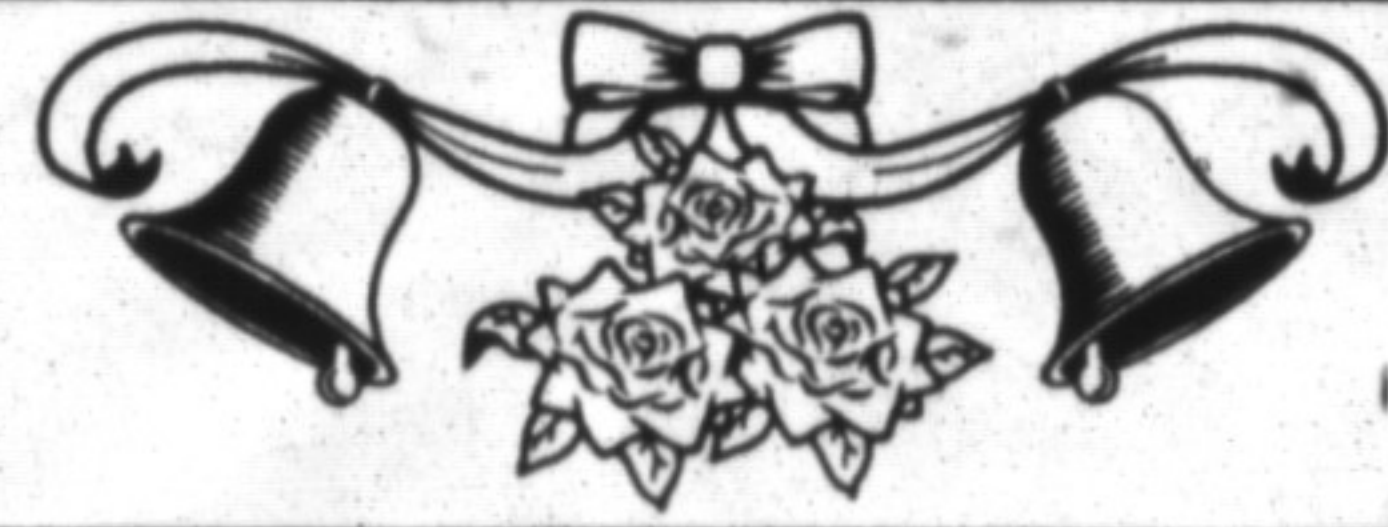




Bridal '96

— ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE —



Plan for your marriage — not just for your wedding

Your wedding lasts only a few hours — your marriage is intended to last a lifetime.

A wedding is just the starting point of a marriage. Marriage is a partnership that can only be developed step by step and day by day. And although a wedding is very important, whether or not you will have a happy marriage depends on whether you build a mar-

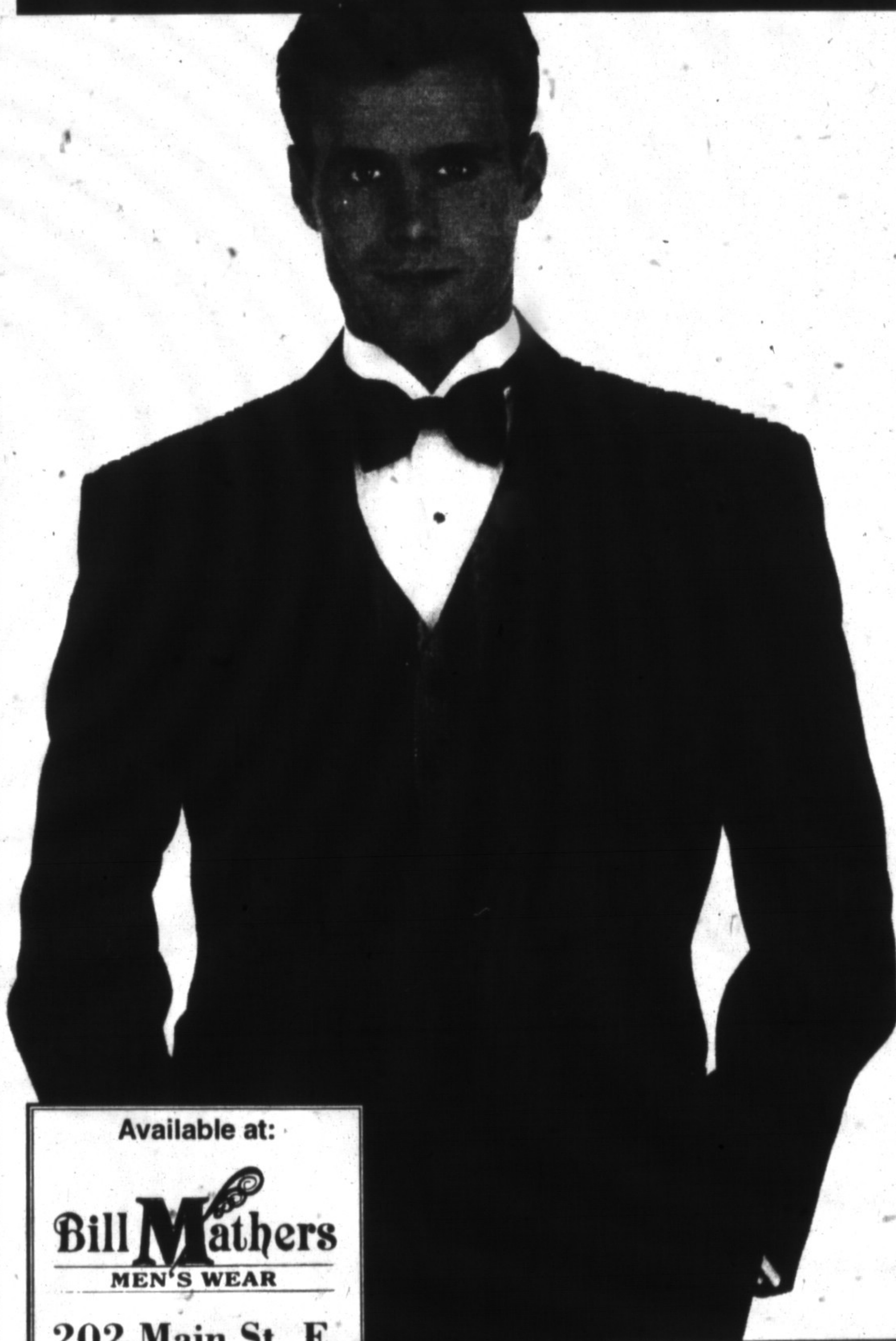
riage strong enough to handle the inevitable ups and downs of a long-term relationship. Feeling "in love" may be enough to get a relationship started, but it's not enough for an enduring partnership. The first years of marriage are crucial. From previous relationships each person has learned patterns of relating to others — how to express love, how to get approval, how

anger is handled, what a "good" husband or a "good" wife is supposed to do, etc. Each brings this learning to the marriage. During the first weeks and months, partners establish patterns of interacting with each other. Patterns can be positive, leading to closer and more loving relationships — or patterns may be negative, leading to distance and drifting apart.

Most couples want a marriage in which there is friendship, trust and respect, as well as passion. As the focus on the wedding diminishes, the challenge of shaping the future of the marriage begins. In addition to the joys of establishing a home together, partners must learn to handle differences, imperfections and disappointments. The wedding vows may include

promises to stay together "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer ..." but what is really expected is to have mostly "better, health and richer." When anger and frustrations arise, couples are poorly equipped to handle this part of their relationship. But unless these feelings are handled constructively, feelings of love and affection can be eroded.

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