Cinderella Ball

Morganstown Public Library

Children

Cinderella Ball

Nov 17, 2015

$1,001-2,500

$$$
Byline

Jayvonne, Gunner, Public Relations, Morganstown (W.V.) Public Library

The Cinderella Ball gave almost 300 children a taste of Disney royalty by allowing them a chance to be a prince or princess for a day. Kids danced in a ballroom with a live orchestra, met Prince Charming and Cinderella, took part in activities and dined on light refreshments.

Advanced Planning

Our goal was to give as many children as possible a fairy tale day to remember. Our ball took place on October 3, 2015, and we began planning in July. Three staff members determined which decorations to purchase, who to cast as Cinderella and Prince Charming, where to purchase the costumes, the location of festivities, etc. One unexpected challenge was the arrival of Prince Charming's costume; it barely

made it in time. Order costumes (and other supplies) well in advance.

Marketing

On July 28, 2015, we created a Facebook event for the Cinderella Ball. This was all the advertising we needed. Within a day, 100 people had joined the event, and the number increased from there. We did not advertise anywhere else for fear of having an onslaught of parents and children wanting to attend.

Budgeting

Our budget was spent on costumes, decorations, food, drinks, tiaras, crowns, postage and giveaways. A lot of our decorations were borrowed by volunteers and local organizations, which is a good way to keep costs low.

Day-of-event Activity

Prince Charming and Cinderella had to be dressed, made up and styled on the day of the event, but set-up commenced well before then. Three days before the ball, two staff members and four volunteers assisted in transforming our library into the palace of books. The carriage, constructed by the local event-planning company The Merry Mermaid, had a bumpy entrance into our palace. Although its measurements were taken, one hurdle forgotten was the library's security system. We had to pick up the pumpkin-shaped vehicle to clear the gates, and in the process, the carriage lost its roundness and became misshapen. Kristen Grandstaff, the owner of The Merry Mermaid, became Cinderella's fairy godmother that evening and used her magic on the disfigured frame resulting in one fantastic carriage.

Program Execution

For more information, view the video under Videos and Images at right.

As the event date approached, we watched our numbers grow on Facebook . Growing concerned due to the overwhelming response, registration had to be enacted due to fire safety codes. We capped the number at 300 children and limited their time at the ball to one hour. From 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., groups of 25 children entered our first floor, where their first half-hour was spent. There, the festivities including taking a photo inside the carriage (created by The Merry Mermaid), making Cinderella and Prince Charming Stick Puppets, decorating a fan (girls) or crown (boys), or entering the tiara dressing room where princesses received a free tiara placed in their hair along with glitter by D & B Tanning.

Downstairs, their second half-hour was spent dancing in the ballroom accompanied by the Morgantown Community Orchestra and partaking in cookie decorating with MedExpress, as well as other refreshments. Little princesses could also sit on the throne, where they could try on the glass slipper. When their second half-hour terminated, attendees exited the palace of books and received a take-home gift to remember their day at the ball.

There was constant motion throughout the day, as every 30 minutes, a group of 25 children was either entering the library to begin their day at the ball, moving downstairs to the ballroom, or exiting the library.

Out of the 300 children who were registered, 250 attended; that does not include the 500 adults who attended with their children. We were quite worried that many would be upset by the shortness of their stay, or complain that something was poorly executed, but it was quite the contrary. The feedback has been nothing but euphoric. Some families drove hours for this event to leave with their children saying it was the best day of their lives. It touches us greatly for this is what we wanted: to make these children have one their best days of their lives.

Advice

Hearing or reading the word “ball,” people think of adjectives such as “elegant,” “majestic” and “royal.” When preparing for a ball, whether it is costumes, decorations or food, choose great quality. Great quality does not mean expensive. One with a good eye and a creative mind can make a castle out of stick-ons, paper and tablecloths. Your ball should be properly staffed, organized, and most

importantly, fun.

- The budget we used included buying permanent decorations and costumes to use in future events at our library. Plans are in the works to make the Cinderella Ball an annual tradition at our library.
- We recommend registration (which we very rarely do) and keeping the number of children within a range your building can comfortably handle. During registration process, each child was formally asked to present his/her invitation to verify time of entry and engaged in eye contact. They were given a map specifying the location of each festivity as well as instructions to await the announcement permitting entrance into the royal ball. This works for crowd control and allowing the next group to move seamlessly in to the festivity area. We also had a designated waiting area inside for early arrivals.
- Most children were happy with a couple of dances and then wanted to move on to the next thing. Due to this fact, Cinderella's and Prince Charming's dance scene with the clock striking 12 was moved to the beginning of each ball session, or there might not have been any children to witness the scene if we kept at the end as originally planned. We only had a few volunteers to dance with the princes and princesses; once they got started with a partner, many parents joined in the dance with their children. Don't have too many dance volunteers, parents are the best ones!
- Not having to wait in line to participate in each activity made for a calm, relaxed atmosphere for all involved. Children did not have too much time on their hands to get bored. Very important!
- We borrowed some of our props and decorations from local businesses. Hastings Funeral Home lent us decorative columns upon which we could place our cardboard castles, lending an elegant feel to the room. Our throne came from Morgantown Dance Company. Local theater groups and high school drama departments are a wealth of props.
- Cookies to decorate were donated by MedExpress Urgent Care.
- Visiting princesses from a party planning business volunteered for photo opportunities, dancing and hugs.
- A canopy created a mock dressing room for tiara placement where D & B Tanning could glitter and fluff hair after placing the tiara.
- Our local community orchestra volunteered to play part of the day. Next year, I will get in touch with the high school orchestra to try to get more hours of live music.

- If anyone has questions or would like to talk with us, we would be more than happy to talk with you!
    - Jay Gummer 304-291-7425 ext. 216; email: jay.gummer@clark.lib.wv.us
    - Bonnie Dwire 304-291-7427; email: dwireb@clark.lib.wv.us

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

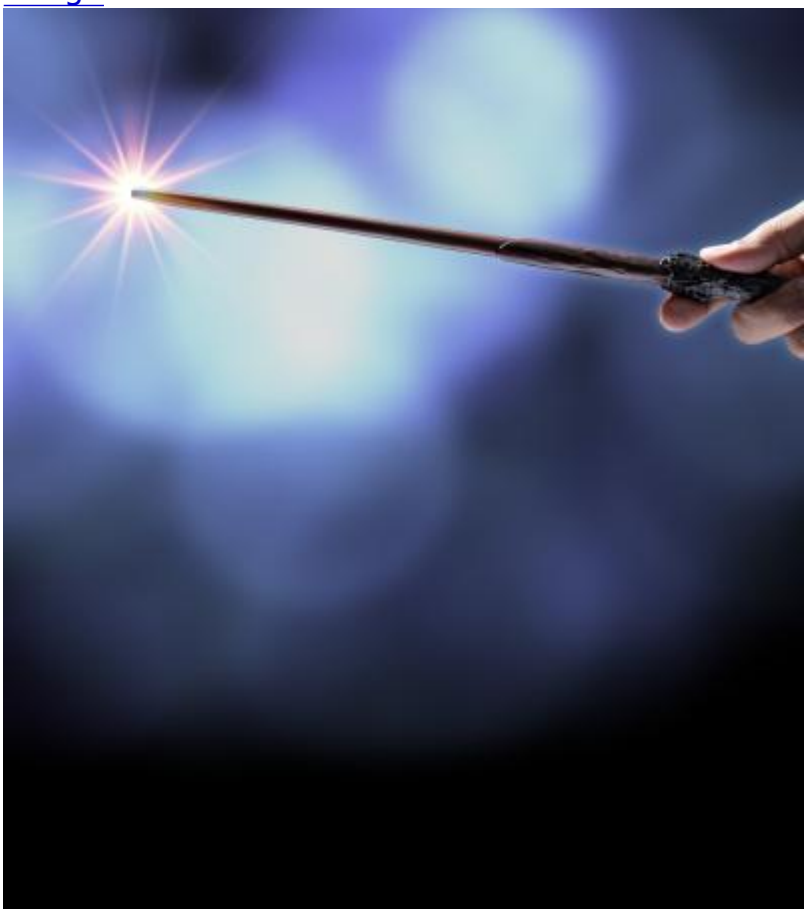
Slideshow Images

Image

More Programs

Apr 24, 2015
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $$$

Image



Harry Potter Yule Ball

Audiences:

Young Adult (17 - 20)