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Can you find true love at Stampede?

Hooking up.

Matchmakers believe the Calgary Stampede presents opportunities for romance

ALICIA GERRIOR
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For some, hookups are just as much a Stampede tradition as pancake breakfasts, but the potential to wrangle true love at Calgary's biggest party exists, said matchmakers.

"The Stampede, wow! What better venue? A happy venue where everybody's out there having fun," said Jane Carstens, founder of Matchmaker for Hire.

"Everybody's just open to meeting people in general, so then it just opens up opportunities of meeting other singles," she said.

A chance meeting at Stampede has led to an 11-year marriage for Marc and Bobbi Paolini.

"(Love) literally stopped by my table that night," said Marc Paolini about the fateful evening in 1997.

If you're looking for a long-term romance on the grounds, be aware of the type of person you're interacting with, said Susan Semeniw of Divine Intervention.



Couple Janine Hardonk and Kevan Coyle take their relationship to the Calgary Stampede Wednesday.

CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO

Stampede lovin' tips

1 "You have to be open and exude a fun confident vibe. Smile and be approachable," said Susan Semeniw, of Divine Intervention.

2 "Stay away from threatening questions," said Jane

Carstens, Matchmaker for Hire.

3 "Look the part. You have to look good when you go out," said Semeniw.

"Some are looking for love, and some are looking for brief flings," the match-

maker warned.

And don't be shy.

"Interact with as many

people as possible," she said.

"It can be as simple as saying hi or 'Isn't this great?'" said Carstens.

"Just the sheer event of the Stampede itself allows great conversation," she added.

The biggest tip both real-life cupids stressed is to be open to finding love.

"When you say there are no single people, you close the door," said Carstens.

"You've got to believe it exists and it will happen."

CALGARY IS NOT THE GREATEST CITY AND THAT'S OK



IN DEFENCE OF
Mike Morrison
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When Stephen Harper helped kick off the Calgary Stampede last week, he probably had no idea that he'd also start one of the biggest debates this country will likely see in a non-election year.

"(The founders) would be amazed to see that their Stampede has been part of giving birth to the greatest city in the greatest country in the world."

With that, Calgarians cheered the seemingly official declaration of greatness, while others, likely just looking for attention in the media, scoffed at the PM's claim.

For me, the allegation was nothing unusual. I rarely agree with our current prime minister, and this quote was no different. The fact of the

matter is that Calgary isn't the greatest city in Canada. It might not even be the greatest city in Western Canada.

After all, the term greatest feels like something immeasurable.

I don't think Calgary has the greatest public transportation, nor is its housing very affordable; and sometimes — hold on to your cowboy hats — I don't even think we have the greatest mayor.

But who does? Who knows enough about each city in Canada to declare one as the greatest? I do, however, think this city is pretty awesome. Warm or cold, the weather here is fantastic; we have unbelievably nice people; we have near-perfect trails and bike paths; and, almost on command, bunnies run down our streets. Which, admittedly, is pretty great.

The fact I don't think Calgary is the greatest city

Quoted

"(The founders) would be amazed to see that their Stampede has been part of giving birth to the greatest city in the greatest country in the world."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

shouldn't ruffle feathers — though it likely will. I'm assuming most of the people upset by such a disparaging comment about Calgary haven't ever left the 403 area code. Being from somewhere, or a part of something, doesn't make it the greatest. If you like the Calgary Flames, you should like them for their sportsmanship and ability, not just because they are Calgary's team. And while some parents might disagree, their own kids aren't the greatest, even if they are pretty cute.

I'm even humble enough to say this isn't the greatest column in Calgary.

For me, there's no fun in declaring yourself the greatest: That means your work is done. Nothing more to work towards. And if there's one thing that's great about this city, it's that we aren't afraid of a little hard work.

If cities like Vancouver want to try to correct the prime minister, let them. We're better than that.

Plus, I was in Vancouver last week and it's not that great either.

MIKE MORRISON OWNS THE PERFECTLY ROUND AND BALD HEAD BEHIND MIKE'S BLOGGITY BLOG. HE TWEETS FROM @MIKESBLOGGITY