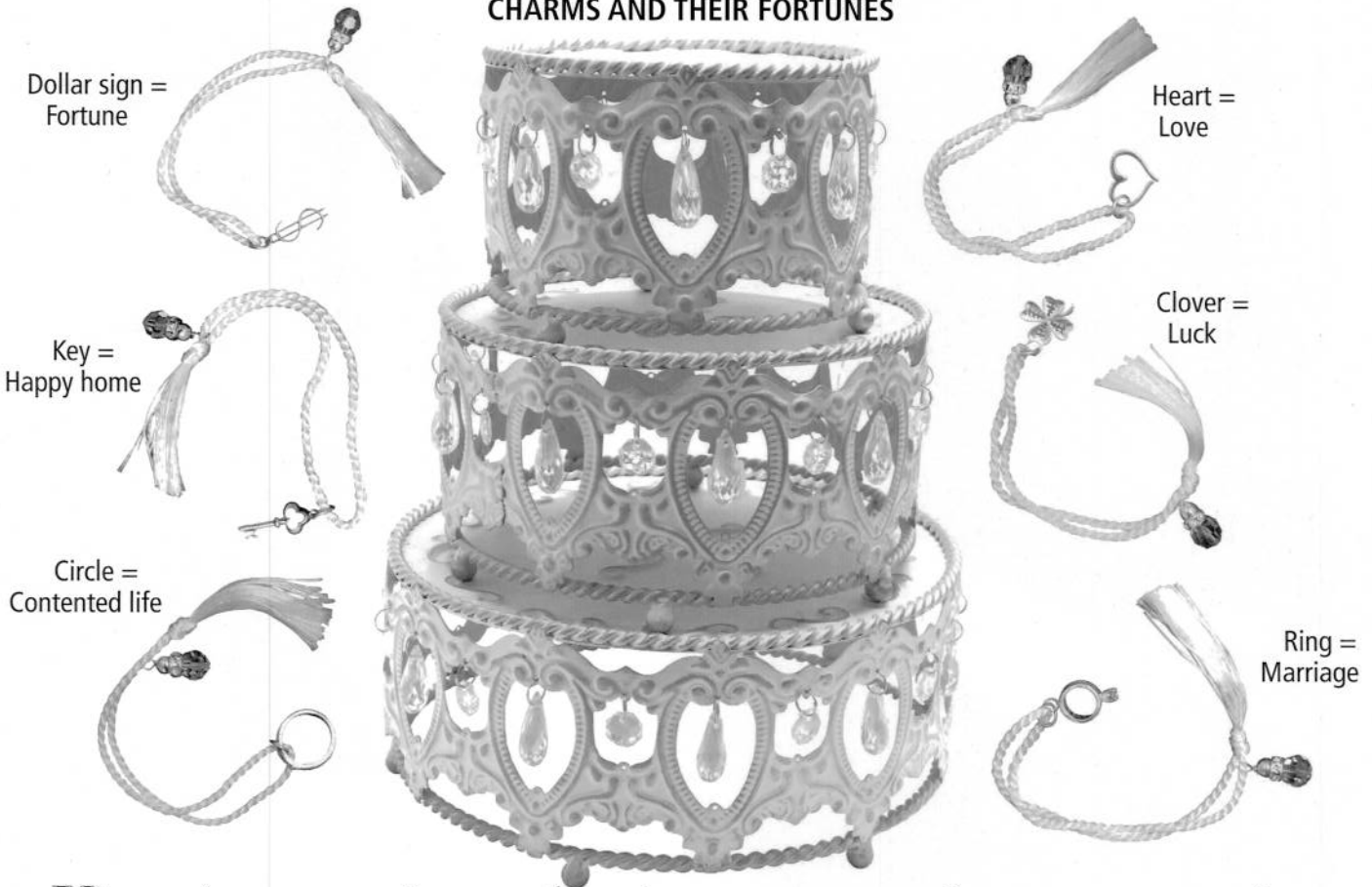


# A CHARMING TRADITION

## CHARMS AND THEIR FORTUNES



## Victorian practice makes its way to modern ceremonies

By ROSEMARY FORD

Weddings are all about traditions. And recently, local brides have begun renewing a lost Victorian one: the Cake Charm Pull.

During the late 1800s, it was a tradition for a bride to place small charms attached to ribbons within the layers of her wedding cake.

Just before the bride and groom cut their nuptial dessert, the bridesmaids would gather and were invited to pull one ribbon each, claiming a charm that would foretell her fortune.

The tradition has experienced a resurgence, not just at weddings but also at bridal showers.

"I have noticed it for four or five years," said Carla Byrne of Bella

Beads in Andover. "I am not sure what is bringing it back."

Most brides don't get the charms messy by placing them in a cake anymore. Instead, they are placed under the cake or in a decorative glass atop it.

Byrne makes her own charms at Bella Beads, in sterling silver and Swarovski crystal. She also allows brides to customize their

order along a theme, like all Irish charms for an Irish wedding, or a color scheme.

After the "pulling" at the party, Byrne can also make bookmarks or necklaces out of charms.

*A set of six customized charms at Bella Beads sells for \$120. Bella Beads is located at 89 Main St., Andover. Call 978-474-4424.*