

# NHJPA Newsletter

Wedding season is just around the corner!

Winter 2024



## Update from the President

Greetings and Happy New Year! We have gone through a bit of a quiet spell for weddings, but with that romantic Valentine's Day on the horizon, that phone should start ringing again!

What was your most unique wedding experience in the last few months? For me it was as a wedding guest! I was really looking forward to observing the Officiant and learning a new technique or wedding inclusion.

July wedding - couple broke up the day after the invitations went out!

October wedding - I gave up 2 weddings to attend this one. I got food poisoning at the hotel restaurant the night before and never made the wedding!

November wedding - I gave up two weddings to attend this one and got the flu and never went! This is why I always tell my couples to guarantee the hotel/caterer at least 5 people less than the number who respond they will attend. There are always people who cancel at the last minute; and in the event more people arrive than the guarantee, they ALWAYS have extra food!

Speaking of food, have you had an opportunity to try something you've never had before? It's a great way to learn about the many cultures we interact with.

Looking forward to seeing you March 3 and learning from YOU! Your advice makes me a better Officiant! Stay well!

Judith Wilhelmy - NHJPA President and Founder



# Meet your Board of Directors

## President and Founder

Judith Wilhelmy, Nashua

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## Chairperson of Membership

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## Vice President and Co-founder

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## Secretary

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## Chairperson of By-Laws, Nominations and Elections

Patricia Berger, Raymond

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## Treasurer

Wayne Sevin, Pittsfield

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**YOUR VOTE  
MATTERS**

## Annual Elections

Join the Team

We are accepting nominations for three board positions below. Elections will be held at the upcoming Meeting on March 3. Interested in being a part of this team or contributing your experience or expertise? Please contact Patricia Berger at [seacoastnotary@gmail.com](mailto:seacoastnotary@gmail.com). We would love to have you.

- **President - 2024 to 2026 (2 years)**
- **Treasurer - 2024 to 2026 (2 years)**
- **Chairperson of Education & Partnerships - 2024 to 2026 (2 years)**





## NHJPA Lifetime Member John Scuto

We celebrate John Scuto in our Member Spotlight because he is a Lifetime Member. He attained this distinction because he has been a member for 10 years (2014) and served on the Board of Directors from 2014–2019.

John is a New Hampshire Justice of the Peace, Marriage Celebrant, and Interfaith & Non-Denominational Wedding Minister. In 2000 he was commissioned as a JP and became legally ordained in 2006. John holds a Master's Degree in Counseling with a focus on Spirituality from Rivier College and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Education from the University of New Hampshire. He is also a Professional Career Counselor and worked with organizations such as AT&T, the University System of New Hampshire, and Northern Essex Community College as a Counselor, Faculty Member, and Professional Trainer.

In a past life, (Mid 90's – Early 2000's) John was a Wedding Ceremony and Reception MC, and Disc Jockey.

John thoroughly enjoys performing Weddings. He truly believes that with every Marriage he officiates, he is making a difference in the world by making it a better and more loving place – and this is no small thing! John just really enjoys helping couples and being an important part of their Wedding Day!



### How to educate your couples about your pricing - courtesy of Wedding Pro

Pricing is one of the most complicated topics for any wedding pro. Price your services too low and it's hard to run a profitable business. Price your services too high and you'll constantly be asked why you're more expensive than others. While there is so much that goes into educating yourself about pricing strategies as you work to find that sweet spot, you also need to educate your couples about your rates in order to close the sale. So today, we wanted to help you level up your own education a bit with some important facts and expert advice. Read on for insight about couples and money as well as thoughts from other wedding pros to help you talk about your pricing and communicate your value. [Click here to read complete article.](#)

# Handfasting Ceremony Inclusion



Bride & Groom have chosen to include the ancient Celtic ritual of handfasting in their wedding ceremony; it is where the expression 'tying the knot' originated. This is a symbolic ceremony to acknowledge the intertwining of their lives and represent their commitment to each other for a long and happy life together.

Bride & Groom have selected four colors making up the Hand Tying cord with the Lover's Knot. (Drape cord over hands)

Blue : representing tranquility, patience, and devotion

Will you honor each other? We will.

Will you seek never to give cause to break that honor? Yes.

And so the binding of honor is made.

Green: representing fertility, prosperity, and nurturing

Will you share each other's dreams? We will.

Will you dream together to create new realities and hopes? Yes.

And so the binding of vision is made.

Gold: representing wealth, intelligence, and longevity

Will you share each other's laughter? We will.

Will both of you look for the brightness in life and the positive in each other? Yes.

And so the binding of optimism is made.

White: representing purity, concentration, and peace

Will you share the burdens of each so that your spirits may grow in this union? Yes.

And so the binding of sharing is made.

The tying of the Lover's Knot is complete. Bride & Groom will grab the ends and tighten. As the knot tightens it strengthens the bond of your relationship.

Woven into this cord, imbued into its very fibers, are all the hopes of your friends and family, and of yourselves, for your new life together. With the fashioning of this knot are all the desires, dreams, love, and happiness wished here in this place for you. The knots are not formed by these cords, but rather by your vows. For as always, you hold in your own hands the making or breaking of this union.



Bless these hands that you see before you on this day.

May they always reach out with love, gentleness, and respect always being held by one another.

And may they build a loving relationship that lasts a lifetime.

Bride & Groom as your hands are bound together now,

so your lives and spirits are joined in a union of love and trust.

Above you are the stars and below you is the earth.

Like the stars, your love should be a constant source of light, and the earth, a firm foundation from which to grow.





# Welcome



A warm welcome to our new NHJPA Members

Amherst – John Hall

Campton – Jessica Morel

Hebron – Sheila Oranch

Manchester – Paul LaFerriere

Marlborough – Ulysses DeGuzman

New Ipswich – Kenneth Niles

Plaistow – Martha Wyatt

Salem – Jeffrey Erickson

Weare – Will Crabtree

[Click here for the NHJPA Listing](#)

## Member News

Annual membership renewal invoices for July 1, 2024 to June 31, 2025 will be emailed in July.



We want to hear from you!

NHJPA was established in 2014 to educate and network with New Hampshire Justices of the Peace. We ask that you participate in this survey so that we, as an organization, can best serve our members. If you or know someone interested in becoming a member, please refer them to our website [nhjpa.org](http://nhjpa.org).

[Click here to take a brief survey!](#)



At the NHJPA meetings, we have a raffle with participants donating what they can. The cash donations are then sent to the New Hampshire Food Bank. In October 2023, NHJPA made a \$108 donation. Food Banks prefer a cash donation over food donations. For each \$2 donated they can purchase \$10 of food items. [Read more...](#)

[Click here to read more about the NH Food Bank](#)

Check out [SCORE of New Hampshire](#) – If you looking for free guidance from experts in the business world to help your wedding business? SCORE offers free business training on a variety of small business topics including LIVE webinars on small business tips and strategies.



## Suggestions for Officiants

- Always look at the Marriage License before signing. Make sure that it does not have a watermark that indicates "This is not a valid Marriage License". If possible bring this to the couple's attention when they receive it from the City/Town Clerk.
- Always make a copy of the marriage license before submitting to the City/Town Clerk.
- Take a picture of the couple for your records.
- Make sure you have tissue or a hankie readily available for tearful brides...and grooms!
- If the wedding is to be held in the same room as the reception, strongly urge the couple to keep the bar totally closed until after the ceremony. If the bar is available, people will cluster around the bar. If a guest has a choice between ordering one more drink or sitting down for the ceremony, for many guests, the bar wins. It is not an easy task to get everyone to leave the bar and to sit down in a timely manner for the ceremony to begin.

## What Makes a Great Officiant?

Good Public Speaking, Good Listening, Organization, Resourcefulness, Reliability, Patience, Humor, and Flexibility. A good knowledge of wedding styles, choices and laws are necessary, too. NHJPA provides information in these areas. How can we help You? Join us at one of our upcoming meetings and network with other JPs.

## Member Benefits

- Support and Encouragement from fellow members
- Listing and Referrals on our website
- Referrals from other members
- Use of NHJPA Logo for website and professional use
- Current Information and Changes in the Law
- Subscription to NHJPA Times Newsletter
- The opportunity to have legal papers signed and/or notarized at our meetings
- Social events and tours

For more on NHJPA Member Benefits and Membership [click here](#)



### **NHJPA Mission Statement**

The New Hampshire Justice of the Peace Association promotes Professionalism and Integrity by requiring members to comply with a Code of Ethics and provides Education through meetings, workshops and networking.

New Hampshire Justice of the Peace Association

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