

FROM THE RUNWAY TO THE AISLE

Wedding profile

Extra preparation time helped the Pruitts avoid common pitfalls on their path to marriage

By Jenny Sherman
Freelance Reporter

Ever since she was six years old and wearing a tutu on her head as veil, University graduate Molly Pruitt has imagined her big day.

"I've been planning this forever," she said.

But planning a wedding can be exhausting and expensive, and for Molly and her husband Doug, who is also a University graduate, it was no different.

Doug proposed to Molly in August 2002, and so began the project of planning a wedding on a tight budget.

"I saved a lot of money planning (the wedding) myself," Molly said.

With the help of University financial aid, money from egg donations and family contributions, the couple planned a 150-guest ceremony economically.

They began by researching different specialty stores in Eugene and Portland and comparing prices.

"I spent so many hours on the phone calling vendors," Molly said.

Molly had the help of the "Bravo Wedding Planner," which the Web site labels "the professional, step-by-step system that keeps track of every detail of your wedding."

The time commitment to plan the wedding conflicted with schoolwork, but the couple gave themselves plenty of extra time in case of unexpected obstacles.

"You need more than a couple months for a wedding like ours. You need time to compensate," Doug said.

As predicted, a few things didn't work out as planned. When Molly went to pick

up her dress at Tres Fabu Bridal in Portland, she found it hadn't even been ordered. It took seven months to finally get her dress after she was told it would take three, and she was never offered a discount or compensation for her troubles.

Another common problem arose on the wedding day: rain. Luckily for the couple, they had a backup plan.

After some advice from a bank teller, the

bridesmaids' white prom dresses. Although the bridesmaids had to purchase their attire, Molly allowed them to wear \$15 J-Crew flip-flops.

To stay on budget, Molly and Doug ordered a revised menu for the reception that excluded expensive items like salmon, which carried a tab of \$30 a head. A beer and wine bar opened for the first hour of the reception, charged for cocktails and stayed open to the bridal party all night long.

Molly, who loves the color orange, found her tangerine and peach decorations for 90 percent off at Michaels, an arts and crafts store. Her flower vendor, Blooming Bouquets of Portland, is run by a woman out of her home and offers bouquets at three times less than flower shops.

The wedding cake had flowers of marzipan and was made to feed about 80 percent of the guests. According to Molly, cakes are one of the highest expenses in a wedding, so the couple saved money by asking their

peach-donating cousin to make a cake. The chocolate confection was in the shape of a slot machine, celebrating the couple's honeymoon to Las Vegas.

Molly and Doug said it took a total of eight months to prepare for the wedding. After a speech from the best man, dancing with little children, champagne toasts and the bouquet tossing, the guests tossed hundreds of orange paper airplanes at the new husband and wife, who ran to their brand-new Chevy Silverado.

The couple now resides in San Antonio, Texas, where Doug is training to be a navigator for the Air Force, and Molly is working as a nanny.

"I like Oregon better," Doug admitted, but the couple is slowly getting accustomed to the different location and their new lives together.

Jenny Sherman is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



Courtesy

Recent University graduates Molly and Doug Pruitt planned their 150-guest wedding economically, by using family contributions and searching for deals.

two found the Persimmon Country Club in Gresham to be "perfect" for the ceremony, as it was both breathtaking and affordable, Molly said. The tranquil site, which has a panoramic view of the Cascade Mountains, was clouded over on June 20. The couple took precautions by moving the entire event underneath an overhang, and it started to shower precisely as the traditional Wedding March music sounded.

At the reception, the bridesmaids and groomsmen hemmed the newlyweds at a center table facing the dance floor. Each table was adorned with flower pots brimming with peaches, which were garnished with tiny white flowers and miniature airplanes to represent Doug's participation in the U.S. Air Force.

"They were all real Air Force planes," he said.

Flower petals sprinkled the white tablecloths with oranges and pinks, which matched the Asiatic Lilly corsages on the



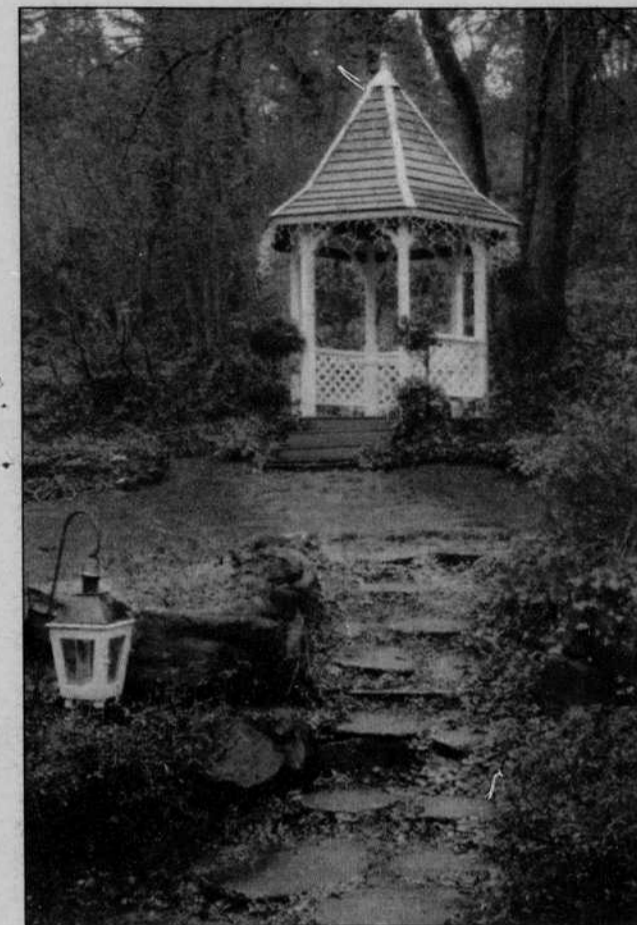
Lauren Wimer Photographer

Nineteen-year-old Katherine Smith tosses a bouquet into the crowd during one of four fashion shows held this weekend at the Emerald City Bridal Show.



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Julie Hale helps her 23-year-old daughter Sara Hale try on tiaras and veils for her wedding day. Sara will be getting married on July 3.



Tim Kupsick Freelance Photographer

The Campbell House is a great place for a wedding or honeymoon.



Photo illustration by Lauren Wimer Photographer

Eugene resident Tiffany Brown models a wedding dress at Eva's Bridal Mart. Located at 970 Pearl St, Eva's is one of several bridal shops in the local area.

Bridal show

The Emerald City Bridal Show, held this weekend, added reality to many bride-to-be's dreams

By Evan Cael
Freelance Reporter

Brides-to-be, eventual husbands, families and others filed into the Lane Events Center for the 2004 Emerald City Bridal Show on Saturday and Sunday.

Students Jennifer Cooper, 21, and Rodney Clark, 22, spent much of their Sunday touring the more than 100 booths of local wedding-related businesses.

"It's kind of overwhelming," Cooper said. "I want everything to be perfect and exactly how I imagine it in my head, but I didn't even know how many options were out there. It feels like we're back to the drawing board."

The two were engaged over the holidays and are planning an August wedding with about 300 guests in Portland. That may seem far off, but as anyone who has participated in the coordination of matrimonial affairs knows, the clock is ticking.

"This (show) is a unique opportunity for future brides and grooms to

finalize their wedding plans or just to get some good ideas all under one roof," show producer Seth Reese said.

Reese's company, Oregon Wedding Shows, sponsors similar bridal events throughout Oregon. Each event takes about one year to organize.

"It could take weeks or months to drive to each of these businesses individually, but we offer the same service in one afternoon," said Reese, who was wearing a sleek black tuxedo at the show.

Walking into the event hall, each of the roughly 700 brides-to-be in attendance over the weekend first entered a portion where string quartets were in direct competition with party disc jockeys and classical guitarists — the first of many impassioned decisions to be made.

Persisting forward, event participants encountered a mountain range of wedding cakes where Jill Dian, owner of Classique Cakes & The Wedding Solution, had a booth. She runs her business entirely out of her home with a small family staff aiding in the tasks involved in maintaining a business.

"I don't even advertise in the phone book," Dian said. "This show is pretty much the only publicity that

I get aside from word-of-mouth, so I always look forward to these events."

According to Dian, young couples like their cakes "simple yet elegant."

David's Bridal customer service employee Kandayce Day attended the show and said she has seen many brides find their dream dresses.

"When you see her come out of the dressing room and she gets that sparkle in her eye ... it is a beautiful moment," Day said.

A fashion show — the main event of the occasion — occurred four times throughout the weekend. From tiny kiss-blowing flower girls to GQ grooms, the models offered the hopeful brides and grooms in the audience the chance to see possible wedding themes. Exclusively Bridal now offers a University Ducks wedding dress with matching dresses for the bridesmaids.

The bridal show was not merely an event where wedding plans were stapled down and chicken or fish was decided. It became a place to facilitate childlike dreams and hopes, where tablecloth veils of many years ago were transformed into thousand-dollar satin gowns — all under one roof.

Evan Cael is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Six-year-old Emily Bly and 15-year-old Matt Colver model wedding fashions at the Emerald City Bridal Show on Saturday.



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Left to right, 6-year-olds Justine Cole and Emily Bly and 8-year-old Maya Weiler model wedding attire while sitting on a carriage provided by Chafin Farm Carriage at the Emerald City Bridal Show.

Tips for an economic wedding

- Flowers:** Make the corsages, bouquets and arrangements ahead of time; cut flowers or flowering shrubs from a friend's or relative's garden; use the same arrangements for the ceremony and reception.
- Location:** Plan a wedding that takes place at a venue where everything is planned in one package deal; plan a destination wedding where the wedding is at the honeymoon site with close friends and family members.
- Time:** The least expensive months to get married are November through January and any day of the week except Saturday; mid-morning and mid-afternoon receptions will save money because they don't require a full meal.

Source: <http://www.blissweddings.com>.

Wedding Timeline

- 6-12 months prior
 - Determine a budget
 - Set time, location of ceremony, rehearsal & reception venue
 - Pick a honeymoon destination



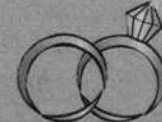
- 5 months prior
 - Order invitations
 - Choose florist
 - Order wedding cake



- 2 months prior
 - Plan rehearsal dinner
 - Select attendants' gifts and groom's gift



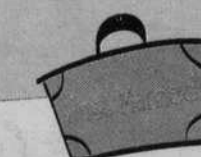
- 1 month prior
 - Choose wedding bands
 - Mail invitations
 - Apply for marriage license



- 2 weeks prior
 - Final check on bridal party clothing
 - Notify newspapers



- 1 week prior
 - Start honeymoon packing
 - Schedule rehearsal for one to two days prior to wedding
 - Go over final details of ceremony & reception with all parties involved



- 1 day prior
 - Have manicure and pedicure
 - Attend wedding rehearsal & dinner

Wedding Day
• Breathe! Enjoy your day.



SOURCE: <http://www.weddingmanor.com>