



Amanda Lavis
+ *Dave Pedersen*
MAY 20, 2017



How They Met: Amanda is from York, while Dave hails from Clinton Corners, New York. Both were students at Messiah College, where they became fast friends over Dunkin' Donuts and Ford Mustangs. According to Amanda, "Dave and I have been friends for over 15 years, with our friendship spanning most of our adult lives. We've experienced the excitement of a summer studying abroad, the giddiness of Dave purchasing his first Mustang, the anticipation of graduating college and starting our first real jobs, the sadness of Dave selling his first Mustang and the joys of furry kids. If you were to tell us back in college that one day we'd be married, we would have laughed!"

When they found themselves both single for the first time in their friendship (and living just a few miles apart), "we began to realize that friends was transitioning to friendlier. We took a chance, and that gamble paid off, as our years of friendship have only served to enhance our relationship," Amanda says.

*Photography by Svetlana Smith
Svetlana Photography: Svetlanaphoto.com*

After attending a benefit for Keystone Human Services – Susquehanna Service Dogs (SSD) falls under the organization's umbrella – Amanda was so impressed that she began considering ways in which SSD could be included in the wedding. Along came the "Love Bug" litter ...



Volunteers from SSD transported the 12-member "Love Bug" litter of Yellow Labs to Drumore Estate for the May 20, 2017 wedding.

THE PROPOSAL: Dave contemplated proposing during a business trip he and Amanda would be taking to Hawaii. He reconsidered, thinking a proposal in paradise would be too predictable. Instead, he proposed in their driveway on April Fool's Day as they were leaving to celebrate Amanda's March 31 birthday with friends. She had arrived home late from work and as they were rushing out the door, Dave applied the brakes and, as Amanda recalls, exclaimed, "Wait a minute! Just wait a minute! I have a question for you before we go. Will you marry me?" He then presented her with a ring he helped design with her favorite jeweler, K Novinger. Amanda remembers she was completely caught off guard, but still managed to say yes. "We were a little late to the dinner, but at least we had a good excuse!"



The cocktail hour that followed the ceremony established a way for Amanda and Dave to acknowledge SSD's mission, plus raise money for the organization through the photo booth (below). Susquehanna Service Dogs raises, trains and places service and hearing dogs (as well as facility dogs) with children and adults with disabilities, thus allowing them to lead more independent lives. More than 300 placements have been made since 1993.

FINDING THE PERFECT VENUE: The Mechanicsburg residents had checked out a few venues prior to looking at Drumore Estate. "We were looking for a unique venue that would be the perfect backdrop for our black-tie-elegant garden wedding," Amanda explains. "We arrived at Drumore fully prepared to cross it off the list due to the distance from Mechanicsburg, but as soon as we drove up the tree-lined drive and saw the estate, we knew it was the place. Let's be honest, there isn't anything unimpressive about Drumore Estate."

According to Amanda, that extends to owner Karyn Regitz, who brings attention to detail and high standards to Drumore weddings. Karyn is also a dog lover - her three Boston Terriers accompanied the couple on their tour of the property. "Karyn and her team are what truly make Drumore Estate the gem it is," Amanda notes.



PUPPY LOVE: "It was important for us that our wedding would include things we love and could share with our guests," Amanda says. "We didn't consciously select a puppy theme, but dogs are one of the many things we both love and wanted our guests to celebrate with us."

CARRYING OUT THE THEME: "We originally wanted to include our collies, Jack and Ruger, in our wedding; however, we realized the busyness of the wedding day would likely be too hectic for them," Amanda recalls. So, they turned to their

Photo courtesy of Amanda Lavis.



In addition to puppy raisers, the Grantville-based organization is in need of sitters (who serve as backups for the raisers) and huggers, who simply interact with puppies and help them become socialized. As you can imagine, those hugger volunteer positions are in high demand!

SUSQUEHANNA SERVICE DOGS:
Keystonehumanservices.org/susquehanna-service-dogs

The dog theme was also carried out through the "sit" name-card holders that doubled as party favors. Drumore's gorgeous gardens and landscaping provided the perfect backdrop for Amanda and Dave's black-tie-elegant garden wedding.



wedding planner, Susan Moran of That's It! Wedding Concepts for some ideas. "She was fantastic about brainstorming ideas with us, and made sure the details were executed to perfection!"

Susan, it seems, has planned her share of weddings that included dogs. "The nice thing about this wedding was the fact that Drumore has no restrictions," Susan says, noting that privately owned venues tend to offer more options where dogs are concerned.

"Dave and I bought a chalk collie statue at a local antique store several years prior to our wedding, and when we showed it to Susan, she thought of including it on the name-card table," Amanda recalls. The couple custom-created the golden collie name-card holders (which doubled as informal favors for the wedding guests). To make their wedding invitations more personal, they included two collie silhouettes on the band. "It was the perfect touch to have our stationery go from stock to special," Amanda says.

Inspiration for the final piece of the puzzle materialized in December, when

Amanda and Dave attended a black-tie gala to support Keystone Human Services. Canine representatives of Susquehanna Service Dogs (SSD) were present at the gala. "I mentioned how wonderful it would be to have them at our wedding, and SSD made it happen!" Amanda says. "SSD is a fantastic organization, and we were thrilled to be able to include them in our wedding." As luck would have it, the Yellow Lab "Love Bug" litter was born in time to be a part of their wedding. "The puppies were the center of attention during our cocktail hour," she continues. "Guests could cuddle with the puppies and have their photo taken in our puppy-kissing photo booth."

Kerry Wevodau, the organization's director of development, notes that outside of service-dogs-in-training taking part in their foster parents' weddings, this was a rare occurrence for SSD to be asked to participate in a wedding.

In Susan's estimation, "It turned out to be a win-win for everyone. The couple was able to carry out their theme and Susquehanna Service Dogs received exposure and monetary support through

donations and the puppy-kissing photo booth. I love clients who donate to 501(c)(3) organizations," she says of the trend that sees couples make donations to worthy causes as opposed to spending money on favors and such. "It's a kinder, gentler component to a wedding," she says.

THE SUB-THEME: "Our wedding included many little touches that reflected our lives," Amanda notes. "For example, our guestbook was a Mustang coffee table book, our bar featured premium bourbon from our trip on the Kentucky Bourbon trail, and our wine bar featured wines from New Zealand and Australia, where we would be honeymooning."

HAWAII IS NOW HOME: Four months after their wedding, the newlyweds started the process of moving to Hawaii, where Dave, who works for the Department of the Navy, serves as the Human Resources Director for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC). Both love the warm weather, but they hope to return to Pennsylvania in the upcoming years.