



Lifetime Commitment

Stephanie Patterson and Peter Cook
Rancho Bernardo Courtyard, San Diego

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JENETTA LEA PENNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Wedding Consulting by Robin Pickett and Jessica Gillon, Events by Design

THE INTRODUCTION Peter and Stephanie met at the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, California in October, 2003. Peter had lost sight in one eye due to a brain tumor when he was young. Stephanie had lost one eye at the age of five due to retinal blastoma, and was left with only slight vision in the other. On her first day at the Orientation Center for the Blind, Stephanie was accompanied by her mother, and Peter went up to Stephanie and introduced himself. She was shy at first and didn't pay much attention to him. They later became friends, started dating, and fell in love. **THE PROPOSAL** Peter took Stephanie to look at wedding rings and he got down on his knee right there in the store and asked her to marry him. They began living together with Stephanie's mother, Beverly, and opted for a commitment ceremony when it became evident that if they married, Stephanie would lose her mother's medical insurance. Stephanie became pregnant and the couple welcomed their son, Kayleb, into the world on January 20, 2005. Unfortunately, doctors believed that the pregnancy made her susceptible to her sixth brain tumor. **THE CEREMONY** All of the wedding vendors, who had generously donated their time and services, had created a blessed event and had



made Stephanie feel like a princess. Vendors drew inspiration from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and, because Stephanie was blind, incorporated details to tickle all the senses. Aromatic coffee beans in feather-bordered trays held guest seating cards; vanilla scented candles created romance; centerpieces filled with roses, herbs, and other fragrant flowers sat atop tables; and seafood Paella cooked onsite made mouths water. The couple released doves during the ceremony and Stephanie enjoyed one of her favorite wedding moments as she held the warm, soft bird. Strings from the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts provided ceremony music with specially chosen songs sung by Joe Pechota of the San Diego Opera. The bride's mother requested steel drum beats during cocktail hour. Dinner entertainment was provided by flamenco guitarist Anthony Garcia and flamenco dancing by Sara Olivar. And after dinner, Stephanie and Peter danced the night away to a DJ. **Floral Design** Floral Poetry, PRP Florals **Rentals** Affairs Party Rental, Classic Party Rentals, Chelsey Designs **Lighting** Events by Design **Linens** Concepts Party Rentals, Magical Party Rentals **Invitations** Events by Design **Catering** Paella Valenciana, In Good Taste, Trader Joe's **Cake** Do It With Icing, Claim Jumper Restaurant **Entertainment** SDSCPA Strings, vocals by Joe Pechota, Sweet Steel by Julie Jaskula, Anthony Garcia and Sara Olivar **Videographer** Taylor Films **Transportation** Emerald City Limo **Gown** White and champagne two-tone satin gown with elbow-length sleeves and pearl beading on the hem and train donated by Bridals by Susanti. **Formalwear** Men's Wearhouse **Wedding Rings** Diamond Boutique **Hair & Makeup** Studio 158 **Ice Sculpture** Ice Carvings by James Lovejoy **Espresso Cart** Blended Desires **Bridal Jewelry** Freshwater pearl illusion necklace custom made for Stephanie by Diamond Boutique **Honeymoon** The Lodge at Torrey Pines compliments of Evans Hotels **THE NEWLYWEDS** Stephanie and Peter had moved to their own apartment in Escondido where Peter cared for her and their son. Early in 2007 Stephanie was diagnosed with another tumor and she passed away. Stephanie and Peter had previously decided that Peter and Kayleb would live with his family in San Francisco while Peter pursues the studies that will allow him to raise Kayleb on his own.