

Let them eat cookies

New wedding trends alter traditional ceremonies

By Amanda Trimble
THE BATTALION

Carol Conlee has a wealth of experience in weddings. Conlee and her husband are the proprietors of the 7-F Lodge in Wellborn, a bed and breakfast, antique wedding chapel and large party pavilion, all in a nature setting. Her first observation about trends in weddings is simple.

"We're seeing lots of individualism now," Conlee said. "People bring their personal lifestyle into their weddings."

Individualism includes everything from ornate wedding themes to minimalism with the bride as the star of the show. Regardless of the category, weddings are evolving and incorporating the loves and interests of the bride and groom.

"The common denominator with people who get married out here is that they love nature," Conlee said. "It's more of the bride and groom's wedding versus the parents' wedding. The biggest trend is less pageant and more reality."

Incorporating a theme into a wedding is a way for the bride and groom to personalize the event. According to ModernBride.com, creativity is the modern trend. Themes can be pulled from a couple's dating history, a local landmark, a holiday or season, or a family's ethnic origin.

Conlee said she has seen many themes at the 7-F Lodge including a tropical island feel with tiki torches and outdoor grilling, an Italian bistro theme and a vintage theme with the bride and bridesmaids wearing vintage mink stoles.

Jill Filip, a senior agricultural development major, will be getting married in Shiner, Texas. Along with other small town wedding touches, Filip found a band to play the "Grand March," a traditional dance involving all of the wedding guests.

"It's your basic country wedding," Filip said. "I told my friends it's going to be polka music and lots of kolaches, so I hope you like it."

Julie Hurn has been coordinating weddings for 20 years and for the last three years has been at the Kyle House in Bryan. Last year she saw an Indian-themed wedding using traditional dress and foods, and seven weddings scheduled around Christmas. Hurn said couples specifically wanted Christmas decorations.

"One girl even decorated her cake with Christmas decorations," Hurn said. "She used greenery and red berries — it was gorgeous."

New traditions are evolving with wedding cakes and groom's cakes. Erin Walters, a senior finance major, got the idea to have cookies



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instead of a groom's cake from another wedding.

"The trend is moving away from two cakes because you have two different kinds, and it makes it more expensive," Walters said. "So [having cookies] is a good alternative."

Hurn said the tradition of a groom's cake is not common outside the South.

"I think what happened one day was some groom decided he wanted chocolate cake," Hurn said.

Other changes in wedding trends are incorporated into the ceremony itself. Filip is having her grandmother light a memory candle for her and the groom's grandparents who have passed away. Kate Osborn, a junior education major, is having her mother and father give her away at the wedding ceremony.

"I just wanted both my parents to be there with me," Osborn said. As a sign of gratitude, Walters said she will carry two roses down

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Dashboard Confessional praises fans for undying support

By Lycia Shrum
THE BATTALION

It is the all too familiar story of guy notices girl, girl asks guy out, guy nervously awaits the date and the guy and girl hit it off for a fairy-tale ending.

This romance story now is available in a four-song EP. Dashboard Confessional, led by Chris Carrabba, released *So Impossible* in December 2001, which tells the story of young love starting with the track "For You to Notice" and ending with the track "Hands Down."

"I had a thought on my mind and I wrote all four songs on the EP in about an hour and a half," Carrabba said. "I realized that it tells the complete tale and wanted to put it out like that. I wrote one song and it was on my mind so I wrote the next song and it was still on my mind so I just kept getting further and further along with it, and, granted it's not the entire story, but it's the story of a beginning."

From his clever writing skills to his unforgettable performances, Carrabba captures the hearts of his fans time and time again, not only because of his musical talent, but because of the sincere appreciation he has for his fans.

With Dashboard Confessional's rising success, Carrabba said he has not forgotten the people who helped bring him to the place he is today. From multiple magazine appearances to a video on MTV and his song "Screaming Infidelities," which is making its way into regular radio rotation, Carrabba said he is appreciative of the fans who helped get his music heard.

"All this press and this MTV and all the radio in the world could not touch what has happened for my band due to word of mouth and the passion of the kids who actually embrace it," Carrabba said.

Even after a change in his style of music, Carrabba knows that if any fans are going to stand by a band, it will be his true fans.

What started out as a guy, his guitar and a stool has developed into what seems to be a recipe for success. The current lineup of Dashboard Confessional includes Carrabba, Dan Bonebrake of the band Seville on bass, Mike Marsh, also of Seville, on drums and Mike Stroud on guitar and piano. On each of Dashboard Confessional's tours, the crowd can expect to see others of Carrabba's

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