



Filipino American Society of Iowa

THIRD QUARTER NEWSLETTER



FAS GOLF OUTING 2021



A few sprinkles couldn't stop the 14 intrepid golfers from teeing off in FAS' 2021 Golf Tournament on July 31. Held at Willow Creek Golf Course in Des Moines, the return of this annual event drew the full range of duffers to pros. Taking top honors at the tournament was the foursome of: Penne Gatton, Steve Gatton, Ike Robles, and Bob Vida.



"I will tell you right now I can't wait until next year and already have a bunch of friends excited to join us," said first-time FAS tournament participant Steve Roberts. "What a great group of golfers and the Filipino organization is full of amazing and kind people."

"It's a very fun and exciting time to get everyone out together, even if they don't play," said Tom Benoit. "I think the pictures show how much fun we have."



FILIPINO AMERICAN SOCIETY OF IOWA

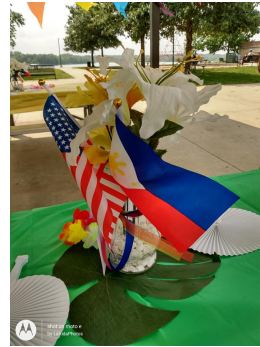
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ANNUAL FAS PIG ROAST 2021



A true Filipino event always features food and perhaps none is as notable as a pig roast. Which may be part of the reason why FAS' annual Pig Roast Picnic has always been so popular. After taking a break in 2020 due to the pandemic, this event returned on July 31 with all of the elements attendees have come to love: live music, activities, dancing, recognition of FAS' scholarship program recipients, a lengthy list of prize giveaways, over six tables of food, and the guest of honor: the roast pig.



"I really enjoy the FAS Pig Roast because it gives me a chance to connect with my roots and other Filipinos," says attendee Roxy Strike. "And I am able to introduce and share Filipino food and culture with my friends."

"The FAS family gathered as one family, not only having fun watching the programs but also sharing their talents and making everyone feel welcome as family," said picnic attendee Christina Adriano.



THE ROAD AHEAD IN 2021

HONORING OUR VETERANS

We look forward to returning to the in-person event that salutes and recognizes those who have proudly served our country in uniform on **November 13, 2021**

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

By the end of 2021 we sincerely hope that we will all be able to look back on 2021 and be able to embrace the joy of our lives moving beyond the world we've been living in for this past year. We will be joining together to share food, sing Christmas carols, and even have a visit from Santa himself on **December 11, 2021**

FILIPINO STORE HALL OF FAME



Robert's Filipino Store in Des Moines is more than just a place to buy genuine food items from the Philippines, it also serves as a default 'cultural center' or gathering place for the Filipino community across Iowa and the Midwest. So it is of no surprise that for the last several years they have participated as a cultural food vendor at the World Food & Music Festival conducted annually in Des Moines.

Owner Belinda Roberts shares they were all very surprised to learn in 2018 they received the most votes and won the People's Choice award. Then in 2019 the Roberts' daughter Kimberly made effective use of social media to help her family's business repeat that success.

The stakes were now high going into 2021, the first year of the event after 2020 was cancelled, because if the Filipino Store could manage to pull off a third year in a row victory they would qualify for the event's Hall of Fame. A measure of success that no one had been able to reach in the 15 years of the event.

When the dust settled, not only was it clear that Roberts Filipino Store had indeed won an unprecedented 3rd year in a row, but that they had done so by a significant margin over everyone else. The support for the quality of their food and their effort to reach Hall of Fame status was very strong. Iowa's Tourism Department spent an hour at their tent filming for cultural segment they will post online and the City of Des Moines is arranging for a special, inaugural World Food & Music Festival Hall of Fame award to be presented to the Roberts in a ceremony that will draw full media attention.

FAS extends its fully congratulations to Roberts Filipino Store and their well-deserved recognition. They are truly Hall of Fame level ambassadors to and for the Filipino community!

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The FAS Scholarship Program held a fun and successful fundraising event in May 15 at Union Park in Des Moines. Attendees helped fund future scholarship to deserving college-bound students while enjoying great food, a chance raffle of amazing prizes, and a karaoke contest.



FAS Scholarship team also awarded scholarships to Liam Wells (left) and Brandon Lee (right).

Liam is attending the University of Iowa studying Computer Science, and Brandon is attending Des Moines Community College studying Human Science and Wellness



CHALLENGE OF HOSTING EVENTS DURING COVID

We have all been excited to begin the process of returning to normal, or at least as much as we can, after the shutdown of 2020. For FAS this was an especially big deal because one of our main objectives is to connect the local Filipino community and that's really tough to do when you cannot gather the community together.

That's not to say that we just took a vacation during 2020, but we did need to get a bit more 'creative' in how we did some things. We launched multiple Pagtulong Day events in which those who were able to and felt safe to do so would join together in small groups engage in a volunteer effort in partnership with local non-profit organizations. We shifted our monthly leadership team meetings to the same environment that so many businesses did: online. And we significantly ramped up our use of social media to not just promote our efforts but also to maintain our sense of community. Perhaps the biggest example of this was our 2020 Honoring Our Veterans event which combined individual Facebook recognition for each submitted veteran with a video-based salute featuring the Iowa National Guard Color Guard, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, and US Representative & Army Major Tulsi Gabbard.



Even as we entered into 2021 and took those first few tentative steps toward the return to normal, we did so with clear awareness that some things were now simply different. With that in mind FAS hosted a self-defense program during the unfortunate period of increased aggression toward those of Asian heritage. FAS partnered with Des Moines-based Vaxi Taxi, the nation's very first mobile pharmacy, to make the COVID-19 vaccine available to those in some of the underserved or disconnected portions of our local population.

Part of recognizing the realities of the current world around us has also been the difficult decisions regarding our in-person events. We made the tough, but correct, choice to not hold our popular Valentine Ball at the start of 2021. Those events that we have opted to proceed with have been scaled down and included intentional focus on the safety and social distancing of attendees. The FAS Scholarship Program's karaoke fundraiser, the FAS Golf Tournament, and the Pig Roast Picnic have all taken place outdoors and open shelter facilities.



Now as we enter the final few months of 2021, we have three events planned, all of which are indoor: our Pista sa Nayon which takes place in conjunction with Filipino-American History Month in October, Honoring Our Veterans in November, and our FAS Christmas Celebration in December. While our goal is to make each of these a fun and festive experiences, we have also scaled down the plans for each and are being very conscientious about the social distancing and safety requirements of hosting indoor events. The well-being of our attendees is always our top priority, now more than ever.

Thank you for continuing to support FAS through your participation, your financial contributions, by maintaining your FAS Associate status, and by interacting and sharing our social media posts. FAS doesn't exist to serve FAS, it exists to serve you – and we are very grateful to all be one family!

FAS Leadership Roles

People are the most important aspect of success in anything. Not only do you need people to participate in or demonstrate support for the effort, but it takes dedicated and hard-working people to lead the efforts for them to be successful. FAS is very fortunate to continue to have those who are willing to invest in the continued support of the Filipino community in Central Iowa serving in leadership roles.

As the calendar year draws to a close, we near the point where some people will rotate out and some will step into those leadership roles. One big obstacle for a lot of people when it comes to volunteering in a leadership level role is the concern of it being a "lifetime commitment". FAS wisely addressed this a few years ago by establish 2-year terms for each role. Sure someone can choose to continue on to additional 2-year terms, but if their schedule won't permit that then they are able to scale back their involvement without it being "a big deal".

This level of freedom and control in the time commitment of FAS leadership roles has made serving in them much more appealing to many. But we are always interested in visiting with others who would like to consider stepping into one of these roles – and there's no better time to have such conversations than right now!

"Being a leader with FAS has been such a rewarding experience," says FAS President Bobbie Van Roekel. "Sure, there are times when it's a lot of work, but we get to touch so many lives. It really makes me feel good to know that things we do as a group have an impact on our community."

If you would be interested in learning more about being an FAS leader, contact:

Luisita Dona McBurney (515) 770-6425 | Bobbie Van Roekel (515) 418-5003 | Paul Smith (515) 291-0186

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