



NEW TRIER EXAMINER

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No two dances are alike

by Julia Patton

New Trier school dances are commonly viewed as different from other schools, and this stems from a variety of reasons, the most noticeable is that students at New Trier dress in costume for many of the dances.

Of the three school dances, Homecoming, Turnabout, and Prom, juniors and seniors dress in costume for only two.

Every year at Homecoming and Turnabout, it is easy to tell the underclassmen and upperclassmen apart because of this one detail.

Freshmen and sophomores are often excited to dress formally, while juniors and seniors get to dress up and form a group with a specific, often comical or clever theme.

No other schools in the area does this which makes the experience that students have at other high school dances significantly different.

Sarah Shafiq, a senior at New Trier, went to the Evanston Township High School homecoming her freshman year.

"Everyone dressed up and you couldn't tell the difference between the underclassmen and the upperclassmen," Shafiq said.

While apparel may be the most noticeable difference there are other smaller details as well.

Every high school has different types of students, with a specific

culture and set of social norms.

This can be visible at other school dances through the atmosphere of the dance, the activities before and after the dance, and even how much money people spend preparing for that night.

Senior Carly Levy went to prom at St. Viator last year. The biggest difference between the proms was that at St. Viator only seniors attend, but still may ask dates from any class, according to Levy.

Another difference Levy noticed was how much smaller the dance was, due to St. Viator's smaller class size.

"It was a really nice environment to have prom in because everyone was friends with each other and people weren't dancing in different groups or anything," said Levy.

Another point of divergence between New Trier and other area high schools is the rules of the dance and how the night pans out.

Senior Steph Gacek attended Loyola Homecoming, and the rules of the dance stood out to her.

According to Gacek, Loyola requires students to attend the whole dance, or not go at all.

This is extremely different from New Trier, with its more laid-back policy that you can stay for however long you want, as long as you arrive before a set time.

"At Loyola everyone's there at the same time. After the first hour it's

boring," Gacek said.

Gacek added that there are negatives to doing dances both the Loyola way and the New Trier way.

At Loyola you want to leave at a certain point, and the dance gets tedious.

At New Trier not everyone is there at the same time so you don't get to see all the people you want to. Either way, there are both pros and cons to the mechanics of a dance.

Many schools also value the dance over other parts of the evening.

New Trier is, for the most part, the opposite, and this is seen in that we don't require students to stay at the dance for an extended period of time.

Most students don't even stay for more than forty-five minutes.

"I think that other schools are more about the dance, but for us the dance is not the most important part, it's not the reason people stress. It's more about who you go with, if you have a fun group, the pictures, and the after party," said senior Jeffrey McHugh.

No matter what school dance you attend, whether you dress in costume, how much money you spend on the event, or who the people around you are, you're still bound to have fun.



A NT couple from the 50's enjoying themselves at a school dance | Yearbook

School dance ticket sales go to good cause



Panorama of New Trier's Winter Fest from 1953, now called Turnabout, held in one of New Trier's gyms | Yearbook

by Sarah Wong and Katherine Rhea

School dances always come with a cost, literally. The perfect outfit, dinner, and creative asks all dip into students' pockets. Not to mention buying the tickets.

Although Turnabout tickets cost about \$20, everything adds up quickly for students.

"I think dance tickets are overpriced, especially since you are only there for fifteen minutes," said senior Katie White, "getting a whole new outfit for the dance plus the dinner already makes it expensive."

Moira Gitau, of the IT Department and Global Exchange club sponsor, works hard to stay within her budget to make Turnabout special each year.

"The cost of each dance varies from year to year. This year we have changed the way we have spent our budget by spending less on decorations and more on the DJ," said Gitau.

With so much to pay for, students often lose focus as to what the price of their ticket goes towards.

After the DJ and decorations are paid for, all profits are put towards scholarship opportunities for students who want to travel abroad through one of New Trier's many summer programs.

"Before students would have to apply for a scholarship that was not necessarily need-based, but there are a lot of students who want to go on these trips to France and China who just cannot afford the trips. This is

why we use our profits in partnership with the scholarship program to help more students go on these trips," said Gitau.

"They should advertise that the proceeds from the dance go to charity," said White, "It would put the cost of tickets more into perspective for students."

Gitau also explained that she does not account for how much money students will spend before and after the dance. Her goal is to keep students at the dance for as long as possible.

However, Turnabout is not the priciest dance at New Trier. Prom is one of the most extravagant events, facilitated by the Junior Adviser Chairs Greg Segó and Patricia Sheridan and the prom committee.

The total cost for Prom the last two years averaged \$100,000 annually, according to Segó.

This price includes the venue, decorations, food, music, T-shirts, and incidental expenses, such as hors d'oeuvres and parking vouchers for chaperones.

For 2015, the school estimates 1315 attendees, presenting an issue in finding a setting spacious enough to hold the dance.

Segó stated, "A few years ago, we held it at the Adlai Stevenson Convention Center and it was cheaper, but the majority of student feedback was that 'it didn't feel as festive or as important' as it would in Chicago."

Since then, New Trier has shelled out \$88,500 on the venue alone to hold prom at the Hyatt downtown to enrich the experience.

However, New Trier alum Michael Stamos, who attended the event last year, offered a different opinion.

"I'd say it was very festively decorated and it seemed like there was a lot of money spent, but the venue was much too big and impersonal, and the magic was lacking for that reason," said Stamos.

Limited by the large class sizes,

it is difficult to find a cheaper venue, but there are still other factors that affect the overall cost.

Decorations in the lobby total roughly \$1500, special giveaway T-shirts add another \$6000, and the DJ charges \$4000 each year.

The decorations inside the dance, per regulation, must remain on the tables. Sheridan said that a sea of balloons serve as the \$1500 table toppers to complete the prom embellishments.

All of the expenses are totaled and averaged per student to arrive at the ticket price, which will be \$80 this year.

This price does occasionally fluctuate, depending on the cost of various components of the dance.

In 2013, the ticket price was down to \$75 since balloons cost a third of their current price and the Rosemont venue was cheaper.

Tickets may be pricey at New Trier, but what students pay to get into prom is intended to balance the dance budget.

Any extra money from ticket sales is either allocated to New Trier's general fund or donated to the senior class Habitat for Humanity project.