

# Wedding Bella 2022



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**Republican**  
WEDNESDAY, Feb. 16, 2022

Two local features:

- Hellmann/Branson – page 2B
- Nicks/Wright – page 10B

# A Thousand Years, Love

Matthew and Brooke Hellmann, Oct. 9, 2021

by Roxie Murphy, Gasconade County Republican Feature Writer

## Heart beats fast, colors and promises, how to brave, how can I love when I'm afraid to fall

**A**ug. 26, 2017: Matthew Hellmann asked Brooke Branson to be his girlfriend on their first date. And she said “yes.”

But for as cute as it sounds, Brooke, who was 25 at the time, jokes that their first meeting might have been a bit unorthodox.

“We met online through a dating app,” she said. “He initiated the start of us talking and wanting to get to know each other.”

Two weeks into talking, Matt, then 27, asked Brooke on a date. Since Matt was from Villa Ridge and Brooke was from Owensville, they met halfway between.

“Our first date consisted of me meeting him at the riverfront in Washington,” Brooke said. “I had walked up to



his truck and introduced myself and he looked at me and said ‘are you going to get in?’ I got in the truck and we drove half a mile down the road and then he proceeded to introduce himself.”

She laughs at the memory.

“So my first thought was ‘oh, my, I got into a truck with a stranger!’ Even though I knew what he looked like. Then I told him that most people introduce themselves at the beginning but it’s okay, I will make this an exception!”

But Matt was paying attention.

“The first thing I noticed about Brooke was her personality, her smile which always makes me smile, and her eyes,” Matt said.

Driving the back roads, they listened to music and talked and finally just pulled over to have a deep conversation.

“We went to Sonic and got food then went back down to the riverfront and sat on the tailgate of the truck and ate,” Brooke said. “Matt said ‘I think we can make this. So would you like to be my girlfriend?’ I say ‘yes’ and we had our

See **Hellmann**, Page 3B

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**Hellmann/Branson Wedding**  
Page 2B



**Nicks/Wright Wedding**  
Page 10B

## Hellmann

• from page 2B

first kiss and said our good-byes for the night.”

Three years later, Matt proposed.

### One step closer

“I knew I wanted to ask Brooke to marry me when I learned that she likes to travel and go places with me,” Matt said. “Also, her willingness to help me work on things and stride to get goals done. The biggest thing was her support she gave me and still does when I pull tractors.”

Matt liked that Brooke was a partner to him.

“The partnership we have and how we discuss everything that we do and go through,” Matt said. “We support each other’s goals and dreams to help make sure we help one another reach those goals and dreams.”

He knew Brooke wanted to get married and he wanted to ask her.

On Aug. 30, 2020, at Maramec Springs State Park, Matt proposed in front of one of the old rock buildings with a square princess cutting that came from Kays.

“I think it is safe to say that we both knew from the beginning that we were going to be the one for each other,” Brooke acknowledged. “I knew on our first date that I was going to marry him. There is just something about him and Matt said the same thing.”

Her family threw them an en-

See **Hellmann**, Page 4B

A special thanks to these couples for sharing their stories.

## Advertiser Index —

### BANQUET ROOM

7th Street Events ..... 10

### BED AND BREAKFAST

Brinkman Farmstead B&B ..... 9  
Merchant Townhouse ..... 8  
White Mule Bed & Breakfast ..... 7

### BRIDAL SHOPS

Goddess Gowns ..... 19  
MiMi's Bridal & Boutique ..... 21  
Wedding Creations ..... 6

### CAKES / CONFECTIONS

Teresa Lynn Cakes ..... 20

### CATERING

Argyle Catering Company ..... 4  
1st Street Eats ..... 8

### FLORIST

Hillerman Nursery & Florist ..... 13  
Old World Creations ..... 11

### FORMAL WEAR

Old World Creations ..... 9

### FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Legends Bank ..... 12  
Maries County Bank ..... 3

### FURNITURE

Kay Carpet & Furniture ..... 23

### INSURANCE

American Family Insurance ..... 19  
State Farm Insurance ..... 18  
The Insurance Center ..... 20

### HAIR SALON

28th & Main ..... 11

### HOTEL

Super 8 ..... 18

### INVITATIONS

Office Concepts & Copies ..... 21

### JEWELER

Altemueller Jewelry ..... 6  
Wilcox Jewelers ..... 16

### MUSIC/ENTERTAINMENT

Hysteria Sound ..... 15

### PORTABLE REST ROOMS

Central Mo. Septic Service ..... 11

### RECEPTION/MEETING HALL

Bistro at the Mill ..... 11  
Cuba Knights of Columbus ..... 18  
Gerald Knights of Columbus ..... 22  
Owensville Lions Club ..... 15  
Red Oak Valley ..... 24  
St. James UCC Charlotte ..... 14  
White Mule Bed & Breakfast ..... 7

### REAL ESTATE AGENT

Re/Max, Exclusive Properties  
Diane Thomas ..... 17

### RENTAL

Party Pros ..... 13  
Pioneer Home Center & Rental ..... 16

### SKIN CARE

Washington Skin Solutions ..... 8

### SPA / MASSAGE

Massage for your Health ..... 23

### TRANSPORTATION

Wine Country Wagon ..... 2

### TRAVEL AGENCY

Nona's Travel ..... 2  
Time to Travel ..... 14

### WEDDING VENUE

Bistro at the Mill ..... 11  
Red Oak Valley ..... 24  
White Mule Bed & Breakfast ..... 7

## Hellmann • from page 3B

gagement party to celebrate and then the wedding planning began.

“We didn’t have much planning because we knew we were going to get married,” she said. “So all we had to do was pick a date and vendors along with my wedding dress.”

Setting the date came easy because they wanted a fall wedding, but not towards the end when it starts to get cold.

“So we chose Oct. 9, 2021,” Brooke said. “Colors we also knew were easy since we wanted a fall wedding. We knew fall colors were going to be our colors.”

Brooke wanted a country rustic wedding. “My wedding vision, I knew, was going to be a dream come true because growing up and going to my grandpa’s farm, I knew I wanted to have a country wedding and get married in a barn,” Brooke said. “That was my all-time dream wedding. Everything else, I knew, would fall into place. And it did.”

They found both the rustic theme and barn at Red Oak Valley on Highway 19 outside of Owensville.

Matt’s wedding vision was basically the same as Brooke’s. Simple, rustic and country.

“After our proposal and wedding plans



**A FAVORITE** memory for Brooke was driving her father’s John Deere 60 from the farmhouse to the wedding venue at Red Oak Valley. Her father stood behind her on the tractor while the bridesmaids rode on the hay wagon.

See **Hellmann**, Page 6B

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**BROOK AND MATT** both wanted a rustic country wedding in a barn. They chose Red Oak Valley on Highway 19, south of Owensville.



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**THE RECEPTION** including an outdoor dance floor with lights strung above and stars sparkling in the sky.

## **Hellmann** • from page 5B

began, my biggest contribution to the wedding was when I helped Brooke make decisions for the wedding that she wasn't sure of," Matt said. "I also made sure that the wedding was special for both of us."

### **I have died every day, waiting for you**

If planning the wedding wasn't dream-come-true enough, her wedding dress added to the bliss.

"It didn't take long or many places to go," Brooke said. "I went to David's Bridal and tried on four dresses and each of those I tried on I just wasn't feeling. Then I put on the fifth dress and felt like it could be the one. I walk out of the room not fully looking into the mirror yet. I look over at my mom and best friend and they are both crying."

The beautiful ballgown style flowed gently around her, coming to a V in the back.

"I didn't like the ballgown slip underneath and without that, it was the perfect amount of material and fluff," she said about her dream dress. "My dress was this beautiful lace dress with sparkles on top."

The seamstress added a beaded belt in the middle to break up the sparkle.

See **Hellmann**, Page 7B

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**Hellmann • from page 6B**

“It turned out even more perfect than when I bought it. When she finally gets a glimpse of herself in the mirror, she was decided. “This beautiful dress I have, I started crying as well,” Brook said. “Which before we got to the store, I told my mom and friend that I am not going to cry when I find my dress. I will just know.” She admits she was wrong. “I bawled,” she said. “That’s how I knew the dress I chose was by far my dream dress.”

**Time stands still — Oct. 9, 2021 — Red Oak Valley**

The Branson-Hellmann bridal party stayed at the wedding venue, Red Oak Valley, Friday night to decorate for the wedding.

“We decorated the venue up on Friday before the wedding and got everything ready that needed to be done for our big day,” she said. “The day of, my bridesmaids and I got ready in the Hen House at Red Oak Valley and the groom and the groomsmen got ready in the hayloft.”

The photographer visited with both the bride and groom’s party. “I wanted to do a cool picture when opening champagne,” Brooke said about the girls’ early morning shenanigans. “But that took a while due to me taking 20 minutes to pop the cork,” she laughed.

As the time for the wedding drew nearer, Booke loaded her girls up in a hay wagon attached to her dad’s John Deere 60 to travel from the farmhouse to the barn.

“My bridesmaids were on a trailer behind the tractor and my dad standing on the back of the tractor while I am driving (was one of my favorite moments),” Brooke said.

They arrived at the barn and the girls lined up, preparing to be cued by the music. The men wore blue jeans. Matt wore a red button-up shirt and his groomsmen wore white button-up shirts.

They waited at the front of the barn while the bride and groom’s parents and grandparents entered to the song Grave By Thomas Rhett.

As the music changed to Prayed For You by Matt Stell, Brooke’s bridesmaids walked down the aisle.

“Right before the ceremony, we were getting ready to start and I was in place to start walking down the aisle when my maid of honor realized she forgot to grab our rings out of the Hen House,” she said. “So a friend had to run and go get them and hand them up to the front while I was walking down the aisle.”

The oops wasn’t a distraction for Matt. “My first thought when she came down the aisle was that she looked very beautiful and stunning,” he said. “Also that I got a little teary-eyed just looking at her in her wed-



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THE BRIDAL party stopped for a group photograph on this bridge at Red Oak Valley.

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## Hellmann • from page 7B

ding dress.”

They also wrote their own vows.

“Brooke and I decided to write our own vows for one another and wanted to have that special moment with one another speaking from our hearts,” Matt said.

### Beauty is all she is

And finally A Thousand Years (instrumental) piano/violin cover by Alison Sparrow announced the entrance of the bride.

“My first thought as I was walking down the aisle was ‘holy cow, there’s a lot of guests here to celebrate Matt and I’ and then I look all the way at the end of the aisle and see Matt smiling,” Brooke said. “I couldn’t help but smile back because that was my soon-to-be husband that I was looking at and I just got so excited.”

Matt’s first thought when he saw Brooke was that she was beautiful and stunning.

“The big day which was the best day!” Brooke said.

### Every breath, every hour has come to this

An outdoor reception followed the ceremony.

“John Paul (Quick, owner of Red Oak Valley) asked me what my vision was for my first dance with Matt, and I said I wanted it to be romantic and under lights,” Brooke said.

The result was an outdoor dance floor with lights strung above them and the stars sparkling in the sky.

“It was so magical with that setup,” Brooke said.

She even fit in a small cake fight with her little brother.

“The sunset that evening was beautiful, so dancing under that was also beautiful.”

Brooke says looking back, she doesn’t think there is anything they would do differently. The day was perfect and went smoothly. Matt couldn’t agree more.

“Something that I will always remember about our wedding day is the weather being perfect,” he said. “The love and support of family and friends that came together to celebrate Brooke and I on our special day. The owners and staff at Red Oak Valley were amazing and helped make our day special. They were very attentive to all our needs. John Paul made our wedding dream come true.”

The seclusion of the venue also helped. “The pandemic did not affect our wedding planning at all,” she said. “It was like it wasn’t even going on even though we knew that it was.”

The couple still has a getaway to look forward to.

“We are going on our honeymoon at the end of May for a week, to Tennessee,” Brooke added.

She and Matt are living in the Union area and are enjoying being married.

She works for the United Bank of Union and Matt works for Turnkey Tool and Dye in Union.



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## White Wedding

Dustin and Karlee Nicks, Jan. 15, 2022

by Roxie Murphy, Gasconade County Republican Feature Writer

**K**arlee Wright was a freshman at Owensville High School when she first met Dustin Nicks. “It was his senior year,” Karlee remembers. “We started talking, but that didn’t last long.”

It was two years after Dustin’s graduation before the two reconnected in January 2017 through a mutual friend during Karlee’s junior year. They started dating on Feb. 25, 2017.

“He asked me out through a game of Hangman,” she remembers. “Our first date was at the trout park (Maramec State Park) in St. James.

### A long courtship

The couple dated for five years before Dustin proposed in 2020.

“It was Thanksgiving Day at my parents,” Karlee said.

Wedding plans began right away. They set a date.

“We picked Jan. 15 because that’s the day that my parents met (28 years ago),”

Karlee said.

### White snow, red dresses, black tuxes

Karlee’s vision of the day was simple. “To have just the right amount of snow,” she said. “Which God delivered.”

So they planned their day around the possibility of a snowfall.

“Picking out the dress — from Mimi’s Bridal & Boutique — was one of the first things I did,” Karlee said.

With help from her mom, mother-in-law, husband and friends, they chose their colors.

“Red goes great with snow, which we got on the morning of the wedding,” she said.

The morning of Jan. 15 dawned snowy, just as Karlee had hoped.

“I prepared with my girls, mom and mother-in-law at my house and hair and make-up were done at the house we just bought,” she said.

Dustin and his friend Tanner stayed at Tanner’s mom’s house.

The ceremony took place at the First Baptist Church on Lincoln Ave in Owensville.

Guests who braved the snow filed into the church.

“Our videographer — Daniel Thompson — got stuck in the snow no the way, but made it right on time anyway,” Karlee said.

The ceremony began and before she knew it, she and Dustin were taking the short walk up the aisle together.

“The snow was definitely a highlight,” Karlee said. “And walking down the aisle as Mr. and Mrs. Dustin Nicks.

Later that evening the couple began their lives together celebrating with family and friends who could make it through the snow.

“The (pandemic) did have some effect on the wedding,” Karlee said. “There

were some family and friends who did not get to attend due to being COVID positive.”

### Happy beginnings

The snowy day in January was a dream come true for Karlee and Dustin.

Two days after they said their vows, the couple went to Jamaica for their honeymoon and stayed at the Sandals Resort in Montego Bay.

The couple settled in Owensville.

Other vendors not mentioned: Karlee’s hair was done by Maranda Lyn Kottwitz and Machaela Williams. Tyra Mangrum did her makeup. The caterer for the reception was Cuba Lakes Golf Course. Music was provided by James Bartel at Hysteria Sounds. The wedding cake was from Kathy Echols.



**NIECE’S AND** Nephews of the bride and groom were part of the Nicks wedding. From left are Sutton Wright (Karlee’s niece), Hunter Nicks (Dustin’s nephew) and Holly Nicks (Dustin’s niece.)

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**KARLEE'S DREAM** wedding came true when a blanket of snow covered the ground the day before her wedding with Dustin Nicks. Her cascade bouquet is from Old World Creations in Owensville.

Wedding photos by Melia Corson and Sarah Maune



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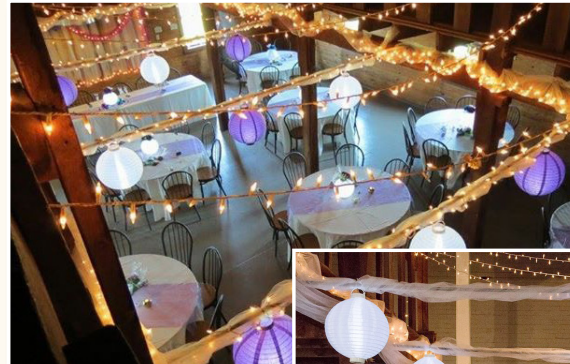
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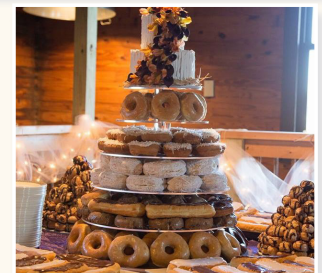
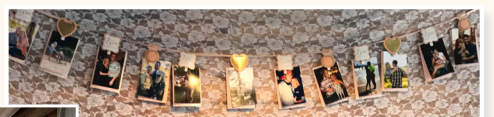
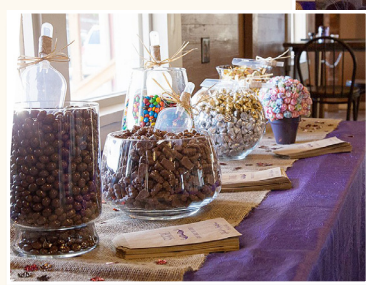
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**THE MAID** of honor for the Nicks' wedding was Grace Skelton. Corey Nicks, brother of the groom was the best man. Bridesmaids were Makenzi Mistler, Lauren Baker, Megan Burkhart, and Kyra Daiber. Groomsmen were Tanner Jackson, Chase Copeland, Andrew Scheer and Dakota Gerloff.

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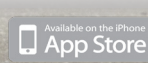
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**THE NICKS'** were married at Immaculate Conception Church in Owensville on Jan. 15, just ten days after Christmas. They took advantage of church's Christmas decorations keeping some lit trees and the red Poinsettias around the alter.



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**ARDEL WRIGHT** (photo far left escorts his daughter Karlee down the aisle at Immaculate Conception in Owensville. Fr. Wayne Boyer (center, photo left) was the celebrant. The mother of the bride is Melissa Wright (photo above.)

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Few things set the mood of a wedding more effectively than music. Beautiful songs often are incorporated into wedding ceremonies, and romantic or upbeat songs intermingle to create a festive mix at receptions.

Playlists curated specifically for weddings can be found online to help couples narrow down their options. According to Wedding Forward, a wedding planning guide, wedding planning experts and modern couples agree that wedding playlists should have a 60/40 split of classics and new wedding songs.

Music is a personal choice, but couples may benefit by considering who will be in attendance at their weddings. In so doing, couples can ensure the music played at their weddings reaches as many people as possible there:

- **Wedding processional song:** The wedding processional is the moment the wedding party walks down the aisle. Music may be a traditional hymn, classical music or a favorite contemporary song.

- **Bridal processional song:** In many traditional wedding ceremonies, the bride walks down the aisle separately, with her father or both parents. She customarily will have a different song from the rest of the wedding party. While “Bridal Chorus/Wedding March” is a traditional choice, some brides may prefer a different tune.

- **Wedding recessional song:** Again, depending on

the ceremony location and choices, the recessional may be a classical piece or a hymn. Some couples choose an upbeat song for their first official promenade as a married couple.

- **Wedding party entrance song:** Couples can ask their music vendor to put together the majority of the songs for their reception, but they may want to choose their own wedding party entrance. This song typically is a fast-paced, upbeat song that gets the crowd pumping and ready for a fun night. Think “Dynamite” by Taio Cruz or “Can’t Stop the Feeling!” by Justin Timberlake.

- **First dance:** The first dance song is another personal choice for the couple. Slow songs traditionally are chosen, but couples who want something a little different have increasingly selected faster songs and paired them with rehearsed choreography. “Thinking Out Loud” by Ed Sheeran has become a popular first dance song.

- **Other songs:** Couples also will select songs to complement dances with their parents, cake cutting, garter toss, and any other special traditions or moments. They also can make requests to include songs of different eras to appeal to guests of all ages.

Music is an important component of wedding celebrations and deserves some extra consideration to ensure everyone has a great time while cutting a rug.

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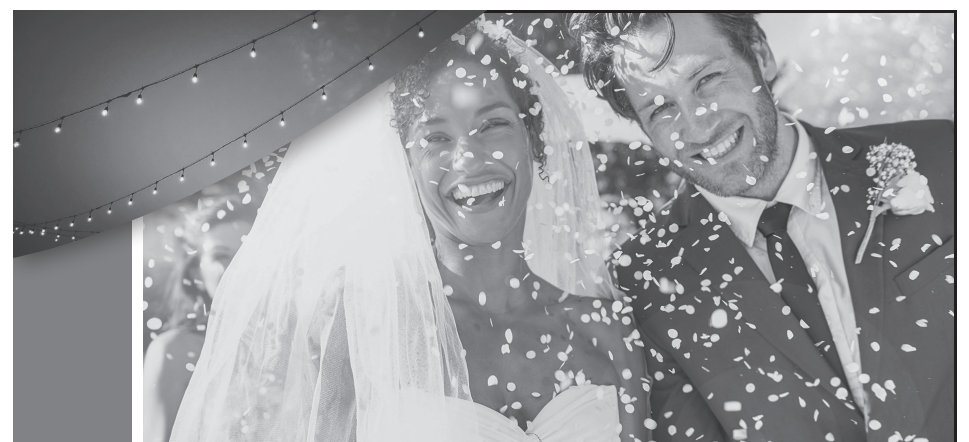
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## Fun ways to utilize social media in your wedding

Young couples tying the knot today grew up with social media, so it's no great surprise that so many want to utilize various platforms when planning their weddings. In fact, the Brides 2018 American Wedding Survey found that 87 percent of brides turned to the social media platform Pinterest for inspiration when planning their weddings.

On the surface, modern wedding ceremonies and receptions may look similar to the nuptials of yesterday. However, engaged couples have increasingly incorporated social media into their weddings, and the following are some fun and creative ways to embrace that trend.

- Create a social media photo booth. Guests may take more pictures at modern weddings than the photographers who were hired to document the happy couple's big day from start to finish. Social media boards are digital screens



that display social media walls. Live event social media boards collect and curate content from social media channels and display it on a single digital screen. Users, in this case a couple's guests, simply

use a predetermined hashtag when posting photos and the images are then displayed on digital screens in real time. This can be a fun way to engage guests during the reception.

- Live stream the wedding. Live

streams became very popular during the pandemic, when couples getting married had to pare down their guest lists in order to adhere to social distancing guidelines. But live streams can continue to be used after the pandemic, as there will always be guests who can't make it to the wedding. Facebook Live was a go-to social media platform for live streaming weddings during the pandemic, and it can be utilized to involve loved ones in the festivities even if they can't be there in person. Live streaming via social media may be especially useful for couples who want to enjoy destination weddings, which tend to be small affairs due to travel constraints.

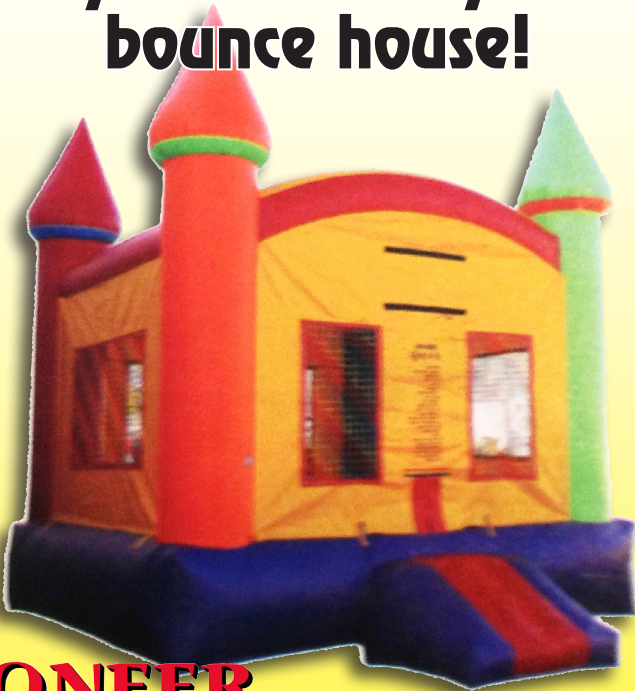
- Hashtag the wedding. A couple-specific hashtag can serve as something akin to a wedding album, only it's one everyone can easily access via the couple's chosen social media platform. En-

courage guests to hashtag photos from the wedding so everyone can have a good time looking back on the ceremony and reception once the day has come and gone.

- Plan with your party. Social media can be as fun, inclusive and useful when planning the wedding as it can during the wedding itself. Brides and grooms can create their own private Pinterest boards and share them with the wedding party. Everyone can then use the private board to bounce ideas off each other. Couples can infuse a little fun into the Pinterest board by encouraging their groomsmen and bridesmaids to post outrageous outfit ideas or submit sing-along song requests to be played during the reception.

Social media is a big part of modern couples' lives, so it makes sense for them to find fun ways to incorporate various platforms into their weddings.

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## How to give weddings a modern touch

No two weddings are the same. Some couples go to great lengths to personalize their weddings, while others make a few minor tweaks to traditional components to make ceremonies and receptions more reflective of their style and the sentiments they hope to convey.

Embracing modern trends is one way couples have looked to set their weddings apart from traditional ceremonies. There are no rules governing weddings, and that affords couples certain freedoms as they seek to incorporate a modern sensibility into the festivities. For example, couples can modernize certain components of their weddings while remaining loyal to more traditional elements, or they can fully embrace a modern aesthetic. That choice of how modern to make a wedding is up to the couple tying the knot, but the following are some ways to give weddings a modern touch.

- Leave a small carbon footprint. Eco-conscious couples can embrace an

environmentalist ethos when planning their weddings by doing everything they can to eliminate waste and promote conservation. Send electronic invitations and save-the-date cards in lieu of paper alternatives and choose a reception venue that serves only locally sourced food and beverages. In lieu of wedding favors, which tend to be individually wrapped, make a donation in guests' names to a local environmental group and share that information with loved ones. When picking a hotel for guests, find lodging that incorporates sustainability into its day-to-day operations.

- Retire certain traditions. Couples need not feel pressured to incorporate traditions that no longer reflect modern sensibilities. It's up to couples to determine which traditions to retire, but customs like the garter toss and bouquet toss may no longer resonate with modern couples or their guests. In addition, brides who want to be walked down the aisle by both of their parents,

as opposed to just their father, should not hesitate to do so.

- Look for a modern venue. One of the most awe-inspiring ways to give a wedding a modern touch is to choose a venue that reflects a modern aesthetic. Vaulted ceilings, white walls and floor-to-ceiling windows can create a clean, modern feel. Outdoor ceremonies also can create a modern ambiance.

- Adjust your attire. Black tuxedos and white wedding dresses are among the first things to come to mind when imagining traditional weddings. Couples can stay formal but embrace a more modern look by choosing more colorful tuxes for grooms and groomsmen and picking a wedding gown with a flair of color. Brides also can allow bridesmaids to pick their own bridesmaid dresses to expand the modern look even further.

There's no shortage of ways for couples to give their weddings a modern touch.



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## Tips for finding the right wedding venue

**W**edding planning requires couples to make many decisions, including where the wedding will take place.

A couple's wedding day is typically broken into two parts: the ceremony comes first, and the reception follows soon after. Depending on couples' preferences and religious beliefs, ceremonies may take place at a house of worship or another location that is separate from the reception venue. In some instances, couples may choose one location for both the ceremony and the party to follow. Wedding venues are where the bulk of the day will unfold, and couples can consider these four tips to find a venue that suits their needs.

1. Consider your theme and wedding style. Most couples know which sentiments they want to convey during their weddings. The venue should match the theme so the entire wedding will feel connected to the space. A modern wedding, for example, will be at home in an art gallery or warehouse. A wedding with natural elements may work better on a ranch or in a botanical garden. Zeroing in on the wedding style helps narrow



down potential venue options.

2. Assess the budget. A couple may find what seems to be the perfect venue, only to realize that the cost of the space doesn't fit their budget. Ampersand Travel says the venue accounts for the most significant wedding expense, at an average cost of \$9,000. Finding a venue that will maximize dollars spent involves looking at what is included.

Rentals for chairs, linens, lighting, a dance floor, and other extras can quickly add up. Couples should have a set limit they're willing to spend on the venue and let that dictate the location.

3. Availability of the location. When a couple wants to get married may determine their venue options, especially if they're planning on a budget. September and Oc-

tober are now the most popular months to get married, so venues will book up quickly during that time of year. Those who have their hearts set on specific days will have to begin the search earlier than couples with no attachment to a particular date. Concessions may need to be made if a certain date is a must.

4. Estimate the size of your guest list. Price, date and style will factor into wedding venues, but the number of guests also is a major consideration. A trendy restaurant may seem like the perfect locale, but it must be able to accommodate everyone on the guest list. Couples should sit down with their families and come up with a list of potential guests and look for a venue that can accommodate everyone.

Couples also should visit potential venues in person to see which, if any, details might be missing from online or magazine advertisements. A host of factors, including accessibility, should be considered when looking for a venue.

Finding the right venue requires careful consideration of various factors that are unique to each couple.



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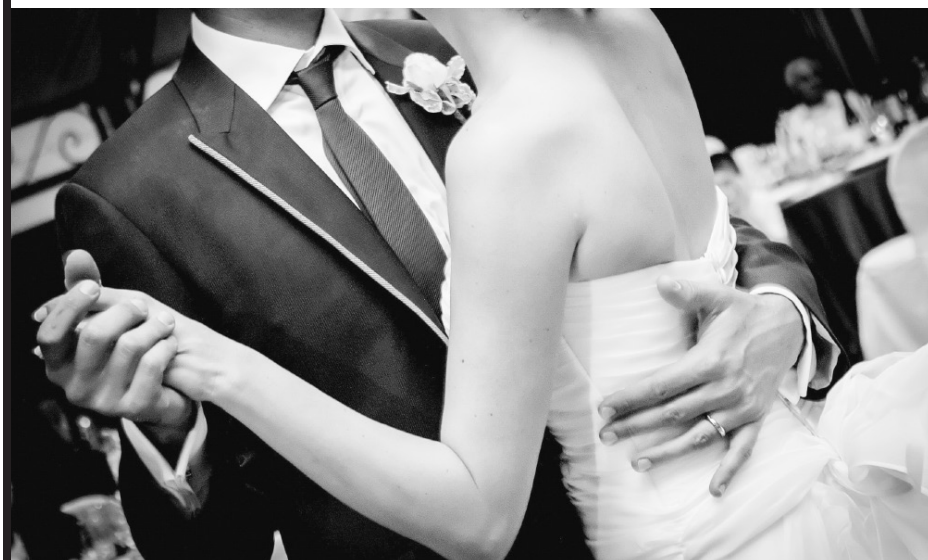


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## The rise of the microwedding

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been far-reaching. People from all walks of life have had to confront the pandemic and the changes it wrought, and many of those changes could have some staying power.

Wedding industry experts note that one of the more noticeable and potentially long-lasting effects of the pandemic has been the rise of microweddings. The 2020 Real Weddings Study (COVID-19 Edition) found that 58 percent of couples who planned to get married in 2020 ended up reducing their guest list by a significant percentage. The average reduction was 41 percent, and some suspect small ceremonies may be the new normal in the years ahead.

### Microweddings

Microweddings are not necessarily a new trend, as couples have always had the option of getting married with only a small number of family and friends in attendance. However, microweddings could be an emerging trend, and cost may have a lot to do with that. The Wedding Planner Institute notes that microweddings cost anywhere from \$1,600 to \$10,000, though the group notes that most microweddings fall somewhere in the middle of that range. A 2020 survey from TD Ameritrade found that 47 percent of respondents felt that cost of living was the biggest threat to their financial security and long-term investments. Engaged couples confronting the well-documented post-pandemic increase in cost of living, including an unprecedented rise in housing costs, could see expensive weddings as luxuries they simply can't afford. Microweddings could be viewed as a cost-effective way to combat the rising cost of living that still allows couples to share their big day with their closest friends and family members.

The WPI has urged wedding planners to offer microwedding packages in an effort to capitalize on this emerging trend. Data from The Wedding Report indicated that the total number of weddings would rise to 2.77 million in 2021, an increase of roughly 650,000 over the yearly average. Even if only a fraction of couples who tie the knot in 2022 opt for a microwedding, a preexisting microwedding package can help wedding planners secure their business. Couples who opt for microweddings may do so to save money, but also to avoid the effort and save the time required to plan more lavish affairs. Such couples may be especially excited to work with wedding planners who can plan their weddings regardless of how small the



affair may be.

### What goes into a microwedding

Nothing should be off the table when planning a microwedding. The fewer the people who will be there, the more freedom planners and couples may have. The WPI notes that microweddings afford planners and couples the chance to get personal in ways that may not be possible when organizing larger affairs. Planners can focus on small details and allow couples to make their ceremonies and receptions as personal as they would like. Couples who prefer microweddings tend to emphasize minimalism, so keeping things simple is something to keep in mind when planning microweddings.

Microweddings are an emerging trend that make for a realistic option for couples and the people they hire to help them plan their big day.

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## Picture perfect wedding day photography tips

**F**ew things document weddings more effectively than photographs. Carefully curated wedding albums and portraits hung on walls serve as daily reminders of a couple's special day.

Photography is often left in the very qualified hands of professional photographers. However, couples can pitch in to make their photos really pop. These picture pointers from industry insiders can help couples put their best smile forward.

### Leave ample time

A carefully orchestrated timeline can ensure photos are the best they can be. Why? Because a couple who is relaxed and not overwhelmed will notice that attitude translates to their photographs. When planning wedding timelines, couples should leave ample opportunities for getting dressed, chatting with the wedding party and going through various photography settings to grab great photos, advise the experts at Martha Stewart.

### Put together a short list

The photographer will have his or her ideas of which shots to cover, but a couple with specific goals in mind should relay that information to their photographer. For example, if a grandparent is getting up in years, request some solo photos of that person so you can look back on happy times together. Certain couples want to be snapped posing with a beloved pet. Putting that on the list helps ensure it will happen.

### Enlist a family photo coordinator

If the photographer does not have his or her own assistant, recruit someone who is assertive to help wrangle everyone for the family shots. Attempt to get family photos when family members are relaxed but not



too far ruffled by dancing or having a good time.

### Play your style safe

A wedding day is not a time for the bride or groom to try a dramatic new style, according to photographer Amanda Lamb. Resist the urge for a daring cut or color. It's also likely not the place to try out new facial hair or heavy makeup. A couple unaccustomed to the way they look may be shy in front of

the camera.

### Delve into the details

Prepare wedding details, like gowns, shoes, accessories, etc., in advance to save time once the photographer arrives, suggests Desi Mendoza, a pro from Dez and Tam Photography. Invest in a beautiful hanger for the wedding gown as well, because you may want to photograph that on its own.

### Learn to pose

Couples can practice posing in front of mirrors to get a feel for body positions that put them in their best light. A photographer's advice in regard to posture is invaluable as well. Create space between arms and the body and learn how to angle the body so you look your best.

Photos will capture wedding day memories forever. Couples can put themselves in the best positions for success by following some photography guidelines.

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# Wedding styles

Every wedding is different, even if many share some common components. As couples plan their weddings, learning about some popular wedding styles can help them create a ceremony that suits them.

### Classic wedding

Classic weddings are the storybook traditional weddings that many people dream about for years. Key elements include a tuxedo for the groom and a white gown for the bride. Formal attire is reserved for the rest of the wedding party. The ceremony is conducted in a place of worship before everyone retires to a fancy catering hall for the reception. Traditional weddings also may include the time-honored customs like toasts, cake cutting, bouquet toss, and parent-child dances.

### Beach wedding

Beach weddings often are casual, laid back affairs. Dresses may be less structured and flow with sea breezes, while guys may even don shorts with linen shirts or jackets. Guests can expect the party to be much more free-flowing and the traditions of classic weddings may not be part of the celebration.

### Bohemian wedding

Free-spirited individuals may dive head first into a bohemian style wedding. According to wedding planner David Tutera, a boho wedding is casual and comfortable. It tends to come off chic but appears that way with

minimal effort. Decor is typically humble and blends harmoniously with nature. A boho wedding may take place outdoors or in another less traditional venue, such as a farmhouse or botanical garden. Wedding party attire may be mismatched and showcase each person's individual style.

### Modern wedding

Brides and grooms who crave contemporary and current trends may prefer a modern wedding. Graphic color schemes, clean lines and minimalistic flowers might be part of a modern wedding. Attire may be angular and edgy, and the venue may run the gamut from sleek museum to a city rooftop.

### Destination wedding

Couples who love to travel and don't want to worry about the minutiae of wedding planning may find a destination wedding is a good fit. Destination weddings last more than one day and focus on relaxation, activities and lots of fun. Destination weddings tend to be less formal and less traditional than classic weddings. Due to the remote locations, destination weddings also can be smaller and more intimate, as many invitees may be unable to attend. Yet those who can attend often get to enjoy tropical islands or mountain retreats.

Wedding styles are as unique as the people getting married. Choosing a theme that has the right feeling can help couples make the most of their special days.

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## Your wedding timeline guide

**W**edding planning involves many movable pieces that ultimately need to come together on the big day. Planning is typically a months-long process, and adhering to certain monthly benchmarks can help couples stay the course.

Brides magazine offers that the perfect engagement period is 12 to 14 months, which affords ample time to get organized and work with vendors. With that in mind, here's a 12-month timeline

### 12 months out

At the start of the planning process, establish your budget, hire a wedding planner (optional), choose the wedding party, pick a date, and start to assemble a cursory guest list. This also is a great time to begin touring venues to get a feel for potential ceremony and reception locales.

### 11 months out

Now is the time to get a firm handle on the theme and scope of the wedding. Start picking wedding colors and overall design. Also, interview and hire vendors, such as photographers, bands and videographers. These vendors tend to book up quickly as wedding season draws near, so it's never too early to book them.

### 10 months out

This is a good time to start shopping for a wedding gown because it might take some trial and error to find the perfect dress. You also can start shopping for wedding party attire at this time. Check with formalwear vendors to see how long it will take for the gowns to arrive in the shop for alterations. If you haven't already done so, be sure to book the wedding venue.

### 8 months out

Reception halls may have their own schedules, but you should think about setting your menu at this time, including deciding if you will host a seated dinner, a buffet or something else.

Eight months out also is a good time to finalize the guest list and send save-the-date

cards.

This also is a good time to visit stores to create registry gift lists.

### 6 months out

Meet with potential florists and other vendors, like transportation companies and hotels, to secure these arrangements. Your place of worship also may require certain classes or preparatory meetings, so be sure to inquire about these.

Meet with a makeup and hair stylist and book a trial. Choose attire for groomsmen and give them a deadline for fittings and orders. If you will not be getting married in a place of worship, hire an officiant at this time.

### 4 months out

Grooms traditionally arrange the honeymoon, so this is a fine time to get those travel plans in order. If you need passports, you should secure them as early as possible, and no later than four months prior to the wedding to ensure processing times. Book cake tastings and order the cake if it is not part of the venue food and beverage package. If you haven't already done so, the bride should have an initial gown fitting, and wedding invitations should be ordered at this time.

### 2 months out

Secure your wedding license and buy wedding party gifts. Address and mail the wedding invitations. Undergo a second gown fitting and work with the seamstress for the final fitting date just before the wedding. Finalize any song selections with the DJ or band.

The final details will occur in the last weeks before the wedding. Buy all the small accessories and items, undergo final fittings and check in with all vendors for final payments and to ensure they are on schedule. Notify the reception hall of the final guest count.

Once the wedding day arrives, couples who have done their best to stay on schedule can relax and have a great time with family and friends.



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## Timeline tips: Factors to consider when planning your wedding



The notion that “timing is everything” is applicable in many situations, perhaps none more so than on a couple’s wedding day. Many couples spend months, if not years, planning their weddings in the hopes that all that hard work will ultimately result in a day they will cherish forever.

The sheer volume of things to do on a wedding day can make couples feel overwhelmed. Those feelings can be overcome by emphasizing timing on the day of the wedding. Wedding day timelines will differ depending on variables that are unique to each couple’s wedding, but the following are some factors to consider as couples organize the big day.

- **Venue(s):** The schedule couples adhere to on their wedding day will be greatly affected by their choice of venue. Does the venue have somewhere on premises for the couple and their party to get ready? Are the ceremony and reception being held

at the same venue? Before creating a timeline, consider the location of the ceremony and reception venue(s) and the accommodations each provides. Getting to and from multiple facilities won’t be an issue if couples choose a multipurpose venue where they can get ready, tie the knot and dance the night away all in one place. Couples who will be moving from venue to venue throughout the day must build the time it takes them and their party to get about into their timelines.

- **Wedding party:** The size of the wedding party also bears consideration when planning a wedding day timeline. Large parties will require more time to get ready, and that should be factored into couples’ timelines. Large parties also may be harder to corral and transport from place to place, so couples should build some extra time into their timelines to account for that. Small wedding parties can be easier to manage, so couples with small parties may be able to begin their timelines a

little later in the day than those with large wedding parties.

- **Weather:** Weather is the most unpredictable variable couples need to plan for on their wedding days. As the wedding day approaches, couples can monitor the day’s forecast and then make any necessary changes to account for inclement weather. Getting around in a rainstorm will likely take longer than moving about on a sunny day, so some minor tweaks to the timeline may be necessary if storms or another type of inclement weather is in the forecast.

Couples can access wedding day timeline templates on various websites. But it’s important that couples remember that their weddings are unique, so online guidelines might not be realistic. A careful consideration of a handful of variables specific to couples’ weddings can help them craft timelines that make their big day go smoothly.

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KayCarpetandFurniture.com

\*Financing Available with approved credit  
OPEN: Mon.-Fri. 9AM-5PM • Sat. 9AM-1PM

 **573-437-3805** 



# RED OAK VALLEY



**OPEN HOUSE**  
MARCH 20TH, 1-3 PM



## ABOUT THE PROPERTY

We offer two gorgeous climate-controlled barns – one red and one white, a classic chapel, as well as several romantic outdoor ceremony sites, tree-lined drives, a private lake, and modern luxury lodging for an immersive destination experience.

## ALL - INCLUSIVE VENUE RENTAL

- 15-hour rental
- Tables, chairs, and linens included
- Day of Wedding Coordinator
- Luxurious overnight accommodations
- Indoor or outdoor ceremony sites
- Custom dressing suites w/private restrooms
- Event set up & breakdown and more!

CONTACT US

 [redoakvalley.com](https://redoakvalley.com)

 3725 MO-19,  
Owensville, MO

 833.437.3737