Wedding planners can handle all budgets, details

BY KRISTEN HAINS

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In the 1991 film "Father of the Bride," Martin Short played an over-the-top wedding planner who spared no expense in planning the wedding of Steve Martin's daughter. Short's character reinforced the stereotype that wedding planners are only hired by those who have a lot of money.

But according to Chandra

this money on a wedding," Demers said. "You're going to spend \$2,000 on a band that's going to be there for three hours. Why not spend a little bit on someone that's going to be there for eight months and help you through everything?"

Weddings Inc. has planned \$6,000 weddings and \$130,000 weddings. Regardless of the amount of money being spent, staying on budget is one thing that a wedding planner can help ensure.

"Wedding planners have done this over and over," she said. "They know how to save money."

Demers and LaPres bought the business (formerly Leelanau Weddings) three

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summers ago. Demers had been in the wedding industry for nine years, working as a photographer.

"We are a full-service wedding and event planning business," Demers said. "We're there from the begin- family," Demers said. ning to the end."

Services include everything from helping pick the wedding date and location to selecting vendors such as caterers, florists, photogra-

phers as well as details like sending invitations, decorating for the reception and shuttling of guests.

"We are pretty much the eyes and ears and secretary for bride and groom and

Another service provided by Weddings Inc. is designing a personalized Web site for the bride and groom. The site contains information such as date and time of the service and rehearsal dinner as well as gift registry links and information about the Grand Traverse Area.

Demers says wedding planners are trained to look out for all of the details, things couples often overlook like shuttling guests and logistics of the wedding.

For couples planning an outdoor or tented wedding there are many details; things like running electricity to the tent and having temporary service set up for that day, ensuring that wires are flagged and the proper heating systems are in place. With outdoors weddings, there is also the issue of bringing in restrooms. A wedding planner can assure you get a restroom with running water and not just your basic "porta-potty."

As a wedding photographer, Demers has seen firsthand the difference between a bride with a wedding planner and one without.

"It's amazing the difference. The bride who has a wedding planner can sit back and actually enjoy the day," she said. "If something goes wrong we're the first ones to deal with the issue and take care of it. The bride never knows half the things that happen because we try to go through that seamless process where we just fix it."

Kristen Hains is a local freelance writer.

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