

# The great boyfriend hunt



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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Have a question or comment about the single life in Chattanooga? E-mail Cari Gervin at [CGervin@TFPCCommunityNews.com](mailto:CGervin@TFPCCommunityNews.com). In coming days, she'll answer her mail in a blog at [www.timesfreepress.com](http://www.timesfreepress.com).

I'm not a big fan of New Year's resolutions.



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To me, it seems like any day is a good time to make a change in your life — to get in shape, to start giving more money to charity, to stop getting annoyed by tourists who drive really slowly.

Then again, back when I regularly made resolutions, I never kept them. Of course, when one of your resolutions is "Get a boyfriend!!", it's no wonder.

## Finding love takes more than a resolution

That was one of my goals, exclamations points and all, for the year 1991. I was in eighth grade and clearly had no clue how relationships worked.

I don't know how I even could have had a boyfriend then, because looking back through my old journal, where the above resolution was written, I had a crush on a different boy in every entry.

Perhaps it's not surprising then that no boy ever looked my way.

I really don't know what I was thinking — that I would resolutely wait for someone to notice that my haircut wasn't as atrocious as it had been the previous year? That if I bent off enough tabs on soda cans on the 10th try, my crush whose name started with the initial J would actually like me back?

I have no idea what I would have even done with a boyfriend at age 14, except hang out at the mall. But in 1992, the ridiculous resolution was the same (albeit with only one exclamation point).

Similar resolutions followed over the next few years, morphing from the 10th-grade resolution to "have a long-term relationship (at least one month)" to the exhortation of my sophomore year in college to "fall in love w/someone who also loves me and have a nice

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# Boyfriend

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relationship.”

Needless to say, that year, 1997, I had my heart ripped apart as if by wild boars.

That year was the last in which I regularly kept a journal, and so the end of my resolutions and my quest to find love on demand.

I had forgotten all of my younger idiocy until recently, when I realized that for an increasing number of women — at least, if the self-help section at Barnes and Noble near Hamilton Place mall is any measure — finding a husband is a popular resolution.

I personally can't imagine setting out to find a husband within a year. It's hard enough to find someone I would even want to go out with more than once.

But last year, that was the resolution of one of my best friends, and she is hardly alone. She decided that in 2005 she would find the man with whom she would spend the rest of her life by her birthday in the late fall.

She stuck to it for months, asking all of her friends to set her up with their other single friends. After months of unsuccessful dates, she finally met a guy that she was convinced was “the One.”

Unfortunately he dumped her

not long after her birthday deadline. Over dinner in November, she gnashed her teeth in frustration.

“I just don't get it, I keep putting myself out there, and I'm not finding anyone at all!” she said with exasperation.

As we are still in our late 20's, I suspect the problem is simply that many men our age are still not ready to settle down. The guys I know don't meet a woman and automatically think, “Is she wife material?” All of my female friends do.

Yet according to a number of books, you can indeed find a potential mate and convince him to propose within a 365-day period. All it will take is things like high heels, eyelash extensions and a willingness to give up kissing.

Seriously, one book that recently crossed my desk advocated not kissing a man until he proposed to you. When a man attempts to press his lips to yours at the end of a date, you are supposed to offer your cheek and tell him, “I don't believe in casual kissing.”

I tried this on my last date. Unfortunately, I had already kissed the fellow, and he looked at me like I was insane and said, “What are you talking about?” Then he kissed me.

Another book advocated getting your makeup professionally applied before your first date and keeping a top-shelf bar stocked to impress any man who

stops by your place.

(This was also the book that advocated eyelash extensions. Do men even notice eyelashes? I'm not sure. Will you catch me out of my house without mascara? No.)

As an ardent feminist, these books disturb me because they imply that if you aren't married by a certain age, then you are a failure. But as I read through them I realized that the books are really less about dating and marriage and more about marketing.

This is what our consumer culture has come to — marriage is not about true love, it is about rebranding yourself and selling your image to someone who can provide financial security.

Maybe there's something to this method. But I think I'll stick with that old standby, being myself.

And as far as me having any resolutions this year, it's to start saving money. (It is very dangerous to have an office a block away from the Coach outlet.) Of course, that was one of my resolutions back in 1997.

Who keeps their New Year's resolutions, anyway?