

# Forest & Bluff

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## Be My Valentine

High school sweethearts  
Missy and Johnny Poth  
met and married  
in Lake Forest

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## Missy and Johnny Poth's storybook romance sparked when a sweet Valentine was slipped into a high school locker.

words by **Rochelle Newman Rubinoff**  
photography by **Robin Subar**  
styling by **Theresa DeMaria**

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**LTHOUGH THEY** currently reside in the city, it is clear that Missy and Johnny Poth's hearts are firmly rooted in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff.

That is, after all, where their romance began. And also where Missy's business, M on the Square, is based. But more on that in a moment.

Missy and Johnny met second semester, senior year at Lake Forest High School, just making it under the wire for them to officially qualify as high school sweethearts.

Missy grew up in Lake Bluff starting at age 6 and Johnny moved to Lake Forest in kindergarten. It is actually surprising that they had not met prior to a mutual friend introducing them in study hall. They quickly realized they had many mutual friends and, “we were instantly enamored with each other,” Johnny says. “The rest is history.”

“We went to senior prom together,” Missy adds. But they did head off in different directions for college, Missy to Auburn University in Alabama and Johnny to Miami of Ohio.

During their four years of college, the couple was able to achieve what many have failed to accomplish—they actually made their long-distance romance work. Miss and Johnny both knew they had found someone special. “In addition to lots of texting, calling, and Facetiming, “it was a little bit of planes, trains, and automobiles,” Missy laughs.

# Forest Bluff

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magazine

## FOREST PARK BEACH *Celebrates 25 Years*



CLASS OF 2012  
FOREST PARK BEACH  
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Johnny Poth (in foreground) and Missy Crowe (in yellow) at Forest Park Beach with friends during their senior year at Lake Forest High School.

Missy is quick to acknowledge that the success of the business would not be possible without the support and help from her family, especially her husband Johnny and her parents, Lisa and Jack Crowe. Although Johnny has his own career in private equity, he often helps out at the store, especially during those busy times, like Christmas.

"It's a family affair," Missy says.

"I want it to be a place that my kids come to after school, to work, take out the garbage and wash buckets.

"We love the community. We loved growing up here and it would be a great place to raise a family and continue our life with both sets of our parents here."

Missy and Johnny were married September 2019, in a beautiful ceremony in Missy's grandmother's backyard in Lake Forest. Flowers by none other than ... M on the Square! In fact, Missy says the event side of the business is growing. "A lot of Lake Forest born and raised kids love coming back and getting married here. I think it is great fun to bring your college friends and your extended family to the community—it's such a beautiful community. I would say that was a big draw for us.

"My favorite thing about weddings is working with the brides from start to finish. Getting to see the look on a bride's face when I hand her the bouquet is the most rewarding feeling. It's even better when I get to watch her walk into the reception. A few lucky times I've even been able to see her walk down the aisle and that moment gets me every time. The flowers, the music, the dresses—it's all so romantic and comes together beautifully—the feeling is inexplicable. Those moments make every tough day and long night worth it."

Missy and Johnny's first fateful meeting in high school happened a few weeks before Valentine's Day. "I definitely had a big crush on him," Missy shares. "So I just made him a cute little paper Valentine and left it for him in his locker."

During college, they were never able to visit each other for Valentine's Day. "Now we definitely try to make it special. Even though I'm always busy as a florist on Valentine's Day, we celebrate by making a fun dinner. We both love to cook and set the table, so that is the best way to celebrate for us."

It is a safe bet that a stunning, bespoke floral arrangement will hold pride of place on their Valentine's Day dinner table.

After graduation, they both moved back home. Johnny began his career in accounting and finance. Missy started full-time as the manager of what is now M on the Square in Lake Forest's Market Square, specializing in both floral and home decor.

This was not her first foray into the floral world. In fact, Missy has been involved in the floral business since high school. She worked for the store's previous owner, the late Molly Flavin, even as a teenager. She then majored in business management in college, so that educational background combined with her floral experience made this next step a natural.

Missy says, "I just love the store. It's like my home away from home. I love every minute of it." Missy bought the store from Flavin two years ago. She is grateful for the kindness and support from the community, and she delights in working with and getting to know her clientele. "It's just this quintessential thing, especially during the holidays, when I leave the store and Market Square is all lit up. My mom works at the store, and she and I will close up and shut off the lights at five o'clock and it's an almost old-fashioned, out of a movie feeling—there is something about it that I truly love."