

people

by Carol Saviak

# Betty Crosby

## The Secret to Successful



Photo: Tammy Harrow

Saint Johns County is one of the most romantic destinations in the world. Every year, its historic sites, pristine beaches, elegant hotels and cozy bed-and-breakfast inns welcome couples across the nation who travel to Saint Augustine to "tie the knot" and renew marriage vows in Old World style.

For those seeking to plan the perfect Saint Augustine wedding, there is perhaps no more capable guiding hand than that of Elizabeth "Betty" Crosby, one of the leading ladies of Saint Augustine's social set. Betty is the driving force behind Elegant Events of Saint Augustine, which she founded in 1994 and operates with her husband Allen, who is frequently tapped to serve as a wedding officiant. Together, they perform or coordinate more than 100 weddings and special events each year.

## Saint Augustine Weddings

Elegant Events has received widespread acclaim as one of Northeast Florida's premier wedding planning services, including special recognition in WeddingWire's 2012 Bride's Choice Awards and The Knot's Best of Weddings for 2011 and 2010.

Betty brings a unique and calculated approach to her work. She is a retired high-school Algebra teacher who moved to Saint Augustine in 1984. She has taught Algebra courses year-round at St. Johns River State College for twenty-five years and continues to be a favorite instructor. Her students quickly learn that tests in Betty's classroom are always accompanied by freshly-baked chocolate chip cookies.

Betty's grey-green eyes sparkle with humor when she suggests a similarity between the brides and grooms she meets and her Algebra students, "When they first show up, they're completely lost."

Betty is a font of wisdom when it comes to local wedding venues and specialty vendors. She has been a "let's get it done" leader in Saint Augustine charitable circles for nearly three decades. She has served on the board of directors for the Junior Service League, Women's Exchange, ARC and Community Hospice of Jacksonville. She is a current board member for the Limelight Theater, outgoing chairwoman of Saint Augustine Community Hospice Advisory Board, an active member of Memorial Presbyterian Church and recent recipient of the Saint Augustine Rotary's 2011 "Service Above Self" Award.

Betty believes the secret to successful weddings is working with reliable, tried-and-true vendors. "If you simply pick a name out of a phonebook or base your decision upon pretty photos on website, you have no idea what kind of service you'll end up with," Betty states. "I sit down one-on-one with each of my clients, talk about their ideas and then recommend a selection of reputable service providers. I encourage clients to look at every vendor's years of business experience and always ask for references."

"Wedding coordination can be extremely stressful, especially for individuals without event experience," she adds, "We encourage our clients to relax and 'Be a Guest' at their own weddings."

When asked about what drives her personal success and popularity as a wedding planner, the platinum-coiffed dynamo smiles and remembers her successful, charismatic father. "Like many brides, I guess I'll always be my Daddy's girl...I enjoy making everyone happy." ■



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