

Flirting workshop has help for that dreamed-of moment

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KRT CAMPUS

PHILADELPHIA — "You should totally sign up for this," my single — but attached — girlfriend says via e-mail. I look at the subject line: Flirting Workshop. I roll my eyes and type back, "Are you off your meds? No way."

Not another event that preys on lovelorn singletons wasting away in condos and cubicles, desperate to get noticed.

Speed dating, singles booze cruises, mixers, and theme parties. Match and E-Harmony and It's Just Lunch. All, in my cynical single-girl mind, money-draining endeavors that take advantage of singles' innermost fear: waking up alone for the rest of our lives.

What happened to fate, to

karma? If I had a dime for all the times I've heard, "It will happen when you least expect it..." ("What if you're always expecting it?" is my pal Laura's smirking response.)

I scroll down a bit on my e-mail. What exactly is a flirting workshop, anyway? I envision pick-up line cheat sheets, tips on effective hair flips, and how to get properly fitted for sparkly tank tops.

"Tap into your inner bad girl," it says. "What signals do you send off?" (Uh, desperation?)

"This isn't a pick-up seminar," the flyer says. So much the better, I think, because who knows what kind of freaks, er, singles, show up for these things. I'm a singles-event virgin who's heard too many stories from girlfriends

about Match dates gone bad, and speed dates with 35-year-old, basement-dwelling mama's boys.

The host for this workshop, it says, is the owner of moxieinthecity.net. It's \$25. Is it bad that I'm wondering if that includes drinks?

Well, what's the worst that can happen, right? Sometimes karma needs a little nudge.

Bourbon Blue, the casual-chic hangout and restaurant in Manayunk, is the setting for this summer flirtfest. I park the car and wonder if we'll be discussing pop culture's famous flirts, the good — Joey Tribbiani's "How you doin'?" — and the bad — Anthony Michael Hall's flashing his braces on the bus in "Sixteen Candles."

Bourbon Blue's downstairs

bar is set up with tables and chairs facing the back wall. "It's like a classroom," whispers one girl on her way down.

There's a nice cross-section of flirtees: women in their late 20s, 30s and early 40s, guys in their 30s and 40s — pretty evenly split between men and women, which is good.

Workshop leader Moxie is really Christan Marashio, a down-to-earth, unintimidating 36-year-old Bostonian who says she's hosted and organized singles events since 2001. Marashio, standing before her students, exudes confidence and, well, moxie.

A guy toward the back whips out a huge fold-out leather notepad — the kind you'd bring to a stockholders meeting. Clearly some people

are taking this very seriously. I, meanwhile, have a whole batch of eyerolls ready to make an appearance.

Much to my surprise, I didn't need them.

Marashio's advice is heartfelt and encouraging. "Appreciate being single," she says, pacing the floor as a blender whirs upstairs. "Own your body, whatever size you are, you're beautiful" — and this is directed at the guys, too.

We should get rid of the stigma of "being alone equals bad," she explains. "Don't cross your arms and look down" if you're out socializing with friends. "Force yourself to make eye contact."

Good advice, of course, and it all plays into what Marashio considers to be the four "areas" we singles should focus on to

maximize our chances for a love connection: attitude/expectations, appearance, communication and body language.

I won't divulge all of Marashio's secrets, but I will say that by "appearance" she doesn't mean sparkly tops and the trendiest clothes. She says you can impress even when you're not all done up, just by giving out a positive vibe.

On to the post-lecture, interactive forum — a free-for-all sharing session and Q&A.

A tall blonde, who I learn later is Audra Niszczale, 34, a research scientist from Norristown, Pa., is talking about gender roles. "They're less defined now. Some guys like it if a woman asks for their number or asks them out. Some guys don't."

Scene at USC

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers



Today
"THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS": 8 p.m. Russell House Theater.
CAROLINA PRODUCTIONS' COFFEEHOUSE — CAUSEWAY: 6 p.m. Russell House patio.
"MYSTERIOUS SKIN": 7, 9:10 p.m. Nickelodeon Theatre, 937 Main

St. \$5.50 with student ID.

Thursday
MODERN MUSIC STUDIOS BATTLE OF THE BANDS — MIND YOUR HEAD, MINX FLUX, XEMIR, THE AUTUMN OVERCAST: 8 p.m. New Brookland Tavern, 122 State St. \$8 under 21, \$6 over 21.

"THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS": 8 p.m. Russell House Theater.
"MYSTERIOUS SKIN": 7, 9:10 p.m. Nickelodeon Theatre. \$5.50 with student ID.
BOXING DAY, MEAN WIENER: 8:30 p.m. Art Bar, 1211 Park St. \$2. Over 21 only.

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Down for the night
 - 5 Over the horizon
 - 9 Diner
 - 14 Zoom
 - 15 Sit for a shot
 - 16 Sleep noisily
 - 17 Work for
 - 18 "___ Don't Preach"
 - 19 Watchband
 - 20 Grad
 - 21 Not quite right
 - 23 Latin being
 - 24 Car-payt. fig.
 - 26 Forensics series on CBS
 - 27 Mr. Coward
 - 28 Emotionally moved
 - 32 De-crease
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 - 43 Sundial three
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 - 51 Austen novel
 - 54 ___ about time!
 - 56 Gasteyer of SNL
 - 57 Keep in check
 - 58 La Scala's city
 - 60 Kind of roller or tide
 - 64 Banks of baseball
 - 66 Clamping device
 - 67 Sole
 - 68 Influence
 - 69 Middle Eastern leader
 - 70 Resting on
 - 71 Contract components
 - 72 Ocean parts
 - 73 Alaskan port

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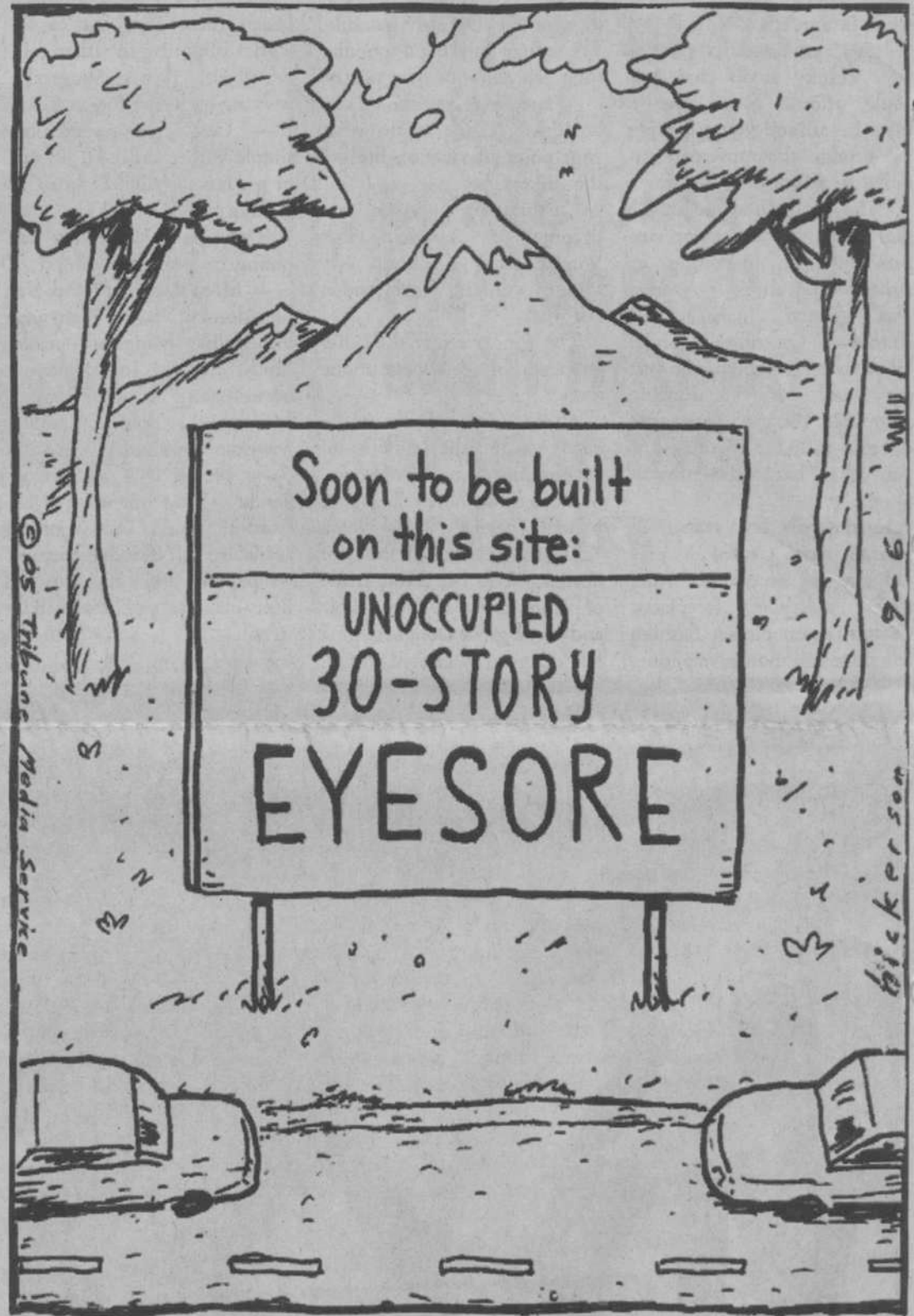
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- 7 Laurence Harvey film, "A Dandy in ___"
- 8 Transferred to a different job
- 9 Snaky shape
- 10 Feeler
- 11 Bulk of the body
- 12 Expunge
- 13 Drive back
- 22 Knight's title
- 25 Magician's exclamation
- 28 Fall guys
- 29 Jerk
- 30 Venetian villain
- 31 Orders
- 33 Beaver State
- 35 Bobbsey twin
- 37 Minnelli of "Cabaret"
- 38 Like one piper
- 39 Spy Alger
- 42 Complainers
- 45 Element in pitchblende
- 47 Boise boy
- 49 Mel Gibson film
- 51 Put up
- 52 Country singer
- 53 Small-scale
- 55 Slippery buildup
- 59 Large landmass
- 61 Division word
- 62 Grab hold of
- 63 Promotional excess
- 65 UFO crew

Quigmans • By Buddy Hickerson



Paper Asylum • By James Hickson/The Gamecock



HOROSCOPES

ARIES Get friends to help you do the job so you can get done sooner, then go out to celebrate together. Foreign food is favored.

TAURUS You're not the sort of person who rushes into things, especially now when there are so many ideas to consider. Take your time, and do it right.

GEMINI Travel is favored, but only if you go with an interesting partner. If you don't have one already, you're apt to meet someone out there.

CANCER It might be difficult to tell how much you've got and what's coming in. Finances are a bit unstable, but all turns out well.

LEO You need a plan and a partner who can help you follow through. Besides increasing certainty, it'll make what you're doing more fun.

VIRGO More work's coming in, and a lot more money. Don't get rattled — get organized.

LIBRA You've been venturing into previously unexplored areas. Today, you're quite likely to make a new friend out there.

SCORPIO If you're not finding what you want for your home at a price you can afford, expand your search area. It's out there.

SAGITTARIUS You're pretty good at technical subjects once you

settle down and concentrate. To achieve a dream, go ahead and do that now.

CAPRICORN Cash in your coupons. Get your old stuff appraised, as it's gone up in value. Well, some of it has, anyway. The challenge is in figuring out which pieces have.

AQUARIUS Friends are glad to offer suggestions, if you're willing to listen. Admit where you're clueless, and find another way to approach the problem.

PISCES It's time to do the planning, the organizing and the paperwork. Don't pitch a fit — think of it as preparing for a test.