

*To have and to hold,
from this day forward,
for better or for worse*

Your favorite wedding stories and photos

Beach lovers

Living in the shadows of the Rocky Mountains in Denver, Colorado, at the time, we had our share of amazing backdrops to choose from for our wedding. But the beauty of the Carolina coast was just too ideal to pass up. With just close family by our sides and the ocean at our feet, our wedding on the beach at Oak Island turned out to be more perfect than we could have imagined. Now married almost three years and living in Charlotte, my wife Jessica and I couldn't be happier, and are looking forward to our next trip out to the coast.

Jeremy Braketa, Charlotte



Thanks to everyone who your favorite wedding stories and pictures. You can see more on our Web site. Next month we'll publish stories and photos of your favorite cars. [Deadline was May 15.] For more themes and the rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 20.



A priceless reception

After my parents passed away, I was cleaning out a cabinet in their home. They hadn't thrown much away in over 50 years together. I came across the receipt for my wedding reception in the 1970s. I was still in college and the wedding was during spring break.

When we told my parents about our engagement, my father asked, "You know my daughter has one more year of college. What are you going to do about that?"

My husband-to-be boldly replied, "I have a job. I can pay for her last year."

"Welcome to the family," my father said, shaking his hand.

I couldn't believe we were really married and about to have a wonderful reception. What seemed so grand to me at the time was in reality quite simple.

The afternoon reception was at a local steak house. My parents had planned for 150 guests, but we had a few "wedding crasher" classmates. The grand total for food, drinks and a 15 percent gratuity for 165 people was \$753.70.

I'm going to put the receipt in a safe place and bring it out when our daughter is planning her wedding.

*Patti Carr, Emerald Isle
Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative*

The power of roses

Bobby and I were married on Sunday, August 22, 1971. We left the church and went to my parents' house for me to change into my "going away" outfit. We drove off in a 1969 blue Camero. As we headed out of town, the smell began to rise. We finally stopped the car and found a can of opened sardines cooking on the engine! Bobby removed the can but the smell continued as we



headed to Raleigh to spend the night. He checked the car over again and found another opened can under the driver's seat. My boss had sent 36 yellow roses to our room, and needless to say, we put the vase of roses in the back seat of the car. The next morning as we headed to the mountains of North Carolina the sweet aroma of yellow roses was wonderful.

Bobby passed away in July 2006. We had 35 good years together. I often think of that day when I see yellow roses.

Cynthia J. Corbett, Fountain, Pitt & Greene EMC

Want ad romance

We both had ads in the local paper's dating service. She answered mine, but by the time I realized it the paper quit doing it. I forgot about it, but she did not.

Three years passed. I was working at a local gas station where she came by often, but I did not know it was her. One day she came up and asked me if I had put an article in the paper three years ago looking for a date. She asked if my name was Michael, and I said yes, and she said she was Jennifer. It just clicked in my head that it was her. We have been together ever since. This past March 20 we celebrated our fourth wedding anniversary. We also have a 2-year-old daughter named Kari.

Michael Taylor, Lexington, EnergyUnited



A lovely day anyway

We decided to marry on the beach that we loved. But first we had renovations and repairs to make on the beach house.

One such renovation was landscaping our yard. I set out to clear the way wearing a pair of shorts. Mistake! Within the week my legs were covered with either poison ivy or poison oak. The wedding was over three weeks away, so I didn't worry. But two weeks until the big day my legs were still a mess. I planned to wear a short wedding dress which would make my legs quite visible, so I headed to the doctor for a remedy. I tried the tanning bed and spray-on tans. But nothing seemed to make my red welts disappear.

Only one week to go and snap! I broke my crowned tooth. The crown could not be replaced since the tooth had broken off at the gum line. The best the dentist could do was give me a "flipper"—a retainer devise with a tooth attached. It looked natural, but I couldn't talk without a lisp. Now I was both leg-scarred and toothless.

During our rehearsal we learned that tropical storm Barry was indeed headed to our coast, and the weather forecast for the next day was dismal: rain all day, winds gusting at 25–30 mph!

The morning of June 2 my legs were still a disaster, my tooth out and flipper in (at least I could smile with what looked like a full set of teeth), while Barry barreled up the coast.

The ceremony began. The wind blew our hair, my scar-dappled legs walked down the aisle, my vows were on the lispy side, and rain was definitely on the way. But I smiled with joy as I joined hands with this man who had made my dreams come true.

Donna Bowles, Emerald Isle, Carteret-Craven EC

Impatient after 20 years

We had been going together for over 20 years before I accepted my husband's marriage proposal. He would ask me to marry him, but I would always say no over and over again, until I finally accepted in 2006.

We got married at my home place in the den. We wanted a private ceremony and did not send out invitations. The preacher had guests from Philadelphia, so they came. So did one of my four sisters, my one and only brother, and my sister-in-law. The best girlfriend of my deceased mother stood in for my mother. And our beautiful daughter Alexis was there.



When the ceremony was almost over, before the preacher could say "You may kiss the bride," my fiancée was already in position to kiss me. Everybody started laughing, and the preacher said, "Not yet!"

Wanda Beamon, Mount Olive, Tri-County EMC

Just starting out

Bill and I were married March 2, 1957. Our minister got sick so we found another one. My brother-in-law was an usher. He came down with the flu. At 3 p.m. that afternoon I carried his tuxedo pants to get them fitted so another man, Bill's brother-in-law, could be an usher. The wedding went fine.

Bill and I stopped in Southern Pines for supper. He realized he had left his billfold in the pants of his tuxedo. I paid for our first night until our family could bring his billfold to us.

Bill had a new 1957 Mercury, and the brake lever broke on our trip. When we returned, I went to see my parents. As I went by the picture window, I saw our car rolling down the driveway.

That was 51 years, three children and three grandchildren ago, and we are still together.

Dottie Gaines, Siler City, Central EMC



Show time

Every girl dreams of her fairytale wedding. My dream began in Boston when I met Jeff face to face after meeting in cyberspace a few weeks earlier. A wedding wouldn't happen until we returned to Jeff's home state of North Carolina. Jeff has been in professional theater since college, so I wasn't optimistic that a theater opportunity in North Carolina was out there. But it was, and on Christmas Eve 2005 while viewing the construction of the new theater from Flat Top Manor, he put his arms around me, held a diamond ring in front of me and asked me to be his wife.

With so many Christmas Eve milestones in our life (including his parents' 1943 wedding), December 24 had to be the date. We were married on the main stage of the Hayes Performing Arts Center. With "One Performance Only" and the "Cast of Characters" (including Best Dog), the ceremony was unconventional and fun. We ended with "Rocky Top" as our exit walk. The weather and day were perfect. Never give up on your dream. Mine came true at age 57!

*Diane Scott-Clark, Blowing Rock
Blue Ridge Electric*

He saved me a seat next to him

Back in the 40s, a Walters family moved here to Indian Trail from Anson County. One of the sons named Bill had the prettiest smile and a good sense of humor. It was love at first sight for both of us.




I was so thrilled when I'd see him at church or on our school bus. He started saving me a seat on the bus. One day he joined the Navy instead of being drafted for the Army. I was so sad, but he started writing letters nearly every day. He came home one weekend on leave and sat in the choir with me. He spent the day with us and took me to church that night and also gave me my first real kiss. He spent two and a half years in the service and then was discharged.

We soon got married in the preacher's home. It was the most beautiful small wedding. He was the most caring and loving husband. We spent nearly 57 years together. God blessed us with six precious daughters. He is now in heaven, and I miss him so much. He was a precious daddy, too.

*Marie Walters, Indian Trail,
Union Power Cooperative*

The joys of a wedding day

My favorite wedding story happens on two different dates. One wedding was on Feb. 12, 1989, and the second wedding was on Oct. 13, 2001. My husband posed patiently in all the wedding pictures. He knew I was all about making memories.

The first picture is my 6-year-old daughter from a prior marriage posing with her new daddy whom she adored. The second wedding is, well, you guessed it! The same little 6-year old girl, now age 20, still is posing with her dad but now on her own wedding day. 

Sally Tyndall, Fremont, Tri County EMC



send us your best **EARN \$50**

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you \$50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

August 2008

If Students Ran the School
For students: How would you run your school?

Deadline: June 15

September 2008

My Favorite Photo
Our annual photo gallery of N.C. people and places.

Deadline: July 15

October 2008

Celebrity Presidents
What celebrity—human or cartoon—would make the best President, & why?

Deadline: August 15

November 2008

The Techno Whiz
Your craziest experience with home electronics.

Deadline: September 15

December 2008

Holiday Recipes
Recipes for your favorite holiday meals.

Deadline: October 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 800 pixels.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616
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