

RELEASE IN PART B6

**From:** H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 15, 2011 11:39 PM  
**To:** 'sbwhoep [redacted]'  
**Subject:** Re: H: Now, this is really important. Sid

That is fabulous--mazel tov!

**From:** sbwhoep [redacted] [mailto:sbwhoep [redacted]]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 14, 2011 09:27 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** H: Now, this is really important. Sid

Part of your letter to my mother and my new step-father was read by the rabbi at their wedding ceremony. The Chicago TV stations were there and broadcast it as one of the top stories that night. Here's the Chicago Tribune story:

[http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-07-06/news/ct-x-0706-elder-marriage-20110706\\_1\\_first-date-young-couples-pandora](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-07-06/news/ct-x-0706-elder-marriage-20110706_1_first-date-young-couples-pandora)

## Couple, 90 and 86, 'lucky to have found each other'

July 06, 2011|By Bonnie Miller Rubin, Tribune reporter

Claire Blumenthal and Bernard Miller can barely contain their excitement as the hours tick down to their wedding. They show off their formal invitations, her sapphire and diamond engagement ring, and her elegant chiffon gown.

"I had to protect her reputation," said the 90-year-old Miller, explaining why he proposed to the 86-year-old Blumenthal. "People were beginning to talk."

On Thursday, the widow and widower will exchange vows at Am Shalom Synagogue in Glencoe before some 200 guests who have come from as far as Japan, London and Korea to bask in the uplifting message that love is possible at any age. No one knows if they're the oldest to tie the knot because Illinois doesn't track marriages by age, according to the state's Vital Records office. But according to Census Bureau data and anecdotal evidence from senior communities, the number of older couples saying "I do" is inching upward, though still very small.

In the twilight years, why bother marrying at all? All too often, a late-in-life trip down the aisle opens a Pandora's box, from adult children not getting along with their new step-parent to inheritance issues. Financial advisers often push clients to live together without benefit of clergy, and even when everyone is thrilled, the near future will almost certainly be filled with illness and loss.

None of that seems to trouble these two. With 116 years of matrimony between them, they know what they're getting into — and Blumenthal's response differs little from any dewy young bride.

"We just seem to fit," she said from her comfortable Lincolnwood condo, where family photos and other mementos — including a framed congratulatory letter from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton — grace the walls. "We have a lot of fun together."

The last decade has taught the couple to embrace the good times. In 2002, Blumenthal lost both her son Edward and her husband, Hy. Miller's wife, Judy, died in 2008 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

"I was lonely," he admitted.

A friend suggested that he call Blumenthal. Their first date was Oct. 13, 2009, a dinner that lasted for hours. While they knew each other casually, they discovered mutual friends, careers — he was in commercial real estate, she in residential — and a love of the arts and politics.

Blumenthal told him about her two surviving children: Sidney, 62, an author and senior adviser to former President Bill Clinton; and Marcia Fields, 60, a Winnetka attorney. Miller filled her in on his son, Anthony, 54, an Asian-based fund manager. Their respective journeys had followed such similar arcs that, as young couples in 1947, they had even lived in the same Winthrop Avenue apartment building in Chicago.

And when it came time to take his date home, Miller wrapped her in his arms and kissed her.

"I learned during my military career that you must be aggressive," said the World War II veteran, explaining his strategy.

"I was a little surprised," she admitted. "But Bernie is a really good kisser."

From that moment, they started spending time together, going on what they call little adventures: concerts, theater, movies, current events groups and travel. Each says they were drawn to the other's intellect and energy.

Soon, they became "an item" around the Lincolnwood complex, prompting talk from the neighbors — and Miller's decision on Jan. 15 to get down on one creaky knee and propose.

"Why not?" asked the bride. "I don't need his money, he doesn't need mine. We're very lucky to have found each other."

Miller interjects, "You can't be a *mensch* unless you're married," he said, using the Yiddish word for "person of character."

Both families say they are delighted with the arrangement. Fields carries the "save the date" card in her purse, ready to be whipped out at a moment's notice. The juxtaposition of the couple's aged faces alongside a nuptials announcement elicits a smile every time, she said.

Perhaps that is why only two guests have sent their regrets. Even peripheral acquaintances hoped to be invited to the ceremony — followed by dinner, dancing and lots of champagne. The newlyweds will honeymoon in Sweden.

"For all of us, this has been like sunlight on the human condition," Fields said. "That no matter the stage of life, happiness is within our reach."

Miller says he loves finally having a daughter. His son, Anthony — an only child — has started calling Fields "sis."

Only after making it legal will the groom move from his Lake Shore Drive apartment into Blumenthal's home. If the couple had decided to live together but not made plans to marry, the bonds wouldn't be the same, Fields acknowledged. "I wouldn't feel like Bernie is really my stepdad."

Matrimony is growing among older folks, largely due to our increasing life span without disability, said Stephanie Coontz, author of "Marriage, A History."