy," Beyoncé
- "Dance with My Father," Luther Vandross
- "Love of My Life," Brian McKnight

Tried and True

- "Butterfly Kisses," Bob Carlisle
- "Wonderful World," Louis Armstrong
- "Hero," Mariah Carey
- "You Are So Beautiful," Joe Cocker
- "Lullabye (Goodnight My Angel)," Billy Joel



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Did you know?

A number of variables affect how much engaged couples will spend on their weddings. Personal preferences, location and the season in which couples get married are just some of the factors that can affect the final cost of a wedding. However, one aspect couples can count on regarding wedding spending is the reception will likely require the most significant financial investment. The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study found that the average cost of a wedding in 2022 was \$30,000. The study also found that the biggest investment couples make is the venue. Couples indicated they spent about 37 percent of their overall budget on a wedding venue. Though some couples may spend more than that and others may spend less, engaged couples currently planning their weddings should know that the cost of the venue where they will tie the knot will likely end up requiring the most significant investment of any component related to their wedding.



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How to build a wedding budget

Wedding planning is a unique experience unlike any endeavor most couples will ever encounter. Much effort goes into planning a wedding, and that includes building a budget that ensures the big day will be fun without breaking the bank.

Most couples planning a wedding have never tied the knot before, so it can be difficult to determine a reasonable amount to spend. It's easy to go overboard when planning a wedding, and couples may find their list of wants and, consequently, their expenses, growing as they get into the weeds of wedding planning. Though it might require some difficult decisions, couples can keep these tips in mind so they can build a wedding budget that won't land them in debt after saying, "I do."

- **Determine funding.** The days when a bride's parents would finance the wedding entirely on their own are largely a thing of the past. According to a recent WeddingWire Newlywed Report, parents now pay for 52 percent of wedding expenses. As couples begin establishing a wedding budget, it's imperative that they first determine who, if anyone, will be helping them finance the big day. Fifty-two percent of wedding expenses is a significant amount of money, but in that scenario, couples will still need to come up with roughly half of the money needed to fund their weddings. Couples without substantial savings may be forced to cut back in order to avoid beginning their life as a married couple in debt.

- **Make a list of potential expenses.** Location will be a significant factor when determining potential expenses. For example, a 2022 ValuePenguin analysis of data from The Wedding Report found that the average wedding in Massachusetts cost roughly \$30,500 in 2020, while couples tying the knot in Arkansas spent around \$12,500 on their weddings. With such wild fluctuations, it's important that couples get an accurate estimate of how much it may cost them to get married in a given city. Couples who met in a city and still live in a city but grew up in a suburb might save a considerable sum by getting married in their hometowns. Compare and contrast prices in locales you're considering, and then build your budget accordingly. This can help you avoid sticker shock and going over budget. Notable expenses to budget include the venue, attire (i.e., wedding dress and tuxedo rental), hairstyle and makeup, entertainment, photography, and transportation, among others.

- **Make a list of what's most important.** Most couples will have to compromise in order to avoid taking on debt to finance

their weddings. An earnest discussion about what's most important to each person can ensure you both get what you want. Each person can make a list of their priorities, ranking them from most important to least important. Once lists are shared, couples can see where their priorities converge and where they diverge. Any items that rank low on each person's list of priorities can be afforded less funding, while those that are high on each list can take up more of the budget, if necessary.

- **Commit to a limit before spending a dime.** Committing to a limit before spending a dime can help couples keep wedding costs more manageable. Once that number is defined, couples can then work within its parameters, which can make potentially difficult decisions a little easier by narrowing options at a time when options can seem endless.

A well-planned budget can be just what couples need to begin married life on strong financial footing.



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Options abound when shopping for wedding reception venues

A wedding ceremony is a joyous occasion couples will remember forever. As couples walk down the aisle after making their union official, the focus then shifts to the reception, where a fun-filled night of food, laughter and dancing awaits.

Nothing can trump the ceremony in terms of meaningful moments, but wedding receptions tend to last far longer. That's why couples devote so much effort to finding the right reception venue. As couples get

to work on planning their post-ceremony party, they can consider a wide range of reception venue options.

Banquet hall

Banquet halls are perhaps the most traditional option for hosting wedding receptions. They're also among the most popular, as the The Knot 2022 Real Wed-

See **Venue**, Page 15B

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Time-honored wedding traditions

Weddings are special events that celebrate two individuals' love for one another. Weddings bring together friends and family to witness couples share vows and devote their lives to each other.

Wedding guests recognize that certain components are commonplace in ceremonies and receptions. Perhaps you were once a ring bearer or caught the bouquet? There's a rich history behind the traditions that feature prominently at many weddings. Here's a look at traditions past and present and the meaning behind these customs.

Marriage

The custom of marriage can be traced back thousands of years to when hunters and gatherers started coming together to form societies and farm land. In order to ensure the success of communities, couplings were developed to produce offspring and maintain households.

Tie the knot

Getting married is sometimes referred to as "tying the knot." This stems from the custom of "handfasting," which is a common practice among various cultures around the world, and notably in ancient Rome. The bride and groom's hands are tied together for the duration of the ceremony, not to be released until the wedding is made official. This isn't something you see too often at modern weddings, but can be something unique couples may want to consider.

Bridal bouquet

A bouquet of beautiful flowers is held by the bride on her wedding day. Roses, orchids, peonies, and other fragrant blooms are often included, but in ancient times brides' bouquets were likely made of herbs. According to the resource Minted Weddings, these aromatic herbs

See **Tradition**, Page 15B



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DIANE THOMAS



Tradition • from page 14B

were used to ward off evil spirits.

Veil

Evil spirits also were the basis for the wearing of bridal veils, as they were utilized to hide brides from these miscreants. Veils now are more style than substance.

Bridesmaids

In ancient Rome, bridesmaids were tasked with protecting the bride. They wore the same dresses as the bride to confuse evil spirits from finding the soon-to-be-betrothed and cursing her. Today's bridesmaids are less decoy and more helper. They may wear similar dresses to the bride and one another, but they aren't trying to fool any spirits.

Tossing rice

Rice and grains were long regarded as signs of prosperity and fertility, according to the gifting company Personal Creations. Therefore, couples were showered with rice to ensure their good fortune. Consumption of uncooked rice has been proven to be detrimental to some wildlife, so rice has now been widely replaced with bubbles or birdseed.

Cutting the cake

At the reception, many couples link hands and make the first cut in their wedding cakes. Wedding Wire says it's a tradition that around 80 percent of wedding couples partake in. It is believed this tradition symbolizes the couple's first official task performed together, and marks the promise to support and take care of one another throughout the marriage. However, in the past, brides were responsible for cutting the wedding cake alone and distributed slices to guests to aid in fertility, according to BakingNook.com.

Weddings are full of traditions with interesting histories.

Venue • from page 13B

dings Study found that one in five couples had their wedding receptions at banquet halls. There's no end to the options available to couples who want to host their receptions at banquet halls, which run the gamut from more intimate venues to larger sites that can host hundreds of guests. Some banquet halls offer various rooms and even different styles of rooms, from traditional to modern, all at one site. Because banquet halls are designed to host special occasions like weddings, couples may find they are an especially planner-friendly option.

Beach venue

Beach reception venues are not limited to coastal communities. Though oceanfront venues are an option for couples who live on a coast or those opting for destination weddings, even landlocked locales have beach venues along rivers and lakes. When considering a beach venue, couples should inquire about contingency locations should Mother Nature not cooperate come the big day.

Boat/yacht

Keeping with a water theme, couples may want to look into celebrating on a boat or yacht. This option can make for an especially memorable and unique ex-

perience, but it's important to keep guests in mind before booking a boat or yacht for your reception. Some guests, such as aging relatives or loved ones with young children (at home or at the reception), may want to attend the reception but not stay for its duration, which is not an option on a boat or yacht. Others may be hesitant due to seasickness or another preexisting medical condition. If no such issues are likely to present, couples may find it hard to beat the ambiance of a reception aboard a boat or yacht.

Campgrounds

The Knot reports a surge in the popularity of campground receptions in recent years. A campground reception can be ideal for couples who love the great outdoors and prefer a less formal and more fun-focused reception. This option may require a little extra coordinating on couples' part, as they will likely need to supply all of the food and beverages and may even need to arrange for guests to safely access the venue.

There's no shortage of locations for couples to host their wedding receptions. Each venue is unique, and couples can undoubtedly find a facility that has what they're looking for.

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The most popular honeymoon destinations

Couples have different ideas regarding what makes a great honeymoon destination. Some couples may want to spend their trips with toes in the sand as they relax on a secluded beach, while others might want to traverse rapids in a tandem kayak. There's simply no rules when it comes to choosing a honeymoon destination other than picking a place each person will enjoy. With that in mind, couples looking for inspiration can consider the 10 most popular honeymoon locales as determined by a recent survey from Expedia.com.

1. United Kingdom: This might come as a surprise, but the most common honeymoon destination in 2022 was actually multiple destinations across the United Kingdom. A multi-city train trip through various parts of England and Scotland was the most popular honeymoon trip in 2022.

2. Dubai, United Arab Emirates: Honeymooners looking for something upscale can consider Dubai, which combines sun and sand with unrivaled luxury.

3. Paris, France: Little needs to be said about this European city considered one of the most romantic locales in the world.

4. Florida: Pristine beaches, awe-inspiring sunsets and seemingly endless sun and warmth made Florida the fourth most popular honeymoon destination in 2022.

5. Los Angeles: Los Angeles truly has it all, with sun-soaked beaches, world-renowned restaurants and, of course, Hollywood.

6. Madrid to Seville, Spain: Couples who want to make multiple stops can consider this popular option, which takes visitors from Spain's capital and most populous city to one of its most historic and unique destinations.

7. Rome, Naples and Amalfi Coast, Italy: A tour of three of Italy's most wondrous locales needs no introduction, which is undoubtedly why these three places were a must-visit for many honeymooning couples in 2022.

8. St. Lucia: An idyllic island country in the eastern Caribbean, St. Lucia was recently named as one of the best places to visit in 2023 by Tripadvisor.

9. Iceland: Iceland has experienced a tourism boom in recent years as more and more people have discovered the unique beauty and extraordinary culture of this



island nation in the North Atlantic.

10. The Maldives: An archipelagic state in South Asia, The Maldives has the lowest elevation of any country in the world,

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Questions to ask when vetting wedding vendors

The process of planning a wedding involves the coordination of many different components, including people. It can be stressful and it can be exciting. Chances are the couple-to-be will be handling conversations with vendors they may have never worked with before.

It may be tempting to simply sign on the dotted line when hiring wedding vendors and hope for the best. But the process can prove more fruitful when couples prepare for it by compiling a list of questions designed to ensure they know what they're getting before they enter into a contract.

Is the date available?

The most important question to ask is whether the vendor is available on the day you have chosen to get married. The house of worship or place where you will be exchanging vows should be set first, and then additional vendors can be interviewed to confirm their availability and the scope of their services.

How long have you been in business?

How long a company has been in business, and more importantly how much experience they have with weddings, can be a telling detail. Experience is not always indicative of ability, but vendors with long track records

of success may prove easy to work with.

Are you insured?

Check if the vendor is insured. It can be a risky proposition to work with vendors who are not insured.

Will you be on site to oversee things?

From florists to private caterers to specialty performers, it is acceptable to ask vendors if they will be there the day of the wedding to manage things or if it will be a third party or another representative. Confirm all pertinent details, including who will be there on the day of the wedding, in advance.

What is your payment schedule and cancellation policy?

Understand how the vendor expects to be paid. Many businesses require a deposit up front to book the date. Some may want payment in full a week or so before the wedding day. Others may enable you to make monthly payments for a set period of time. Ask how the vendor handles cancellations, and whether any deposit or portion of the money already paid will be refunded.

When is the last possible date for making changes?

Know how long you have to make any changes to your plans, colors, music choices, or other details.

Are there any additional fees?

It's important to determine if gratuity, travel, overtime charges, cleaning fees, or any other charges are included in the contract or if it leaves room for additional expenses.

Is mine your only wedding that day?

Figure out if the vendor handles just one wedding per day or if they have staff to cover multiple weddings on a given date.

Do prices differ depending on time of day, month or year?

Certain dates are busier than others. Find out if the vendor charges a premium for holidays or particular times of the year.

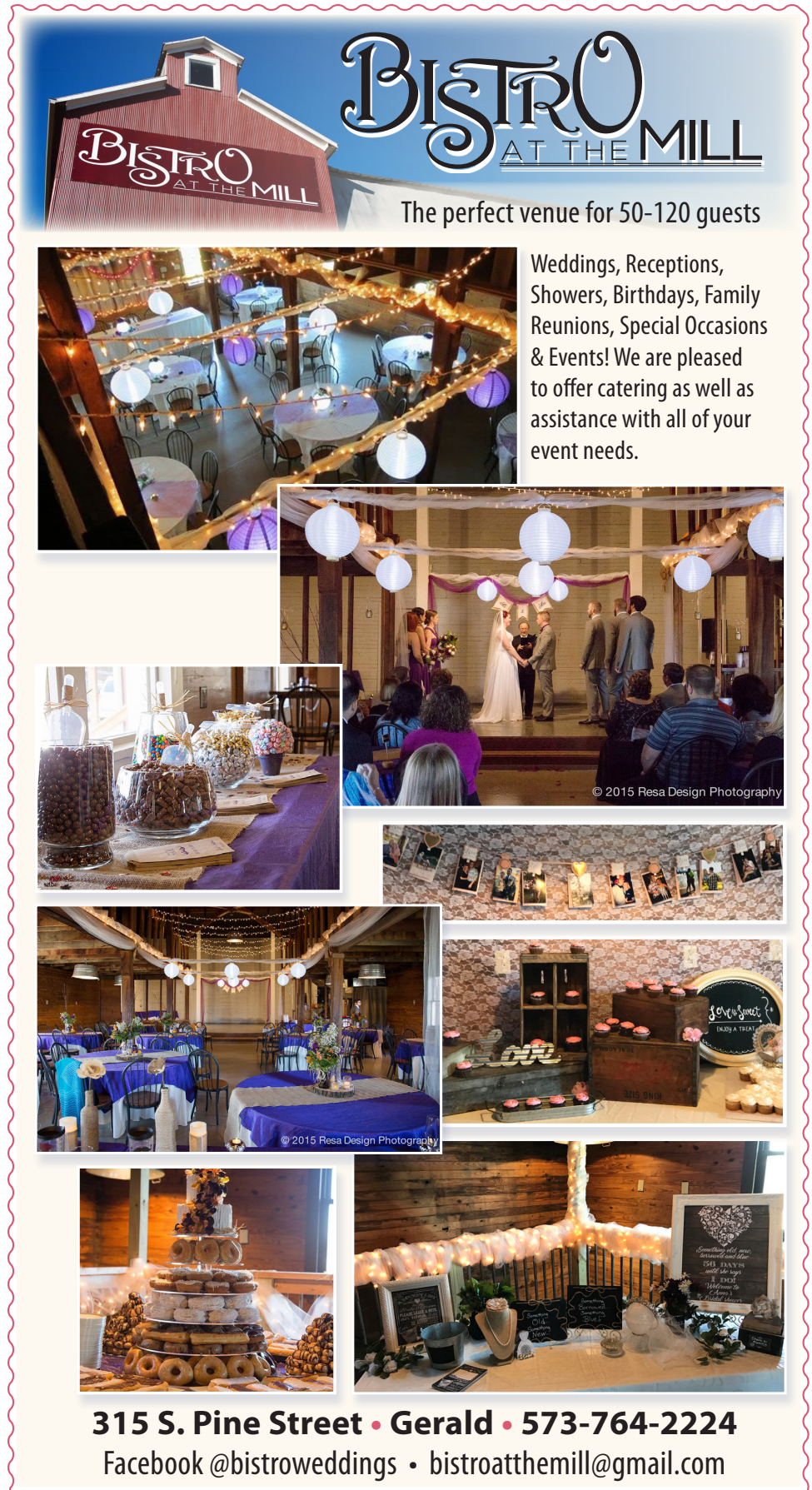
Couples are urged to exercise due diligence and ensure contracts with vendors specify all details before signing on the dotted line.



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The greatest love story

Nick and Kelsy Hinch, Nov. 4, 2023

by Elise Brochu, Special Correspondent for the Gasconade County Republican

They said I was nothing but a troublemaker ...

Kelsy Ryerson and Nick Hinch have known each other their whole lives. They grew up in Owensville and went to school together, including preschool. “It’s kind of funny, because when we look back at our pictures, we’re always standing next to each other, so it’s just kind of funny. It’s like we were always meant to be,” Kelsy said.

Nick first developed feelings for Kelsy in seventh grade, while both participated in “The Scoop”, a middle school broadcasting group. He asked her out multiple times over the years, but she declined.

During their sophomore year of high school, Nick wrote “Will you be my girlfriend” on a volleyball, and Kelsy finally said yes. “I bought my own (volleyball),”



Photos by Kristin Carr Photography (see ad below)

Nick was quick to point out.

His mother was the volleyball coach and he considered stealing one of hers, then thought better of it. That phase of their relationship, however, was short-lived, and they broke up.

They got back together on Aug. 2, 2017, during their senior year. Their first date was Cracker Barrel in Sullivan, followed by an Avengers movie, and they have been together ever since.

‘Cause I was gonna be your forever...

In late July 2022, the couple drove to the Smokey Mountains for a weekend away. Nick had planned a perfect mountaintop proposal. “We were supposed to go hiking that weekend, and then we got down there

See **Hinch**, Page 19B



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THE BLACK steel bridge at Red Oak Valley wedding venue provides a dramatic backdrop for this photograph from the Hinch wedding. The river bed they are standing in recreates Nick's wedding proposal to Kelsey.

Hinch • from page 18B

and it rained - all day, every day," Nick said. "So, we just happened to be out on the town one day, then we went to some of the smaller national parks. There were some open rocks in this river that we could stand on, like being in the river, and that's where I proposed."

"There was, like, a little waterfall right below us," Kelsey said, adding that she was so excited she blanked out, and he had to ask her again before she could answer. Her answer was "yes", this time forever. The date was Aug. 1, 2022.

Nick bought her ring from Kay Jewelers about a week before he proposed, and they ordered his from Manly Bands online.

The couple went to Red Oak Valley the day they got back from their trip, and booked the White Barn and chapel the same day. "I met with a lot of the vendors and tried to get those scheduled," Kelsey said. "We knew Judy was going to do our flowers, because Nick's mom, Gayle, works with Judy."

The couple chose Kristin Carr Photography and Judy Morris with Old World Creations as their florist. Kathy Echols with The Kathy Echols Kake made their cake,

See **Hinch**, Page 22B

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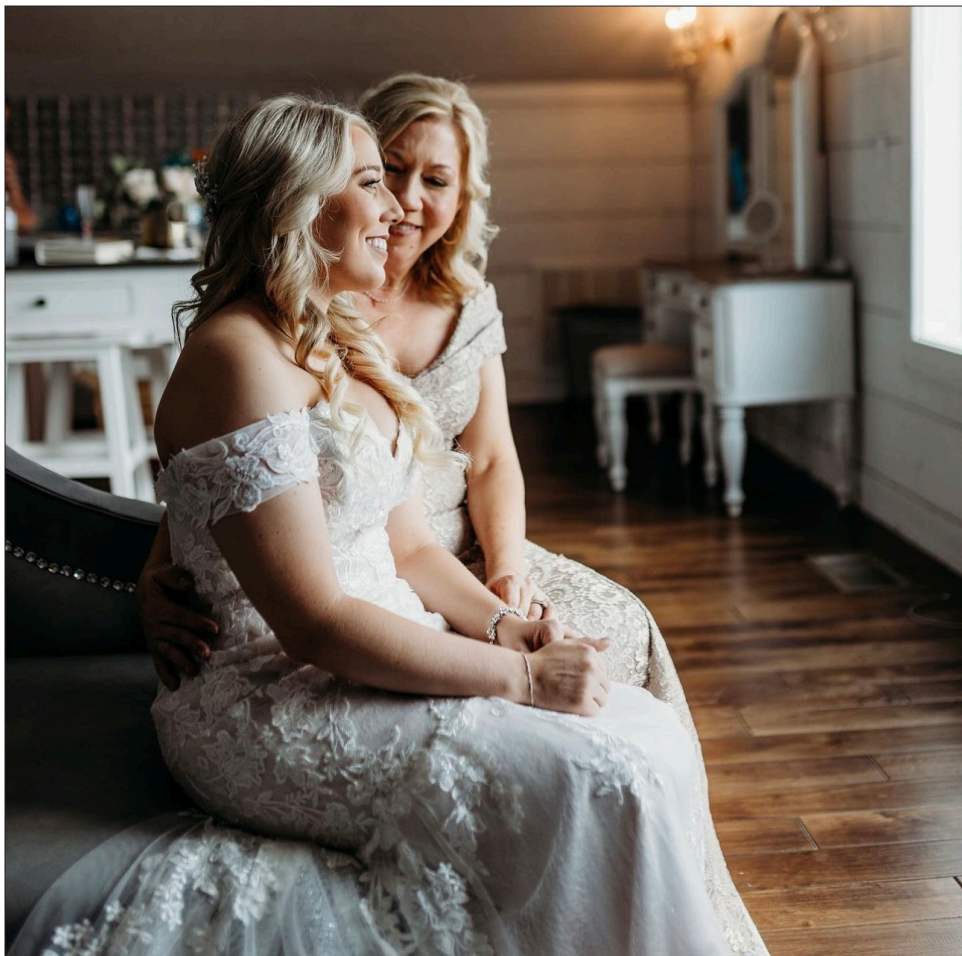
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KELSEY RYERSON sits with her mother, Tammy before the wedding ceremony.



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Hinch • from page 19B

and Red Oak Valley catered the event. Sis Pix Photobooth provided a photobooth. Their DJ was Nick Robinson with Nitelyfe Entertainment. Natalie Peterson with NP Design provided wedding invitations and save-the-date cards. The wedding favor cups and koozies were by 1633 Designs.

“In September, I started looking at wedding dresses, and in October I actually picked my dress,” Kelsey said.

She was looking for a satiny white ball gown with a little sparkle, and she found the perfect dress at Breeze Bridal Boutique in Jefferson City. “One of the girls that was helping me asked if I wanted to try the fitted dress, just to see what it’s like with the lace, and I was like ‘Sure, why not? I’m not going to like this at all.’ Once I tried it on, it was just like instant ‘Oh my gosh, I really like this dress.’ Once I walked out, my mom and Nick’s mom were with me, and they instantly started tearing up, and so I started tearing up, too. Once they put the veil on, they added some sleeves to the side of the dress, and that’s when I knew it was the one. It was just perfect for me. It was the complete opposite of what I wanted,” Kelsey laughed.

Tuxedos came from Old World Creations, and the bridesmaids’ dresses from Azazie.

Kelsey wanted a subtle, elegant wedding, with cool, neutral tones. “Where colors kind of went together but nothing was too bold, so that Nick and I could stand out,” she clarified. “It was hard, because, on Pinterest, the colors I was choosing were just starting to become popular, so there wasn’t anything that I could really go off of. I really had to make it from scratch. Every detail that I had to do was really thought out.”

“It was a process,” Nick added.

But, I was what you wanted; you were what I needed ...

Nov. 4, 2023 — The couple saw each other the morning of the wedding, to calm Kelsey’s nerves, but went their separate ways to get ready. “We didn’t do a first look, or anything like that,” Nick said.

Crystal Valley with Great Reflections

and Kim Cahill with 28th & Main Boutique & Salon handled the bridal party’s hair, and Ashley Schlottach did their make-up. Kelsey’s jewelry came from Olive & Pipe.

She couldn’t wait to see Nick, and he was just as anxious to see her. “The morning seemed like an eternity, because I was just kind of like ‘What do I do all day?’ Because it only takes me about 15 minutes. I already shaved and showered the morning of, so it’s like all you’ve got to do is get dressed and ready to go,” Nick said.

The first time they saw each other after getting ready was when Kelsey was walking down the aisle. “Which I really recommend, because it gives that special moment, and everyone else can see that special moment with you,” Kelsey said.

They both said their first thought when seeing the other was “try not to cry.” Kelsey added that she also thought “This is it. This is what I’ve dreamed of since I was a little girl. My dream is coming true.”

Although they both teared up a little, neither of them wanted to be crying in the pictures. “We paid too much money for these not to be perfect,” Nick laughed.

Kelsey said the whole day went smoothly,

See **Hinch**, Page 24B



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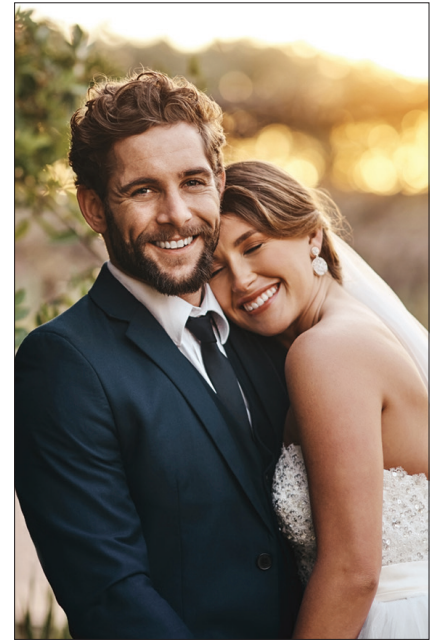


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Hinch • from page 22B

noting the only issue minor. Someone used the bobby pins she had set aside for her veil, so the bridesmaids had to pull a few pins from their hair for her to use. “Other than that, it went so smoothly. We had enough help, and lots of family and friends that really helped put to make the day special,” Kelsey said.

Their wedding coordinator was Chrissy Burkholder Fernau. “She was amazing,” Kelsey said.

Their first dance was to “Greatest Love Story” by Lanco. Kelsey said the reception was perfect, although, with over 300 guests, she was too nervous and busy to eat. She danced with her dad, Don Ryerson, to “You’ll Always Be My Baby” by Alan Jackson. Nick danced with his mom, Gayle Hinch, to “You’ll Be in My Heart” by Brent Morgan.

“It was a really good day. The weather was beautiful. It was perfect, and, with everyone helping out, it just went great. It was a great day,” Kelsey said.

We’re gonna be the greatest love story this world has ever seen ...

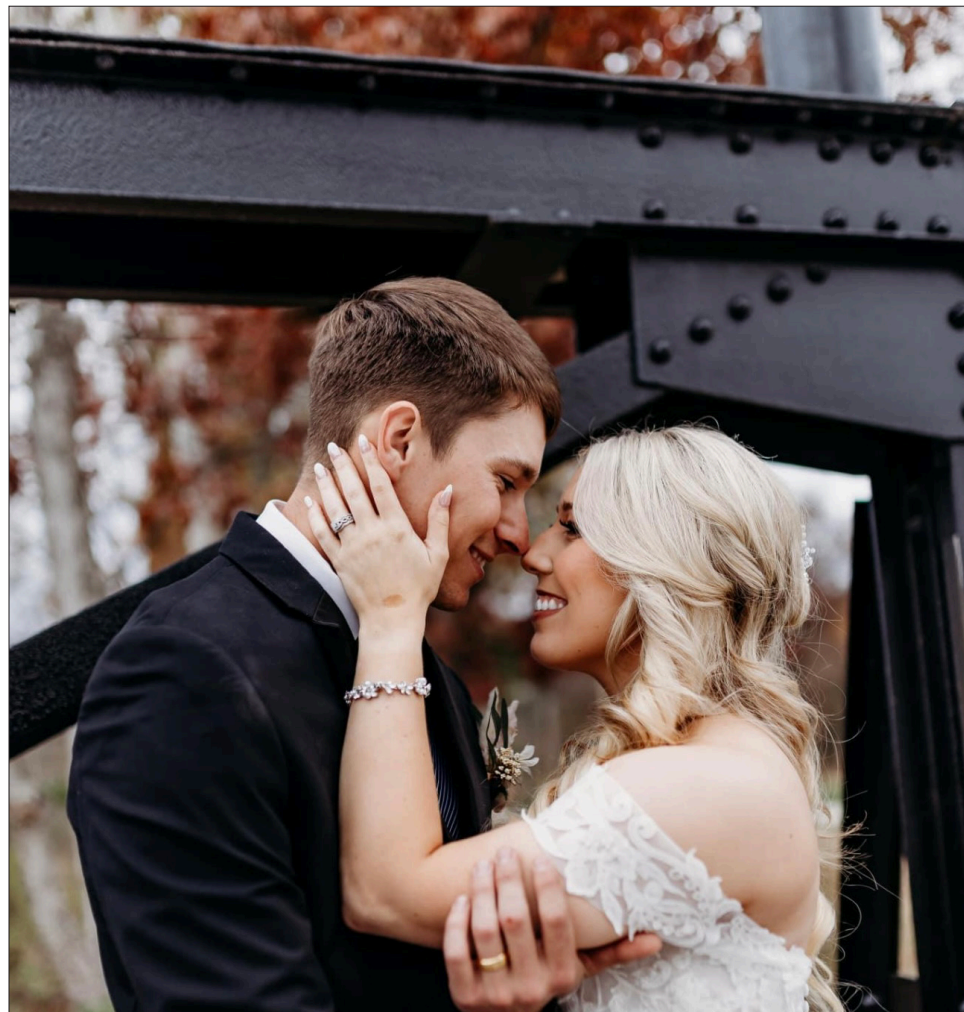
The couple went to Hawaii for their honeymoon, and stayed in a resort on the big island. “We had a beach view from the ocean side, which was really, really pretty,” Nick said.

They also went manta ray snorkeling at night, flew in a helicopter over volcanoes, went zip-lining over waterfalls, and did the Mauna Kea summit stargazing tour. The honeymoon was booked through Jamie Anderson with Anderson Designs Travel.

“We got pictures where you can actually see the Milky Way behind us in the pictures,” Kelsey said.

She added that one of her favorite parts of the stargazing tour were the warm, purple sweet potatoes that were provided on the way up, because she’d never seen purple sweet potatoes before. “It was just so neat to see those sweet potatoes, and it just came out of a cooler, but it was the best sweet potato I’ve ever had,” she said.

The couple now lives in Linn. Nick is a lineman for Three Rivers Electric, and Kelsey works for Evers & Company, CPAs, as a staff accountant. They have two dogs, an Aussiedoodle named CJ and a Morkie named Khloe. “Anyone that knows us knows our dogs go everywhere with us and mean the world to us,” said Kelsey.



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