

Lynn, a prospective Video-Mate client, is shown here reacting to video taped interviews of prospective dates. (Staff photos by Stephen Cantrell)

Using television and videotape...

Here's a visionary approach to blind dates

By ELYSE GOLDIN

Remember blind dates? Remember how the date was always described beforehand as possessing a "wonderful personality"?

There's a new Southfield dating service that apparently thinks there are enough dissatisfied blind daters in the Detroit metropolitan area to warrant a new approach to the dating service game.

Video-Mate, which originated in New York, has located its South-eastern Michigan-area home in Southfield's Northland Square Building on Northland Drive.

The firm uses video tape and television in matching partners and its slogan is, needless to say, "the end to the blind date."

"We're not out to get people married," said Video-Mate director Robert Culver, a Plymouth resident. "We're simply an organization aimed at improving our clients' social lives. We feel people should fill up and enjoy their weekends and social schedules."

Video-Mate works on a more personalized basis than most other dating services, according to its directors.

A typical applicant at Video-Mate would first come in and fill out a

short questionnaire regarding their own lifestyle and the lifestyle they would like their "ideal partner" to have.

THE SELF-ASSESSMENT and personal profile probes into categories of appearance, marital status, occupation, religion, income, interests, hobbies, personality characteristics and how one feels about dating relationships.

A professionally-trained Video-Mate interviewer then reviews the finished questionnaire and prepares the applicant for the video taping session.

This is where Video-Mate differs

from most similar services. Most services attempt to match an applicant with a mate regarding his personality profile. Video-Mate furnishes a tape of the applicant discussing interests on a closed-circuit television.

Throughout the taping session, the interviewer asks the applicant various questions while the video tape recorder records the applicant's answers as well as mannerisms. Later, an applicant of the opposite sex can actually see their prospective date's mannerisms, hear the voice and in the end know that "what they see is what they get."

Clients do not get to see the taped interviews of all applicants of the opposite sex. Applicants are initially screened by interviewers regarding likes and dislikes.

After the initial screening an applicant gets to watch the taped interview of a prospective date who fits into his preference profile. In turn the prospec-

tive date can watch the taped interview of the other applicant.

IF BOTH AGREE to meet each other, the prospective date becomes a reality.

"A client is never forced to date any of the people he or she has previewed in a tape. It is all on a voluntary basis. If the agreement does not work out, then both names are kept on file for six months and within that time given a date, or the money is refunded," said Linda Cooper, one of three of the firm's directors.

The third director and owner, Stephen Scherhorn, 38, of Warfield agrees with Ms. Cooper, 25, and Culver, 36, that the main problem in the Video-Mate system is the public's perception of the firm's dating program.

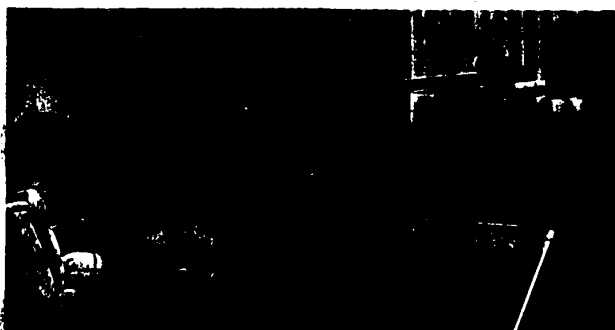
Ms. Cooper said, "People tend to think of all dating services as a fly-by-night hoax that attracts weirdos and strange people and many com-

puter dating programs are not. Video-Mate is a licensed, no-risk, personalized service to very normal people who are tired of awkward dates and the insecurity of standing in a singles bar."

According to the firm's directors, 30 per cent of Video-Mate's clientele are divorced and most are professionals ranging from 25-35 years old. The owners add that Video-Mate's clientele is comprised of 55 per cent men and 45 per cent women.

ALTHOUGH the program does not guarantee a successful date, Culver stated that the firm hasn't had any complaints since their first day of business, Dec. 1.

Culver said, "More than being thought of as an end to the blind date, we consider ourselves an introduction service, sort of a middle-man bringing those people together who mentally and physically belong together."



Video-Mate interviewer and co-director Linda Cooper (right) interviews Lynn. While being interviewed, Lynn is videotaped and ap-

Superintendent optimistic

By DAVID McDOWELL

Superintendent
Clarenceville School District

As I write my annual reflections and predictions about the Clarenceville School District, it is an appropriate time to thank the parents and supporters of this district and wish each a happy New Year filled with good health and prosperity.

The 1975 school year found the Clarenceville School doors open to 3,200 students. This represented a loss of 86 students from the 1974-75 school year. The decreasing enrollment trend continues for Clarenceville as for most school districts in the metropolitan area.

The entire student population loss occurred at the elementary school level. Even there, a new trend may be developing, because for the first time in six years, the kindergarten was slightly larger than the previous year.

OUR DISTRICT continually tries to improve the teaching of the basic skills so that our students will be provided with the tools necessary for succeeding in work or higher education. To accomplish this goal a number of

things were done this year.

•Three complete revisions, kindergarten through grade 12, of the curriculum were made by the teaching staff in the fields of math, social studies and language arts.

•A study of classroom management continues, with the emphasis on individual teaching and learning.

•With federal money, tutorial programs have been set up in homes

after school to help those elementary students who are having trouble mastering necessary reading skills.

•Preprimary programs were planned for the second semester of this year to ready certain four year olds for their kindergarten experience. Those selected for this program have been screened as ones who would benefit most by this experience.

Reformation's impact is subject of course

"Influences of the Reformation on Contemporary Thought" is a new offering of John Wesley Weekend College to start on Saturday, Jan. 10 in the off-campus center at 27000 Farmington Road in Farmington.

Professor of the course, Dr. Robert C. Walton, says of the study, "Between 1500-1550 profound changes took place in Europe which laid the foundation for western culture and civilization. We will examine the American society today, and the impact of

the reformation in the formation of our society."

Luther, Calvin, Crammer and Loyola are some of the prominent personalities to be studied. Classes will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Four credit units can be earned.

Walton received his PhD from Yale University and BD from Harvard Divinity School. He has done foreign study at the universities of Marburg, Göttingen and Zurich. London and Zurich have also been centers for his foreign residence research.

He has taught at Duke University, the University of British Columbia, and is currently a full professor at Wayne State. He has been the recipient of many research grants and his publications are numerous.

He has also been a contributor to encyclopedias and is on a number of university committees at Wayne.

Registration for all classes offered in the college's Center for Continuing Education in Farmington begins Monday, Jan. 5.

For a brochure, address inquiries to Nancy Bates, John Wesley College, 27000 Farmington Road, 48024.

Troop 179 gives awards

Dan Bush and Chuck Williams were honored with the Life award, only one step below Eagle Scout, when Boy Scout Troop 179 held its Court of Honor to recognize scouts who have advanced in rank since the troop returned from summer camp on Mackinac Island.

Larry McDonald, troop committee chairman for the past two years, received a special award at the end of his tenure.

Six new scouts, who received the

scout investiture, are Russ Delonge, Bob Garrison, Jamie Kordel, Eric Smith, Chris Timma and Dave Watson. Dave Stenson received the award of tenderfoot.

Andy Freeburn and Eric Stenson received the award for second class scouts. Freeburn also earned the first class award along with Bob McCreir and Dave Short.

Higher up the scouting ladder, Mike Newell and Pat MacDonald were presented with their star award.

WINTER ANTIQUE WALK

JANUARY 5-11

Browse through an exhibit of antiques and memorabilia brought to you by specially selected dealers.

A few of the highlights of the show are the collection of old Wedgwood dolls, an oak highchair-stroller (circa 1850), a Victorian fainting couch and a selection of Victorian church pews.

There's also a collection of original front pages from the 1940s, with such notable headlines as "War Ends," "Japs Bomb Pearl Harbor," etc. all suitably framed.

Don't miss this fine collection, there's plenty of FREE parking and pleasant 72 temperatures!

CUSTOMERS' APPRECIATION DAYS AT LIVONIA MALL

Starts Tuesday, Jan. 13, at the Cinema

FREE MOVIE—FREE PRIZES—9:45 or 10:15

Have an enjoyable morning on us

Livonia Mall

Open daily 'til 9:00 p.m. Sunday 12-5 p.m.