



Bob and Cindy Grimm, with daughter Katherine celebrate the re-enactment of their wedding proposal.

Wedding Proposal at The National 4-H Conference Center

Many 4-H alumni claim that 4-H provided them with the skills for their first interview, their first job or their first major professional undertaking. It is extraordinary to hear that 4-H led them to true love. Or, is it? For Bob and Cindy Grimm, 4-H provided them with all of the above.

In 1977, Bob had been working for three years as a teacher and Cindy had just gotten her BA from the University of Maryland when they were selected to travel to Holland through the International Foreign Youth Exchange Program (IFYE). When Cindy arrived at the National 4-H Center, she saw Bob playing volleyball with the other IFYE exchange students. Cindy admits it wasn't love at first sight, "He was more like an IFYE brother:"

Bob thinks the cards were stacked in

their favor, for there were many instances where they got to know each other prior to arriving in Holland. Before leaving the states, Cindy helped Bob return some of his luggage to Ohio. They sat next to each other on the flight over. The plane was forced to make an emergency landing in Iceland, and Bob ended up negotiating with the authorities in order for them to make their connecting flights, impressing Cindy.

Busy with their host families, the two didn't actually start dating until later when they were invited back to the National 4-H Center to speak about their IFYE experience. They got to know each other well when Cindy was working at the University of Maryland and Bob was accepted as a graduate student there. While their lives would move them to other locations, various events would pull them back to the DC area and the National 4-H Center. Bob convinced Cindy to stop at the National 4-H Center for old time's sake. While wandering through the Danforth Courtyard, Bob proposed to her and they got married in 1980.

Years later, Cindy unfortunately lost her engagement ring while moving. Bob

arranged for them to re-enact that romantic moment while staying at the National 4-H Center for the IFYE 50th Anniversary which was held in August 1998. This time, however, their daughter Katherine added to the mood by blowing a flute given to her by a Philippine delegation. Not necessarily as romantic, but meaningful all the same.

Coming from 4-H families, both Cindy and Bob were involved in 4-H for years, and the impact that the program has had on their lives is obvious. When asked what aspect of their 4-H experience impacted them most, Bob spoke about the leadership opportunities available to him, and how his skills in small group dynamics were a direct result of his years in 4-H. Cindy replied, "Everything I do today (in relation to my work life) I think was influenced more by the experiences that I had in 4-H than anything I learned in school!" 4-H to the Grimms is more than just an opportunity to gain skills, but it created for them a sense of shared values which has helped them in their marriage and family life. Cindy added, "To make the best better, we live our lives by that motto."

