

4-1-2018

After the Aisle: Destined to Be

Leigh Savage

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine>

Recommended Citation

Savage, Leigh (2018) "After the Aisle: Destined to Be," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 61 : Iss. 1 , Article 31.
Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol61/iss1/31>

This Regular Feature is made available online by Journals, part of the Furman University Scholar Exchange (FUSE). It has been accepted for inclusion in Furman Magazine by an authorized FUSE administrator. For terms of use, please refer to the [FUSE Institutional Repository Guidelines](#). For more information, please contact scholarexchange@furman.edu.

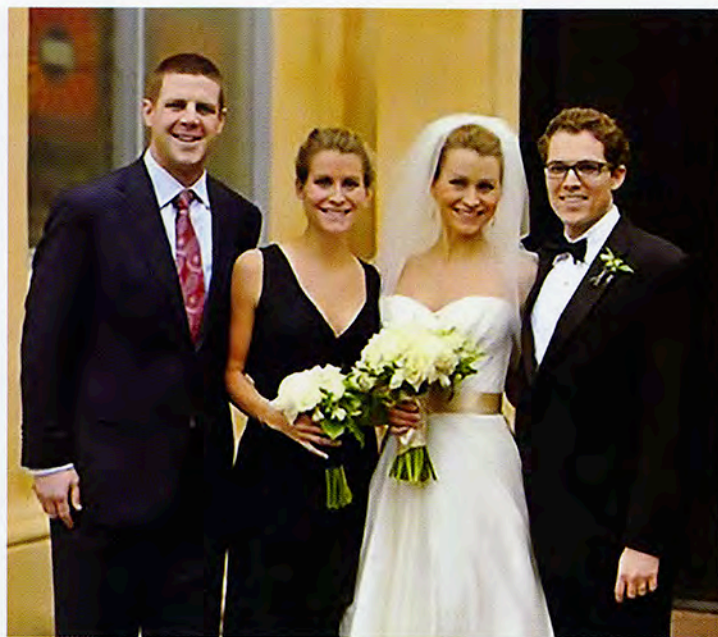
Sisters Ali Gunn Napier and Jenny Gunn Littlejohn '03 did not want to go to the same college. Like many twins, they were eager to strike out on their own. "We didn't want to be compared – who's the smartest? Who's the prettiest?" Jenny says.

Then they both fell in love with Furman. And, even more unexpectedly, within days of arriving, they both met their future spouses.

As high school seniors in Gainesville, Georgia, most of their friends were heading to the University of Georgia, but Ali and Jenny wanted something smaller and a little farther from home. They both felt right at home at Furman. Each desperately tried to convince the other to go to any other college, "but neither of us would budge," says Ali, laughing.

They arrived ready to forge different paths and requested different rooms, but both were placed in Blackwell Hall, "so we ended up having the same friends," Ali says. One of the first people they met – **Will Littlejohn '02** – would marry one sister and play a key role in introducing the other to her future husband.

Even before classes started, Jenny met Will, who was on the Furman orientation staff. "He was working at a carnival on the lawn outside Blackwell, and he spilled a strawberry smoothie on me," she says, grinning. "I like to think he got



Destined to Be

The words "Furman family" have special meaning for twins Ali Gunn Napier and Jenny Gunn Littlejohn.

By Leigh Savage

flustered by my charm." They were soon a couple.

Ali met **Billy Napier '03** during orientation week, but it took another twist of fate for them to spark a relationship. Sophomore year, Ali was placed in Montague Village housing, which was quite a trek from campus. She didn't have a car, so Will introduced her to Joe Wilson, who lived at Montague and could give her a ride to class.

Wilson, who was an offensive lineman on the Paladins football team, reintroduced her to Billy Napier, the all-Southern Conference

quarterback, and their fates were sealed.

As with most young relationships, it wasn't always smooth sailing. Jenny and Will broke up on graduation day in 2003 and went their separate ways. Jenny moved to Charleston, worked for an accounting firm and then earned a master's degree in English at University College of London. Will earned a law degree at Charleston School of Law.

By 2009 they were both in Charleston and decided to meet at Poe's Tavern on Sullivan's Island to catch up. "When he fell back into my life, it was

like seeing your best friend again," Jenny says. Two years later, they were married.

For Ali and Billy, a similar story was playing out. Ali worked in marketing in Charleston, while Billy went to Clemson University to work as a graduate assistant, later becoming offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach there through 2010. They reconnected, and she moved upstate, working at Erwin Penland until they married.

After stints coaching at Alabama and Colorado State, Billy was recently promoted to associate head coach and offensive coordinator at Arizona State. Ali and Billy have been in Arizona for just six months with their children, ages 5, 3 and 1.

Will and Jenny live in Charleston, where Will is an attorney at Holder, Padgett, Littlejohn & Prickett. Jenny is focused on raising their 4-year-old and 18-month-old and is considering baby No. 3.

Though they once craved separation, now the far-flung sisters look forward to the times they can get their growing families together. "Our kids love each other," Jenny says. Though with five kids under 5, "it's a lot louder when we get together now."

All four still reconnect with their college friends as often as they can. "Those friendships – they last," Ali says. "We hold onto those the best we can." ●