

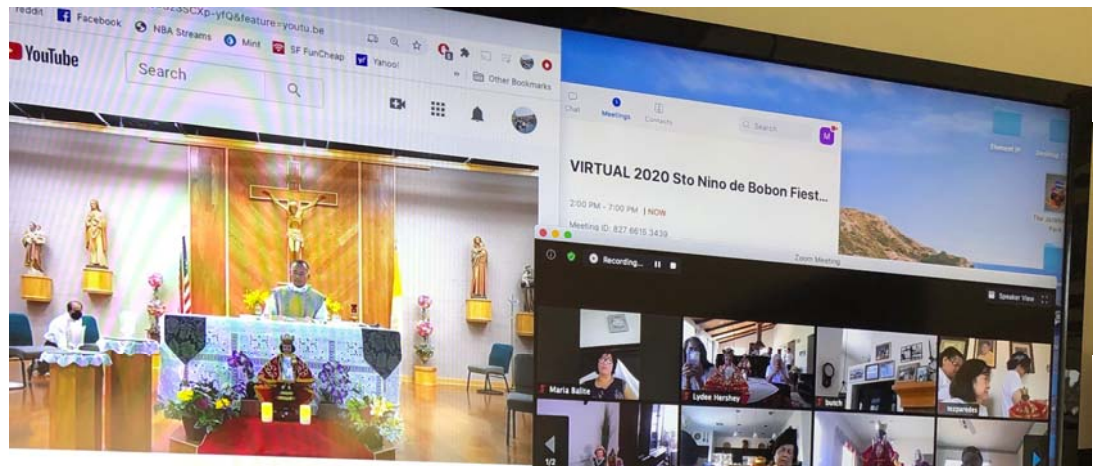
NEWSLetter



Paredes Cousins Host Virtual Fiesta Celebrating 30 years of Bobon-USA Traditions

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By Arpee Paredes

REISTERSTOWN, Maryland — The grandchildren of Agustin and Rosario Paredes were blessed to sponsor the 30th annual Bobon-USA Sto. Niño Fiesta celebration: Dustin Paredes and wife Bernadette, Raphael Paredes and wife Liza, Christine Bautista-Weeks and husband Dan, Olivia Bautista-Hinder and husband Zac, Ervin Paredes, Michelle Hershey and husband-to-be Riley, Julia Hershey, and Jonathan Paredes.

Preparations were made a year earlier in 2019, and the venues for the fiesta and *vespera* were select-

ed and scheduled to be held in San Diego, California. With 2020 on the horizon, people were eager to bid 2019 farewell as is typical - it is a common ritual around the new year to have this attitude toward the past year being one of the worst in history to share this prevailing thought that it has been a bad year, and that in the new year, things would be looking up and get much, much better in 2020, because how could they get worse.

When 2020 finally came, the Amazon rainforest was ablaze in a devastating fire that

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Merry Christmas!
and a
Blessed New Year

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Fiesta '21 goes to Portland, Oregon



Welcome to the Beaver State!

In 2021, our fiesta celebration will go to Oregon for the first time with Eliseo and Melba-Vasquez Ganaban as our *Hermano and Hermana*.

It will be held on August 21 at The Grotto, the National Sanctuary of Our Sorrowful Mother, located in the city of Portland, Oregon, USA.

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Fiesta 2020

(Continued from page 1)

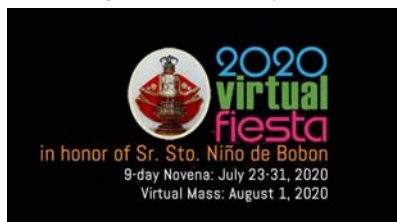
literally can alter life as we know it, and World War III almost broke out. It was only the first week, and things were already not much, much better. Kobe Bryant passed away in a helicopter accident, and Brexit was made official which threw the geopolitical landscape into more turmoil in an already turbulent time. January hadn't ended yet and things were not looking quite so up. At the very least however, people would say, things couldn't get much worse...

So of course, a global pandemic started. The novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 spread through the land quickly, throwing the country into a toilet paper hoarding panic. The NBA, a league that generated billions of dollars of revenue every year, suspended its season a few weeks away from the beginning of its playoffs, and folks realized this was now serious. Stay at home orders were enacted for what many people assumed would be for only a couple of weeks so that states could attempt to get the virus under control. Restaurants closed their doors and became delivery only, and a little communications app called Zoom suddenly became a staple of everyday life.

Everyone in the family stayed hopeful and thought (hoped?) that humanity would come together and unite in the face of a global crisis and that the shutdown would be over by the time summer came. Humanity did not. The number of infections and deaths kept rising, and it was in this backdrop that many big events either started getting cancelled or postponed. Michelle and Riley's wedding got postponed until 2021. Dan and Christine's son Lane celebrated his high school graduation online. Inevitably, the decision was made that the Bobonanon fiesta would have to be changed completely to fit the current reality, as expecting hundreds of people flying to California in a virus super spreading plane was not ideal, and gatherings larger than 10-25 people were being discouraged.

And so with a global pandemic raging, the 30th Bobon-USA Sto. Niño Fiesta celebration would go down in history as the first (and hopefully, only) one to be held virtually.

The money spent on reserving the original venues was refunded, which in turn was donated to the Bobon-USA Association. Then on August 1st, 2020, the virtual fiesta was held



over Zoom. The traditional "vespera" was held on the day before as a prayer meeting which included the rosary and the final night of prayers for the Novena for the Sto. Niño, and it served as a good trial run for the official one as we worked through the hiccups. The actual fiesta started with introductions and a short program, followed by watching a video of pictures of the family and memories of past fiestas, then watching a mass recorded specifically for the celebration and posted to YouTube. Afterward, time was spent catching up with everyone attending online, then the "kids" split off into their own Zoom call and played games, like the typical fiesta.

While it was not exactly the big splash expected for the 30th anniversary of the Bobon-USA fiesta celebration, there was a feeling of nostalgia and gratefulness shared among the family. As many of us stayed home and spent a lot of time reflecting on all the things poisoning our society, we also had a lot of time to reflect on what actually mattered and appreciate the days when we were able to hold gatherings without having to worry about catching a potentially fatal virus just by having a conversation with someone while sitting close or greeting a relative you haven't seen in a while with a hug and kiss. We reminisced about the early

(Continued on page 3), *Fiesta '20*

Virtual Fiesta 2020 Picture Gallery



*We're on the web! At
www.bobon.us*

Fiesta '20

(Continued from page 2)

fiestas, which were held outdoors at a park or at someone's house that was near a large open space, where everyone would each bring a dish or two, attend a mass held outdoors, and afterward there would be two hand touch football, a frisbee being tossed around, or a pickup game of basketball at a nearby court (at least from the view of a



kid, which I was at the time). As the years went by, the fiesta evolved into something more formal, like a dance held in a hotel ballroom where there would be a program and a DJ, catered food and formal dress. At the heart of all the fiestas was the celebration around Señor Sto. Niño - and this idea that the descendants of people from a small town in the Philippines, along with their family and friends, would gather together in a country 8,000 miles away to celebrate the blessings of the Christ Child every single year for thirty years, would likely have once been unthinkable to all the Bobonanons who came before us.

We, the grandkids of Agustin and Rosario would like to thank our parents - Rene and Ninfa Bautista, Butch and Melinda Paredes, Dick and Epay Paredes, Brian and Lydee Hershey, and Tez Paredes - for all the help and support they provided for this fiesta. This event definitely could not have happened without all their help, support, experience, and advice. From creating the slideshow video, to organizing and recording the mass, and coordinating the Zoom calls, they really carried this over the finish line. As 2020 now comes to a close, we are hopeful for a better year coming because really, how much worse can... actually never mind, we'll just go with - we are just grateful we were able to come together for another celebration, and we appreciate all these blessings through the tough times, no matter how small.

Fiesta '21

(Continued from page 1)

Details of the fiesta will be posted in the next issue of the NewsLetter.

In the meantime, let's all hope and pray to Sr. Sto. Niño that this COVID-19 pandemic will be over soon so we can start planning for a family vacation to Oregon in 2021.

The Grotto is a 62-acre shrine located in the city of Portland which offers a sanctuary of peace, prayer and natural beauty for all people.

See you all in Portland!



Thank You!

By Lydee Hershey

Our 30th Señor Santo Niño de Bobon fiesta has come and gone, and I hope that these days, each and every one of you is well, happy and healthy. I still couldn't help but reflect on how great it would have been if COVID-19 pandemic didn't happen! I was looking forward to seeing you all and having a fun and memorable fiesta 2020 celebration but, as we all feared early on, it wasn't going to be. Fortunately, inspite of all the preparation challenges we faced due to the pandemic, we were still able to celebrate our fiesta the best we could. It was memorable in a way that even with the pandemic restrictions we were still able to do virtual novena through Zoom, virtual mass through YouTube, and virtual sinulog also through YouTube! *Waray la kit lugaring kuratsa!* But not to worry, because even without the *Kuratsa* we were still able to raise funds through the sale of the 30th anniversary Señor Santo Niño de Bobon T-shirts.

And so, I'd like to thank Len-len Omega for all her help with the fundraising effort and to all those who supported this fundraising. *Dako nga salamat sa iyo ngatanan!* Because of your support we were able to raise \$400.00 for the association! Special thanks to the following donors:

1. Len-len Omega
2. Ronnie Omega
3. Tony Hill
4. Nelly Hill
5. Fatima Carpina
6. Tony Abellar
7. Totoy Cornillez
8. Tita Cornillez
9. Jovena Alvarez
10. Paz Encenares
11. Salve Labro
12. Lynn Tabigue
13. Nuncia & Francis Tiberio x2
14. Juvy Lindsey x2*
15. Morna Cruz x2
16. Neneng Solano x2
17. Nonoy Balite x2
18. Melba Ganaban x2



T-shirts sold: 24 x \$25.00. Total money collected = \$600.00

Cost of T-shirts + printing at \$5.00 each = \$120.00

Mailing expenses = \$80.00

NET DONATION = \$400.00

*\$10.00 membership fee of Juvy Lindsey sent to me together with the fee for the T-shirts

To be sent to Bobbie: *\$410.00



*We're on the web! At
www.bobon.us*

Fiesta 2020 and Beyond

Our current line-up of *Hermanos/Hermanas* for our annual fiesta is as follows:

2020 - Dustin & Bernadette Paredes, Arpee & Liza Paredes, Christine & Dan Weeks, Liv & Zac Hinder, Michelle & Julia Hershey & Riley, and Ervin & Jonathan Paredes, *Virtual Fiesta*
 2021 - Eliseo and Melba Vasquez-Ganaban, *Oregon*
 2022 - Pacita and Estela Cornillez
 2023 - Artemia Tobes-Eneria and Family
 2024 - Ronnie & Sheena-Hill Dilla
 2025 - Juvy Tiberio-Lindsey
 2026 - Puey Quiñones, Nuncia Tiberio, Florissa (Tot-tot) Balite

If you feel like Sr. Sto. Niño is asking you to honor Him by sponsoring any of our upcoming fiesta celebrations, just let us know. *Viva Sr. Sto. Niño!*

More Fiesta 2020 Pictures



Tips & Other Bright Ideas

4 Simple Microwave Cleaning Hacks That Work! (Continued from a previous issue)



Hack #3: Cleaning With Soap

The hands-on method:

1. Put some dishwashing liquid in a bowl of warm water. Soak and squeeze a sponge in the bowl until the water gets full of suds.
2. Remove the turntable and scrub it in the sink with the soapy sponge. Rinse it off and let it dry.
3. Try to remove all the crumbs from the inside of the microwave with a damp paper towel or rag.
4. Use the soapy sponge to scrub the inside surfaces, starting with the top. Using a circular motion, coat the top, sides, bottom and door with suds, being careful not to get them in the vents. Repeat with clean suds to make sure all the grime is gone.
5. Wipe down all the surfaces with a damp paper towel to remove the suds, being careful not to get water in the vents.
6. Now, wipe everything with a dry paper towel or rag to avoid streaking.
7. Replace the turntable.

The hands-off method:

1. Put some dishwashing liquid in a microwave-safe bowl and fill it with warm water. If your microwave needs to be deodorized, add a little baking soda to the mixture.
2. Place the bowl in the microwave and run it on high for five minutes.
3. Let it stand for another five minutes. Then, remove the bowl. Note: It might be hot.
4. Take the turntable out and wipe it off with a damp sponge and dry it with a paper towel.
5. Wipe down the surfaces of the microwave with the damp sponge and dry them with a paper towel.
6. Replace the turntable.

- To be continued on the next issue of the NewsLetter

- Courtesy of <https://www.ahs.com>



Did you know
 that if you log onto smile.amazon.com, a percentage of your purchase will go directly to Bulig Foundation? All you have to do is to specify who you want the proceeds to go to. Once you choose Bulig Foundation as the charity of your choice, Amazon Smile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.3% of the price of eligible purchases! That's it!
 Thank you for your support!

More fiesta pictures are available for viewing and download at our website: <http://www.bobon.us>