

You've got mail: how two people met on the Internet and lived happily ever after

By Devon O'Neal

To Laura Grant, the term "you've got mail" takes on a whole new meaning; it is with these words that she found her soon-to-be husband.

An avid Internet user from North Andover, Ms. Grant has been online for the past seven and a half years. But, it wasn't until two and a half years ago that she found her true love online. It all started with an "instant message" from Micah Sateriale of Everett, who came across her profile late one night and realized they had a lot in common.

Though Mr. Sateriale was eager to meet Ms. Grant, she was skeptic at first. After realizing that they went to the same college, Salem State University, he claimed to have seen her in the hallway. When he was able to describe what she was wearing, it was revealed that they had a class on the same floor.

"Since he had seen me, I figured we could meet," Ms. Grant says.

The two met on campus in Meier Hall for the first time, and that was the beginning of their road to the altar.

The story took a turn when Ms. Grant decided to place the details of her life with Mr. Sateriale online. After already creating a Web site of her own four years prior, she wanted to put their story online. Ms. Grant set up www.wedding.wavgirl.com and included every detail, from the videotaped marriage proposal to the centerpieces of her Cinderella-themed wedding. Anyone visiting the Web site can download the actual proposal, as well as have access to a song that Mr. Sateriale wrote for his fiancée.

When asked if she finds it disturbing that total strangers

can have access to very personal details of her life, Ms. Grant replies, "No, (the site) was created for family members and friends, so that they can remain included in the wedding. My fiancée's sister lives in Michigan and it helps to keep her updated on our plans. I've found it to be a great way to alleviate some of the tension and stress, because people don't feel as left out of the wedding planning."

Not only does Ms. Grant's Web site include photos of the wedding party, but she also has everything from the invitations and cake topper to the silverware with which they will cut the cake. Most of the items that are shown were actually found online.

Web sites such as www.MAweddingguide.com list businesses, so that one can find vendors, reception halls, photographers, videographers and even dresses with just one click.

"The Web site (www.MAweddingguide.com) allows you to design dresses, from the type of sleeves, train, etcetera," says Ms. Grant.

Although Ms. Grant found her gown inside of a bridal shop, she says that her selection was made easier because of the preparation she could do beforehand on the computer.

Ms. Grant plans to update her Web site after the ceremony takes place by showing pictures from the wedding and honeymoon. Curious Internet users can look forward to seeing the final product of Ms. Grant and Mr. Sateriale's very special day, as many have shared with them in the steps it takes to plan out a wedding.

Other brides and grooms can create their own Web sites by first heading to a search engine to find a program that will give



Micah Sateriale and Laura Grant have a September wedding planned.

step-by-step directions.

"Programs such as Microsoft Frontpage show you how to do it - you just type in the text and where you want it," Ms. Grant says.

Although Ms. Grant came up with the idea of creating the Web site on her own, there are others who also do this. What makes her story unique is the fact that Ms. Grant and Mr. Sateriale also met online. While a bride of years ago had to wait for the typical business hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., she can now head to the Internet to have access to thousands of ideas any time of the day. Many Web sites offer photos from actual weddings, so that you can get an idea of whether you think something worked well before deciding to purchase.

"More and more of the planning we do for weddings can be done on the Internet, and people are using it more as a primary means of communication," says Ms. Grant.

As the September wedding approaches, people will be wishing the couple the best, as they sign the guest book featured on the Web site. Hopefully, Ms. Grant and her Prince Charming will be riding off into the sunset.