

Economist & Sun/Sun-Tribune

DIVERSIONS

Not looking for love

Singles in local groups taking it slow

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Good news for men in mid-life entering York Region's singles scene: there are more women than men at local singles events.

But men trying to pick up women they just met will likely be disappointed. The women say they are more interested in meeting other women.

Maureen Quinn, a credit consultant in her late 40s who joined a club called Single Horizons, enjoys the group's many activities but says they're not geared toward finding members a date or mate.

Instead, she says, the club is a good way for men and women to meet other single people. Members say romantic involvement, if it happens, will develop over time or through the introductions of other members.

You might meet a friend of theirs, a brother of theirs. Tonight, I'm going to a dance class with a bunch of people from the club, says Ms. Quinn, a Thornhill resident who agreed to go on a dinner date with another member after the man pledged \$225 last week end at a "bachelor and bachelorette" auction for charity.

Most Single Horizons members are open to dating someone from the club, says Elaine Cooper, 47, a customer service representative who also attends single events in the Jewish community, activities of her one-parent family group in Richmond Hill, dances for single professionals and sessions of a brunch club she started.

"I think most people are mature enough to realize it takes time," she says.

Some people after being separated, widowed or divorced, go through the crazy time doing things out of character, out of their personality. Other people, they may be withdrawn, she said.

Then people find what they most want is companionship, Ms. Cooper says.

Women tend to join singles activities with friends, but men don't.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE ADLER

Ms. Cooper recognizes it is frightening for men to join on their own, but says club members try to put them at ease.

Elvio Paziienza, 41, and divorced three years ago, found it difficult to go to his first Single Horizons event.

"I'm not a very social person," says the Woodbridge man, a purchaser for an automotive company who tried online dating but rarely received a response from women he contacted. "It didn't make sense to me."

Mr. Paziienza says he made a New Year's resolution last year to just get out and do stuff, and has enjoyed himself a lot more since. "I just got fed up with being home."

Club president LeeAnn Jensen of Markham says men are less willing to try new things or plan in advance for group activities, which at Single Horizons range from comedy nights to something called "llama trekking," in which the large mammals are led by participants but not ridden.

Men "are a little lazy," adds Ms. Jensen, 41, who met her fiance at a club event three months after she started Single Horizons in February 2001. "Women will go. Yep, I'm going to try a canoe."

Speed dating, that pastime of urban twentysomethings, is available here in the suburbs for a surprisingly mature clientele.

Three-quarters of people who turn up for speed dates — in which they can experience 10

See EXPECTING, page 18.



Christina Spence-Maharajh

Kitchen Crafts 'n' More

Lavender spray soothing

Today, I walked into a lavender specialty shop and one whiff of that delicious odour reminded me why it's still the most popular aromatherapy scent — it really does calm your nerves and promote a sense of relaxation. Plus, it just smells great.

Today's easy project is excellent to spray on your bed linens or to use as a calming room spray.

Lavender Room and Linen Spray

1 cup distilled water

2 tablespoons vodka

1/4 teaspoon pure lavender essential oil

2-3 drops rosemary or peppermint essential oil, optional

Combine distilled water, vodka and essential oils. Using just the pure lavender oil is wonderful, but for a more complex scent, add a few drops of either peppermint or rosemary essential oil.

Pour into a clean spray bottle and label. Don't use bottles that contained other chemicals. Shake well before use.

Use as a room and linen spray, or you can even spray a gentle mist on to clean clothes before you iron them to infuse them with the natural scent of lavender.

It's nice to spray a bit of this soothing mixture on pillows and sheets before bed to encourage a natural, restful sleep.

This makes a beautiful gift, or an ideal addition to a homemade gift basket. Add a lightly scented bath powder and a couple of luxury soaps and you have an inexpensive and wonderful bath basket.

Christina Spence-Maharajh is a freelance writer who specializes in crafts and creations. She can be reached at newsroom@erabanner.com or to The Era-Banner, 580 Steven Crt., Newmarket, ON, L3Y 4X1.

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