

Jennifer Cochrane and Stuart Walsh



CATHERINE HERNANDEZ

Stuart prides himself on being a good judge of character. Perhaps that is why he found himself proposing to Jennifer on what was technically their sixth date — which happened just a year ago.

No, it wasn't a hasty shotgun wedding or a marriage made in desperation. It just happens that these two knew a good thing when they saw it, and decided to hit the road to the chapel with the pedal to the metal. So procrastinators and commitment-phobics beware: This tale serves as a lesson to be learned.

After the end of his first marriage, Stuart re-entered the dating scene through a matchmaking service. And he didn't take to it casually. Unlike many bachelors, who would rather stew in a vat of hot oil than get hitched, this charming fellow was ready and willing to commit.

Enter matchmaker Gloria MacDonald, who had the honour of informing Stuart that she had found him the perfect candidate — only she lived in Hamilton. Stuart, who at the time lived in King City, thought that distance shouldn't be a reason not to meet someone. So he went ahead. And he admits it was love at first sight.

"I confess that I found Jennifer extremely attractive when I first saw her," says Stuart. "But it was the recognition of the same core values that made me keen on her."

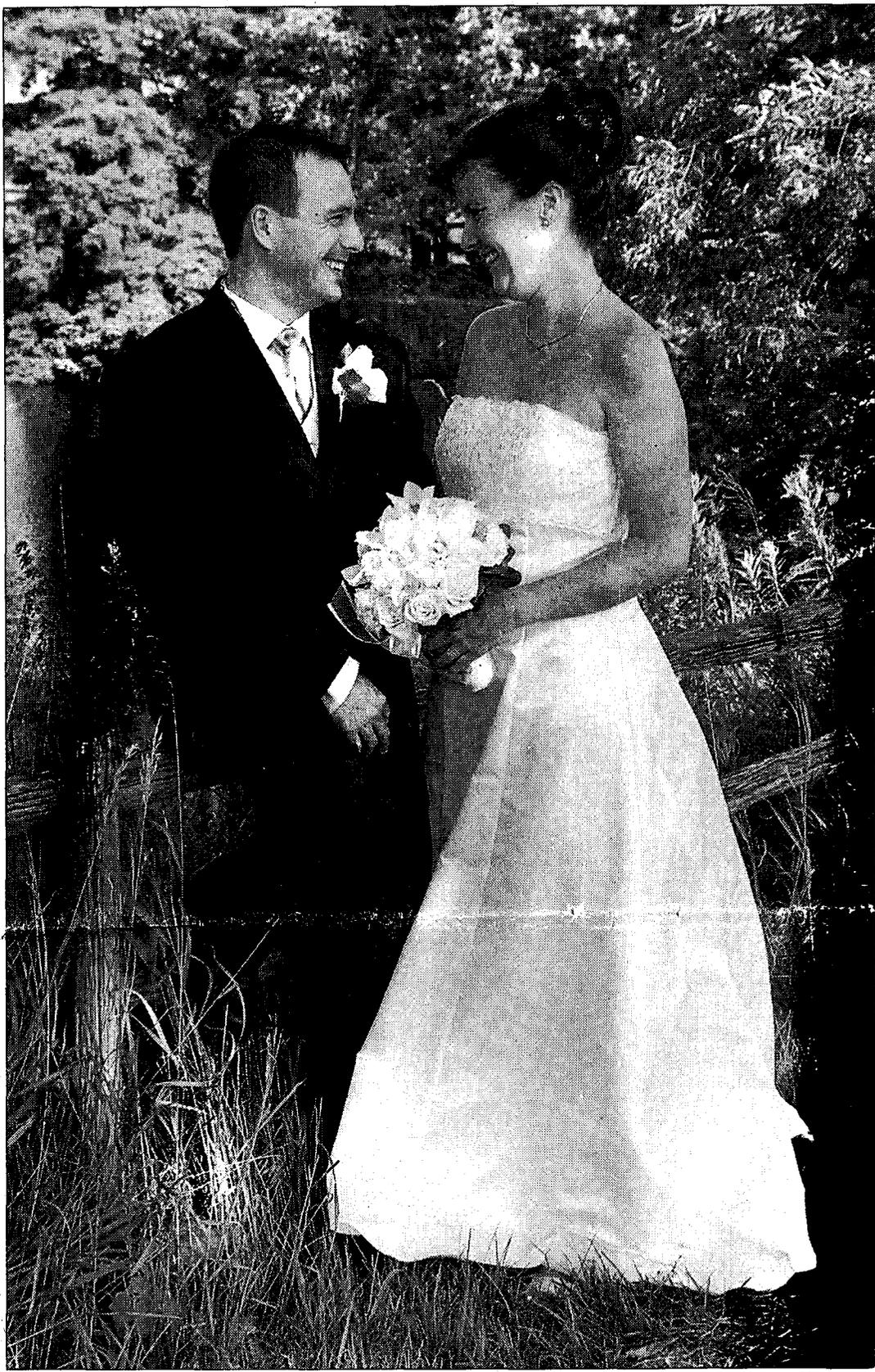
With their chemistry electric and their bond ever-growing, the pair began exchanging romantic e-mails, including one with a cryptic message from Stuart reading, "WYMM?" Understanding his sentiment, Jennifer coyly keyed back with, "Maybe. Can I have a month to think about it?" That was proposal number one.

Proposal number two occurred when they flew to the Bahamas for their sixth date. Although Stuart was itching to propose properly, he wasn't sure if he would have the nerve. Finally, on the last day of their four-day excursion, he picked up a coral ring from a local vendor and presented it to his girlfriend while they were enjoying a soak in their hot tub. Again, Jennifer responded with "Let me think about it."

The next day, while at the airport awaiting their departure, Jennifer sweetly whispered into Stuart's ear, "Yes, I'll marry you."

Stuart's formal proposal (number three, if you're counting) took place a few weeks later in Jennifer's office at Halton Health Care Services, where he presented her mother's refurbished engagement ring. Since her parents were both recently deceased, the sight of the ring brought tears to Jennifer's eyes.

At lightning speed, the two pulled together a wedding at the beautiful Angus Glen in Unionville on July 31. They had their heart set on a traditional outdoor wedding, but with inclement weather soaking their



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plans, the celebration was moved inside. Jennifer was pleasantly surprised when plan B ended up being just as charming, with their handy-dandy florist jazzing up the aisle at a moment's notice.

Accompanying the bride for her walk down that aisle were her loving grandparents, Herbert and Susan Rees. At the reception, Stuart surprised everyone with an animated presentation, complete with caricatures and photos. This tribute to his new wife also

served as a Meet the Groom 101 for Jennifer's relatives who needed to catch up on the couple's quick-paced courtship.

Now that Stuart and Jennifer are newlyweds, they look forward to settling down. But they're not settling for the easy life. They've just conceived their first baby, who is due in June. And as any new parent knows, there won't be any slowing down after that.

National Post

