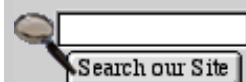




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Posted Oct. 17, 2004

## Kristin Brantmeier column: First comes love, then comes registry

If someone had told me a year ago that picking out china patterns would ever be a priority for me, I'd have said it was less likely than a Martha Stewart acquittal.

How times change. Martha's in jail, but I'm scouring every department store, Web site and catalog possible, in search of the perfect dish.

The reason? I got engaged.

You see, a strange chemical is released in an engaged woman's brain when bridal registry time rolls around. It reacts with the diamond on her left hand and a mutant shopping chromosome to produce unexpected results.

My fiance Dave and I arrived at the store to register. I'd been researching registries for weeks, and we brought a list of about 65 desired items.

"You'll want to register for about twice as many items as you have guests," the store manager informed us.

Uh oh. That left us considerably short.

We prowled the aisles with our UPC scanner gun, zapping items that appealed to us but we had never imagined owning.

Suddenly, we weren't Kristin and Dave, engaged couple. We were scanner fiends on a mission. The world was our oyster, or at least those cute little oyster forks over in aisle seven.

"There's the Calphalon One cookware!" I shrieked, and ran over to it.

"Look! There's the knife block set we saw on the website!" I scurried over and pressed my nose against the glass cabinet, leaving a little smudge.

I was a kid in a candy store. Dave smiled good-naturedly.

"Wow, look at these cute stainless steel cheese spreaders!" I shouted

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from across the department. "Bring the scanner over here. We need some cheese spreaders."

Since we don't often eat spreadable cheese, Dave looked mildly surprised, but managed to say, "Whatever you want, Kris."

"Oh! Look at this metal cookbook stand with a SPLATTER PROTECTOR!" I yelled, and picked up the box triumphantly. Never mind that I'd used a cookbook all of twice in the last six months.

Dave finally tried to intervene.

"A dirty cookbook page is a sign of good use," he offered.

"I don't want our cookbooks all sticky and nasty," I explained with determination. "And the manager said we need more things on our registry."

By the puzzled look on Dave's face, I could tell two things.

First, he thought the cookbook stand was just about the most useless thing on the planet. Second, he thought I had lost my mind.

Clearly, it was time to leave.

As we walked by the checkout lanes on our way out, Dave took the scanner and zapped a package of Altoids.

"We can't register for Altoids," I protested, far less amused than he and the checkout clerks were.

"But the manager said we need more things on our registry," he said, shaking the tin.

The checkout clerk piped in, "Oh, we have people register for candy all the time."

Gee, thanks, lady.

Then, in a flash of clarity, I realized that Dave had been a trooper through the whole registry process.

He put up with me changing my mind four times on bedroom color schemes (and six times on specific bedspreads).

He put up with me sticking pictures of different dishes in front of his face for weeks, accompanied by questions like, "Do you think this Kate Spade contemporary pattern or that Lenox platinum band would coordinate best with our serving platters? What do you mean you don't care?"

All that patience, and he just wants a tin of Altoids on the registry? All right. He's more than earned it.

*Kristin Brantmeier is an Appleton resident and a Post-Crescent community columnist. She can be reached by e-mail at [pclatters@postcrescent.com](mailto:pclatters@postcrescent.com)*

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