

## How do I love thee...?

### 350 BC couples count the ways



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If love stories are mushy, then Brevard College has at least 350 mushy stories to tell.

To date, BC has been the inspiration point, the starting place of relationships for more than 350 presently married couples.

Donna and Larry Burch, 1965 graduates of BC, are currently residing in Lenoir and have been married for 21 years. Four children later, Donna still vividly recalls her first memories of Larry.

"Larry played for the basketball team, and I was a cheerleader. We were part of a circle of friends who did everything together."

In 1965, the rules at BC were extremely strict. Donna informed that women weren't allowed outside the dorm after 6:30 on weeknights, and only a little later on weekends.

Even the sports program ran rigid in its guidelines. Donna said with a chuckle, "Our cheerleader skirts were down below our knees."

Other rules made the dating aspect of college a little more difficult, but solutions were found. Explained Donna, "Students couldn't have cars on campus, so we'd always get into groups and do things nearby."

"A friend of ours, and part of the group, Jimmy Brown (who's now an attorney), drew up a contract on a napkin," Donna explained. "His family owned a summer camp nearby, and the contract had it for me to go with Larry up to this camp, to picnic one day. We went up there and had a great time. After that, we started dating."

Donna and Tim Bailey, 1970 graduates of BC, live in Boca Raton, Fla. Tim is a Trustee of BC, and he and Donna have four children whom Donna feels to be "a special blessing."

Donna began, "I met Tim at a computer dance during orientation weekend. My roommate went to the same high school as Tim." Tim, with the help of Donna's roommate, asked Donna to the Valentine's Sweetheart Dance. "That was our first date," Donna informed. "He seemed like a

nice guy, sweet and very studious," she said and paused. "But that was not at all what he was. I've been hanging onto his coattails ever since!"

"When I first laid eyes on Danny he was wearing a Boy Scout uniform," said Kim Armstrong of her husband, Danny. Kim and Danny Armstrong are 1976 graduates of BC. The two have been married for 10 years and have one son and another child due in May. Kim and Danny have dated since high school and continued through Brevard and Duke University. They now reside in Miami.

"Kim was in some of my Sunday School classes," said Danny. "And we grew to be good friends in high school. I actually was first attracted to her best friend. I kept asking her out, and was constantly turned down. Then I looked over and realized how good of a friend Kim was, so I asked her out. She turned me down, because she didn't want to play second fiddle." But after much perseverance on Dan's part, the two began dating in 1974. Kim and Danny continued their education, as well as their love for each other.

But it took work.

Not a 9 to 5 kind of work either. Each couple believes that marriage demands a good deal of each other as individuals, and as a couple.

"Realize how much of a commitment marriage is; it's not always as it seems," Kim Armstrong advised. "These days, people just aren't willing to commit. And commitment goes through everything in life."

"In going through college while continuing a relationship, many demands exist," admits Danny Armstrong. Danny felt that what helped make things work was friendship he and Kim developed, before the relationship. "Together," said Danny, "we were two individuals getting through things. We helped each other as individuals."

"To share that and communicate those individual needs is important, said Donna Bailey. "Always share, or else you grow apart."

Donna Burch expanded on the individual's part in relationships. "We were secure with ourselves. We both knew who we were and what we wanted. You need to

know yourself before anyone else can. And when this is done, you're ready for a relationship."

Donna Bailey added, "Accept challenges. It's so narrow-minded to have one set goal and to never stray from it. It's a very disheartening way to look at life."

Danny Armstrong agreed, "A lot of flexibility is needed," he said. "Give each other a lot of room. If the framework of the relationship and the future is too rigid, there's just no way the marriage will survive."

But the hard work, the couples feel, pays off. And pays well.

Donna Bailey admitted, "I've learned a lot from this man.... All the problems and changes, the sacrifices are well worth the effort."

Said Kim Armstrong, "I've never thought of marriage as giving up, or sacrificing anything. It's really been more of an enhancement. Our commitment was a strong one. We've been married for 21 years now, and I hope we'll be married 21 more years. It gets better and better."

To celebrate and honor these BC love affairs, the College will sponsor a gala Sweethearts Weekend in June, welcoming back to BC the multitudes of married alumni.

