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Students recycle fashionably at Trash Dance

By Megan Krause, Campus Life writer

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To promote Recycle Mania, Ohio University students traded in their day-to-day trends for recyclable looks at the Trash Dance held Feb. 1 in Baker University Center Ballroom. Students took advantage of the theme by turning their trash into fashion statements.

Recycle Mania is a recycling competition that started in 2001 between OU and Miami University, but it now includes 400 universities. The Trash Dance was an addition to the promotions of Recycle Mania this year.

OU environmental groups wanted to give students a reason to dress up, senior Sarah DeWitt said. "It's a good contrast because you're dressing up in trash."

The Trash Dance also was used as an opportunity to have a non-waste event, DeWitt said. Most of the decorations were made from items from Campus Recycling. Disco balls were made by covering lights with

CDs to form spheres. Decorations also included fans made out of telephone book pages, packing peanuts and water bottles.

According to a display at the dance, five bottles have enough fiberfill to stuff a ski jacket, and 20 plastic bottles have enough material to make a polyester suit.

Junior Laura Allen used a few of the 236 incandescent lightbulbs she had in her basement to finish off her dress. The [extra] lightbulbs were a result of an environmental effort to replace students' incandescent lightbulbs in dorms with energy-saving bulbs, Allen said. The remainder of her dress was made from curtains.

Freshman Emilee Brightman wore a corset-like top crafted from magazine clippings that were folded like fans and a skirt made out of plastic shopping bags. The outfit was made by Brightman's friend freshman Devon Turchan. Turchan himself was dressed in a vest. The outfit was simple to make and hardly took any time, he said.

Junior Leah Graham made a skirt completely out of ties. They were all old, unwanted ties collected from her dad and brother, she said.

Juniors Becky Clark and Corey Gagliard embraced the formal dance idea. Clark wore a dress crafted out of newspaper clippings, most of which she said had political themes, along with fliers for the Trash Dance. Gagliard turned a beer case into a suit jacket, explaining that most of the trash in his house is beer-related. "I heard it was formal, so I wanted a suit," he said. Both finished their outfits with a glow stick.

Proceeds from the Trash Dance will support the Sierra Student Coalition and the Sustainable Living Organization. The Office of Sustainability, Campus Recycling and the Green Network also helped with the event.

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