

Cupid gets an updating with match-up service

BY SHERRY KAHAN

The closest thing to a Cupid in the area this Valentine's Day is Roy Phillips of Farmington Hills, owner of Date-A-Mate Inc. of Northville.

On the day of hearts and flowers, he will spend his time as he does on other days—acting as a matchmaker.

Not one to stalk a comely lass or lad with a bow and arrow, Phillips relies instead on a compatibility questionnaire sent out to all those who wish to take advantage of his service.

Computer dating is not for him. "The computer is cold, impersonal and expensive," he says. "There is no way a computer could scan the paragraph our clients write about what they are looking for in an ideal mate."

PHILLIPS FEELS respect for those who opt for a dating service.

"They are more honest about their situation than the people who go to bars hoping to meet a mate, but claiming they are just going out for a pleasant evening." He feels it is important to continue this

kind of openness when they respond to his questionnaire.

"The more truthful they are, the greater the probability that they will find the right person," Phillips said.

"Do you object to dating someone with children?" asks one question. "Have you a good sense of humor?" says another. "How interested are you in getting married as soon as possible?"

SALLY AND GORDON, middle-aged singles who live in this area, indicated an interest on their questionnaires in early marriage.

Sally was a widow with two children, one a boy who had been asking most of the males he met, since his father's death, "Will you be my daddy?"

"It's hard to meet men, especially at my age," says Sally. Gordon found it difficult to maintain a lasting relationship because he was often out of town on business.

"I called Date-A-Mate and asked for a brochure," continues Sally. "I filled out the questionnaire and sent it in. Not too much later I began to receive phone calls, one of them from Gordon."

"It was not at all embarrassing. They would call and say they were from Date-A-Mate and had received my name. Then we'd talk. By the time you make a date you know a little about each other."

"It's much better than going to clubs or bars to meet men. It is a discreet way of meeting someone. If you find you don't like him, you just say you are busy; the next time he calls."

ON THEIR FIRST DATE Gordon and Sally went to the movies. In about two months they started going steady. Five months after their first meeting they were married. That was a few months ago, so this will be their first Valentine's Day together.

"I would never have met anyone like him," smiles Sally. "We were in different circles. If run right, dating services can do a lot of good."

"Many women are embarrassed to put out the news they are looking for a man. So instead they go to a bar, let a stranger buy them a drink, dance all night and then make a date. With the dating service they can be more selective."

When it receives the compatibility questionnaires, Date-A-Mate goes over them carefully. It also keeps them strictly confidential. Once possible matches are made, clients receive by mail several names and phone numbers of persons with



whom the company feels they will be compatible.

"Usually the gentleman calls," says Phillips. "But if he doesn't, we suggest the woman drop him a note or give him a call. If they meet someone and start to date on a serious basis, or if they become engaged, we ask them to drop us a line. Then we discontinue matching them."

On the other hand, if a member fails to feel the right vibes with her first few dates, she can continue to keep her name on file.

DATE-A-MATE charges range from \$25-\$75 depending on the number of referrals the client needs and the time his file is kept active.

He finds his kind of matchmaking far more acceptable today than it was 10 years ago. "It has been recognized nationwide as a necessary service."

"I tell you one thing. It gives men and women a new lease on life when they start dating. It gets them out of their shell."

"I'm very happy," says Sally. "The children are happy and he's happy. I gave up work and enjoy staying home. The children also enjoy my staying home. We're a real family."

Date-A-Mate (308-2070) can be reached by writing to Box 117, Northville.

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