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Father of the bride 101

By **TED BROWN**
Special to the IFP

Last week, I listed those things that have happened since retirement—I had to dedicate an entire column to one of those events.

Seems I acquired another son— actually, I acquired another son-in-law.

You see, Daughter Number Three, aka, Maggie, became Mrs. Maggie Edwards in early September.

It was a great day, as well as the time leading up to it.

People say organizing weddings is stressful. There's so much to be done, so many details to attend to, with events like bridal showers, the stag and doe, and countless other celebrations to attend.

There's dress shopping and decorations to be decided upon, with lots of opinions thrown into the mix.

The flowers have to be ordered, the photographer booked, the limo confirmed— there's lots going on leading up to the special day.

By the time the wedding day arrives, every female in the family is completely stressed out—but excited as hell.

This was my second stint as father of the bride, the previous one being 12 years ago in August. After 12 years, one does forget a bit about the details and planning that goes into such an event.

But as father of the bride, I maintain my duties are pretty straightforward.

For those fathers out there traveling down this road to a wedding, I'm gonna give some tips about being the father of the bride.

I call it 'Father of the Bride 101.'

First of all, accept it— there's going to be some stress in your life for the six months leading up to that day. Suck it up, that's a given.

Your daughter and her wedding party will be leaving for hours at a time, to go dress shopping. This is a ritual the bride must go through, trying on more dresses than one could imagine possible.

Count your blessings that you're not

A Ted Bit



invited. This is girl territory, so enjoy the quiet and access to the remote while they are out on a dress hunting mission. It will come to a close soon enough.

Be prepared, you probably won't see the wedding dress until the day of the wedding, or at best, she'll show you a blurry photo taken in the dress shop by one of the bridesmaids on her smart phone.

Trust me, she'll be beautiful.

I breezed through the stag and doe—it was fun. Funny how you start to recall when you attended your own stag, if you can remember it...

In retrospect, I figured I had it pretty good as Father of the Bride. In that position, there's not too much in the way of expectation— 'show up and do as you're told' is the best way to describe it.

But standing there, at the end of the wedding procession, your stunning daughter on your arm, preparing to start down that long walk to the minister at the other end, you will suddenly realize something.

That magic tiny baby that you held in your arms when she first arrived home from the hospital, that little toddler who came running to give you a hug when you came in the door, that young girl who got you to inflate the tire on her bike, that teen who you were tempted to sell to the gypsies, and that young woman who graduated from university— has grown into a beautiful, intelligent woman, who is so happy to be escorted down the aisle by her dad, ready to start her new life with her husband.

I tell ya, it's pretty moving.

So enjoy the Father of the Bride 101 experience— it lasts for a fleeting moment.

But man, that moment is golden.

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