

STAGE & DANCE

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# Paper Heart Flowers is a blooming Lexington business

## HIGHLIGHTS

Business started as owner was planning her own wedding

Roses, peonies, anemones and other flowers among its offerings

These wedding florals never wilt



A centerpiece from the 2015 wedding of Ashley Cox. The bouquet is a mix of artificial greenery and paper flowers created by Cox. Beca C Photography

BY HARRIETT HENDREN

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The bride wants what the bride wants. And as Ashley Cox planned her October wedding, her vision included a certain bloom.

"I wanted flowers everywhere and I wanted peonies, which are my favorite," said Cox who was married on Fort Meyers Beach, Fla. But spring-blooming peonies at a fall wedding were a pricey option.

So, planning well in advance, the bride-to-be decided to create her favorite flower using paper. "I started experimenting and made all the flowers for my wedding," said Cox, who crafted about 500 paper peonies in hand-painted pastel shades of ivory, blush and coral.

Before the creations were even used in her wedding, the crafty Cox launched Paper Heart Blooms, a company

offering handmade paper flowers, last April. Located at her Lexington home, it has bloomed into a successful business for Cox who creates all of her hand-dyed designs, including poppies, roses, peonies, anemones, calla lilies and hyacinths. Prices for individual stems range from \$2.50 to \$4.50.

"So far I've done quite a few weddings, and they're popular for the rehearsal dinner. And I've done a few baby showers and bridal showers," she said. "Pretty much any event where real flowers were used, people are using paper flowers.

"Most everything is made to order. I try to get as much time as possible in advance."

A bouquet or a cake topper might take a couple of weeks. Larger orders need more time.

The big time came calling in December by way of Alex and Ani, a jewelry company with stores in 10 countries and 11 Caribbean islands. They contacted Cox; she sent samples, and on Dec. 14 Alex and Ani placed an order for 2,080 flowers to be displayed in 65 stores.

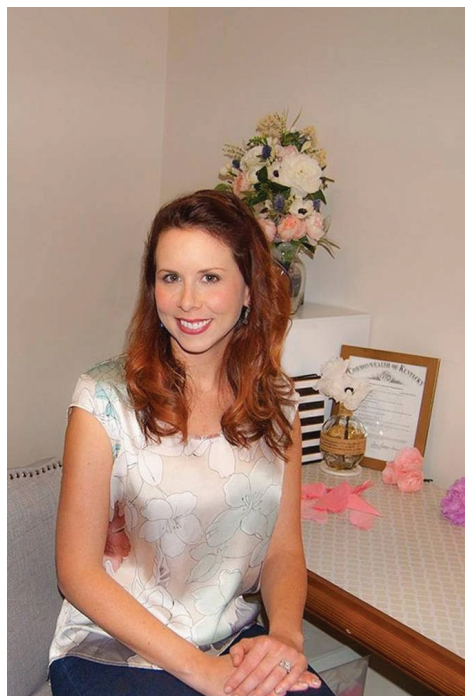
A sea of peonies and roses covered the garage as Cox fashioned each flower herself. "The cars got kicked outside," she said. "It looked like the most amazing thing." The deadline was Jan. 4. "I finished the order on New Year's Eve," she said.

To find out more about Paper Heart Blooms go to [Paperheartblooms.com](http://Paperheartblooms.com), visit the company's [Facebook page](#) or [@paperheartblooms on Instagram](#). Cox also will be a vendor at the Big Fake Wedding bridal show at the Livery on July 14.

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Paper roses from Paper Heart Blooms decorate a wedding cake. They are mixed with artificial greenery. Beca C Photography



Ashley Cox has launched Paper Heart Blooms, a Lexington company that offers handcrafted paper peonies, anemones, hyacinths and more.