



The Wedding Planner

BY LEE McHATTON
WITH KATHY PERKINS

At first glance, Sara McHatton looks like *she* is the blushing bride. It takes only a few minutes of observation to realize that this organized perfectionist is the one in charge - the Wedding Planner herself!

After working with several hundred brides, the president and CEO of Wedding Bound is definitely on top of her game after seven years in the business. Her love of detail, challenging

work, and her self-described perfectionism make her the perfect candidate for this often stressful but very rewarding job. As she herself says, "This is not a job for those who lack self-discipline and don't like to sweat!"

Wedding planning, while it may have looked fun and glamorous in the movie of the same name, is, according to Sara, "not an 8 to 5 job. It's a 24/7 job! I never get a day off (especially juggling time with my husband and two small children). In addition, people attempt to take advantage of my time and knowledge." Yet she loves

the job and providing the excellent service that makes her clients happy.

When asked what would be a 'nightmare scenario' for her, Sara replied. "No one situation immediately comes to mind that would really frighten me, as I love the challenges that are placed before me with every event. However, a nightmare scenario for me would be planning my own wedding! Planning your own wedding just puts too much pressure, stress and emotion on a bride, even a wedding planner!!!

All Photos taken at Canyon Oaks Country Club by Jason Halley.



of a bride's dreams.

Sara, along side her husband and partner Lee, operate their wedding and special event-oriented corporation that includes several company divisions. Emmett's Sound Productions is a mobile disc jockey and entertainment company established by Lee in 1977, that can also provide musicians, pastors and even dance instructors. Communication Consultants is a company that offers pre-marriage

One thing Sara stresses is that a wedding planner is only as good as the team of vendors she has assembled to assist her. Some of her personal favorites are Cambray Rose Florist, Boss Manufacturing (Display Stands), A & J Party Center Rentals (Rental and Linen Items) and Canyon Oaks Country Club (Venue).

The wedding planning business is definitely much more in vogue than in past years, becoming known as a 'must-have' on a bride's wish list. Sara's husband and business partner, Lee McHatton, has a time-telling perspective on this fact, having worked in the Northern California wedding entertainment industry since the late 1970's. He says, 'Wedding planning and coordination is a much easier sell to brides these days than it was during the past three decades.' So many brides-to-be have seen disastrous results first-hand at family and friends' weddings, causing them to pursue a 'true' professional to organize their special event. 'Not having to hear a wedding photographer come up to me and say 'so, what's the plan for tonight?' at the reception is a total relief!' this wedding DJ says. A true wedding planner will ensure that not only the bride and groom know the wedding plan, but also each vendor.

Sara McHatton is the premiere wedding planner right here in the North State. McHatton not only is contracted to plan and coordinate events from start to finish on a regular basis, but also is compensated to consult on an hourly basis to jumpstart the organizing

seminars, workshops and personal communication skills training for those interested in maximizing success in their relationships. Even a unique stay for your first night as a married couple can be a part of the package.

Earlier this year, McHatton's Wedding Bound completely planned and coordinated a local wedding that involved three different music ensembles, multiple photographers, a team of videographers, a fleet of eight limousines and on site coordinators who worked this most elegant affair that included over 100 vendor staff! There was an exquisite atmosphere and sit down dinner with prime filet mignon for the more than 400 guests from as far away as Europe, South America and Asia. This wedding could have easily been featured on a television wedding show or in a movie. It definitely wasn't the ordinary Northern California Wedding! The point is, if this wedding planner can handle a budget that far exceeds the typical wedding budget in this area by more than ten fold, she can handle most any event you have to put together.

Continuing the wedding theme, McHatton sponsors, produces and coordinates a local Wedding Show called 'The Wedding Day Soirée' that showcases some of the top area wedding vendors. The 'Soirée' is celebrating its fifth year as a quaint, upper-scale Bridal Show that allows

brides and grooms to meet and select their favorite wedding vendors all at one special location of quality wedding professionals. Exhibitors include not only the staple florists, caterers and photographers, but also exciting added 'extras' that a typical wedding show might not think to include. It's this creative and 'out of the box' thinking that puts the Soirée in a class all its own. This show has completely sold out each and every year as a unique marketing opportunity to wedding professionals, having had a 'waiting list' for exhibitors since the first year of existence. And, the guest feedback of those attending the Soirée has been overwhelmingly positive.

The Wedding Day Soirée is reaching new heights with each and every show that takes place. The response has been so good that there will be some exciting additions and two shows in 2008! This year's show will be Sunday, November 4th at the Masonic Family Center at 1110 W. East Avenue in Chico, California from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Those interested in purchasing advanced tickets or reviewing the select wedding vendor list can call Emmett's Sound/Wedding Bound at 530.891.1039 or go to the website @ www.weddingdaysoiree.com. To purchase advance tickets, please visit 'Flowers by Rachelle,' located in the Raley's Skypark Plaza.

Upon graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree and succeeding in several sales, marketing, advertising and television positions that allowed her travels across the United States and Canada, McHatton began her own business just a few years ago. Since then she has been able to attain exponential success in a challenging trade area with the marketing, organizational, administration, communication and personal skills necessary to thrive in this type of business. Where others are simply trying to survive in an ever-changing market, McHatton is continually looking for other motivated and responsible individuals to partner with her in her adventure. This successful woman in business is even considering franchising her business plan to other entrepreneurs.