

FEATURE

Prom-goers 'pay the price' for evening of memories



John Powell/Photo intern

Getting ready for their prom portraits, Kathleen Hennessey, left, and Cori Kern make final adjustments to their make-up May 13 at Aquinas Institute's junior prom at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

A high-school prom carries quite a bit more impact than, say, your average dance or party. As Mark Catalfano, 16, put it, "It's a one-time thing; it only comes once. I never thought I'd be going to my junior prom, and all of a sudden it's here."

"It's a big thing in your high-school career," added Cori Kern, 16. Both she and Mark are parishioners at Greece's St. John the Evangelist Church.

Mark and Cori are not dating each other, but they did travel in the same vehicle to Aquinas Institute's junior prom on May 13. In fact, they were among 14 — that's right,

14 — teens piled into a limousine that took them to the Rochester Riverside Convention Center. Cori's boyfriend, Dan Horn, noted that renting the limo for eight hours that night was pretty pricey, even when split 14 ways.

"It was \$70 each," said Dan, 17, from Holy Cross Parish in Rochester.

Expenses can indeed pile up quickly during prom season. But Mark's girlfriend, Kelly Sadler, thinks that shopping for the big event is a good learning tool.

"There's a lot of (financial) responsibility that goes with it," said Kelly, 16, from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Irondequoit. "The boys went out and got their own tuxes; it's not like their moms dressed them."



A photographer positions Dan Horn and his girlfriend Cori Kern for their portrait at the prom.

On the other hand, in Brianne Duffy's case, it may have been good for the family budget that her mom was along when she shopped for her prom dress. Brianne selected her outfit after visiting two malls while on spring break in Myrtle Beach. Although she said she got a good bargain on her final selection, Brianne admitted that at first, she was drawn to a few more exotic outfits.

"There were some \$400 dresses. I picked one out and my mom said, 'We're leaving,'" remarked Brianne, 16, from Church of the Assumption in Fairport. Brianne plans to attend both her Fairport

High sophomore formal on May 20 — as well as the Eastridge High senior ball in June — with her boyfriend who attends Eastridge.

Salvatore Guarnieri, also from Church of the Assumption, is scheduled to attend not two, but three proms. He will take his girlfriend to both his McQuaid Jesuit High School senior ball on June 2, and her Fairport High senior ball one day later. Just for good measure, Salvatore has also committed to go to the Our Lady of Mercy junior prom on May 19, taking a friend of a friend of a friend. (Don't ask!)

Attending three proms can empty the wallet out quickly, but Salvatore is being positive. He noted that the McQuaid and Fairport senior balls fall on back-to-back



Capturing the moment forever with a snapshot, friends Sean Ciminelli, left, Mark Catalfano, middle, and Angelo Natale pose before the Aquinas junior prom.

nights, so his one tuxedo rental for that weekend will cover both nights.

Salvatore, 18, remarked that he's looking forward to hitting the town with a touch of class. "Everybody goes out and looks nice, instead of the street clothes they wear at the dances," he said. "You try and be extra polite, very formal." He said he has gradually improved his appearance at formal events, having enhanced his dancing skills and even getting his hair to remain in place.

"I could never get it to do what I wanted it to. It never stayed the way I wanted for the pictures," Salvatore said.

Brianne expects that students will carry themselves much differently at proms

than in the school hallway.

"Everybody's going to be dressed up so much better. I think they'll all be more polite," Brianne said.

For some of Brianne's friends, she said, prom season has been on their minds for many weeks.

"They've been obsessing since February and I was like, 'It's three months away!'" Brianne said. "It's just the word 'prom' — it scares people."

Will Payne, on the other hand, doesn't feel any pressure from prom season. He plans to attend his McQuaid senior ball as well as the Mercy junior prom with different dates, both of whom he has known for quite some time.

"Both are just good friends. It's just going to be a really good time," said Will, 18, from St. Louis Parish in Pittsford.

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