

B

Section

LIFE

Sommer
in the City
SOMMER
BROKAW



5 guys, 40 minutes, no waiting

I've yet to make a love connection here the old-fashioned way, so I decided to give one of the latest dating fads a try. After all, this is the new millennium and just about everyone is exploring cyberspace. I started by looking at a few options online, such as Matchmaker.com. But there's something creepy to me about posting my profile in an online dating database. I'm just traditional in that way. I want to see the person face to face. Then, if they decide to shoot me down, at least I got the chance to see who it was. So, I chose another fast-paced way to find the man of my dreams: speed dating.

I liked this idea. I could find Mr. Right in less time than it takes to order a café latte. When I came across the advertisement for 8minute-dating.com, I was impressed. It read "8 Great Dates - 1 Fun Night." But, when the dating started at Phil & Tony's on Providence Road, there were five men, seven women, and whether we were going to have fun was in doubt. I was disappointed, but determined to make the most of it. I refused to believe I'd gotten all dressed up and let my hair down for nothing. I was going to have some fun.

So, I escaped into the world of speed dating. When I stepped into the speed zone, I was no longer Sommer Brokaw. I was Sommer 103. No last names here. I was given a card to write the names and numbers of potential mates and a list of instructions. I would really have to be socially inept to actually need their networking tips. For example, some of their tips were to smile, say hello. "Houston! We have touchdown."

Did we just come in from Mars, or do we know this already?

The card also had pick-up lines to avoid such as: "Hello, I'm a thief and I'm here to steal your heart." "Your legs must be tired because you've been running through my mind all night." And the classic "Is there an airport near by, or is that my heart taking off?" They made me laugh, but I was still nervous. Questions to ask ran through my mind like: "Are you married?" "Are you a psychopath?" Granted, I would hope everyone would be single, but not everyone has those morals. When I was online, the one handsome man I saw had a question mark under marital status. Another profile read "If you're HIV free, don't mess with me." Um, thanks for the warnings.

The dating started with a buzzer. First up was Chris 716 from Spartanburg. He was kind of shy, and I only had eight minutes to get to know him until the buzzer rang. I felt like we were being rounded up like cattle for auction. "Sommer 103," a voice inside my head kept telling me "Chris 716 isn't that into you, keep moving." And so, the cycle continued. Chris 703, a gym teacher, looked nice, and he said to me under the wire, "put a line across the one in your number and that makes us a match." Cute. I get it 103, 703. There's that buzzer

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PHOTO/WADE NASH

Ny Vann and Shawn Huntley went to get tested for HIV together during National HIV Testing Day.

HIV: Know your status

Black women are losing fight against contracting HIV

By Cheri F. Hodges
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Thirty-year-old Shawn Huntley has been here before, with the blood sample and waiting.

The waiting, she says, is the worst.

"It seemed like the longest two weeks of my life," she said of waiting for the results of her HIV test.

On Monday, as she waited in line at the Mecklenburg County Health Department to get tested again, she knew what to expect.

"I get tested once a year because

the CDC suggests that you get tested every six months," she said.

Black women, according to the Centers for Disease Control, make up 57 percent of HIV cases.

The AIDS rate among black women is three times as high as that among Latino women and 18 times as high as that among white women. Today, black women make up more than half of all women who have died of AIDS.

African Americans make up 13 percent of the population, yet account for 41 percent of all AIDS cases in the United States.

These statistics play into why Huntley and her fiancé both got tested last year and Monday during National HIV Testing Day.

"It is very important for us to know our status," she said. "We both went to get tested. I saw on a commercial that this is something important to talk about with your partner."

Especially if couples don't always use condoms during sex, something Huntley admits she and her fiancé, Ny Vann, don't always do.

Please see HIV/2B

Orlando offers alternatives to theme parks

By Cheri F. Hodges
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There's more to an Orlando vacation than Mickey Mouse and theme parks.

The Orlando Convention and Visitors Bureau wants black families to know there is more to the Florida city than Universal Studios and Disney magic.

You can revisit African American history in Eatonville, just north of downtown. It's the home of the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum of Fine Arts and Zora Neale Hurston Festival of Arts and Humanities. The festival takes place each January in

the Orlando suburb Hurston called home and is the oldest incorporated African American municipality in the country.

According to Michelle Stepney, a spokeswoman with the OCVB, Eatonville is the biggest attraction for black families.

Orlando produced an African American Travel Guide which offers information about special events and activities, worship, dining, shopping, nightlife, business and personal services, media, black organizations and area maps.

The guide also details the influence

of African Americans in Orlando's growth from the early 1800s through today and into the future.

In July, Orlando plays host to "Fireworks Over The Fountain" at Lake Eola Park downtown. There are several ethnic offerings as well as American culinary favorites.

On Sundays in July and August, Orlando's contemporary jazz station plays host to "Jams in Central Park" in Winter Park.

So a trip to Orlando can be fun and informative and it doesn't have to center around a mouse.



Summer was made for lots of activities

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—It sounds so good: Lazy summer days with nothing to do. But, as anyone with active and antsy children in the house knows, nothing to do gets old fast.

Some new books and magazines come to the rescue, offering ideas for things to do before rest becomes restless.

The best part? Most can be done with items you likely have around the house: "Family Fun: My Great Idea" (Disney) includes parents' tips for, well, family fun. A total of 350 submitted their ideas, including Cindy Gwozdz from Taunton, Mass.

Her daughters used oversized boxes to turn the backyard into a drive-in movie theater. They spent an entire afternoon decorating their boxes with

windshields, rearview mirrors, wheels and license plates. Then, their Aunt Carol pulled a TV onto the deck to complete the experience. (She also loaded up on snack food and mosquito coils.)

Meanwhile, the Kittles family of Jupiter, Fla., has its own drive-in theater -- the garage. They drag their VCR (or maybe a DVD player) out to the garage and then climb into the family van. "There are no bugs," says mom Lynette, "and the food is more reasonably priced."

Tawni Ballinger of Germantown, Tenn., with help from and decorations by her twin daughters, turns the family van into an ice-cream truck all in an effort to help the hungry.

The Ballingers fill up a cooler with frozen treats and head out in their van

with a cow bell to announce their arrival up and down the street. But instead of paying for their ice cream pops with money, neighbors donate canned goods.

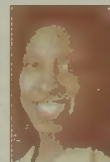
The next day, they drive down to the local food bank to deliver the supplies they've gathered.

Parenting magazine's July issue features a section called "backyard party," which needs no other occasion than a pleasant day for friends and families enjoying each other's company. Some games are "aqua pinata" and "dog chases tail."

For the pinata, fill a large plastic bucket halfway with water and hang it from a tree branch. Blindfold kids, spin them around, and then give them a

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Health
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Learn diabetes and its effects

Are you one of the 5.2 million Americans who has diabetes but doesn't know it?

Diabetes means your body cannot properly store and use fuel for energy. Your body needs glucose for fuel, and to use glucose, your body needs insulin, which is made by the pancreas. If your blood glucose is not managed, diabetes can lead to kidney failure, heart disease, impotence, blindness, and amputation.

Symptoms of diabetes, including frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, increased fatigue, irritability, infections and blurry vision, should be reported to your doctor. Once it's diagnosed, diabetes can be treated and people can lead long, healthy lives. But it's important you learn what type of diabetes you have and how to treat it.

The two main types are Type 1 and Type 2. Type 2 accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases and is the most common form affecting blacks. Type 2 is associated with older age, obesity, family history of diabetes, prior history of gestational diabetes, impaired glucose tolerance, physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity.

Type 2 diabetes means the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin your body makes. As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin.

People with Type 2 diabetes need to follow a careful diet and exercise program, lose excess weight and take oral medication.

Type 1 diabetes, previously known as juvenile diabetes, usually affects children and young adults, although it can start at any age. In Type 1, the body's immune system destroys the cells that produce insulin. To survive, people with Type 1 diabetes must have insulin delivered by a pump or injections.

Pre-diabetes is a condition that may develop before Type 2 diabetes. Blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but managing those levels can delay or prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

Gestational diabetes affects about 4 percent of all pregnant women and is more common among obese women and women with a family history of diabetes. During pregnancy, gestational diabetes requires treatment to normalize the mother's blood glucose levels to avoid complications in the infant. After pregnancy, 5 to 10 percent of women with gestational diabetes have Type 2 diabetes.

Ophelia Garmon-Brown, M.D., is medical director at Presbyterian Urgent Care

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