

Single seniors search for companions

By Sharon Dargay
staff writer

DATING TEENAGERS cruise out to the local burger restaurant after the school dance. Yuppies take their sweethearts to

wine and cheese tasting parties after a night at the theater.

Where does the over-60 set make the singles scene?

"The same places you young people go," laughed a Rochester senior citizen.

"The theater, to dinner. A lot of

senior centers are not for singles. If you sit down and talk to someone in-

cessently, his wife may be sitting there right next to him. You don't

want to cause any problems." The woman, who asked to remain anonymous, said she prefers singles clubs like Singles II, the Rochester

group for unmarried people over age 35.

"If anyone goes to a singles group looking for a mate, they're nuts," she said, noting that at some singles groups "they couple up."

"I don't think that's the point of singles groups. The majority of people who go to senior centers are too old for me."

But some older singles often find companionship, sometimes acquire dates and occasionally mates, through senior centers.

"SENIOR CITIZENS aren't looking for lasting relationships. They're looking for companionship — someone to go out to dinner with or dancing," said Marye Miller, director of the Older Persons Center, Rochester.

"They want to have fun but they want to have it with the opposite sex. I think there are a lot of seniors who look toward their churches (for social activities). The centers do bring in a lot of single seniors. The dances can start relationships where other programs can't."

Cards, woodworking and billiards attract men to the Rochester center where women make up about 60 percent of its attendance.

"The ones that dance at our place on Fridays go from senior center to senior center," noted Loretta Conway, director of the senior group at Mercy Center in Farmington Hills. "That's how I find that people meet."

Throughout the area, seniors could go five days a week to the centers. They're a lively group. We have them come all the way from the east side to dances.

Senior citizens come from as far away as Mount Clemens to attend dances at the Southfield Senior Activities Center.

Phyllis Havard, faculty supervisor for the center, said the Friday afternoon dances draw upwards of 100 people, many of whom bring dates or hope to meet eligible members of the opposite sex.

Many pair off into couples, although "snowball" dances encourage participants to meet others. Dating couples often dine after the dance or head for the movies.

"It's a real date. It's just like they're 40 and 50 years younger. They have girlfriends and boyfriends here. Some are real possessive," Havard said.

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— Marye Miller
Director, Older Persons Center

Fred Wertheimer, a member of the Clawson-Troy Elks, described himself as a ballroom dancer.

He and his wife, Helvi, prefer YMCA and fraternal club dances, like those at the Elks Club, to senior center events.

The Warren couple dance their way from Ann Arbor to St. Clair Shores, stepping out nearly every night of the week.

"The Troy senior center dance was too crowded. We like to dance, but there the rest of the people just carry you along," he said with a laugh.

"It's like Bingo. Some people get out before breakfast and up chairs over at the tables to save a place to sit."

Considering himself a young 80 years old, he avoids events that draw "fuddy-duddies."

But Conway noted that many older single seniors socialize at activities centers because "it's a nice safe place."

Maefield Kaganac, 75, Bloomfield Hills, admitted that Mature Mingle, Birmingham's senior activities center, draws mostly singles age 70 and over.

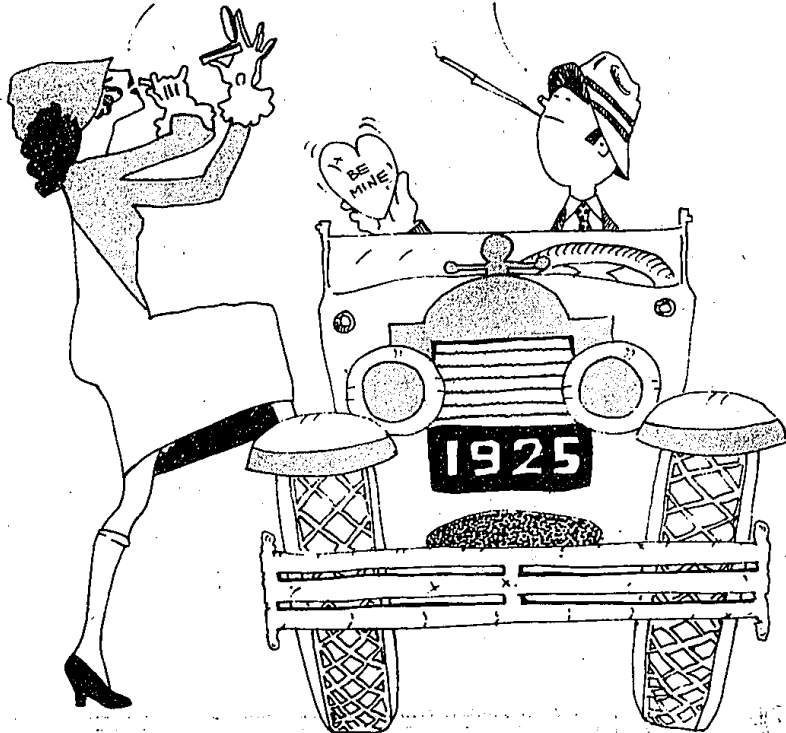
"The ones who are 55 and 60 come in and do volunteer work. And they like the idea of the sociability of the group," she said.

"The best place to meet them (men) would be playing cards or billiards. The ladies here would like the companionship," she said.

"But there aren't that many men out there. The ratio's about 2 to 10."

If we're roarin' in the 20's...

...Will we be boarin' in the 80's?



short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33263 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

ON THE MOVE

Nancy Salter of Farmington Hills, planning and development officer in Comerica's Corporate Human Resources Department.

She joined the corporation in 1978 as a management trainee. Since then, she has held positions of increasing responsibility.

SHE'S PROMOTED

Real Estate One has promoted Erin Walsh to business administrator of the company's Training Center at 28711 Northwestern Highway, Southfield.

The Farmington Hills resident joined the company in 1986 as an administrative assistant.

She is responsible for analyzing and coordinating all operations of Real Estate One's Training Center, which offers pre-license as well as advanced real estate courses.

Before joining Real Estate One, she was office manager of a produce company in Austin, Tex.

Real Estate One is the largest privately owned real estate company in Michigan.

HE'S ELECTED

H. Perry Driggs, vice president and treasurer of Farmington Hills-based Michigan National Corp., was elected secretary of the Michigan State University Foundation.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

WRIF-FM has added Linda Skuratovic to the sales staff.

The Farmington Hills resident previously handled retail sales of industrial plant advertising.

NAMED TREASURER

Kay Vito of Farmington Hills was named treasurer of the Michigan Tile & Marble Co., Detroit.

Says company president John Lanzetta: "This appointment has been made in recognition of Vito's outstanding ability and faithful service. It is the first time in the 45-year history of MT&M someone other than a member of the Lanzetta family has been entrusted with this financial responsibility."

Michigan Tile & Marble Co. fabricates and installs marble, granite and slate.

BRANCHING OUT

Robert Taylor of Farmington Hills, owner of Herb Taylor & Son Landscaping, was named a director to the executive board of the Michigan Association of Nurserymen at its annual convention in Grand Rapids.

MONEY RAISER

James McLaughlin of Farmington was named director of annual giving for the Providence Hospital Foundation, fund raising arm of Providence Hospital, Southfield.

He had been associate director of development for the foundation. He previously served as director, development and public relations, for Boyville of Michigan and as capital campaign coordinator for the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce.

NEW LOCATION

Kitchen Creations in the Village Mall in downtown Farmington has moved to a larger shop — still in the Village Mall but around the corner on Farmington Road.

With larger quarters, Kitchen Creations has added helium balloons for every occasion. It delivers bouquets of balloons, party hats, glasses, party favors and a beverage, depending on the occasion. It has non-alcoholic champagne for those who prefer or for those younger than 21.

EXPERT HONORED

The partners of Arthur Young & Co. and Drs. Bea and Phil Kalisch honored Lynda Carpenito of LJC Consultants, New Jersey, at a reception in the Kalisch's Farmington Hills home.

Lynda Carpenito is a renowned national and international nursing expert on nursing diagnoses, clinical care planning and clinical research strategies. Her many honors and recognitions include two Book of the Year Awards in 1984 for Nursing Diagnosis/Application to Clinical Practice.

Dr. Kalisch, who directs Nursing Consultation at Arthur Young, is a

Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and has co-authored several books and numerous articles. She is currently editor of an on-going book series, Studies in Nursing Management, and involved in a study of the nursing shortage.

NEW IN TOWN

The Professional Business School of Travel, at 28229 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills, offers a comprehensive travel career training program in 10 weeks.

The school is licensed by the Michigan Department of Education. Its approved curriculum consists of 120 clock hours.

Classes are taught by Thomas Schlavi, owner of Sanders Travel Consultants, Inc., and Jan Kaplan. Both are certified instructors.

Placement is available with local agencies, airlines and tour operators.

Classes start March 23 and June 8.

For a free catalogue, call the Professional Business School of Travel: 855-2820.

ASSISTANT VP

National Bank of Detroit has promoted Michael Culp of Farmington Hills to assistant vice president in its Eastern Metropolitan Regional Banking Division.

Culp, an NBD employee for three years, serves as a loan officer for commercial accounts of NBD affiliate, NBD Troy Bank.

SPECIAL SALE

During February and March, Nortech Industries will sponsor a special sale to benefit Sheltering Arms Older Adult Day Care Center in Birmingham.

Nortech, a business supplies company in Southfield, with a district office in Farmington Hills, will be offering special sale prices on 3M and Maxell diskettes. From each box of diskettes sold, Nortech will donate 50 cents to Sheltering Arms.

Sheltering Arms, a program of Catholic Social Services of Oakland County, a United Way/Torch Drive Agency, provides a pleasant, lively setting in which dependent older adults can enjoy therapeutic activities and socializing opportunities. It also allows for a periodic respite from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for their caregivers.

For more information and the special prices on the 3M and Maxell diskettes, call Nortech Industries: 540-0511.

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