







# A WEDDING EXPERT GETS MARRIED

HAYNAL PAPP: VIRGINIA VIDEOGRAPHER

By Annie Hynick Photos: David-Madison.com

Many brides debate whether or not to hire a videographer to film their special day. Haynal Papp, owner of Dolce Video in Herndon, Va. makes a compelling argument in support of the decision. "If you could watch a video of your great grandparents' wedding, would you? Of course you would! You would get to see how your relatives laughed, talked, moved and danced—you can't get that from a picture. You can't ever listen to those speeches again, or hear yourself say those vows. You are creating a legacy for yourself and for your family in the form of a treasured, family heirloom."

Needless to say when Haynal was planning her June 11, 2005 wedding, choosing a

videographer was one decision that she didn't have to think about. "I own a videography business, so no, I didn't hire another company! I simply didn't book any weddings that weekend and had my entire team shoot our wedding."

Haynal met Eli Staples on *Match.com*, and he proposed two years later on her birthday. "He brought me breakfast in bed with a single rose on the tray. I smelled the rose. Then I pointed it at him, so he could smell it. That's when I saw a glint on the stem and realized it was an engagement ring!"

Planning the wedding was easy for Haynal and her husband—a jazz musician and band manager—because of their involvement in the wedding industry. "We





knew what we liked and what we didn't, and we knew what we wanted right from the start. Making it happen was simply a matter of booking and ordering everything."

The ceremony and reception were held at Pomonkey Point, a private residence flanked on the Potomac River and Pomonkey Creek. Because of its location on a bend in the river just south of Mount Vernon, guests appreciated a beautiful view stretching eight miles down river. Guests also enjoyed the bird watching tower with swinging bench, the pier jutting out in the juncture of two waterways and the expansive property filled with lush green lawns.

On their wedding day, Haynal and Eli wanted to celebrate the many traditions and interpretations of love. Their nondenominational service incorporated traditions from

different religions, cultures and historic, marriage rites. Throughout the property hung beautiful vellum cards with famous quotes about love printed on them.

"The sentiment we most wanted to convey to our guests was our philosophy that marriage is about making your relationship public. It asks that your family and friends become a part of your relationship, support it and help nurture it. In kind we wanted to nurture our guests and ensure they had a relaxed, wonderful time."

Guests enjoyed a Southern style menu including Maryland Crab soup catered by the Marsh Hall Restaurant. "The Source" band entertained guests throughout the day as they danced with bubbles and glow sticks. The evening literally ended with a bang. After watching the sun set, guests marveled at fire-

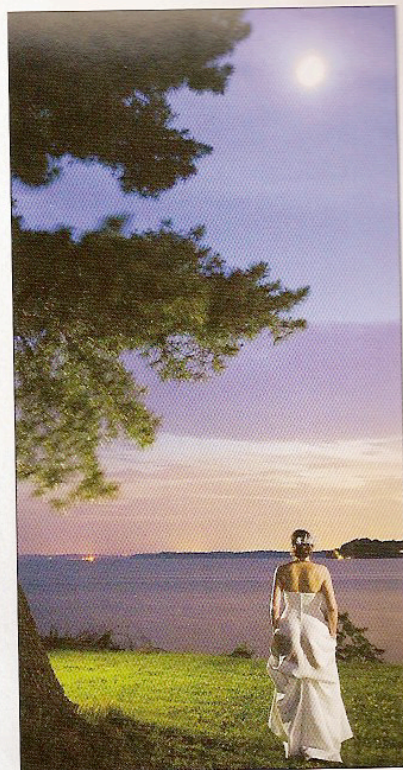
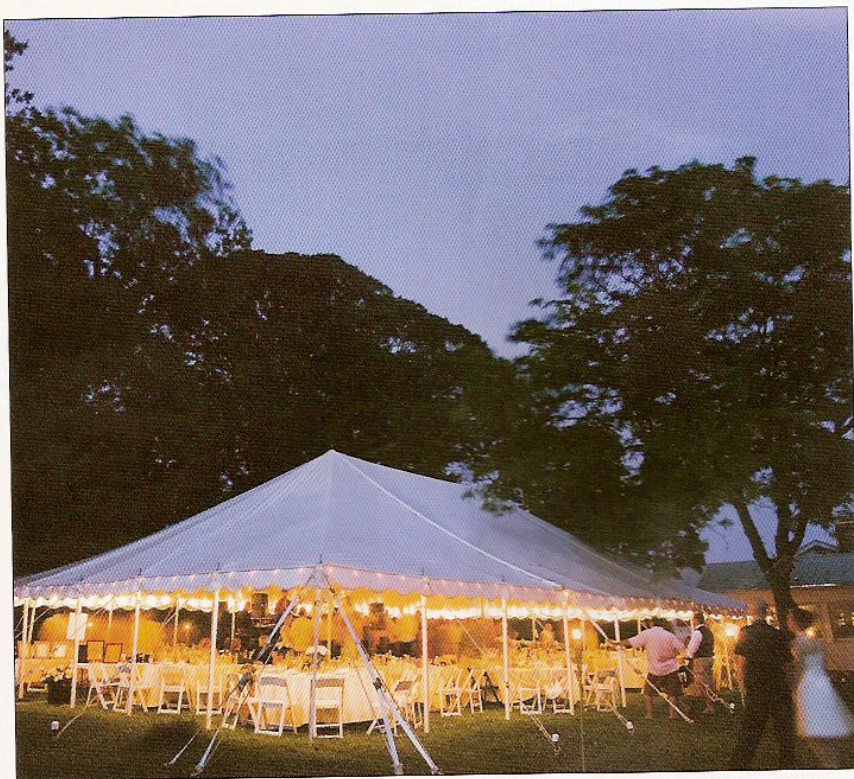
works—set off in honor of the couple—sparkling over the Potomac.

Haynal initially started shooting weddings through an agent and enjoyed it so much she decided she wanted to do it full-time. Since then Dolce Video has been voted among the area's best videographers by *Washingtonian* magazine and has been included as a preferred vendor for many exclusive sites including Hay Adams Hotel, The Willard InterContinental Washington, Lockesly Manor and Thomas Birkby House.

Dolce Video employs a documentary rather than a staged approach and aims to be as unobtrusive as possible when filming. "I was curious as to how it would feel to be on the other side of the lens, and I have to say, my team did an excellent job! I had three cameras on our shoot, and I barely saw any of

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them the entire day," Haynal says.

The most important advice Haynal can give to brides and grooms is: don't have a friend or relative shoot their wedding. "They will hate their video, and they will hate their friend! Professionals have access to professional equipment and are experts in shooting weddings, so they know what to shoot when, where to position themselves for shots, how to best use the camera, how to get stable shots and when to take a break." As a result of using a professional videographer, many of her clients enjoy their video so much that they look forward to viewing it on their anniversary each year.

Although the couple was well connected within the industry and had a very clear idea of what they wanted to share with their guests, they still encountered a learning curve in the planning process. "What was truly surprising was just how much stress a wedding can add to everyone's psyche. It's very hard to include everyone and make everyone feel somehow special, especially on the day of the ceremony. I've seen brides trying to make everyone else happy and their smiles are pinched, and they're shrill or crying in the bathroom. Make decisions that will make you happy, and you will be!"

