

# 2010 Mazel Tov! *Jewish Wedding Guide*

## Finding your life's partner

BY ELAINE MARKOWITZ  
Jewish Press

For the single among us who would like to find a partner, success may come when you are looking, or when you least expect it.

Nancy Wall of Tampa, the divorced mother of two, is planning a May 2 wedding. She met her new love at a place she didn't want to be after she had tired of looking and wasn't expecting it.

"Sometimes it's just b'shert [meant to be]," she said.

In December of 2004 Nancy, 46, drove a single friend to the Latke Bash at Congregation Schaarai Zedek in Tampa. She had tried to get out of it, but she had promised her friend earlier when they were both actively looking. Once there she was reluctant to go in herself. At her friend's urging she entered anyway, thinking she would just sit and wait for her friend to be ready to leave. She sat down next to a solitary man seated in the back of the room.

"He was a nice looking man with a great smile," she said. "I assumed his wife was working on the event since he wore a wedding ring."

Actually, the man, Temple Terrace resident Jerry Wishik, 56, was legally separated. He was, though, still wearing his ring.

"It was just part of my finger," he later told Nancy. "I forgot about it."

Nancy says she was drawn to Jerry's smile and the fact that he sat apart from the crowd. She had separated herself from the crowd also, realizing she had been to many such events and already knew most of the people. Jerry, on the other hand, was a newcomer to mixers.

Jerry said he was attracted to Nancy's assertive personality and the fact she was forthright in joining him, seated alone at a big table.

Two years ago she opened a business to help other singles find their mate. Tampa Bay Matchmakers typically attracts clients, Jewish and non-Jewish, from their early 20s through their 70s.

Wall has some advice for those still seeking a new romance: "Identify what is most important to you," she said. "Determine your non-negotiables."

She also suggested that single people participate in activities they enjoy, rather than just going places hoping to meet someone.

"Be yourself," she said. "You can't keep up a façade forever."

\* \* \*

In 2007 St. Petersburg singles Jonathan Bowman, 27, and Melanie Present, 27, found each other in a different singles' venue — J-Date.

Jonathan liked what he read about Melanie and contacted her.

"She sounded down-to-earth," he said. "She said she loved to play tennis and to cuddle."

After a first date — dinner at a Tampa restaurant — Jonathan called and e-mailed Melanie to no avail.

For her, a bit of reluctance had set in. "I wasn't ready to date yet," she said. "I had just ended a relationship."

Some three months later, the couple spotted each other at a Chanukah party and struck up a conversation.

"I was impressed that he was so nice to me after I hadn't returned his calls," Melanie said.

The two took a bike ride on the Pinellas Trail shortly thereafter and have been together ever since.

The couple now share a professional life as well. Both work for Harmony Home Health, a private-duty home health agency that Jonathan founded. Melanie also works for Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services, headquartered in Clearwater.

Both also are active in the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties, of which Jonathan is an executive board member.

On May 30 the couple plans to tie the knot in St. Petersburg, in a service conducted by Rabbi Gary Klein and Cantor Deborah Jacobson of Temple Ahavat Shalom in Palm Harbor.

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