

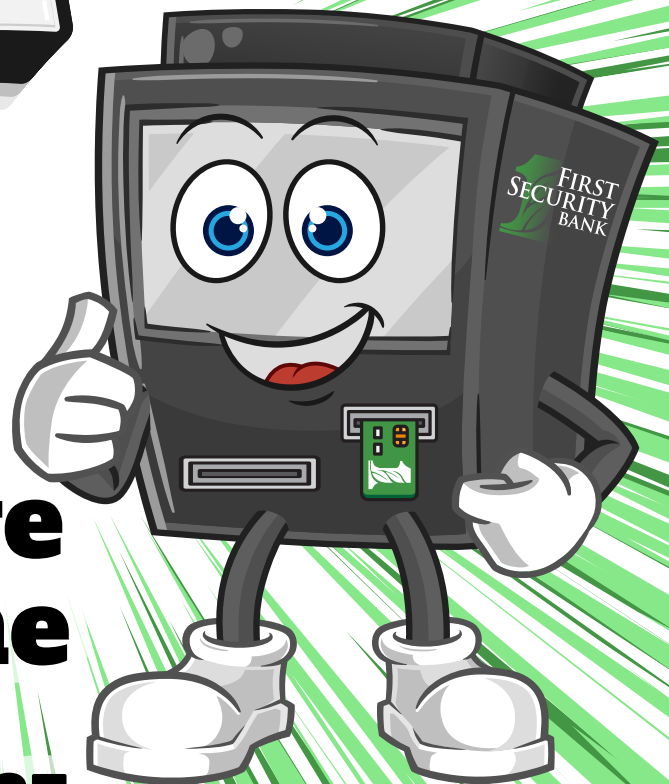
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SPRING 2024
ISSUE 30

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Event Calendar

UKC Southern Classic

Batesville Civic Center

MAY 3 – MAY 5, 2024

Dog show presented by United Kennel Club Conformation (Altered Conformation, Junior Showmanship, Altered Total Dog, Novice Puppy, Total Dog/Total Junior, Veteran), Nosework, Precision Coursing, Rally Obedience, UKC Main Events.



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Sawyer Brown

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Center

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ARTS & CULTURE

LEATHER CRAFTS

Batesville leatherworker adds new passion to multiskill life

BY ANGELA H. CUTRER

Photos Submitted by Michael Johnson



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Michael Johnson had a gun. Nothing unusual about that.

It was a compact Smith and Wesson 40-caliber Shield that his beloved late wife, Billie Brewer Johnson, had gifted him.

But he needed something to carry the thing in. That's the one thing he didn't reckon on.

Sure, he could order one off the internet, or go shopping for one at a specialty store. But he didn't necessarily want that. In fact, he wasn't even sure what he wanted.

That's when the internet actually came in pretty handy for the guitar-playing Delta man eager to learn new things. And that's how Town and Country Leatherworks truly began.

Batesville's Michael Johnson, who turns 50 in July, has service in his blood. "I'd been in the fire service since 1990," he explained. "I've always been around law enforcement; my daddy retired from it and I've been around it all my life in some way or another."

Michael has always been the kind of man who stops on the highway about a mile down from any officer conducting a traffic stop, just to make sure the trooper remained safe.

Johnson doesn't consider himself a superhero or anything; he just knows right from wrong and how supporting fellow man costs nothing. It's just time wisely spent, in his opinion.

Following 35 years of employment as a traveling plant electrician, Michael took the suggestions from local friends and attended deputy school. He now patrols the very county he loves as a part-time sheriff's deputy.

Let's get back to that gun and what caused such a worry 10 years ago. Johnson needed a holster, but he couldn't find anything that appealed to him. So he started watching Youtube videos to find out how to use his God-given artistic abilities to see what was involved in making one himself.

A multit talented man, Johnson didn't know if he had it in him. "I didn't think I'd drawn anything since second grade," he said, explaining how his current passion for leatherworks developed.

Another thing Johnson found was his interest in working with leather. After researching, it was time to head to Hobby Lobby to look at what medium to use. His eye fell upon imported vegan leather: Because it was not super expensive, so he didn't have to worry about "messing it up."

From there, Johnson's passion for leatherwork expanded. He has now created service holsters for fellow law enforcement members, saddle stirrups, wallets, belts, guitar straps, Bible and notebook covers and even watch bands.



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The son of Carmel and Lavern High Johnson, Michael grew up at Parchment, “on the good side of the gate.” His father was an airman based in Columbus. Michael chopped cotton in his youth, but found it didn’t pay much and the work backbreaking.

Michael, now a modern-day artist using the skills of yesteryear, has been working since he was 16, when he left school at Drew. He said there was nothing part time in those days; it was either full time or nothing. So he made a choice and went to work.

Now, all these years later, he’s proud to show off his work, but not for pride’s sake. “People are used to things off an assembly line,” he said. “Whenever I am at a festival [with my wares], people stop and just watch me as I work with the leather. I guess it’s fascinating because it’s so unusual today to find many who work on things that take patience, time and skill.”

The only major change to Michael’s work is that he now uses American-made leather. “It’s like butter,” he said. “Once I knew I wouldn’t mess it up, I started using it because it’s like night and day – expensive, but it carves like butter.”



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Michael's artistry takes a fine hand. "You gotta be particular about it," he said of working with leather. "I had to piddle with it using a utility knife and take my time. I feel grateful I could use that God-given talent and my mind to make these things."

Michael appreciates the celebration of his handiwork, especially considering that when he was young, he said he "didn't know there was life outside of the Delta." Each piece of his leatherwork has a portion of himself embedded within. "I hope they see the Lord is in it," he said. "Whether it's beaded earrings or something with American flags or the Bald Eagle on it, it's definitely a passion – what I'm doing."

"Not just anyone can pick up a knife and do this. Your heart has got to be in it. You have to listen to the leather – I see the finished product before I even start."

It's like a sixth sense – knowing what that piece of leather wants to be; whether it should be dyed or left natural. You have to think about it and then work so that everybody who sees it feels the way you did when you carved and decorated it."

Whether it's a wallet or a gun sling, Michael Johnson's handwork without machines or anything unnatural is truly a plethora of trees within the forest that is Batesville, just waiting for someone else to discover them.

We'll make it easy for you: Contact Michael via good-ol' Facebook to see more of his work and to order a little something for yourself. But be warned: He can size up people pretty good.

"If it's leather, I can build it," he said with a knowing, but humorous, confidence. "But if I can't build it, you don't need it."

He's only half joking.



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FOOD

FOOD TRUCK - SNOW CONES

Shaved ice season is back!

BY DAVIS COEN

Snow cone and Shaved ice season is on folks, and Batesville is the prime spot in Panola County for cool delights.

Two major players in the iced refreshments game are Partee's Sno' & 'Mo Shaved Ice, and Bryant's Shaved Ice, each with eye-catching food trucks, usually in bustling parts of town.

Both businesses perform a similar craft, which is mainly cooling down patrons of all ages and tastes through the warmer months.

"You know, people just love to see shaved ice concession trailers out there," said Jerome Partee, who first acquired all the essential equipment to run his operation back in 2003, then set up in the parking lot in front of his barber shop, on Pearson St.

At the time, there was no shaved ice business in town, and he felt "it was a pretty good community, with a lot of kids," as well as adults.

Partee, who grew up between Batesville and Sardis and has lived in Panola his whole life, eventually started leaning greater towards shaved ice.

Often folks might confuse snow cones with shaved ice, but Partee, who uses about 10 blocks of ice a day, explained that snow cones use "harder ice," and that shaved ice has a "smoother taste, like snow." He also characterized another popular frozen food item,

Italian Ice, as "shaved ice, but in an ice cream form."

Partee said that he typically gets about 25 small cups out of one block. While medium and large cups are also available, he can easier gauge sales through the small sizes, although he's "never really counted."

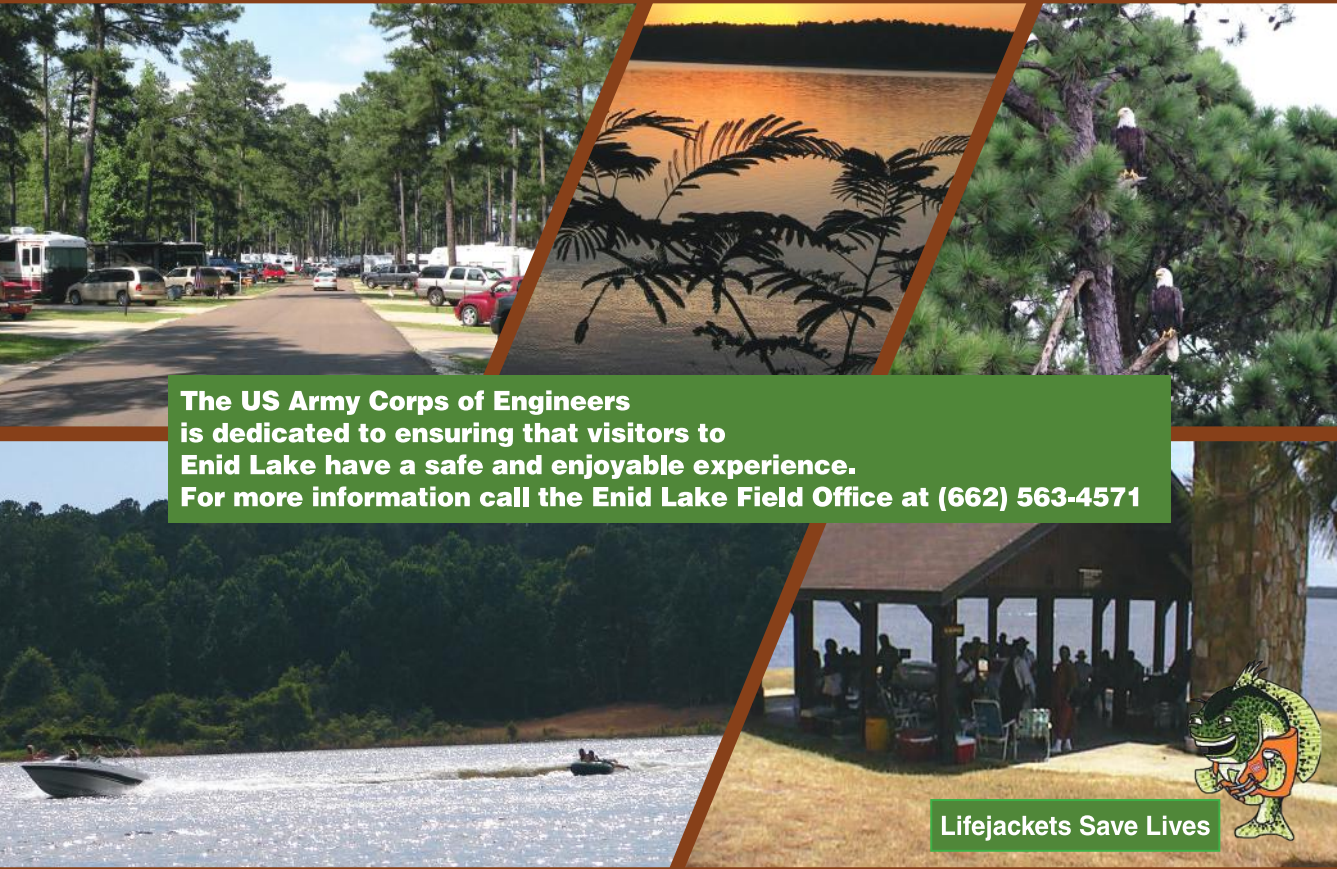
If the usual ten blocks a day don't get used up - things are still chill. Partee has a deep freezer where his Italian Ice and block ice carry-over are stored. "We don't lose any ice, because we just continue to use it the next day - if we need to," he said.

Partee said his biggest selling flavor of shaved ice, hands down, is Blue Raspberry. "Kids love it. I don't know whether it's because it makes their tongue blue," said Partee, "but as far as shaved ice, that would be the one."

As Italian Ices go, the most popular flavors are Tropical Rainbow, and Berry Delicious, which is made out of real fruit.

His prime vending locations include Hwy. 6 in Batesville, and Jackson Ave. in Oxford. Partee said, "It's just got to be visible. You've got to go where a lot of traffic is coming through."

Also locally operated, Bryant's Shave Ice, started their business in 2005 and it all began with "homework and research," according to Margaret Bryant, who runs the operation with her husband James.



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“We thought that we would do great in this line of work, so we decided to purchase a stand and give it a try,” she said.

Beginning with just one truck, the Bryants eventually invested in two more, currently totalling three.

Of course the nature of the business depends on weather, but with the Bryants’ multiple trucks, they sometimes exceed 20 blocks of ice in a day.

Similar to Partee’s, a top flavor for Bryant’s is Blue Raspberry, as well as Tiger Blood, Wedding Cake, and the Rainbows, which consist of Pineapple, Blue Raspberry, and Strawberry flavors.

Among their whopping total of 36, they also have two sugar free options, which are Strawberry and Green Apple.

Also similar to Partee’s, Bryant’s has repeat customers that are so familiar and consistent with their order that preparation can begin even while they’re approaching.

“We have several customers that come on a daily basis, and we know their whole entire order to where they don’t have to say a word, but ‘hey,’” said Bryant. “We know our customers so well, each and every last one of them.”

An advertisement for Mr. Pueblo Authentic Mexican Restaurant. The top features the restaurant's logo with a cactus on either side of the name 'Mr. Pueblo' in a stylized red font. Below the logo is a banner that reads 'AUTHENTIC MEXICAN RESTAURANT'. The address '105 John R Lovelace Dr • Batesville MS 38606' and a Facebook icon are listed, followed by the phone number '662-578-8805'. The main image shows a sizzling skillet of food, likely fajitas, with flames rising from the bottom. At the bottom, the text 'We appreciate your business' and 'God Bless America!' is written in a large, yellow, stylized font.

With regards to hazards of doing business, Bryant said, “although we work with blades and shaving ice, we have not had any injuries. We are well trained on how to operate our shaved ice machine and know all of the dos and don’ts.

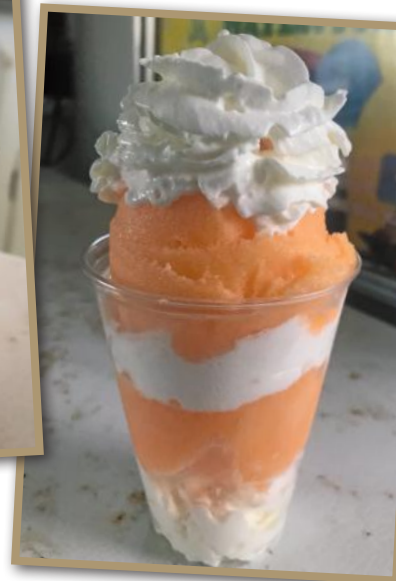
As far as the biggest challenges, she said the hardest part of making shaved ice is when the ice is not cured enough. “With the ice being cured, it gives you more speed of shaving the ice and more firmness.”

Although they specialize in shaved ice, hot dogs are huge sellers. “We can’t keep them,” said Bryant. Other staple menu items include nachos, Kool-Aid pickles, plus a variety of other pickles.

The Bryants have a permanent location in Batesville, which is Margaret’s hometown - located in the Plaza parking lot, as well as in Clarksdale, MS (James’ hometown) on Desoto Ave., in the old Fred’s parking lot.

“Each town has their own stand. We never pull from our designated spot,” Bryant said. “Our third stand is used for all events.”

“Since I was born and raised in Batesville, I wanted to serve my hometown, and with James being born and raised in Clarksdale, he wanted to serve his hometown.”



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How to Celebrate Your Anniversary with Traditional Gifts



BY STAFF REPORT

Every year of marriage is a milestone to celebrate, and there are special gifts that correspond to each anniversary. These gifts have a long history and symbolism, dating back to the Victorian era or even earlier. Whether you want to follow the traditional or modern themes, or mix and match them, here are some ideas to inspire you for your next anniversary celebration.

First Anniversary: Paper

Paper represents the first year of marriage because it symbolizes a blank page, ready to be filled with your memories and stories. Paper also signifies the fragility and strength of your relationship, as it can be easily torn but also holds together when folded or glued.

Some paper gift ideas are:

- A personalized photo book or calendar with your favorite pictures from your first year of marriage.
- A journal or scrapbook where you can write down your thoughts, feelings, and plans for the future.
- A love letter or poem expressing your gratitude and affection for your spouse.
- Tickets to a concert, movie, or show that you both enjoy.
- A subscription to a magazine or newspaper that interests your spouse.

If you want to follow the modern theme, the first anniversary gift is a clock. This symbolizes the time you have spent together and the time you have ahead of you. You can give your spouse a watch, a wall clock, or a personalized clock with your wedding date or a meaningful message.

Second Anniversary: Cotton

Cotton is the traditional gift for the second anniversary because it represents the comfort and durability of your marriage. Cotton is soft and cozy, but also strong and resilient. It can adapt to different seasons and situations, just like your relationship.

Some cotton gift ideas are:

- A cozy blanket or quilt that you can snuggle under together.
- A set of matching pajamas or robes that you can wear on lazy mornings or nights.
- A personalized pillow or cushion with your names, initials, or a sweet message.
- A cotton canvas with a painting or print of something meaningful to you, such as your wedding venue, your honeymoon destination, or your favorite quote.
- A cotton tote bag or backpack that you can use for your travels or adventures.

The modern theme for the second anniversary is china, which symbolizes the elegance and sophistication of your marriage. China is also fragile and delicate, so it requires care and attention, just like your relationship.

Some china gift ideas are:

- A set of fine china dishes or cups that you can use for special occasions or everyday meals.
- A china figurine or ornament that represents something you love or admire, such as an animal, a flower, or a character.
- A china vase or bowl that you can fill with fresh flowers or fruits.
- A china plate or platter that you can personalize with your names, wedding date, or a message.
- A china tea set or coffee pot that you can enjoy together.

Third Anniversary: Leather

Leather is the traditional gift for the third anniversary because it represents the protection and security of your marriage. Leather is durable and flexible, and it can withstand wear and tear. It also ages well, becoming more beautiful and valuable over time.

Some leather gift ideas are:

- A leather jacket or coat that you can wear on chilly days or nights.
- A leather wallet or purse that you can use to store your money and cards.
- A leather belt or bracelet that you can accessorize with your outfits.
- A leather journal or notebook that you can use to record your thoughts, dreams, and goals.
- A leather keychain or luggage tag that you can attach to your keys or bags.

The modern theme for the third anniversary is crystal or glass, which symbolizes the clarity and sparkle of your marriage. Crystal or glass is also fragile and transparent, so it requires honesty and trust, just like your relationship.

Some crystal or glass gift ideas are:

- A crystal or glass vase or bowl that you can fill with flowers or candies.
- A crystal or glass figurine or ornament that represents something you cherish or admire, such as a heart, a star, or a butterfly.
- A crystal or glass wine glass or champagne flute that you can toast with on your anniversary.
- A crystal or glass picture frame or mirror that you can display with a photo of you and your spouse.
- A crystal or glass pendant or earrings that you can wear to add some sparkle to your look.

4th Anniversary: Linen or Silk

Linen or silk represents the smoothness and comfort of your marriage. Some linen or silk gift ideas are:

- A set of luxurious linen or silk sheets or pillowcases for your bed.
- A linen or silk scarf or tie that matches your spouse's style.

The modern theme for the 4th anniversary is appliances, which symbolize the convenience and practicality of your relationship. Some appliance gift ideas are:

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WHY WE'RE VOTED #1!

- A coffee maker or electric kettle that you can use to brew your favorite drinks.
- A toaster oven or air fryer that you can use to make delicious snacks.

The 4th anniversary color is blue or green, which represent calmness and growth. The flowers are geraniums or hydrangeas, which signify friendship and gratitude. The gemstone is blue topaz, which is a light blue stone that symbolizes love and fidelity.

5th Anniversary: Wood

Wood represents the strength and stability of your marriage. Some wood gift ideas are:

- A wooden picture frame or plaque that you can engrave with your names, wedding date, or a message.
- A wooden chess set or board game that you can play together.

The modern theme for the 5th anniversary is silverware, which symbolizes the elegance and refinement of your relationship. Some silverware gift ideas are:

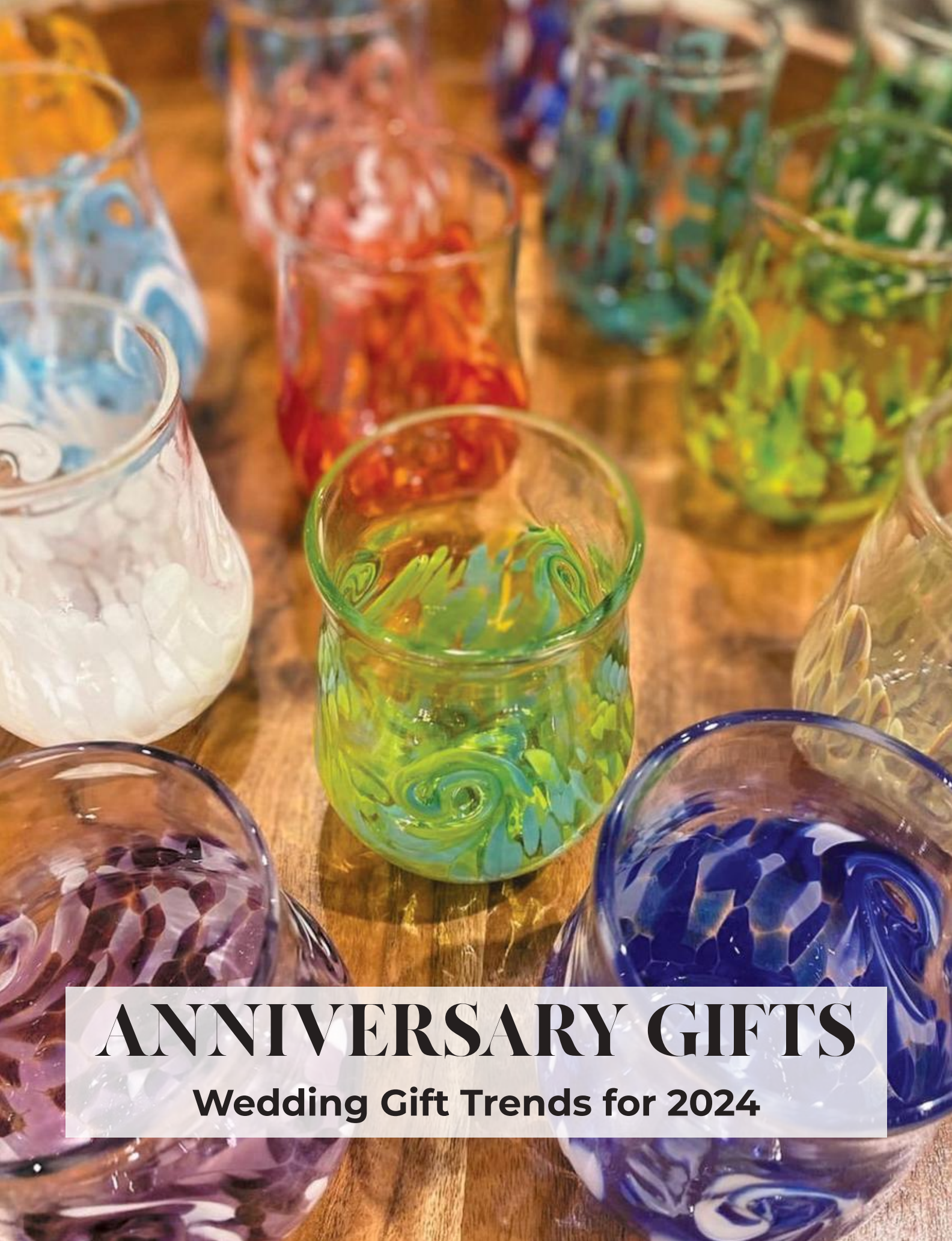
- A set of silver spoons, forks, or knives that you can use for your dining table.
- A silver necklace or bracelet that you can wear to accessorize your outfits.

The 5th anniversary color is turquoise or pink, which represent joy and romance. The flowers are daisies or roses, which signify innocence and love. The gemstone is sapphire, which is a dark blue stone that symbolizes wisdom and loyalty.

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A collection of several glass jars of various shapes and sizes, each decorated with vibrant, hand-painted patterns in colors like blue, red, green, and purple. They are arranged on a rustic wooden surface. The jars have different designs, including swirls, floral motifs, and abstract patterns. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the glass and wood.

ANNIVERSARY GIFTS

Wedding Gift Trends for 2024



IMMUNIZATIONS AVAILABLE



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1. What wedding gift trends do you anticipate in 2024?

I think we will see brides add more casual items to their registries; less formal dinnerware and more items for everyday living.

2. What do you recommend for those who wish to give a timeless treasure?

My "go-to" for a classic timeless piece is Simon Pearce hand blown glass made in Vermont. Their pieces are gorgeous, classic shapes with a modern flare; great for the casual bride, the traditional, and the formal bride!

3. What items do new couples show the most interest in?

When the bride and groom register together, most of the items they choose are for entertaining purposes such as barware, nice stemware, and charcuterie/cooking items.



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5. What do you suggest for those who wish to give unique gifts?

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- Monogrammed Dinner Napkins
- Monogrammed Towel Sets
- Simon Pearce Stemware/Barware
- Montes Doggett Dinnerware and Serving Pieces

7. Wedding gift ideas under \$50

- Colorful Hand-Blown Stemless Wine Glasses
- Monogram Cocktail Napkins
- Barbara Biel Hand-Made Blessing Crosses to Bless Their New Home
- Picture Frames
- Charcuterie Boards for Entertaining



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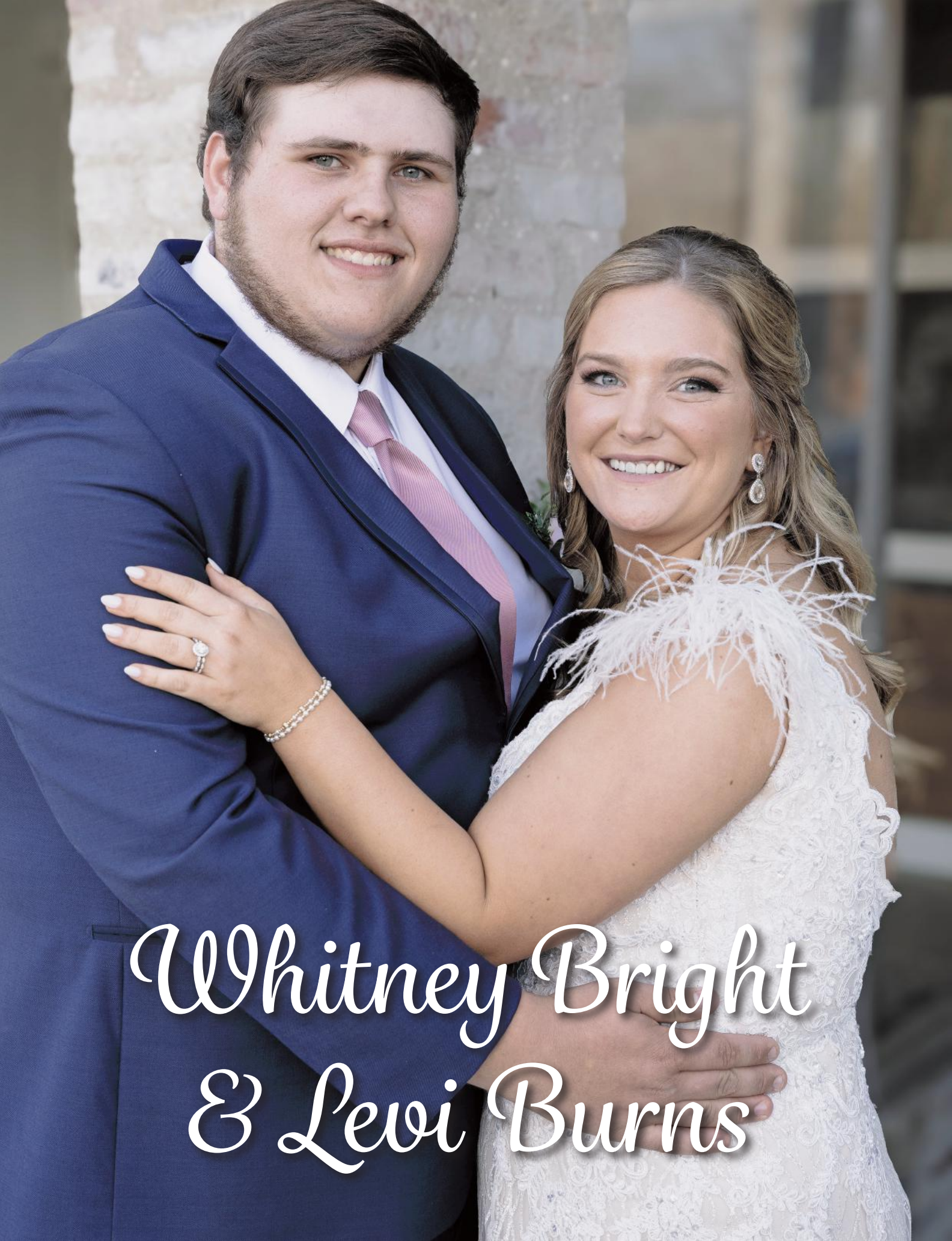
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*Whitney Bright
& Levi Burns*



PHOTOGRAPHER

Maria Melton

CEREMONY DATE

February 24, 2024

VENUE*

211 Main Street, Como, MS 38619

BRIDE'S CAKE

Katie Crenshaw

CATERER

Angie and Tony Allen

WEDDING DRESS

Engagements Grenada





*Madison &
Caleb Capwell*



PHOTOGRAPHER

Kayla Minyard?

**FAVORITE MOMENT
FROM YOUR BIG DAY**

First look with Caleb and my dad,
Scott. I surprised my mom with photos
of me in her wedding dress from 1993.

CEREMONY DATE

February 24, 2024

VENUE*

Yellowheart Barn & Venue

WEDDING DRESS

Engagements of Grenada





*Blair (Williams)
& Taylor Brown*



PHOTOGRAPHER

Morgan Huffman

HOW DID YOU TWO MEET?

Mutual friends.. after just knowing of each other for years.

**FAVORITE MOMENT FROM
YOUR BIG DAY**

Walking down the aisle to see each other for the first time.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW

Building a life together with our sweet pup Milo.

CEREMONY DATE

October 14, 2023

VENUE

The Hudson - Chickasaw Hills Sardis

RECEPTION VENUE

The Hudson - Chickasaw Hills Sardis

WEDDING PLANNER

Myself with the help of my sister.

FLORIST

Kathy Elmore- Family friend and former florist.

BRIDE'S CAKE

Katie Crenshaw

CATERER

Taylor Grocery

WEDDING DRESS

Low's Bridal

BRIDESMAIDS DRESSES

Azazie online





*Jenny Kaye Fowler &
Michael Chase Jackson*



PHOTOGRAPHER

Jason Williams

HOW DID YOU TWO MEET?

Through a friend

**FAVORITE MOMENT FROM
YOUR BIG DAY**

Seeing Chase's face when they opened the doors for me to walk down the aisle and when we were saying our vows a flock of Canadian geese flew over

WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW

Just got settled into our new house, working, traveling, and enjoying each other

CEREMONY DATE

October 14, 2023

VENUE

Yellowheart Barn and Venue

RECEPTION VENUE

Yellowheart Barn and Venue

WEDDING PLANNER

Myself

FLORIST

Blossoms in Batesville

BRIDE'S CAKE

Tasty Treats by Tanya

CATERER

We did the food ourselves!





*Kaitlyn &
Barrett Bridges*

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kayla Minyard Photography

**FAVORITE MOMENT FROM
YOUR BIG DAY**

The photos. I love having something to look back on. It's hard to soak in all the little moments on your big day so the photos capture the memories for you forever.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW

Kaitlyn is a registered nurse in Oxford and Barrett is a machinist in Batesville.

CEREMONY DATE

September 30, 2023

VENUE

Gumbo Flats - Lambert

RECEPTION VENUE

Gumbo Flats - Lambert

WEDDING DRESS

Lowe's Bridal





*Cari &
Dalton Barefoot*



PHOTOGRAPHER

Katie Stone

HOW DID YOU TWO MEET?

We met at Como Steakhouse. We had mutual friends and we ended up meeting through them that night. We instantly clicked and couldn't stop talking.

FAVORITE MOMENT FROM YOUR BIG DAY

My favorite moment would be the reception and getting to have a blast with all of the people we love. It was such a fun celebration & I would do it over and over again.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW

We are expecting our second baby girl due in May and we cannot wait!

CEREMONY DATE

October 28, 2023

VENUE

211 Main Hall & Garden

RECEPTION VENUE

211 Main Hall & Garden

WEDDING DRESS

The Barefoot Bride Memphis

BRIDESMAIDS DRESSES

Birdy Grey



OUT AND ABOUT

Panola Partnership Annual Banquet

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF EYES OF THE BEHOLDER
211 MAIN HALL AND GARDENS
MARCH 21, 2024



Crowd picture



Court Street Catering serving staff



Sheriff Deputy Reginald Lantern,
April Lantern, April Jackson



Kayla Dunnigan, Denise Lloyd,
CC Cauthen, Cecilia Webb, Robby Griffin,
Barbara Bonnell, Marshall Bartlett



Keith Dunhan, Rodney Wolfe



Robbie Haley, Martha West



Jennifer Hale, Robbie Haley,
Jay Hale



Everette Hill, Rachel Hill,
Ruby Higgenbottom, James Jones



Belinda Morris, Lenora Morris



Luke & Jordan Latham



Bobby Walton,
Joanette Walton



David and Janet Karr



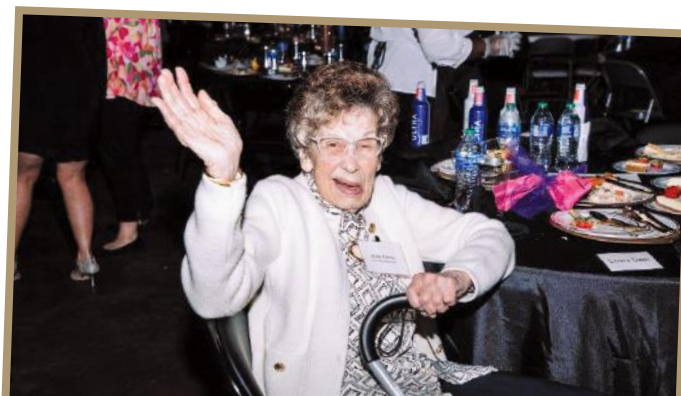
Judge Jimmy McClure, Representative
Josh Hawkins, Perrin Caldwell



Drew and Kayla Wilkinson



Chris Gulledge, Mandy Robertson,
Barbara Smith, Shaquille Conrad



Anne Davis

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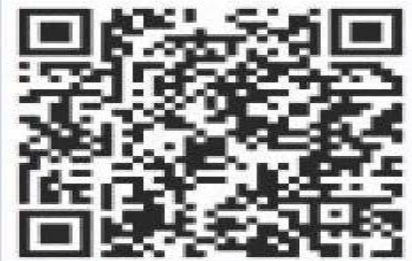
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