

# Rochester Romance

Did you find your heart at Rochester?  
In the spirit of Valentine's Day, we  
ask a small sample of alumni  
couples to tell us their  
stories.



*Profiles by Robin L. Flanigan | Introduction by Susan Hagen*

**A**FTER MORE THAN 40 YEARS OF RESEARCHING relationships, Harry Reis is struck by how our connections to other people are central to human life. One of the most compelling findings of the research, the Rochester professor of psychology says, is “just how extensively relationships pervade every part of our lives. There is almost nothing that is not impacted in a profound way by our relationships—school, work, health, you name it.”

And while Rochester alumni have many connections to their alma mater—friends, classmates, family, other members of the University community—for about 10 percent of graduates, the ties are a little deeper.

According to University records, about 9.5 percent of Rochester's roughly 108,000 living alumni are married to another alumnus. That's not counting those who are in long-term relationships but who are not married.

Such long-term relationships are especially beneficial to each partner's well-being, says Reis, the author of more than 120 papers on how the connections between people affect their psychological and social

health. The longer couples are together, he notes, the more each partner reaps a host of benefits, including longevity, happiness, overall health, and more productive work lives.

“Relationships are a source of support. They help people deal with stress, and make people happier,” he says. “People have a need to be connected, and when they have those needs met, they have more energy for other pursuits as well.”

That's not to say long-term love is always a bed of roses. Hundreds of studies have shown that the No. 1 ingredient in a healthy relationship is the ability to handle conflict in a constructive way. Being able to really listen, to recognize the other person's perspective, and to compromise are also essential, Reis says.

“Lifespan research shows over and over, if you ask a senior what's important in life, they say, ‘Pay attention to your relationships.’ Look at tombstones. No one writes, ‘... worked at this or that business for 28 years.’ They write: ‘Husband, mother, sister, brother.’”

With that in mind, we asked a small sample of alumni couples to tell us the stories of their Rochester romance.



## 'A Lasting Union'

**Allan '54M (MD) and Helen Uebel Inglis '49**

A mutual friend invited them to dinner, and after a lively evening, Allan Inglis '54M (MD) offered Helen Uebel '49 a ride home.

He was characteristically quiet, but weeks later called to invite Helen out to dinner and a movie. She told him she had plans to attend a concert, but that she'd love a raincheck. The next invitation came a month later, to accompany him to a class party. They arrived early, so Allan, a squash player, brought Helen over to the squash court, where she took off her high heels and chased after balls in her stockinged feet.

"I didn't expect her to be very good, but I thought we would have a good time," says Allan. "My classmates cheered us on."

Over Christmas break, back home in Oregon, Allan kept mentioning Helen's name. His mother was on a plane to Rochester that January.

"She came to look me over," Helen recalls. "I was an Easterner, for heaven's sake. And worse yet, a redhead."

Helen passed the test, and Allan passed a similar one with Helen's friends months later at a party she hosted before departing on a European summer vacation with a friend. "All the girls were circling around him and doing a 'Oooh, where did you find him?' kind of thing," she says. "I acted nonchalant."

The couple married in June 1955. They went on to have seven children, two of whom are doctors. They moved 10 times between Allan's graduation from the School of Medicine and Dentistry and their decision to settle in Rye, N.Y.

The Inglises agree that the University gave them a nice start to their lasting union.

Says Allan: "It was a lovely place to spend the first year of our wonderful marriage."



**After meeting on a double date with friends, Allan and Helen Uebel Inglis married in 1955. "We had a lot of fun," says Allan of life on campus as a couple.**





## 'Best Thing That Ever Happened in My Life'

**Robert '58M (PhD)  
and Janet Eddy Scala '55N**

A month after starting medical school, Bob Scala '58M (PhD) ended up in the emergency room. It turned out he had significant internal bleeding, and after being moved into a private room, was told his vital signs would need to be checked every 30 minutes.

"The first person through the door was a young student nurse to whom, it is claimed, I said, 'Get the hell out of here and leave me alone,'" he says. "She turned on her heel and walked out."

She went back in, of course, and over time even brought him up to the roof in a wheelchair so he could get some air. Janet Eddy '55N was a second-year nursing student then.

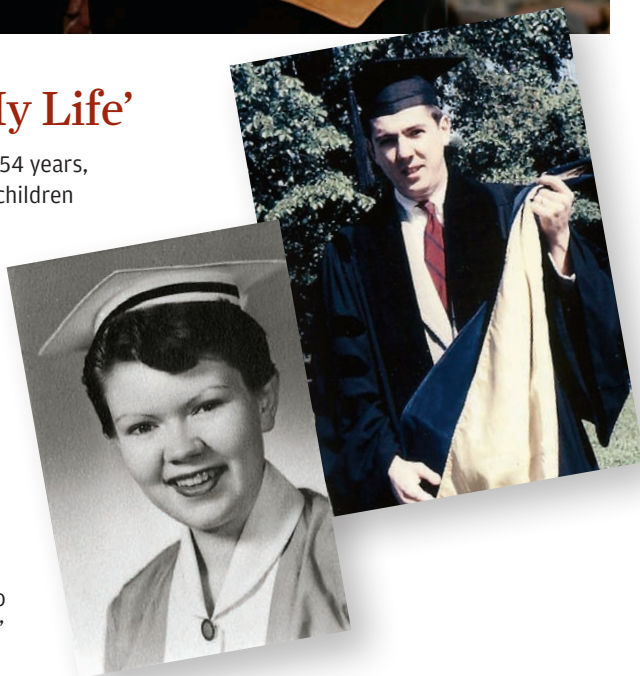
"I just kept peeling off one layer after another," she says. "He was such an interesting guy."

They howled through a Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin comedy on their first date, and have been laughing—and playfully teasing

each other—ever since. Married 54 years, with four children and 10 grandchildren (other Rochester graduates include son John '80 and grandson Andrew '11), the couple lives in Tucson, Ariz.

"For me, Rochester has meant two great things," says Robert. "I got to meet this lady, which was the best thing that ever happened in my life, and I got a superior education, which has led us to be pretty regular contributors to the school. We're proud of that."

Janet echoes her husband's assessment of the University, as well as his affections, though with one last ribbing about his overdue proposal: "I don't think there are ever any coincidences in our lives. I'm an old romantic, and I could easily say he just lit up my life. Apparently, after four years, I lit up his."



**The first of three generations of Rochester students, Robert and Janet Eddy Scala met on campus in the early 1950s, while Janet was working toward her nursing degree and Robert was a PhD student at the School of Medicine and Dentistry.**



## ‘Constantly at Each Other’s Sides’

**Chris '82 and Elizabeth Pedro Taggart '82**

During the first week of NROTC freshman orientation, Chris Taggart '82 came across to Elizabeth Pedro '82 as straightlaced and much too eager.

“We wanted to be dismissed and do other stuff, and he would continue asking questions,” she says. “We would all sink further down into our seats.”

But about a month later, at a party, the two got to talking and found they had a lot in common. They'd both come from military families, participated in student government, and been involved in speech and debate in high school. Shortly after that, Elizabeth asked Chris on a date.

“She took pity on me,” he says. “I told her I had 8 a.m. chemistry classes and went to bed every night at 10 p.m., and she couldn't believe I had such an austere, non-social life. So she took me to see *Barry Lyndon*.”

Commissioned into the Navy first, Chris then commissioned Elizabeth, and after

exchanging vows in a military wedding in 1983, the couple lived in several states before settling in Greensboro, N.C., where they raised their two children. They both now work for the same defense industry contractor.

Though they haven't been back to Rochester since 1986, the Taggarts are looking forward to attending their 30th class reunion this fall, and are members of the planning committee. They say they carry with them four years' worth of shared memories that include swim meets, sorority events, and educational spring break trips. Even their wedding photos pay homage to their alma mater—a University of Rochester sticker is prominently displayed in the foreground of an image of the pair sharing a kiss through a car's back window.

“We were constantly at each other's sides our entire time there,” says Elizabeth.

Adds Chris: “It's where I met the love of my life and best friend.”



“It's where I met the love of my life and my best friend,” says Chris Taggart of meeting Elizabeth Pedro Taggart during the first few months of their freshman year in 1978.



## 'It Was Love at First Sight'

**Jimmie '75 and Dolores Ramirez Reyna '75**

With brown hair that fell past her knees and green eyes, Dolores Ramirez '75 had Jimmie Reyna '75 hooked.

"I have the event indelibly inscribed in my mind," Jimmie says of the moment he noticed her at an orientation program just before their freshman year. "She was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. It was love at first sight for me."

The relationship moved fast, with Dolores bringing her new beau home to the Bronx three months later for Thanksgiving, and with Jimmie announcing to his parents over Christmas break in New Mexico that he was very serious about his new girlfriend. They courted over games of backgammon and chess—"I used to beat him at chess," notes Dolores—and during the spring semester, on March 4, they married.

The newlyweds moved to an off-campus apartment, but when the woman in charge of married student housing, at the time available only to graduate students, discovered they were crossing the railroad trestle over the Genesee River to get to classes, she offered them a small place to live.

Now, about to celebrate their 40th anniversary, the Reynas live in Silver Spring, Md., and have two adult sons (including Justin '99). Last year, Jimmie was appointed by President Barack Obama to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Dolores is a high school counselor.

They are each thankful for the opportunity to attend the University on full scholarships—even as they raised a family, aligning their schedules so that one would be home while the other was in class.

And all these years later, Jimmie can easily snap back to his first experience as an undergraduate and that unforgettable impression of his soon-to-be wife.

"Everybody tells me how lucky I am," he says. "I know that."

**Married as freshmen in 1972, Jimmie and Dolores Ramirez Reyna will celebrate their 40th anniversary this spring.**







## 'The Rest Is History'

**Arthur '70S (MBA) and Margaret Stolze Bernstein '70**

As a graduate student walking past Todd Union with a friend, Arthur Bernstein '70S (MBA) wanted to meet the attractive coed a few steps in front of him, so he tapped her on the shoulder and asked for directions to the football stadium.

"She looked at me like I was clueless," he recalls.

Still, Margaret Stolze '70 accepted his invitation to attend a business school function that night. They got engaged the following fall, and married the summer after that.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of that day in 1968, Arthur arranged for a bench to be installed near the spot where they'd met. He decided to surprise Margaret with it during Meliora Weekend in 2008, while making their way from one event to another.

But when they walked by the bench, several people already were sitting on it. Arthur suggested that they relax on a different one nearby, and after stalling for quite some time,

proclaimed the day a beautiful one and recommended moving to another spot—the just-vacated bench—to enjoy the sun a while longer.

Margaret, a bit confused by her husband's behavior, noticed the plaque before sitting down.

"I said, 'Wow, that plaque has your initials on it,'" she says. "Then I looked again and said, 'Wait a minute. It has my initials, too.' I was flabbergasted. I couldn't believe it."

Except for this past fall, the Bernsteins, who have two sons (Jeff '04 and Brett), have traveled to Rochester from their home in Boca Raton, Fla., every year for Meliora Weekend. (They've already made hotel reservations for 2012.) And every year, they stop to rest on their bench, reconnect, and reminisce about their Rochester days, which included Arthur having Margaret's father, the late William Stolze, as a business professor.

The simple phrase inscribed at the bottom of the bench plaque says it all: "The rest is history."



**After meeting during a fall weekend in 1968, Arthur and Margaret Stolze Bernstein graduated together in 1970. In 2008 they celebrated the 40th anniversary of their first meeting by having a bench installed at the spot on campus where they met.**