

Prom Project about caring



From left, Adam Palmer, Hailyee Aide, Kaylea Parkhurst, Candice Liedtke, Jamie Handt and Brittany Hass participate at the annual Learning Foundation's Prom Project at North Hastings High School. Photo by Julie Musclow

By Julie Musclow and Sarah Vance

Last Thursday afternoon at North Hastings High School, the Prom Project was set up to allow local students to access formal wear at no charge.

"It is truly an event about caring," said Cynthia Moffitt, a parent, who attended the event with her daughter. "Everything about the staging of this event, from the displays to the decorations, speaks about caring."

"I got a killer suit and it is amazing," said Bailey Garcia, a student from North Hastings High School, who benefited from the gentlemen's clothing section.

The Reuse, Recycle and Revamp Prom project is an affordable solution for young people, and ostensibly adults, who are in need of high quality formal wear, as the season of graduations, proms and weddings comes upon us.

The event is in its fifth year. On Thursday, there was extra incentive to take part: door prizes, one of which was a free ride to the prom in a private limousine. Other prizes included corsages, as well as salon and makeup appointments.

Formal wear is collected leading up to the event. Many items have only been worn once or twice; some are even brand new. Items are gathered by the Learning Foundation in Belleville, where local dry cleaning facilities prepare the garments as a gift-in-kind for this important event.

"Prom Project is for everyone and is a great way to reuse things that would have just stayed in a closet," said Lucille Kyle, school board trustee.

Teacher Leyann Tomasini-Love, one of the organizers, has been involved for some years. On Thursday, she was helping young people search the shelves for just the right style.

"There was a large variety of dresses - and they were all so pretty!" said Cara Rumleski, a student from O.L.M, who came to the high school to peruse the items after her classes.

"Everyone can go to their event looking great," said Erin Graham, from the Quinte Mall in Belleville, who travelled to Bancroft to attend the popular event. Donations from the Quinte Mall made this year's event even more special.

Prom Project is ran solely on donations, with many local and regional businesses contributing to this community event.

"There have been years where the momentum has not been as strong as it has been this year," said Kelly Waterbury, a North Hastings High School teacher, who spearheads the local day along with others including Leeann and Lucille. "The generosity of the community, and the enthusiasm of the youth who benefit, truly makes a difference."

When asked if Prom project is something that will continue, Trustee Kyle said, "Yes, I believe Prom Project is something that will

continue, because it sustains itself yearly and is truly loved by our community.?