

2010 Mazel Tov! *Jewish Wedding Guide*

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open bar. "I should have known something was up," Richard said.

He also realized, in retrospect, that four new planters had been arranged in a square on the deck. They later held the poles of the chuppah as the guests stood in the yard below to watch the ceremony.

The details of the surprise event had been carefully arranged.

"Matt and I showed up in our jeans," said Caroline. "Then we disappeared for an hour and came back in our wedding clothes."

The portable chuppah had been propped up against the side of the house, unnoticed by guests, and even the cake was camouflaged. Since a traditional wedding cake would have been a giveaway, the cake, shaped like a wild turkey, aptly fit the holiday.

Most of the guests were dressed for a typical Florida fall, some in shorts and sandals. Two of the bride's uncles, David and Richard Moore; the groom's sister, Julie Payne and the bride's sister, Lara Zielin, supported the chuppah. Everything happened so fast that Richard barely had time to put down his cigar.

"At the appointed time we told everyone to go outside," said Janet Kass. "We had started to line up behind the garage."

Husband Michael, she said, went out on the patio and made an announcement: "We have a rabbi, we have music, we have the family—let's have a wedding."

Caroline and Matt, who met on J-date in October of 2008, said they look to the lives of their parents for examples of successful marriages.

"Both sets of parents have been married for more than 40 years," Caroline said. "We have good role models."

... and for the friends

When friends of the Kass family learned daughter Caroline had recently become engaged, the inevitable question was, "When is the wedding?" The planned answer was "Jan. 16, 2010." That, though, was never meant to be the actual wedding date.

Instead it was an event to let friends in on the surprise.

"We set up the reception for that date ahead of time," said Caroline, "but didn't actually plan the party until December, after the wedding."

The invitation to the dinner-dance reception at a Tampa hotel shocked friends much as the surprise



Newlyweds Caroline and Matt Schwartz display their ketubah.

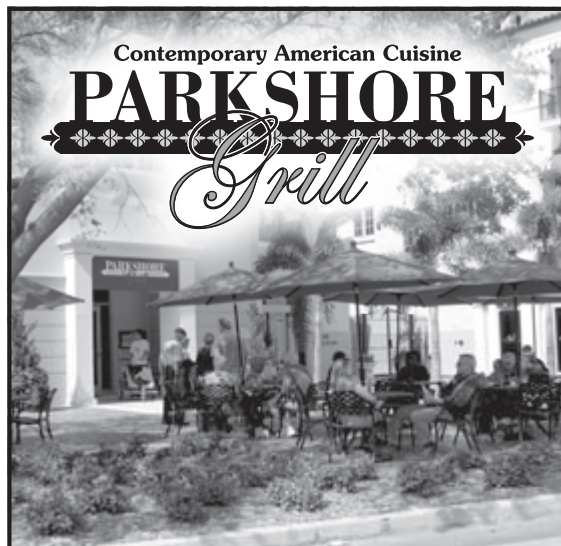
Photos by JoePhoto, Tampa

wedding had shocked family. Unlike the Thanksgiving dinner guests who only expected turkey, trimmings and family fun, the 200 plus guests invited to the reception initially expected a wedding.

Then the invitation arrived, "We got married! Come celebrate with us."

The secret was out all around.

"It was all lots of fun," said Caroline, who is employed by Bank of America. Matt is an attorney with Financial Services Institute in Tampa and is involved with securities regulations.



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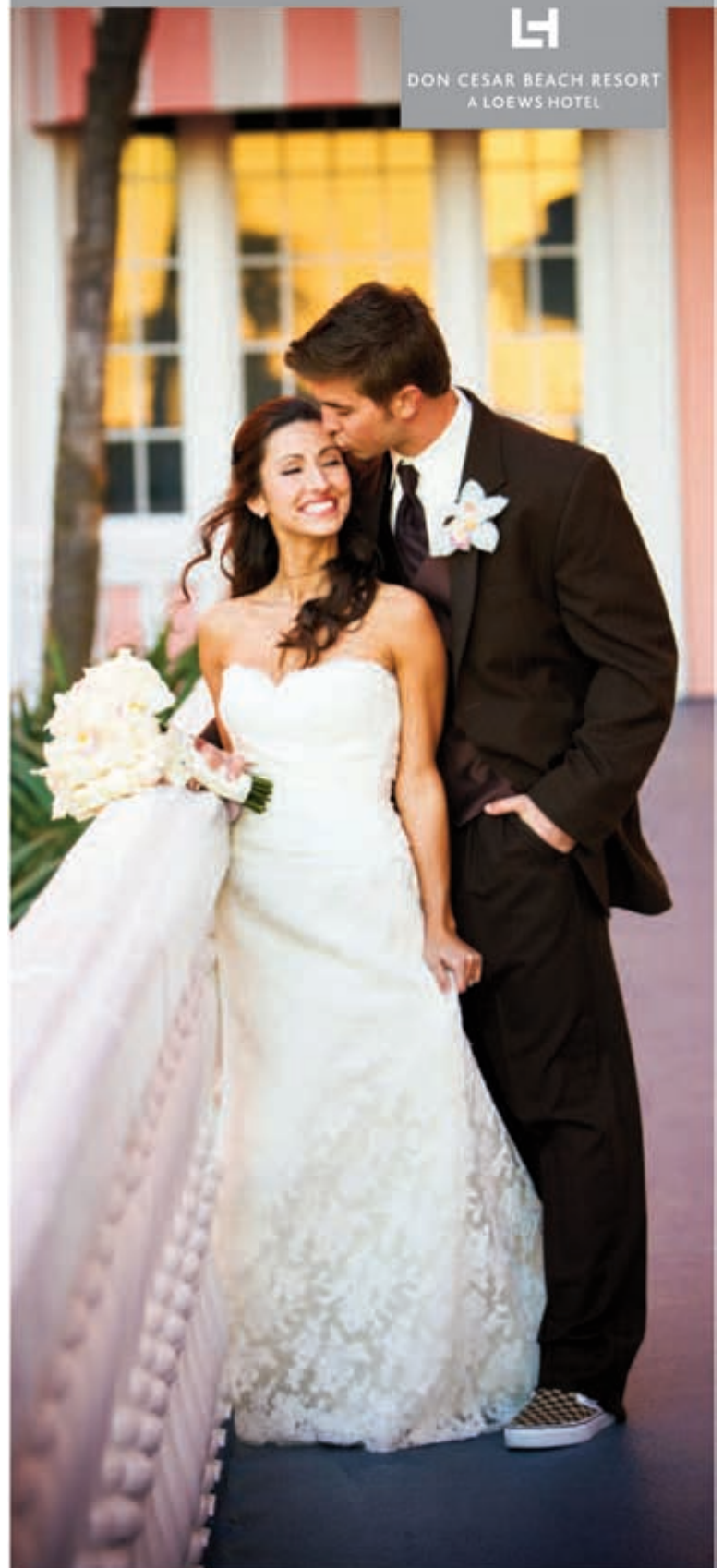
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