



THE WEDDING PLACE
...Exudes romantic ambience

The Wedding Place Is Total Concept With Wedding Preparation Business

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer

When a young woman is proposed to and her answer is yes, in most cases she will be on a romantic high until the wedding day. However, having her head in the clouds is not conducive to managing and preparing for an elegant wedding ceremony. Fortunately for this woman with stars in her eyes there is The Wedding Place, a total concept wedding preparation business.

So as not to let the young women crash into the reality of a myriad of tasks involved in preparing a wedding, The Wedding Place exudes a relaxing and romantic ambience. Located at 223 East Blvd. in a large but quaint older home. Within, the bride-to-be's senses are treated to further elegance and enchantment. There is mauve carpet and arched entranceways and low-light lamps that emulate candlelight. Hundreds of white, ivory or colorful silk or satin, lace gowns are hung in the many rooms and romantic music wafts throughout. Music like Olivia Newton John's "I Love You, I Honestly Love You."

This setting is important for, as one of The Wedding Place's managers informs, "Here is for many brides-to-be their home away from home for several months." The managers, Millie Dennis, Alma Ashley and Vernell Funderburk are all women of great taste and pleasing personalities. Their easy comradeship puts anyone at ease. This is a necessary skill in their business, of course. They in fact become surrogate mothers, confidants and best friends to the hundreds of brides who come through their shop on their way to what is supposed to be the happiest day of their lives.

"We have 40 years of combined wedding preparation experience among us," states Millie. Back in time before The Wedding Place was established, Alma recalls, "We all had the knowledge, we liked the work, but we didn't have jobs."

Encouraged by many who knew and liked their services, the three ladies were prompted to start their own business. They became partners and opened The Wedding Place in 1981. It's location was then on Selwyn Ave. "We began when the bottom was out of everything," laughs Millie, then she adds seriously, "It took determination and courage and hard work."

These ingredients paid off quickly. In one year The Wedding Place's large volume of business outgrew the space they had on Selwyn Ave. In October of 1982, they relocated to the larger building on East Blvd.

Now that they are happily flourishing in their business, the ladies are eager to list the many services they provide for brides, mothers-of-the-brides, bridesmaids, grooms, ushers, everyone in the wedding party. And since they house the largest selection of party gowns anywhere, they also accommodate debutantes, prom going high school girls, beauty pageant entrants, socialites and social clubs, anyone who needs formal or evening gowns and accessories.

Lucky brides who choose The Wedding Place are treated like queens. They need only to enter, explain what they want and the managers will cater to their wishes. "We take the time to direct the entire wedding if they so wish," informs Millie. Preparation begins with a consultation to find out the bride's desires. If necessary, the managers will assist in securing a photographer, florist, musician and caterers. They can also rent tuxedos for the gentlemen and help with the selections of invitations, printed or engraved. An added service is writing a description of the bride's gown for announcement in area newspapers.

The brides are, of course, the

special ones. They can relax and ramble through The Wedding Place and all their needs are right at their fingertips. They'll find jewelry, lingerie, shoes for themselves and their bridesmaids dyed to match; their gowns and bridesmaid's gowns, headpieces, flower girl's gowns, mother's formals, and guest formals.

With fitting rooms and alteration facilities on the premises, The Wedding Place is definitely a one-stop wedding business. Another service they provide is redesigning a mother's wedding gown for the daughter to wear. They may just alter it, or enhance it with lace or pearls.

The Wedding Place primarily deals with traditional weddings, whether small or large. "We've yet to have someone want to jump out of an airplane to get married or want to get married underwater," laughs Alma. "We supply a total concept in weddings, but with a choice," Millie interjects. "The bride has the option of choosing what venue she's like to take and we also encourage her to compare prices and services."

"Many do follow our recommendations," Millie assures. "They trust that we know what is needed to have a pretty and proper wedding." Whether it is the first, second or third marriage for a bride, Millie maintains that she and the other managers know what is appropriate, in style and in good

taste. After all, says Millie, "Fads and styles come and go. But good taste is here to stay."

"The girls come here with rings on their fingers and they need a lot of assistance in planning the wedding. We're involved not just for the sale. We are determined that her wedding be outstanding. We have a stake in their wedding because it reflects on us."

There is no better testament to The Wedding Place's managers' abilities and good judgment than the fact that most of their clientele are directed to them through word of mouth. Happy brides send their sisters, cousins and friends to this business.

Thank-you notes from many of the brides are found in the managers' office and throughout the store; along with them, are also beautiful portraits of former brides who have passed through The Wedding Place.

It is with a hint of sadness that Millie reflects on the girls who have become beautiful brides with assistance from her business. Millie, Alma and Vernell had all become integral parts of these young women's life for a time but then they must send them off to their new responsibilities of marriage. Millie admits, "Many times we've had to console them during the very tense times of preparing for the wedding. But at The Wedding Place everything works out in the end."

Children In Poor Families Become Eligible For Medicaid Coverage

Special To The Post

Raleigh - Children in poor families and low-income pregnant women who are married became eligible for Medicaid coverage this week under an extended benefit package approved by the 1984 General Assembly, the state's Medicaid director announced.

Barbara D. Matula, director of the Department of Human Resources' Division of Medical Assistance, said the additional coverage for poor children and low income pregnant married women will result in an additional 58,000 North Carolinians being eligible for Medicaid.

"The new law will provide vital health care to over 58,000 children under the age of 19 who live in low-income families," Matula said. "This important coverage will help meet these children's need for early and comprehensive health care."

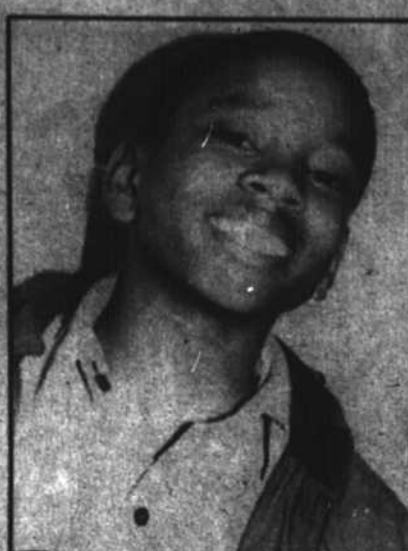
Prior to the change, Matula said that children could qualify for Medicaid health care benefits only when their parents were too ill to work or in cases when one or both parents were absent or dead.

She said the increased Medicaid coverage for married pregnant women will allow an additional 2,100 poor women to receive government funded prenatal care and delivery. In the past, this coverage was limited to unmarried pregnant wo-

men. "I believe this expanded coverage will help in North Carolina's battle against infant mortality, and in reducing the number of low birth weight infants, which is caused in part by the lack of adequate and early prenatal care," Matula said.



Darel Ross
Utilities



Darrele Miller
Racing



Jennifer Todd
Education

Opinions At Spaugh

Sixth Graders Know What They Want

It seems the age at which kids become aware of, involved in, or knowledgeable about various things gets younger all the time. We hear of elementary school students using drugs, on the negative side, and kindergartners using computers, on the positive.

Since this week is The Post's annual "Career Edition," we thought we'd see if youngsters are as aware of career choices as they may be of some other aspects of life. Post reporter Audrey Lodato asked sixth grade students at Spaugh Middle School, "What do you want to be when you grow up, and why?" They all had very specific ideas of what they want to pursue when they get older.

And there's nary a doctor or a nurse among them.

• Darel Ross of Avalon Avenue may not be sure what he wants to do, but he knows where he wants to do it. "I want to work for Duke Power," he volunteered. His reason? "The money. My cousin used to work for them and he got paid \$700 a week." (If that's the case, move over Darel, here I come!)

• Miriam Benton, a Bahama Drive resident, has her career plans laid out. "I want to major in computer technology," Ms. Benton declared. "My uncle is a lawyer and he works in computers. He said you could learn a lot from them."

• Jennifer Todd of Camp Greene Street, wants to be a teacher, "because I'd like to teach students. If it is a middle school or a junior high, I'd like to be a homeroom teacher. I like biology, too," she added.

• Jonathan Bowers lives on Marlboro Drive. "I'd like to be a lawyer when I grow up," he related. "I've been interested in law ever since I was about seven." What got him interested? "When people are innocent, I don't like to see them be put in jail or punished for anything."

• Jeremy Ardrey is another resident of Bahama Drive. His career



Jonathan Bowers
Law



Jeremy Ardrey
Architecture

ambitions stem from his interest in art. "I want to be an architect," he revealed. "I've been interested in drawing ever since I was about eight years old. Me and my brother used to have drawing contests and my mother would judge. He's very good. He's 14 and studying art."

• Darrele Miller resides on Capitol Drive. He wants to follow the career of the person he said he was named after - Darrell Waltrip. "I would like to be a race car driver," he stated, "because they get to speed around the track."



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