

MEDIATE THIS !

WEDDING PLANNING: SEE THE CELEBRATION FROM BOTH SIDES

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

Dear Mediator,

My fiancée and I have been engaged for over a year. We are now in the beginning stages of planning our wedding and have decided that we want to keep it small, simple and cheap. My family, both immediate and extended, feel, however, that we should have a lavish ceremony and reception. They are very insistent and willing to contribute toward the cost. I told them if they want to help, they can contribute to the honeymoon. They feel we are being selfish because they cannot enjoy the honeymoon and that we are denying the family the opportunity to celebrate together. How do I tell them it's about us, not them?

Distressed in Kensington

Dear Distressed,

Oh, how weddings themselves can be such joyous occasions, while the planning process can feel like it entails more stress than it's worth. Lots of couples are opting for more simplified and cost-conscious weddings these days, for good reason: According to WeddingWire, total expenses for the average wedding add up to roughly \$29,000.

All of us know what it's like to have family expectations projected onto us. The pressure to comply



GETTY IMAGES

This week's questioner seeks advice about managing family expectations regarding a simple wedding versus a lavish event.

with these expectations can be overwhelming, to say the least. When these pressures are paired with the already stressful process of planning a wedding, it can feel like you're planning the event for everyone except the two of you.

In a situation such as this, we

have a rift in perspectives. That is, your family does not see what you see, and you might not see what they see. An effective mediation technique that can be utilized is perspective sharing. This technique focuses on sharing one's perspective and reasoning. In

other words, rather than allowing emotions to become a barrier to a solution, take a more communicative approach by sharing your perspective and hearing the other side's viewpoint.

Your family could benefit greatly from hearing your reasoning for having a smaller and less-expensive wedding. You could explain that, from your perspective, it's not worth the stress or the financial cost to put so much into just one day. There are surely other things you'd like to put that money toward; tell them what those are. Maybe you'd rather save for a house, or splurge on your honeymoon.

Giving your family concrete reasoning and a detailed look into your perspective will change the way they perceive your choices. Inversely, it will also help the situation to hear their perspective. It would not be unreasonable for them to think that a cheaper wedding might mean that some extended family members might not be able to attend. They could be worried that those family members will feel slighted at the lack of an invite, or be saddened at missing the opportunity to celebrate with you.

Perspective sharing will open the gateway to further dialogue that's based on a true understand-

ing of your desires and your family's desires. It would be wise to emphasize the fact that the size and expense of your wedding are unrelated to its meaning. As long as you are with the people you love, then it will be a success. You can address your family's concerns by talking with them about alternatives to a larger wedding. Perhaps you and your fiancée could visit members of your extended family on separate occasions, so they all get the chance to celebrate with you.

Weddings are about celebrating the love and commitment between two people, and while it can feel like everyone's opinion holds weight, do not lose sight of the fact that this day belongs to you and your fiancée. Implementing a solid conflict resolution strategy using perspective sharing will allow you to focus on what's important: enjoying this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Steven P. Dinkin is a professional mediator who has served as president of the San Diego-based National Conflict Resolution Center since 2003. Do you have a conflict that needs a resolution? Share your story with The Mediator via email at mediatethis@ncrconline.com or as an online submission by visiting www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

ENVIRONMENT: GARY ROBBINS

Orb weaver spiders are in spin mode

For lack of a better term, it's "freak out" season in San Diego County.

This time of year, orb weaver spiders spin huge radial webs that are so ethereal people often don't see them when they head for their cars in the morning. So they walk head-long into the sticky webs and thrash around in shock until they peel the silk from their face and hair.

"If you had a hidden camera running, you're catch some amazing expressions on people's faces," said Chris Conlon, the supervising vector ecologist for the county.

The summer freak out usually begins in August when a lot of the orb weaver spiders are old enough to join in spinning big webs, some which are more than 3 feet in diameter. Earlier last week, a spider in Escondido spun a web that measured 3.5 feet across. A string strand from web extended about 20 feet to other areas of the property.

"The spiders like to let the silk to spool out in the breeze," Conlon said. "That's how it gets from the garage over to plants 3 to 4 feet away."

The orb weavers mostly produce the webs at night, hoping to catch a variety of insects. It's not unusual for them to destroy the webs early in the morning.

The "big spin" typically lasts from August into September, but it can go into October if the weather is warm and fair. And that's fitting because the webs represent the same kind of designs that are incorporated into Halloween displays.

This year's spin might be unusually robust. Since Oct. 1, San Diego has received nearly 13 inches of rain, about 3 inches above average. The moisture caused vegetation to flourish countywide, which led insect populations to flourish countywide. So now, the family of orb weaver spiders found across the county have more targets of opportunity.

Don't fret if you walk into one of the webs. Yeah, some of the spiders are roughly as large as a quarter, which can be scary. But they're harmless.

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THE READERS' REPRESENTATIVE: ADRIAN VORE

Web stories might not make print

Occasionally the readers' rep will get an email asking if all the stories that appear on the sandiegouniontribune.com website also appear in the print newspaper.

Last week, for instance, a reader wondered why a couple of stories he saw on the website did not run in print.

The short answer is not every article on the website will make the newspaper.

The website automatically receives The Associated Press news feed of AP state, nation and world stories. The site also receives stories from the U-T's sister paper, the Los Angeles Times.

For the newspaper, a news editor in the U-T's downtown San Diego office curates the stories. The editor might use AP, L.A. Times, New York Times or Washington Post stories for the state, nation and world print report. The editor might also combine multiple news service stories for one article. And U-T editors can edit news service stories as they see fit.

News services editor Mitch Weinstock handles the wire report most nights for the next morning's paper. He will work with other A-sec-

tion editors for story choice and play. "I choose stories by trying to determine what will have the greatest impact on our readers and aid them in decision making," he said.

For the website, state, nation and world stories drop in automatically, but U-T editors can manually move them to different sections of the site, such as Top Stories or Breaking News.

Almost all stories written by U-T staffers and posted on the website will appear in print. A story on current weather conditions or a traffic snarl, for example, probably will not make the newspaper because of the timing.

The website should not be confused with the U-T's e-edition. The e-edition is an exact replica of that day's print newspaper. The e-edition is available only to e-edition and print subscribers.

The website is free, but nonsubscribers have access to only three stories a month. E-edition and print subscribers have unlimited access to the website.

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BIOTECH: BRADLEY J. FIKES

Algae-eaters wanted for UCSD study

Can a common green algae improve the health of your gut? People with inflammatory bowel disease will soon be asked to help answer that question.

An upcoming study at UC San Diego will look for volunteers to add a nutritious green algae to their diet, said algae researcher Steve Mayfield.

The goal is to see if the algae improve the function of gut microbes, possibly alleviating symptoms.

The study will be performed by the California Center for Algae Biotechnology, which Mayfield directs. The date hasn't yet been determined.

It's a follow-up to a previous 30-day study, which will soon be published.

That study provided a powdered form of the algae *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*. Volunteers mixed it or a placebo with their meals. The algae is used as a nutritional supplement to provide protein.

It's also being tested as an environmentally friendly food source. Last year, prominent San Diego chef Brian Malarkey served

the algae, provided by San Diego's Triton Algae Innovations, in special meals that went over well.

"The follow-on trial will be similar in scope to the first trial, but will focus on a specific population of people that has been diagnosed and suffer from IBS," Mayfield said.

"There were some of those individuals in the first trial (about 15 percent of people have IBS). But that initial trial included mostly healthy individuals, as that trial was really intended to look at how people tolerated the algae, both in terms of if they liked it — color, taste, texture — as well as what they observed in the gut health over the 30 day trial.

For more information on Mayfield's algae work, which includes algae-based surf gear and biofuels, go to <http://algae.ucsd.edu/mayfield>.

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EDUCATION: LAURA GROCH

CSUSM to study STEM students

California State University San Marcos has received a grant of almost \$2 million from the National Science Foundation to do research that will help increase the number of students graduating with college degrees in STEM studies.

The grant of \$1.9 million covers five years and was awarded to a group headed by Dr. Wesley Schultz, a psychology professor and the dean of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at Cal State San Marcos. Schultz will lead the project with Dr. Anna Woodcock, research faculty in the CSUSM psychology department, and Dr. Paul Hernandez, a professor at Texas A&M University and a CSUSM alumnus.

Schultz and his team will aim to answer the question of how the development of an identity as a scientist affects a student's persistence and success within a STEM discipline, and how that identity aligns with the student's other identities.

The project will enroll 1,400 junior engineering and biological science majors — 50 percent minority and 50 percent majority

students — from 10 campuses in the California State University system: CSUSM, Cal Poly Pomona, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal State Fullerton, Cal State Long Beach, Cal State Los Angeles, Cal State Northridge, Sacramento State, SDSU and San Jose State. Students will be recruited into the My College Pathways project, a new five-year longitudinal panel. Biannual surveys and computerized test scores will allow the researchers to compare the development and stability of STEM identity across a juncture where many STEM majors leave their path.

The project starts Sept. 1. It will be supported by the NSF's Education and Human Resources Core Research program, which emphasizes STEM education research. It will build on two years of background work, funded by the foundation's Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research program, in which Schultz's team collected data from about 300 students on three CSU campuses: CSUSM, Long Beach and Northridge.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

STREET SCENE GOT PEOPLE DANCING IN THE STREETS

Thirty-five years ago today the Neville Brothers, The Robert Cray Band, X, Jack Mack & the Heart Attack, and local favorites the Beat Farmers had people dancing in the streets on a Saturday evening in the Gaslamp Quarter.

The occasion was San Diego Street Scene II, staged as a sequel to the San Diego Jazz Festival's first Street Scene in May 1984. Tickets cost \$6. The music festival became an annual San Diego tradition that lasted 25 years before ending in 2009.

From The Tribune, Monday Aug. 20, 1984:

STREET SCENE II BRINGS GASLAMP QUARTER ALIVE

By Nanette Wiser, Special to The Tribune

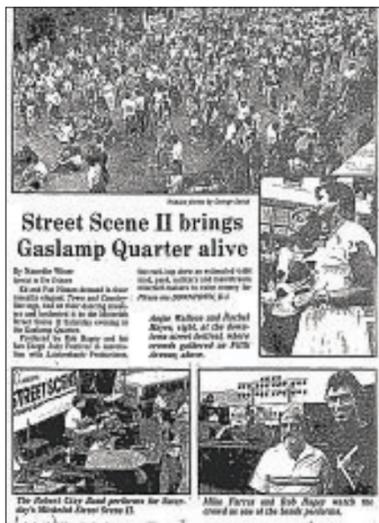
Ed and Pat Nissan dressed in their casually elegant Town and Country-like togs, tied on their dancing sneakers and hotfooted it to the Michelob Street Scene II Saturday evening in the Gaslamp Quarter.

Produced by Rob Hagey and his San Diego Jazz Festival in association with Luckenbach Productions, the rock hop drew an estimated 4,400 mod, punk, military and mainstream mischief-makers to raise money for the Jazz Festival and San Diego Repertory Theater. The 6 p.m. kickoff by the Robert Cray Band gave way to continuous music by the Mardi Gras madness of the Neville Brothers, San Diego's own Beat Farmers and their Elvis Presley rock-till-your-socks-drop, synchronized soulability of Jack Mack & The Heart Attack and the nasty new-wave sounds of Los Angeles' X, beating eardrums till 11 that night.

For expatriate New Yorkers such as the Nissans, it was the best of the East come West, a musical signal that the downtown renaissance predicted by all urban oracles — from Centre City Development Corp. to Gaslamp Quarter Association — was blaring and blinking loud and clear.

Dressed in a natty olive khaki safari short and shirt set, Pat Nissan's New York nose wiggled in excitement. Staring at the cordoned-off Fifth Avenue block between J and K streets adjacent to the landmark Spaghetti Factory and Unicorn Antiques building, she and Ed tried to decide between urban noshes such as smoky hot dogs from Louis Marotta's white oak antique pushcart (Gaslamp Quarter's first pushcart, normally located at Fifth and E) or tasty tiropitas from Mary Pappas' Athens Market.

"We never come downtown very much, but there's a lot of vitality here now that was



never here before," said Pat, tapping her feet to the rockabilly rollick of Jack Mack & The Heart Attack gyrating on one of the two alternating festival stages anchoring each end of the block. Added husband Ed: "We're coming back this Wednesday to eat the \$3.95 steak dinner special at Patrick's II. And we still want to try Dobson's. It's finally happening downtown."

Although most area businesses were expecting little overflow from the festival, most restaurateurs said the event attracted people downtown who would normally ignore the Front Street exit off Interstate 5.

"We're not looking for anything special except maybe a little pre-dinner action," said

PlayBill's owner Mary McDaniel, wistfully. "Perhaps if the festival promoters could put together a pre-dinner or after-event coupon book the next time with area merchants, we'd attract some return business."

At The Golden Lion, only a handful of 8:30 diners and drinkers reveled in the elegance of art nouveau murals and stained-glass vistas. The hostess suspected that the cocktail crowd would spill over after the concert, but that many of the wanderers would be underage and wouldn't be allowed into the bar anyway.

Dan Pearson, managing partner of the Grand Pacific Hotel, pondered the effect of the festival on downtown from his perch on the second floor of his Fifth Avenue and J Street hotel, overlooking one of the festival stages. He and wife Kit Goldman, executive producer of the Gaslamp Quarter Theater, plan to break ground this March for the Horton Grand Hotel and 260-seat theater complex on Fourth Avenue and Island Street.

"We were delighted when Rob Hagey decided to do the Michelob Street Festival in this block. To see all these new faces discovering how neat San Diego is after dark will encourage businesses to stay open and capitalize on the new downtown denizens who come from Kearny Mesa or La Jolla for a fun evening in a metropolitan area.

"We need to coordinate these events with the local merchants on a regular basis to build more evening traffic downtown and make it work," said Pearson, peering out the gabled window at the dancing throng below.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB.