

Gay Couple Gets Married One Day After Same-Sex Marriage Ban Calling It 'A Dream Come True'

By BRITTANY BREVIK | [Daily Inter Lake](#)

History was made in Flathead County on Thursday morning as two Kalispell gay men were legally married in Justice Court.

One day after a federal judge tossed out the state's ban on same-sex marriage, John Blanchard, 54, and Shawn Sharp, 35, arrived at the Flathead County Courthouse at 8 a.m. sharp Thursday to apply for and receive their marriage license.

Later Thursday morning, they became the first same-sex couple to be married in Flathead County. Kalispell attorney Eric Hummel presided over the ceremony since the justices were at a conference.



"I figured it was going to drag out for years, since it is Montana," Blanchard said. "This blew me away."

The couple wore rings they gave each other at a private ceremony at Blanchard's home in September.

“There’s a lot of vain people out there,” Sharp said. “I’d almost given up, and then I met John.

“This is a dream come true for me.”

The couple showed off their official marriage license as well as a heartfelt note from a stranger. Blanchard and Sharp were handed a small piece of paper with a rainbow-colored heart drawn in crayon on the front.

“Love is love. Congratulations to you on this wonderful day” read a note on the back of the card.

“For us, it’s really special that we get to have something that everyone else has,” Sharp said.

The pair met online and have been together since August. They previously looked into getting married in Las Vegas and a friend suggested they drive over to Idaho to get married there.

“Our love for each other is there,” Blanchard said. “We’re happy to finally have a legal paper to show we are who we are.”

Blanchard, 54, recalled times in the past when strangers would drive by his home and yell gay slurs at him and his partner. “We’re still just people. We’re not any different than anyone else.”

He also said there aren’t many gay men that are out in this area, noting that a lot of gay men in Montana tend to be really reserved. But times have changed – the couple said they’ve been shocked by the amount of support they’ve received.

Sharp said that any relationship is more about personalities rather than gender or physical attributes. “We just see love,” he said.

When asked how they would celebrate, the men grinned at each other. "I guess we should get some champagne," Sharp said.

Later Thursday afternoon, another marriage ceremony was scheduled for Tamara Walter and Heather Bryan.

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