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FALL/WINTER 2003

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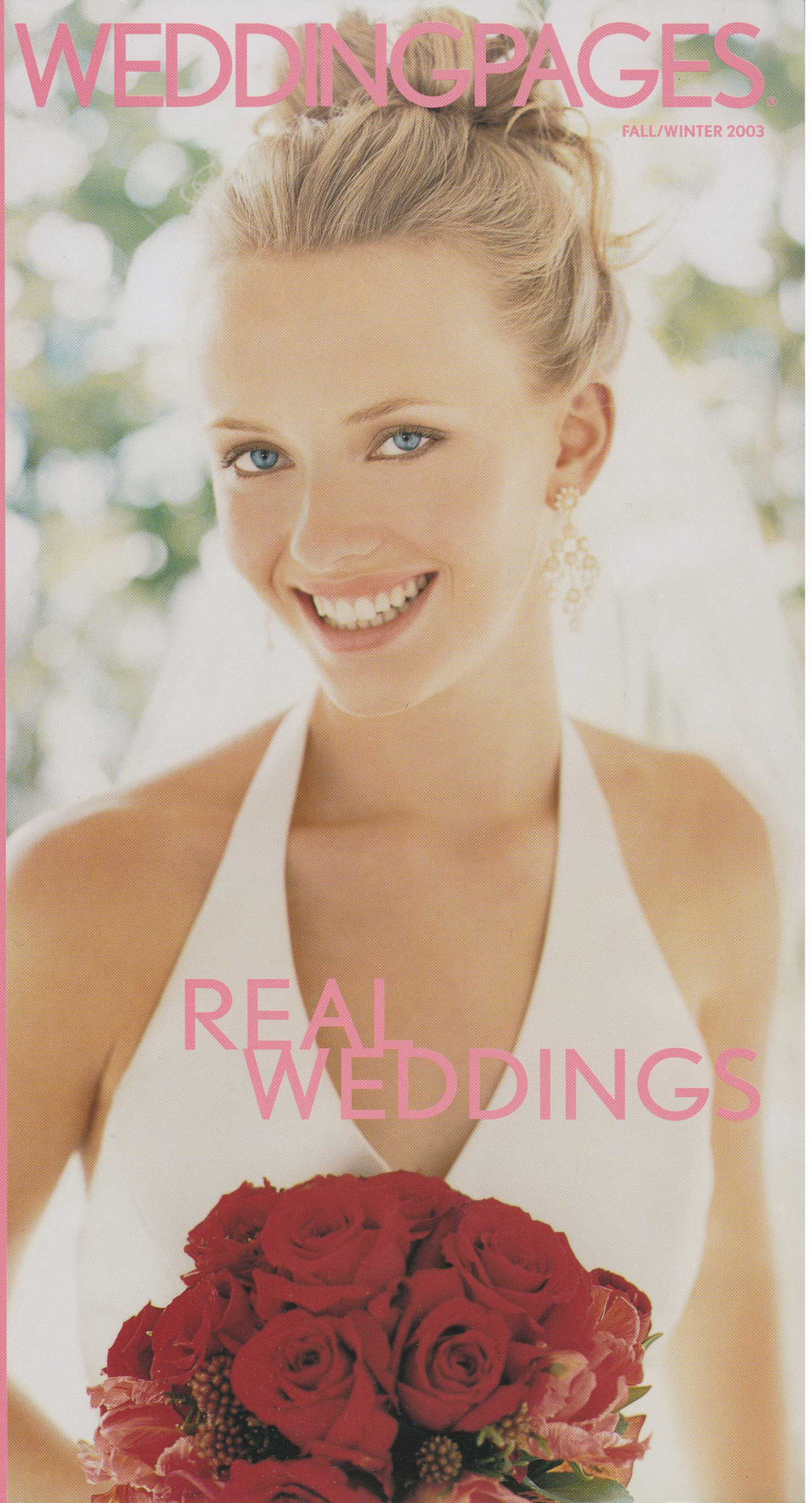
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REAL
WEDDINGS

MAMA BRIDE

Q. *By the time I walk down the aisle, I will be about five months pregnant. We are having a somewhat formal Detroit wedding, and I'm stumped about where to get a maternity wedding gown. Any ideas?*

A. If ever there was a time to have an original gown designed, this would be it! It seems that the best scenario would be to find a seamstress to create a gown for you and to work with you as final alterations become increasingly necessary. A seamstress will be able to accommodate every special need that you will have. Jules Joyner, (248) 545-9944, has done many custom wedding gowns at her studio in Royal Oak.

Haberman Fabrics, (248) 541-0010, also located in Royal Oak, has the best selection of fabrics and a knowledgeable staff always ready to assist with questions. They can also recommend skilled seamstresses.

WHEELS TO WOW

Q. *I am determined to surprise my fiancé by whisking her away from our Birmingham wedding in a really hot sports car. Since buying one is out of the question, is there any way to rent such a car for a day?*

A. What is not for rent in today's world? Of course you can rent the hottest sports car to whisk away your bride! There is a source right under your nose—Classic Auto Resources in Birmingham, (248) 258-6560.

PLUSH POTTIES

Q. *We are having our wedding reception in a tent at my parents' Bloomfield Hills home and are expecting about 175 guests. Mom and Dad are being very generous about us turning their home into a reception site, except for one thing: they are obsessing about their septic tank and insisting that we get portable toilets for our guests. We don't want to send our loved ones, who will be dressed to the nines, into port-a-johns. Help!*



A. Actually, Mom and Dad have a valid concern. Even if they do happen to have five bathrooms in their home, and even if they don't mind all those people marching in and out, the fact is this one party could do some serious septic damage. The good news is that those portable toilets that we all hold our breath in at state fairs and sporting events are not your only option. Now outdoor privies can come equipped with multiple seats, air conditioning, running watering, music, and flushing johns too. Special Events Party Rentals, (586) 755-0000, has several luxurious models to choose from. Offer a little basket of amenities and your guests will think they are stepping into the most posh of restrooms.

SMALL SOIREE

Q. *We are keeping our wedding very small and only inviting about 30 people to attend. The problem has been finding a reception setting that does not dwarf our intimate group. We would like something cozy and elegant. Can you recommend some sites that can accommodate small parties comfortably?*

A. Now is the time to be totally open-minded. Recently, a bride and groom hosted their engagement party in the private room at The Palm Restaurant in Troy, (248) 813-7256. When previewing the room (knowing that the bride wanted this to be one of the most romantic evenings of her life) it became apparent

that some magic was needed. This small room is usually the setting for business functions and pharmaceutical meetings, but it became a most romantic spot after the florist created an intimate space using screens, elevated urns with wrought-iron candelabras, arrangements of roses and white lilacs, and lots of candle power including votives, pillars, and floating candles.

The moral of the story: It is not so much the space but the magic of decorating that will provide you with the perfect setting. Take a look at the small venue, the boring boardroom, the average meeting room, and don't be afraid to jazz it up! Consider renting china and stemware to make the dinner service more elegant. You can save money by booking this type of room and then creating the most romantic room that you and your guests have even seen.

As for particular sites, every hotel and every major restaurant will be able to offer you a small room—your choices are unlimited, so have fun. ☒

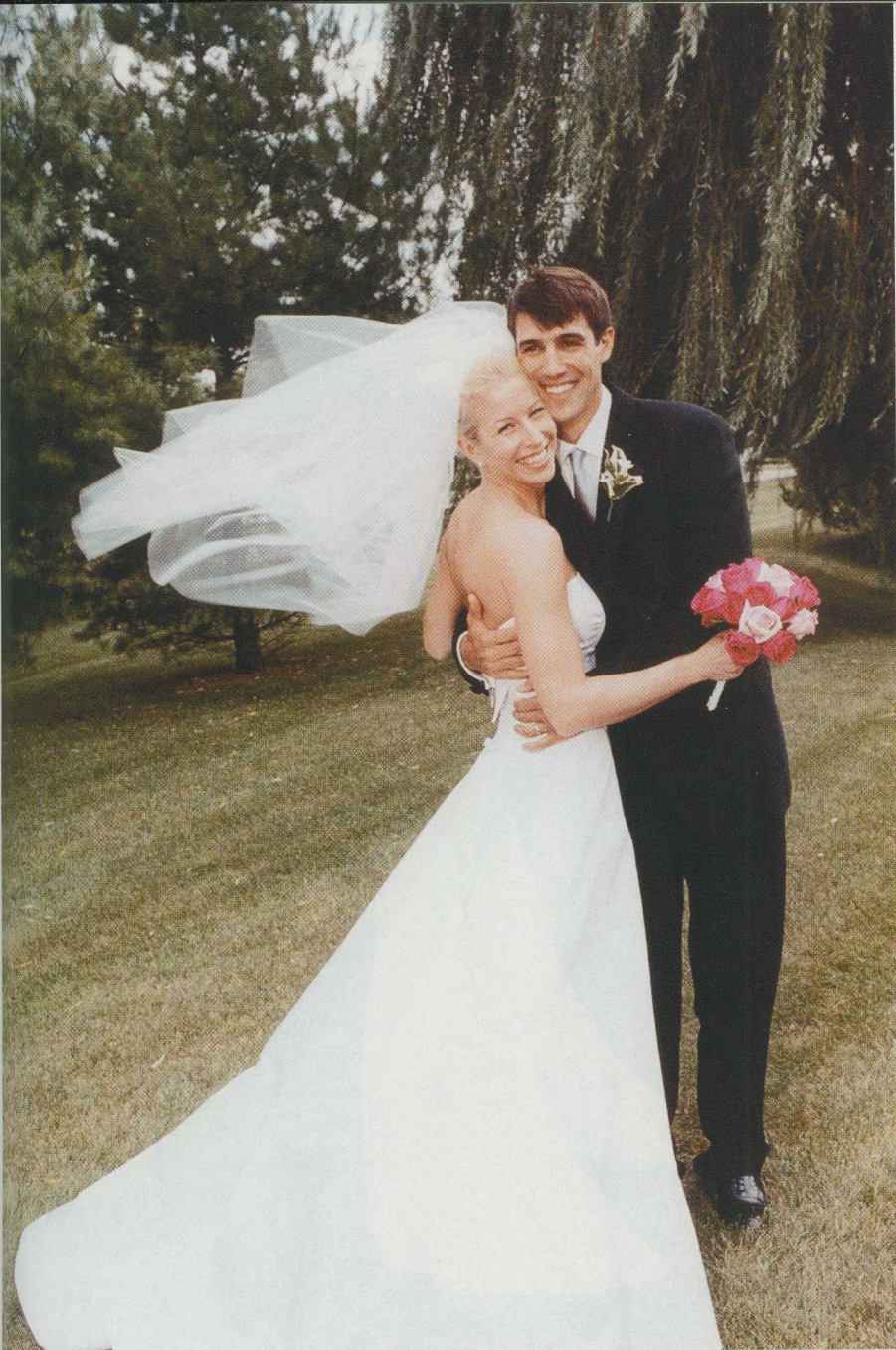
OUR LOCAL EXPERT



Carolyn Hefner plans weddings and special events through her business, The China Closet. A background in floral

design gave her behind-the-scenes experience with all the elements of special events. Her interest in party planning was ignited, and she has never looked back. The launch of her website (TheChinaCloset.com) has meant new clients from as far away as London. She is a member of the Association of Bridal Consultants.

If you have a question for local expert Carolyn Hefner, or would like to see what other Michigan to-be-weds are asking, check out: TheKnot.com/detroit.



elizabeth & thomas

AUGUST 17, 2002, DETROIT

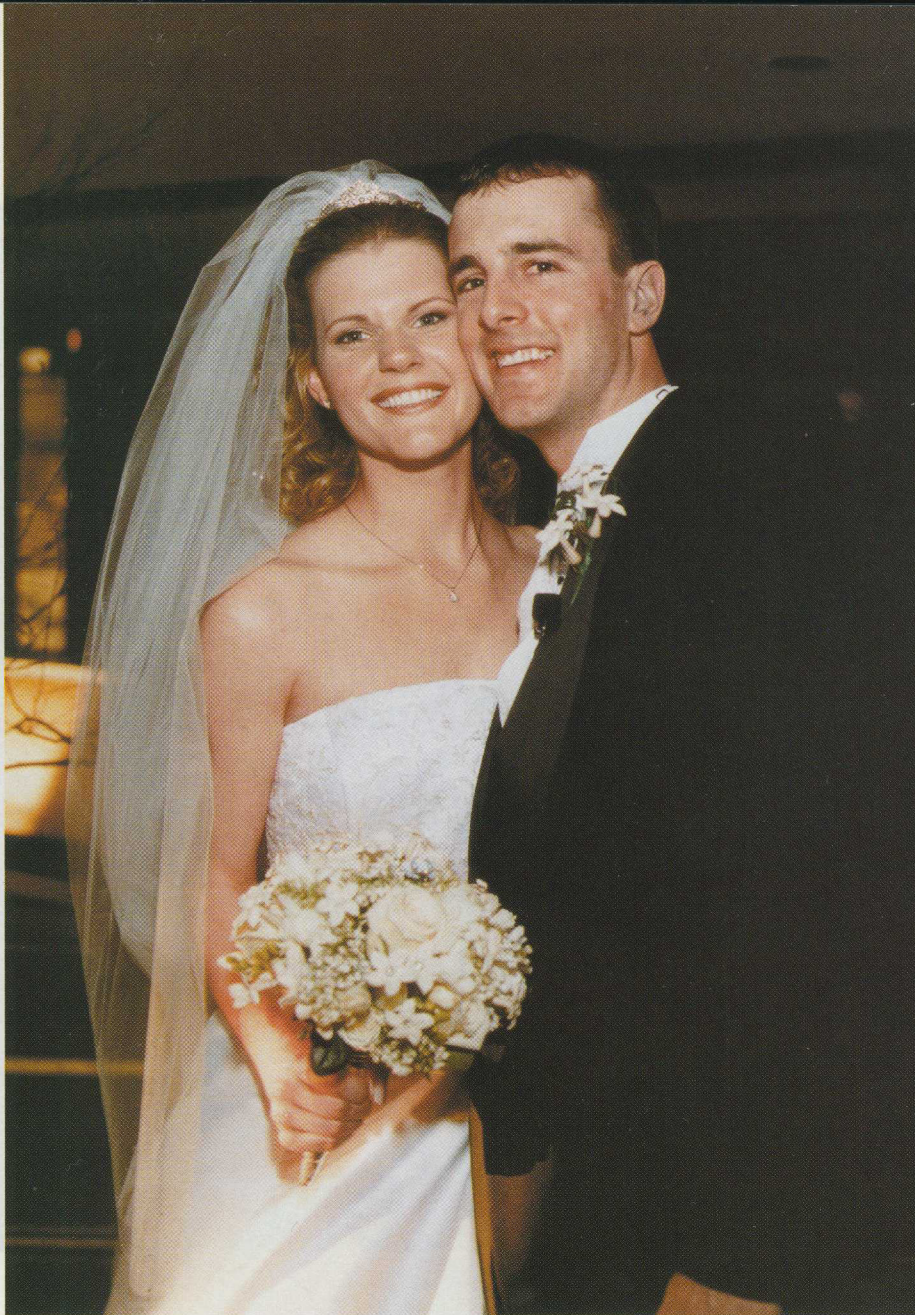
"We met at a popular campus bar," says Elizabeth Huckabay. "We were introduced by mutual friends. Although we joke that it was not the 'romantic' scene to meet a future spouse, it was nonetheless a unique start to our relationship." Liz, a registered nurse, and Thomas Chinonis, an attorney, were students at Michigan State University when they began to date in 1995. Seven years later, they went on a getaway to Bay Harbor Resort in northern Michigan. Tom set up a scavenger hunt for Liz in their hotel suite: along the way she found old photos from their early dating years, an invitation to spend the rest of the weekend at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, and best of all, at the end of the hunt, she found Tom down on one knee on the hotel balcony. The two married at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Troy and celebrated at the Athenaeum Hotel in Detroit. It was a big wedding because Tom has a large Greek family. Afterward, the newlyweds spent two weeks in Greece visiting the village where Tom's dad was born and raised, and kicking back on Mykonos and Santorini. —Lisa Carse, photo by Laurie Tennent

REAL COUPLES



keven & brewster JUNE 15, 2002, OXFORD

Blind dates may be a hell that we all suffer through at some point in our lives, but for some couples a blind date can be a most welcome surprise. For Keven Duffy, a movie executive, and Brewster Pettus, a lawyer, their first meeting was a blind date by a mutual friend that led, miraculously, to romance. Exactly two years to the day of that first date, the couple was vacationing on St. Bart's in the Caribbean, when Brewster returned to their villa and casually mentioned that he had signed them up for a sunset boat ride. He added that since they were the first to sign up, they might be the only ones on the boat. (Brewster had actually signed them up for a private cruise with a gourmet chef.) She laughs, "I just thought we got lucky with so few people choosing to go on a sunset boat ride." As the sun set, he proposed. The wedding took place on Keven's 350-acre thoroughbred farm. There were three rainbows during the celebration. Says Keven, "Both Brewster's parents and my father have passed away, so this [celebration] seemed very symbolic." Photo by Judy Eliyas, Studio 925.



amy & kyle FEBRUARY 28, 2002, DEARBORN

photography by Don and Lorna Ling

MOST COUPLES FEEL A BIT OF A LETDOWN WHEN THE WEDDING DAY has passed. But Amy Gatewood and Kyle Buckle confess to feeling sad about coming to the end of their wedding to-do list, too. "We had so much fun planning this wedding," says Amy, who runs daycare centers owned by her mom. "Every time there was a decision to make—a cake tasting or choosing invitations—we went with our families, then we all went out to dinner to celebrate and toast the decision we made."

Part of the joyful attitude is due to the expert assistance Amy enlisted early in her plans. Wedding consultant Carolyn Hefner even remained calm when Amy, too impatient to wait for the June wedding to roll around, moved the date up to February. "We just chose a new theme—a winter wonderland," says Amy. "I love sparkles, and

Carolyn just had so many great ideas to make it work."

Amy met Kyle, who is studying to be a chiropractor, when both were in college at Central Michigan University. He proposed when they were having graduation portraits taken: "We have great photos of him down on one knee," says Amy.

The traditional ceremony was at the First Presbyterian Church of Dearborn. Amy says, "My dad and I cried all the way down the aisle." Trolley buses brought the celebrating wedding party to The Ritz-Carlton, where a decadent cocktail hour awaited. The biggest hit: a "martini luge" where guests chose a martini recipe, and the beverage was poured down an icy slide into a waiting glass.

The church had been decorated beautifully and although Amy had been in on all the plans for decorating the hotel ballroom, she



INGREDIENTS

CEREMONY SITE THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DEARBORN (313) 274-1313 • **RECEPTION SITE** THE RITZ-CARLTON, DEARBORN (313) 441-2100 • **PHOTOGRAPHY** D&L PHOTOGRAPHY (248) 624-9483, Wixom • **VIDEOGRAPHY** Alan MacDonald (248) 338-2537, Bloomfield Hills • **WEDDING CONSULTANT** Carolyn Hefner, THE CHINA CLOSET (248) 258-6480 • **GOWN** Designed especially for the bride by Anne Barge, ALVIN'S BRIDE (810) 498-7200, St. Clair Shores (to view more gowns by this designer, visit TheKnot.com/gowns) • **VEIL** Veils by Toni, ALVIN'S BRIDE • **BRIDESMAID DRESSES** VERA WANG • **FORMALWEAR** PRESIDENT TUXEDO (248) 855-0488, Farmington Hills • **INVITATIONS** THE CHINA CLOSET • **CEREMONY MUSIC** SCANDINAVIAN STRING QUARTET (248) 547-6136, Huntington Woods • **FLOWERS** TIFFANY FLORIST (248) 646-0333, Birmingham • **RENTAL EQUIPMENT** PARTY LINENS (248) 332-8700; TOO A T (248) 646-4517; BLOOMFIELD PARTY RENTALS (248) 332-4700, all in Bloomfield Hills • **MENU HIGHLIGHTS** Shellfish and sushi bars; entrees: filet of beef with medallions of lobster, chicken breast stuffed with morels, rice, and apricots, and tomato-encrusted salmon, THE RITZ-CARLTON, DEARBORN • **CIGAR ROLLING STATION** LITTLE CIGAR FACTORY (517) 267-1476, Lansing • **BAND** RUMPLESTILTSKIN, booked through LORIO-ROSS STERLING ENTERTAINMENT (248) 398-9711, Royal Oak • **CAKE** SWEET DREAMS (586) 751-8900, Warren • **FAVORS** Silver-rimmed mint julep cups; tiny versions of the wedding cake in clear boxes, SWEET DREAMS • **TRANSPORTATION** TECUMSEH TROLLEY & LIMOUSINE (866) 423-3335, Tecumseh • **HONEYMOON** Turks and Caicos; then to the Dominican Republic with their parents

was stunned when she first saw the setting. Centerpieces of all-white flowers and sparkling twigs were set in silver vases; mobiles of floral snowflakes and spheres of orchids hung from the ceiling; tables were covered in layers of ivory satin, sheers, and beaded linens; and there was sparkling, perfect snow everywhere. "The florist used 125 pounds of artificial snow," Carolyn reports.

After Amy and Kyle had arranged themselves at their private table, they and their 285 guests chose from three entrees. There was a coffee bar, a cigar-rolling bar (and a separate room in which to smoke them), and, later in the evening, a sweets table. Best of all, the band played until the end without a single break. —L.C.