

## CHAT ROOM



JONI HUBRED

## Love in 7 minutes? I don't think so...

What an amazingly instant society we've become.

We've gone from microwave meals to 8-minute abs, from the One-Minute Manager to express lanes that let you scan your own groceries. And now comes the Seven-Minute Date to streamline our social lives.

The concept, which entered my life via a press release for an event at the Boogie Fever Cafe in Ferndale, is just quirky enough to draw plenty of media attention. You gather with other singles in a room, sit down to talk with someone, ask questions - gather whatever knowledge you can in seven minutes - and then a bell rings and you move on to your next target.

So to speak. At the end of the evening, you indicate the people you'd like to meet, and if they want to meet you, too, a match is made.

Maybe it's just because a literary agent once sent me a list of 48 publishers who took a pass on my first novel, but frankly, I'd just as soon take the chance of being rejected en masse. Can you imagine how depressing it would be to have, say, a dozen seven-minute dates (an elapsed time of just under an hour and a half) and learn no one found you even remotely attractive?

I've always believed you shouldn't knock something until you've tried it, but in this case, I'm willing to make an under-informed judgment.

Why? Because this new manner of dating focuses almost entirely on the external, the temporary. You can't even begin to measure someone's worth in seven minutes. All you can do is establish whether you're "instantly" attracted.

I suppose in that regard, it does save some time. There's nothing worse than getting to the restaurant and finding your blind date has all the coath and class of a flying monkey - and dresses like Boy George.

But for the life of me, I can't get behind a concept that ties something as complex as human interaction to a series of physical attributes, the ability to describe your personality in 20 words or less and a talent for first impressions.

Finding a life partner or even a decent date just isn't that easy. I've never heard a tale of "love at first sight" that didn't have a backstory, one filled with challenges and two people who had the courage to face them. You don't learn a thing about someone's true character in seven minutes or less. You don't learn about it in a personal ad or the sound of a recorded voice.

All you can do is wait and watch. That's the hard part.

One of my best friends first saw her

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# WALKING THE TALK...

women make strides in Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day

BY RENÉE SKOGLUND  
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Rain or shine, area participants in the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day have stuck to their training schedules. They know the walk - a 60-mile, three-day trek from Ann Arbor to Detroit from May 31 to June 2 - is for the tough and the determined.

Noreen Loper of Livonia has been walking 15 miles several times a week through Hines Park with her daughter, Debbie Pluff, who also signed up for the Avon 3-Day.

"When my daughter said I had to walk, I said, 'Are you out of your mind? Do you know how old I am?'" said Loper, who is 69.

Like many other participants, Loper has a story. She is a breast cancer survivor. When her breast cancer was detected by a mammogram in December 2000, she was totally surprised. The lump had not been palpable, and there was no breast cancer in her family.

"At the time I said, 'Where in the world did this come from?'"

Loper underwent an initial lumpectomy then additional surgery after her cancer was diagnosed as invasive ductal. Twice-daily bouts of internal beam radiation for 10 days at Beaumont Hospital followed.

Loper is now cancer-free. She is walking on foot.

"The good Lord brought me through this. This is how I can give back," she said.

Linda Taub, 52, a nurse from Garden City, also is walking because she is thankful.

"I'm walking partly for a personal challenge and in gratitude that my family is not afflicted by this."

Taub, who has a hefty sense of humor, described herself as a "fat, little, middle-aged woman" when first interviewed in January. By the end of March, she had lost 28 pounds, and she



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

**Challenge:** Linda Taub, a nurse from Garden City, is walking 60 miles during the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day because she is grateful that her family and friends have not had the disease. She also said the walk was a "personal challenge."

recently started walking to work - a 15-mile journey.

Linda said her son, Scott, 29, has been her biggest supporter. He donated \$1,000 of his Christmas money to fund his mother's walk. Each walker must raise a minimum pledge of \$1,900.

"I think it's great," said Scott. "She's been working at training for several months."

Walking may be the easiest part of the 3-Day for Taub. As an ex-homeschooling queen (Garden City West 1968), she plans to wave to the crowd of well-wishers along the route. She'll need a strong pair of wrists.

"I still teach parade-waving 101," she

joked. "I show the girls how to wave from a float, first your left hand and then your right hand."

**In memory of mothers**

Carleigh Flaherty, 29, president of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, made the commitment to walk in the Avon 3-Day last September in honor of her mother, Lana Barnes, a four-year cancer survivor.

"To me, it just seemed natural, something I should do for my mom," she said.

Flaherty's participation in the walk seems all the more significant since she is battling cancer herself. She was diagnosed in December with Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"As long as I have the energy, I will participate. It's given me something to focus on during my treatment... I looked at the way my mother did her battle, and I modeled the way I handle my own treatment after her."

Suzi Premen, 26, works as a dental hygienist in Canton. Last Sunday, friends of hers who have a bond, the Rusty Lunch Box, played a benefit concert at Boulders restaurant in Plymouth to help raise money for Premen's walk. The owner of Boulders also agreed to charge a donor fee for the concert and donate it to Premen.

Such generosity motivates Premen, who has walked in the Karamanos Race for the Cure, to continue doing



**Her mother's daughter:** Carleigh Flaherty, president of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, is walking the Avon 3-Day in honor of her mother, a cancer survivor.

her part in the battle against the disease that affects one in eight women. Premen's mother died from breast cancer three years ago this August.

"I'm walking just to spread the word about prevention so the women will get

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**In memory:** Tara Eddington of Livonia, a Madonna University student, and Wayne Wright of Detroit are walking the Avon 3-Day in honor of his mother, Erlene Wright, who lost her battle with breast cancer a few years ago.

## SENIOR CITIZEN FIX UP/CLEAN UP COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Saturday May 11, 2002  
Sponsored by the Youth of Unity

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Handicaps or Special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like help with the following:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yard Clean Up         | <input type="checkbox"/> Check Smoke Alarm  | <input type="checkbox"/> Install Screens    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trim Bushes           | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Washing     | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Refrigerator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Oven            | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Light Bulbs | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum/Mop Floor   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fix Doors             | <input type="checkbox"/> Move Furniture     | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Car          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Furnace Filters | <input type="checkbox"/> Dust               | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Garage       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Needs _____     |   |   |

Please mail to:  
Greg Adair - AFFORDABLE HOMECARE 20270 MIDDLEBELT  
SUITE 9 LIVONIA, MICHIGAN 48152

## Got a broom? Help a senior!

BY RENÉE SKOGLUND  
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For most of us, spring offers a chance to flex our muscles in cleaning out our houses and backyards. After all, isn't spring cleaning a rite of passage to a more relaxing summer? However, for senior citizens who no longer have the physical ability to trim bushes or wash windows, spring means hiring somebody to do basic chores.

Dick Adair, owner of Affordable Homecare in Livonia, believes in giving seniors a helping hand at this time of the year. He has helped organize the "Senior Citizen Fix Up/Clean Up Community Service Project," sponsored by the Youth of Unity, a group of teens from The Church of Today West-Novi and The Unity Church of Livonia.

Come Saturday, May 11, these teens - and their parents - will hit the streets armed with brushes, brooms and lots of good will. And area seniors are not the only ones benefiting from the project.

"Parents and teens work together in teams as a way to teach

children valuable lessons in home maintenance and respecting elders while providing an important community service," said Adair. "It also gives teens a chance to be with the elderly, who often are not part of their lives."

Those qualifying for the free chore service include all persons 65 years or older living in Livonia, Farmington, and Farmington Hills, as well as any Unity congregation member.

Applicants will be selected based on need and the availability of workers. Special consideration will be given to those with physical handicaps or difficulty performing activities of daily living.

Seniors must fill out the application below and return it by May 4 to Greg Adair, Affordable Homecare, 20270 Middlebelt, Suite 9, Livonia, MI 48152. Seniors who are selected will be contacted.

The project also needs lots of volunteers. The more parents and teens involved in the project, the more seniors can be helped with spring chores. The project begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends when chores are completed.

To volunteer or for more information, contact Greg Adair at (248) 477-4848 (work) or (248) 380-8236 (home).

