



Wedding crashers

Ice cream giant spoils wedding plans of young lovers in North Carolina

The planned marriage of Jerri Haagen to Ben Dazs turns sour as an international food giant tries to protect a brand name.



Davidson College student Jerri A. Haagen planned to marry her childhood sweetheart Benjamin J. Dazs in May until multinational food giant Nestle S.A. sued to stop the Haagen-Dazs wedding.

April 1, 2016

Jerri Ashley Haagen was thrilled when her childhood sweetheart proposed to her at the Christmas cotillion at Davidson College in North Carolina where they are both scheduled to graduate in May.

The 21-year-old bride-to-be accepted the proposal with just one condition: she had to keep her family name. The self-described “post-neo-feminist” majoring in women’s studies and gender-identity politics, told *Dairy Foods* that she would “deny my family’s heritage if I did not keep my last name. I can’t do that. There’s been a ‘Haagen’ in the Valdese phonebook for 90 years,” she said, referring to her hometown 64 miles east of Asheville, N.C.

But fiancé Benjamin Jared Dazs was pressuring his bride-to-be to take his last name. The 20-year-old is majoring in graphic-novels with a minor in contemporary body art, which he explained as “the study of tattoos and piercings in the years after World War II.”

The two lovers worked out a compromise: they would hyphenate their family names. That’s when their legal woes began. Two days after setting up a Haagen-Dazs page on the wedding registry website The Knot, they received a curious envelope from multinational food giant Nestle based in Vevey, Switzerland.

Nestle tells Haagen and Dazs to ‘cease and desist’

The envelope contained not a note of congratulations but rather a “cease-and-desist” letter from Nestle’s legal counsel. The owner of the Haagen-Dazs trademark claimed the young couple were infringing on its intellectual property.

Brushing back tears, Jerri Haagen shared the letter with *Dairy Foods*. It states, in part,

“Nestle S.A. became aware of your use of the Haagen-Dazs name which redirect [sic] visitors to your page on The Knot. Under North Carolina law, common law trademark infringement occurs when a party utilizes a trade or service mark that creates a likelihood of consumer confusion. You must cease and desist all promotion and/or marketing of the Haagen-Dazs wedding and affiliated events, including (but not limited to) bachelor and bachelorette parties, showers, rehearsal dinners, wedding receptions and after-parties. You may not use the term ‘Haagen-Dazs’ on save-the-date mailers,

wedding invitations, tee-shirts, matchbook covers, announcements and similar communications. You must execute a copy of this letter and send it to this firm within seven (7) days of the receipt of this letter.”

“What gets me,” she said, “is that our family doesn’t even use those stupid dots over the first ‘a’ in our last name.” Haagen said the wedding has been postponed until the issue is resolved. She and Dazs set up a GoFundMe page to help defray legal costs, which are expected to be in the five figures.

Ben loves Jerri, but Unilever claims it is harmed

On Monday, Haagen was shocked when she opened a letter from Unilever. The multinational food and CPG company (and Nestle rival) claimed that the new couple, Ben and Jerri, are infringing on its own ice cream trademark, Ben & Jerry’s. They must cease and desist immediately.

Copyright ©2016. All Rights Reserved BNP Media.

Design, CMS, Hosting & Web Development :: ePublishing