

Price of a Promenade

- Pierce Law

The idea of prom is an iconic and integral part of the high school experience. Prom is believed to have evolved from the popularity of upper class balls from centuries ago. Girls, wearing all white, walked in to the grand ballroom in all of its glory. This is where the word prom comes from; it is a shortened version of the word promenade. Prom slowly made its way from college to high school and evolved into what it is today.

An important part of modern day high school, prom is becoming an increasingly expensive. The average price of prom in the US is \$1,078. The average price of prom for the Northeast is \$1,944. As expensive as it is today, the cost of prom is still rising. The average cost increased 33.6% from 2011 to 2012 and is expected to rise even more.

A large majority of the cost comes from the attire and the accessories that are worn to prom. For the girls, the cost of hair, nails, and make-up really adds up, when just the dress will cost between \$100 and \$400. Guys have to buy or rent a tux, which costs on average of \$150. And for those of you who are buying the tickets to this year's prom, those could be upwards of \$60. Although most of the national and regional averages incorporate limos and dinners into the cost of prom, traditionally, Marblehead High School has had a required bus service, to and from the event, and a full buffet.

To offset the cost that each attendee pays individually, thousands of dollars are raised and set aside by the class to help pay for and organize the event. A lot goes into the organization of a prom. There has to be a location that can fit the amount of people attending with room to spare. Often pricey hotels are the popular spot for prom; Marblehead High School's Senior Prom is at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Cambridge, while the Junior Prom is at the Peabody Marriott. Then there's the cost of the DJ, and of course, the price of food. The right or wrong caterer can make or break a prom.

Not only is it expensive, but asking someone to prom, especially in Marblehead, requires creativity and ingenuity. People have asked in ways that range from romantic to extreme. Potential askers have spelled "prom" out using candles, snow, spray paint, sticky notes, with flags, with flowers, on cars and just about anything you could think of. It is as much of a proposal as it is a date. A teenager from California went over the top and asked supermodel Kate Upton to his prom by posting a video onto YouTube.

Alea Moscone, a junior at MHS and a planner for our prom, said "Prom is a really fun way to get in touch with your grade and unite with those you don't normally hangout with. And who doesn't like to dress up?"

Prom is a once in a lifetime event, and I know I'm excited. And to my girlfriend: Will you go to prom with me?