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magazine

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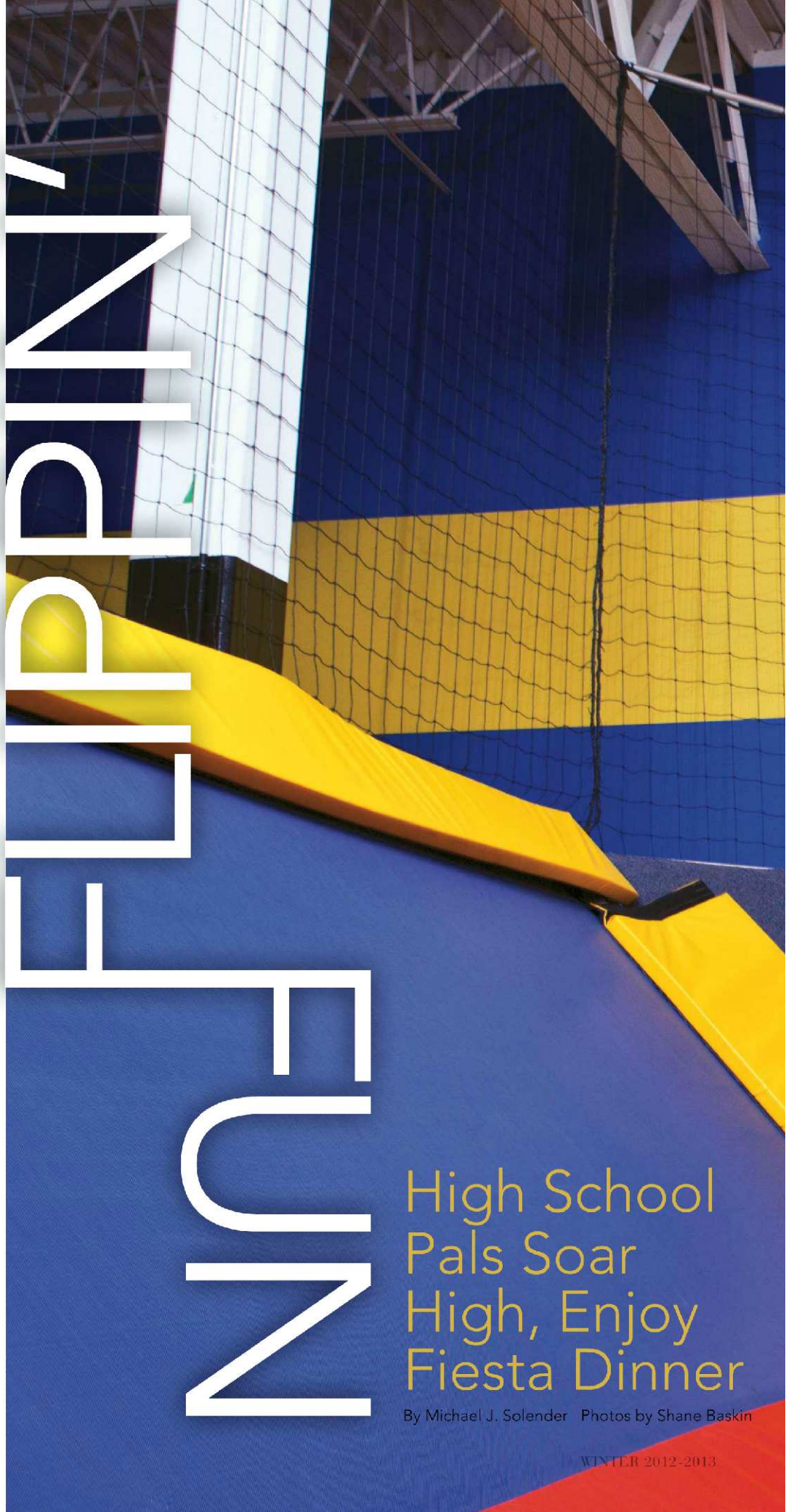


WHEN FOUR PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS got together for a different kind of night on the town, they didn't expect they'd spend half their evening bouncing off the walls. But spring-loaded fun was exactly what they found when they arrived at Sky High Sports in Pineville, where their own private trampoline fun room called them to jump into action.

"I didn't really know what to expect," says Megan DeJohn, student body president and captain of the cheerleading squad for the Providence High Panthers. "I'd never been before but really wanted to come based on what I heard. The set-up was really amazing; it is a great place to get a little crazy."

DeJohn's date for the evening was Erich Jegier, fellow executive board member, Panther football team right tackle and DeJohn's escort at homecoming. Tom Donaldson, a tight end for the Panthers, and Danielle Barilla, also on the executive board, rounded out the foursome. The quartet is enjoying their final year of high school with an eye toward college and exciting challenges ahead.

Group dates are common among teens in their crowd, according to Jegier, who says he often turns to Donaldson as his communication go-to



## High School Pals Soar High, Enjoy Fiesta Dinner

By Michael J. Solender Photos by Shane Baskin





Erich Jegier (from left),  
Danielle Barilla, Tom  
Donaldson and Megan  
DeJohn enjoyed their double  
date at Sky High Sports.



The girls demonstrate their mid-air splits.



"I didn't do anything too crazy, but there were some near collisions that got my heart racing."

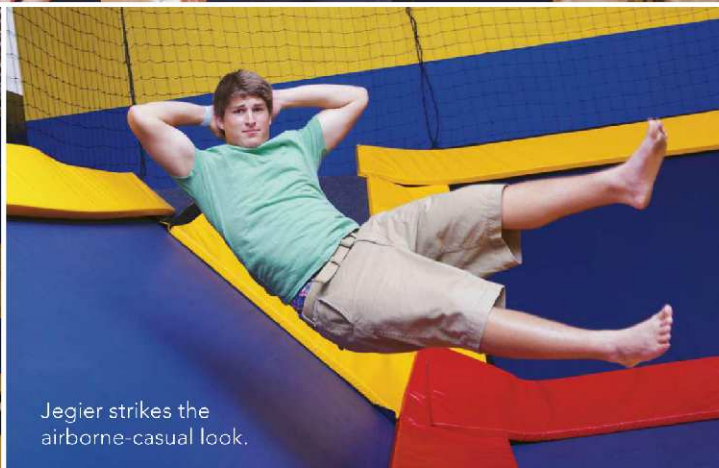
— Danielle Barilla



Donaldson nearly achieves a toe-touching lift.



Jegier strikes the airborne-casual look.





guy in rounding up a crowd to see a film or go hang out at someone's home for the evening. Barilla notes that anywhere from eight to 12 friends may get together for a collective night out, with many of them knowing each other as classmates or from community service groups they participate in.

### Laugh Attack

Fun was definitely the first order of business as the group descended on the Sky High Sports arcade room to begin their evening. Spying the motorcycle video games, DeJohn challenged the competitive Jegier to a race. With their pals in full laugh-attack mode and cheering them on, the two classmates were literally off to the races. Jegier showed no mercy for DeJohn and handily took the first and only race of the evening.

"I don't think Megan knew exactly how to work the throttle on the 'motorcycle,'" Jegier says. "Maybe I had an unfair advantage."

A tiny photo booth in the arcade called out to the teens, and they were eager to see if all four could fit inside for the shot. With each of the guys over six feet tall, there was too much teenager for too little booth and the four settled for tandem shots, with each pair mugging their best for the camera. Shining through were the high wattage smiles of the girls, whose natural styles made them stars of each photo set.

Next up was the main attraction as the couples were shown to their own

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private trampoline room. Their eyes widened as two spotters on Sky High's staff showed them the ropes on the black trampoline floors with angled trampoline walls. Yellow-cushioned dividers among the trampolines provided a checkerboard appearance to the layout.

It didn't take long for the fearless foursome to spring into action. DeJohn began by showing her friend Barilla some airborne cheering moves like the Herkie jump. "I was trying to keep up," says Barilla, "I didn't do anything too crazy, but there were some near collisions that got my heart racing."

## Mid-Air Miscommunication

Donaldson and Jegier were trying to perfect the airborne high-five when miscommunication led to the gridiron teammates experiencing an unplanned crash landing.

"High-fives are definitely a right-handed maneuver," says Donaldson, noting Jegier tried to connect with his left hand. "We wiped out but no one was hurt, the spotters came over to make sure we were okay and we were just laughing."

It turns out frenetic bouncing and aerobics lead to teens with



A tiny photo booth in the arcade called out to the teens, and they were eager to see if all four could fit inside for the shot.



DeJohn (right) challenged Jegier to a motorcycle video race. Barilla (far left) and Donaldson enjoy the competition.





After meals that included carne asada (grilled beef), chicken and rice, burritos and quesadillas, the teens had one surprise left.



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healthy appetites. The gang was ready for refueling, and set off for Don Pedro, the festive Mexican restaurant in Pineville.

"Actually one of the best parts of the evening was listening to Tom and Erich bicker over driving directions," says Barilla, who sat in the back seat of the car with DeJohn. "Tom drove and Erich navigated and they argued the entire way about the best route to take. Megan and I just cracked up!"

Once inside Don Pedro, the girls couldn't get over the authentic Mexican décor, vibrant colors and lively atmosphere.

"It's really a beautiful place," DeJohn says.

### Guarding the Cheese Dip

The jalapeño cheese dip was such a big hit with the girls that they built a "fortress" down the middle of the

table with their water glasses, salt and pepper shakers and table décor to keep the hungry guys from eating more than their share. "We finally let them have some when we were through," notes Barilla with a smile.

After meals that included carne asada (grilled beef), chicken and rice, burritos and quesadillas, the teens had one surprise left, and it featured a golden opportunity for payback from the boys.

"Four cinnamon sugar-dusted nacho chips with whipped cream and honey hit the table when the girls were in the restroom," recalls Jegier. "After Tom and I each had one, I told Tom, 'You know if we eat these other two, the girls will never be the wiser.'"

While the boys considered that move for a moment, chivalry won the day and the girls, together with their dates, savored a sweet end to their enjoyable evening. 