

## Groom-to-be goes to great lengths to ask for her hand

Olivia Blanco Mullins  
Contributing writer

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For John Michael "Mike" **Carlin**, asking Stan Reitz for permission to marry his daughter Anna, was not negotiable.

For other men the concept may be outdated, but Mike, the youngest son of state Rep. **Sydney Carlin** and her husband John, had carefully planned it.

He had envisioned a guy's day, in which Mike and Mr. Reitz would go out to a golf course and play for a while, then to dinner and maybe a drink.

Unfortunately, before he got around to doing that, Mr. Reitz was diagnosed with cancer; his health quickly deteriorated.

If Mike wanted to ask for Anna's father's blessing, he needed to move quickly, and at the risk of ruining Anna's surprise engagement he asked her for help.

They went to Michigan, Anna's home state, to visit Mr. Reitz for the weekend. Because other family members were there, too, Anna's job was to get Mike alone with her dad to give them some privacy. That was impossible.

"There were all kinds of people [in his room]. I had no time," explained Mike. The next day the couple went home to Atlanta. Mike was disappointed, but decided that a call was the least he could do.

"I asked if he would bless Anna and me; and he was so overwhelmingly nice to me." He said, it would be an honor, because he knew I would take care of her forever."

"I could never imagine someone not asking my dad," said Anna, who explained that as the youngest of four and the only daughter, she had a very special relationship with her dad. "In any other situation I would have been disappointed [that he didn't ask in person]; But I knew it was important to Mike too. If he had waited a month it would have been too late."

With Reitz's blessing, Mike planned a simple proposal. Anna had told him that her favorite part of the day was getting home to Mike, who works from home.

He hired a limo and had it parked outside their Atlanta home. When Anna arrived from her job as a school teacher, Mike came outside dressed in a suit, holding a rose in his hand.

In their kitchen, Mike went down on his knee and asked Anna to marry him.

Once inside the limo, on their way to a romantic dinner at Atlanta's Sun-Dial Restaurant, they called family and friends to tell them the good news. Among those who received calls was Anna's dad.

Mike and Anna married at the basilica at the University of Notre Dame, Mike's alma mater, on Dec. 6. They had a snow-covered ceremony, and even with the adrenaline from the emotion pumping through her body, Anna's feet, in Atlanta-appropriate open-toe shoes, were very cold.

"Being the guy that he is, when we got back in the bus Mike put my toes in his hands until they warmed up," said Anna, who described her husband as a genuinely nice person.

On Dec. 27, the couple celebrated again, with a reception at the **Carlin** residence in Manhattan.

The couple plans to stay in Atlanta, the city where they met, and where Mike's brother, Ryan, and his wife, Molly, also reside.

"It is very cool to have them so close, when we start having kids, the cousins will grow up together."