

## Tales from a (married) broad

**Pearl Adler Saban**  
Special to The CJN

On Dec. 19, 1993, according to Jewish law, I became a Mrs. I stood under the chupah as our rabbi did his part, as our two witnesses did their parts, as seven of our guests did their parts, and as my husband-to-be said – and did – his part.

L'chaim! Ron and I were now partners. Joining forces to become one. Two halves becoming a whole. A pot that had found its lid.

I believed in these two mottoes and claimed them for myself:

- Good things come to those who wait.
- God saves the best for last. Happily, I have been repeating these affirmations for nearly 19 years.

Paradise Banquet Hall was the setting that day – kabalat panim, chupah and dinner all took place within its various, well-appointed social halls.

Isn't it oh-so-fitting to begin a marriage in paradise! In essence, you're there before even getting there. Upon being asked, "Where did you get married?" I like to be clever and jokingly reply, "I started married life in 'paradise'; it's been hell ever since."

Being a writer and editor, and working at the time for a publisher of romance fiction, I felt I just had to make a speech on my wedding day. Over the years, I had written speeches for other people to help mark their personal celebrations, be it anniversaries, bar mitzvahs, weddings or birthdays; finally I could write one for myself. My words were peppered with publishing



**Pearl and Ron under the chupah**

and literary references, and as I shared my thoughts with our families, our guests and my new husband, I had no doubt in my mind that our life together was going to become a well-loved bestseller.

Three children later, our lives were made even more complete.

I'm still writing and editing, but more importantly, I'm still turning the pages of that well-loved bestseller of mine... called marriage. Sometimes I'm forced to read between the lines, do some minor editing and rewrites if necessary, but I don't have to read too far ahead to know how the story plays out. The book's dust jacket says it all: "Easy to read. Likable characters who interact well. A simple – yet entertaining – story line, with its adventure, drama, humour and romance. A keeper!"

There used to be a poster on my wall at work, which read: "A good book is a wonder and a joy." To that I can add: "So is a good marriage!"

## Matchmaking service for secular Jews

**Carolyn Blackman**  
Staff Reporter

Rachel Zelunka is trying to fill a void in the Toronto social scene.

The 32-year-old wife of Rabbi Mark Zelunka, spiritual leader of Aish Campus Toronto, has started up findmysoulmate.ca, a matchmaking service for secular men and women of all ages.

The seeds for her service came about, she said, when she met singles attending Aish Campus events. "I always thought about setting them up, and I finally decided to do something about it."

She started by telling a few people about her service, and "it spread by word of mouth. I was shocked by the number of people that contacted me. [The service] has grown bigger than I anticipated. It has driven me to work harder."

Zelunka has received requests from people from other cities, she said, but because she conducts face-to-face initial interviews, they must come to Toronto to meet her.

She said she's been contacted by about

100 people, but she's still interviewing them and hasn't started matching them yet.

At the interview, she said, in addition to the usual questions such as religious background, lifestyle and interests, she delves into their past relationships.

"I try to get them to pinpoint where these relationships went wrong and coach them to be self-aware – what sets them off, what they like, what annoys them. [My theory is] is if you don't know who you are, you don't know who you want to be with."

She stresses that the service is not a dating site, "but an 'I want to get married or be in a long-term relationship' site. Members cannot browse other profiles, and everything is confidential."

When she meets two people she thinks may be right for each other, "and if they both agree, phone numbers are exchanged. I don't push people together just because they are available. That is not fair to anyone."

Zelunka said that although there is a charge for findmysoulmate.ca, it's not a business. "I do it purely for chesed. I like to see people get together."

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