

Owner of Regal Carriage-Horse Drawn Carriage Company finds Her Happily Ever After

By Pat Van Nostrand

When Karolina and Mauricio became engaged and started to think about what they would like to do for their wedding, Karolina knew she wanted all her horses to be there, along with both her dog Houdini and Mauricio's dog Thomas, as after all, they were all family. Of course such a venture would need a spectacular outdoor location to accommodate everything and everyone they wanted to be there to share in their special day.

Karolina who provides horse drawn carriages for weddings and other affairs, worked for several years with another carriage company and was smitten with not just the love of driving, but the horses as well. When the owner decided to retire and move out of state Karolina purchased two of his white Percherons, Duke and Mr. Callahan, along with the Cinderella carriage. A regal pumpkin complete with a crown, on wheels for truly special weddings. Karolina wanted to be sure that Duke and Mr. Callahan both well into their twenties remained with her and be taken care of. She formed the new Regal Carriage Company to carry out the traditions of horse drawn weddings and other types of rides. That was over two years ago. Duke, now 27, and Callahan, now 29, are still with her. The company has grown adding two more white Percherons, Sonadora and Diesel, as well as a Vis a Vis carriage and a wagonette.

She kept the horses at the barn where she learned to drive, and often asked for advice from her friends there, as a way to obtain as much knowledge as possible. She also turned to Mauricio, the barn's head groom, to help her in the care and management of the three giant draft horses she was now responsible for. Eventually the two began dating, and Mauricio frequently assisted Karolina with her carriage jobs, ranging from weddings to birthday and holiday celebrations. Little did she know that Mauricio, her friend the barn groom would one day become Mauricio, her beloved bridegroom.

For the day of their special wedding ceremony she was fortunate to be offered the use of a friend's lovely estate setting, which was once part of a large farm. The former carriage house and stable of J. P Morgan, was now the home on the estate.

The happy couple was also lucky enough to solicit help from another friend, a lawyer and Justice of the Peace, who also kept her horse at the barn where Mauricio worked. As she knew both of them quite well, Suzy readily agreed to handle the pending nuptials.

Paddocks were set up for the horses; a large family style farmhouse table was laid out for the wedding guests under a tent. A spot was chosen for the actual ceremony where guests sat on bales of hay covered with old horse blankets, and an ivy covered backdrop with curtains served as the spot where Karolina and Mauricio said their vows. Houdini and Thomas sported green ribbons around their necks and yellow and green flowers were everywhere, the lucky colors selected by the couple. At six PM, the brass bell rang, for the first time in many years, indicating that the ceremony was about to begin.

At the sound of a tractor pulling up, all the guests turned to see Mauricio making his way over on a yellow and green John Deere tractor, parking in back of where the guests were sitting and being escorted down the aisle by Thomas and Houdini. Hoof beats a moment later heralded the arrival of Karolina, driving her favorite horse Duke, accompanied by her mother and father. A lovely yellow and green Champion horse show ribbon fluttered in the breeze from Duke's bridle, one of the wedding favors that Karolina and Mauricio's choose for their unique wedding ceremony.

During the ceremony, Suzy, the officiating Justice of the Peace recounted how she came to know both the bride and the bridegroom and why she set out on a quest to find that special someone for Mauricio, never realizing that Karolina was in plain sight all the time. She related how she separately asked them why they were getting married and stated that although neither knew what the other was asked, their answers meshed in such a way that it was certainly meant to be.

After saying their vows, the couple lit a candle together for continued luck and prosperity. Suddenly Karolina broke out a pair of, yes, yellow and green rubber boots. After putting the boots on, a silver coin was placed into one boot, a Colombian wedding tradition to further provide luck and happiness for the newly married couple. Climbing back into the carriage, the newlyweds drove away, merrily chased by Thomas, with a sign on the back of the carriage proclaiming "Just Married", looking just like a picture out of an old horse and coach's book.

The wedding reception that followed was a lovely blending of two cultures as Karolina's heritage is Polish and Mauricio's is Colombian. The food, served family style, included delicacies from both countries, and further enhanced and accented the blending of not just two cultures, but two lives. In addition to the horse show ribbon wedding favors there were personalized M&Ms and a jar of honey with "Meant to Bee" written on the label. Karolina and Mauricio said that the love of horses is what brought them together, but it is the love of one another that will keep them that way forever, no matter what. The wedding was in Locust Valley, Long Island at Pennoyer Farm.

The bride, the bride and the groom.

