

Happily Ever After

Taylor and Casey August 4, 2018

By Kim Wegener
Family Living Editor

RURAL SHELBY -- Taylor Brown and Casey Schulte's love story began when they were both students at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, MO.

"We met my freshman year of college and Casey's sophomore year at Northwest Missouri State University. Casey was my best friends' (Hannah and Carly's) freshman seminar class peer advisor (TA). Carly and Hannah began to invite Casey to hang out with our friend group which is where we met, became friends, and then after a little time and convincing from our friends, started dating," said Taylor.

Casey said it didn't take long before he knew Taylor was the one for him.

"I noticed after three months that I loved Taylor. I constantly was thinking

about her when I was not with her. Right away, what drew me to Taylor was how genuine of a person she was and how supportive she was of myself and the people around her. She quickly "checked all the boxes" of things that I was looking for in a partner and from that moment I just knew she was the one," said Casey.

First visit to pumpkin patch ends in marriage proposal

Casey proposed to Taylor approximately 2 ½ years later. He chose a pumpkin patch in Waterloo, IA for the proposal site. Casey said there was not a ton of significance to the location other than he wanted the proposal to be simple and heartfelt as his love for Taylor.

"I did not want to do anything flashy and just strived to be my true self as I did throughout our relationship. I asked Taylor's dad a few weeks prior, her parents

and mine were the only ones who had any knowledge of it. I remembered a week or two before the proposal that she said that she had never been to a pumpkin patch and thought that it would be a memorable way to propose which was also simple and heartfelt," said Casey.

Taylor was surprised her first pumpkin patch visit ended in a marriage proposal.

"I had told him I had never been to a pumpkin patch before and I was dying to go. First, he took me through a corn maze (it was supposed to be a haunted one, and I do not do haunted things so I was dragging my feet) and after that he took me towards more of the middle of the pumpkin patch and said a million sweet things before he got down on his knee and asked me to marry him," said Taylor.

Special song plays during gown selection

Taylor found the perfect wedding gown during an unplanned trip with friends and family.

"It was actually a spontaneous trip to go dress shopping. Casey and I came down to Harlan to go to the Harvest Fest on the square with my parents and sister. My dad made a joke (we should) go look for wedding dresses while we were in town, and we kind of jumped on it. I called my maid of honor and best friend, Carly to come with us and we all headed to Omaha," said Taylor.

"Since Casey was with us, we had him stay in the car while we were shopping - he enjoyed that! I tried on two dresses, did not like them and then I tried on my third (dress) and fell in love. I wanted to make sure so I tried on a few more, but kept comparing them to the third, so I retrieved it on and knew it was the one. This is when my mom's phone glitched and it started playing music and

Schulte please see page 4



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Ultimate Wedding Planning Checklist

To plan the perfect celebration, use this comprehensive wedding checklist, with a timeline based on the 16-month length of the average U.S. engagement.

Sixteen to Nine Months Before

- ☐ Start a wedding folder or binder. Begin leafing through bridal, lifestyle, fashion, gardening, design, and food publications for inspiration.
- ☐ Work out your budget. Determine how much you have to spend, based on your families' contributions and your own.
- ☐ Pick your wedding party. As soon as you're engaged, people will start wondering who's in.
- ☐ Start the guest list. Make a head count database to use throughout your planning process, with columns for contact info, RSVPs, gifts, and any other relevant information. (Want to keep costs low? It may be brutal, but the best way to do it is to reduce your guest list.)
- ☐ Hire a planner, if desired. A planner will have relationships with—and insights about—vendors.
- ☐ Reserve your date and venues. Decide whether to have separate locations for the ceremony and the reception, factoring in travel time between the two places.
- ☐ Book your officiant. Research photographers, bands, florists, and caterers. Keep their contact information in your binder.
- ☐ Throw an engagement party, if you wish. But remember that your invitees should be on your wedding guest list as well.

Eight Months Before

- ☐ Hire the photographer and the videographer. No need to talk specifics yet, but be sure that the people you hire are open to doing the shots that you want.
- ☐ Book the entertainment. Attend gigs of potential acts to see how they perform in front of audiences, then reserve your favorite.
- ☐ Meet caterers. If your wedding venue doesn't offer its own catering service, look for one now and hire the service this month or early next.
- ☐ Purchase a dress. You'll need to schedule time for at least three fittings. Veil shopping can be postponed for another two to three months.
- ☐ Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests. Pick three hotels at different price points close to the reception venue.
- ☐ Register. Sign up at a minimum of three retailers.
- ☐ Launch a wedding website. Create your personal page through a free provider such as weddingchannel.com. Note the date of the wedding, travel information, and accommodations. Then send the link to invitees.

Seven to Six Months Before

- ☐ Select and purchase invitations. Hire a calligrapher, if desired. Addressing cards is time-consuming, so you need to budget accordingly.
- ☐ Start planning a honeymoon. Make sure that your passports are up-to-date, and schedule doctors' appointments for any shots you may need.

- ☐ Shop for bridesmaids' dresses. Allow at least six months for the dresses to be ordered and sized.
- ☐ Meet with the officiant. Map out the ceremony and confirm that you have all the official documents for the wedding (these vary by county and religion).
- ☐ Send save-the-date cards. Reserve structural and electrical necessities. Book portable toilets for outdoor events, extra chairs if you need them, lighting components, and so on.
- ☐ Book a florist. Florists can serve multiple clients on one day, which is why you can wait a little longer to engage one. Plus, at this point, you'll be firm on what your wedding palette will be.
- ☐ Arrange transportation. Consider limos, minibuses, trolleys, and town cars. (But know that low-to-the-ground limos can make entries and exits dicey if you're wearing a fitted gown.)
- ☐ Start composing a day-of timeline. Draw up a schedule of the event and slot in each component (the cake-cutting, the first dance).

Five to Four Months Before

- ☐ Book the rehearsal and rehearsal-dinner venues. Negotiate the cost and the menu. If you're planning to host a day-after brunch for guests, book that place as well.
- ☐ Check on the wedding invitations. Ask the stationer for samples of the finished invitations and revise them to suit your needs.
- ☐ Select and order the cake. Some bakers require a long lead time. Attend several tastings before committing to any baker.
- ☐ Send your guest list to the host of your shower. Provided you, ahem, know about the shower.
- ☐ Purchase wedding shoes and start dress fittings. Bring the shoes along to your first fitting so the tailor can choose the appropriate length for your gown.
- ☐ Schedule hair and makeup artists. Make a few appointments with local experts to try them out. Snap a photo at each so you can compare results.
- ☐ Choose your music. What should be playing when the wedding party is announced? During dinner? To kick off the dancing? Keep a running list of what you want—and do not want—played.

Three Months Before

- ☐ Finalize the menu and flowers. You'll want to wait until now to see what will be available, since food and flowers are affected by season.
- ☐ Order favors, if desired. Some safe bets: monogrammed cookies or a treat that represents your city or region. If you're planning to have welcome baskets for out-of-town guests, plan those now too.
- ☐ Make a list of the people giving toasts. Which loved ones would you like to have speak at the reception? Ask them now.
- ☐ Finalize the readings. Determine what you would like to have read at the ceremony—and whom you wish to do the readings.

- ☐ Purchase your undergarments. And schedule your second fitting.
- ☐ Finalize the order of the ceremony and the reception.
- ☐ Print menu cards, if you like, as well as programs. No need to go to a printer, if that's not in your budget: You can easily create these on your computer.
- ☐ Purchase the rings. This will give you time for resizing and engraving.
- ☐ Send your event schedule to the vendors. Giving them a first draft now allows ample time for tweaks and feedback.

Two Months Before

- ☐ Touch base again with all the vendors. Make sure any questions you or they had on your first draft have been answered.
- ☐ Meet with the photographer. Discuss specific shots, and walk through the locations to note spots that appeal to you.
- ☐ Review the playlist with the band or deejay. Though you probably won't be able to dictate every single song played, you should come prepared with a wish list.
- ☐ Send out the invitations. The rule of thumb: Mail invitations six to eight weeks before the ceremony, setting the RSVP cutoff at three weeks after the postmark date.
- ☐ Submit a newspaper wedding announcement. If you're planning to include a photograph, check the publication's website: Some have strict rules about how the photo should look.
- ☐ Enjoy a bachelorette party. Arranging a night out with your girlfriends generally falls to the maid of honor. But if she hasn't mentioned one to you by now, feel free to ask—for scheduling purposes, of course!—if a celebration is in the works.

One Month Before

- ☐ Enter RSVPs into your guest-list database. Phone people who have not yet responded.
- ☐ Get your marriage license. The process can take up to six days, but it's good to give yourself some leeway. If you are changing your name, order several copies.
- ☐ Mail the rehearsal-dinner invitations.
- ☐ Visit the dressmaker for (with luck!) your last dress fitting. For peace of mind, you may want to schedule a fitting the week of your wedding. You can always cancel the appointment if you try on the dress then and it fits perfectly.

- ☐ Stock the bar. Now that you have a firm head count you can order accordingly.
- ☐ Send out as many final payments as you can.
- ☐ Confirm times for hair and makeup and all vendors.
- ☐ E-mail and print directions for drivers of transport vehicles. This gives the chauffeurs ample time to navigate a route.
- ☐ Assign seating. Draw out table shapes on a layout of the room to help plan place settings. Write the names of female guests on pink sticky notes and the names of male guests on blue sticky notes so you can move people about without resketching the entire setting.
- ☐ Purchase bridesmaids' gifts. You'll present them at the rehearsal dinner.
- ☐ Write vows, if necessary.
- ☐ Get your hair cut and colored, if desired.

Week of the Wedding

- ☐ Reconfirm arrival times with vendors.
- ☐ Delegate small wedding-day tasks. Choose someone to bustle your dress, someone to carry your things, someone to be in charge of gifts (especially the enveloped sort), someone to hand out tips, and someone to be the point person for each vendor.
- ☐ Send a timeline to the bridal party. Include every member's contact information, along with the point people you've asked to deal with the vendors, if problems arise.
- ☐ Pick up your dress. Or make arrangements for a delivery.
- ☐ Check in one last time with the photographer. Supply him or her with a list of moments you want captured on film.
- ☐ Set aside checks for the vendors. And put tips in envelopes to be handed out at the event.
- ☐ Book a spa treatment. Make an appointment for a manicure and a pedicure the day before the wedding. (You might want to get a stress-relieving massage, too.)
- ☐ Send the final guest list to the caterer and all venues hosting your wedding-related events. Typically, companies close their lists 72 hours in advance.
- ☐ Break in your shoes.
- ☐ Assemble and distribute the welcome baskets.
- ☐ Pack for your honeymoon.



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Graeve-Bramley plan May wedding in Earling

EARLNG -- Tim and Ann Graeve of Manilla announce the engagement of their daughter, Michelle to Adam Bramley, Urbandale. Adam is the son of Steve and Maureen Bramley, Kansas City, MO.

The couple plans to marry on May 25 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Earling.

Michelle is a 2007 graduate of Irwin-Kirkman-Manilla High School. She is a graduate of Iowa State University where she was awarded a degree in exercise science, pre-PT. Michelle earned her doctorate of physical therapy degree from Des Moines University. She is employed as a physical therapist.

Adam is a 2007 graduate of Oak Park High School and a graduate of Missouri State University where he received a degree in finance. He earned his MBA in finance and financial planning from the University of Iowa. Adam is vice-president of core markets at ICMARC.



Michelle Graeve and Adam Bramley

Christensen-McAlister will wed in May ceremony

BAYARD -- Lamont and Shelly Christensen of Irwin announce the engagement of their daughter Kaitlyn Christensen to Marty McAlister, son of Pat and Ann McAlister, Bayard.

The couple will marry on May 25 at Saint Patrick's Catholic Church in Bayard.

Kaitlyn is a 2011 graduate of IKM-Manning and a 2015 graduate of Iowa State University where she earned a degree in English education, with a minor in technical communications. She is employed as a 5th and 6th grade reading and language arts teacher and high school girls basketball coach at Coon Rapids-Bayard Schools.

Marty is a 2011 graduate of Coon Rapids-Bayard High School and a 2011 graduate of the welding program at Iowa Central Community College. He is employed as a service technician for MPE Equipment Services in Des Moines.



Kaitlyn Christensen and Marty McAlister

ENGAGEMENTS

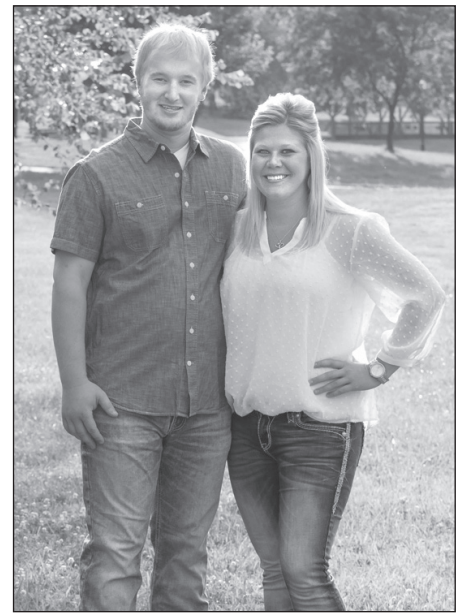
Ladehoff-Petersen plan to marry in June

HARLAN -- Dylan Petersen and Katie Ladehoff both of Harlan will wed on June 15 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan.

Parents of the couple are Robin and Janet Ladehoff, Irwin; and Dennis and Mary Petersen, Harlan.

Katie is a 2010 graduate of IKM-Manning High School and a 2015 graduate of Iowa Western Community College where she was awarded an associates in applied sciences degree. She is a staff nurse at Cass County Memorial Hospital.

Dylan is a 2010 graduate of Harlan Community High School and a 2012 graduate of Des Moines Area Community College where he received an associates degree in diesel technology. He is a mechanic at Robinson Implement.



Dylan Petersen and Katie Ladehoff

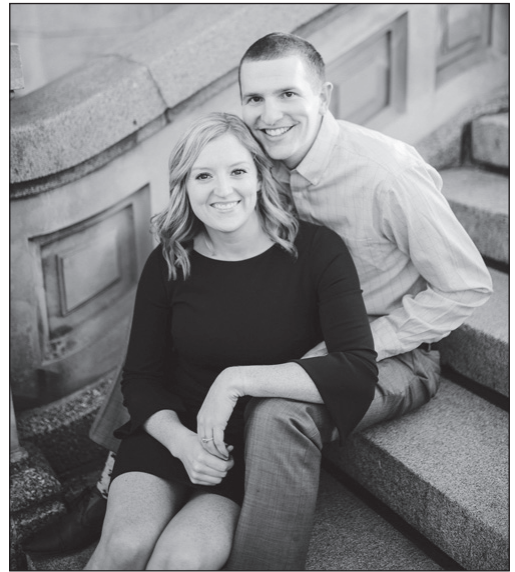
Coughlon-Schwery will marry in September

WEST DES MOINES -- Shannon Coughlon and Michael Schwery both of Grimes plan to wed in September at Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in West Des Moines.

Parents of the couple are Steve and Deb Coughlon, Peoria, IL; and Ed and Wendy Schwery, Harlan.

Shannon is a 2010 graduate of Peoria Notre Dame Catholic High School and a 2014 graduate of Drake University where she was awarded a degree in accounting and finance. She is employed as a senior associate/CPA at KPMG.

Michael is a 2009 graduate of Harlan Community High School and a 2013 graduate of Simpson College where he earned a degree in accounting. He is employed as a senior financial reporting and treasury manager at Iowa Fertilizer Company.



Shannon Coughlon and Michael Schwery

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the song just so happened to be my Nana's (the late Beverly Wirth) favorite song *I Can Only Imagine* by MercyMe, so I immediately bought it (the dress) and finished my shopping."

The couple exchanged marriage vows on August 4, 2018 at the Willow Creek Glass Chapel in rural Shelby. When bride Taylor walked down the aisle to meet her groom, Casey, she knew she was marrying the man of her dreams in a location she had dreamed about for years.

"I have dreamed of having my wedding there since I was a little girl, it is the most beautiful place in the whole world, and we are extremely lucky to have been able to have our wedding there. Neither of us were striving for a traditional wedding so it was a perfect spot," said Taylor.

They chose their wedding date because of the location availability.

"It was the only day left in 2018 at Willow Creek! We looked the day after we got engaged and we were lucky enough to see a date that we thought would work best," said Taylor.

Unplugged ceremony

Approximately 190 guests witnessed their marriage ceremony and helped them celebrate at the reception and dance held at the Willow Creek Banquet Barn. Their decorating theme was rustic modern with purple, silver and wine as their chosen colors.

"We had an unplugged wedding ceremony. We asked our guests to be present in the moment with us by keeping their phones and cameras put away," said Taylor.

Some of the sentimental touches included flowers and the wedding cake topper. Taylor's mother added the flowers she used in her wedding bouquet to Taylor's bouquet. On top of the wedding cake was the cake topper which her grandparents (the late Lynn and Beverly Wirth) had used at their wedding.

Taylor's wedding attendants included maid of honor Carly Nielsen, and bridesmaids Lexus Brown, sister of bride; Megan Schulte, sister of groom; and Hannah Furlong. Flower girls were the bride's cousins, Jaelynn Wallace and Payton Marshall. The bride's personal attendant was Miranda Vest.

Casey's wedding party members included best man Sam Phillips and groomsmen Brady Reed, Devin Hires and Mike Weinands. Ringbearer was Trevor Hake, cousin of groom.

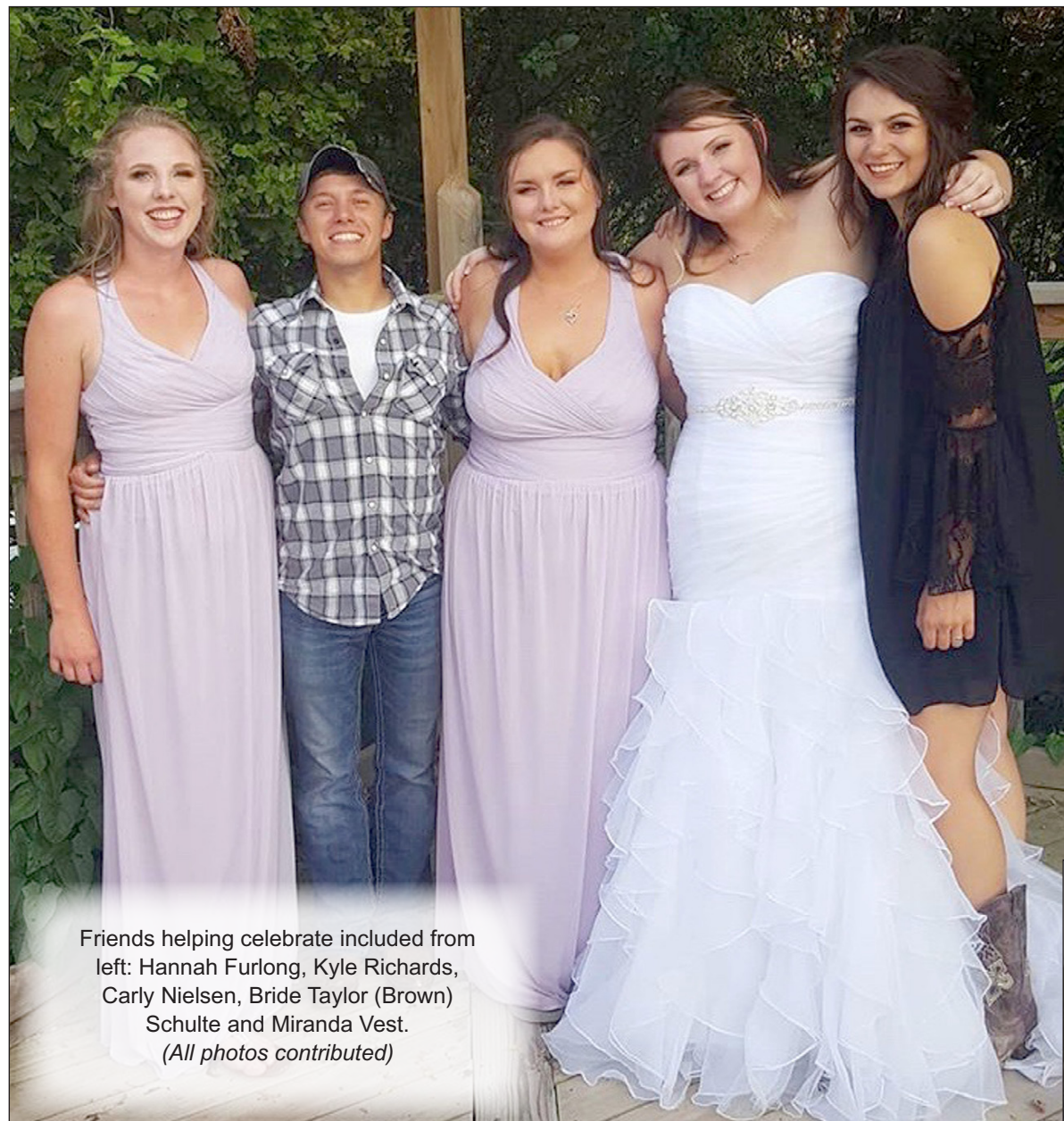
Ushering the guests were Josh McCallister, Jordan McCallister, Joseph McCallister, step-brothers of groom, and Colby Schulte, brother of groom. Guest book attendants were Kyleigh Clay and Riley Buckman.

Advice from the newlyweds

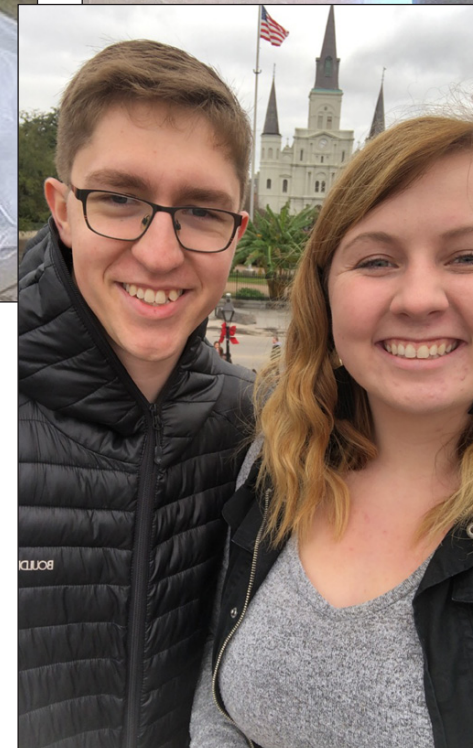
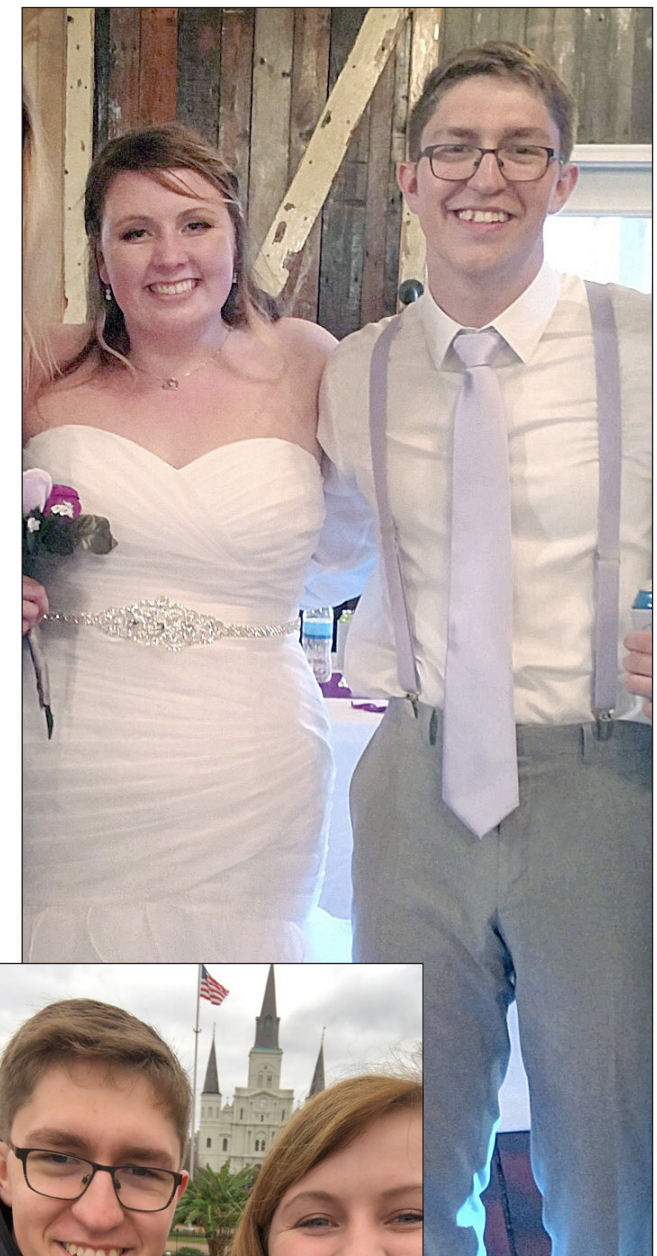
Taylor says remember that this wedding is for you and your significant other, your happiness is the most important part of the day - don't worry about pleasing others.

"We had been talking about a wedding for some time prior to the engagement so we both had an idea of things we wanted. The most stressful part was definitely the guest list. Trying to ensure that we had everyone we needed on there while still trying to stay at a reasonable amount of people. However, by the time June/July hit we kind of had that mindset of whatever happens, happens!" said Taylor.

Casey's advice for future grooms is to be flexible and supportive during the plan-



Friends helping celebrate included from left: Hannah Furlong, Kyle Richards, Carly Nielsen, Bride Taylor (Brown) Schulte and Miranda Vest.
(All photos contributed)



Honeymoon in New Orleans.

ning process with your significant other, planning any event like this is stressful.

"However, when it comes down to it, the most important thing is that you're marrying the person that you want to spend the rest of your life with. All of the other things do not really matter that much in the end. We planned everything for the best and were extremely

happy with how it turned out. In the end, the most important thing is that I got to go home with my wife," said Casey.

The Schultes spent their honeymoon in New Orleans, LA. They are now at home in Cedar Falls. Taylor is employed as a childrens applied behavioral analysis specialist at Balance Autism. She is also pursuing a master's

degree in school counseling. Casey is employed as a case worker for Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI). He is also working toward earning a master's degree in mental health counseling.

Taylor is the daughter of Carl and Carmin Brown, Harlan. Casey's parents are Christine Richter, St. Charles, MO and Daryl and Kerri Schulte, Foristell, MO.



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