

Vegas: Organizers hope Viva can become an annual event

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they didn't have any proms in their high school days, so we just want to offer them a chance to dress up and dance," Ishii said.

This is the first time his association has hosted such a formal dance party, and whether it will become an annual event is still in question.

"We hope it could become an annual event, but we have to listen to students' reactions," Ishii said. "If people don't like it, I guess we might have to get it back to our traditional Valentine's party again."

Visitors' enthusiasm at the party seemed to be a relief to organizers. The floor was crowded with dancers from 8:30 p.m. until midnight. The five big posterboards erected in front of the ballroom, which featured the buildings and streets of Las Vegas, proved to be a popular attraction. People took breaks from the fast dancing and posed in front of the posters for photographs.

Jihye Song, an exchange student from South Korea, said she was satisfied with the formal dance.

"I have never been in this sort of dancing party before, it is amazing," she said.

Song came to Eugene this fall, and she never got a chance to try her evening wear.

"This is the right place to dress up because everyone's dressing at their best, and you won't attract that much attention as you usually do," she said.

For ASUO International Student Advocate and sophomore Laila Taraghi, the formal dance was also different from the proms she attended in high school.

"There are no boring requirements on what you can wear and what not anymore," she said. "We occasionally have some small-scale formal dances in our residence halls, but nothing like this — it's so big and people are from different cultural background."

International Student Association members said at least 200 people showed up by 10 p.m. Friday evening, and many visitors came in after that.

"We sold some 180 tickets through the EMU Ticket Office, and counting the 20 tickets brought by the ASUO, the total ticket sales should be more than 200," said ISA Co-Director Georgia Mu.

Mu was not surprised by the number of visitors because the association sent out large numbers of invitations through e-mail to many student organizations.

The association's budget, as well as fundraising from ASUO and the University, helped pay the \$600 rent. The EMU Ticket Office closed at 10 p.m., and visitors who came after that were let in for free.

"The Ballroom usually closes at 10 p.m., but nobody wants a dance party to end up that early, so we have to pay for the overtime," she said.

The organization put tsunami relief donation boxes inside and outside the Ballroom.

"We will pull the donations from other international nights together and send them to the related disaster-relief organizations," Mu said. "I just hope people could donate the money saved on tickets to our tsunami-relief donation box."

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