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News

Saying 'I Do' In Kayaks On The Mystic River

The Mystic River provided the perfect backdrop for the wedding of Debbie Pray and Larry Crooker.

By [Bree Shirvell](#) [Email the author](#) | July 4, 2012



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The Mystic River provided the perfect backdrop for the wedding of Debbie Pray and Larry Crooker. Credit: [Bree Shirvell](#)

Photos



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On a cloudy summer night in kayaks on the Mystic River, Debbie Pray and Larry Crooker said, "I do." It wasn't a



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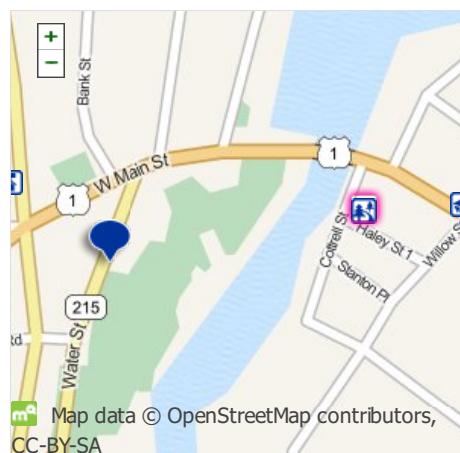
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very conventional wedding ceremony, but for those who know the Mystic couple it was perfect.

"They love kayaking," said Irene Pray, Debbie's mother, adding she wasn't at all surprised when they told her. "They wanted something different."

Something different it was, but it was also something beautiful and a bit magical, just like the couple's story.

"We met at a place that doesn't exist anymore—[Margaritas](#) when it was still Chuck's," Larry said. "We dated for a little while, but the timing was not on our side."

Thirty years later - after divorces and raising five boys - the two met again in what Irene calls a fairy tale story.

"We kept having events bring us back together," Larry said.

When Larry and Debbie decided to get married they wanted something different.

"Debbie wanted to elope, I said why not get married in kayaks," Larry recalled with the laugh.

"Why not do something off the wall," Debbie added.

This is the second season the couple has spent kayaking around the area together. They kayak almost every night.

"In the summertime, it's just beautiful, you've got the moon and the stars," Larry said.

They say it wasn't hard to get people to participate in a kayak wedding. More than 20 people joined the couple in kayaks they launched off Holmes Street in Mystic. People walking by stopped to ask what was going on and then offered good wishes. The group, with Debbie's and Larry's kayaks decorated for the occasion, made their way down the Mystic River Tuesday evening. They stopped to hold the wedding ceremony in front of the [Mystic River Park](#) dock where more family and friends watched.

"Not the traditional walk down the aisle, but it'll get-er-done," said long-time friend and wedding officiant Mike Marquette.

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Jeanne Shirvell

8:30 am on Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Congratulations to Debbie and Larry!

Great photos Bree.

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Barbara Bracci Jones

9:53 am on Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Congratulations again Debbie and Larry. It was a magical evening with family, friends, and smiling tourists. Love the photos. Thanks Bree.

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Debbie pray

10:45 am on Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Thanks Barbara for Sharing our night with us .
And thanks again to bree, you did an amazing job.

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Corey Fyke

12:37 pm on Wednesday, July 4, 2012

What a great memory for a wedding day ... errr ... night! Congratulations!

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