

It's classy camo for this wedding



By Karen Zach, Around the County

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It was back to my fav interviewing spot this week to meet a fun, nifty couple. Neither are Montgomery-born, but he graduated from Southmont and she graduated from nearby McCutcheon where she was active in Girl Scouts, 4-H, softball (an outfielder and clean-up batter) and played oboe in band. In 4-H she took foods, sewing, child development, and forestry mainly but one year did ten projects much to her momma's chagrin. He was a football player for Mr. Coudret, plus had played tuba and wrestled a year. Born in Champaign, Ill., he moved to Thomasboro through 8th grade and came here in 9th grade where he lived in the famed painter, TC Steele's boyhood home for a time. After marriage, they lived in Waveland until not long ago when they moved closer to Crawfordsville. We had a great time at Pizza Hut – I enjoyed 'em immensely! What a great young couple.

Before he even graduated from high school, he had a job at Raybestos, hired by my brother, even. He hadn't realized I was a Bazzani so that was fun to fill-out information about all the side ways we have connected and hardly realized it. For instance, he coached their son, Austin, in soccer from Kindergarten-6th grade and coached our grandson, AJ, too, so we enjoyed catching-up on AJ being a Navy Nuke, now and Austin as a security guard. They also have an 11-year-old daughter, Camden who is "going on 30," as he says. As a 6th grader at South, she swims, golfs and just finished the Addams Family musical, having a blast in that! So, he worked at Raybestos for 18 years as a tool and die maker. When Raybestos was having troubles ("Getting goofy") he decided to look for another job.

Actually, he was looking for a wife, as well, and I simply loved the way they got together. She was a bit embarrassed to have put her information on match.com, but he felt that they were the two places to meet someone – bars and church. They of course didn't go to the same church and didn't frequent bars. Thus, match.com. We laughed that she noted she was still in her two-week trial period for the dating site. He grinned saying, "I thought it would be a one-date wonder because it would be a wonder if someone wanted to date him more than once." I queried how it came out. She answered that she knew immediately through his kind eyes (which I had already noticed myself) that he was someone to trust.

"It was just so natural and normal for us to be together and since it was reasonably close, Waveland to Lafayette, they decided to give it a go," and that was 13 years ago and they still love to look into each other's eyes and be together. They are adorable, seriously.

Now, comes the really good and funny part! As they were planning for their wedding he did get his current job at CSX (inspects and repairs railway cars in Avon) and they knew that he had to go through a five-week training in Georgia. Of course, that's when it happened. He was off to Atlanta, coming back for the wedding, even missing the rehearsal but it went off without major problems and came out to be quite a beautiful wedding. His vest and tie were camo and they used Hunter orange as their complimentary color; he grinned and said, "It was quite classy!" Afterward it was off to Georgia, and they stopped in Louisville at the Galt House where they had reservations. They went in still dressed and the desk clerk was amazed. He asked had they just gotten married. "Well, yes," and she teased the clerk, asking if maybe he could give 'em an upgrade. Laughing, he said as he tapped the computer keys, "Exactly what I'm doing!" Their room was as big as the side of the Pizza Hut where we were eating and everything so great. She spent the next week in Atlanta with him. During the day, she did the touristy thing, visiting mansions, museums and the like, then at night they'd eat at fancy restaurants and perhaps go to other places, such as the Coca Cola museum. What a fun and different honeymoon. Their life started a couple of weeks later when he completed the training and came back to Indiana.

Her first job was pretty exciting. She volunteered each summer in Camden NJ (thus their daughter's name) doing Mission work for inner city poor and she found her niche. The first years there was 100 kids every day in a small church and now it is a huge ministry called Urban Promise. After graduating from Huntington College she went back to Camden and worked; a few years later returning to Lafayette working at the Tippecanoe County Historical Museum (helped plan Feast of the Hunters Moon, Genealogy projects, oversaw Fowler House) and then decided she was about burned-out with non-profit work and went to PU for 13 years, in Engineering and Bio Med recruiting and working with rotations for the internships. Then Gina met Kevin Haile and life really began for her!

Back in Waveland, Indiana, she then went to work at Wabash and is Grant Coordinator at the Center for Teaching and Learning for Theology and Religion. Note she's back in the religious world that she loves so much.

The family attends Rockpoint Church and they teach 2nd/3rd graders together on a rotation and love it! She's been involved in PTO and besides the coaching I mentioned above he loves to hunt, fish, play golf and ride ATVs. How I got to know Gina is through her amazing work with Waveland Strong. This fantastic organization plans some of the niftiest programs for our little town and even though Gina doesn't live here anymore, she's right in the festivities – appreciate that and thanks for the interview. Had a fab time and so I will see my readers next week with some aspect of Around The County!

Karen Zach is the editor of Montgomery Memories, our monthly magazine all about Montgomery County. Her column, Around the County, appears each Thursday in The Paper of Montgomery County.

