

The Daily Camera

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

Business

Make Me a Match

Local matchmaker helps singles meet in comfort

By Jenna Weisser

For the Camera

Boulder, CO - To many, the thought of dating may evoke frightening images of awkward conversations and uncomfortable pauses. These images alone may be enough to keep many out of the dating scene altogether.

Introductions, a Boulder matchmaking company, is attempting to eliminate those potential bad dates by letting Dottie Braun play matchmaker.

Introductions originated in Denver, but has been in Boulder for two years. Currently, there are 250 members between Introductions' two locations in Boulder and Denver.

Braun does all of the work for the Boulder division, from interviewing potential members to setting up the actual dates. The first step in the Introductions dating process is for potential members to fill out a questionnaire asking them about their interests. Next, they sit down for a one-on-one interview with Braun so she can learn more about them.

If the interview goes well, Braun runs a background check on potential members and then writes a profile. Pictures are not included in the profile. "We feel if s about the whole person," she said. "Quite often a little picture limits possibilities."

After the profile is written, Braun sifts through her profile database to find potential matches.

"In essence, members have hired me as a consultant to take the guesswork out of dating for them," she said.

"I give people the opportunity to meet people they otherwise would not have had the chance to meet."

Once she has found two people that she feels are compatible, she sends each person their potential match's profile for approval. If both parties agree, Braun makes a reservation at a restaurant so the couple can meet

Barry Erdman, a Boulder psychotherapist who often works with couples, said dating services help quicken the pace of dating. However, people must be honest when completing profiles and speaking with

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matchmakers.

Braun said Introductions has a wide variety of members, from doctors to businesspeople to attorneys. The general age range is 30 to 60.

Niwot resident Linda Morrell, 53, joined Introductions a year ago. She said Introductions' matchmakers do a good job pairing people that are compatible. "I have gone out with seven gentlemen, and every one has been delightful," she said. Morrell is one of Introductions' success stories. She's still dating one of the first men with whom she was matched.

If a member meets someone they want to pursue a relationship with, they can freeze their membership for up to six months. In the past, there often has been a stigma associated with dating services. Braun said the stigma is disappearing, partly because of the abundance of such sites as IAC/InterActiveCorp's Match.com and Yahoo Inc.'s Yahoo Personals.

However, Braun was quick to point out that Introductions is different than online dating. Most of Introductions' members have tried online dating services because it is cheap and fairly easy. The downside is that they are often time consuming, Braun said.

Erdman, the Boulder psychotherapist often recommends that his clients try online services as a way to start putting themselves out in the dating scene.

Morrell was a member of Match.com for one year. During that time, she went on one date. "It was truly a disaster," she said of the date. "It was one of the ones where you go, thank God this is only lunch" - Morrell said Match.com targets a younger clientele. She liked the fact Introductions' members were more serious about wanting to be in relationships.

Braun credited the popularity of Introductions, as well as other dating services, to the fact that it often is difficult for adults to meet one another. "In our 20s, it was really easy to meet people.... Then we all got married and no one expected us to be 40, 50, 60 and single," she said. There just isn't an avenue for meeting people at our age."