

## A tropical date with dad



Margaret Hobbs photos

A festive table featuring a pineapple tree held assorted fruits with dipping sauce, and veggie shooters for guests at Covenant Academy's Father-Daughter Night to enjoy. Cory Turner and Anslee McCurry can't wait to try the appetizers before a dinner of Hawaiian chicken.

### Covenant Academy's Father-Daughter Date Night takes on island feel

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You don't have to travel to Hawaii to enjoy a luau, just ask the couples attending Covenant Academy's Father-Daughter Date Night. The annual event is held in the school gymnasium, and was transformed into a Hawaiian paradise.

Over 200 guests entered through a luminaire-lit walkway on their way to the luau featuring an island-inspired stage, with beach chairs, umbrellas, Tiki heads and pineapple cutouts. An authentic wooden dock extended from the stage and was surrounded by "water."

An appetizer table filled with assorted fruit and dip was anchored with a large pineapple tree constructed from fresh pineapples, and made by school director Earline Steakley.

"It was so much fun deciding on decorations for this party," said Steakley. "We had lots of help and ideas to make it work."

Soft Hawaiian music played during dinner, which consisted of Hawaiian chicken, rice, creamed potatoes and green beans. Dessert was chocolate and vanilla cake.

James Merriman enjoyed the evening with daughters, Shelby and Lila, a first time for the trio. When asked about the chicken entrée, Lila said she liked the Hawaiian chicken, because it was different, and Shelby thought it was a lot sweeter than usual.

When asked where Hawaiian chicken comes from, Lila replied, "From the sea!"

Shelby was asked what she looked forward to the most. She said, "I can't wait to dance with my daddy and to socialize with my friends."

Attire for the evening featured assorted styles, with some choosing authentic Hawaiian dresses, shirts and hula skirts, while others wore formal attire. Several made unique floral headdresses, and many wore their complimentary leis and sunglasses.

Following the dinner, many were anxious to hit the dance floor, with the traditional dance tunes provided by a disc jockey.

Guests could have professional photographs made, and a fun photo booth complete with Hawaiian props were available for guests. Many fathers and daughters took advantage of the setup, ensuring the memories of the night will be captured and enjoyed for years to come.

Organizers feel this is an important evening for families, and they are already making preparations for next year's event.



With over 200 tickets sold to the gala, the dance floor was a happening place, with girls dancing with friends, but also saving a dance for daddy.



James Merriman enjoys a delicious meal with daughters, from left, Shelby and Lila. This was the first time for the family to attend the gala, making many fun memories.



Chris O'Hara gives daughter, Marissa, a swirl as the two enjoy the dancing part of the evening.