

Glow-in-the-dark dance party part of celebration

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Once the media production class decided on “Swedes Light ‘Em up,” for this year’s Gothenburg High School homecoming bonding experience, they wasted no time putting pieces into place.

“We ordered 600 glow sticks before we had official approval from Mr. Evans,” said junior Bailey Morton.

The glow-in-the-dark dance party involved crowding 440 students (grades 7-12) into the north gym on homecoming—Oct. 11—and having a cheerleader teach each class a short dance, created by the media production class, to several popular songs mashed together.

“They had 30 minutes to learn it,” said senior Brett Mann.

Dances were synchronized beginning with freshmen and ending with the seniors.

Through a microphone, Mann told students what to do and where to go and others filmed with six video cameras.

Lights were then shut off, music began from an iPhone plugged into the sound system and several takes of the five-minute video were shot—in the dark. Glow sticks, cellular phone flashlights, Christmas lights and more shone as students gyrated to the music.

At the end, students yell “GHS” and cheer.

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Despite a little misbehaving, Tiani Reeves said everyone did what they were told.

“You have all these people in the dark who don’t want to be in class and you expect them to behave. It’s crazy anyway,” she said.

Kayla Trevino said she thought students become more excited once they were in the dark and “could see how it was all coming together,” Kayla Trevino said.

Timing was probably the biggest challenge, Morton said.

“When to dance and hit the right time of the song.”

Senior Ashley Wilkerson said the production team had to trust each other and hope it would go smoothly.

“It was organized chaos,” Wilkerson said.

She added that the production class had to learn to work together.



“We are perfectionists and opinionated so it was hard not to offend each other,” Wilkerson said.

Editing was a big, time-consuming part of the project, class members said, as students had to put the sound track over the video, fade in crowd noise, select different camera angles and

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more.

High school principal Randy Evans said he was skeptical about how the class would pull off their idea.

“How was it possible to get 400-some people in the gym taking directions from their fellow peers?” he asked.

Evan said his biggest fear was what students would do once the lights were out and “people didn’t follow directions.”

The last two years the media class roused school spirit on homecoming day with a lip dub that involved different organizations doing different things as the production class walked down hallways with cameras in hand.

Students then gathered on the football field to cheer.

Evans said he liked the new idea this year as a student-building activity.

“It was very well organized and a great leadership project and (Dan) Jensen (the class teacher) did a good job of giving the class ownership,” he said. “Sometimes that’s a risk.”

Mann said the experience bonds students and “we are a school together.”

Days after the filming, the class said students were still talking positively about the experience.

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Students can have their own free video of the project by picking one up in Dan Jensen's room.

The video is also on the school's website—www.gothenburg.k12.ne.us—and the school's Facebook page.

ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com

308-537-3636