

Falling in Love

in the Digital Age

Fort Bend couples who met online, fell in love, and are living happily ever after

Written by Kennan Buckner | Select photography by Elahe Alam

People used to think that to meet Mr. or Ms. Right, you'd have to run into them by chance, be introduced to them by a friend, or have been high school sweethearts. Today, meeting your spouse online isn't unheard of. In fact, the trend is growing. Fort Bend residents share how they met their match through a new kind of introduction - online dating sites - and are enjoying the journey of a lifetime with their loving spouses.

David & Amy Simmons

Met: Yahoo Personals in 2004

Married: April 20, 2005

Sugar Lander David Simmons works as an IT professional for Centerpoint Energy, and Amy is a stay-at-home mom. Though many would think the couple should have known each other, as they both are graduates of Kempner High School, they didn't actually meet until joining Yahoo Personals in 2004.

Amy says, "I chose the unconventional method of meeting someone because I was older and traveled a lot so it was the most convenient way to meet new people." The Simmons met online when the trend was just becoming

popular, and many of their family and friends were still very skeptical of the process. "We started out as just friends and communicating via messages, and then we got each other's phone numbers," says Amy.



Amy and David Simmons were married in 2005 at Oak Lake Baptist Church

The couple didn't even know they went to the same high school until after they'd been talking a while. David graduated in 1994; Amy graduated in 1995. "After a few phone conversations, we were talking and realized we had gone to the same high school, had the same friends, and hung out at the same places," Amy recalls.

The couple met in person about three weeks after sharing phone numbers. "I was a little nervous, but knew we had a lot in common and knew a lot of the same people - so I was excited just the same," says Amy. Though the pair likely crossed paths many times in their younger years, they see the perfect timing in meeting when they were both a little older. Amy says, "The world is a small place, but I guess the timing wasn't right when we were in high school."

David proposed on Thanksgiving Day in 2004 with both of their families to witness the special occasion. The pair married in April 2005.

“He did the little things that counted. He would send me flowers if I was having a bad day just to make me smile, or he would take a day off to spend time with me.”

- Amy Simmons



Amy and David both attended Kempner High School and even had some friends in common, but did not meet until joining an online dating site



Digital Love Stories

“I met my husband in a Talk City chat room in 1998. We married in 1998. We married in 2002. Now, we’ve been married 12 years and still going strong.”

- C. Eubanks

“I met my hubby in July 2002, and we were married in June 2004. We met on match.com.”

- C. Price

“My husband and I met online. We’ve been together since 2005, married June 2006.”

- K. Vela

Jason and Christine Watson spent time getting to know each other via email for several months before meeting in person

“If you don’t have a bunch of social activities that give you a chance to meet people, it’s a great way to meet people and remain anonymous until you don’t want to be anonymous anymore.”

- Jason Watson



“It was magically perfect,” says Amy. They got married at her parent’s church in Sugar Land, Oak Lake Baptist, and had a reception at Sweetwater Country Club.

The couple has been married nine years and has three children Blake, Mikayla, and Aubree. Amy says, “We look forward to our future and celebrating many more years of marriage.”

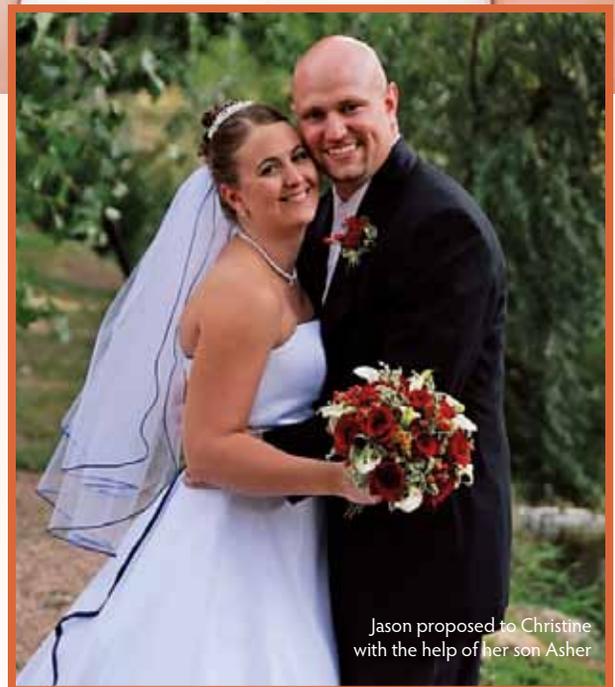
She advises others thinking of joining an online dating site to “take your time, fill out your profile, and tell what you are looking for so that you only get the responses that you would really be interested in. Good things can come of this method; you just need to stay positive. It may not be the first guy you meet online, but he’s out there. Most importantly, be honest!”

Jason & Christine Watson

Met: Yahoo Personals in 2006

Married: September 3, 2007

With hectic work schedules, young professionals can find themselves in a social circle rut - making it difficult to meet new people. Jason and Christine Watson took a chance in 2006 by joining an online dating service. “We met on Yahoo Personals. I don’t think it’s even around anymore,” says Christine.



Jason proposed to Christine with the help of her son Asher

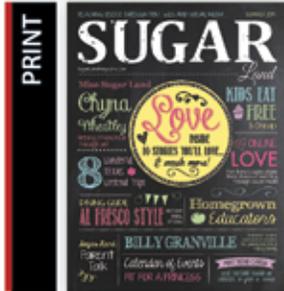
With a busy work schedule, Jason shares, “I had limited social time, so meeting someone outside of the workplace wasn’t the easiest possibility.” Christine was working full-time and was the single mom of a toddler, Asher. “How does one meet good people like that?” she says. “Going out to meet people wasn’t easy. I didn’t have the time or energy just to date around.”

Shortly thereafter, Christine’s profile caught Jason’s eye. Christine recalls, “Jason found my profile online and

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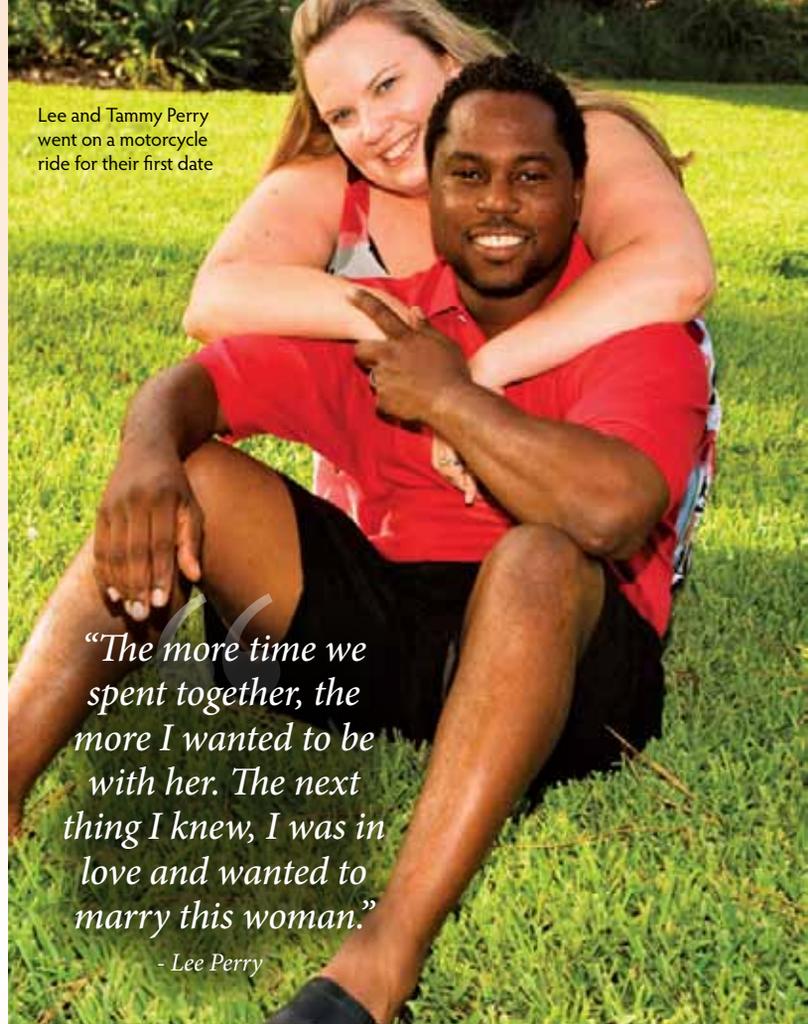
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decided to send me a message. We began emailing back and forth for a few months.” The couple spent time getting to know each other’s likes, hobbies, work, and family for about eight weeks before picking up the phone. “I decided after the second time he asked me out that I was comfortable enough to meet him in person,” says Christine.

When their first date plans fell through, they came up with something else on the spot. The couple went bowling, which proved to be a great ice breaker. Christine remembers Jason slipping on the slick alley floors and ending up on his rear end at least once. Christine says, “We laughed a lot that night.”

It took a few dates for her to realize he was husband material. “But once I finally introduced him to my son and realized what an amazing person he was, with a strong faith in God and commitment to his family, it was obvious,” says Christine. “For the first time I really understood when people say, ‘When you know, you just know.’”

Jason made a secret trip to Christine’s parents’ in Iowa to ask for their permission to marry their daughter. The following weekend, Jason took Christine and Asher to one of their favorite pizza places. Afterwards, with the help of Asher, he got down on one knee and popped the question. “I was completely surprised, and of course said, ‘yes,’” remembers Christine.



Lee and Tammy Perry went on a motorcycle ride for their first date

“The more time we spent together, the more I wanted to be with her. The next thing I knew, I was in love and wanted to marry this woman.”

- Lee Perry

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As a wife, Christine strives to respect her husband, as Jason seeks to love her. Christine says, "We keep our faith in God the center of our marriage, and having this commonality is key to our happy household." Both are excited about their family's future. "Having kids around makes everything more fun as well," adds Christine. The couple now has three children: Asher, Taylor, Kellen, and a fourth child due in October. Christine reminds others considering online dating, "If you're shy or nervous about dating, or really short on time, it's the way to go. Plus, I feel that social networking branches out so much farther than our small circles of family and friends can take us."

Lee & Tammy Perry

Met: BBPeopleMeet in 2008
Married: June 25, 2008

With no time for finding a second chance at love, Lee Perry says, "It was difficult to meet someone with similar interests that wanted the same things out of life." He decided to join bbpeoplemeet.com, where he met Tammy. He didn't hesitate joining an online dating site. "It was something different and new, and with our previous experience, why not?"

Lee recalls, "I sent Tammy a message, and we exchanged emails and talked online for a few weeks before meeting." On their first date, they went on a motorcycle ride and hit it off. "We had a good time and enjoyed each other's company," says Lee. "If I remember correctly, Tammy was the one that asked me for a kiss at the end of the date."

Lee was already thinking about marriage well before Tammy was, but she quickly came around. "I realized Lee was 'the one' not just from the way he treated me, but how he treated my son," says Tammy. "Plus, we both wanted the same thing - a family. I could see from the way he bonded with my son that he would be a good father."

"When we actually decided to get married, we didn't want a big wedding since this is the second go-round for both of us," recalls Lee. "We just want to dive in and start a family right away." The couple went to the Justice of the Peace and hosted a small party at their house for their family and friends afterwards.

The couple now has three children, Christian, Lil' Lee, and Reece. "Tammy and I have been married for six years in June, and we've been through a lot as a family." Some of their challenges have been job changes, relocations, and medical issues with their youngest son who was diagnosed with spina bifida. "But through it all, we've been strong together," he says. "Tammy has sacrificed a lot for the family. She has been my best friend, strongest supporter, and my rock." **SLM**



KENNAN BUCKNER's life was forever changed in 2010 when she joined eHarmony on a free weekend and was matched with Marcus, her husband of three years.

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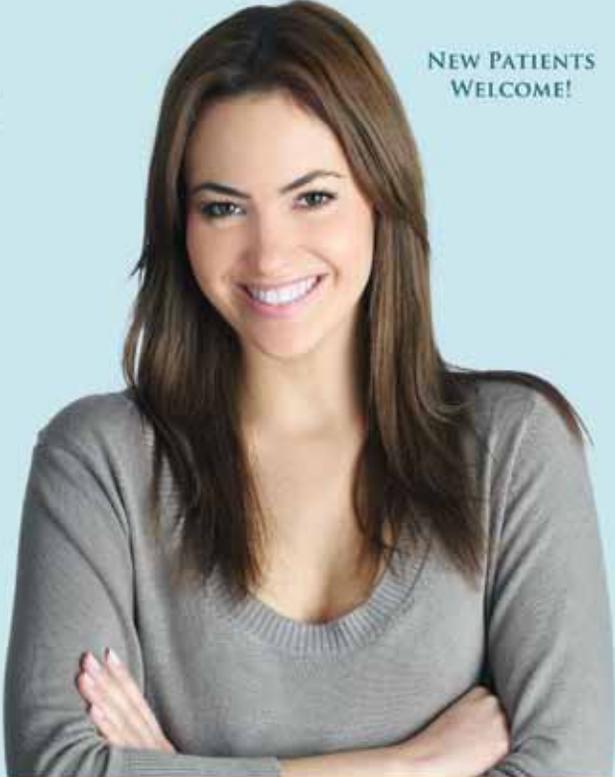
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