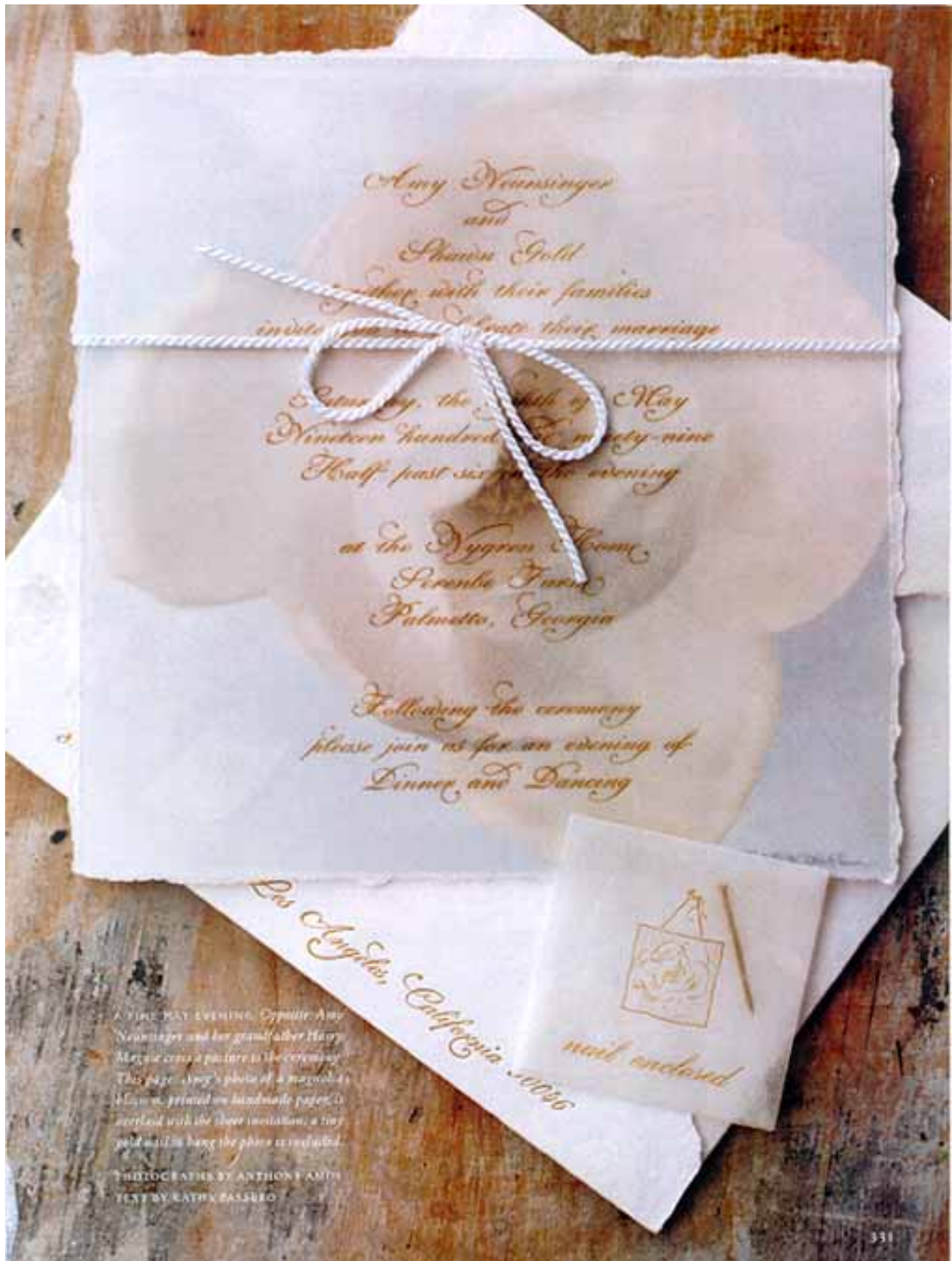


A SOUTHERN  
COUNTRY  
WEDDING

AMY NEUNSINGER TO SHAWN GOLD

PALMETTO, GEORGIA 05.08.99



A FIRE-KIT EVENING. *Opportunities:* Amy Neussinger and her grand-oldest Henry Meyer circa a picture in the ceremony. This page. Amy's photo of a marriage. Also in printed on handmade paper, is accented with the three invitation, a tiny gold metal box the photo is included. PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTHONY AMTH TEXT BY KATHY BASSIQUO



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Amy Neunsinger and Shawn Gold hardly live in the past. When the two met at a party in 1994, Shawn was running an Internet company in New York City, and Amy was a California-based photographer's assistant whose assignments took her around the world. Their coast-to-coast romance blossomed amid constant travel and chaotic schedules. Even now, though they live in Los Angeles, their busy careers often mean working on opposite coasts and saying good night by telephone.

And yet, their courtship evoked the age of romance more than that of technology: After they met, Shawn sent Amy a note every day until he won her heart. "It was very old-fashioned," says Amy. Four years later, she invited him along on a photo shoot in Western Samoa; they visited the island's westernmost point, where the sun sets for the last time on the planet each day. As the waves crashed around them, Shawn proposed. "I wanted a tell-your-grandchildren story," he explains.

To capture that same old-fashioned romance in their wedding, the couple chose to say their vows at Serenbe Bed-and-Breakfast, a bucolic Georgia farm owned by Amy's cousins Steve and Marie Nygren. "It's a magical place," says Amy. "Most of our 120 guests were from New York and Los Angeles, and we wanted to give them a complete change of pace."

The festivities began with a church-basement rehearsal dinner at the New Hope United Methodist Church in town. Gospel singers performed, then guests headed downstairs to dine, family style, on okra, fried chicken, and macaroni and cheese. Afterward, everyone played bingo, using pinto-bean markers, and smacked Jack Daniel's into their lemonade and cola.

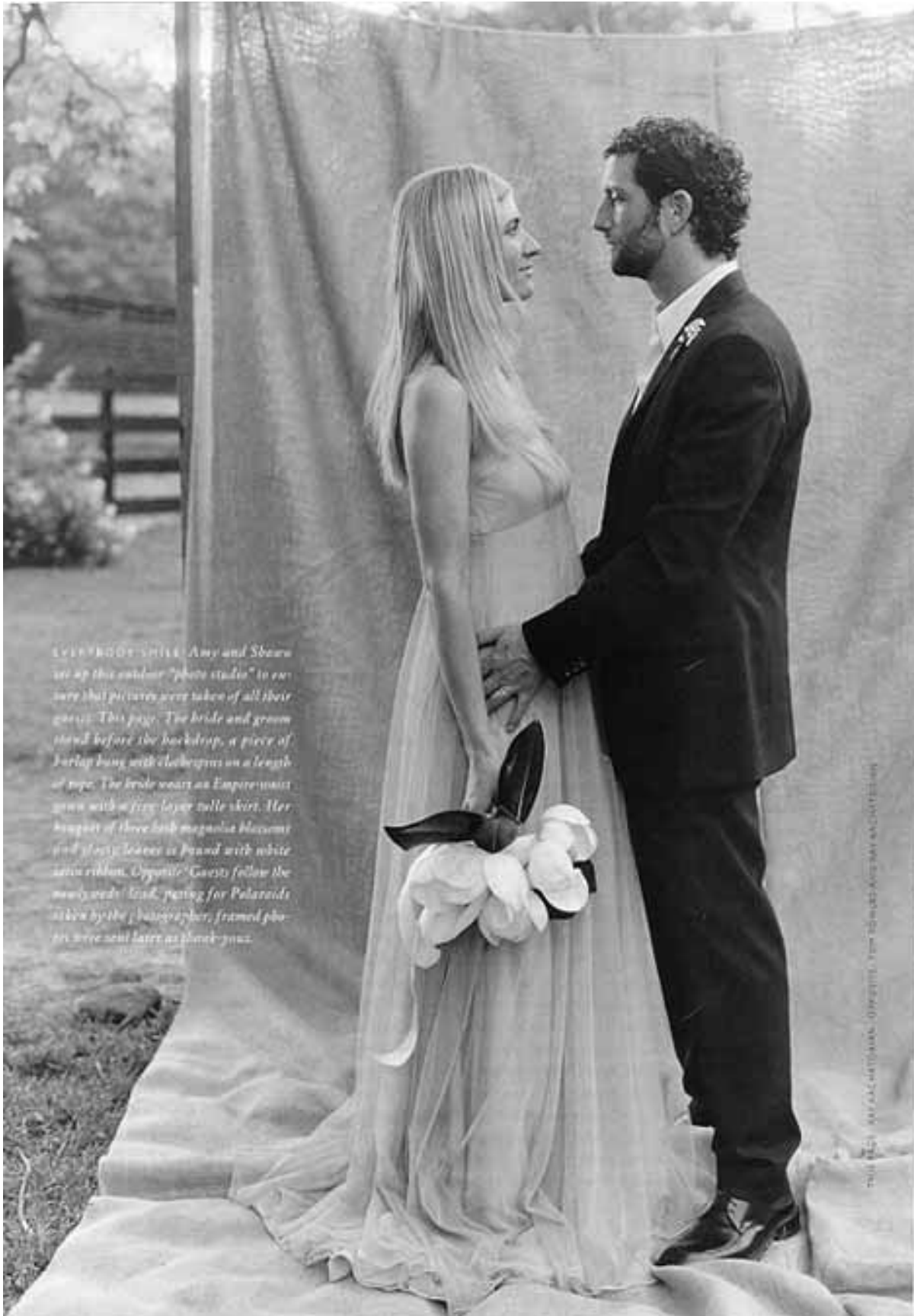
The next morning, Amy's mother and cousins gathered flowers for decorative baskets, bridesmaid bouquets, and boutonnières. Meanwhile, friends visited a nearby farm in search

of three perfect magnolia blossoms for Amy to carry as her bridal bouquet, offering lemon and banana-cream pies in exchange.

Guests gathered late in the afternoon and ambled the grounds, petting baby animals before taking their seats in the orchard. As the bride and groom exchanged their vows, cows lowed softly nearby. A cocktail reception in a small pasture followed, with mint juleps and fried green tomatoes. Dinner, served around a swimming pool aglow with floating flowers and candles, included shrimp grits with rutabaga.

The day wouldn't have been complete without a touch of old-fashioned, romantic magic. Fortunately, Mother Nature obliged: Just as Shawn toasted his bride—telling the hushed and happy guests how lucky he was to have found Amy—two shooting stars raced across the night sky.

**SOUTHERN CHARMS Above:** The bride and groom gather with the bride's family for a photo. **Opposite, top row, left to right:** Geese wander the grounds of the wedding location, a working farm and bed-and-breakfast. The newlyweds walk up the petal-strewn aisle. Monogrammed fishing hats are given to the men in the wedding party. **Middle row, left to right:** Buckets of carrots hang on a fence, so guests can top and feed the cows. Shawn honored Jewish wedding tradition by breaking a glass that had been sewn inside a taupe-and-white-gingham bag for safety. Each bridesmaid received a beaded ankle bracelet tucked into a hand-calligraphed paper pouch and attached to a tiny flower-filled bucket. **Bottom row, left to right:** A freshly picked dogwood blossom serves as a boutonniere. The favors are mason jars of grits with attached cards that carry a recipe for shrimp grits, served at dinner. In lieu of presents, guests were asked to slip donations to Habitat for Humanity into a flower-decked birdhouse.



*EVERYBODY SMILES: Amy and Steve set up this outdoor "photo studio" to ensure that pictures were taken of all their guests. This page, The bride and groom stand before the backdrop, a piece of fabric hung with clothespins on a length of rope. The bride wears an Empire-waist gown with a five-layer tulle skirt. Her bouquet of three lush magnolia blossoms and glossy leaves is bound with white satin ribbon. Opposite: Guests follow the newly-weds' lead, posing for Polaroids taken by the photographer; framed photos were sent later as thank-yous.*

THIS PAGE: GARY SACK; OPPOSITE: TOM BURNETT/AGE FINE ARTS/GETTY IMAGES



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*THE FINE POINTS* Hollowed eggshells filled with chocolate ganache are favors for the guests. Opposite, top row, left to right: A tray of soul, refreshing mist juleps at the cocktail reception. Female guests receive a pail of sweet peas and Enatoma. Bowls of floating flowers are interspersed with candles as a centerpiece; a pillar candle holds the table number. Middle row, left to right: Dinner tables are set around a swimming pool. Seating cards are attached by miniature clothespins to a laundry line strung round the cocktail area. The wedding cake is a croque-madame sprinkled with edible rose petals. Bottom row, left to right: A bowl with a floating magnolia blossom makes an elegant centerpiece for the bridal table. A wreath adrift in the pool reflects the wedding's colors: pale pink and white, blended with shades of taupe. The bride and groom enjoy their first dance as a married couple. SEE THE GUIDE FOR SOURCES