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Adventuring bachelor parties outlast lap dances

BY ERIN CHAN DING • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • MAY 10, 2009

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But there's only so much male bonding that can happen at a strip club.

That's the main reason why Darren Hitz created a different kind of bachelor party.

Hitz takes groups of guys on adrenaline-inducing experiences all over the country with his company, Adventure Bachelor Party. They not only get a load of fun from whitewater rafting or all-terrain vehicle motoring or even cattle rustling, but they also get lasting relationships.

Men bond in these situations, says Hitz, 32, of Royal Oak, who started the company four years ago. "Women are more emotional and relational. Guys bond more in the heat of something. You put them in these intense situations where they create a memory that will last because they're immersed in this foreign environment."

Two years ago, when seven of Dan Williams' closest friends got together for his bachelor party one month before his wedding, not all of them knew each other. Some were work friends, others from college and others from elsewhere.

With the help of Adventure Bachelor Party, they whisked Williams away to West Virginia, where they spent the weekend rafting on the



Photos courtesy of Darren Hitz

Michigan-based Adventure Bachelor Party sends a groom-to-be and his friends whitewater rafting. The company arranges unique pre-wedding weekends that encourage bonding with heart-pounding outdoors action.



Darren Hitz, 32, of Royal Oak founded Adventure Bachelor Party four years ago.

(Darren Hitz)

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New River and chowing down at a pig roast.

"It was very important that friends of the past get along with friends of the future," says Williams, 40, who says the adventure made them feel more at ease with each other during his wedding. "They will remember all seven of the other guys for the rest of their lives because of this experience."

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Vicky Sowden, 50, of Midland is the wife of Williams' best man, Gary Sowden, 41, and it was she who found the trip for the guys.

"Neither Dan or my husband are really womanizer types," says Vicky Sowden. "Dan is really an outdoorsman, and I thought, 'This would really be something fun to do. ... Guys like stuff where it's a little dangerous. It seems like guys are always saying, 'Let's jump off the side of this cliff and see what happens.' It's a testosterone thing."

Sowden and Williams add that because most of the guys were in their 30s and 40s and well into their [careers](#), they had more disposable income for a bachelor party compared with those in their early 20s.

Hitz' bachelor party packages run from \$250 to \$400 per person and include meals, accommodations, ground transportation and an adventure. He currently offers whitewater rafting in California, Colorado, West Virginia, Tennessee and New York; cattle rustling in Texas and ATV motoring in West Virginia.

Williams of Portage, Wis., admits he and the guys did venture to a strip club after the pig roast, but the rafting -- and its somewhat treacherous nature -- constituted the pinnacle of the trip.

Says Williams: "It was the best guy weekend ever."

Contact ERIN CHAN DING: 313-222-6696 or echan@freepress.com

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GordoS wrote:

LOL... don't think for a moment there isn't adult entertainment planned AFTER these outings.

05/10/2009 8:15:53 a.m. EDT

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mjs1122 wrote:

Wow...I would have greatly enjoyed an adventure trip with my gal pals over the wedding showers. Really, how excited can you get over another kitchen gadget???

05/10/2009 7:38:33 a.m. EDT

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Rory_Kasel wrote:

Vicky Sowden muses: "It seems like guys are always saying, 'Let's jump off the side of this cliff and see what happens.' It's a testosterone thing."

Ha ha ha ha!!! Yes, us guys are always saying that! We are also known for saying "Let's drink Liquid Drano from a beer funnel and see what happens!", and "Let's hit each other in the temple with a ball peen hammer and see what happens!"

Sigh...Vicky, What "guy" do you know that suggests jumping off the side of a cliff? Are you sure your husband wasn't suggesting YOU jump off a cliff?

05/10/2009 4:53:18 a.m. EDT

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