

# KENDALL GAZETTE

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## Stories of Love on Display at The Palace Renaissance

BY KERRY PHILLIPS

Vintage wedding photos, dating back to the 1940s are bringing back fond memories for residents and families of The Palace Renaissance, an assisted living community.

In honor of February being the “month of love,” a poignant exhibit of residents’ wedding photos is on display, capturing the stories of war-time brides, young love and decades’ long romances.

“Recognizing their loved ones in the display seems to bring tears to families and the residents,” said director of activities Maggie Miranda, who spent a month collecting and editing photos for the display. “We sometimes forget the former lives of older adults. But, this serves as a reminder that they have amazing stories, filled with love and romance that embody the spirit of Valentine’s Day.”

The Valentine exhibit will be on display at The Renaissance, located at 11355 SW 84 St. in Miami, through Feb. 29.

### Among the love stories featured are:

Ana and Daniel Ortiz were married on June 25, 1955. When they wed, Ana had recently graduated from high school and Daniel had completed four years of service in the U.S. Navy as a deep-sea diver and photographer. Unlike many wives in the '50s, Ana was not a stay-at-home mom to the couple’s four sons. She managed the household and children while attending Hunter College, graduating Phi Beta Kappa with a dual major in Education and Anthropology.

Irma and Armando Hernandez have been married for 50 years. A coincidental meeting in a parking lot which their companies shared resulted in their marriage six months later. Irma knew Armando was the one because of the way he treated her. They raised their family in Miami where Armando’s parents lived. Irma visits Armando every day now that he needs assisted living and lives at The Palace



Pictured (l-r) are residents Irma and Armando Hernandez; Maggie Miranda, director of activities, and Erika Ruiz, an assistant in The Palace Renaissance's Activity Department.

Renaissance. The keys to their longevity have been respect and love for your partner.

Magnolia and Francisco “Rene” Gutierrez met in Havana in the late 1940s. He was an engineering student at the University of Havana and she was in high school. Her parents agreed to the relationship on the condition they were chaperoned. Before they were married, Magnolia insisted on finishing her education and graduated from La Universidad de La Habana with a PhD in pedagogy. They had two children and immigrated to the U.S. in 1964 to escape the Castro regime, first settling in Union City, NJ and later moved to Miami.

They were married for 49 years and loved music, dancing, traveling and family gatherings.

Zenaida and Nicasio Alonso were neighborhood sweethearts. Their son, Nick Alonso, tells the story that Nicasio

knew Zenaida would be his wife. They married on Sept. 29, 1960 and had three children. The family now includes eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. When asked if Nicasio ever looked at another woman, he would say that Zenaida was everything for him, but that it never hurt to look! They were married for 40 years.

Harriet, now widowed, met Gus Wenzel met at a dance for soldiers in Richmond, VA. She said she was hooked from the moment she saw his blue eyes. They were married on Sept. 11, 1948.

The exhibit is open from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. If you would like to visit, call **305-270-7000**.

The Palace Renaissance is part of a continuum of care offered at The Palace Kendall campus that also includes independent living as well as skilled nursing and rehabilitation. To learn more, visit [www.ThePalace.org](http://www.ThePalace.org).