BY ALEIGH ACERNI

Saving the Day

Even meticulously planned weddings sometimes go awry; avert disaster with the help of some local wedding planners

FIASCO: Heavy winds force an outdoor bar inside, making for impatient, thirsty guests.

FIX: *"Our bar was supposed to be outside," says Stacey Fraunfelter of Red Letter Events. "But strong winds meant that the tents were almost blowing away, so we had to move inside. I grabbed the champagne and suggested an early toast, so that the bartenders could set up and not be bombarded by guests while they were getting situated."*

TIP: If any portion of your wedding is being held outdoors, have an alternate plan in case the weather isn't in your favor.

FIASCO: An outdoor wedding and reception is flooded at high tide.

FIX: *"We were preparing for a wedding reception at a location downtown, and there was a torrential downpour," recalls Kristin Newman of Kristin Newman Designs. "It was high tide, which meant there was nowhere for the water to go. The dance floor was completely flooded, and the water was up to my shins!"*

Newman thought fast and had a pump delivered to drain the standing water and prevent more from flowing in during the reception. "No one ever knew there had been so much water there only a short time before."

TIP: In addition to keeping a close eye on the weather forecast, be sure to check the tide charts. If it looks like it's going to rain, have someone in your wedding party take responsibility for bringing in a pump, just in case.

FIASCO: The trolley transporting the bride's family and wedding dress catches fire. Everyone escapes safely, but when the dress arrives, it reeks of smoke.

FIX: *Tally Angle of Distinctive Events was recently asked how she would remedy this wedding-day catastrophe: "If I was faced with this situation, I'd grab the dress as soon as it arrived," says Angle, "and then I'd use the steamer I always have on hand to get the smell of smoke out."*

TIP: A portable steamer is an invaluable wedding-day tool. As well as smoothing away wrinkles, it also gets bad smells out of fabric.

FIASCO: An out-of-area band still hasn't shown up, and there's only an hour until the reception.

FIX: *"One of the bands that I book often was coming down from Atlanta for a wedding," says Tara Guérard of Soirée. "On the way, their bus got into a huge accident."*

Normally, says Guérard, the band would have canceled. "But because they knew me, they rented another bus, transferred their equipment, and made it here just in time."

Guérard credits her good relationships with her vendors as the reason she's managed to thwart major wedding-day fiascos. The situation could also have been remedied if she'd hired another bus and had it meet the band at the site of the accident.

TIP: A trusted person (wedding coordinator, mother of the bride, or maid of honor), should always have a list of contacts and phone numbers for various transportation companies.