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# Wedding Guide

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# Don't Go, HE SAID ...

Photos by Christina &  
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As an Olympic athlete, swimmer Cody Miller knows the importance of persistence—it's a trait that helped him get to the 2016 Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro, where he won bronze and gold medals for Team USA.

It's also been valuable in other aspects of his life. Cody, now 26, met middle school teacher and swim coach Ali DeWitt during his senior year at Indiana University, when she was a volunteer assistant coach for the Hoosier swim team. Initially, she declined his request for a date, but Cody was undeterred, asking her out several more times. Finally, he and Ali went on their first date in April 2014.

Their relationship quickly blossomed, and they soon realized they were serious about each other. That summer, Ali was offered a job as a swim coach in New Jersey. It was an excellent opportunity, but it would mean moving away from Cody.

When Cody learned about the offer, he wasn't exactly thrilled. "He said he didn't want me to go anywhere," says Ali, now 28. "That's when I kind of knew it was serious."

Ali stayed in Indiana, and in November 2015 Cody proposed while they were in Los Angeles for the USA Swimming Foundation's Golden Goggle Awards. As they strolled along Manhattan Beach at sunset, Cody took the ring—hidden in a dental floss container—from his pocket and asked Ali to marry him.

Though it was swimming that brought them together, the two had bonded over something else they both love: J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books. As they planned their special day, they made sure it reflected their Pottermania, incorporating the theme into everything from their engagement photos to the wedding programs.

The wedding was held on September 9, 2017, at Deer Park Manor. Wedding planner Cathy Teeters decorated the venue with vibrant floral arrangements featuring sunflowers, red roses, and blue delphinium. Bright red bows festooned the guest chairs.

Wearing a white sleeveless gown embellished with lace and a pair of sparkly red shoes, Ali was accompanied down the aisle by her father, Chuck DeWitt. Her sister, Brittany Krier, was her matron of honor, and



Cody Miller, an Olympic athlete, knows the value of persistence and determination. He used those skills to convince Ali DeWitt to take a chance on a first date. The two were married in September.

Family and friends gathered to witness the outdoor ceremony held at Deer Park Manor.



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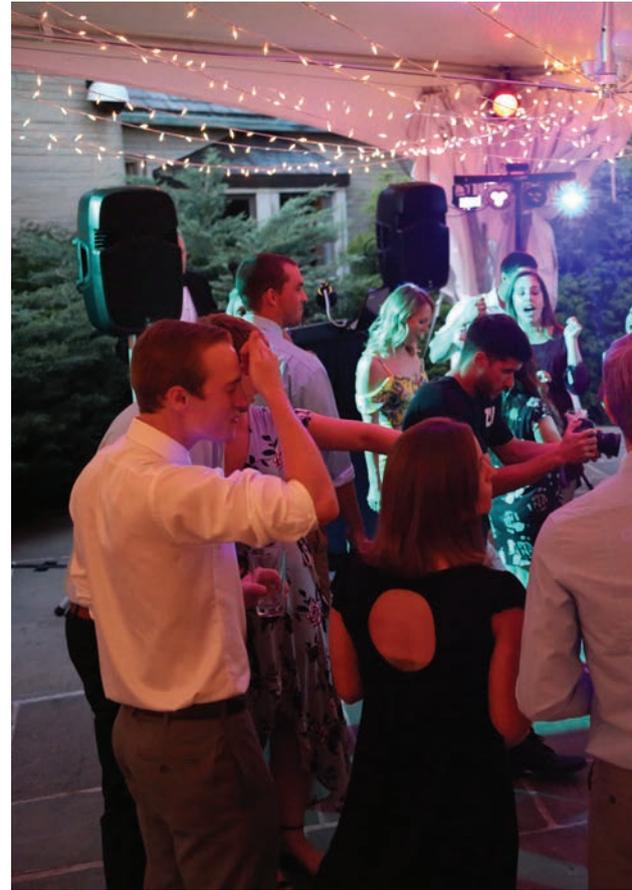
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(above) The wedding party.

(top, center) Guests enjoyed dancing through the night.

(top, right) Dark tablecloths set the backdrop for red napkins and bright sunflowers.



Cody's fellow IU swimmer James Wells was his best man.

Ali's friend and fellow teacher Tiffany Grant officiated at the outdoor ceremony, which took place beneath a leafy tree decorated with round glass terraria filled with sunflowers. "I remember being emotional but overjoyed," Ali says. Cody adds, "I was fighting back the urge to cry pretty much the whole time."

weddings



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(above) Ali's friend and fellow teacher Tiffany Grant officiated.

(right) A father-daughter dance.

(opposite page) The wedding and reception featured several Harry Potter elements, including this three-tier chocolate cake by Stecy Ober.





At the reception, also at Deer Park Manor, food stations by IMU Catering allowed guests to choose from several dinner options, including pizza, pasta, wings, salad, sushi, and Mexican food.

Like the wedding, the reception featured several Harry Potter elements, including a photo booth from Picture Perfect where guests could use Harry Potter-themed props to make their own keepsakes. Stecy



Ober created a three-tier chocolate cake decorated with a wizard's robe and wand and other Harry Potter imagery.

"It felt like a big party the whole time," Cody says of the reception. "No one wanted to leave."

The couple honeymooned in the Maldives in December. They reside in Bloomington, where Cody continues to train at IU. Ali plans to return to teaching and coaching after taking a year off to travel with Cody.  
—Molly Brush

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# A HAUNTINGLY BEAUTIFUL Wedding

*Photos by Laura Von Photography*

Mike Jacob admits that he's not a particularly romantic guy. So it's no surprise that his marriage proposal to Natascha Buehnerkemper was unconventional. "Getting on a knee—that's not me," he says. Yet their wedding was hauntingly beautiful and quixotic.

Natascha, 33, and Mike, 32, met as co-workers at Bloomingfoods. Theirs was a low-key courtship. Their first date was an evening at Kilroy's with a few of Mike's friends. But as they spent time together, they realized they were a good match. "It started off as just fun, but then we got along really well, continued to hang out, and got more serious," Natascha says.

In October 2015, the two were having dinner at El Ranchero when Mike mentioned a recent dream he'd had. Natascha remembers, "Out of nowhere, he said, 'I had a dream the other night that we were getting married, and it just made sense. I haven't been able to stop thinking about that. So will you marry me?'"

After getting over her initial shock, Natascha said "yes," and the couple went back to eating dinner. "It was very low key and very true to us," Natascha says.

From the beginning, Natascha and Mike had a specific vision for their wedding, and they enlisted Lucee Blue Events to help them bring that vision to life in The Clubhouse at The Fields. To evoke the moody feel they wanted, they used a color palette of deep jewel tones with black accents. Bloomin' Tons Floral Co. created lush arrangements that featured dark red and peach roses, succulents, and eucalyptus.



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Natascha and Mike had matching notebooks where they wrote their wedding vows.

Natascha's dress was a custom-made top and skirt created by Libby Ball of Bloomington Stitchery.



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The couple wrote their own vows for the ceremony, which was officiated by their friend Ryan Boyce. Natascha's godmother, Christy Buehnerkemper Elder, was maid of honor. Mike's friend Stephen Maynard served as best man.

Natascha's wedding-day attire was a custom-made top and skirt created by Liby Ball of Bloomington Stitchery. One side of the reversible velvet skirt matched the pale gold top, while the other was deep red. The ensemble included a velvet cape in emerald green with black sequined epaulettes.

The wedding took place on November 19, 2016. That morning, photographer Laura Von took photos of the wedding party at Woolery Mill. "I finally saw her dress and how beautiful she looked," Mike says. "I was holding back tears, that's for sure." Adds Natascha, "It was total happiness."



The couple wanted to share their love with family and friends, and did so with a special unity candle ceremony that included everyone in attendance.

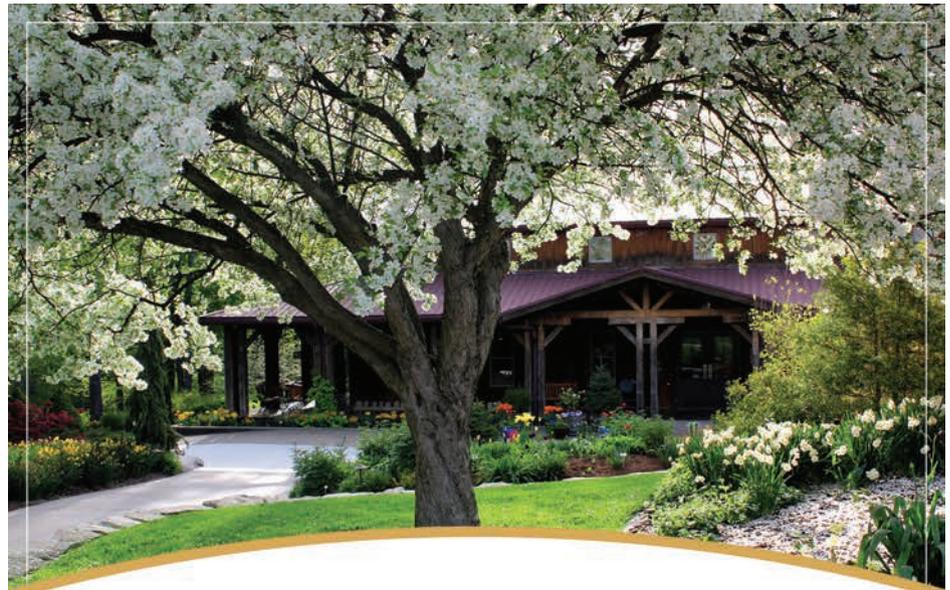
The couple's friend Ryan Boyce officiated the ceremony, for which they wrote their own vows. Christy Buehnerkemper Elder, Natascha's godmother, was her maid of honor, and Mike's close friend Stephen Maynard was his best man.

The ceremony also included a twist on the traditional unity candle ritual. Before the ceremony, each person received a black taper. The couple's parents lit the main candle, from which Natascha and Mike lit their candles. They in turn lit the bridal party's candles, and the bridal party lit the guests' candles. Bathed in soft candlelight, the pair exchanged rings.

At the reception, guests dined on barbecued pork and macaroni and cheese from Carson's BBQ & Catering. The cake, from Icing on the Cake by Kristina, was a four-tier naked red velvet decorated with dark red and peach roses.

Dave Walter served as the DJ, spinning 90s R&B and hip-hop tunes. At the end of the reception, a school bus transported everyone to The Atlas Bar, where the celebration continued.

The couple honeymooned in Southeast Asia for three weeks. They visited Mike's extended family in Malaysia, where they



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held a second wedding reception, and also traveled to Brunei.

When Natascha and Mike reflect on their wedding, they agree that the best part was being surrounded by family and friends. “The thing that sticks out to me is how incredible it was to have all those people in one place celebrating us—this total feeling of being enveloped by love,” Natascha says. —*Molly Brush*



(clockwise from top left) The wedding party—and more; a quick kiss during the reception; the four-tier naked red velvet cake with dark red and peach roses; black linens and greenery, with plenty of candles, made for a cozy November evening.

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Sarah Ristau and Seun Akinyosoye first met in Indiana, but it wasn't until they traveled to another continent together that their romance began to blossom. As students at Indiana University, American-born Sarah and Nigerian-born Seun visited South Africa in summer 2010 to volunteer with an IU student organization. At the end of the trip, they spent several days together in Cape Town, where sparks began to fly. Soon, they were dating.

The couple embarked on another journey a few years later when they moved from Indiana to Washington, D.C. In July 2016, Seun proposed to Sarah at the National Portrait Gallery as their family and friends, who were hiding nearby, looked on. "I sort of had a feeling it was coming," Sarah remembers. "It was funny because I've never seen him so nervous."

With an August 5, 2017, date set, Sarah and Seun chose Frame Worthy Events as their wedding planner. Two things were of particular importance to the couple: holding the wedding on the IU campus and ensuring that it blended American and Nigerian cultural traditions.

They picked Indiana Memorial Union as the venue, holding the ceremony in the Tree Suite Garden and the reception in Alumni Hall. They wanted to incorporate natural and floral themes into the event, and the serene elegance of the Tree Suite Garden fit the bill perfectly. "I would describe our wedding as a sophisticated garden party," Sarah says.

Seun and Sarah met at Indiana University, and held their ceremony and reception on the IU campus.



# *A Marriage* OF TWO CULTURES

*Photos by Wandering Heart Photography*



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(top) The bride and her bridesmaids; (left) the groom with his groomsmen; (above) Seun's nephews were ring bearers and carried signs that read "Here Comes the Bride" and "Ring Security."



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The ceremony was officiated by Seun's family pastor, Idowu Fasooore. Seun's nephews served as ring bearers, carrying signs that read "Here Comes the Bride" and "Ring Security."

At the reception, Artful Blooms brought the garden party indoors. Against a backdrop of ivory linens and gold chargers, elaborate centerpieces featured blush and white garden roses, hydrangeas, succulents, dahlias, and eucalyptus. Mini potted succulents doubled as place card holders and guest favors.

IMU Catering served chicken and steak, roasted potatoes and asparagus, and vegetarian pasta at the reception. The five-tier carrot cake with white icing came from the IMU's Sugar & Spice. In a nod to the garden party theme, the gold cake topper read "Love Grows Here."

Halfway through the reception, the couple changed into traditional Nigerian attire and made a second entrance into Alumni Hall, where they performed a dance choreographed by Seun's cousin to a song by Nigerian R&B duo P-Square. "It didn't go as well as we anticipated, but it was still fun," Seun says with a laugh.

The reception also featured a Nigerian tradition in which guests shower the newlyweds with money as they dance. "It's part of the way they celebrate you and give you gifts," Sarah says. By the end of the evening, the floor of Alumni Hall was covered in dollar bills.

The 170 guests came from 19 U.S. states, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom. "One of the things that made our wedding so special for us was getting to celebrate with so



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(clockwise from above) Indiana Memorial Union's Alumni Hall was the site of the stunning reception; the cake, from the IMU's Sugar & Spice, had a topper that read "Love Grows Here"; centerpieces featured blush and white garden roses with other flowers and eucalyptus; halfway through the reception, the couple changed into traditional Nigerian attire and made a second entrance into Alumni Hall; guests came from 19 U.S. states, the United Kingdom, and Seun's native Nigeria.



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many people," Sarah says. "It felt like everyone was so happy to be there." Adds Seun, "It was a fantastic day for everyone involved."

After a weeklong honeymoon in Cancún, the couple returned to Washington, D.C., where Sarah works for the United Nations Foundation and Seun is an IT consultant. —Molly Brush

# THREE WEDDINGS

# And I's Mores



*Photos by  
Tyler White Photography*

(above) Lacy and Bubba cutting the wedding cake during their reception at Abram Farm in Spencer.

(opposite page, left) Lacy shares a dance with her youngest child, Landon Clement; (opposite page, right) Bubba dances with his oldest and youngest children, Rachel and Lilly Poor.

As a single parent of 11 children, Lacy Clement had neither the time nor the inclination for romance when she met Marshall “Bubba” Poor in fall 2015. “I had been divorced for eight years and wasn’t going to get remarried,” Lacy says. “I had never dated and was just going to focus on the kids.”

Bubba had other plans. From the moment the two met at Bloomington Hospital, where he is a neurosurgeon and she is a nurse, he was smitten and determined to win her over.

Lacy, 54, was hesitant to start dating, but Bubba, 61, who has four children

of his own, was persistent. “I just kept showing up,” he says. They began spending time together at her children’s activities, and eventually they were officially dating.

On November 30, 2016, Bubba took advantage of a quiet—if not entirely romantic—moment in Lacy’s kitchen to propose. “We took the trash out,” he says. “When we got back into the kitchen, she had a big sneeze. While she was incapacitated by the sneeze, I got down on my knee and asked her to marry me.”



The couple decided to marry in Puerto Rico so that their families would have the opportunity to get to know each other. “They had met a few times, but they live all over,” Lacye explains. “So if we could go away for a week, it would be a nice bonding time.”

To avoid having to navigate the process of obtaining a marriage license in Puerto Rico, the couple elected to have a civil ceremony in Bloomington before they departed. On April 16, 2017, Monroe County Circuit Court Judge Teresa Harper married the couple in Bubba’s office—the first of three times they would celebrate their union. “We have three anniversaries,” Bubba says.

Their second ceremony took place on April 28 at Hacienda Siesta Alegre, a working horse ranch tucked into the foothills of a moun-

tainous tropical rainforest. Held in a lush garden filled with vibrant wildflowers, the ceremony was officiated by Pastor Juan Fernandez, the father of one of Lacye’s sons-in-law. In attendance were Bubba’s children and grandchildren and Lacye’s children, grandchildren, mother, sister, brother-in-law, and nephew. The couple recited vows they wrote themselves and exchanged rings, and Lacye’s oldest son, Bo, read a poem and led a prayer.

Back in the United States, the celebration resumed when Bubba and Lacye held a reception for family, friends, and co-workers at Abram Farm in Spencer on May 12. Cathy Teeters Beautiful Weddings transformed the barn into an elegant reception hall, filling the space with roses, hydrangeas, chrysanthemums, and other flowers.



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Christy Wilson of Creative in Bloom incorporated the floral theme into the place cards and menus. The tables were decorated with gold votives and floral arrangements in gold vases.

The IMU Catering menu featured herb-encrusted beef tenderloin with béarnaise sauce, and grilled chicken with mushroom cream sauce. The cake was from IMU's Sugar & Spice bakery. For more fun treats, guests could make s'mores over a campfire outside the barn.

Immediately following the reception, Bubba and Lacye went camping in McCormick's Creek State Park with their children and grandchildren.—*Molly Brush*




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WICKS BUILDING Photo by Courtney Sinclair



(top, left) Waiting for the bouquet toss; (top, right) Lacye and Bubba look on as their children make speeches, toasts, and offer well wishes during the reception; (above) a new beginning, sealed with a kiss.

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