

Semi Formal Glamour  
*first published in Newswest April 12, 2018*

“Do you have a date for the semi-formal?” Judy's excited voice asked over the phone

In an instant my calm Friday night mood turned into full-scale panic.

“Date? What are you talking about?” I asked shrilly.

“Fisher Park is having a semi formal dance in two weeks and some of the girls in my class have been asked.”

“Have you?”

“No, but I would love to go. What about you?”

“Where would I find a date? Besides, who needs one? Let's all go in a group with Mike, Karen and Dave. It would be more fun anyway,” I suggested.

The rest of our friends agreed, and Mike was sure his dad would drive us all. Since Dave went to Fisher Park, he picked up the tickets for us, and to our surprise and excitement, the Staccatos were playing.

The next day we three girls walked up to Westgate to check out the upscale Anna Lee Shoppe. Karen had a beautiful pale blue dress bought for a recent family wedding but Judy and I had nothing suitable to wear to a semi-formal dance. Luckily we both found dresses we loved on the sale rack. “There goes all my babysitting money,” Judy moaned.

“It's worth it, your dress is gorgeous,” Karen said.

Dave said he could borrow a sports jacket from his brother, but Mike needed to go shopping. They headed down to Towsley's Mens Wear on Wellington Street where Mike bought a classy grey and green checked jacket and a sparkling white shirt.

The day of the dance was approaching quickly. My new pale green dress with black trim was beautiful and I coaxed my mom into lending me her black patent leather pumps.

Early on the afternoon of the dance, I set my hair in giant pink rollers and covered them with a net. Straight bangs were a necessity, so I taped them to my forehead. To my horror, the hairdryer wasn't working so I settled myself behind the living room armchair in front of the heat register on the wall. I had time to read a couple of chapters of “The Catcher in the Rye” since it took forever for my hair to dry. My dad spotted my feet sticking out from behind the chair and came to investigate. “What are you....oh never mind.” He walked away rolling his eyes.

Finally it was time to remove the rollers, wipe away the Scotch tape marks from my forehead, get dressed and slide into my Mom's shoes. Mike's dad picked everyone up and soon we arrived at Fisher

Park High. The lights in the gym were dimmed and the walls were decorated with balloons and red and white streamers. Everywhere were girls in lovely dresses and boys in jackets and ties; not a pair of jeans, lumberjack shirt, or desert boots to be seen. We danced to the Staccatos' music until all five of us were exhausted, then decided to walk down to Jimmy's restaurant to finish off the evening. No day was ever complete without chips and gravy, and a coke.

By the time Mike's dad picked us up at Jimmy's, we all had our second wind. We were gabbing about the fun we had, but also making plans for the next few days, when the dance would be a memory and we would be back in our jeans, lumberjack shirts, and desert boots.