

Charitable Wedding News

A forum connecting weddings, communities, and philanthropy

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Charitable Wedding News is sponsored by the I Do Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps couples share some of the joy and generosity of their weddings with the charitable organization of their choice. Comments or written contributions can be sent to Lisa Jenkins, editor, at Lisa@idofoundation.org www.IDoFoundation.org

1) In Focus: Waste Not, Want Not

Wedding vows are forever, but the materials and supplies that go into a wedding are often thrown away the next day. With a little extra planning, couples can go a long way in cutting down on wedding waste. This issue of Charitable Wedding News focuses on how couples can use the leftover items from their wedding to feed the hungry, help the environment, brighten someone's day, and even save some money.

Donate

Couples can recycle much of what was not used, or what was "gently used," by donating food, flowers, and formal wear from the wedding and reception.

Food- Local food rescue programs will pick up leftovers from the wedding reception, and deliver them to a homeless shelter the same day. Couples should know that most food banks only deal with non-perishable food items. A food rescue picks up perishable and non-perishable foods. Anything not being used at a wedding falls under the heading of perishable. For more information and to locate a local food rescue program, please visit America's Second Harvest (www.secondharvest.org).

Flowers - Centerpieces live on beyond the wedding day when donated to a retirement home or assisted living center. For local listings, please visit www.nursinghomeinfo.com, and www.assistedlivinginfo.com.

Clothing: Bridesmaids dresses don't have to be worn just once. Several nonprofit organizations recycle "gently used" bridesmaids dresses and groomsman's tuxedos into formal wear for low-income high school students. Links to a variety of local programs are provided below.

Think Globally, Shop Locally

Couples can actually save money and the environment by avoiding products that create more waste. By checking with their florist and caterer to choose flowers and produce that are local and in season, couples can avoid shipping charges and the extra packaging that creates waste. <http://www.localflorist.info>

Use the World Wide Web

For guests who are Internet savvy, a wedding website is a great way for couples to centralize wedding information as well as save paper. Sites like WeddingChannel.com, TheKnot.com, and IDoFoundation.org provide a free wedding web page, as well as easy to use web page design tools.

2) Industry Leader: America's Second Harvest

The following is a brief interview with Susan Hofer, spokeswoman of America's Second Harvest. Through its network of 200 food banks and food rescue programs, America's Second Harvest provides assistance to more than 23 million hungry Americans each year. Susan Hofer spoke with Charitable Wedding News about how brides and grooms can make a difference by donating excess wedding food.

CWN: How can America's Second Harvest be of assistance to couples in the midst of wedding planning?

SH: As a couple is planning their wedding, they can ask if there is an arrangement between their caterer and a food rescue program. If there is an agreement in place, then it is always good to be certain that they donate all of the food that is prepared but not served. The easiest way for a couple to donate their food is to work with a facility that already has an arrangement.

If the couple cannot find a business with an agreement, it is worth it for them to call a few people. Go to the Second Harvest website (<http://www.secondharvest.org>) for further information. You can contact us directly, but we also have listings for local organizations in every state (<http://www.secondharvest.org/foodbanks/locator.html>) to ensure that unused prepared food does not go to waste.

CWN: How are you currently seeing engaged couples incorporate food rescue programs into their weddings?

SH: I think couples do not realize how easy it is to make this happen. It's just a few phone calls to find out if places you're looking at have relationships with food banks. We don't want to add to the burden of the wedding. We just ask that couples call their caterer, and ask if there is a relationship with a food bank. And if there is not a relationship, we hope that the couples will simply ask how one be developed.

CWN: Any last thoughts for busy brides and grooms?

SH: Weddings are huge undertakings. We at America's Second Harvest recognize that food is an integral part of every wedding. We would like it if during weddings, people continued to think about those less fortunate. We want people to continue working with their local food preparer. Food can be a connection point for *all people*.

For additional information about food rescue and America's Second Harvest, please visit: www.secondharvest.org

3) Links: Make My Day

Couples spend so much time and money on centerpieces and flowers, often to only to leave it all behind when the party is over. Couples can increase the shelf life of their wedding centerpieces by planning ahead to donate these items to nursing homes or assisted living centers. Using the links below, couples can identify a local facility and then appoint a close friend or family member to deliver the flowers after the celebration. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.nursinghomeinfo.com/search.html>
<http://www.assistedlivinginfo.com/search.html>

4) Nonprofits Spotlight: Fairy Godmothers Unite

Ideally, brides hope to find bridesmaid dresses that their friends will love, but the reality is that it can be hard to find something that suits everyone's tastes. Increasingly, bridesmaids are choosing to donate their dresses rather than letting them collect dust in the back of the closet. Nonprofit organizations around the country are now collecting "gently used" dresses or tuxedos in order to give low-income teens a chance to attend their high school proms in style. Check out these organizations to find some local fairy godmothers:

Chicago: The Glass Slipper Project: <http://www.glassslipperproject.org/>
Los Angeles: The Cinderella Project: www.cinderellaproject.org/
Washington: The Fairy Godmothers: <http://www.fairygodmothers.org>
Arizona: Fairy Godmothers of Flagstaff:
<http://hometown.aol.com/storybookbridal/godmothers.html>
Ohio: Fairy Godmothers Inc.: www.fairygodmothersinc.com

5) Recent Press about Charitable Weddings

MarketPlace Morning Report: "Altruistic Weddings" June 27, 2003
http://www.marketplace.org/morning_report/2003/06/27_mmr.html

The Forward: “Giving Gifts that Keep on Giving” June 20, 2003

<http://www.forward.com/issues/2003/03.06.20/fast2.html>

The New York Times: “Down the Aisle with a Social Cause in Mind” June 8, 2003

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F00F10FD3D5D0C7B8CDDAF0894DB404482>

The Washingtonian: “From The Heart” June 2003

<http://www.washingtonian.com/weddings/heart.html>

I Do Foundation

The I Do Foundation is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC, whose mission is to bring a charitable focus to special life events. The Foundation helps engaged couples raise charitable wedding donations through three channels:

Gift Registry: When couples register with our partners—including Target, Linens 'N Things and Amazon.com—up to 8% of all spending is donated.

Travel: The I Do Foundation's partner, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, donates 5% of all honeymoon packages.

Donation Registry: With our flexible Donation Registry, guests can make a donation directly to charity in place of, or in addition to, traditional gifts.

Favors for Charity: The Favors for Charity program allows couples to make donations in honor of their guests in place of (or in addition to) traditional favors.

To learn more, visit www.idofoundation.org or contact info@idofoundation.org.

To unsubscribe, send a message to newsletter@idofoundation.org with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

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