

Catering Nightmares - October 2015

Heather Flemke, *NACE Marketing and Communications Director*

From the looming threat of rain for an outdoor venue, to the groom who thinks he 'might not want to' get married a week before the big day over a holiday weekend, there's no shortage of potential nightmares that cross event planners plate on a daily basis. That's why one Philadelphia planner, Lynda Barness of I DO Wedding Consulting, decided over the years to compile an on-going list of unique anecdotes that one really just could not make up .

"In my initial meeting with one family, the bride was discussing the fact that she and the groom did not want a wedding cake. Instead they wanted a pie station with at least four selections. Someone said to the bride, "Well, what are you going to cut?" The father of the bride responded, without hesitation, "My wrists!" An excerpt from I DO: A Wedding Planner Tells Tales.

It's understandable when you consider all of the moving parts, that one is bound to get a bit nervous along the road to one of the biggest days of their lives. The initial decision to determine a location can feel like the *only* big decision, when in reality, it just becomes one in a very long list that need to be determined and mutually agreed upon. Whether on the beach, countryside, or trendy city venue, the key is communicating ones vision and that can start to fade when too many hands are in the pot.

And then there's the invite list. What seems like an easy compilation of loved ones, has the ability to quickly spiral downward when both families are involved. How does one not offend family members, yet still include all of those guests that you *actually want* to share in the big day?

"One mother of the groom --who wasn't actually my client --called me and up said, "My husband and I went to someone's party last week, and we realized that we hadn't invited them to the wedding. Could you call them and introduce yourself and ask if they're coming, and then apologize when they say they never received the invitation?" An excerpt from I DO: A Wedding Planner Tells Tales

It's true, wedding planners are worth their weight in gold when you consider the many intricate details they must prepare and advise their clients on. So what are some basic guidelines that can make any event run smoothly? Lynda suggests "do your research and pick your event professionals in the beginning, and then take a break! This often allows the client time and space to breathe a sigh of relief that qualified reinforcements are now on their side." Lynda added, "when feeling stuck in the struggle of which client/vendor relationships to pursue, follow your instincts and recognize who or what is not a good fit for you." It's all about setting realistic expectations and communication that can help keep any event on track, so YOU TOO can steer clear of any potential nightmares to come!