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Matchmaking with a magic touch

BY PATRICK LANE

The Cherry Creek Times

When you mention the words "Dating Service" many singles cringe in fear.

Michele Fields, however, is not a dating service, she's a matchmaker. As president, owner and everything else of Bon Jour, Inc. she brings together high-profile, successful singles. After years of setting up friends on an informal basis, she began to do it professionally in 1989.

She currently has about 250

clients and knows each one personally, which plays a huge part in her success as a matchmaker. Fields now takes credit for 59 marriages (with no divorces) and many other serious, long-term relationships.

While many other big dating services rely on computerized questionnaires and videos, Fields' first-time clients undergo a two-hour interview. Perhaps "interrogation" is a better word as she grills clients on everything from their feelings about pre-nuptial agreements to their political views on abortion and capital punishment. One of the more important, but often overlooked topics is pets, she says. Allergies, or even a plain-old dislike for animals can doom an otherwise promising relationship before it gets started.

After the interview, Fields searches her client list for a potential match. She lets the clients review the prospect's information and photographs and decide whether he or she would like to meet that person. Only if both parties agree, however, will Fields arrange for an introduction. She'll give the two people the other's telephone number, but they must make the effort.

After the couple meets for the first time, Fields insists on getting a report from each person. Then it's up to the couple to decide whether they want to meet again.

Bon Jour, Inc. won't accept just

anyone. Fields turns down prospective clients that don't fit with her clients' backgrounds, education or age. This selectivity ensures that she

has a quality pool of singles from which clients can choose. She also won't tolerate dishonesty or rudeness toward any of her clients.

When asked what characteristics make for a successful match, Fields bucks conventional wisdom. Shared values, ethics and goals are the most important basis for a lasting relationship, she says. Many people,

especially in Denver, place too much emphasis on having common interests, she says. Interests are superficial and can always develop as a relationship progresses.

People also get stuck in personal ruts and routines, she says. The hardest clients to find matches for are the ones who are rigid or inflexible, Fields says. One client insisted on meeting only men over 6' 2", which dramatically cut her options. People find success in the dating world when they're willing to break their patterns and branch out.

As her client list grows, she is sure to make many more people happy. The only question left is when is this matchmaker going to find her match?

For more information, call Bon Jour, Inc. at 303-337-9558.



Michele Fields, a.k.a. "The Matchmaker"