

# Prom Night

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Regardless of where we are in life today, many of us can recall the night of our Senior Prom. The prom was one of several events during our senior year that signified the end of one chapter of life and the beginning of another. As for me, I was not in attendance at the Senior Prom. There were a number of reasons that I did not take part (a lack of self-confidence being a primary issue), but ultimately the fact that my family was struggling financially made committing a large amount of money toward one night of my life totally impractical. I do not remember doing anything special the night of the prom. Yet what struck me the morning after the prom was that I did not feel that I had missed out by not being in attendance.

Over the next several years I traveled a path that many had followed. I attended and graduated from college. After a couple of job changes I became established in a career. I married and started a family. And I became involved in several volunteer activities. Yet over that time period I still at times found it difficult to get past some of the struggles I associated with the high school years. As our 20 year reunion approached in 1989 an invitation was sent to me. A request was also sent asking if I would help with the planning. Despite reservations on my part I became involved. To my surprise I had the opportunity of becoming connected with old classmates in a different way than while still in school. From there I decided to attend the 20 year reunion. The one thing that remained for me was to get up the courage to ask for a date (that date being my wife Linda (Lukat) Denny, Class of 1970). Linda graciously accepted my invitation and from there we made plans to attend the reunion.

The evening of our 20 year reunion was a memorable one for me. I was pleasantly surprised as to the number of people who remembered me and welcomed me. I was also taken aback as to the number of classmates in attendance and how well the events had been planned. Midway through the evening I began to realize why the evening was special. This was the night of MY prom. I was there with Linda, the woman I will be with for the rest of my life. This was not about the end of something, but the beginning of a number of opportunities to connect with old classmates. Maybe I had to wait 20 years for that special night in my life, but I left that evening with a sense of completion and inner peace as to the high school years that has remained with me to this day.

Since that time I have attended each of the subsequent class reunions. As before I have been remembered and welcomed. And I have also had the honor of taking Linda, my wife and date for a lifetime. Yet I still have one small struggle that perhaps classmates could give me counsel and guidance on. This past fall I asked Linda to the Homecoming football game. She turned me down.

Sam Denny  
Class of 1969