

Ulster Publishing's

Hudson Valley Celebrations

Winter 2023



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'Til death do us part

Six tips to achieve perfect wedding hair from Hudson Valley's hottest hair salon

by Zac Shaw and Kristen Ciliberti

IS THERE ANY day more important for your hair than the day of your wedding celebration?

There will be hundreds if not thousands of pictures of it. Everyone in your family (who you get along with) will see it. There will be moments when everyone at your reception will be staring at it. How will you handle your wedding hair?

For that moment, it's the most momentous choice you will make. Your friends will fixate on it, and they may have opinions.

Okay, that's hyperbole. But it is a hair-raising experience. For some brides-to-be, it's actually a pretty accurate description of the pressure felt to get one's hair just right for the big day.

To get the best advice for brides-to-be, we spoke with the hair professionals at Le Shag, a boutique, Manhattan-style salon in uptown Kingston run by longtime local entrepreneur Jen Donovan.

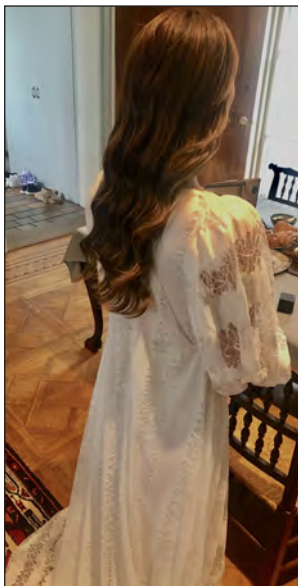
In addition to cutting and styling the hair of our area's most stylish movers and shakers, the Le Shag team are experts in beautifying brides for matrimony. Here are their top six tips for ensuring your vision of celebrating love includes celebration and love for your hair:

Do a hair trial run

If you want your hair to perform perfectly on your perfect day, you're going to need a dress rehearsal.

There are benefits to having consultation and trial with your stylists months in advance of your wedding. Everybody will know what to expect from your hair, having worked with it hands-on. Moreover, it's an opportunity creatively to sculpt your masterpiece in collaboration with experts under no pressure.

Bonus: You get to walk out of the salon and literally live with it. Plan a night on



the town with your fiancé and/or friends, and put your hair through its paces. Give yourself and your stylists the ultimate confidence to make your hair a big hit on your big day.

Care for your hair

The person turning your hair into art wants your hair to be healthy in their

hands. Hair that is thriving is the ideal source material for a show-stopping hairstyle. To this end, make sure you're up on cuts and maintenance prior to going in for a consultation. This is especially important if you're skipping the trial run. Your hair expert is a master at spontaneous solutions for unexpected obstacles, but there's only so much they can updo

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in the moment.

In the run-up to your celebration, give your hair the attention it needs before all eyes are upon it.

Having healthy hair and a cut that you're confident in are prerequisites to a great consultation and subsequent ceremony. If your hair is not there yet, your stylist will be more than willing to help.

Have clean, dry hair when you arrive at the salon or on site

Talk to any hair pro about their job, and one common complaint will



come up: Clients show up with dirty hair more often than you think.

Some are just lazy, ignorant or inconsiderate. Does your hair stylist really need to huff sweaty scalp scent while he/she works?

Others are under an odd impression that there is some great benefit to avoiding washing their hair. Where did urban myth come from? Did we miss a viral TikTok about not showering before a hair appointment?

Some experts will suggest washing hair the night

before a wedding updo, as so-called "second-day hair" can sometimes be easier to work with and style. However, texturizing spray and other products are always at the ready if your hair needs that extra grit.

In a sense, showing up with clean hair is to show up for your hair artist with a blank canvas. Anything becomes

About the cover:

Zach and Kelsey's Wedding

Photo by AGP Collective

Provided by Gina Maloney Events & Design.

GINA MALONEY HAS been a wedding planner for 12 years and has lived in the Hudson Valley for more than 30 years. She feels that people are drawn to the Hudson Valley because of its natural beauty. Once they discover it they want to share it with their family and friends on their special day. With so many new venues popping up in the last decade she gets to give her clients the most beautiful options. Some of her favorite venues include: Red Maple Vineyard, Gather Greene, Meadow Ridge on the Hudson, Opus 40, The Senate Garage and, for the folks that want acoustics for their band, The Bearsville Theater.

Gina's favorite part of being a wedding planner is, "making people happy.... Especially on one of the most important days in life. We strive to go above and beyond for our clients and

exceed their wildest dreams. Many of our clients become life-long friends, as the wedding planning process can take a year or more to execute. This gives us an opportunity to really get to know each other and the families. We create a true bond and friendship with our clients and their family and this is such a gift."

For more information go to: gina-maloneyevents.com or call her at: 845-853-4075.



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EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Geddy Sveikauskas

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: Genia Wickwire

ADVERTISING: Lynn Coraza, Pam Courselle,
Elizabeth Jackson, Angela Lattrell,
Tobi Watson, Jenny Bella

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possible, and everyone is happier from your hygiene. The more you let your hair absorb the debris of everyday life, the closer you get to your stylist politely offering to wash it.

Be on time

We get it. There's a lot going on with your wedding plans. Your hair is only one of many items on the list. That's why hair pros really want to get across a simple but

often-overlooked fact: They are not gods or goddesses who can bend the fabric of time. If you show up 45 minutes late, your stylists will still do their best. After all, you're not the first person to show up

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late for a hair appointment. But you may be forced to make necessary concessions, and for anyone who wants a perfect day, that won't fly.

Think about it: Everything for your celebration has been perfectly arranged and prepared beforehand. In contrast, your stylists need the breathing room to sculpt hair in real time into a work of art. There are no shortcuts to perfect hair. You ultimately respect yourself by respecting your hair stylists' time.

Bring the right photos

By now, most folks have tapped into the power of the Internet for their beauty aesthetics. Every possible hair permutation can be found with a simple Google Image search. Bring a photo or two to your hair pro, and you'd be amazed at how well they are able to use that information to get you the look you're looking for.

To get the hair of your dreams, don't describe the dream you have for your hair. Show your stylist what it looks like in real life. The photos don't have to be exactly what you want, just get in the ballpark. You can mix and match.

Ideally, look for examples of people that have similar features to your own. Providing photos of celebrities and other people is great. You get extra credit if you bring a pic or two of updos you've enjoyed in the past. There's no better hair model for your hair than you. All of these images will be used by your hair expert to triangulate the dream hair in your head so they can translate that to dream hair on your head.

Don't forget special accessories, including your veil

Remember to organize and pack any special tool or accessory that will touch your hair. Your stylist will have a basic supply of hair pins, clips, and the like – but any decorative clips, ribbons, or other special

accessories should be brought to your trial consultation (and of course, don't forget them for the ceremony).

One near-universal accessory that many forget to bring to the salon is the veil. It's ideal to schedule your hair consultation and trial right after locking in your dress. Not only can any details of the dress be

integrated and complemented in your hair, but the veil can be tried out in conjunction with your hairstyle. You'll have the opportunity to get comfortable with the combo and work your hair around it. Peace of mind on your wedding day means preparation. Do it all in advance, and your future married self will thank you.



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Empower your sensuality

The Red Foxxx opens in Woodstock

by Abigail Gierke

FOR DAISY MONTEZ, owning a business was not something new. Her entrepreneurial spirit led her down several different paths in the past, from a childcare service in California to Journey Dance facilitation, a therapeutic form of group dance. And although the concept for her latest venture had been in the back of her mind for a while, it didn't come to fruition until the onset of Covid-19.

"With the first wave of Covid, I couldn't continue my current work," she said. "I felt there was a need for a shop and safe space where people could explore and connect with the tools necessary to empower their sensuality."

Helping people was always in the plan. Initially studying to be a clinical psychologist, it would be a rare heart condition requiring medical attention and rest that would give her time to think and ultimately lead her in a new direction. "I decided to pause and take a break from everything I was doing."

During that time Montez discovered a form of therapy new to her through the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck. "A friend invited me to a female empowerment workshop at Omega, and it was there where I encountered Journey Dance. The dancing was such a healing experience. The connection with other women was cathartic and beautiful, and I realized this was also a form of therapy."

Journey Dance is a therapeutic healing practice achieved through movement and dance. It requires a large room with a group of people. Continuing her practice during the pandemic just wasn't an option.

Enter The Red Foxxx — a Latina-owned and operated lingerie and wellness boutique in Woodstock.



Bra and panties at The Red Foxxx.

PHOTOS BY ALAN CAREY



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The first two years of The Red Foxxx were solely online. Montez learned the business, met vendors at tradeshow, and made connections. "It was always a goal of mine to open a store, but when everything shut down I wasn't sure if it was a smart idea. An online store was a way to start slowly offering products to people I



Lounge wear at The Red Foxxx.



Exterior of The Red Foxxx, located on Tinker Street in Woodstock.

know." The brick-and-mortar store opened its doors last October.

The name The Red Foxxx is a nod to a series of powerful events, people, and figurative and literal encounters with the creature that would become a central symbol in Montez's life. "It started feeling like bread crumbs. Every time I would meditate or think about this venture, a red fox would come up in one way or another. It became

my spirit animal."

Montez, a California native, lived in Brooklyn for ten years and first visited Woodstock for her husband's 40th birthday. They both fell in love with the area. In 2017, Montez and her husband made it permanent.

"I'm not really a city person," she explained. "I grew up near the desert, and proximity to nature and more space is important. When we came up here for the first time, it was so beautiful to reconnect with each other and our surroundings."

A ripple effect

The goal of the shop goes beyond the selling of retail items, according to Montez. "This isn't just a retail shop. Journey Dance led me in the direction of building community and awareness of self-care, and I want to continue that here."

The Red Foxxx emphasizes the importance of body positivity, female empowerment, and inclusiveness.

"I grew up in the era of Victoria's Secret angels," she said. "I remember as a young girl, not necessarily fitting that type of body that we saw everywhere. I didn't feel like I fit in and was riddled with insecurities. Women need to see themselves being represented. Female empowerment means making conscious choices from a place of self-love. Every choice causes a ripple effect, and when you love and accept your truth and make choices from that place, you build a life you love that is strong and capable of handling the ebbs

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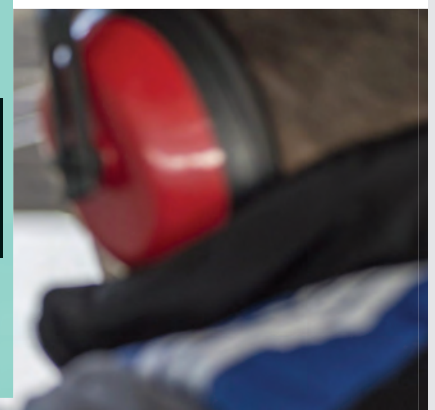


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A mannequin displays an elegant bra at The Red Foxxx.

and flows of life.”

Her store will start offering more to the community beginning in the spring. “We

are building a foundation to offer educational services, and events on a regular basis to help empower people to connect

with their senses and feel comfortable within themselves,” she said. “I’m committed to body inclusivity and supporting brands using materials for their products that reflect this idea and who include photographs of lingerie on all different body types and sizes.”

So far, the best-sellers are lingerie and sexual wellness products, according to Montez. Her biggest surprise has been how excited and welcoming older women from the community have been. “Most shoppers who leave with a purchase are women in their late 50s to early 60s. I honestly didn’t expect the curiosity. Women who are my mom’s age want to be very sexual, and it’s a wonderful surprise.”

She credits the younger generation as central to bridging the gap for those who might be curious but too shy to explore.

“I think female empowerment has come a long way. It’s been a long road but now the younger generation is empowering their generation and others. There’s a ripple effect. I see a lot of older women feeling safer and more comfortable asking questions and exploring certain things that they never thought they’d be exploring. They are discovering and rediscovering this side of them.”

Try something on

Montez said she also understands the environmental impacts of an industry that she said was responsible for ten percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions. “Sustainability is one of the main deciding factors when I’m sourcing products in the shop. I’m proud of the brands I carry in the store.” Sandmaiden, Movelle, and Monique Morin, a New York City-based and ethically sourced lingerie company, are examples of brands using sustainable fabrics.

So far, Montez said she has felt extremely welcome in a town that has always balanced old-Woodstock charm with a willingness to push the edge. She encourages locals and visitors to come in and try something on. “I get so excited when I hear shouts of excitement from the dressing room. I know they feel so great in that moment.”

The Red Foxxx at 68 Tinker Street offers a variety of lingerie, lounge-to-sleepwear, and sensual wellness products. The hours are Friday through Monday, noon to 6 p.m.. To view products, make a purchase, and learn more, visit: www.shoptheredfoxxx.com.



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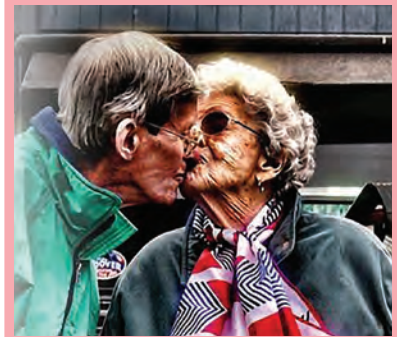


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The view from the bandstand

Weddings and celebrations provide musicians with unique perceptions

by Brian Hollander

THE INSTITUTE FOR Advanced Study is surely an auspicious site for a wedding, with its rolling New Jersey campus and reputa-

tion as an intellectually unmatched haven for the study of ... what? Well, everything, or anything apparently.

So as our humble Woodstock bluegrass band drove up to the Princeton campus and parked next to Albert Einstein's house. Realizing where we were, we all felt a little

smarter. Well, maybe it was awestruck that we were feeling.

In any case, we had made the three-and-a-half hour drive through intermittent torrential rains. But skies were clear when we arrived, biding well for the reception, which was sumptuously laid out in a large gorgeous tent. There was a makeshift bandstand, maybe four inches high in front of a portable dance floor on the lawn under the tent. Einstein's house, next to the tent, was available for the band for tuning, and freshening up.

Somewhere in the first set, it began to rain. For a short period, it rained hard. But the tent held and all stayed dry. The

band played until the dinner was served. Speeches weremade, toasts were clinked, and all appeared under control.

The bride was beautiful in an off-white full-length gown, and her bridesmaids

Everything was called by the leader. Those gigs were called 'screamers.'

were stunning in matching dresses. The men wore formal, and wherever a puddle appeared, all stepped gingerly around it.

The skies opened up again in our second set with a vehemence heretofore unseen by humankind, or so it seemed. Still we soldiered on, though our newlywed hosts seemed a little apprehensive that the long-planned wedding party might be truncated. As we went back to Einstein's between sets we noticed that electrical service was being relayed to the tent from the residence. There were about ten yards of open territory between the two. Lying in the middle of a mud puddle was the junction of two outdoor extension cords.



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The author (third from left) playing with his band at an event.

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the storm, shedding its ambivalence toward us, finally ready to flex. And down she came, in magnificent sheets of pure water.

Though the tent held, it still got pretty moist inside. The folks got a bit looser, able to find spots of dry ground. The dance floor got a bit slick. One little guy, about maybe eight years old and dressed in a fine suit, regarded nature's bounty with a growing grin on his face.

And still it poured. The tent flaps did nothing much, the ground started muddying, the dance floor began sinking into the lawn. The party went on. We played faster.

The little guy finally went for it. Laughing with glee, he jumped into a large puddle of mud and started dancing. Soon he was fully splattered.

Next, in came the bride and groom, throwing all cares away, dancing in the mud as the floor became completely submerged. And you knew that this could be a marriage that would last.

The bridesmaids and groomsmen joined

in, and some of the parents did, too.

The mud was everywhere. The rain's faucet stayed open. Play on, they asked us, hinting at greater riches than the contract had called for. And we did.

In the end, we were relatively unscathed. A little muddy, but not too bad. Nothing electrical blew.

And the wedding party, covered in mud, was ecstatic. Two weeks later, we got a thank-you note from the couple and a check for a couple of hundred more than we had agreed to take.

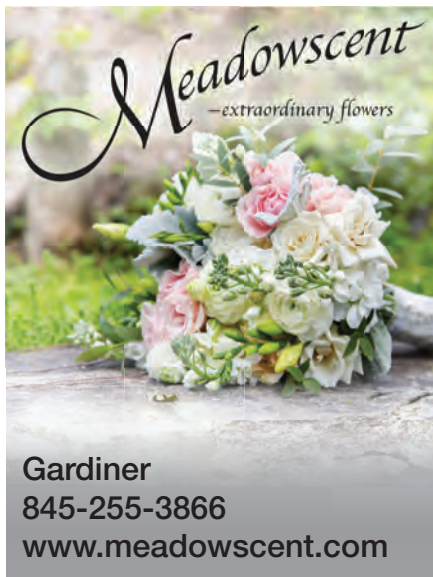
Playing weddings and other types of celebrations provides a unique view of the proceedings. From the bandstand, one is positioned to observe as well as be observed, and often the band or bandleader is expected to be a host and keep the event on track. These are generally well-paying jobs, the food is usually good and sometimes quite spectacular, as can be the venues.

It is best to blend into events and be ready to fill in with whatever is needed. There aren't so many of these wonderful gigs these days, as it seems live music for weddings has been supplanted by (expletive contemplated) DJs.

CAUTION: THE EPISODES IN THIS ARTICLE come from the usually unreliable memories of slowly aging musicians. Thus, every tiny detail presented as fact could have undergone shifts of perspective somewhere along the way. But the stories, in general, actually happened — I think.

Here's more.

Robbie Dupree says: "In 1974, \$7500 was a lot of money. A fan of my band con-



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tacted us and said there was a wedding to play. We don't play weddings, I told him, but he said this one was so much money you got to do it. And we agreed to do it. It was way up the line on Route 32, I can't even say where it was. And the idea was for us to stop at a parking space and we'd be picked up. So we waited there, and sure enough a white van came along, a club van with lots of seats, and two guys gave us all blindfolds to put on.

"We were kind of freaked out about it, but like I said \$7500 was unheard of for us. So we took the money, put the blindfolds on, and rode for, I don't know, 15 minutes on what felt like a back road, and we arrived at a location that was all set up for a wedding. The wedding went off. We played three sets, got paid \$7500, and there were lots of guests who came. I don't know if they were blindfolded.

The end of the story for me was that a couple of years later I read about a big drug bust that happened on that property, or at least up that way, and I'm assuming it was that property. We got the cash and we got



The music plays on even if the rain falls on your wedding day.

away, and that was my one wedding story.

"Yes, they blindfolded us on the way back, but it was nighttime by the time we left, so it wasn't quite as conspicuous."

Harvey Citron says: "Back in the Seventies and early Eighties when I was doing weddings in New York, New Jersey and

Connecticut, I had an agent who would put me out on gigs. How it worked was I would call him on Tuesday and he'd say I was playing with the so-and-so orchestra. Give them a call on Thursday and they'll tell you where to go.

"When I first started there I had never played with any of these people, and the way those wedding bands went they had lots of work in those days. Mostly they were called orchestras, they were not even bands in those days. They might have had ten, twelve, maybe 15 regular people that worked with them. And they would do showcases to sell their band.

"How did they do that? They would have their best players on stage at a bridal show and somebody would say, wow, that lead signer Tony is really great. Can I have him two years from now, on Saturday night, the 17th of June, and he'd look in the book, and see that Tony was scheduled for three gigs that night.. 'Yeah, he's available,...' and it went down the line like that, and whenever they ran out of their regular people they'd call my agent and sometimes he'd provide almost the whole band. Mind you, there were no rehearsals, no set list, no song list. Everything was called by the leader. Those gigs were called 'screamers.'

"On a Friday night when the band was not going to be the band the people ordered for a wedding. The owner in the office would call the bride and tell her, we're so sorry, Tony was in a car accident ... 'Oh, is he going to be okay?' Well, yeah, but he's not going to make it to the wedding. Good news is, we just got Joey, and he came off the road with Bon Jovi... 'Oh, thank you.'

Once in a while, they were not happy



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with that. I remember being on a gig and the bride was just seething ...”

Kenny Nemiroff says: “I played a wedding a long time ago at the West Park Winery, and it was Betty MacDonald’s gig, and I was playing keyboard on it. I got there early We had a setup down near the building and then there’s a hill that goes up with a bluff on top, about 20 or 30 yards from where the band would be playing, and at the top they have the ceremony. They set up a bunch of seats there, and it was a beautiful day. One of the guests was going to play the ceremony and they needed to borrow a keyboard, so I set up my keyboard at the top for the guy.

“As the people were going up to their seats, the guy is near my keyboard and I’m down the hill setting up there, and all of a sudden I hear this really loud, booming bass line from ‘Can’t Touch This,’ it goes da da da da dum, da dum da dum, and I realize I left the sequencer on, on the keyboard. The guy must have hit the other pedal and it started playing, and everybody is looking at him and he’s looking shocked and terrified. So I had to run up the hill, the 30 yards, as fast as I can. And everybody is turned around looking at me, and the keyboard player is looking at me.

“So I said, ‘It’s his fault,’ and I pointed to him. ‘No, I’m only kidding,’ I said, and that was the end of that. He wound up playing the ceremony.”

We played Mack and Susan’s wedding in 1983, on their beautiful property in the Ulster County hills where they were building a house. It was a lovely, sweet homemade party outdoors on a shiny summer’s day.

Twenty years later, they called again, this time for Mack’s 60th birthday, and we were thrilled to again play our acoustic music on another sunny warm day, this time in the long-completed home they had created.

Another 13 years went by until we were called again, this time for a wedding party for their daughter. By now it was a reunion of old friends.

We closed the joyous day with Mack and Susan swaying to the tune we had first played for them more than three decades before, Bill Staines’ “Roseville Fair...”

And we danced all night to the fiddles and the banjos

*Their drifting tune seemed to fill the air
So long ago, but I still remember
How we fell in love at the Roseville Fair.*

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Horses bring happiness

“We do everything from gender reveal to burial”

by Violet Snow

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Jim Martyn, who drove his first pony and cart around his Queens backyard at the age of five, has spent the last 42 years providing horse-drawn vehicles for weddings, funerals, harvest festivals, and other events. His wife, Margie, raises mini-horses and keeps ponies at their Clear Brook Farm in Millbrook, offering pony rides for birthday parties and community events, as well as for temporary petting zoos with mini-horses, sheep, goats, and cows.

“We do everything from gender reveal to burial,” Jim said. Being an old-fashioned guy, he was confused the first time a caller requested a carriage for a gender reveal



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARGIE MARTYN

Teams pull wagonloads of people at festivals.

party, thinking she wanted to celebrate a sex change. Instead, he found himself

driving a pregnant woman and a large box to a gathering. When she stepped out of the carriage, the box exploded with blue sparklers and unfurling blue ribbons, announcing to the guests that a baby boy was on its way.

The Martyns have seven pairs of draft horses, five white, one black, and one black-and-white. They are stocky Percherons, a breed known for their strength as well as their placid temperament, essential for driving in traffic and around unpredictable humans. There's also a white baraat horse for the bridegroom to ride during traditional Hindu and Sikh weddings, complete with the richly embroidered costume that covers most of the horse's body and the elegant parasol



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A wedding carriage waits in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan.



Margie Martyn raises mini-horses at Clear Brook Farm in Millbrook in Dutchess County.

held over the groom's head.

At weddings and funerals, Jim and the other drivers dress up in suits with high hats, and they often attach plumes to the horses' heads. Their teams also draw wagonloads of people at harvest festivals and winter holiday events. People hire carriages or ponies to celebrate engagements, anniversaries, sweet sixteen parties and quinceañeros, block parties, grand openings, and fundraisers.

Margie's ponies and riding horses have appeared onstage at the Metropolitan Opera. The smaller equines are accustomed to elevators, which they may have to navigate to reach photo shoots and

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A team navigates traffic while pulling a hearse.

opening or closing bell.

Jim has been in the horse business for most of his life. When he was growing up in the Ozone Park section of Queens, his father and grandfather kept ponies out back until the sanitation department said they couldn't dump manure in trash cans. They moved their five ponies to a stable in Brooklyn. After a barn fire, they found another place in Ozone Park.

Following the 1964-65 World's Fair in

Flushing Meadow Park, Jim set up a track in the park, where local drivers raced their ponies and carts, and kids could ride a pony once around the track for 25 cents. For six years, he trained and drove trotting and pacing ponies at exhibition races at the track in Monticello.

In 1980, Jim opened the Pelham Bit Stables in Pelham Bay Park. At the time, it was one of five stables in the Bronx offering riding lessons and boarding. Later

called the Bronx Equestrian Center and recently renamed City Island Stables, his place is the only remaining stable in the borough. When Jim decided to buy a wagon for weddings and hay rides, his business expanded steadily.

The Martyns drive all around the country to buy horses. Many of the draft teams are raised and trained by Amish farmers who sell their stock at auctions in Mt. Hope, Ohio, or New Holland, Pennsylvania. Once purchased, the horses spend most of their time in the pastures of the Dutchess County farm, while the carriages and wagons are stored at the Bronx location.

With 50 to 60 weddings booked each year, having seven teams allows the horses plenty of rest between jobs. Although life on the farm is relaxing, the horses can also get bored. Jim said, "They perk up when you harness them to a wagon."

When a caller requests a carriage, a discussion ensues about the route to be traveled. "We try not to go over three miles, for time constraints," Jim explained. "It'll take 30 to 45 minutes to go that far, say a mile or two from the house to the church, another mile to the reception. In the summer, sitting in a carriage in a tux can get pretty hot."

For burials, the distance from the funeral parlor to the church to the cemetery is usually too far for people's patience. Often one leg of the trip is made by car and the other by carriage. "We avoid big hills," Jim



Jim Martyn has been driving wedding and funeral carriages for over 40 years.

said, "because they're hard on the horses."

Birthday parties may include pony rides or an assortment of mini-horses and farm

animals for the kids to interact with. If a unicorn is desired, Margie sprays her white pony's mane pink and purple, stencils stars on his rump, and attaches a horn to his forehead.

Clear Brook Farm has a room that may be rented for parties, as does City Island Stables, or the Martyns will travel with their animals. "We did Puff Daddy's kid's party at Chelsea Piers," Jim said, "and we brought three ponies to a party for Diana Ross's kids in Greenwich, Connecticut."

Hiring a carriage or wagon costs \$1500, with extra charges for events distant from New York City. Jim has trucked his horses and carriages as far as Philadelphia, Massachusetts, and Delaware. The charge for an hour-long pony party is approximately \$300, with the price depending on location and the number of animals. Note that the unicorn costs extra.

For more information, see <https://www.nychorse.com> or call 914-489-1037.

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