

Couple to Celebrate 10th Anniversary at Dublin Irish Festival

DUBLIN, Ohio - July 13, 2015
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Diamonds are the gemstone traditionally associated with 10th wedding anniversaries, but this year Trena and Kevin McNair's special day will be filled with emeralds -- the magic and romance of the Emerald Isle, that is.

The Dublin Irish Festival, held the first weekend of August in Dublin, Ohio, for the past 27 years, holds a special place in the McNairs' hearts because traveling to the Festival was one of the first things they did after getting married.

This year, they plan to celebrate a decade of marriage at the 2015 Dublin Irish Festival, set to be held at Coffman Park from July 31 - Aug. 2.

"When we got married, right after our reception, literally walking out of the reception door, we got on the road to come to the Dublin Irish Festival," Trena McNair said. "It was kind of a fun thing to do. We had never been there before and my husband is very Irish. He had heard about it and we thought we would go and check it out."

Kevin McNair said upon arriving in Dublin, the newlyweds stopped by one of the Festival's entertainment stages to watch American fiddler Eileen Ivers perform.

"We know her from seeing her a bunch of times and we went over and saw her drummer, Tommy (McDonnell), and we said hello and we mentioned that we had just gotten married the night before," he said. "And he was like, 'Oh that's awesome. Hold on a minute,' and he went and disappeared into the trailer."

McDonnell returned with a CD signed by the band, which he gave to the McNairs, Kevin said.

"We thought, 'Oh, that's pretty neat,'" he said. "So we sat down and watched the show and partway through (Ivers') set, she said something along the lines of, 'I have some friends who are here who just got married,' and she made us stand up in front of all of those people and then she dedicated a song to us."

But the McNairs' night of surprises did not end with their impromptu wedding announcement in front of 30,000 people.



After the show, Kevin and Trena were asked to participate in a radio interview and had their photos taken. Then they were given passes to the Emerald Club, one of the Dublin Irish Festival's three VIP clubs located on the Festival grounds.

"We thought that was the greatest thing in the world," Trena McNair said. "We hadn't known that the Emerald Club even existed until then."

For the past ten years, the McNairs have continued to renew their Emerald Club membership, which has provided them the opportunity to meet new friends throughout the Festival weekend, Trena said.

"We became really close friends with a lot of other people who have always been a part of the Emerald Club," she said.

It is this sense of friendship, fun and excitement that has convinced the McNairs to return to the Festival year after year, often bringing along friends and family members.

"Almost every year, we end up bringing someone new with us," Kevin McNair said. "We have people we have brought before who keep coming back. Our group just keeps getting bigger and bigger and it fluctuates from year to year."

The Dublin Irish Festival has become a family tradition, Trena McNair said, adding that her brother-in-law proposed to her sister at the Festival one year. She said she and her husband appreciate the way the Dublin community rallies around the Festival each year, which is one reason why they continue to return.

"We just think it is incredible how the whole city pulls together for this festival and does a really good job. We are just blown away by that," Trena said. "We will probably always go. It has just become a tradition in our family."

For more information about the Dublin Irish Festival, visit dublinirishfestival.org.