

Paul and I met while we were both working up at a summer camp. He had been at the camp teaching outdoor education, and stayed on for the summer to life guard. I came up for the summer to counsel 4-6th grader at "Indian Village". Paul remembers that we met while I was carrying all of my gear and crossing the street. I remember that we met when the one person I knew before I arrived, and he were checking their email. I wanted to start a conversation with him (because he had awesome sideburns) so I got some Red Vines from my care package and offered him some. He said he'd have one, and I told him, "No, you have to take 2, licorice is eaten in Twos". So I started things off with how obsessive compulsive I am, and the rest is history! J

What was it that attracted you to each other? (personality, looks, eyes, quirkiness...you get the idea)

Sideburns and a soul patch (it may have been a goatee) was why I initiated conversation with him. I think Paul would say it was how happy and bubbly I was, that attracted him.

How did he propose?

By surprising me. J

I was expecting that Paul was going to propose on August 25th 2008, our 1 year anniversary of round 2 of dating (we had dated and broken up for 9 months and wound up back together again). But, he took me to the Tillamook cheese factory that day and gave me a necklace and jewelry box that day.

My Thursday began as an intentionally frumpy day. I had been up late Wednesday night finishing homework and preparing for my last few days of school. I woke up, rolled out of bed, washed my face, put on a hat and went on my way to school.

I went to all of my classes, and at some point in the middle of the day while I was walking from one class to another I got a call from Paul. He said that his Mom wanted us, and Dylan and Alison to have couples pictures taken for their Christmas card. Paul explained that Sandy wanted to get the Christmas card out in the mail this weekend so that she didn't have to worry about it while she prepared for having people over for my graduation. I didn't think too much about that, I guess it made sense. I knew I was going to be ready for having my picture taken because late that night I was going to my senior banquet. All of the Communication Studies students who are graduating in the winter were invited to have dinner with the professors.

So I went about my day. I went home and got dressed after I was done with school and then went to work. I left work early so I could make it on time to my dinner, and then left that just a little bit early so I could meet Paul to have our picture taken. While I was driving to the mall I gave Paul a call, because I wasn't absolutely sure about what was going on, I was also asking if we would be meeting Alison and Dylan to have our picture taken together. Paul explained that they were going to have their pictures taken tomorrow. So on I went. I met

Paul over by the carousel. When I saw Paul I kind of laughed because we were both wearing very similar colors. We went into Picture People and waited for our turn. Paul said he had filled out the paperwork necessary for us to have our picture taken earlier. So we sat, waited our turn and were taken back to one of the photo areas and had several pictures taken of us. We switched backgrounds and took a lot of different poses. Then while we were reconfiguring for a different pose when Paul said, "Wait I have something I want you to wear for the next picture".

Then it happened. He got down on one knee, he held my hand, and said, "Alison Rose, I love you very much and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you marry me and be my wife?". Of course, I cried, I am Alison Gressang, they were very very very very happy and excited tears. I was so very surprised, thrilled, and Oh my Goodness Gracious Sakes Alive EXCITED!

I felt like that was such a creative and amazing way for Paul to propose. I mean how exciting for us to have captured those extremely precious moments collected in photographs.

How long were you together before the proposal?

16 months of dating in Round 2 of relationship, but we had known each other and been good friends 3 years.

How did you pick your location?

We decided we wanted to be married in the church, and at the time I was interning at the church with their children's ministry, the church graciously allowed us to use their sanctuary free of charge. We decided to have our reception in Paul's parent's back yard. They have a large lot with a lot of grassy area. It was his parents dream to have their kids have their reception there, and we were able to make it beautiful and utilize the space well.

What were your colors and why did you choose them?

We chose Chocolate Brown and Green. My favorite color is green, and I didn't feel I could find a bridesmaid dress in a shade of green that would not make my bridesmaids look icky. So, the girls wore brown dresses, which looked nice on their varying skin tones, and the guys wore green vests and brown Dickies. We were on a tight budget and most of our wedding party was too so we chose bridal party clothes that were affordable. With green being our other color, we were able to make some fun center pieces out of green glasses. We cleaned the labels off of Stella Artois, Perrier, Pellegrino, and Wine bottles, tied brown and green ribbon on them and filled them with white flowers. They turned out pretty cool, and super inexpensive.

What did you like about your flowers?

We chose all white flowers, and we liked that they were of varying texture and size. The flowers we chose also did well in the heat. They did not brown or wilt easily.

What did you love most about your location?

That we had all the time we wanted or needed to set up and tear down, also that it was close to the ceremony site.

Did you have help planning your wedding? If so, who?

TheKnot.com, The Knot's little book of Checklists, and Margie. Margie provided all the coordination I needed as far as who needed to be where with what and wearing what, and when they needed to be there. She set all of our timelines, and since I work well with check lists the little book I got from The Knot helped with all of pre-big-day planning from when to send invitations and reminding me to buy things little by little as to avoid being slammed with bills when we got back from our honeymoon.