

Holiday wedding saved

The Macomb Daily

Saturday, November 24, 2007

Clerk opens
locked office to
retrieve license

WEDDING: License delivered in time

By Christy Strawser
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

Working long hours as a computer programmer, Angela Donnelly, 31, of Shelby Township, had no time this week to pick up her wedding license at the county courthouse, so she figured she would get it Friday, the day before her Saturday nuptials.

But the frantic bride-to-be had her worst fear confirmed when she logged onto the Macomb County Web site on Thanksgiving Thursday and saw in black-and-white all county offices were closed until Monday.

Could this marriage be saved?

Yes it could, thanks to County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh, who took Donnelly's distress call at home on the holiday and calmly agreed to ask an employee to go into the closed courthouse Friday, retrieve the license, and deliver it to Donnelly and her fiancée Simon Robert, 34.

"I was like 'am I going to have to go to Vegas?'" Donnelly said. "I wanted my family there and I couldn't believe how nice she

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(Sabaugh) was. She didn't even seem to think twice that some stranger was calling her at home."

The call to Sabaugh was a shot in the dark that came after Donnelly noticed the clerk's full name on the county Web site. She looked up Sabaugh on whitepages.com and dialed the only entry that seemed to match.

"I couldn't believe it when she picked up," Donnelly said. "I said 'is this the Macomb County clerk?' She said it was."

The bride-to-be told Sabaugh her story, including the fact her fiancée is from Great Britain and had just flown in the week before after handling all the last-minute details of relocating to

Macomb County.

The couple met about two years ago on an online chat room for aspiring writers, where they immediately clicked. Donnelly flew across the ocean about six months later to meet him in person, and they ended up in love, engaged, and looking forward to a small wedding to start their life together.

Donnelly and Simon applied for the license Friday in the rush of wedding preparations. Per the law, they had to wait at least three days to pick up the license and they met a bevy of obstacles, including Donnelly's long work days. The court is open until 7 p.m. only on Wednesdays — and that was the night of their rehearsal dinner.

"Friday was best for us and I figured since Thanksgiving

is not a national holiday, the court building would be open the next day," Donnelly said. "It should have occurred to me it could be closed, but it didn't until my mom asked if I was sure it was open. I was praying they would be open, but I checked the Web site and they were, of course, not open."

The dress and veil were ready, the venue at her parents house in Goodrich was all decked out for the festivities, and the RSVPs were in. Oh, and her parents house was to be taken over Monday by renters, so this was the last weekend they could have the wedding there.

"I was just about to cry when I found out we were able to have it," Donnelly said, adding with a laugh, "I'm going to lock this license in a safe until then."

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