

Local wedding consultants are in the know

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With so many people come to the Las Vegas Valley to get married, plan ahead to get the wedding you want. Otherwise you could end up taking your vows before an Elvis lookalike.

The Association of Bridal Consultants (ABC) had its 5th biannual wedding workshop last week at CCSN, Henderson Campus, to help educate future brides and grooms about how to start planning for their big day.

Wedding experts chatted with people about wedding needs and a drawing for wedding items took place throughout the workshop.

One of the members of ABC, accredited bridal consultant Zipporah Singleton, said, "This organization tries to educate the public with information. With so many advertisers in Las Vegas, we help people choose quality people to make their wedding day everything that they always wanted. If a problem occurs, we take care of it instead of the bride and groom worrying about it. We coordinate the occasion and make sure things run smoothly."

The consultants help people choose vendors who they know are creditable people and they can count on. "These people have important roles in the ceremony; they prepare the

wedding cakes, take the wedding photos, DJ the music and marry the couple, so it's important to have reliable people."

The Association of Bridal Consultants requires its members to provide a copy of their business license and requires consultants to be in business for at least a year.

Members must be from professional organizations and meet a code of ethics.

The organization sifts out members not complying with these regulations, Singleton said.

"It is surprising how many people don't have their business license. It is safer to use a consultant because you won't get ripped off. The best price isn't necessarily the best deal," Singleton said.

If couples have a limited budget to spend, ABC will help them choose the right people to fit their needs and budget. "We help people plan weddings who have a \$5,000 budget and people who have over \$50,000 to spend. Every dollar counts. It is especially important for those people who don't have a lot of money to spend, not to waste money and financially plan their money. Our members will send people to other members based on their particular needs," Singleton said.

Dyanne Maurer, a minister who performs non-denominational ceremonies, has been a

member since the beginning of The Bridal Association. "The people who are members of ABC are dependable people with years of experience so we know they will do a good job if we recommend them to someone. This organization teaches people to communicate with other people and this avoids embarrassing moments that can occur," Maurer said.

"I want to make the ceremony as meaningful as the reception and have it touch the heart of everyone there. I am proud to do ceremonies for the couples, I think the minister is part of the wedding party. I give personalized ceremonies based on what that particular couple wants," Maurer said. "Some couples want to get married in a church while others prefer outdoor ceremonies. I have preformed a variety of different weddings. I did a lot of weddings at Lake Mead. In one day, I did a wedding on a hot air balloon, then a ceremony on horseback and then later in that same day a wedding at Mt. Charleston in the snow on the back of a sled."

Another member, Patricia Mullaney of Bridal Spectacular Events, said, "We try to maintain the high standards that exist in this group so the customers are satisfied. The group it is very particular with its members, it has high quality-members who are experienced

professionals."

The owner of Bridal Spectacular events, Debra Hanson, has been in this industry for 30 years and produces shows. Bridal Spectacular Events puts on two shows a year, one in January and one in July. It is a Friday and Saturday event with 168 vendors. Thousands attend these shows so some people have to rebook for the next show that takes place, Mullaney said.

"A couple should plan their wedding one and a half to two years in advance. The busiest time to get married in Las Vegas is during October and May, because the weather is good during those months. During those months people should plan for it at least two years in advance," Singleton said.

The Association of Bridal Consultants has been around for 25 years. It is an international organization with around 3,000 members in different countries around the world. For more information, visit <http://abcnevada.intranets.com> or e-mail questions to abcnevada@earthlink.net.

