

CORDILLERA BAMBOO DAY 2015

Celebrating Bamboo

One of the major events pioneered by EDAYA is the ground-breaking ceremony and the declaration of the Cordillera Bamboo Day. In a nutshell, the purpose of the activity is to launch advocacy campaigns to instill practicable, sustainable and creative utilization of bamboo parallel to the priority concerns of climate change mitigation. The Cordillera Bamboo Day is also designed to act as a celebration for the life of the bamboo, giving gratitude to its contributions not only to the human life but also to the culture. The original proponent of this idea is Mr. Edgar Banasan, a co-founder of EDAYA and it was decided that it will be celebrated last September 22.

The highlights of the celebration are the performance of the ritual, the declaration rites, the musical jammings, and the consultative forum, to name a few. The event was attended by approximately 50 people and that came as a surprise to us. Various reasons can be accounted for this. One of which is that the Cordillera Bamboo Day has been planned within barely a week, considering that two major events with EDAYA involvement took place a few days before the declaration. It was a struggle for us, finding ways on how to consider everything. Even the set-up was done on the day of declaration itself because members of EDAYA who attended the Palette Career Fiesta came back from Bulacan only a day before the event which left us no time to set-up. On a happy note however, we had the help from some volunteers who sacrificed their time to help us set-up the venue.

Other problems included lack of budget, lack of manpower, somehow inappropriate venue (we had to change venue from Bamboo Forest to Tuding because it's a little inconvenient to go to Tuding because of the distance), the liquor party came too early for the visitors and others. But what is noteworthy about the event is that it came out more successful as what we originally planned. Also, shoutout to Ms. Juliet Cheatle who donated some amount for the pig that was used for the ritual and lunch.

First account was that the number of people in attendance greatly exceeded the expectation of around 10 people attending the event due to the fact that it was not a holiday and that we could not really coordinate the event very well because of the limitations. We only created an

event page on Facebook and sent out invitations to our friends. The response within less than a week was awesome. It gave us a good number of participants.

The other thing that is noteworthy is that like in Palette Career Fiesta, we were also multi-taskers during this event. Due to limited number of staff, we have to do what we can to make this event a success – from documenting to joining jammings to talking with the guests. And although there are still lots of things that we can improve on, we knew we did a good job.

During the consultative forum, we are grateful to hear the commitments from the attendees when we told them about the future plans for the Cordillera Bamboo Day and invited them to be part of the pioneering members of the Cordillera Bamboo Day Organization. Already, they are excited to continue. Moreover, the Itogon municipal mayor Hon. Victorio Palangdan has given us his full support to whatever the team wants to do in the future. It seems that next year's dream of conducting a Cordillera Bamboo Day Congress could be realized.

Finally, we will also start getting exposure from the media. The ABS-CBN Northern Luzon did a coverage on the event which during the local news time slot on the same day. We are also trying to reach out to print media to strengthen our call to action and encourage volunteers to help us explore the endless possibilities brought by the bamboo.