

# The Bandera PROPHEET

September 6, 2020

And though he be but little, he is fierce

By Jessica Nohealapa'ahi Goode  
The Bandera Prophet

Observing a different kind of Labor Day this holiday weekend, Lakehills residents Jamie and Alex Diaz are celebrating their baby's survival. Born 16 weeks early and weighing only 15 ounces, little Maximus Decimus has already proven to be a fighter.

"The morning of Wednesday, June 17, I woke up thinking yesterday's ultrasound looked ok, they're going to let me go home and I'll finally be with my kids again," Jamie Diaz said, after learning her baby was not receiving enough blood or nutrients. "God apparently had other plans." One week prior, Diaz was admitted to Children's Hospital of San Antonio, expecting to be there until her son was born. After two steroid treatments things seemed to improve, but it was a temporary fix.

"The ultrasound showed the blood flow to my son from the placenta through the cord was bottoming out again. The specialist told me the best decision would be to take little Maximus out. There was no benefit in keeping him in," Diaz said.

He was born at 5:08 p.m.

Although the infant is two-and-a-half months old, his gestational age is 35 weeks - still five weeks shy of his due date. He weighs 2 pounds, 11 ounces, and he's 13.7 inches long.

"He has good days and bad days," Diaz said. "Currently we are dealing with elevated heart and breathing rates."

Balancing time between Maximus and their two older children Alexander, 12, and Annabelle, 5, in the middle of a pandemic, Diaz and her husband Alex divide and conquer, taking turns at the hospital.

“Due to Covid, my husband and I cannot see Maximus at the same time. So we can not experience things like smiles or anything else together,” Diaz said. “We each see the other interact with our son via cell phone photos and videos... it has made a difficult situation even more difficult.”

And yet, another unexpected turn of events created even more turmoil in this already challenging chapter of their lives. Diaz said her husband lost his job in Bandera because he missed too much time from work while she was in the hospital.

“He was told he had been terminated because he did not qualify for FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act),” Diaz said. “Our only source of income was gone.”

Remaining hopeful and positive, Diaz said Maximus is stable. He has had some complications with chronic lung disease, extreme malnourishment and ROP (Retinopathy of Prematurity) eye disease, “but slow and steady wins the race,” Diaz said.

The family maintains their Lakehills home, but they have temporarily moved into a hotel near the hospital, where the kids are remote learning with Bandera ISD.

Already an international superstar, Maximus has his own social media pages on Instagram: @Maximus.the.mightymicropreemie and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Maximus-the-Mighty-MicroPreemie-103092574849377/> .

“When we created the Instagram, [it was] to keep family and friends updated,” Diaz said. “We have people from all over the world following our little warrior’s story.”

A family friend launched a Go Fund Me account “to help with everyday life costs and the things we will need for Maximus when he comes home.”

That link is:

[https://www.gofundme.com/f/max-the-mighty-micorpreemie?sharetype=teams&member=5113904&utm\\_medium=copy\\_link&utm\\_source=customer&utm\\_campaign=p\\_na](https://www.gofundme.com/f/max-the-mighty-micorpreemie?sharetype=teams&member=5113904&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer&utm_campaign=p_na)

“My personal goal, after our NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) journey is over, is to start a foundation or group of some sort that donates to NICU parents,” Diaz said. “I want to give back to other NICU families. The NICU journey is a hard journey to go through.”