

St. Norbert College

Digital Commons @ St. Norbert College

Parent E-News Archives

Office of Communications

Spring 2019

SNC Employee / Parent / Townie Dishes on 50 Years of Campus Life

Todd Danen

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.snc.edu/parent_enews



Academics

Admission

Campus Life

Living Norbertine

Athletics

About



Todd Danen '77, SNC dad and director of alumni and parent relations, left, meets his son Patrick '22 on the basketball court. Todd Danen grew up near the SNC campus, and has since experienced St. Norbert as both a parent and an employee.

SNC Employee/Parent/Townie Dishes on 50 Years of College Life

Todd Danen '77, director of alumni and parent relations, has lived on or near the SNC campus for much of his life. Here, he shares some history and memories of the college.

I have a few ties to the college.

I am an employee; grew up in De Pere; attended grade school, high school and college on our campus; and now my wife, Anne (Vandeveld) Danen '82, and I are parents of a first-year student, Patrick Danen '22. I was invited to share some history and memories of St. Norbert, and I have plenty of both.

The year 1952, three years before my birth, was a milestone in college history. It was the year St. Norbert went co-ed, admitting women for the first time as full-time students. Twenty-four female freshmen, several sophomores and one junior enrolled.

There were no women's bathrooms on campus at that time. Shortly before classes began in the fall of 1952, workers boarded up the urinals in a first-floor lavatory in Boyle Hall for their use. In addition to being their restroom, the space served as a sanctuary for the women, as some of the men – in addition to several faculty – were not exactly thrilled their campus was now co-ed. Appears the college would have benefited from the all-gender bathrooms we have today.

In the beginning, the women were day students. But shortly afterward, they began boarding in homes on or near campus. The first residence hall built for women was Madelaine/Lorraine, or Mad/Lor, which opened in 1963. Following Mad/Lor, three more women-only residence halls were constructed: Mary Minahan McCormick Hall in 1965, Gertrude S. Bergstrom Hall in 1966 and Dorm IV in 1967.

While I recall the dorms being built, there was another building, the old JMS science hall, built in 1967, which created fun memories. A big hole was dug for the building, and as a result there were huge mounds of mud surrounding the hole. If there were fences to keep my buddies and me from climbing and sliding, they were easily avoided. We really had a blast!

As you and your student well know, parking can be a problem here. There was a time when this was not the case. Students were not allowed to keep a vehicle on campus prior to the '60s. If you were caught with a car, you faced stiff discipline. You could be expelled from school or restricted to your dorm or the campus. The latter discipline was known as being "campused," and you were grounded and confined to your dorm for a day or more, which could include the weekend.

Back in the 1950s, and for most of the 1960s, ROTC was mandatory for freshmen and sophomore males. So there were a lot of students involved in ROTC. Every Thursday afternoon, the ROTC cadets would march down Second Street, Third Street and Fourth Street. It was like having a neighborhood parade once a week. It was impressive.



About Our Contributor

Todd Danen '77 has served as the college's director of **Alumni and Parent Relations** since 2008. He grew up on De Pere's Stewart Street near campus and played basketball at SNC from 1974 to 1977. (He also served as team captain.)

Danen has a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and enjoys learning about St. Norbert College history. He and his wife, Anne (Vandeveld) '82, have two sons, Patrick '22 and Sean.

Get to know Alumni & Parent Relations

Alumni & Parent Relations is an office focused on hosting campus and community events. For parents, that means shindigs such as **Family Weekend**.

You can also use this office as a resource when organizing your own parent gathering on campus.

Also in This Issue

This article first appeared in the March 2018 issue of Parents of St. Norbert College. Other features in this edition included:

Commencement By the Numbers

SNC Employee/Parent/Townie Dishes on 50 years of College Life

Summertime Often Means Undergrad Research



One of my buddies had a paper route, and it included Sensenbrenner and Berne halls. He’d be delivering papers right in the hallway. We’d get to know a lot of the students that way, the guys. But I was introduced to many of the guys and women because my maternal grandfather was Buck Janssen. From 1959 to 1977, he ran a popular bar called Buck’s Tavern on the corner of Reid and Fourth streets. He and my uncle, young Buck, served fish on Fridays. Grandpa also made chili and pea soup that was to die for. My dad and I were in Buck’s a lot, and so were most of the college students.

When I was a kid in the 1960s, the Norbertines separated students based on gender. Women lived on the north side of campus and all the men resided on the south side. St. Norbert also had a curfew: 10 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday and midnight on Friday and Saturday. When St. Norbert abolished its curfew in 1968, guess what? At first the college only abolished it for men! The women still had a curfew for one more semester. At midnight on weekends, there’d be this exodus of men heading south on Second Street, walking right down the middle of the street. They had just said goodnight to their girlfriends and were headed back to their dorms. It looked like there were hundreds of men, but it was probably just a dozen.

Another favorite memory involves the Green Bay Packers. During summer training camp in the 1960s, they stayed in Sensenbrenner for six or seven weeks and ate three meals a day in the dining room. They got to know us local kids pretty well. Today, the Packers are only here a few weeks and eat all of their meals at Lambeau, except for a late-night snack in Michels Ballroom. I hardly see them.

One last story. In January, St. Norbert College became a smoke-free campus. When I was a student in the 1970s, faculty were puffing away during lectures, and there were ashtrays on the student desks in most classrooms. I would imagine many of our current students have never seen an ashtray.

Our son, Patrick, was 7 years old when we moved back here. He grew up on campus just as I did, and he just knew he’d go to college here. Patrick has an old soul like his father. He uses the term “dormitory,” he loves the old gym (Van Dyke) in the Campus Center and knows the cafeteria was once located in the basement of Burke Hall (1942-1961).

He also realizes that if he’s caught smoking a cigarette, in a car without a permit, after 10 p.m. on a weeknight, he will be “campused” for the weekend.

March 12, 2019

Parents Say Service Work Helps Students, Too

High-Impact Teaching Drives Student Success

It’s Quiz Time!

For other St. Norbert stories, check out the **St. Norbert College Magazine** **online** and **subscribe to print and/or online issues**. Find us on **Facebook**, follow our **blog** or **subscribe for monthly emailed updates** via **@St. Norbert**.

St. Norbert College

100 Grant Street
De Pere, WI 54115
920-337-3181

[Map & Directions](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Careers](#)

[Library](#)

[News](#)

[Events](#)

[Box Office](#)

[Undergraduate](#)

[Graduate](#)

[Schneider School of
Business & Economics](#)

