



THE BULLDOG BEAT



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LOVE IN THE AIR AND INCLUSION ON THE FLOOR:



THE 24TH ANNUAL LIFE SKILLS VALENTINE'S DANCE AT BHS

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Photo Editor

With all the love in the air, Berwick Area Senior High School hosted its 24th annual Life Skills Valentine's dance with 15 schools in attendance. This dance was started by the senior class of 2000 for their senior project and has only grown since, with the student council, the counselors, Mrs. Curry, and Mrs. Warhurst helping.

The donations and help required by the school to host such an event do not go unnoticed. Mrs. Laubach makes calls up to the event day to try to make it a simple morning with Mrs. Curry, Mrs. Hmelak, Mrs. Warhurst, and some counselors running to collect everything. Student Council Advisor Melissa Driscoll said, "The same businesses have been donating the same items for over ten years. Student Council is assigned specific food items to bring in for the dance to help." Making sure the day has enough food to last through the fun.

The dance is a wonderful thing to see. Teacher Debra Kern said, "My favorite part is just watching the inclusion with their peers, them getting a day to be themselves, and hanging with their friends." It is a good day for all those involved.

When the kids think about this dance, they think of the fun music, dancing, and the opportunity to dress up. Freshman Zaphyre Chamorro said, "Being with my friends, having lots of fun, and the music," were the reasons she looks forward to the dance.

Not all of these students are able to attend the other dances their schools hold, so holding a dance including things that are seen at the usual dances was the right way to go. Peer Tutor Emily Brekke said, "It gives the kids their own opportunity to get into a court and just have a great time with friends and people from our school."

The space provided adds just enough fun and magic to all the kids in attendance. Peer tutor Alex LeVan said, "It provides the kids with a space to dress up and have fun for a day." Spreading all the love that this holiday brings to people in a safe environment for all.

Student Council members come in and help set up, serve food, and then get to dance and join in on the fun. When asked what the best part was, freshman student council member Adrianna Gonzalez said, "It felt nice to gain more friends and talk to more than the kids I normally am with." The dance creates a sense of community and friendship for more students.

The dance has grown since the first year, when it was only Berwick Middle and High School and Central High School. Assistant Principal Kate Warhurst said, "Year one was held in 'room 29,' which was a big study hall room where Mrs. Riccoboni's class is now... All donations were collected by a small group of students who had to pick them up themselves that morning. We were the DJs, crowned the king/queen, decorated, etc."

This is not the only great event like this that is held; all the schools will head to North Nanticoke for their St. Patrick's Day event to add more holiday cheer to the community. This celebration of love and friendship will continue on other holidays as more schools host similar events throughout the year.

While the dance has moved far beyond the walls of "Room 29," the spirit remains the same as it was in 2000. What began as a single senior project has blossomed into a regional tradition of belonging—one that ensures every student, regardless of ability, has a place on the dance floor and a community that celebrates them.



Students out on the dance floor.
Photo by Callie Shultz



Student Council members serving lunch.
Photo by Callie Shultz



Seniors Savannah Pajovich and David Drauschak bust a move.
Photo by Callie Shultz