



#dysfunctional

Students Attempt To Escape Creepy Cellar

All that senior Sara Goodman can see is darkness, her senses heightened as she is led through a room. She hears the click of a metal cuff as it is wrapped around her ankle. With the blindfold off, her eyes take in as much as possible. It is still dark except for the eerie, red light, the only source in the entire room. Fake blood coats the walls, buckets of body parts cover the floor, and random words scattered about the walls begin to overwhelm her. The clock is now ticking down and the race to get out begins.

At Escape Chambers, an attraction downtown, people paid to be locked in a room and solve clues to escape. The catch was, they only had one hour. There were six different rooms to try, based off many scenarios like attending a party or getting recruited into the CIA.

A group of 10 seniors decided to try out one of the rooms. They choose the scariest room, named the Cellar, which had five stars on its website. "We liked the idea of the fear factor," Morgan Stutzman said.

Ellie Henry also wanted to try the Cellar. "If we were going to do a basic room, I didn't know if I wanted to do it," Henry said. "But when we were talking about the Cellar, I thought it would be a little more exciting and memorable."

Before entering the room, an Escape Chambers employee blindfolded them and led them in one-by-one. Then, he handcuffed them by either their wrist or ankle. Next, he placed two people inside two separate cages. "It was a little scary being blindfolded," Glen Nagel said.

Greta Hammond was terrified of being blindfolded. "I was not okay," Hammond said. "I was freaking out, I had to hold somebody's hand as I walked in."

A single table was placed in the middle of the room and a white fridge with a lock stood against one wall. There were two tall cages in opposite corners. Chains and handcuffs aligned all the walls. There were two doors inside the room.

One was the exit, and the other held more clues.

The team found the combination for the lock to get into the other door. The only person free at the time, Meredith Campidilli, was able to go inside. "It was literally pitch black inside," Campidilli said. "I didn't know what was in there or where the walls were."

Before Campidilli entered the room, scary music began to play. "The guy came over the intercom and started to play lullaby music," Eric Friesth said.

That scared Campidilli. "We had to encourage Meredith to go into the room," Nagel said. The team began to chant and cheer Campidilli on, and she managed to go inside and get the rest of the clues.

The group ran into many other difficulties and problems along the way, like accidentally attempting some of the clues in the wrong order. Although they were confused for a short time, they got help from one of the instructors.

Once the clock hit zero, time was officially up, and the group still had not escaped.

Some of the members thought they would want to try again sometime. "I would try the other room, the Collector," Henry said. "My sister did it and liked it a lot."

Overall, the group enjoyed the Cellar. "Even though we all got frustrated and scared, it was really fun," Campidilli said.

Senior Sara Goodman did not enjoy the Cellar as much as she thought she would. "I wanted to go because I heard good things about it before," Goodman said, "so I was expecting it to be good and fun."

However, all the clues made things more aggravating than engaging. "I am one who doesn't like puzzles and stuff," Goodman said. "Anticipation isn't something that I enjoy."

Although she didn't like it, Goodman thought it was still a good experience. "It wasn't really that bad overall," Goodman said. "I just don't think I'll do it again."



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Dominant. Gazing at the Zipper ride, seniors Madison Shore, Olivia Roberts and Amanda Shore anticipate the night's activities. This was the girls first time at the Urbandale Carnival. "It was much better than Johnston's," Shore said. (Photo by Madelyn Vajgrt)

1. Studying the drill book, senior Johanna Miller prepares for the first day of band camp. The theme was "Iconic" and featured music from pop icons like Queen and The Beatles. (Photo by Helen Moritz)

2. After being defeated by the scariest room in the Escape Chambers, Cellar, seniors Eric Friesth, Sara Goodman, Carter Spurgin, Glen Nagel, Greta

Hammond, Morgan Stutzman, Meredith Campidilli, Kiersten Cartwright, Ellie Henry and Anna Toot pose for a photo. The Escape Chambers had a collection of rooms in which participants had one hour to solve different riddles and clues, and use them to escape. (Photo provided by The Escape Chambers)

3. Senior Caroline Aldrich raises her flag while marching in the Green Days Parade. The parade began at Pioneer Parkway and ended at the high school on the morning of June 20. (Photo by Helen Moritz)

4. Seniors David Lass, Dani Hanson, Jolene Thimmesch and Helen Moritz lay on the blanket-covered ground

watching the movie "Inception" on their homemade projector. "We did it as a way to end summer break with something fun," Lass said. (Photo by Ashley Long)

5. Junior Courtney Plaskitt waits for the next act to come on stage at 515 Alive Music Festival. 515 Alive took place in Western Gateway Park and featured performers such as Waka Flocka Flame, Snails and G Jones. (Photo by Corrina Iler)

Captions by: Corrina Iler
Spread by: Helen Moritz
Story by: Alaina Lampe