



Hope after a Natural Disaster Strikes

Everything happens for a reason; good or bad, we may never know the reason, but on December 31, 2010, Gina and Josh understood why they made the decision to move their wedding date, that was originally set for May 22nd at Gaylord Opryland.

On the first weekend of May, over 13 inches of rain was recorded over a two-day period, doubling the previous record. The Cumberland River reached nearly 12 feet above flood stage and topped out just less than 52 feet before the waters began to recede in downtown Nashville and around Gaylord Opryland.

I could not comprehend what was happening that weekend. The city of Nashville, hour by hour was drowning under water

and all I could think about was how many weddings this was going to effect. I do not watch much TV, but texts and calls started to come in from panicked clients. I cannot describe the sick feeling I had when I turned on the TV and saw many homes and venues under water. I have fixed a lot of problems in my ten years of planning, but there was nothing I could do to make this huge problem go away.

While I was working around the clock to find alternative venues that were not under water, I had one special couple that chose to move their wedding date. There were many parts and moving pieces to the logistics of the Angley/Pisacopo wedding; little details that were put into place over the past year.

Gina was one of the calmer brides because she knew exactly what she wanted: to marry Josh at Gaylord Opryland. But it was not until a groomsman posted a picture of the Delta Pavilion, that Gina knew she would not be getting married on her original date.

After working through logistics with contractors, insurance companies, and permits from the city, we finally learned that Gaylord would re-open just before New Year's. With just two months to go, we hit the ground running transforming a spring wedding to a winter wedding.

Once Gina and Josh chose a new date, December 31, 2010 we began to revise a spring wedding into a New Year's Eve wedding. I will never forget the sadness I felt at the first planning meeting we had after the flood. Gina sat in my office and cried. The excitement was gone; it wasn't just changing a few flowers, the entire décor concept changed: from maroon and pinks to black and white with pops of reds; completely different from what she had envisioned. But with a loving mother

who only wanted the best for her daughter, and with amazing vendors, we moved forward quickly. I was so thankful to have experienced professional vendors working on this wedding who were overly accommodating on such short notice of a New Year's Eve event.

Gina had just graduated from Vanderbilt with her doctorate in audiology and it was supposed to be a happy time with graduation and wedding, but I could feel the stress of wondering if they made the right decision. She decided to leave the planning up to her mother and me; she had faith in us to execute something beautiful. It really didn't matter to her anymore; she waited almost eight years to marry the man she loved. What were a few more months?

Let me take you back to a similar scenario in Gina's life when her parents owned a family bakery for 30 years. Her uncle was left to run it alone when her father was diagnosed with cancer. Josh insisted on helping out, working around the clock with Gina's family to keep the bakery up and going. It was at that point that she knew she loved this man and he was the one and only one for her.

Once again, Josh was there for her, reassuring her that they made the right decision. They escaped to what was supposed to be their honeymoon on the new cruise, The Oasis of The Seas, and named

the trip their Honeysun, the trip taken before you get married.

Time passed by quickly, and the wedding day was finally here. The joy and excitement they all had was indescribable. When Gina and Josh saw the Delta Pavilion and Magnolia Ballroom for the first time, they could finally see what her mother and I saw all along. They told me it was better than anything that was supposed to be created back in May.

At that point, Gina and Josh knew that everything had happened for a reason. Guests who could not come to the original May date were able to come to their New Year's nuptials and share the special experience of seeing how all of the details had come together with drastic changes. Once the evening concluded Josh looked at Gina and said, "Thank God for the flood. This night was even better than it would have been in May. Think of all the things your mom and Angela added and changed." He was right!

As I mentioned earlier, everything happens for a reason. It's up to you to find the good and turn it into a new positive in your life. As for Gina and Josh with the support of true professional vendors, they had the wedding they had always envisioned and more.

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