



I took some time on a recent rainy day to write up a few notes for you to (maybe?... hopefully?) use during your wedding planning -- this newsletter is a start -- and you can expect to see a few of these newsletters over the next few weeks.

We finished up our last wedding of the year in November and that was followed up quickly with our first wedding of 2016! Denise and Joe were married over the New Year's weekend - what a great kick-off to our 2016 events! The inn was filled with love and warmth: picture a light covering of snow outside, holiday lighting everywhere, fires crackling, a hot-chocolate bar... and you can get the idea.

Between those two events we did take some terrific family trips for the holidays and with warm weather in December (odd!) we managed to get some outdoor projects done that normally would have to wait 'til Spring. A new roof, a new deck, and a new fence around the animal pasture spruced things up outside considerably! We also managed to get some rooms painted and replaced carpet in quite a few guest rooms.

Some other big news is the addition of two new staff members:

Hi there! Allow me to introduce myself: I am Candice McRacken and I am the Assistant Innkeeper here at Mountain Meadows Lodge. I recently realized that I belonged in the mountains and I found my way to Mountain Meadows Lodge in October 2015. I spent many years in the educational industry before coming back to my calling of taking care of people. I love to cook, go hiking, find a new favorite red wine and breakfast is my favorite food group! I am originally from Charlotte, North Carolina.



Alex Daniels: Since graduating from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in English and a minor in Outdoor Education in 2011, I have worked on cruise ships, private yachts, been a live-in nanny in Germany, and worked as a whale watching guide in Iceland. I am conversationally fluent in German, intermediate in Spanish, and have learned much about the different cultures and animals of the world-all while traveling to over forty countries. Through these experiences I have confirmed what I always knew: that I enjoy interpersonal communication and that nothing makes me happier than crafting the perfect experience for others. The life of the sailor is extremely transitory, and as such, I decided to come back home to New England where I feel the most comfortable around mountains and trees. Working for Mountain Meadows gives me the opportunity to spend more time with my family, get back on the trails, and get back in the woods-all while working for an establishment that mixes high quality service with a familial air. I'm excited to be part of the team and part of your experience with Mountain Meadows, whether that be a wedding, private event, or just a few nights between hiking or skiing!

We hope many of you can make it to Mountain Meadows Lodge to enjoy the beautiful Vermont winter and maybe even do some wedding planning! We're happy to sit down with you and discuss your event when you come. It's 50% off lodging if you come and stay overnight.

As of today, the following are open weekends and are good times to come

- Jan 22-24, & 29-31
- Feb 19-21
- Any weekend in March
- April 15-17, 22-24
- May 7-9
- June 4-6, 24-26



Don't worry if you can't come: we can conference call, skype and swap loads of emails and get everything done that way.

Wedding Planning

Read on for some wedding planning tips and please visit the [website](#) and use the search box as a handy way to find some guidance. There are loads of [reviews](#) from this past wedding season on WeddingWire as well.

And keep an eye out for more newsletters. We'll try to address frequently asked questions and offer advice and guidance. While not everything will apply to your event, there should be many things that will help.

First Things First

The highest priority item is probably your SAVE-THE-DATE communication to your guests. Announce the weekend and the nature of the event (so they know it's a weekend-long affair). Here are [some samples](#) or do it via email.

Then there are 5 other high priority items (as they apply to you) because they affect booking calendars.

- Interview DJs / bands and get an idea of their advance bookings
- Interview some Justice of the Peace/Ministers and get on their calendar
- Decide if you want to do overflow lodging at neighboring inns and give those inns a call to get a block of rooms on their calendar
- Do a draft of your rooming list. More on this below.
- Narrow down your list of photographers; check out their web pages to get a sense of what they offer, get a couple of quotes.

Another item worth considering is "wedding insurance"; [here's a link](#) for a description to get you started.

Here's a list of [recommended services](#)

If you do a wedding web page, let us know, so we can add a link [here](#) since some of your guests will find their way to that page.



Rooming List/Lodging Arrangements

One question that comes up very often is "What do you need from us?" This is it - **the rooming list!** We've already received calls from folks looking to make their lodging arrangements. In most cases we can't help them without your rooming list. Work on a 'draft' or a 'wish list' at this point, but it will help us know where to place people as they call. Keep in mind that the room assignments do not have to be set in stone. It's

likely that most of your guests will be flexible. And of course we recognize that you're doing this without having RSVPs returned. Typically we see that the rooming list gets adjusted as you start to get responses from people - and this is not a problem for us. Look in your contract for lodging requirements and links to the rooming list documents.

Remind your guests that the discounted wedding rate is not only good for the wedding weekend but also for before and after the wedding (based on availability), so if folks want to make a Vermont vacation out of their trip they can hang out for some extra days at a great rate. Look at your contract for the room rate.

Here are some ideas/guidelines:

- You might want parents or wedding party in the upgraded rooms overlooking the balcony
- You may know of people who will prefer to have two beds in a room rather than one
- You may want older folks who might need to get away from the party to lodge in the farm house.
- You might want folks with mobility issues to have a first floor room.
- You may recognize that some young people will be able to crowd into one of our rooms with many beds so that they can enjoy the convenience of staying at Mountain Meadows Lodge and they will save money on lodging arrangements
- You may know of people that you'd prefer to stay offsite (at the Greenbrier) or they themselves would prefer to stay offsite.

Farmhouse Tables?

If you're planning a tented event it's time to think about tables and chairs for under the tent, because some of the choices do "sell out" if the rental company has a busy weekend... so if you can make a few decisions now, you'll likely guarantee your first choice. This is particularly true of the farmhouse tables. You'll find the Celebration Rentals brochure in your wedding packet - inside the green wedding folder that you would have gotten when you came for a site visit. In it you'll see pictures of the various furniture choices. If you don't have one handy, here's a [PDF](#)

Cost, of course, is a consideration. The farmhouse tables and picnic tables are more expensive than the rounds but you'll likely save on linen rental. [The rounds are plywood tops and must be covered with linen.] The chiavari chairs are a lot more expensive and if you prefer these, you will still have to rent the white wedding chairs for an outdoor ceremony because the chiavari chairs can't be outside uncovered.

Some other things to start thinking about: Do you want a head table? Do you want a sweetheart table? Do you want some cocktail tables? Don't be shy about asking for help on these details. We'll help you through it all!

