

RHS REUNION 2013; Roger Thompson

Hello Robins! Let the celebration begin for this wonderful building, our pride and joy from the 1950s. And to think it was called outdated over thirty years ago. Other than this building, we had a caring community, a fine faculty teaching a well designed educational program and a great student body. My journey to RHS began when Lynn and I moved to Minnesota and my good friend Dick Davis told me about a position in District #281 at Robbinsdale High School. After meeting Bob Mendenhall and Milo Mielke I was hired and became part of a great band program that allowed me to fulfill my career goals in music education.

Why was RHS so special?

#1. The Campus featured a building designed for a comprehensive high school. Courses provided the curriculum for a general, vocational or college preparatory emphasis that offered an excellent reflection of the community.

.#2. The #281 Community, led by the school board and the City of Robbinsdale, had a diverse population large enough to afford strong educational programs that attracted new citizens. From the merchants to the parents and the general public there was enormous pride in the schools extra-curricular programs through their successes in athletics and the arts. The Robbinsdale City Band and Community Choir were very active with an average of twenty-five concert or parade performances a year for the band and concerts for the choir.. Robbinsdale became a true All American City.

#3. The Staff, made up of skilled professionals who supported one another, was inspiring to work with and respected by their students. How about Saliny and Berg for orchestra, Adams for choir, Kvam and Anderson for art, Luebke and Plut for the DYNAMIC DUO of drama, and that is just the Arts? Then there was a morning in the lounge when Tom Loechler was questioned about one of my memos that began with a preposition. His response was, how about “ IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED?” etc. Tom was just one of the many fine teacher/coaches who carried the torch from RHS to the rest of #281.

#4. The Parents. We hit the Jack Pot! Did you realize that the chaperones paid their way on our trips including Europe, Washington D.C., Dallas, L. A. and many others. They paid for lessons, came to concerts, and assisted in every fund raiser so their child could have an extra-curricular experience in music. I have to mention the Broins and Warren Clark for their loyalty and many hours of service.

#5. The Students. How proud I was of the dedication to their craft and the desire to perform at a high level. The performances you gave were an inspiration to your school, your parents and community. I am so grateful to have been in a position to know you and to work with you. But you must always remember that it took the efforts of many people to help you achieve your goals and it is now your duty to continue the effort. You have given me so much joy and many wonderful memories. LOL Mr. T

#6. The Legacy. What began here set the stage for the future of Robbinsdale School District #281. The ability to remain relevant in the lives of our students will determine our success. So give yourselves a cheer and commit to keeping the LEGACY ALIVE.

P.S. Check out the archives!

Roger Thompson, PhD, Band Director/History Teacher