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War in East Asia?

By Elfren S. Cruz

The headlines are wrong. P-Noy is not trying to defy China. He is, however, firm in his declaration that the Philippines will adhere to international law. The Philippines cannot, and must not, recognize the air restrictions over the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) unilaterally imposed by China. This is the same stand that the overwhelming majority of the international community has taken.

The confrontation between the Chinese navy and an American surveillance plane has obviously increased tension in our region. The question that is now being asked, more and more, is if there is a possibility that war will come to East Asia.

Is there a chance that there will be war between China and the United States? I am sure that nobody believes that the two powers desire war. But history shows that wars are often started either by accident or by unfolding events that cannot be stopped anymore.

In recent interviews, Mike Morrell says that whenever there is confrontation between a rising power and a status quo power, history tells us that there is a 70% probability of war. But who is Morrell and should his views be taken seriously? He was the deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency for the Obama administration and served as acting director twice in 2011 and 2013. His work in the CIA centered on Asia, and is presently CBS News Senior Security Correspondent.

He says that as China continues to expand its influence and strength, this could “absolutely” lead to war between the USA and China. He said: “China is a rising power. The United States is a status quo power. We are the big dog on the block...They want more influence. Are we going to move a little bit? Are they going to push? How is that dance going to work out?”

The immediate cause of this tension is China’s construction activities in the West Philippine Sea that have transformed reefs into three artificial islands. These islands have been expanded by 2,000 acres that

can eventually handle military aircraft. The intention is to build military bases far from its shores.

But this is only one part of a broader military strategy that is intended to establish China’s military and naval dominance in East Asia. Beijing has launched its first aircraft carrier. It is developing missiles that can destroy even American warships, and it is equipping its nuclear missiles with multiple warheads.

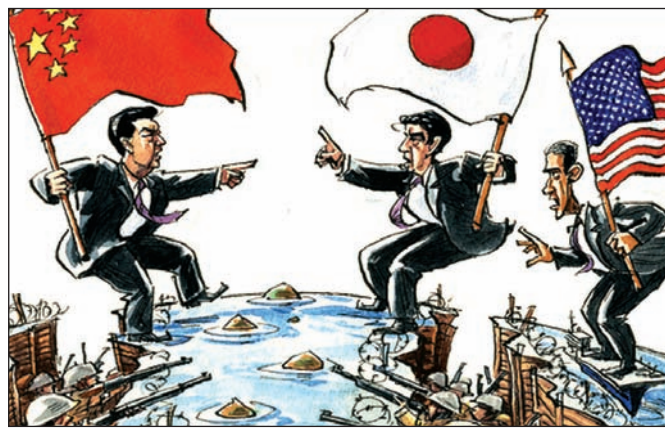
US Defense Secretary Ash Carter has now formulated options that are intended to “send a message to Beijing that the United States will not acceded to Chinese territorial claims to the man-made islands in what the US considers to be international waters and airspace.”

These options include deploying the US Navy to fly more surveillance planes over the disputed islands; and, positioning ships within 12 nautical miles of the man made islands in the Spratly Islands.

The Philippines, unlike its neighbors, have decided to take the alternative of taking China to court. On January 22, 2013 our government initiated proceedings against China at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. Apart from affirming its own territorial claims, the Philippines asked that China’s maritime claims based on the so called “nine-dash-line” be declared “contrary to the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).” It argued that China has illegally occupied eight land features in the South China Sea based on illegitimate claims and unlawfully claimed rights to and unlawfully exploited natural resources in other areas of the Philippine EEZ and/or continental shelf.

Even Chinese international law experts have admitted that it is difficult to defend their “nine-dash-line” as the basis for their territorial claim. Beijing has, therefore, decided to ignore the arbitration case and the UNCLOS.

The decision by the International Tribu-



nal is expected late this year or early next year. It is widely expected that the Tribunal will uphold the Philippine claim about the illegality of the “nine-dash-line.” But it is also just as widely accepted that China will ignore the decision. However, China will now be internationally perceived as a nation that has no respect for international law. This is their dilemma.

Chinese academicians have time and again said that China wants to rise to superpower status peacefully. It wants to avoid conflicts with its Asian neighbors. China’s leaders have offered all kinds of economic

assistance to its neighbors.

Clearly, however, China’s core interests of becoming the superpower in Asia will infringe on the territorial sovereignty of its neighbors. Its rise to superpower status requires that China must first undermine America’s position of strength in Asia. Then it must literally force its neighbors to accept China’s role as the sole power in Asia.

If America backs down, it will lose its superpower position, not just in Asia, but all over the world. In East Asia certain countries like Cambodia China’s pre-eminence might be accepted, but clearly other countries – Japan, Vietnam, Philippines, Australia- will form a defensive alliance to protect themselves.

It seems that China cannot attain its core interests through peaceful means. It will be extremely difficult to maintain peace and stability in Asia unless China gives up its interests or its neighbours accept China’s dominance. Both scenarios seem highly unlikely.

Perhaps Morrell is right. The probability of war in East Asia — by accident or deliberately — is very high and getting higher.



Editor's Note

Philippine Fiesta celebrates its 14th year anniversary in our Filipino-Americans community in Sacramento. Its founding in 2002 coincides with the occasions of Filipino Fiestas in Sacramento and vicinity. Through the years, Philippine Fiesta continues to fulfill its mission in the celebration of our culture and heritage and in the acknowledgment of the achievements of our people.

The Philippine Fiesta announces and invites everyone to the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento on June 7, Sunday. It will be a fun day of music, dance, and other performances that will surely entertain one and all.

As we reflect upon the Philippine Fiesta publication’s humble beginning, we asked for your continued support through advertisement and the publication of Filipino celebrations and events.

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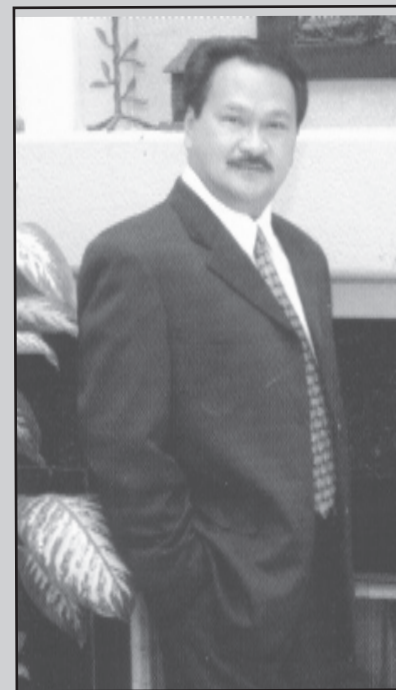
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Roxas to Poe: Be my VP

But Senator Poe is noncommittal

By Leila B. Salaverria

Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, the prospective presidential candidate of the ruling Liberal Party (LP), has asked Sen. Grace Poe to be his vice presidential running mate.

But Poe, fast emerging as a presidential candidate, has not made a commitment to Roxas.

"The plan of Senator Roxas is clear to me now. Sometimes, when we see each other, he mentions that it would be good if we [run] together," Poe told reporters on Wednesday when asked if Roxas had asked her to be his running mate.

While she could not say whether Roxas' statement was a formal offer, she said she thought it was "more than just feelers."

"I think it's clear. He is ready," she added, referring to Roxas' statement on Tuesday that he was ready to continue President Aquino's anticorruption campaign.

Aquino said on Monday that Roxas was on the top of the list of the administration's candidates in the 2016 elections.

Roxas, however, is lagging behind Vice President Jejomar Binay and Poe in the presidential polls, and many allies of Aquino have suggested that Poe run for President to give the administration a better chance of winning the elections.

But many LP members want Roxas to be their standard-bearer with Poe as his vice presidential running mate.

Poe said, however, that she had yet to decide whether to join Roxas in his run for Malacañang.

She said she had told Roxas that while there were things they had in common, such as the desire to continue the



Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, the prospective presidential candidate of the ruling Liberal Party, has asked Sen. Grace Poe to be his vice presidential running mate.

fight against corruption, she also had views that differed from his in other matters.

Poe said there were things that she believed the Aquino administration had failed to do.

"It seems many of our poor countrymen have been neglected," she said, mentioning one of what she thought were the Aquino administration's failures.

Poe said her friendship with Roxas would not be the only basis of her decision.

"You have to have the same views on things and trust in each other before [making a decision]," she said.

Poe said she last spoke with Roxas last week, after they unexpectedly bumped into each other in a restaurant.

Independent is better

Poe also said she appreciated the benefits of being an independent.

She ran as an independent in 2013, but was taken in as a guest candidate of the administration in the senatorial election. She topped the race for the Senate.

"For me, there are a lot of benefits to being independent. We need to remind ourselves that our loyalty should be to the people who elected us and not to one party. So for me, it's

easier if you are free to make decisions not based on the dictates of one party, but based on your conscience," she said.

Poe also said she and Sen. Francis Escudero, with whom she has close ties, were also discussing plans for 2016, but she would not say whether the talks were serious.

That does not mean, however, that she has made a commitment, she said.

In the first place, she said, she has not decided whether to run for higher office.

"I have not reached that point, so it does not mean that my talking to someone indicates that [I have committed to run with that candidate]," she said.

Support from Escudero

Escudero, for his part, promised to support Poe, whatever her decision would be.

"I've already told Senator Poe that whatever her decision, I will always be behind her, giving the same support and assistance I gave to her late father," Escudero said.

Escudero served as the spokesman for Poe's father, the late movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., who unsuccessfully ran for President in 2004.

Binay forms search body to find his running mate

By Christine O. Avendaño

Vice President Jejomar Binay on Wednesday said his party had formed a committee to look for a vice presidential running mate for him in next year's presidential election.

Binay told reporters that Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco, interim president of the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA), was the head of the committee, which would also look for senatorial candidates for the opposition party.

Binay said the search committee would lay down the qualifications for his running mate.

UNA has been reported considering the popular Sen. Grace Poe as running mate for Binay, but Poe, an emerging presidential candidate, has rejected teaming up with the Vice President, who is under investigation by the Senate and the Office of the Ombudsman for alleged corruption during his tenure as mayor of Makati City.

There have also been reports that UNA is considering the tough-taking mayor of Davao City, Rodrigo Duterte, as a running mate for Binay. But Duterte has also declined to run with Binay.

The Vice President spoke to reporters after the opening of the National Housing Summit in Barangay (village) Ugong, Valenzuela City.

Binay said he did not mind the entry of Interior Secretary Mar Roxas into the 2016 presidential race.

"Having more candidates for the presidency will give the public the opportunity to select," Binay said.

Roxas, after receiving praise from President Aquino, said on Tuesday that he



POLITICAL BUZZ Vice President Jejomar Binay, Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada and Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco, interim presi-

was ready to continue the good government program of the administration.

Aquino on Monday said Roxas remained at the top of the administration's list of candidates, but did not announce that Roxas was his candidate for President.

UNA to launch party

The search for candidates begins as UNA prepares to launch as a political party. Sen. Nancy Binay, who attended the housing summit with her father, said the party was likely to be launched by July.

Vice President Binay also confirmed that UNA was in talks with former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Lakas party for a coalition.

Binay shrugged off suggestions that his party's alliance with Lakas would be a "kiss of death."

"Election is always about votes. One voter means an additional vote," he said.

No problem

Tiangco said in a phone interview that Binay had not asked either Poe or Duterte to be his vice presidential running mate.

What Binay had said was that he was "considering" Poe or Duterte as a possible running mate, according to Tiangco.

Tiangco also shrugged off the suggestion that Bi-

nay was having a problem finding a running mate.

"If ever, it will not be his problem. It's the assignment of the search committee," Tiangco said.

So far, there have been no serious talks with any possible vice presidential candidate, he added.

September deadline

Tiangco said the search committee would give itself a September deadline to come up with a short list of vice presidential and senatorial candidates for Binay's consideration.

He said Binay would want possible running mates to be, among other qualifications, open to working for the welfare of overseas Filipino workers and the poor, whom the Vice President wanted to be given access to free public education, free hospitalization, among other benefits.

In a separate talk with reporters, Tiangco mentioned as possible senatorial candidates Manila Vice Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso and boxing icon Manny Pacquiao.

He said Binay had been talking with former Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Lunch with Erap

Binay, his daughter Nancy, son Makati Mayor Jejomar Erwin Binay, and Tiangco had lunch with Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada on Wednesday.

The Vice President, however, declined to say what had been discussed during the lunch with the former President of the Philippines

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US pledge to defend PHL against external armed attack stands strong

United States and Philippines reaffirmed strong and enduring ties during the meeting of Secretary of National Defense Voltaire Gazmin and US Defense Secretary Ash Carter in Hawaii, May 27.

“Secretary Carter welcomed the opportunity to discuss regional security issues with one of our closest allies in the Asia-Pacific, and stressed that the U.S. commitment to defend the Philippines is ironclad,” Pentagon said in a news release.

U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty has bound two nations for more than 60 years with “common



The USS Ronald Reagan is replacing the USS George Washington as the US Navy's forward deployed aircraft carrier in the 7th Fleet. Part of the fleet's area of responsibility includes the Western Pacific Region, which covers the heavily contested West Philippine Sea.

determination to defend themselves against external armed attack, so that no potential aggressor could be under the illusion that either

of them stands alone in the Pacific Area.”

“Nagbago na ang equation ngayon. Tinutumbok na niya ang China. Dati hindi niya sinasabi. Ang sinasabi niya we are not party to the claims so we do not want to get involved. Ito ngayon, direct na sinabi tutulong dahil

nga pareho na tayo ng posisyon ngayon,” Secretary Gazmin said as quoted by GMA News.

Binay forms search body to find his running mate

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at Manila City Hall.

“It was all friendly talk,” Binay told reporters outside Estrada's office. “It's been quite a while since I last visited Erap so I missed his jokes,” he added, using Estrada's nickname.

Binay said politics was mentioned only once and it

was about the UNA selection committee.

Estrada was more forthcoming in discussing his two-hour lunch with the Binays with reporters.

“We talked about ER Ejercito (the ousted governor of Laguna province), how he was the only politician in the country to be charged and found guilty of [electoral

overspending,” Estrada said.

“Elections, we also talked about that. Just preparing how to counter, just to read the next elections,” he said.

Asked to elaborate, Estrada replied: “Why would we do that? The competition would know.”

China gives ‘gentle reminder’ to Phl, warns small nations

By Pia Lee-Brago

MANILA, Philippines - China gave the Philippines a “gentle reminder” last Tuesday that Beijing will not bully small countries but warned these nations not to make trouble willfully and endlessly.

“Here is a gentle reminder to the Philippines: China will not bully small countries, meanwhile, small countries shall not make trouble willfully and endlessly. We hope that the Philippine side would stop instigation and provocation and come back to the right track of resolving issues through negotiation and consultation,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry also said that China would continue to build other civilian facilities on relevant maritime features in the disputed Spratly Islands in the West Philippine Sea after the groundbreaking ceremony for a lighthouse in a reclaimed area in the territory on Tuesday.

Hua was reacting to the announcement about the meeting of Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin with US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter in Hawaii regarding China's large-scale reclamation in the South China Sea and the prospect of China implementing an air defense identification zone in the area.

“The Philippine President reportedly said that Philippine military aircraft will keep flying over disputed areas in the South China



In this photo from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Chinese dredgers work on Mischief Reef, which the Philippines calls Panganiban, in the South China Sea in March 2015.

Sea, and that China should not bully small countries. The Philippine Air Force spokesman said its planes will fly over the South China Sea along the route taken by the US Navy plane,” Hua said.

“I can feel the restlessness and rashness of some people from the Philippines on issues of the South China Sea,” she said.

She said China's relevant position has been made clear on multiple occasions.

The official said China's construction on maritime features of the Spratly Islands is to better fulfill China's international responsibilities and obligations in maritime search and rescue, disaster prevention and mitigation, marine science and research, meteorological observation, protection of the ecological environment, safety of navigation, fishery production and services.

China's construction of lighthouses in the Spratly Islands, she said, is to implement China's international obligations and responsibilities, and provide passing vessels with efficient guidance and aiding services, which will substantially im-

prove navigation safety in the South China Sea.

“Going forward, the Chinese side will continue to build other civilian facilities on relevant maritime features of the Nansha Islands and offer better services to vessels from littoral countries of the South China Sea and those sailing through this area,” Hua said.

Hua said the South China Sea is a vital passage for maritime transport and one of the important fishing grounds in the world where a large number of vessels pass through, “under complicated conditions” and vulnerable to marine accidents.

An editorial of the Chinese state-owned newspaper Global Times said a war between China and the US is inevitable unless Washington stops demanding Beijing to halt the reclamation activities on maritime features in the South China Sea.

Chinese officials distanced themselves from the Global Times editorial, saying it “only speaks for itself.”

But China called on the US to do more things that are placatory and less inflammatory.

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Duterte: Threat or treat?

By Val G. Abelgas

After rising in rebellion nearly 30 years ago to oust a president who ruled with an iron fist, it would seem that many Filipinos are now willing to embrace a man who is known to go beyond the law to cleanse his city of criminals.



Rodrigo-Duterte-assault-rifle

Duterte has plunged to below his present rating in the next polling. At present, he is tied for third with Interior Secretary Mar Roxas with 15 percent (a jump from 5%) behind leading contenders Vice President Jojo Binay (36%) and Sen. Grace Poe (31%).

Duterte has been making the rounds of various provinces in the last few weeks in what he calls a "listening tour," pitching for federalism at the same time. A Facebook page has been set up to push for his presidential run, a Duterte for President Movement has been very active, and events such as the "Run Duterte" fun run held last week in Davao City are being held more frequently.

He has also been delivering speeches and accommodating news interviews more often. But the biggest giveaway that Duterte will run in 2016 is the fact that well-known political strategist Lito Banayo has joined his camp. Banayo, who is also from Mindanao, was campaign strategist and political adviser for many presidents, including President Cory Aquino, who named him postmaster general; President Joseph Estrada, who appointed him general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority; and President Noynoy Aquino, who made him head of the National Food Authority.

Duterte's bid did not gain

traction until he was endorsed as official candidate of the PDP-Laban by party chair Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III in February, noting that the Davao mayor has a strong following in the Visayas and Mindanao and is a very strong proponent of the federal system, an advocacy of both Koko and his father, former Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr.

Many presidential contenders have apparently recognized Duterte's drawing power, especially in the Visayas and Mindanao. Binay said last week he is considering Duterte to be his running mate, noting that the latter is a successful mayor. In September, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, who says she would run if her health permits, said in September that Duterte is her first choice for vice president.

Last Friday, Sen. Ping Lacson said he is still studying the possibility of running for president in 2016 and would consider a team-up with Duterte. He said the emergence of Duterte as a strong contender in the 2016 polls shows that people are looking at an alternative to the usual names of possible bets.

Lacson could be right. Thirty years after the so-called "People Power" revolution that was hoped to bring political reforms, the country is back to "business as usual" where the elite rules, and where the problems of cronyism, corruption, political patronage, political dynasties, and breakdown of law and order are back.

The people have grown tired of politicians promising them deliverance and delivering nothing. They are tired of the rule by the

traditional politicians and a few political families. They are tired of a corrupt Congress, an inept and arrogant chief executive, and a slow-grinding judicial system.

Duterte emerged in a time of despair and hopelessness, and has become, to many people, a symbol of their desire to challenge, nay to topple, the status quo. Come to think of it, Duterte is saying out loud – not in the deceptive discourse of a seasoned politician, but in a way neighborhood toughies would – what many Filipinos had been quietly saying all along.

Consider some of his more popular quotes: "The criminals have no place in this city except jails, detention centers, and god forbid, funeral parlors."

"Stop or leave. If you can't or will not, you will not survive. You can either leave vertically or horizontally."

"If you are doing an illegal activity in my city, if you are a criminal or part of a syndicate that preys on the innocent people of the city, for as long as I am the mayor, you are a legitimate target of assassination."

"I want smuggling of rice in my city stopped. If you still do not stop your smuggling activities, I will kill you." "Kidnappers, drug pushers from other places, I dare you to come over here so that I can finish you off."

One would think these words are coming from a nut case. And yet, although Duterte spent his adolescence with neighborhood toughies, he is the son of a former governor of Davao, when the



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province was not yet divided into four provinces, and a former public school teacher. He graduated from Lyceum University for his bachelor's degree, finished law in San Beda College, and passed the bar in the same year.

Duterte has been mayor of Davao City for seven terms, congressman for one term, and vice mayor before returning as mayor in 2013. He has defeated established politicians in the city, including former Rep. Prospero Nogales and former Rep. Zafiro Respicio. According to Wikipedia, Davao City under Duterte won the National Literacy Hall of Fame Award for being a three-time first place winner in the Outstanding Local Government Unit Highly Urbanized City category. He imposed a prohibition on selling, serv-

ing, drinking and consumption of liquors and alcoholic beverages from 1:00 am until 8:00 am. He set speed limits for all kinds of motor vehicles within the city. He established a 911 emergency plan and acquired 10 more ambulances and 42 new mobile patrol vehicles and motorcycles for the Davao City Police. He ordered all shopping malls and commercial centers to install, operate and maintain high end and high definition closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras in all entrance and exit points of their premises. To politicians and militants, Duterte is a threat to freedom and democracy. To the people of Davao, he is a treat. To some people, he is a cold-blooded executioner. To the desperate, he is hope. Which one is he to you?

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US affirms 'ironclad' vow to defend Philippines

In talks in Hawaii with Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter 'reaffirm' the strong ties between the two countries and discuss territorial disputes in the contested waters of the South China Sea

WASHINGTON DC, USA – US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter told his Philippine counterpart on Wednesday, May 27, that Washington's pledge to defend the Pacific nation remains "ironclad" and called for an end to land reclamation in the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea), officials said.

In talks in Hawaii with Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, the Pentagon chief "reaffirmed" the strong ties between the two countries and discussed territorial disputes in the contested waters of the South China Sea, where Beijing has been at loggerheads with the Philippines and other states in the region.

Citing Washington's mutual defense treaty with Manila, Carter "stressed that the US commitment to defend the Philippines is ironclad," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The meeting came as Carter embarks on a tour of Asia and amid rising tensions over Beijing's massive effort to build artificial islands in the South China Sea.

Carter and Gazmin "agreed that all parties involved in the South China Sea should



SIDE BY SIDE. US and Philippine marines hold their respective national flags during the parade of colors as part of the US-Philippines Amphibious landing Exercise Phiblex 2014 closing ceremony at the Philippine marines headquarters in Manila.

seek a peaceful resolution of disputes, immediately halt land reclamation, and stop further militarization of disputed features," the statement said.

Manila has said it will keep flying over disputed areas in the South China Sea despite Beijing's warnings. And this month, the Philippines took part in a groundbreaking naval exercise with Japan, in a move aimed at countering a rising China. (READ: PH, Japan to discuss 'transfer of military assets')

Beijing has expanded its land reclamation work in the South China Sea at a dramatic pace in recent months, constructing man-made islands on top of reefs across a wide area to back up its territorial claims.

China insists it has a right to control nearly all of the South China Sea, including waters near the coasts of the Philippines, Vietnam and other Asian neighbors.

The Chinese military last week ordered a US Navy P-8 Poseidon surveillance plane to leave an area above the disputed Spratly islands in the South China Sea. But the American aircraft ignored the demand and said it was flying in what US officials consider international airspace. (READ: China challenges US plane during Balikatan

war games and China continues to harass PH air patrols in West PH Sea)

After his stop in Hawaii, Carter is due to visit Singapore, Vietnam and India in his second tour of the region since taking over at the Pentagon in February.

"Over the next 10 days, Carter will reaffirm the US rebalance to the Asia-Pacific," Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steven Warren said.

Washington has deployed more ships and aircraft to the Asia-Pacific region in the past two years and tried to strengthen its ties to partners in the area as part of its "rebalance" to Asia, which comes as a response to China's growing military might. – Rappler.com

US: Halt land reclamation in South China Sea



REBALANCE TO ASIA. US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and outgoing US Pacific Command chief Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III. Petty Officer 1st Class Jay Chu/US Pacific Command

US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter on Wednesday, May 27, called for a halt on all land reclamation in the South China Sea.

"We want a peaceful resolution of all disputes, and an immediate and lasting halt to land reclamation by any claimant. We also oppose any further militarization of disputed features," Carter said on Wednesday, May 27 (Thursday in Manila).

"Second, and there should be no mistake about this, the United States will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, as we do all around the world," he added.

The US official made the call as the US takes a bolder stance against China's activities in the disputed South China Sea.

He was in Hawaii during the change of command ceremony between outgoing US Pacific Command chief Admiral Samuel Locklear and incoming chief Admiral Harry Harris. USPACOM is the largest combatant command of the US military that is responsible for Asia and the Pacific.

Carter also held a bilateral meeting with Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, who attended the USPACOM's change of command ceremony. (READ: US affirms 'ironclad' vow to defend the Philippines)

The Philippine defense department said in a statement that the US reiterated its commitment to the US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty.

"The US expressed alarm on unilateral activities that are inconsistent with international law. Unilateral actions escalate tensions which may lead to actual conflict. The Secretaries emphasized that the rule of law should prevail with Secretary Carter expressing support for the PH use of international arbitration," the Philippine statement said.

The two countries agreed to conduct more combined military activities and "regular policy consultations to ensure that positions and actions are coordinated."

The US defense department said a 2-plus-2 meeting will also be conducted. – Carmela Fonbuena/Rappler.com



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Fast Food For Thought

By Rudy M. Viernes

The Philippine government cannot provide employment to its teeming employable citizens, sad to say. That's the reason so many Filipinos go abroad where employment abounds. Thus, the template OFW was coined for Overseas Filipino Worker, which used to be OCW for Overseas Contract Worker.

Time was when one was tagged as OCW the term had a rather abject connotation. No longer because our government has dubbed them "heroes." Hero, in mythology and legend, is an honor given to someone with great courage and strength, celebrated for his bold exploits, especially one who risked or sacrificed his life for a cause, or has saved somebody from the pangs of death.

Our OFWs are called heroes by a grateful government because their dollar remittances had hit a record high of \$26.93 billion in 2014 (Central Bank figures) which had saved the country from economic collapse. They don't mind the loneliness and deprivation where they are as long as they can build and achieve their dreams of putting body and soul together, sending their kids to school, enjoying little luxuries, if not sudden opulence, especially professionals who are mega-buck earners.

In our recent visit to the Philippines we traveled north. We were

amazed how the provincial landscape had morphed into a once languorous landform of nipa huts into gleaming homes with TV antennae soaring into the sky, while in their garage are parked trappings of affluence, like a late model car, a passenger jeep with a sign "Katasang Qatar, or "From Saudi With Love."

That scenery was absolutely amazing, vibrant, albeit startling metamorphosis.

Another OFW vignette. My late wife and I were in the shopping mall one December day. We were behind a young family with two carts loaded with goodies and the queues were unusually long. I figured to my wife it may take about a dozen minutes to check those goodies in the counter so why don't we transfer? Besides our small basket was totally paled by the two cartfuls in front of us pushed by a shopper who ostensibly was on vacation from Dubai, said so by his T-shirt.

Thanks to our heroes in the construction sites in the Middle East, factory workers, health care

professionals, engineers in industrialized countries, the nannies, tutors and chambermaids of rich families in Europe, entertainers and mariners in cruise ships plying the high seas. Their dollar remittances have become a major factor that propped-up the Central Bank reserves that prevent it short of insolvency.

MODERN HEROES



There are estimated 12 million OFWs worldwide and the exodus goes on with thousands leaving the country every year. This includes an increasing number of skilled professionals and workers taking on unskilled jobs result-

ing in brain drain. This is particularly true in health-care and education. There are medical practitioners in the Philippines, especially those working in government hospitals in the provinces who undergo retraining to become RNs whose services abroad are very much in demand.

Filipinos in America today find it easy to integrate themselves in mainstream American society because of their high education and speaking skills many of them have ascended the middle or upper middle class. Filipino-Americans have the second highest median household income of \$65000 exceeding that of the US general population. Asian Indians and Filipinos lead Asian-Americans in household wealth. Filipinos constitute the second largest immigrant group in the US and they live a life as sophisticated

as educated Americans. They are among the 49% of Asians in the US --aged 25 and over--who hold bachelor degrees. By contrast, the corresponding figure for white Americans is 31% and, for all Americans, it is 29%.

However, in other countries where Filipinos abound like those in the Middle East, there are serious issues they have to contend with. OFWs both blue collar and white collar face problems of illegal recruitment, maltreatment, exploitation, long hours of work, limited food, or quartered in the doghouse. They suffer these indignities just so they can earn a mighty greenback to send home. These issues have become major concerns of our attaches in these countries. In some cases their paychecks are withheld and passports confiscated for flimsy reasons. Some domestic helpers, educated as they are as teachers, are physically or sexually abused and maltreated. There are sad stories of Filipino entertainers in countries like Japan who become sex slaves. They go abroad for a promise of domestic work or "social services" only to be deceived into sex work.

But by and large our OFWs have become movers of our country's economy and have been honored by a government that sets aside a day in December to welcome our Balikbayans at the airport in a perfunctory ceremony, have photo-ops and published in the papers with the caption "OUR MODERN HEROES." And our reluctant heroes are grateful for the attention and recognition, if only as an annual parody.

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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

Is Uncle Sam punishing the Philippines?

How often do you hear someone ask, “Will the U.S. defend the Philippines if China attacked her?” Very often. As a matter of fact, with China reclaiming several islands inside the Philippines’ 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and building fortifications, runways, and harbors on them, many Filipinos have been wondering: “Why is it that Uncle Sam is not defending the Philippines as called for in the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT)?” The most common answer to that question is: “These islands are disputed by several other countries and the U.S. doesn’t want to get involved in territorial disputes and therefore she stays neutral.” And besides, Uncle Sam says that these islands are outside the scope of the MDT.

As a student of geopolitics, I have reservations – and misgivings – about this line of reasoning. While it may be true that “Politics is addition,” as the late statesman Eulogio “Amang” Rodriguez loved to say, it’s not quite true in geopolitics, which is defined as: “A study of the influence of such factors as geography, economics, and demography on the politics and especially the foreign policy of a state.” If that was the case, then I must then say that “geopolitics is multiplication” compounded by realpolitik calculations... or miscalculations. If that doesn’t make sense to you, you’re not alone because geopolitics in today’s world is like a bowl of spaghetti (or pancit); that is: the more you try to straighten it out, the more it gets messed up.



Pag-asa Island.

Mutual Defense Treaty

At the end of World War II, the U.S. signed mutual defense treaties with several Asian allies to stop the spread of communism. The Philippines, which gained her independence from the U.S.



US President Harry Truman and Philippine President Elpidio Quirino meet at the Oval Office on September 13, 1951.

on July 4, 1946, had an active and strong communist insurgency that was supported by Russia and China.

On August 30, 1951, the U.S. and the Philippines signed an MDT. The treaty consists of eight articles, of which Articles I through V dictate how the treaty works.

Article I says: “The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means (italics mine) in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered and to refrain in their

international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations.” Article II says: “In order more effectively to achieve the objective of this Treaty, the Parties separately and jointly by self-help and mutual aid

will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.” Article III says: “The Parties, through their Foreign Ministers or their deputies, will consult together from time to time regarding the implementation of this Treaty and whenever in the opinion of either of them the territorial integrity, political independence or security of either of the Parties is threatened by external armed attack in the Pacific.”

Article IV says: “Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.”



US-Philippine joint exercise “Balikatan.”

Article V says: “For the purpose of Article IV, an armed attack on either of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of either of the Parties, or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific or on its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific.”

While Articles I, II and III are pretty much straightforward, Article IV requires that armed attacks shall be reported to the Security Council (SC) of the United Nations. The SC had five perma-

nent members with veto powers; i.e., US, UK, USSR, France, and China. While communist USSR is no longer in existence and her seat was taken by the Russian Federation, China was represented by the Republic of China (ROC) government based in Taipei, Taiwan. Today, communist People’s Republic of China (PRC) government based in Beijing represents China on the SC. In the event that hostility – or war – broke out between China vs. US and the Philippines, China could use her veto power to block any attempt by the US to invoke the provision of Article IV.

Chinese reclamation projects

Recently, Philippine Vice Admiral Alexander Lopez, Western Command Chief, reported that Chinese forces on Subi Reef (Zamora Reef) in the Spratly Islands had sent radio messages warning seven Filipino patrol planes — on separate flights between Thitu Island (Pag-asa Island) and Chinese-held Subi Reef — to stay away. The Filipino patrol planes were flying to and from the airfield in Pag-asa Island, which is a municipality of Palawan.

The Chinese addressed the seven Filipino planes as “foreign planes” that were entering a “Chinese military area.” They were told to leave to avoid a possible “misjudgment.”

Last month, satellite photos were taken showing a runway and a harbor taking shape in the Fiery Cross Reef. With the reclamation projects going at full speed in at least six islands, it is anticipated that the naval and air bases would be operational by 2016.

War with China

With all this construction going in the Spratly Islands, the U.S. continues to maintain her neutrality. The question is: Would the US come to the aid of the Philippines in the event of a war with China?

That’s a tough question but it has been proven time and time again that logistics plays a vital role in a war – any war... small or big, conventional or non-conventional. The U.S. should – nay, must – be able to move personnel, armaments, supplies, and support services to the war zone in a short time. But the problem is: the US doesn’t have the logistics she needs to fight a war in the Philippines pre-positioned nearby. She couldn’t use the battle-ready US

forces pre-positioned in Japan and South Korea because they’re there specifically to defend them from North Korean or Chinese attack.

It would take months to assemble an expeditionary force to defend the Philippines. And since the Philippine Constitution doesn’t allow foreign troops and military bases on Philippine soil, there is simply no way for the U.S. to defend the Philippines from Chinese



The 12 senators who voted against the retention of US bases in the Philippines.

invasion.

And this brings to mind that ignominious day of September 16, 1991 when 12 senators voted not to retain the U.S. bases in the Philippines. The following year, the Subic Naval Base closed its doors for good. Two years later, China grabbed Panganiban Reef (Mischief Reef) in the middle of the night. Today, the reef serves as an outpost for the Chinese Coast Guard. In 2012, China took possession of the Panatag Shoal (Scarborough Shoal) and roped it off to prevent Filipino fishing boats from



US flag is lowered while the Philippine flag is raised during turnover ceremony at Subic Naval Base.

entering the lagoon. With the entire Chinese reclamation projects going on, it won’t be long before China imposes an EEZ around the Spratlys and an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over it, which would prevent Filipino planes and ships from entering “Chinese” territory.

And while all these things are going on, the U.S. continues to maintain her neutrality, which begs the question: Is Uncle Sam punishing the Philippines for kicking the US bases out in 1992?

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PerryScope
 By Perry Diaz

Is the country ready for Grace?

Some people call someone who is in the right place at the right time, lucky. Some say it's destiny. Grace Poe, who was elected to the Senate in 2013 with the most votes in a crowded pack, must either be lucky or destined to be a senator.

A survey taken by Social Weather Stations (SWS) last March showed Sen. Poe in a statistical tie with Vice President Jejomar "Jojo" Binay in popularity. For the first time, Binay's popularity rating went down by 1% to 36% while Grace's popularity rating shot up from 21% to 31%! But with the bombshell that the Court of Appeals (CA) dropped on Binay last May 11 freezing 242 bank accounts and insurance policies belonging to him, his family, and alleged "dummies," Binay would have difficulty convincing his supporters to stay with him.

Speculation is rife that Binay would eventually drop out of the race. With two plunder complaints filed against him and his son Jejomar Erwin "Junjun" Binay Jr. before the Office of the Ombudsman, it's just a matter of time – as early as June? – before the plunder charges are filed with the graft court Sandiganbayan. And at that time, the Sandiganbayan would issue arrest warrants against them. The plunder cases are in connection with the alleged overpricing in the construction of the Makati City Hall parking building and the Makati Science High School building amounting to P1.2 billion and P1.33 billion, respectively. And because plunder is a non-bailable offense, they'd be put in detention.



Pres. Benigno Aquino and Grace Poe, who was elected to the senate in 2013.

Crowded field

Although Binay could still run for office while his plunder cases are pending, he would not be allowed to leave detention to campaign. But whether he will run or not, Grace would have a good chance of winning the presidential race. However, if Binay dropped out, the number of presidential wannabes would dramatically increase, which would be numerically advantageous to Grace. In a crowded field of seven or more candidates, all Grace needs to win is 25% of the vote, with the other 75% spread among the other candidates.

With only one election to her credit -- a senatorial run in 2013 -- Grace would need an organization to make sure that she'd retain the support of those who voted for her in 2013. She may also be the benefactor of the "command vote" of her father, the late Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ), who ran for president in 2004 against then incumbent Gloria Macapagal Arroyo but lost the election due to massive electoral fraud. With the support of the loyal admirers of FPJ, it would provide Grace with

the boost she needs to carry her over the top.

Maturity

But what seems to be the difference in next year's presidential derby is that for the second time since the country's independence, there is a female candidate who doesn't fit the mold of the "trapo" -- traditional politician -- that plays realpolitik at the expense of the public good.

In the two years that Grace has been a senator, she has shown the maturity of a responsible public servant. Her singular effort to press for the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill, which President Aquino refused to include in his legislative agenda and certify as "urgent," speaks highly of her dedication to the mandate entrusted to her by the electorate.

It's interesting to note that with her personal advocacy for the FOI bill, it easily passed the Senate. However, it's not moving in the House of Representatives because the President's allies wouldn't pass it without the President's endorsement.

Cheap shots

Grace's critics -- including Binay -- were saying that she is not ready for the presidency. The other day, Binay took a cheap shot at Poe, saying: "It is dangerous to pass the leadership of the country to leaders who lack experience and competence as it would aggravate the problems currently being experienced by the country." But Mr. Vice President isn't it true that the biggest problem in the country today is corruption?

In response to Binay's attack, Poe said, "More than experience and competence, what the country needs is an honest leader." And this hit a sore spot in Binay because he and his family members are currently being investigated by the Ombudsman for allegations of corruption. Grace urged Binay to face the Senate Blue Ribbon subcommittee and answer these allegations. And when she was asked if she thinks Binay did not possess the quality of an "honest leader," she said that Binay has yet to explain the corruption allegations.

But for a San Francisco-based Filipino-American group, Grace's qualifications for the presidency are questionable. The group even questioned her qualification as chairman of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) to which President Aquino appointed her. Heck, Grace's parents -- FPJ and Susan Roces -- were rock stars in movieland! Isn't that good enough?

Dual citizenship

The group even claimed that Grace is a U.S. citizen. True. But what they forgot -- or choose to forget -- is that Grace is a dual citizen

just like most of them. And since these were the same people who advocated -- and worked -- for the passage of Republic Act 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act, they know that a "dual citizen" could run for office in the Philippines. Yes, a dual citizen is as "first-class citizen" as Jojo Binay.

But the difference between Grace and Jojo is that Grace is not tainted with allegations of corruption while Jojo refuses to disclose how he accumulated his "unexplained wealth," which by Philippine law makes him guilty of corruption.

Indeed, it comes down to honesty vs. greed. And which one would you like to lead the 100 million Filipinos: an honest and unseasoned person or a greedy and skilled person? Here's a hint: an inexperienced person can learn to become competent while a greedy and corrupt person will never be honest and an honest person will never be corrupt.

With all the brouhaha about Grace's qualifications for president, Grace has yet to declare whether to run or not. However, there are subtle signs that she is going to run. The fact that she made it known that she's not interested in the vice presidency narrows down her plans for 2016. It's either she is going to run for president or finish her term in the Senate through 2019. And what's in store for her in 2019? Run for reelection or retire. But that would be a waste of her talents. Like they say, strike while the iron is hot. Yes, it's now or never, and Grace is aware of that.

At the end of the day, Grace knows she's ready to lead her country. But the question is: Is the country ready for Grace?

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Come and Enjoy our Filipino Fiesta in Sacramento on June 7, 2015

By Jose P. Abaya, Jr.

Fiestas are remnants of our colonial past. Despite the atrocities committed against the Filipino people by the Spanish colonial power who introduced such kind of festivities, fiestas flourished and have embedded into our great traditions.

The festivities are so ingrained in our way of life that they are now celebrated in every barangays, towns and cities throughout the country. However, in the passing of time fiestas have evolved, from its religious connotation to commercial endeavors to benefit the places where the festivities are being held.

There are at least 12 million Filipinos who have left their country to cross great continents, sail vast oceans and sea lanes looking for better life and eventually settled in places where they have found sustainable jobs and comfortable way of life to establish their respective families.

However, despite the many amenities that they are enjoying, the Filipinos nostalgically missed their fiestas. Usually, in such kind of festivities, they are with their families, relatives and closest of friends over sumptuous Filipino food and drinks as they bonded together to talk on varied subjects from family problems, politics to the latest buzz in their respective communities. Others just enjoy the many entertainments and shows in the center of the fiesta's celebration.

The Filipino American communities of Sacramento, a vibrant and progressive place of so many activities by different regional organizations have put up one day



of their own version of that kind of festivity to ease the longing and desire for everyone to enjoy just like the fiesta back home.

Our Filipino Fiesta will be held on June 7, 2015 at the Jose Rizal Community Center on Florin Mall, Sacramento where we put into reality the festivity that we have been missing back home. Just like our authentic fiesta, we will have parade, food booths, entertainment and many other Filipino activities everyone will surely enjoy.

While enjoying our fiesta we will also turn back the cloak of time in the early 1960's to remember the challenges and struggles of our predecessors, especially, our early Filipino farm workers who were wallowing into the quagmire of poverty brought about by the indifference of the government to properly address the plight of the minority migrant farm workers who received low wages and poor working conditions compared to other federal workers. Revisiting that part of our history, when the Philippines was the colony of the United States in the 1930's which easily brought immigrant



the strikers succeeded winning higher wages. However, that first strike by the AWOC just started a bigger and better organized united front against the grape growers in Delano in September, 1965 California. For the first time the Mexican dominated union the National Farm Workers Association did not break the strike of the Filipinos but joined hand in hand to demand better working conditions for themselves.

Eventually, the AWOC and the NFWA merged to form the United Farm Workers which relegated our Filipino labor leaders into just figure heads as Cesar Chavez was recognized as the sole leader of the new labor union. While nobody has questioned the leadership of Cesar Chavez as a labor leader, however, the fact remains that

workers into the United States to fill up jobs seldom accepted by Americans such as farm workers and other menial jobs.

That was also the period of our history, when the Filipinos were treated so differently that they were prohibited to marry "American Caucasians, buying a land and otherwise integrated into the community at large" Indeed, a very sad time, for the Filipino farm workers, although, they were the most efficient and hard working people but they were also the most isolated among farm workers imported from other countries.

For such lamentable sad conditions of our Filipino farm workers, especially in California, the Filipinos banded together under the leadership of Larry Itliong together with Philip Vera Cruz, Benjamin Gines, Pete Velasco, Andy Imutan and many others forming the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee whose membership was dominated by Filipinos.

The unbearable working conditions of the Filipino farm workers reached a point that the Union members decided to strike against the Coachella Valley grape growers on May, 1965 which had a minimal success,

the Filipino labor leaders have played important roles to strengthen his position as such because without the Filipinos who have started it all, the pages of history on this matter could have been written differently as they are being read today.

It is, therefore, fitting and proper that our Filipino Fiesta celebration on June 7, 2015 to adopt the "Theme" remembering the Delano Grape Strike of 1965 originally initiated by our farm workers and labor leaders for their struggles and pioneering spirit to improve the working conditions not only our farm workers but everyone to enjoy the benefit that they deserved to receive.

Persons to be contacted in case you want to share any of your skill or talent and any information about the fiesta are the following; Dick Mason for Interactive/Activities, (916) 868-7801; Joe Gonzales for Vendors and Logistics (916) 396-7863; Lilia Rivera for Corporate Sponsors, (916) 524-8008; Jinky Dolar for Marketing (916) 203-3703; Rene Abeleda for Singing Contest (916) 719-8100; and Jay Paular for Entertainment (916) 284-9349.



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Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Annual Mission Drive and Santa Cruzan

By Faina E. Abaya

The great tradition of the Filipino Family Fraternity of Sacramento for annually hosting a Dinner and Dance celebration to raise needed funds to sustain and accomplish its community and apostolic missions as enunciated by the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) sisters. The FFF is instrumental in bringing the Congregation to plant the seed of mission in the Diocese of Sacramento 56 years ago.

The celebration was held on May 23, 2015 at the Parish Social Hall of Saint Peter Church on McMahan Drive, Sacramento. The hall was fittingly decorated with all the tables covered by white cloth with red top liners and elongated crystal vases with freshly cut red, yellow and red roses as center pieces while the chairs were likewise covered with the same and red ribbons tied at the back.

The cart of the Blessed Virgin Mary is placed at the center just below the stage with simple décor of illuminating miniature lights and freshly cut flower of roses of varied colors around Her.

The very energetic and prominent community leader Josie Patria emceed the program who promptly started by calling Eddie Aducaeyen and Remy Solomon to sing the American and Filipino National Anthems respectively. RVM Sr. Conception Cambaya delivered the opening prayer invoking the blessing of the Blessed Virgin Mary to always protect and guide the FFF in all its missions and to bring Her Son Jesus Christ closer as the savior of every family.

A sumptuous American cuisine was served consisting of green salad, baked potatoes and prime ribs steak with varied fruits. While everyone was busy with their food, the almost 200 guests and members of the



FFF were entertained by the well synchronized FCSV beauties who danced gracefully and who received thunderous applause from their admiring audience.

The amiable Dr. Nellie Umali, President of the FFF was called to deliver her welcome address who expressed her profound

gratitude to everyone for accepting their invitations and enjoying the night with them. She also said that "I am humbled and honored to serve the FFF for two terms as your president and to continue preserve our missions to the community as well as to our apostolic duties." She further said, I

am pleased to see many old friends and new ones and I am also thankful to our prominent citizens and various community leaders who are present tonight." Likewise, she also thanks those who worked hard to make the event as always a successful one.

Continued on page 12

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Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Annual Mission Drive and Santa Cruzan

From page 11

Appreciation Awards were given to Julie and Ray Oineza for being the Hermana and Hermano Mayor on the first part which were presented by Memie Wetzenberg and Vicky Johnson while another Appreciation Award of the same on the second part were presented to Edna and Stanley Villanueva by Mercy Guerrero and Aida Azurin.

Another well known community leader Mercy Guerrero takes the privilege of acknowledging the presence of prominent citizens and community leaders such as; former Ambassador George Aducaen, Jr. and wife Mrs Caridad Aducaen; RVM Sr. Ching, Sr. Josie, Sr. Orcalyn and Sr. Nicodina; Ed Aducaen and wife Kristen Aducaen, Cora Ramirez, Mercury Acosta, Aida Azurin, Ling Avera, Sarah Enloe, Luvi, Lilia Rivera, Ray Oineza, Rick Rafanan, Edna Villanueva, Fernando & Betty Rignonon and Letty Oquinn.

RVM sister Josie Tanudtanud delivered the inspirational talk who said that, "On behalf of the Sisters of the Religious of the Virgin Mary, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Filipino Family Fraternity of Sacramento for bringing us in the Diocese to enunciate our godly missions for the good of the family and community" Moreover, she said, "today I am greatly honored and privileged to be with you this evening and to renew our affiliation and fellowship with the FFF of today's world." The good sister further said, "May your families become the schools of evangelization and holiness... obtain the great blessings of becoming the home and seedbed of holiness, peace, unity and progress in our society today."

One of the most respected leaders of our Filipino American community in Sacramento, Memie Wrtzenberg, the president of the Filipino Women's Club of Sacramento delivered the closing remarks who expressed her thanks to everyone for their graciousness to have accepted their invitation to enjoy the night with them.



Indeed, it was the Blessed Virgin Mary who guided and brought them in the right place for the good of the family and betterment of our community.

Continues music was played by Margie and Rick Pasalo for the entertainment and enjoyment of everyone as the public danced until closing time.

On May 24, 2015, the Filipino Family Fraternity under the leadership of Dr. Nellie Umali holds their annual Santa Cruzan procession which started at the Parish Social Hall of St. Peter Church along

McMahon Drive, Sacramento.

All the participants and parishioners who joined the event rendezvoused at the Parish Social Hall where they were treated with morning brunch courtesy of Julie and Ray Oineza, the first Hermana and Hermano mayor.

The Santa Cruzan was chaired by Memie Wetzenberg who was seen so busy arranging properly the costumes of the participants. Likewise, all the ladies were given fans to cool themselves from the excruciating heat of the Sun. Freshly cut flowers of roses were distributed to all for the offertory

before the Blessed Virgin Mary during the Mass.

At about 12:00 noon, when everyone was in their proper place, the procession started led by KENZA Frazer, the bearer of the Black Cross and he was followed by the candle bearers Garrett Ner and David Yee.

They were followed by the little angels in their white clothing and wings namely; Jazelle Abad, Mea Gaerlan, Ganessa Garcia, Gizelle Gimes, Mia Gimes, Maribel Gonzales, Angelina Fresca, Eliza Yee, Audrina and Lucas Goin.

The next batch of angels were

the adults referred to as the Choirs of Angels wearing their choice of color attires with white wings such as; Mercy Guerrero, Remy Mangosing, Virgie Monteagudo and Bebung Morales. They are likewise followed by the Cart of the Virgin Mary with the Crown bearer Mac Kenzie Abad. The Carriers of the Cart of the Virgin Mary were the Cordero Brothers, Carlos, Philip III, Paul and Chad.

They were followed by the Hermana and Hermano Mayor, Julie and Ray Oineza of the first and of the second Hermana and Hermano Mayor Edna and Stanley Villanueva in their formal attires.

Just behind them are the reigning 2014- 2015 Emperatriz Sta. Elena Cora Ramirez 1 and Emperor Kaleb Okana Sanjo and they are being followed by past FFF Emperatriz and Emperadores, community leaders, Nuns and Ministries, Father Joyle Martinez and Father Ruel Mesa.

The procession crossed through parking lot of the church compound towards the Church proper where all of participants entered for the Mass officiated by Father Joyle Martinez. After the Mass, all the participants were treated with another sumptuous dinner courtesy of Edna and Stanley Villanueva at the Parish Social Hall of Saint Peter Church.

Congratulations to Dr. Nellie Umali and all the officers of the Filipino Family Fraternity of Sacramento for such a wonderful Dinner and Dance celebration and a very successful Santa Cruzan.

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Aria Lynn Arguelles

Aria Lynn's Preschool Graduation at the Holy Spirit Parish School, Virginia Beach, VA on May 27, 2015. With her parents Norlynn and Hino Arguelles and Aunts and Uncle.

Victoria Clarice Aldueza Tarnate

graduated from the University of West Florida on May 2, 2015 at 10 am. She received her Bachelor's degree of science with a major in Health Allied Science on a pre-medical track. She graduated with multiple high honors and was also a Magna Cum Laude with a grade point average of 3.7. During her freshman year in college, she was initiated in the Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society for maintaining high grades in all of her classes. She is also a member of the Future Physical Therapist organization at UWF. In addition, she is also one of the student tutors where she helps other students be more successful in their classes. During her senior year, she was initiated into the Phi Kappa Phi honors program for being in the top 7% of her graduating class. She graduated with five honor cords, one medal, and two honor pins. She plans to continue her academics in graduate school and hopes to attend a medical school in the state of Florida.

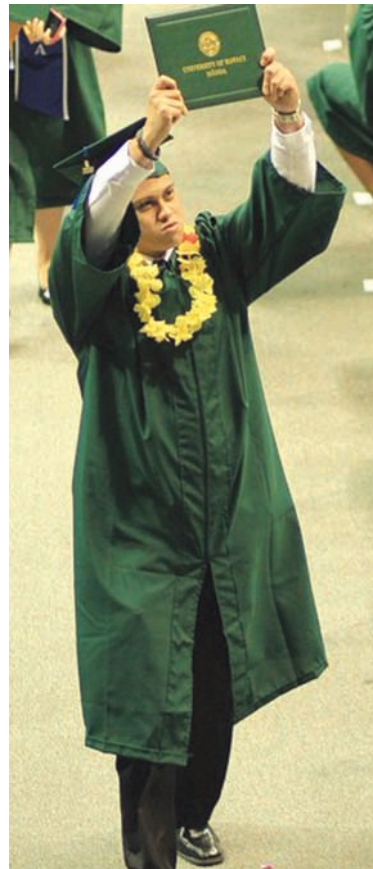


Santiaguel Family Reunion

Aboard the Carnival Splendor Cruiseline on May 15, 2015-the Santiaguel family's cruise getaway to Bahamas, together with friends from Virginia Beach, VA.



the graduates



Alex Del Pilar

Son of Chito and Jane Del Pilar Alex graduates about a week ago from the University of Hawaii.

"Really just want to thank everyone for supporting me through the past 4 years. Thanks to all the family who flew out to celebrate this achievement in my life and thanks to my amazing girlfriend @yoit-straceee and the friends I've made during my time at UHM for making the experience worth while! Also thanks to @retsaid for snapping this awesome picture. On to the future folks, stay tuned!"

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Filipino Fiesta 2015 Singing Contest

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 Teens - 12 years old to 17 years old
 Adults - 18 years and up

There will be First and Second Winners for each category. Winners will win cash and gift prizes. Qualifying singers will be selected on April 25th at Sari Sari Buffet from 2pm to 4pm. Semi Finalist will be selected on Saturday, May 16th at Sari Sari Buffet. Contest will start at 2pm. Two semi finalist will move on to the finals on June 7th. 1st and 2nd for each category will be selected on June 7th at the Filipino Fiesta. For more information and to sign up call: Rene Abeleda at 916-719-8100

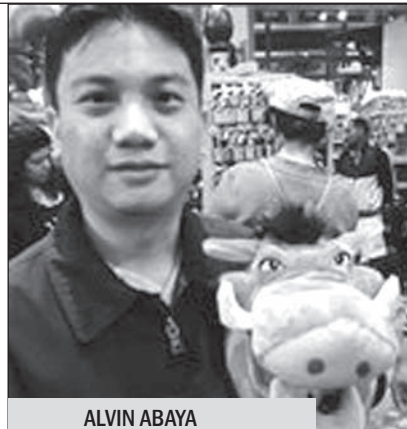
Birthdays



MARK VALENTINE
JUNE 25



SHERYL ABAYA
JUNE 9



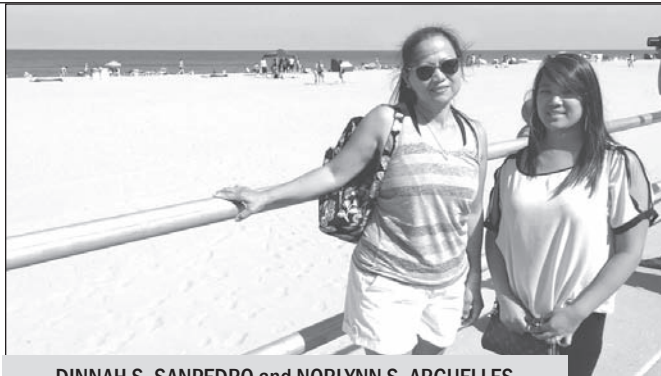
ALVIN ABAYA
JUNE 7



NOEL SANTIAGUEL with parents Nani & Neci
MAY 26



DR. JOE VILLARICA
MAY 24



DINNAH S. SANPEDRO and **NORLYNN S. ARGUELLES**
JUNE 21 and MAY 18



DALE ESPERANTE with wife Melita
MAY 24



Celebrating our dad's 89th bday (Dr. Dionisio Tonel) at his favorite hangout with his lucky charms with Sandy, Sharone, Sarah, and Sheila.



SHEILA and **JER CRISOLOGO**
26th Wedding Anniversary, April 29



NAP and **GYNNE DE LEON**
51th Wedding Anniversary, May 3

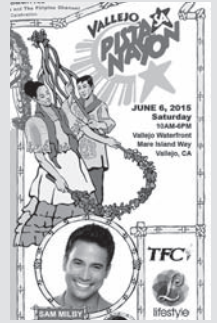
Anniversary

Calendar of Events

JUNE 6, 2015, SATURDAY
VALLEJO PISTA SA NAYON

9AM - 5PM
Vallejo Waterfront, Mare Island
Vallejo, CA

For more information:
Norma Placido
707.643.8037
Annie Ramos
707.319.7537
www.vallejo-pistasanayon.com



JUNE 7, 2015, SUNDAY
FILIPINO FIESTA OF SACRAMENTO

10AM - 5PM
Jose Rizal Community Center
7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento, Ca

Dick Mason for Interactive/Activities, (916) 868-7801; Joe Gonzales for Vendors and Logistics (916) 396-7863; Dr. Tony Solomon for Food-Vendors, (916) 682-3382; Lilia Rivera for Corporate Sponsors, (916) 524-8008; Roselle Lao for entertainer. (916) 204-0169;



JULY 18, 2015, SATURDAY

FCSV Scholarship Award & Hawaiian Night
6 pm - 11pm / Donation \$20
Jose Rizal Community Center
7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento, Ca
Aida - 916.686.9886
Mercy - 916.266.1923
Nelle - 916.215.4716



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Tel 916.732.2037

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Albert Brown Mortuary
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Oakland, CA 94611
Lic. #FD-242
Tel 800.652.1873

EAST LAWN
Elk Grove Memorial Park & Mortuary
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Andrews & Greilich Funeral Home
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Sacramento, CA 95820
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Tel 916.732.2026



Rosalinda Estioco Meris
October 30, 1922 - April 5, 2015

I Lived My Life

By J.E. Samaniego, Jr.

I stand upon the gates of Heaven
For my Lord has summoned me
Here awaits to greet me
are the departed loved ones,
who use to walk with me.
My life on Earth was fruitful
the joy, the love and sorrow.
Many things made me cry,
I was a wife, a mother and sister.
I was a daughter, an aunt, grandmother
and great grandmother.
I leave behind my love,
my memory and legacy.
As much as I hate to leave
for there are still many things to see,
But I must go.
I have lived my life
And my Lord has summoned me.
Do not cry but put on a smile.
I have lived my life,
And Heaven's gate awaits me.



Teodorico "Teddy" Sacote
Oct. 11, 1939 - May 21, 2015

Teodorico "Teddy" Sacote, 75 of Vallejo, CA passed away on Thursday, May 21. He was born in Naguillian, La Union, Philippines. He was survived by his beloved wife Clarita Sacote, sons Edwin and Ariel Sacote, sister Fedelina Garcia, nephew Pat Garcia and niece Leila Devine.

We know you didn't die in vain, as you were loved and loved others in return.



Eufrazio "Apot" Santiaguél Magadia
June 2, 1941 - May 25, 2015

Fifty Years of Happy Marriage

By Gabriel Ortigoza

In the beautiful sunny morning of 26 May 1965, Marcelo C. Ortigoza and Daisy C. Celestial said "I Do" in front of about a hundred invited guests and witnesses at Mlang Baptist Church located inside the campus of Southern Baptist College (SBC) in Mlang, North Cotabato. The wedding ceremony was officiated by Dr. Robert Ricketson who was the president of SBC that time.



Marcelo C. Ortigoza and Daisy C. Celestial

On Tuesday, May 26, my parents celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Yes, 50 years of blessed Christ-centered marriage.

Communication is very important to married couples as well as to individuals, groups, and organizations. Last Tuesday, May 19, I called my parents in Mlang to see how are they doing and to get some update and news from home.

My mother excitedly told me she and my father will celebrate their golden anniversary comes Tuesday. I was caught unaware and asked my mother: are you celebrating golden anniversary already? Yes. My mother replied.

For heaven's sake, I have no idea my parents are reaching another important milestone in their married life. Shame, shame, shame on me for not paying particular attention to this family event.

I asked my mother what is the plan for the big day on Tuesday. She replied by saying nothing really big, maybe a simple lunch at home with your papa. Moreover my mom said she plans to buy lechon manok, pancit (noodle), cake, and ice cream.

I further asked my mother if she has invited guests to celebrate with them. My mother said no. Your papa and I will celebrate our anniversary at home with Abigail (a college student and a relative who helps my parents with everyday chores at home).

I told my mother how I wish to celebrate with you your 50th wedding anniversary but because of distance it looks impossible. My mom said it's ok. Maybe I can send Toto (my older brother who lives in Dagupan) home to join and celebrate with you. I quipped. Mama said there is no need to spend money for Toto's airfare from Manila to Davao

and vice versa just to attend the anniversary.

I negotiated with my mother explaining that expenses are only spending money and it can be found easily but to be physically present during this special day is much more important than the green bucks.

I explained to my mother that golden anniversary is a special occasion that seldom comes to a married life. It signifies half century of marriage. But my mother humbly stands firm on her ground and advised me to save my money for rainy season.

On Wednesday, May 20th, I bought back-and-forth airline ticket from San Francisco to Manila. I also sent money to my older brother in Dagupan for his airfare from Manila to Davao and vice versa with instruction to keep our trip home secret from our parents including but not limited to no public posting at facebook of our location to avoid leakage of info or being detected. Our plan is to surprise mama and papa of our arrival.

At lunchtime of the D-Day, we arrived home and people were busy talking and munching lunch for the simple celebration. Without my parents' knowing, my brother and I already "gate crashed." Everybody was surprised. I saw excitement from the eyes of my par-

ents and from the guests on our surprise arrival. My mother told us, "It seems I'm dreaming." Hugs and kisses followed.

On Wednesday, May 27th, I flew back to California after an overnight stay at home. I have to go back right away to attend my youngest son's graduation from 6th grade on Friday, May 29th. Gamaliel is graduating with 4.0 GPA, in the Principal's List, and Accelerated Reader 1,000 Point

Club whose name will be etched at the wooden plaque inside the school principal's office. Proud of my son's academic achievement.

My goal, as a son, is to see and make my parents happy. As a parent, I want to make my children feel cared for by my presence being there on special and non-special occasions and be there when they need me.

The long distance air travel which averages 13 hours straight flight one way from SFO to MNL and vice versa is definitely tiresome but I enjoy it and am sure my effort will be written on the tablet of my family's heart as one under good memories.

Nothing more can we ask for but a simple life. My parents exemplify this modest lifestyle since we came into this challenging world albeit life is hard but they are still thankful, truly happy, and satisfied.

Joy continues to radiate even at the wrinkles of my parents' faces, my mother being 81 and my father 87 years old. The secret of their happiness is not based on material things but is anchored on spiritual investment.

Happy golden wedding anniversary Mama & Papa. We love you both.



Celebrating my parent's 50th Wedding Anniversary at home in Mlang, North Cotabato

Maytime 1943 and the Good Padre

By R. Carado Dizon, Ph.D.

My heart was filled with gladness when my eldest daughter announced over family supper that she has just been accepted to join the traditional Flores de Mayo or Mayflower celebration. She has just turned seven and starting the first of May, she would join the other girls, her age or older, in the observance and fulfillment of a month-long afternoon prayers and floral offering to the First lady of the First Family in the Calinog Parish Church, Parish of the Immaculate Conception.

During early May mornings, watching her and the other young girls gather fresh blossoms from the neighborhood gardens, I cannot help but recall another Maytime during the Japanese occupation way back in 1943.

We have evacuated into a quiet barrio in Calinog town named Agba-o, about six kilometers north of the Poblacion. My ailing mother (miscarriage), my spinster aunt, my grandmother and a younger brother composed of family. If anyone should ever ask about our father we were told to respond that he is an *ambutante* or traveling vendor of *lana* (refined coconut oil used for cooking and fuel). Actually, as a 5-year-old lad, I had already had a hunch that my Dad was more than just a vendor. Everytime he and his aides would come home visiting at night, I would discover a typewriter and some assorted small arms and ammo, in addition to *frascos* or jars of *lana* in their sacks. I was to learn later on that they were in the resistance movement.

In Agba-o, we were in the company of the prominent families from town like the Casas, the Celos and the

Celestials, to mention just three. And the good Padre. He was staying in the *tambulo* or rice granary of the Casa family which he converted into a modest convento or pastor manse. He was mainly responsible for the observance of the Flores de Mayo that particular Maytime. I remember, that to the war survivors like us, it was the happiest event. For the non-survivors, it was to be their last.

And so, it came to pass that on the very first morning of May, our neighborhood became abuzzed with gangs of young girls harvesting fresh blossoms from many a neighboring flower garden and in practically every nook and corner of the barrio.

There were *gummamelas*, *sampaguitas*, *lirios*, *santans*, *calachuchis*, *daisies*, *yellow bells*, *lilies* and a lot more. The *baybayon* was the most dominant variety of all. Yet, every flowering tree or vine or shrub in the barrio is seen to flower luxuriantly this month of May, seemingly oblivious to the on-going World War II. The young girls would make bouquets from out of their collection and reserve the loose petals for the *Adios* showers.

Promptly at two PM, all the young girls and boys must come together at the modest *capilla* or chapel made of bamboo and *cogon* right in the center of the barrio on high ground. This chapel was built the *bayanihan* (joint effort) way with the participation of practically all the menfolks in the locality under the able direction of the Padre. The first two hours in the afternoon is devoted to the Catechesis or religion class. My aunt was one of the *voluntuer* catechists. Therefore, I had the rare privilege of occupying the front seat with the boys as "observer".

I was also entitled to an attendance ticket given after class. The ticket would be exchanged for goodies at the end of the month during the Mayflower festival. These same ticket I would

present to my sick mother when I'm back home. She would beam with pride as if she wasn't sick at all.

Precisely at four, the Catechism class would adjourn and the daily Flores de Mayo devotion imme-



diately begins. An adult lady devotee, appointed by the good Padre would lead the prayers. This would take about 20 minutes after which the girls would leave the boys on their bamboo seats. The girls would form a line on the center aisle in pairs, the tallest girls would occupy the back row, and the shortest one in front. Each must put on their small white *manto* or *vail* made of *abaca*.

And so, with the accompaniment of the *Con Flores* a *Maria* chant, the floral offering ceremony would then proceed. The tallest pair at the rear would be the first to offer their bouquet on the foot of the statue of the Virgin Mary at the altar, and so on, up to the shortest pairs in front. Singing of the *Adios* Virgin Maria culminates the offering ritual amidst the showering of the flower petals in the direction of the statue of the Virgin mother.

Towards the last days of May however, our Flores de Mayo celebration, have become ominously shabby. News of an impending disaster reached us through the usual *Radio de Puwak* (word-of-the-mouth) channel.

The Japanese imperial Army was getting more ferocious. They have waged a so-called *Juez de Cochillo* or knife is the judge campaign in the neighboring towns of *Duenas* and *Lam-*

bunao. This despicable military concentration is characterized by the sadistic massacre of the civilian population in retaliation for the slow decimation of their soldiers by the hit and run tactics of the marauding

las Reynas (Queen of all the Queens) was the last member of the procession. She is the most beautiful young maiden of the barrio, said to be the granddaughter of the *Celo* clan, they of Spanish ancestry. Her ten-year-old cousin was *Principe Constantino* (Prince Constantine). Some participants held small lighted torches "energized" be *salong* (wild rubber sap). Some torches were lit by "lana power".

The participants sang *Dios te Salve Maria* as they parade along in their bare feet. The procession ended up inside the chapel and because an overflowing crowd was anticipated, along makeshift

breakfast table of bamboo was erected just outside. The table was teeming with steaming *kalan-unon* or breakfast goodies like *suman*, *ibos*, *alupi*, *inday-inday*, *kalamay-hati*, *aripahol* and the like. It seems as though, despite the war, we were never hungry in Agba-o and the surrounding barrios.

We all clapped our hands in applause to the Good Padre, who all by himself hoisted a kerosene-can full of hot *salabat* on his shoulder using a *jute* sack as insulator. The color of his black *sotana* or *habit* matched with the burnt sides of the can container in perfect hilarious harmony. Every participant was invited to partake of the sumptuous breakfast which the barrio ladies prepared with a little help from the *padre de familias* (husbands). We presented our Catechism tickets for the goodies which enjoyed eating to our heart's content.

After the war, *Brangay Agba-o* became part of the newly-created town of *Bingawan*, on the *Iloilo-Capiz* border. Dad has waived his *GI Bill of Rights* to me to complete a *B.S* degree in *Agriculture Extension*, my stepping stone to higher degrees late on. My daughter has since married and settled down in the city of *Modesto*, California, where she is now employed as a clinical nurse and where I

am at present residing.

What about the Good Padre? *Dolores Reyes Ravena*, in her book, "Calinog: The story of People" published in 1996, wrote, "The town had made a bishop out of the newly ordained priest. He was promoted as *Auxillary Bishop* of *Jaro*, transferred to *Davao* and his last assignment was in *Aklan*. Now a retired Bishop, he is back to *Miag-ao*, *Iloilo*, his hometown. But to many, he was and still is "Padre Juan", a term of endearment which belongs exclusively to the *Calinognons*. For many years, they would cherish and recall this pious priest who was 'washed' to the shores of *Jalaur River* under the protective mantle of the *Immaculate Conception*."

"Padre Juan" *Nilamar* served his *Calinog* parishioners from 1943 to 1958. On December 8, 1996, on the Bicentennial celebration of the *Immaculate Conception* Parish, he was a recipient of the *Bicentennial Award*.

In May 2007, after my retirement from the government service, I visited him in his retirement home just across the street from the *St. Thomas of Villanova* Parish Church in *Miag-ao*. He was already nearing 90 years old and did not talk much except give thanks to the modest cash gift, which we gave him through a nun who was his caregiver.

The following October he joined the Lord in Heaven. His town mates in *Miag-ao* (where he is a favorite son) buried his mortal remains right inside the *Miag-ao* church itself, world famous for its native facade with unique explosion of botanical motif. The church is the only *World Heritage Site* in the *Visayas* that was inscribed by *UNESCO* in 1993.

Like the good Padre the church is indeed legendary. To paraphrase Shakespeare, I say, "Here was a Padre. When comes such another?"

The author is a retired Professor from Capiz State University. He is the author of "The Ecology of the Coconut Crop in the Philippines", published in 2004.

OBANDO FERTILITY RITES RECREATED IN BURLINGAME

By Rudy M. Viernes

The Obando Fertility Rites, a colorful Filipino dance ritual held annually in Obando, Bulacan, Philippines, was recreated last May 16 at the Our Lady of Angels parish grounds in Burlingame, California.

Spearheading the activities were the members of the Obandenian Association of Northern California headed by Edgardo San Diego and Gene Rebosura of the OLA Fil-American Community of Burlingame. The affair began with a mass presided by Rev. Fr. Michael Mahoney, OFM, pastor of Our Lady of Angels parish church.

A big crowd of celebrants, members of OANC and OLA Fil-Am community and friends, sashayed with replicas of the trio of Obando patron saints of childless couples -- San Pascual Baylon, Santa Clara and Neustra Senora de Salambao, while they sang "Santa Clara Pinung Pino" in a pandango beat.

The traditional festivities is a three-day affair in Obando, each day with a quaint anecdote. But in the end it encapsulates one wish list of the revelers, many are childless couples coming from out-of-town, to grant a spirit of life in the wombs of their infertile wives. And lo and behold, after nine months they got what they had wished and prayed for -- a child? A Fertility and Dance marker is installed in front of the Obando municipal hall in testimony to the magic and mystery of the town.

May 17 is for St. Pascual, the patron saint of fertility. St. Pascual's surname, Baylon, which comes from the Spanish word "bailar" (to dance) and loosely translated as someone who is fond of dancing. The origin of this festival goes back to the Kasilanawan, an ancient fertility dance said to promote pregnancy in barren women.

May 18 is for Santa Clara (St. Claire of Assisi) was the



first patron saint of Obando. Her Spanish name "claro" was translated as the brightening of the skies after a long season of bad weather. This later became the start of a tradition of Obandenians when they offered eggs to St. Claire to supplicate for good weather. This belief was replicated in many towns in the country by those asking for fine weather when they stage special outside celebrations.

May 19 is for Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, also known as Our Lady of Salambao. Local lore narrates of a miraculous discovery of an image of the Virgin Mary in the net, called "salambao" of three fishermen. When they

thought of bringing the image to neighboring Navotas town their raft suddenly became heavy and immovable. When they decided to bring the image to Obando their boat quickly lightened and easily paddled. This was taken to mean that the Virgin wanted her image enshrined at the Obando Church where she eventually became the patroness of fishermen and good harvest.

A few years after WWII, then Archbishop of Manila and the Obando parish priest forbade the practice of the ritual because of its pagan origin. There was an outcry. Who can deny the testimonies of many grateful couples who soon bore a child after joining in the ritual? So, in 1972, Rev. Fr. Rome R. Fernandez and the Commission on Culture of Obando revived the practice. The local tourism industry welcomed it and business once again flourished.

With all the discussions about the controversial RH Bill pending in the Philippine Congress, people intend to forget the thousands of childless couples in the country who are in perpetual prayers for a child.



Danedini



My name is Dane "The Great Danedini" San Pedro and I'm a professional Magician from Sacramento, CA. My interest in magic was sparked at the age of 9, in the pages of a tattered magic book in an old library. With a background in Dance, Theatre, and a degree in psychology, I have been professionally performing magic for the past 6 years. My shows have inspired and entertained the audiences of Macys, Apple, The American Cancer Society, and various College Universities throughout California such as UC Davis and UC Merced. See more at www.Danedini.com

WHAT I DO

I perform feats of impossibility and illusion otherwise deemed "magic". These impossibilities may include the restoration of destroyed objects, the appearance of items from seemingly nowhere, the prediction of future events, escape from dangers, and the reading of hidden thoughts. As amazing as they are, more important than what I do is why I do it.

I perform these impossible feats to entertain, enlighten and inspire. To entertain others with magic is to transport minds to a world where the "possible" in impossible becomes more apparent. Similar to the way we thought as children, when any and everything was possible. And, simply, I live to entertain this way.

As a child, I was allowed the opportunity to perform on large stages singing and dancing under bright lights with Sinag Tala Theatrical Ensemble. There, I discovered a passion for dancing, performing, and most importantly, entertaining audiences. I honed my dance skills with some of Sacramento's best dance groups/companies including Abstract Styles, Infinite Motion, and Boogie Monstarz.

Recently, I joined some fellow performers to compete in Season 7 of NBC's America's Got Talent. As competitors, we successfully qualified through 5 nationally televised episodes, making it to the final round. While gaining a bit of camera time on AGT, I rediscovered the true magic of a performance. All things, Dance, Magic, Parkour, Martial arts, and any art presentation began to overlap in concept. All forms of art, craft and skill are seemingly impossible yet we make them possible everyday. The impossible things you desire to attain are magically possible with you. You are an impossibility. Get ready to clap, yell, and be amazed by The Great Danedini!

FUTURE

To enlighten others is to bring them to a higher level of thinking. Having seen the impossible occurrences in my show, it changes one's way of thinking. Even if only for a moment, all of a sudden the world changes and becomes that much less impossible. I hope that the impossibility of my performances inspire you to believe that anything is possible. While many things, even our hopes, dreams and goals, may seem at first impossible, they can become more a part of our reality if we simply begin by believing. Then, become a magician yourself, and make it possible. Together, lets imagine the impossibilities.

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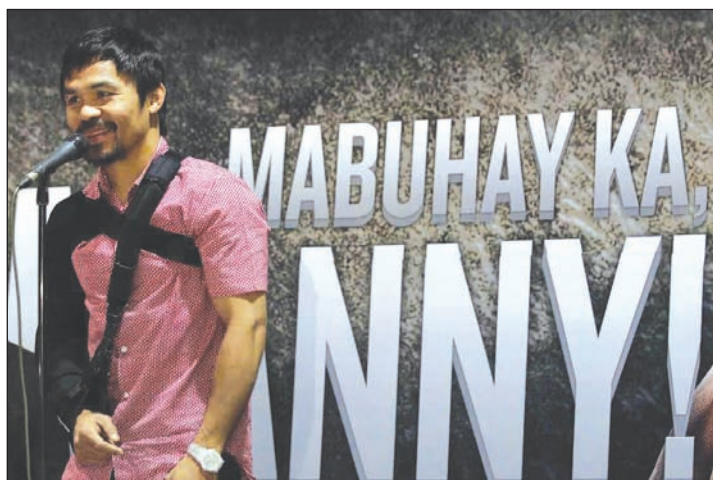
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Ignite Your Passion For God

Manny Pacquiao legacy secure without boxing return

By Phil D. Jay

Nine-time, seven-weight world title holder Manny Pacquiao will be pushing 38 when the Filipino great is fit enough to make a comeback



Manny Pacquiao

to boxing on the back of his defeat to career rival Floyd Mayweather Jr on May 2.

Suffering a shoulder injury in the build-up, Pacquiao was out of sorts during the clash, although it is still debatable whether a 'Pacman' firing on all cylinders could have penetrated the amazing defensive display by the 'Money' man in Las Vegas.

Despite an initially agreed rematch, Mayweather has rescinded any chance of the pair meeting again – leaving Pacquiao with a decision to make as to whether he really wants to continue on without anything further

to prove.

A second clash with Mayweather, when Pacquiao is 100% in mind and body, would still be a draw for May 2016 with a large portion of the boxing fans, but with rumours of pay-per-view sales in excess of four million, there is no real possibility that those figures could ever topped.

So who would Pacquiao face if he does return to action? – Fights with Amir Khan and Kell Brook in the UK would certainly give the Congressman the opportunity to branch out, but beyond that, fights in Macau and the US against

lesser name opponents may not get Pacquiao's blood pumping enough.

A move up to 154 against Canelo Alvarez or Gennady Golovkin wouldn't be a good idea due to Pacquiao's size and declining punching power as fending off two brutes who hit like mules would be too difficult for him without any really hurtful shots of his own.

A fifth instalment with Juan Manuel Marquez always has a place in the sport, although the Mexican would be almost 43 by the time Pacquiao is lining up his next outing, coupled with the fact that 'Dinamita' has already been out of the ring a year and shown little interest in another fight.

The reality is that Pacquiao could walk away from boxing a legend today and lose none of his amazing achievements. So it could make sense for those around him to be encouraging to the notion that retirement may not be the worst idea in the world.

Winning world championships from 112lbs to 147lbs may never be replicated in the sport ever again, so for this reason alone Pacquiao will always be revered as one of the greatest fighters to ever lace on the gloves.

Whatever Pacquiao decides should be respected and applauded for what has been one of the most remarkable stories in boxing and there should be no question of denting his C.V solely from his performance, or lack of it, against a marvel like Mayweather.

Floyd Mayweather, 48-0, is a loser

By John Gatling

Floyd Mayweather Jr. is one of the world's biggest sports villains thanks to his money obsessed persona and history of domestic abuse. The undefeated boxer recently dropped a big chunk of money for four courtside seats to Game 5 between the Golden...



Floyd Mayweather

Floyd Mayweather Jr. is one of the world's biggest sports villains thanks to his money obsessed persona and history of domestic abuse. The undefeated boxer recently dropped a big chunk of money for four courtside seats to Game 5 between the Golden...

Before you roll your eyes in disgust at this title-or perhaps decide to get giddy with glee over it, the purpose here is balance. It is not derived from a place of abject hate for a fighter with which there is a biased sense of vindictiveness.

Floyd Mayweather, the biggest loser in victory of all-time, can't get any love after his UD win over Manny Pacquiao. The reasons and possibilities are almost endless.

It's important for you to understand that, not just because of some sort of journalistic morality, but because the goal is to speak for you, the masses, who made Floyd Mayweather vs. Manny Pacquiao happen. You essentially demanded it on top of the demand. Think Floyd Mayweather Sr. when he basically told his son after round 3: "You got conditioning beyond your conditioning."

For those who don't think this article is relevant or just want the topic to go away, tell that to your cable subscriber, who still has yet to send you the bill which includes the \$100.00 fee stemming from an ill-fated decision you made in pressing "buy" on a remote control. This is the same remote control that chuckles and screams "Sucker!" in the

ghost of Howard Cosell when you walk into your living room.

Floyd and Manny were not Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader presented with the task of restoring balance to the universe, but it sure as hell felt like it. If ever "The Force" was real, we got a general sense of it from these two in fistic terms, so there's no way to reconcile how their lightsabre duel could possibly turn out to be so corny. Vader was the driving force behind the franchise because of a menacing malevolence to go alongside Luke's crusader-like rebellion and epic bravery.

Can you possibly imagine booing Darth Vader after facing Luke Skywalker?

Floyd Mayweather had the entire sports and entertainment world by the balls a few weeks ago, and instead of caressing them in a very memorable way, decided to go for the deep squeeze. He's an asshole for that, and people tend to let him know. Show up for an NBA game? "BOOOOOOOOOO!!!" Go get his morning paper? "BOOOOOOOOOOO!!!" Just to be clear, the MGM Grand was loaded with the richest 1% of society who

echoed the sentiments of the other 99% of the population by and large. It is not often that the two are on the same page, and again, the purpose of this piece is balance.

Never before had so many rich and famous people been so excited about being at an event before and felt so let down. For all of his ball-breaking antics, Tom Brady delivered a very fair and level playing field MVP performance on Superbowl Sunday for the whole world to see. We witnessed Floyd Mayweather speaking with Brady on "Inside Mayweather-Pacquiao" weeks prior to the bout with the promise to do the same. The fervor in Brady's eyes and in his tone, was different than ours, and it made a man who doesn't attend fight events or really watch them on TV, shell out \$300,000.00 for what we all believed would be a modern version of Achilles vs. Prince Hector. But instead, we got his cousin Patroclus masquerading as the mighty warrior against a Hector with a bow in his arm. Thank God for Gennady "GGG" Golovkin.

Ladies and gentlemen, Floyd Mayweather, 48-0, is a loser.

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New movies for Coco, Vice, Jessy and Matteo

By Mikee Delizo

Lady luck continues to smile on bankable stars Vice Ganda, Coco Martin, Jessy Mendiola, and Matteo Guidicelli, who are all about to come out with their respective new films.

Coco-comedy with Vice

Fresh from his rom-com debut last month via "You're My Boss" with Toni Gonzaga, Coco will now join good friend Vice Ganda in another lighthearted fare.

The production team is already creating buzz for the film on social media. Vice also posted a photo on Instagram showing him hugging Coco tightly. He captioned it, "We'll make it bigger together. SOON!#TutoyAndDengdeng."

The concept of the story is a collaboration between the two, which is said to mirror their real-life friendship.

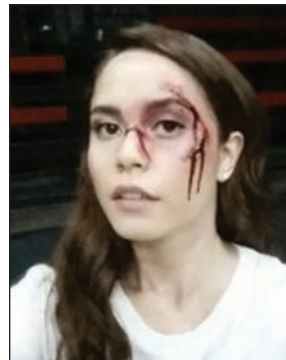
"Makakakita sila ng kakaiba lalo na kay Coco Martin lalo na kasi first time ni Cocong gagawa ng comedy film at ako 'yung kasama kaya masayang-masaya 'to for sure," Vice said.

The movie is planned for a nationwide release mid-2015.

Coco is also set to reprise the policeman role of action star Fernando Poe, Jr. in the TV adaptation of the 1997 movie "Ang Probinsyano."

Scary Jessy

Jessy hasn't been visible of late save for some select TV commercials.



JESSY MENDIOLA

Her last TV series was the remake of Mexican telenovela "Maria Mercedes," which ended January 2014.

Her last movie, the John Lloyd Cruz-starrer "The Trial," was shown in October last year.

However, the actress has hinted on social media about her possible upcoming projects.

On her recent Instagram post, Jessy took a selfie that shows her with blood on her face. The caption read, "Do I have something on my face? From a bridal shoot to a #looktest for a new horror film. #kuracha." Her fans couldn't be more excited about



VICE GANDA and Coco Martin

it; the post has amassed more than 10,000 likes as of this writing.

The actress is also set to make a comeback on primetime TV via "Will Never Say Goodbye" with Richard Gomez, Dawn Zulueta, JC de Vera and Sam Concepcion. It will be directed by Jerry Sineneng.

In a previous interview, Jessy disclosed that she has already started taping for the series. She even cut her hair short for her role as fashion designer.

Matteo on the go

Matteo never runs out of things to do.

With "Inday Bote" nearing its end on Friday, the actor has taken on the lead role for "Tupang Ligaw," an action flick produced by BG Productions International and written and directed by Rod Santiago.



MATEO GUIDICELLI

On Instagram, Matteo shared photos of his first shooting day, which included a scene in a cornfield. He was seen holding a pistol.

Producer Dennis Evangelista of BG Productions also posted several photos, showing Matteo in a fight scene.

According to the producer, the film will have Matteo co-starring with former "Pinoy Big Brother" housemate Rico Barrera, Bangs Garcia and Paolo Contis.

"Tupang Ligaw" is Matteo's first action film. His followers on Instagram were apparently as thrilled as he was.

"So excited to see d other side of u to see u in action film. what else u cannot do. Awesome," one posted

A FILIPINA MUSICAL PRODIGY IN THE MAKING

By Rudy M. Viernes

Here's another Filipina musical wunderkind in the making, a future professional Broadway performer. She is 17-year old Katelyn Paige Torres of Dixon, California.



Katelyn Paige Torres

Katelyn is multi-faceted. She sings, dances, plays and teaches violin, piano and guitar. When she was 13 she started teaching music and is now tutoring several students in these instruments. She has been playing the violin since she was three years old studying the Suzuki method.

Katelyn also dances the ballet, jazz, tap, modern, lyrical, hip-hop, Irish, Polynesian and Filipino folk dances. She had danced competitively and had won awards regionally and nationally. She sings a repertoire of gospel and classical songs. She had studied classical music for the past 10 years and won first place titles at competitions. She has been cast in lead roles in several professional theatrical productions, which is where she had developed her passion for theatre.

Katelyn graduated high school at age 15 where music and science were her favorite subjects. She started full-time at American River College in Sacramento, one of the best theatre colleges in California. She graduated this semester in associate in arts with a theatre degree and an honor certificate.

Last April, she auditioned at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in Seattle, Washington for possible stint at the world-famous Juilliard School of music at the Lincoln Center for Performing Arts in Manhattan, New York. She passed and was accepted among 60 from a worldwide search.

While in New York she will get to train individually at Juilliard with Broadway professionals and work with agents and casting directors to prepare her for a career in Broadway. Juilliard offers an elite and intensive program that will provide students with the highest level of theatre training. Unfortunately, this opportunity is not feasible for Katelyn. She is in need of sponsors to help her get her name out there and show the world what it takes to be a budding Broadway performer.

The Toledo Performing Arts, Inc., founded in 1990 by Tony and Nattie Toledo of Richmond, CA. and the Our Lady of Fatima Devotion and Choir are sponsoring a 3-facet fundraiser "Jamming for a Cause" for Katelyn on May 31, June 28 and July 26 at the Los Robles Clubhouse in Novato, CA. Interested parties may contact: Rowe G. Hutchinson, 415-858-4031 and Dr. Ellen D. Ruperto, 415-378-0074



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