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Couples scramble for wedding facilities after event planner evicted

Andrew Livingstone
Toronto Star

Anna Hobden and Jason Bowes put down a deposit to secure the wedding of their dreams a month after they got engaged.

Knowing the difficulty in getting a place for their special day, Hobden, 22, and Bowes, 23, booked Halton Hills Place last August.

Now, the couple wonders if they'll ever get back the \$4,200 they paid to event planner Remo Iaquinto who was evicted from the Milton venue last month for failing to pay over three months rent.

As a result, some 50 couples are out thousands of dollars.

Hobden and Bowes have been left cash-strapped in the months leading up to their June 15 wedding.

"We thought that since it (Halton Hills Place) had been there forever and that it was just under new owners, it would still be a great experience," Hobden said. "It's a huge chunk of our wedding budget."

Iaquinto told *The Star* he began leasing the



Jason Bowes and his fiancée, Anna Hobden, are out \$4,200 in payments they made to Remo Iaquinto to use the now closed Halton Hills Place (at left) for their June 15 wedding reception.

Above photo by Tara Walton / Toronto Star
Photo at left by Graham Paine / Canadian Champion (Follow on Twitter @halton_photog)

venue last January but renovation costs ballooned, forcing him into arrears on the rent. He said he plans to file for bankruptcy.

"I never received one pay cheque from this job," he said. "All the money I put in is personal money. I've lost well over a half a million dollars."

The personal money lost doesn't include the deposits, he added, which are also gone, though "I've been working with each and every couple to try and save their wedding."

An email sent by Iaquinto Jan. 25 to the couples involved explained his company closed

over a landlord-tenant dispute.

While Hobden and Bowes were lucky to book another venue for the date they had selected, others won't be so fortunate.

"People are going to have to mad dash to book," Hobden said. "People that have dates that are soon are going to have a tough time."

One of the couples affected posted an ad on Kijiji looking for donations of wedding-related items. Darryl Orchard and Samantha Dancey, who have a young child, said they lost about \$3,000, money it took them

Fairgrounds to host Family Day festival

The second annual Family Day Winter Fest — weather permitting — will be held at the Milton Fair Grounds Monday, Feb. 18.

The fairground gates will open at 9 a.m., with a demolition derby to highlight the festivities at 1 p.m. The festival will also feature a midway, petting zoo, pony rides and a pancake breakfast.

Admission is \$5 per person, with children under six getting in for free.



Children invited to design new mascot

The Town of Milton is holding a free Family Day event Feb. 18 to encourage budding young artists to design a mascot for the Toronto 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

Toronto artist and the man who created the Toronto Raptors' mascot Ted Heeley will lead the drop-in workshop. See Arts for story on page 23.

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