



The Scottish hand-fasting tradition represents “tying the knot”.



A quiet moment for the bride and groom.

## Amanda & Anthony Leopardo

TIE THE KNOT

**B**ARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNUS Anthony (AJ) Leopardo and his bride Amanda knew each other as teenagers. They are 19 days apart in age. He was a junior at Barrington, and she was attending West Dundee Crown High School when mutual friends introduced them. Four years later, the two started dating and within the next three years, started to plan their wedding, giving themselves a year to make the arrangements.

“We were young and in love,” Amanda says of their courtship. “AJ is funny, outgoing, and handsome.” If opposites do attract, he’s the perfect match for the reserved Amanda. “She’s shy, has a wonderful personality, and is good company,” AJ says. “And she’s beautiful.”

The couple had their hearts set on a wedding at Life Changers International Church in Hoffman Estates, which they attend. In a nod to AJ’s Scottish heritage, his nephew Rocco wore the clan’s tartan and performed the hand-fasting ceremony—an ancient Celtic ritual that symbolizes “tying the knot”. They built the cross that stood tall near them at the altar.

For the reception, Medinah Country Club was the ideal location with its opulently appointed, grand Byzantine-style clubhouse. Sponsored by a business friend of AJ’s, the couple had their dream reception with personal themes

throughout. Their bulldog, Rambo, appeared subtly on the wedding invitations. The colors in the Medinah ballroom were pink, gold, and silver. But for the rest of the details, the couple turned to a local event planner.

“Christina Currie, who we discovered through QB magazine, just gets it,” Amanda said. “She worked out our details with all the vendors and took care of minor things that we never even noticed on our wedding day. We recommend working with a planner so you can enjoy your wedding day, and give yourself a year to handle all the details,” she said. Amanda also recommends spending money on a good band, rather than on a DJ. “Ours was True Blue Band from Chicago. Their style is like the Temptations—jackets, old school mics, and a great vibe.”

The reception was all about family, complete with wonderful speeches by both fathers. The couple’s daughter, Lynn, was Maid of Honor. And to top off their special wedding day, AJ’s brother Curtis surprised the two with a fireworks show out on the lawn that night.

Amanda and AJ agree on many things, but when they disagree, they work it out. “We say ‘the younger the better’ for getting married,” AJ says. “Sure, we have our fights and issues like any couple does, but our love pulls us through.”





Top, from left: Flower Girl, Noa van Dorin; Maid of Honor, Lynn Leopardo; Flower Girl, Holland van Dorin. Bridesmaids (from left) Lana Leopardo, Danielle Leopardo, Lauren Grabos, Amber Ladd; Bride, Amanda Leopardo; Matron of Honor, Amber van Dorin. Bridesmaids Ava Leopardo, Cara Leopardo, and Elle Winkel. Bottom, from left: Junior Groomsman, Rocco Leopardo; Groomsmen, Josh van Dorin, Jobe Martin, Jordan Yankowski, and Sam Leopardo. Groom, Anthony Leopardo. Best Man, Curtis Leopardo. Groomsmen, Chris Malone, Otis Hudson, Jack Leopardo, and Brandon Yankowski.



The couple, along with Maid of Honor, cuts the cake.



Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Leopardo head to their reception.



Best man, Curtis Leopardo, presented a surprise fireworks show for the newlyweds.



The Medinah Country Club ballroom with wedding colors of blush pink, gold, and silver.