

---

## The talk of the Vineyard

By Mark Shanahan & Meredith Goldstein

Globe Staff / August 23, 2011

EDGARTOWN - What inquiring minds on Martha's Vineyard really wanted to know yesterday had nothing to do with the first family's vacation.

Instead, people were whispering about an extravagant wedding held over the weekend on Chappaquiddick. There were rumors of a private fireworks display lasting 15 minutes (true) and a performance by Lady Gaga (false).

"Oh yes, I heard the Gaga rumor," said JoAnn Gregoli, the high-powered New York-based wedding planner who handled the nuptials of Laura Schifter and Matt Scriven. "I can verify that is just a rumor. She did not perform."

The bride is the daughter of Richard Schifter, a D.C.-based lawyer who was assistant secretary of state for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs from 1985-'92. And the wedding took place on the beach at Schifter's 8,000-square-foot mansion on a bluff overlooking Wasque Point. The fireworks were shot from the beach, with firetrucks arranged around the perimeter in case of an accident.

Gregoli, who planned the wedding for one of Rupert Murdoch's daughters, as well as for "Sopranos" actress Jamie-Lynn Sigler and countless CEOs and CFOs, wouldn't give us the guest list. But she said 300 people attended, taking the ferry from Edgartown and then boarding trolleys and vans to get to the residence. She said the tent was draped in fabrics of blue and lavender with twinkle lights to resemble a night sky.

If not Gaga, who? The Mike Benjamin Band, a Vineyard-based Grateful Dead cover band, played while the well-heeled crowd sipped cocktails, and saxophonist Reggie Woods performed at the reception. Asked if President Obama's presence on the island posed any problems, Gregoli said she'd been planning the event for months by the time he scheduled his Vineyard visit.

As for Obama, he again got a late start, emerging after 1 p.m. on a postcard-perfect day to speak about Libya before heading to Oak Bluffs Elementary School to play basketball with friends and staff. First lady Michelle Obama, meanwhile, ventured into Edgartown yesterday to have lunch at The Atlantic Fish & Chop House. Of course, crowds gathered on the narrow streets to gawk.

© Copyright 2011 Globe Newspaper Company.

---