

in garden ceremony

necessities. Or, perhaps these can be rented inexpensively from your church.

By setting up the punch bowls or champagne table outside, the most popular food and drinking areas are kept outside of the house.

The bride's cake table and food tables are better kept inside the house, away from the weather and the bugs. Use a room that opens onto the yard area where the people are enjoying themselves.

The hectic day is easier if a caterer is hired to take care of the food. be prepared to be banned from the kitchen most of the day.

If an afternoon reception is planned, think ahead to plant petunias or asters or whatever in lots of large pots in the early

spring. You can use these to decorate the entrance to your home and around the yard and tent. You'll find that close friends will even help you grow flowers, and you can choose the colors that match the color theme of the wedding.

To use the hanging plants, which have become so popular, plants can be moved into the tent to decorate it. Ivy plants can be put at the base of tent poles and the ivy wound around the poles to decorate them.

If it's to be an evening reception, add a bit more romanticism with candles. Candles placed in

paper sacks weighted with sand can light the driveway to your home. At the patio entrance of one reception that we attended, violinists played romantic melodies when the bridal couple arrived.

Guests will be pleasantly surprised when they walk into the yard filled with candlelit tables and flowers. Add a few outdoor torches around the edges of the yard.

Add a small combo for music and your reception will be one that the bride and bridegroom, the family and the guests will long remember.

—JOHANNE JONES

Plan ceremony in advance

If you decide a big church wedding is not for you, you may have a tough time finding someone with the proper authority who is willing to marry you.

Ever since justices of the peace were abolished in Michigan, the task of performing marriages has been left up to local city officials, including mayors and judges.

Most mayors have erratic schedules, and for that reason do not perform marriages.

Mayor Edward McNamara of Livonia marries persons only on special occasions, or when the bride and groom are relatives or close friends.

For these people he makes special arrangements, and will visit the couple's home on an evening or Saturday.

Mayor McNamara prefers that the two 16th District Court judges, James McCann and James Mies, perform weddings in Livonia.

Other mayors, including Mayor Thomas Taylor of Westland, marry persons on a regular basis.

Both judges perform marriages only during business hours.

Neither judge will visit a couple's home in the evenings or on Saturdays unless the bride or groom are relatives or friends.

So, if you wish to be married in a civil ceremony, check with your city officials and make arrangements ahead for a city hall ceremony.

—KAREN KOPEIKIN

Ceremony represents happy beginning

In faithfulness and lasting love is the way Melissa Joy Bankston of Garden City will vow to take Tony Rossi of Plymouth as her husband.

Writing their own wedding ceremony, under the guidelines of Hosanna Taber Lutheran Church, was a joint decision, the bride said.

"We're expressing our own feelings about the marriage, just as the person did who originally

designed the service. We are portraying our love, according to our faith, revolving around God, not ourselves."

The couple has planned a small service, followed by a simple but elegant dinner for 50 guests so, said the bride, "we could pay for it ourselves."

Her only wish for her May 13 wedding is "that in some small way our wedding could be representative of our happy life together."

can get nasty about a request to go back to one's former name, even though they are legally supposed to allow the practice.

In that case, Ms. Snow says, the other alternative is to go through a probate court proceeding. "It's relatively simple and makes the name changing process easier."

There is another choice that could be considered when you thrash out the "who gets what name" question.

Marilyn Miller Mosier, an American Civil Liberties Union cooperating attorney, recommends that a married couple "pick an entirely new name."

After all, your maiden name is just your father's last name, not your mother's, so it's not much better than taking your husband's last name.

"If your future husband won't agree to picking a new name for both of you, then don't marry him," she says.

Ms. Mosier said any name change should be made through probate court, "just to be sure."

The notion of a couple taking a last name that belongs to neither would help solve a problem that could develop later in marriage.

In other words, what last name do you give the children? But that's another story.

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ready a Mrs.

long as someone "doesn't follow me down the aisle, of course."

So sure is she about her choice of a husband, Miss Schmidt said, "If I had met him in 10 years, I still would have married him. I'm not old-fashioned, but I know what I want in a home and family."

Washington, D.C. is the couple's honeymoon destination. A week filled with theater, dinner and dancing will be made practical by staying at a family-owned apartment in the city. The bridegroom's father, a former mayor of Farmington, is a paid lobbyist for Crystal Oil Co. and maintains the apartment as his Washington business residence.

If she could have her fondest wish for her wedding day, Holly Ann Schmidt would wish for "a happy, content and stable marriage and, of course, a sunny day."

—NANCY MEININGER

for new vows

Fox and Mrs. Fox of St. John Lutheran Church of Farmington will give the bride away together.

The wedding vows will also be different.

gets more complicated

change back your social security card, your driver's license, and inform your bank or creditors.

"That can be tough. I know one woman who carried copies of the law and affidavit around with her when she went to change her name back, and she still had trouble," Ms. Snow says.

The attorney, who is also parliamentarian for the Michigan Women Attorney's Association, says her group is preparing a booklet on women's rights--and one of the sections deals with a woman's right to change her name.

She says some offices such as the driver's license bureau,