

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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'Parulan' is Bauan High School's pride

By RAUL E. ASIS

When we speak of a Christmas lantern, many think of a five-pointed star made of bamboo sticks and covered with colored cellophane or Japanese paper, decked with a tail of the same material. But for the students of Bauan High School (BHS) in Bauan, Batangas, they don't settle for the ordinary parol. In fact, they have made parol-making a more interesting visual art form by using indigenous materials and unusual things instead.

For years now, the school holds its Parulan, a pre-Yuletide activity to encourage students to utilize their creative juices in producing their respective works of art. The event enables freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, along with their teachers, to use their spare time and pool their resources collectively to build unique kinds of lanterns. Their taste goes exotic, too, as they make use of native materials such as wood, *ipil/guyabano/narra* / coconut seeds, *gugo*, abaca, garlic, beans and peanuts, *palay*, sugar cane, *kiping* (thin translucent rice wafer molded into various shapes), macaroni noodles and even corn grains in fashioning the Christmas items.

iyun, tsine-check rin namin iyung laki. Merong malaking malaki na kaliskis, merong sobrang liit. Iyung ibang kaliskis ginagawa naming bulaklak, parang rose."

Angelito Casaclang, a fourth year teacher takes pride in the school's endeavor.

"Nag-umpisa ito more than 25 years ago," he recalls. "*Nag-umpisa ito sa simpleng parol lamang made of bamboo and paper. Nag-progress ang aming paggagawa ng lantern sa pamamagitan ng mga pag-iisip ng mga indigenous materials. From then on, nagkaroon na ng iba't ibang concept ang mga teachers. Nagkaroon ng creativity ang bawat klase kung anong materials na gagamitin, etc. It depends on the creativity of the students."*

Everyone is involved, relates Casaclang, especially in gathering materials. The lantern-making trend, having started in Bauan, is also prevalent in other towns in Batangas.

But Casaclang is more proud of the school's methods. "We have a sophisticated way," he beams, "technology-wise."

The Parulan took place recently at BHS where 26 well-



More than a parol: Parols prepared by Bauan National High School students will be on exhibit at the CCP Main Lobby starting today, Dec. 13.

Someone who's excited about this extra-curricular activity is Joni Albarico, a third year student.

"Gawa po sa kaliskis ng isda (maya-maya)," Albarico says of his group's lantern. "*Malalaki ang kanyang kaliskis at madali pang hanapin."*

The project, which started in the last week of October, took them a month to finish. It took about 56 of them to make the lantern.

"Pure white lang siya," Joni describes the work. In preparation for it, Joni and his classmates obtained the fish scales from the market, then washed them with water, mixed with detergent and bleach and then left for two weeks. They would work on the lantern either during vacant periods, after classes or when school days are cancelled due to typhoons.

"Ginugupit namin iyung kaliskis na pa-triangle," Albarico continues. "Bago

crafted and awesome lanterns went on display and competed.

Billed as *Singkaran ng Ningning, mga Parol na Mabutinging*, 15 winners were selected by a panel of judges consisting of representatives from the Cultural Center of the Philippines and some universities in Batangas. In 2002, other Bauan lanterns that won went on exhibit at the CCP as well.

With such ingenuity, it is not surprising to see more unique parol creations coming from Bauan in the coming years. It merely shows that Filipinos, in whatever undertaking they engage themselves in, are indeed gifted and talented artists no matter what.

The parols of Bauan High School will be on exhibit at the CCP Main Lobby starting today, Dec. 13, to Jan. 6, 2004. Admission is free. Viewing hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily except Mondays.