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FAIRY GODMOTHER'S FAIRY TALE

Meet the creator behind the magical event-planning company

By Hillary Haenes

Coming from a family of four girls, Colleen Bauer said her mom constantly planned parties. Whether it was for holidays, baby showers or birthdays, there was always an event in the works.

"It's kind of in my blood," said Bauer, deposit relationship manager at Rabobank for almost 12 years. "I have done many of the bank's events and love it."

The idea to branch out to organize additional events came about in 2009, when Bauer was the chairwoman for the Bakersfield Women's Business Conference. Bauer gave the conference the makeover it needed by freshening up the logo, serving different food and changing some sponsorships. Her committee fundraised more than ever, and tickets for that year's conference were sold out.

"You are really planning a party for 1,500 people," said Bauer. "I remember my dad saying, 'What's next?'"

Bauer pondered that question and after the conference, several event planners reached out to her about being a day-of coordinator. This idea sparked something inside of her. So from July through November, Bauer did her research and came up with a name and logo dear to her heart.

She chose the name Fairy Godmother because that's what her niece called her, and it was fitting that a tiny fairy holding a magic wand branded her part-time business.

When Bauer learned that one of the girls at the bank was getting married in January, she asked to coordinate her co-worker's wedding for free. That was all it took — Bauer was hooked.

In 2010, Fairy Godmother coordinated 24 weddings, which were all word-of-mouth referrals from vendors and clients. Mothers started to hire Bauer as a gift to the bride and groom to ensure everything ran smoothly. Eventually, brides began asking Fairy Godmother to plan engagement parties, and that gradually led to more events.

"A lot of people think this business is all glam, but it's not. You can be a server or waitress one minute and a personal assistant to the bride the next," she said. "There are lots of personalities,



Colleen Bauer

PHOTO BY CHRIS THOMAS

emotions and physical labor and you have to tie all that together with a pretty blue bow, a wand of magic and a smile."

Bauer's team includes four women take a bride's idea and design the overall look of the wedding, from the invitations to the decor.

In 2013, the company planned about 100 weddings and events. With a growing business, Bauer knew she needed to call upon more fairy godmothers to help.

"I'm still at the bank full-time. I love Rabobank, and I work really hard to make sure the two don't cross over," Bauer said. "This year, I'm transitioning from employee to owner. To make this work, you have to have a strong team, which I do."

Now that Bauer has built her team of 10, she has scaled back to planning just five weddings per year, or if someone specifically requests her. With this extra time, Bauer can focus on more corporate and charity events, which she says she is excited about.

"Weddings are run systematically, but with events, you can really do anything. I think of an event as a white board, and we get to bring it to life."



Fairy Godmother Foundation's 'Magical Wedding Giveaway'

During the past four years, Fairy Godmother owner Colleen Bauer has grown tremendously her wedding and event planning business. With her recent transition from being a hands-on planner to tackling more executive responsibilities, her two-year dream of giving back has finally come to fruition.

She created a nonprofit called Fairy Godmother Foundation, where one local deserving couple in need will get their wishes granted by receiving a wedding at little to no cost. It's called the Magical Wedding Giveaway.

"I have been so lucky in this business and wanted to find a way to give back, creating the Fairy Godmother Foundation is a perfect way to do this. I want to do this right and do it long term," said Bauer.

Bauer reached out to various wedding vendors and others in the field to contribute their time and services for a dream wedding for a couple facing seri-

ous life-altering circumstances or facing a terminal illness. The foundation's board will hold fundraisers throughout 2014 to help pay for the wedding.

The deadline to apply is Feb. 10, 2014, and the couple chosen will be announced on Valentine's Day on "First Look with Scott Cox."

To be considered for a 2015 spring wedding, couples must be nominated by a family member or friend who can share the couple's love story of how they met, what obstacles the couple has faced, and what their future holds.

A complete application packet, including four to five photos of the couple and two letters of recommendation, must be handwritten and mailed to Fairy Godmother Foundation, 930 Truxtun Ave., Suite 111 in Bakersfield, 93301. Visit fairygodmotherfoundation.org to read the guidelines and download an application.

For those interested in volunteering or donating money to this foundation, visit the website or email Bauer at info@FairyGodmotherFoundation.org.

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WEDDING TIME!

Take this step-by-step journey leading up to your big day

This timeline provides you with a checklist that will help you plan a wedding to remember. This is meant as a general guideline, and there will surely be additional steps unique to your wedding.

12 to 16 months before the wedding

- ___ Choose a wedding date. The best way to do this is to visit ceremony and reception facilities.
- ___ Start a wedding file.
- ___ Discuss and choose the style and formality of your wedding.
- ___ Put an announcement of your recent engagement in the local paper.
- ___ Decide on a wedding budget.
- ___ Hire a wedding consultant.
- ___ Select a ceremony location and reception site.
- ___ Start shopping for a wedding gown, veil and tiara.

8 to 10 months before the wedding

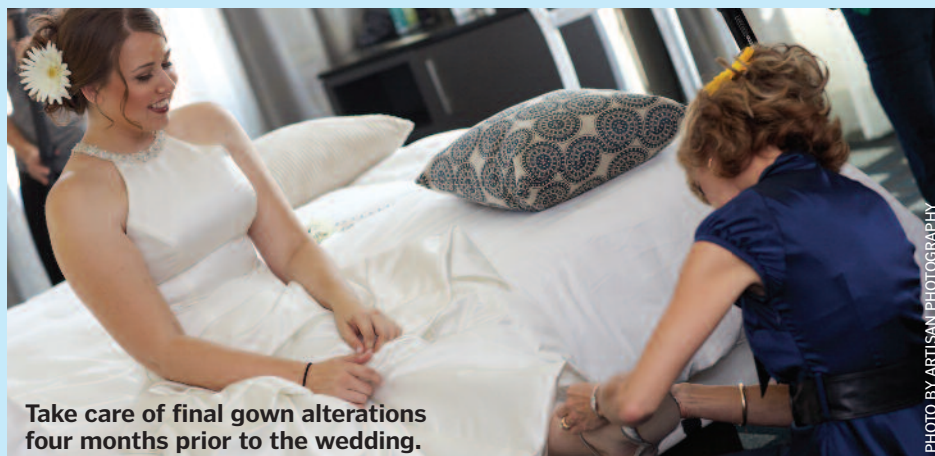
- ___ Place your order for save the dates and "thank you" cards.
- ___ Select your bridal party.
- ___ Interview and hire the following:
 - Wedding officiate
 - Reception caterer
 - Photographer and cinema photographer
 - Band or DJ: Interview several.
- ___ Decide on bridesmaids dresses.
- ___ Start compiling names and addresses for the guest list.
- ___ Sign up for a gift registry.
- ___ Prepare for engagement party.
- ___ Mail your save the date cards.

5 to 7 months before the wedding

- ___ Finalize the guest list.
- ___ Arrange accommodations.
- ___ Select your wedding cake.
- ___ Begin preparations for your honeymoon.

4 months before the wedding

- ___ Book your florist.
- ___ Shop for your wedding bands.
- ___ Book a room for the wedding night.
- ___ Write "thank you notes" as gifts arrive.
- ___ Select tuxedos.
- ___ Discuss finalized menu options and costs with your caterer.



Take care of final gown alterations four months prior to the wedding.

PHOTO BY ARTISAN PHOTOGRAPHY

- ___ Arrange transportation/limousine service for the wedding party to the ceremony and reception.
- ___ Order wedding favors and ribbons (imprinted).
- ___ Shop for bridal party gifts.
- ___ Send out your invitations.
- ___ Choose your wedding music for your ceremony and reception.
- ___ Select a location for your rehearsal dinner and make deposits.
- ___ Schedule your alterations and final fitting for the gown.
- ___ Schedule fittings for the bridesmaids and flower girl.
- ___ Arrange your bridesmaid luncheon and other pre-wedding parties.
- ___ Order address labels with your new name and address.
- ___ Check local newspaper for wedding announcement deadline.
- ___ Confirm your order with the florist.
- ___ Discuss service with your officiate.
- ___ Choose readings for ceremony.

1 month before the wedding

- ___ Design your wedding programs.
- ___ Apply for your marriage license.
- ___ Choose all of your wedding accessories.
- ___ Have a final gown fitting with your shoes, jewelry and lingerie.
- ___ Visit your hair stylist, work on a style with your veil.
- ___ Visit your make-up artist the same day.
- ___ Send out rehearsal dinner invitations.

2 weeks before the wedding

- ___ Call any guests who haven't sent back their response cards
- ___ Give the caterer a finalized head count.
- ___ Obtain your marriage license and request certificated copies.
- ___ Send change of address information to post office.
- ___ Give your DJ or band a list of songs that you want played.
- ___ Confirm rehearsal plans with your coordi-

- nator.
- ___ Obtain any legal information regarding changing your name.
- ___ Complete floor and seating plan for reception.
- ___ Confirm all rental and floral delivery dates and times.
- ___ Write toasts for rehearsal dinner and wedding reception.

1 week before the wedding

- ___ Make any last minute seating arrangements and adjustments.
- ___ Update caterer with final guest count.
- ___ Organize your wedding day attire.
- ___ Confirm honeymoon reservations.
- ___ Confirm reservations for out-of-town guests.
- ___ Pack for your honeymoon.

1 day before the wedding


- ___ Go through your list of things to do.
- ___ Confirm transportations arrangements.
- ___ Get a manicure and pedicure.
- ___ Hold rehearsal dinner, give gifts to parents and wedding party.
- ___ Put wedding attire and accessories together.
- ___ Give rings to best man.
- ___ Try to get a good night's sleep!

Your wedding day!

- ___ Eat something!
- ___ Dress for your wedding.
- ___ Have candid photos taken with family.
- ___ Enjoy! You've worked hard!

After the honeymoon

- ___ Have your wedding gown and flowers preserved.
- ___ Write "thank you" notes and change your name.

— *Colleen Bauer is the owner of Fairy Godmother, a wedding and event planning company* 

HOW TO PLAN A SUPER BOWL BASH

Have a game plan that will score big points with your guests come Sunday

Set up the areas of your house to suit the needs of guests by creating sections for each team.

By Colleen Bauer

Photos by Austin Thomas

Are you thinking this might be the year that you host a Super Bowl party? To score a touchdown with your guests, your plays must be in order and your line of defense must be strong. Here is a game-plan for kicking off the biggest party of the year.

Setting the ground work

First, start with a timeframe. One month in advance is a good time to compile your guest list, plan your menu and buy extra chairs and serving dishes. Decide whether you need an extra set of hands — such as party planners, who are experienced with these kinds of things — to help you out with the party.

Who's attending?

When compiling the guest list, take into account what kind of party you would like to have. Hard core football fans? Friends and family who want to casually enjoy the game and good food? Coworkers, business partners or clients? Now that you have your guests, let's get them comfy.

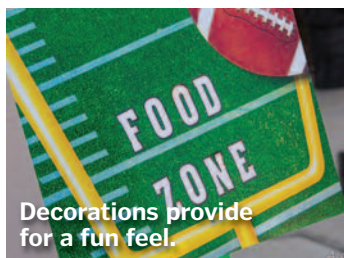
Seating arrangements

Set up the areas of your house to suit the needs of the guests. No matter what group you invite, you will always

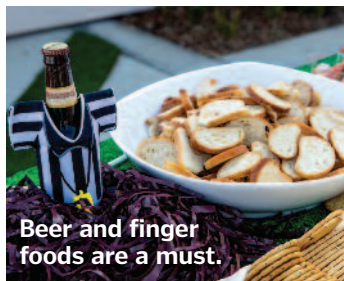


Figure out if you need extra hands for the bowl party, like these ladies from Fairy Godmother.

have those who are serious about the game. They will need a room to watch every play where they're not distracted by chatter. Set up a comfortable area for those guests who are more interested in catching up with one another than watching the game. If there are going to be children at the event, set aside a room or play area for them, with a babysitter to entertain, so parents don't have to worry about their kids.



Decorations provide for a fun feel.



Beer and finger foods are a must.

Decorations

After you have your furniture formation, the decorations are next. Choose your team colors and decorate accordingly. Don't just decorate for the team you plan on rooting for. Provide the opposing team fans some decorations of their own to add some tension. This is all in good fun!

Entertainment

Activities are also an important part of your game plan, even though there is a game going on, activities related to that add to the atmosphere. You might raffle off prize baskets or set up a pool with quarterly winners. For kids, rent a football-themed movie like

"Rudy" or "Little Giants" (appropriate for ages 6 to 9).

Adequate supplies

One of the most important details for you to consider when planning and preparing is the "supply wagon" — cups, plates, cutlery, napkins, paper towels, serving bowls and platters, and last but not least, trash cans. Make sure that you get enough of everything. Too much is better than too little. And make sure these items are easy to find and in multiple locations.

Party foods

Super bowl parties are not a good place to be on a diet. It is the second-largest day for food consumption in the United States — second to Thanksgiving! Naturally, you'll have carbs, sugar and plenty of sodium. Setting up multiple tables for noshing is nice, so that there's something within reach of every guest. Definitely use your Crock-Pot (and borrow two more) to serve nachos, meatball and chili stations. Casseroles are easy to prepare in advance and are easy to serve. Display your dessert table center stage toward the end of the game. It's a nice way to wrap things up and it sends the signal that the party is coming to an end.

Beer, wine and cocktails

Make sure to consider your audience. Will this crowd want to drink their frosty beer straight from a bottle? Or, would it be better to offer some basic cocktails, along with wine and beer? Consider hiring a college student to act as your bartender. Also, make sure you have some delicious non-alcoholic choices. You want to ensure the designated drivers are treated well.

Don't forget the host

As the host, your winning moment is when you get to look around and see everyone having a great time, including you! You've thought of every possible play and you're so organized that you get to enjoy your own party. Touchdown!

— Colleen Bauer is the owner of Fairy Godmother, a wedding and event planning company 

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WEDDINGS: WHO PAYS FOR WHAT?

Taking a more traditional route? Follow this guide to determine who should foot the wedding bills

List contributed by Colleen Bauer

More and more these days, couples are paying for the bulk of their own weddings. But it's nice when parents can, and are willing to, pitch in.

For the more traditional route, follow this list of who should pay to make your special day come together.

Bride

Groom's wedding ring
Groom's wedding gift
Bridal attendants gifts
Bridal attire and accessories
Wedding consultant fees
Bridal luncheon
Medical visit for the bride
Accommodations for out-of-town guests

Groom

Bride's engagement and wedding ring
Groom's gift to bride
Groomsmen/ushers gifts
Bride's bouquet
Mother's corsages
Medical visit for the groom
Marriage license
Clergyman/officiate fee
Groom's attire

Boutonnieres for groomsmen/ushers
Limousine service
Honeymoon arrangements

Bride's family

Wedding gown/headpiece/accessories
Wedding trousseau
Wedding invitations and announcements
Wedding programs
Napkins/matches/printed Items
Wedding favors
Rice bags
Canopy/carpet
Kneeling bench/candelabras
Rented items for wedding
Rented items for reception
Church fee
Church janitor
Wedding reception
Catered reception, professional services
Floral arrangements for ceremony, reception, bridal bouquet, bridesmaid's bouquet, corsages and boutonnieres for immediate family


Wedding photography
Video photography
Musical entertainment: orchestra, band, DJ
Wedding breakfast
Bridal lunch
Father of the bride formal wear

Groom's family

Groom's cake
Rehearsal dinner
Boutonnieres and corsages for immediate family members
Father of the groom formal wear

Attendants

Rental or purchase of their wedding attire
Travel expenses to and from the wedding city
Wedding gift for the couple
Bridal/co-ed shower/favors if desired
Bachelorette party

— **Colleen Bauer** is the owner of *Fairy Godmother*, a wedding and event planning company. 



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