

## Robertson marry on New Year's Eve

Will & Morgan Robertson, Dec. 31, 2022

by Neal A. Johnson, *Unterrified Democrat Editor*

**W**ill and Morgan (Berhorst) Robertson of Loose Creek enjoyed a dream wedding on New Year's Eve with friends and family in Westphalia.

"Marrying your best friend is pretty awesome," said Morgan. "The best part was coming into the church and the reception and seeing all the people coming together to celebrate us. We invited people from 18 different states, Vancouver and Brazil! We are so blessed with so many amazing people in our life."

Will added that seeing all their friends and family made him feel lucky and supported that they took time out of their busy schedules during a holiday weekend to celebrate.

"Someone once told us that 'Other than your funeral, this is the only time in your life that every person in the room is there for just you — so soak it in and enjoy the day, because you can't at your funeral.' Although funny, it is very true," Morgan said.

The couple had known for some time that marriage would be in the cards, but timing was everything.

Will's feelings for Morgan were present long before they officially began to date. "I've had a crush on Morgan since the eighth grade," he said. "We always hung out in the same friend group in high school. Besides being beautiful, she was always the mature and grounded personality in her group, and that always attracted me to her."

"Will was always nice, respectful, athletic, sensitive, family-oriented, and the 'rock' of his group," Morgan said. "Will was always husband material, and I knew that. That May, it was

the perfect combination of a little growing up, being in our hometowns, and rekindling that friendship that made me know he was the 'one.'"

Both enjoyed their college experiences. Will went to Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., played baseball, and earned a business/marketing degree. Morgan graduated from Avila University in Kansas City with a nursing degree. "As much as we love Osage County, it was nice to go to universities that had no friends or family from our hometowns," the couple said. "We were far enough from home that we just had to figure it out. It was a big grow-up pill for both of us. We learned to be our own people. That's kind of what drew us to one another that summer in 2018."

Will and Morgan began dating in May 2018, the summer before their junior year of college, after a ride in Glenn Robertson's GTO with some friends. "Both of us were home that month, Will with a hurt hand and me home from nursing school," Morgan recalls. "Two days later, Will left for summer ball in Cape Cod, so our long-distance relationship began."

Morgan didn't know what she was signing up for when she started dating Will. "This was a whole different ball game (no pun intended)," she said. "This is his dream, and I am so happy for him. But Will has to give up a lot to chase this dream, and I grew to respect him for his sacrifices."

To elaborate, Morgan said summers in Osage County, especially with the Robertsons, include lots of days on the sandbar, Sunday family gatherings at the pool,

endless slow-pitch games, weddings, birthdays, family vacations, etc. "Who wants to miss that?" she added.

But Morgan, often with his or her family, tries to fly out at least once a month and stay a week wherever Will is playing. Will sees many family and friends who come to visit throughout the seven months of baseball, which helps take the edge off the "homesickness."

Dec. 7, 2021, was the day Will proposed.

"We were supposed to be going on our yearly trip to Arris' pizza with Will's immediate family, and then we were going to take Christmas card pictures at the magic tree ... so he said," Morgan explained. "But first, we had to go see the area my dad

was clearing out trees for my parents' new house. This was behind my childhood home, in the creek bottom, where we spent a lot of high school nights with friends."

Morgan was running late and tried to cancel on her dad because she didn't think they had time that evening, and it was cold. "Initially, I refused to get out of the car until my dad (Scott) got there because it was so windy and cold. Little did I know my dad was never coming."

When Will finally got Morgan out of the car, he bent down to pick up a baseball and threw it at her. "I flinched and did not catch it," she said. "When I went to pick it up, I turned around to see Will down on one knee. The ball said, 'Will you marry me?'"

The best part of it all was that the ball was the same one that Will's dad (Jon) proposed to his mom (Cindy) 27 years before."

Will's sister was behind a tree taking pictures, and the rest of their families were waiting at Canterbury Hill Winery to celebrate.

It didn't take long for planning to begin. "Planning and organization are definitely my specialty," Morgan said. "Will was involved, and he always got the option to have an opinion, but I did a lot since he was gone most of the year. When Will got home, he was a big help with getting alcohol and the bar tasks completed, running

See **Robertson**, Page 18



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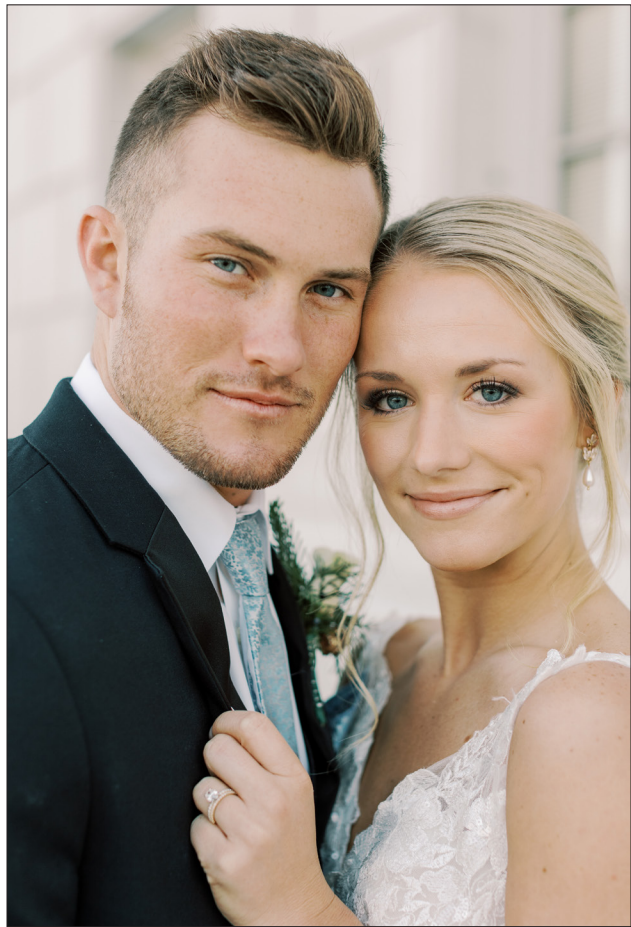
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**Robertson • from page 17**

errands, and doing manly jobs like putting stuff together. We have to give a big shoutout to our families because they were a huge help in making this day come together. They did a lot of behind-the-scenes and thankless tasks.”

Morgan added that the whole year of planning was a process. “It takes a village, and we were so thankful for our friends and family that helped throughout the entire year,” she said. “For future brides, I made a binder of the entire year of planning and even added the things they don’t tell you.”

The couple chose Dec. 31 because of Will’s baseball schedule. “I hate the cold and would’ve gotten married in the dead of summer, if possible,” Morgan said. “When we saw that New Year’s Eve fell on a Saturday, we thought it would be neat. We couldn’t have asked for a better day and better weather.”

Fr. Dylan Schrader officiated the wedding at St. Joseph, where Morgan grew up going to church. The couple invited 875 people and fed 750.

Joining Will and Morgan were groomsmen Ben Robertson,

Nolan Huot, Cody Huhn, Grant Stuecken, James Rakestraw, Michael Fick, and Isaac Collins. Bridesmaids were Macy Berhorst, Maddy Berhorst, Erin Plassmeyer, Andie Heimann, Brooke Westrom, Amber Eisterhold, and Emma Robertson.

Candle-lighters were Brooke Holterman and Aubry Rehaugen, and ushers were Jake Plassmeyer, Jonah Smith, Steven Brandt, and Alex Barton.

Following the reception at the Loose Creek Community Center, Will and Morgan honeymooned at Secrets Moxche Resort in Playa Del Carmen, Mexico. “We had been to all-inclusive resorts in Mexico, but this was by far the nicest place we had been,” said Morgan. “We just wanted a nice resort, good food, good drinks, and warm weather.”

Will left recently to begin spring training, and Morgan is leaving bedside nursing at the end of February and plans to work a remote telehealth job and travel with her new husband. They are also taking their nine-pound spunky miniature schnauzer, Phoebe.



## Vienna Couple has perfect day for beautiful wedding

Parker & Kaitlyn Hayes, Sept. 17, 2022

by Colin Willard, Maries County Advocate Staff Writer

**G**rowing up in a small town, Kaitlyn Neubert, 22, and Parker Hayes, 25, knew of each other long before their romance blossomed.

“Parker and I have known each other our whole lives,” Kaitlyn said. “We both went to the private school here in Vienna, as well as high school.”

Parker is two years older, but they spent some time around each other in high school. It was not until they both started working at the Vienna Quik Spot in 2017 that they began talking. Parker worked at the cash register, and Kaitlyn worked in the deli.

Kaitlyn said that even after they began working together, it took some time for them to become a couple.

“Parker took three months to ask me on a date,” she said. “I don’t think I’ve ever been so nervous to ask anyone out,” Parker said.

In November 2017, he asked her to join him on his birthday for dinner at his favorite restaurant. That evening set the trend for the couple’s next few years of dating.

“We went to Fuji and walked around T.J. Maxx,” Kaitlyn said. “That seems to be our go-to date night activity, even now.”

### A SURPRISE PROPOSAL

The couple dated until their engagement on Oct. 12, 2020. It was not quite how Kaitlyn had imagined, but she said she is grateful Parker planned it the way he did.

“I always dreamed of being proposed to in a field or somewhere outside, just the two of us, and then coming home to surprise all of our family,” she said. “Parker had a different idea. He decided to propose in front of his whole family, which they all knew that he was doing.”

During a family photo shoot, Parker proposed with a ring from Helzberg Diamonds.

“Parker used the chance to have a photographer to his advantage,” Kaitlyn said. “I still feel bad to this day about making the pictures about us. I’m pretty sure it was his mom’s birthday gift from all of the siblings. But I am so grateful that he thought of having a photographer because I met one of my closest friends that day. Toni (Wieberg) did an amazing job capturing every detail, even the ugly crying face.”

Wieberg later took the photos at the couple’s wedding.

“She is an absolute rockstar,” Kaitlyn said about Wieberg. “She was so comforting the whole day, and I felt like I had my best friend with me until the very end of the night. She has given us so many amazing memories to look back on, and I cannot be more grateful to her and all she has done for Parker and I.”

Parker said he knew Kaitlyn was the one when he realized how enjoyable she made things he had never enjoyed before.

“It was during COVID, and she was home from Springfield,” he said. “She made me go on all these hikes with her, and if anyone knows me, they know that hiking is not something I enjoy. Somehow, she made every hike an absolute blast, and every day I looked forward to her hopefully asking to go on another.”

Kaitlyn said she knew a little earlier.

“I knew Parker was the one because when I was deciding where I wanted to go to college, he never told me that he wanted me to stay in Vienna,” she said. “He always pushed me to do bigger and better things, which ultimately resulted in me moving away from him. He never made me feel bad about it or made the decision hard.”

### WEDDING PLANNING

Kaitlyn said that once the couple made their engagement,

See **Hayes**, Page 19

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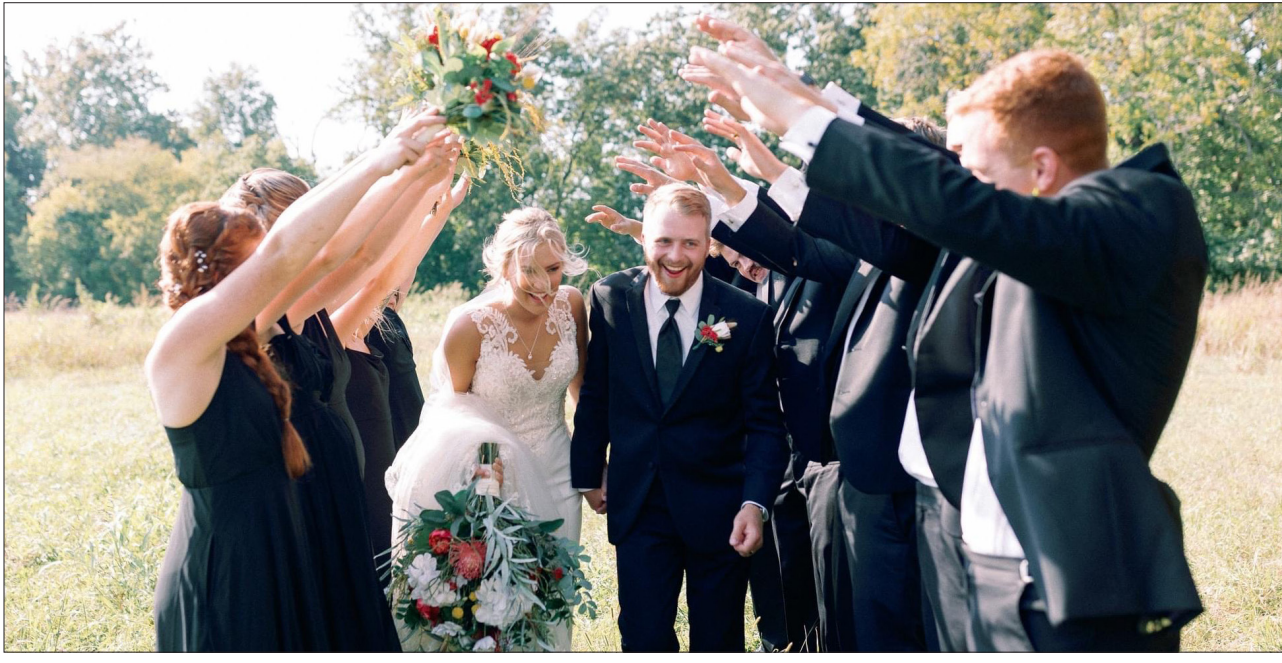
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**Hayes • from page 18**

they did not rush the wedding-planning process. They were still in college, and she said she wanted to wait until they had both graduated to get married.

"I planned for the season after we both graduated college," she said. "The exact date did not really matter to us. I just knew I did not want a winter or fall wedding."

They made it just under the seasonal deadline when they got married a few days before the start of fall on Sept. 17, 2022.

Indecision struck Kaitlyn when it came to picking the colors. Her dilemma: pink or sage green. She kept going back and forth in the time leading up to the wedding.

"I really drove my mom crazy," she said. "My dad was the one that sat me down and really talked to me about the colors and overall theme of the wedding. He is a very thorough thinker, and he and I can really design things in our heads. We sat down in my parent's kitchen for two hours and drew out the entire wedding. After that, I knew exactly what I wanted, and we got right to work."

Parker did not face the same sort of dilemmas when it came to planning the colors and theme of the wedding.

"It's just not something I really thought about," he said. "I knew Kaitlyn was going to go above and beyond planning it, and she did. All I cared about was everyone having a good time and being with our family and friends."

When the wedding day arrived, it did not have an overall theme.

"I'm more of an 'I like what I like' kind of person," Kaitlyn said. "I wanted my wedding to not be a 'country' wedding, but I also did not want over-the-top glam. I worked with the decorator and pretty much had a little bit of everything thrown together. It just looked so good. It was a perfect mix of rustic, elegant and vintage. The bridesmaids wore black, the hall was all greens and neutral colors, while the bouquets for me and the girls held all the color."

Wild Thorn Floral and Design in St. James made the floral arrangements. Rented items came from Grace & Lace Wedding & Event Rentals in Freeburg.

Kaitlyn said that by May 2022, she had it all figured out. "That summer, I did almost no wedding planning and was so relaxed," she said. "Even the day felt easy. Of course, I had a day-of coordinator that helped make everything flow smoothly. It was so nice not to worry about everything. I overprepared everyone way in advance. Everyone got a detailed itinerary. Deacon Brooks got a binder. My mom got a Powerpoint."

"I let Kaitlyn take care of it all," Parker said. "Once she starts making Powerpoints, I know that I should just let her do it."

**THE PERFECT DRESS**

Once the time came to walk down the aisle, Kaitlyn did so in a dress she described as "perfect."

"Growing up, I was obsessed with my Aunt Susan's train on her wedding dress," she said. "I would stare at her wedding photo, and I just knew I wanted one just like it. I wanted the longest train I could get and the longest veil that went with it."

Kaitlyn's search for the longest train and longest veil on the market took her to several dress sellers, but she did not find the perfect dress until she visited Breeze Boutique in Columbia during a sample sale.

"My mom picked it out, and we both cried as soon as I stepped out," she said. "It was such a special moment. I could not have asked for a better experience."

The Hair Boutique in Freeburg did Kaitlyn's hair to go along with her perfect dress.

**WALKING DOWN THE AISLE**

Kaitlyn said she does not remember thinking about anything specific as she walked down the aisle at Visitation Catholic Church in Vienna.

"I was just so happy," she said. "It was so special to be in that moment, and I just wanted to soak every second in."

Parker said his thought as he watched his bride approach was that "it's about dang time."

Kaitlyn said choosing the music was one of the most important parts of the wedding planning process.

"We both love music and had such a fun time picking it all out," she said.

During the ceremony, a piano and violin duo from the St. Louis-based company Gold Standard Musicians played songs the couple had selected. They chose arrangements of "Can't Help Falling in Love" by Elvis Presley for the beginning of the ceremony procession, "Just the Way You Are" by Bruno Mars for the procession of bridesmaids and "Speechless" by Dan + Shay for the aisle walk.

During the reception at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Vienna, a DJ from Night Moves Entertainment played more selected songs. Kaitlyn and her father danced to "My Little Girl" by Tim McGraw. Parker and his mother danced to "You'll Be in My Heart" by Phil Collins.

"(I want to give) a huge shout out to our DJ, who absolutely killed it," Kaitlyn said. "I might be partial, but I have never been to a wedding where so many different people of all ages could come together and enjoy being on a dance floor like we did. I never wanted the reception to end."

Argyle Catering prepared the meal, which included pork loin with red wine sauce, fried chicken, green beans,

broccoli, salad and rolls.

The bakery Grandma's Cookie Jar made the cake, cupcakes and other snacks.

"Our cake was amazing," Kaitlyn said. "It was just a vanilla cake, but we spiced it up with buttercream frosting and a strawberry jam in between layers. We had a variety of different fresh fruits and a powdered sugar garnish on the cake. I had dreamed of this wedding cake since I got engaged, and Kim absolutely knocked it out of the park. It could not have been better. I almost cried when I saw everything together and had to cut into it. I made sure that Parker and I only had the smallest bite. We have it saved in our freezer and will be eating some on every anniversary for many years to come."

Local baker Vienna House Sweets supplied cookies, and they were gone fast.

"They were gone before we even got into the reception

hall, so I don't have any photos of them," Kaitlyn said. "I am thinking the bartenders made a pretty big dent in the snack area..."

**MEMORIES AND THE FUTURE**

Now that the wedding is in the past, the couple relives it through Wieberg's photos, videographer Kensie Darst's recordings and their own memories. Each of their favorite wedding memories bookended the day.

"The highlight of my day was when we walked into the hall and all of the people we loved were there for us," Parker said. "The first dance was a close second; our DJ made Kaitlyn's dreams come true when he approved cold sparks for our first dance."

Kaitlyn chose a moment from the end of the night.

"Parker and I were able to be the last ones to walk out of the hall," she said. "It was so special to be able to look at the space where one of the best nights of our lives was

just held and know that from that moment, it was me and him, even if there was trash everywhere and I had to go help clean up early the next morning."

Looking back, Kaitlyn and Parker both said they would not change a thing about their wedding day. Unfortunately, a family emergency postponed their honeymoon, but Kaitlyn said they hope to someday take their trip to hike in some of Arkansas' state parks.

Kaitlyn and Parker live in Vienna, where they have bought a house. Kaitlyn works as a marketing specialist for the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Parker works as a social studies teacher and baseball coach at New Bloomfield High School. They are expecting their first child, a daughter, in May.

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