

AFTER THE DISCO



FULL CIRCLE MOMENT

SENIORS RILEY ECK AND ETHAN CURRAN HAVE ATTENDED EVERY HOMECOMING DANCE TOGETHER

SENIORS AND FRESHMEN HAVE DIFFERENT AFTER PARTY EXPERIENCES
DESIGN AND STORY BY FRANCIE GARRISON

She watched as her 17 best friends slipped off their dress shoes and heels and loaded out of their party bus, making their way down the stone path to senior Reese Birch's lake house. For their final Homecoming afterparty, Birch and the other seniors decided to keep things more laid back — celebrating with a bonfire and s'mores at Lake Lotawana.

In previous years, the parties Birch attended after school dances had been alongside at least 40 people. She wasted more time stressing to make sure she had the perfect costume to match the theme than she spent enjoying the experience celebrating with her friends.

Just a few days before the

dance, Birch stopped by Target and bought "Happy Birthday" banners and rainbow-sprinkled cupcakes than drove a half hour down the lake to set up. She blew up air mattresses and unfolded lawn chairs out on the dock. Spending only about thirty minutes on the setup — Birch focused to enjoy her last Homecoming.

The sun shined through the house's tall windows as the group woke up in the morning to conclude their final homecoming dance. Gathered around the breakfast table, the group recapped every school dance over their past four years and toasted their glasses of orange juice to a good conclusion of their final homecoming.

He watched as his backyard filled with a crowd of tan cowboy boots and cropped fringe tops. Freshman Grant Seibert took a deep breath as he nervously weaved around his hay-covered backyard — saying his hello's to all of the 101 freshmen invited to his wild-west-themed homecoming afterparty.

"Hotel Room Service" by Pitbull blasted through the DJ's speakers so loudly that ears began to ring. Parents filled the house for their own get-together. Neighbors peeked through their windows, curious about where all of the music and singing was coming from.

Three weeks before the dance, Seibert and his family had already started ordering food and supplies. His parents called a DJ, set up

catering for hot dogs and donuts and ordered hundreds of dollars worth of red and white checkered tablecloths along with western-themed banners reading "Wild Wild West". Each couple was charged \$25 to help cover the costs.

"The entire Homecoming night took a lot of effort to plan, especially because it was such a large group," Seibert said. "It was our first dance, so we wanted it to be something memorable. In the future, I'd rather have a more controlled group, and have a more dialed-down dance."

With three more Homecoming dances left to check off their high-school to-do lists. They still had plenty of time to experience homecoming, whether it was with 100 people or only seventeen.

WINNING CAPTAINS cutout Adjusting her crown, senior Macy Crosser was surrounded by her Lancer Dancer teammates after winning Homecoming royalty. "The whole dance team sits on the sideline and as soon as Kate [Cronenwett] and I won, they all were jumping up and down," Crosser said. "It was just such a fun moment." photo by Phoenix Fisk

RESULT RELIEF first right After winning Homecoming royalty, senior Afa Akwankaa greeted the student section after relieving his crown and sash. "I felt happy and relieved because I did a lot of campaigning for Homecoming," Akwankaa said. "I was happy to know it all paid off in the end." photo by Abi Limbird

SURREAL SENIOR YEAR second right Before being crowned Homecoming royalty, senior Kate Cronenwett hugged SM East Alumni and former Homecoming queen Sydney Beck. "I've watched the crownings since I was a freshman and I felt like I was living in a movie," Cronenwett said. "It is a really special memory for me to remember my senior year by." photo by Eva Berkley

CHEERING FOR CHEER far left Running over to cheer on her teammates, senior Samantha Herpich watched the cheerleaders halftime performance during the Homecoming football game. "I wasn't allowed to be in [the routine], because I didn't have enough time to change," Herpich said. "I wanted to be out there, but it was kind of nice for once to sit back and watch them do it and be able to cheer them on." photo by Eva Berkley



ROYAL CELEBRATION above Celebrating after winning Homecoming royalty, senior Fritz Sullivan hugged seniors Ellie Covell and Greta Dickerson. "Fritz is one of my very good friends," Covell said. "I was feeling very happy for him because he deserves it." photo by Eva Berkley

DAVIS'S FLICS



SOPHOMORE DAVIS FILLMORE TAKES PICTURES WITH HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS AT HOMECOMING

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO TRANSFER TO EAST?

"I wanted to graduate early, but St. Teresa's Academy didn't have any options for my senior year because I started at East and my load of course work was a bit more advanced, so I decided to come back to East."



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