

# 'How we met' and other love stories from readers

**V**alentine's Day is all about the love, and if you're married there aren't many stories more sentimental than how you and your partner met, how your marriage proposal was made, or how your life remains full of love after many years of marriage.

Those stories are often sweet, funny ... and perhaps a little unusual.

We asked readers to tell us how they met their spouses, to share funny or unique marriage proposals, or simply tell us a love story. The best of those responses are on this page. We thank these brave readers for their stories.

## Honoring the spirit of love

As a native of Eden Prairie, my career took me to Newport Beach, Calif. in 2005. While there, I met a beautiful woman named Jen who shared many of my passions. Long walks along the beach and weekend trips around the West fueled our excitement.

Within a year, I knew I had to snag her for good. By May 2011, we were married and ready for the next adventure. What we didn't realize was that fate, via a wonderful career opportunity, would bring us back to the Twin Cities soon after. Many of her friends and family couldn't believe she would move to such a cold place, given she had grown up in Las Vegas and never even driven in the snow before.

But since our move to Prior Lake in August, Jen has shown an aggressive enthusiasm for everything our beautiful area has to offer. From the farmer's market to Cleary Lake dog park, volunteering at local charities to spearheading a trip to the St. Paul



**Matt and Jen Karpinko at their wedding. Jen moved from the warmth of the West Coast to the frozen tundra of Minnesota for love.**

Winter Carnival, Jen has shown her taste for the flavor of life ever since we moved here.

It is just that spirit that caused me to fall in love with her from day one.

**Matt Karpinko  
Prior Lake**

## 'I can't believe I actually did that'

I met my husband at Sears when it used to be on Lake Street in Minneapolis. I worked in menswear, and the tailor shop in back of menswear was also a break area.

A new guy, a really handsome guy, was taking his break.

I asked the tailor, a good friend, to introduce me. He said "Nah," if you want him to fall in love with you, just take this hanger which he had broken open to a straight wire. He tied a string to each end and tied the string together at the top. "Now," he said, "hang this string around his ears and bang on the wire and he will love you forever."

So, I can't believe I actually did that, but I went ahead and did just that.

We were happily married in Jordan 3-1/2 years later.

With fond remembrance,  
**Dorothy (Warden) Tournat**

## Boy meets girl at Radermacher's

The store was quiet, nearing the end of the night. There was something lonely about that store when we approached closing. The hustle of the day was drawing to an end and the aisles were empty.

I wasn't alone; there was a cashier up front and my best friend was

in the front of the store sweeping, cleaning up after a long day. It was the night before prom, and I was feeling lonely.

The empty store wasn't helping. I walked up to the front of the store to help clean up, and as I rounded the corner, I saw her for the first time. Well, I had seen her before, of course; we worked together. But I had never really seen her before.

She was at her register, waiting patiently for customers. She had long, straight brown hair and a beautiful smile. We had talked before, on break or while we were working. I always joked with her, because she seemed to have a sense of humor similar to mine.

I approached her, not sure of what I would say. I hoped that I could make her laugh, while asking her to get to know me at the same time.

I struck up a conversation. I don't remember what we talked about that night, all I remember is what happened at the end of the conversation.

"Are you going to prom?" I asked. "No," she replied. She didn't say much because she was very shy, but that's one of the things I found so unique about her.

"Your boyfriend won't take you, or what?" I questioned. I was joking, but it was a delicate question to ask. "I don't have a boyfriend," she answered.

"Do you want one?" I asked with a grin.

She shyly laughed and turned away to hide her face. Later that night, she accepted my invitation.

That was April 24, 2009. Over the next couple months, we got to know each other well, and we spent the whole summer together.

We faced one daunting challenge at the end of the summer, and we knew it was coming. She had been accepted to South Dakota State University, while I was going to attend Michigan Technological University.

That first semester was the hardest of our relationship, but we got through it with the help of Skype.

We did some research and discovered that there was a school within five minutes of mine that supported her major. She quickly applied to Finlandia University and was accepted.

We have been inseparable ever since.

Last summer, on July 14, I proposed to her, and we will be married on May 12 this year.

I am so grateful that I worked on that lonely night with that cute, shy cashier, because she has changed my life forever.

**Michael Houghton  
Houghton, Mich.**

## Crash my Corvette, survive anything

The following story is completely true and I have my wife's OK to send it to you, too ... lol.

I had come back from a long day at work and my (then-fiancee) took my 1975 Corvette for a spin. I trusted her and she knew where the keys were kept, so this was not out of the ordinary.

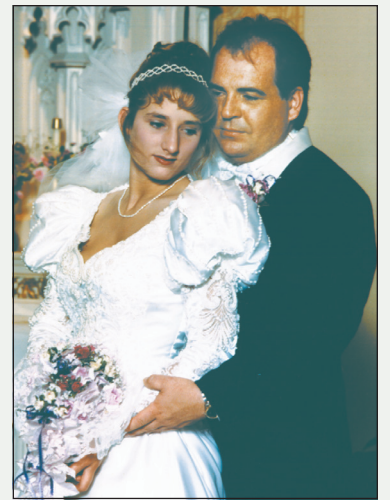
Her best friend arrived, and seeing her gone, decided to wait for her by sitting on my motorcycle, which was parked in front of my car.

Seeing her friend waiting my then-fiancee went to park the car back where it was, and as she parked, the carburetor on the car surged and she hit my motorcycle with my Corvette and knocked her best friend to the ground.

She was quite worried on how I might react, and when she told me, I asked if her friend was OK.

We were married shortly after that.

I figure if I can live through her hitting my motorcycle with my Corvette, I can live through just about anything ... chuckle.



**Dan Elke figures if Shannon could crash his Corvette into his motorcycle and he could survive, he might as well marry her.**

I do love you, Shannon; life is never boring.

Love,

**Dan Elke  
Jordan**

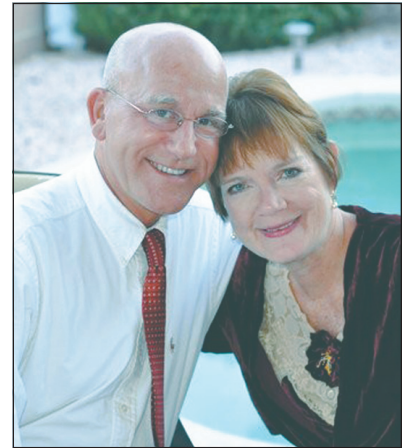
## It only took 28 years...

Steve and I first dated when we were 22 years old. We dated for about a year, broke up, got back together, broke up again but remained friends.

I moved to Denver and we saw each other several times but lost touch for many years. I found him on Facebook three years ago, fully expecting that in the 13 or so years we hadn't talked that he'd be happily married with kids. I simply wanted to touch base with him. He wasn't married, nor was I, when I came from Milwaukee to visit. There ensued a fairy tale.

Our enjoyment in being together was as if we were 22 years old again, and our love resonated. We got engaged shortly thereafter and upon announcing this, both of our families sighed, "Finally!"

I married the only man I have ever loved on Oct. 9, 2010 and we are



**The Steeles at their wedding reception. Elizabeth wore the red velvet dress that was handmade for her grandmother's wedding in the early 1930s.**

still giddy about our good fortune!

**Elizabeth J. Steele  
Prior Lake**



**John Herzog reflects on the love of his life and the resulting blessings, including grandchildren, shown oldest to youngest, Emma (left), Jacob, Ethan, Isabella, Rowan, Andrew, Ethan and Asher.**

## Family provides lifelong blessings

I have truly been blessed in my life.

My wife, Colleen, and I have lived in Jordan now for over 30 years, and this has become our home. We have raised five wonderful daughters (Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, Emily and Molly). And we now have eight beautiful grandchildren (Emma,

Jacob, Ethan, Isabella, Rowan, Andrew, Ethan and Asher). We have three great son-in-laws (Ted, Chris and Jeff), as well. They all reside in the metro area; it is so nice to have them close.

No matter how difficult life can get at times, family always brings me back and reminds me of what is

truly special and most important of all.

In February, Colleen and I will celebrate 40 years of marriage. I would just like to say how much you mean to me. I love you. You are the best part of my life.

**John Herzog  
Jordan**



**Daniel Rogers proposed to Stacey (Kreuser) Rogers by putting an engagement ring inside of a rare shell he found while snorkeling in Fiji.**

## 'Yes' moment: Ring given in a rare shell

How we met:

Upon arriving in Sydney on vacation, Stacey went to climb the Harbour Bridge to see sights of the beautiful Harbour City.

By a twist of fate, Dan led Stacey's climb and they spent the whole tour together. A long-distance love blossomed - you can't get much more distance than between Minnesota and Sydney! - and after hundreds of phone calls, e-mails, and texts, international visits, and an intercontinental move to Sydney ... four years later, we are starting the beginning of another new journey together as husband and wife.

There was a very special trip to

Fiji in 2010, when Dan surprised Stacey by taking her away under the guise of it being her birthday present.

It was during this trip that Dan popped the question on the beach, after finding a rare shell while snorkeling and putting the ring in the shell.

In December, 60 of our family and friends joined us back in paradise for our dream wedding on the beach in Fiji, including Jordanites Dave and Karen Kreuser, Lisa Kreuser, Emily Plooster, and Katie LaPlant.

**Daniel Rogers and Stacey  
Kreuser Rogers**