

Saying 'Goodbye' to Childhood and 'Hello' to Adulthood

Sarahi Jáuregui - Vargas

The Jáuregui-Vargas family had been up early and moving, getting last minute things ready for Sarahi Jáuregui-Vargas for her long-awaited Quinceañera.

Sarahi, a 10th grader at St. Albert, turned 15 in May 2020, but COVID-19 forced her to postpone her celebration until Oct. 10th.

A Quinceañera is a traditional Hispanic celebration that little Hispanic girls dream about having when they turn 15; it is similar to a "Sweet 16." The party has a special meaning. It is like saying goodbye to your childhood and saying hello to your young adulthood. These parties are a very big deal in Hispanic families.

Sarahi was feeling many different emotions that day.

"When I first woke up, I was feeling nervous," she said. "But I was also happy and excited. My day was finally here.

"I started to finally realize what was going to happen in just a few hours when I started to put on my dress," she said. "I couldn't wait to get my hair and makeup done."

Many others were excited for her as well.

"When I got to the church, there were already many people waiting outside to see me and congratulate me," she said.

All of the stress and nerves of planning her big day soon fluttered away as she saw the embellished church.

"When I went into the church and saw all the decorations put up, that's what really surprised me," she said. "I loved how the decorator set up the church. It was really beautiful."

Aside from her special Mass at Queen of Apostles, the after-party may have been her favorite part of the day. About 300 people celebrated with her into the night at the church hall, eating carneasada, mole, carnitas, arroz, pasta, frijoles, and cupcakes, chocolate-covered strawberries and cookies.

The party started with an entrance dance to introduce Sarahi, followed by a waltz. Next, Sarahi received her crown and slipped into her high-heeled shoes, symbolizing her new role as a mature woman. She also was presented with a doll, dressed exactly like her, that she will keep for the rest of her life, marking the end of her childhood.

Afterwards, she performed a choreographed dance with her court.

"It was really fun. My court did an amazing job with the dances," Sarahi said. "I was nervous at first because I was thinking 'what if they mess up the dance? Or what if they drop me while they carry me?' But in the end, they pulled it off and I was very proud of them."

The Quinceañera has a father-daughter dance, but



Sarahi's dad, unfortunately, could not be there. Instead her uncle and grandpa, who are father-figures, danced with her.

"It was very emotional, and I was crying the whole time, tears of happiness and tears of sadness as well," she said. "I know it's not my dad's fault for not being able to come, and I know he would give the world to have that one very special dance with me, but it didn't happen. I am very thankful for my uncle and grandpa, who danced with me."

She also danced with her mom.

"My mom and I have our ups and downs, but at the end of the day, she's still my mom and I'm still

her daughter, and we always get through things together," she said. "No matter what happens or how hard something gets, we fight together to the end."

That day had been emotional for everyone, but especially as Sarahi danced with her mother.

"While I am dancing with her, she starts to tell me that I am now a young adult, but in her eyes, I will always be her baby and that she will always have my back and will forever love me," she said. "That got me very emotional."

After the dances, her court grabbed a chair so she could sit.

"When I saw my two little cousins come in with my last doll, I again started to tear up," she said. "It was so cute seeing them walking in and having the same dress as me. probably one of my favorite parts of the day."

After all the tears, the party was in full swing, but Sarahi's mom still had a little surprise up her sleeve.

"All of a sudden I hear what you call a Tamborazo playing," Sarahi said. "I didn't know that there was going to be one because my mom had told me that she couldn't afford to get one on time. And then, I saw one of my best friends that plays in the Tamborazo"

A Tamborazo is a band of musicians on a bass drum, and brass and woodwind instruments who perform songs from a Mexican musical genre.

"My friend had told me the day before that he wouldn't be able to make it to the party because he had a gig somewhere else," Sarahi said. "So when I saw him I was like 'Wait, what? I thought you said you couldn't come?' But I was so happy he was able to come and celebrate with me."

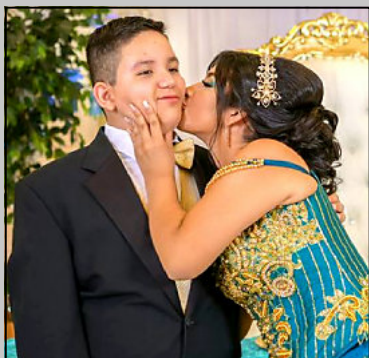
But at the end of the day, the Quinceañera and all its tradition and pageantry had to come to an end.

"I felt a lot of stress come off my shoulders," she said. "It was the best day of my life, and I was sad it was coming to an end. I will always remember this day for the rest of my life."

The Father-Daughter Dance



Sarahi's dad, Segundo Jauregui Pérez, could not be at Sarahi's Quinceañera for her very special dance. Instead, her uncle, Juan Delgado, left, and grandpa Antono Vargas Ceballos, right, danced with her that night.



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