

Filipino Extravaganza a community success

Written by Story and photos by Andy Gibbons III Sun Correspondent
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Cultural Showcase invites appreciation of diversity

The Philippines is a country in Southeast Asia made up of 7,600 islands inhabited by islanders with diverse cultural backgrounds.

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On Aug. 26, community members experienced a culture very different from that of the American Southwest when citizens who hail from the Philippines hosted a “Filipino Cultural Extravaganza” at JFK Middle School, 600 Boardman Dr.

With over 400 people in attendance, the event presented logistical challenges — from seating to food quantity — for its planners.

While the singing, dancing, and acting performances meant the audience had to stand, in the end, there was enough food and fun for everyone, with some Filipino families waiting for the end of the line so non-Filipino attendees could experience the unique Southeast Asian cuisine.

Dr. Christopher Gonzaga, a Filipino doctor and community leader, said the turnout “was really overwhelming.”

In a message to the Sun, Gonzaga wrote: “To be able to gather people from different races, religion, professions, walks of life, etc. and give them a night hopefully they can’t forget. I was amazed that people stayed and hopefully had a good meal.”

The event also provided an avenue for Filipino families and friends to reconnect amidst busy lives and careers.

Such reunions were “a sight to behold!” Gonzaga said.

The money raised by the event benefits the Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services Charity Invitational’s goal. The 20th annual fundraiser is specifically aimed at funding and building a new community wellness center that will service Gallup in many ways.

For information on upcoming events on Sept. 9, 10, and 17 that benefit the Charity Invitational,

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