



FCSV Wellness Day - Page 5

Philippine Fiesta™

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What's causing Obama's sleepless nights? Page 7

My Sister's House Run for a Safe Haven



Filipino in Sacramento join Asian and other community to support My Sister's House fundraiser.

The event was held at William Land Park on October 24, 2015 featured a five mile run/walk and a half-mile kid's run.

My Sister's House, a private nonprofit organization that serves the needs of Asian and Pacific Islander women impacted by domestic violence.

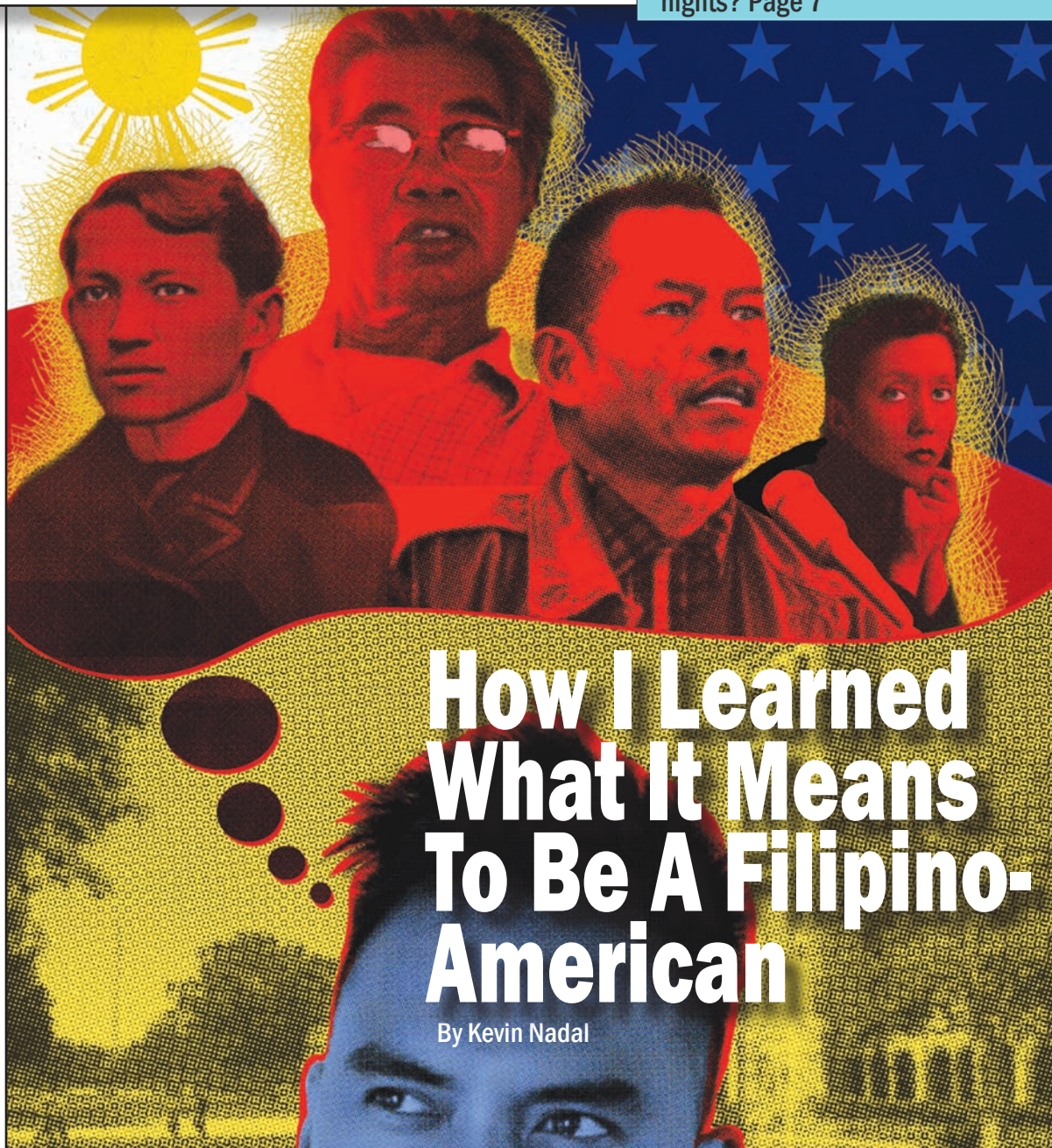
My Sister's House provides services outreach to survivors of domestic violence and hu-

man trafficking, and educates about the topic to the general public. The organization offers a twenty four seven multilingual helpline, a legal program that helps survivors understand their rights in term such as custody of their children and pressing charges against their abuser.



Runners and walkers begin their 5k trek around the popular flat, fast Land Park course. This is the 12th year My Sister's House, which helps domestic survivors, has put on the race as its main fundraiser.

Photos by Dave San Pedro



How I Learned What It Means To Be A Filipino-American

By Kevin Nadal

Growing up, no one taught me what being Filipino-American meant. So, naturally, I studied.

I can't remember the exact moment I first realized I was Filipino-American. It was just part of who I was.

Perhaps it was because I grew up in a large Filipino-American community

in the San Francisco Bay Area. Within a 20-mile radius were my 17 first cousins (and about 70 extended "cousins" who I may or may not have been actually related to). My earliest childhood memories involved running around cousins' houses, while

the titos played mahjong or puyo dos in a smoke-filled garage or basement. The dining room or kitchen always had a tableful of your basic staples: rice, chicken adobo, spaghetti with hot dog chunks, and pancit.

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They must think we're stupid

'Our professional politicians think we don't keep track of their mistakes. Or even if we do, it's not our opinions that matter'

By Shakira Sison

So they think we're stupid, those people in red, raising each other's arms like they have fresh faces, having the audacity to call for a "revolution" in a country they themselves raped.

So they think we're so forgetful that we'll just admire their smiles and their outfits and not think of their offenses in both the distant and immediate past. That we'll gloss over the fact that those arms are being raised by plunderers, convicted and ejected only years before, but back in power just to show that even the justice system is in the palm of their hands.

They think we don't notice the rehearsed speeches, the practiced Tagalog, the pro-poor messages. They think it covers up the fancy foreign schooling that resulted in crafted diplomas, or how they have maintained their circle of powerful friends who are only too keen to benefit from their secret bank accounts.

They think nobody is watching this theatrical performance from afar, that we don't notice that those sweaty armpits are a result of those lies, that those oily and weary faces are aware that this is all a tired old story that they repackage time after time.

A tradition of theft

They think we're oblivious to that surname that is supposedly the reason the central business district thrives. That we'll overlook the fact that this political dynasty is comprised of a father, mother, sister, and brother who have made corruption cases the tradition of their name. If that's not a family legacy then I don't know what it is. It must make one so proud to follow that tarnished path.

And what about the wrong-su-

long (back and forth) cha-cha a hopeful dictator tried to pull with his reluctant presidential candidacy? Even the lawyers among my smarter acquaintances have grown so tired of their fellow Filipinos' complacency and lack of discipline that they now believe this man who promotes summary execution has the answers. I understand that it's inspiring to listen to a man who says he'll clean up the streets and eliminate unwanted elements. Sure, until it's a relative of yours who is killed without due process. All of a sudden, we'll regret putting a lawless verdugo in Malacañang. Don't forget that we've seen that iron fist one too many times.

We sighed with relief when a big-haired longtime politician and current catchphrase and meme star decided she's in the game. Until of course she chose an unapologetic murderer's son to be her right-hand man. That was enough admission from the lifelong scholar of laws that she is not bothered by her running mate's family's offenses, but she even took it as far as explicitly stating that an apology is not needed for the deaths and debts that family has incurred with pride.

They think we're not watching

Those troublesome prospects, the sleepy "safe" bets, the usual administration's pets, as well as the 130 other presidential candidates that filed their certificates the other day make up this political circus that just can't wait to begin. As if we're not already laughable. As if this party needs another clown. As if we aren't battered and weary enough from these cycles of distractions, manufactured victories, and lies.

They think we're not watching

this predictable novella, when those we elect pilfer from the nation's coffers, land themselves in jail, feign medical issues, get released, and then run again for office. It's as if impeachment, conviction, and imprisonment are prerequisites to be elected to the highest posts in the land.

Exhausted, we wait for these crooks to die off and be replaced by younger, more conscientious ones. But it seems they raise new models like their families are factories that replace old thieves with younger and more energetic ones. Where their offspring are taught that their parents are sinless and God-fearing, that they did what was right and necessary during their time.

Just like in the past, there is no doubt that the election will be won by the masa (lower classes), those whose opinions we won't see in our Facebook feeds, and whose voices we often don't even care to know.

It only takes a few seconds of listening to a campaign speech to know that those who seek power are aware that only the votes of the lower classes matter, that all they need are celebrities to come up on stage to endorse them and they will win. That a sob story about being the dark and short Robin Hood of the Philippines is somehow believable.

If it's the D and E classes that put our leaders in power, does that mean that those who have access to education and employment can't do anything about who is elected?

Can't do anything?

There's an air of resignation that it's the same old faces and the same old tricks that will comprise the game in 2016, but the truth is that we're comfortable in these



performances. We're fine with a select few being able to lead the masses like a brainless flock. We have accepted the pleasure of having employees and servants who follow our orders instead of questioning the social structures that keep them bound.

We who say we are tired of political dynasties and corruption are also the ones who make money off mindless shows that keep people busy and make them settle for a happiness of seeing their love team. We write the scripts, we produce the story plots. We edit the political commentary out of story lines. We sell the ads that run in between segments and we follow advertiser's requests to keep things light - devoid of seriousness and real world issues. We don't want trouble, we just want to coast. We are complicit in keeping those who don't have the same resources from scratching the surface of what is handed to them.

We run the cinemas that stop showing independent films that make people think. We put up the billboards that turn our focus on physical beauty, so that money is spent on visual self-interest instead of focusing on the benefits of educating our women over keeping their skin light. We brag when we visit a public official's extravagant home. We don't have a problem when the daughter of a corrupt leader calls us her friend

and asks us aboard her yacht.

Majority of middle and upper class Filipinos have employees - both household and business workers, if not workplace subordinates. Knowing that the face of the future president lies on their shoulders, have we ever asked our employees who they're voting for and why? Have we checked if they remember or have even heard of the horrors of Martial Law? Have we reminded them about the current candidates' corruption scandals? How about their past performance and policy track record? Have we reminded our employees what their president needs to do to better their lives?

Have we asked the people we might be able to influence how they feel about the political landscape? If, in the end, they are the ones who vote in numbers and decide, can we take the time to remind them that the appearance of their favorite celebrity at their campaign rally is not going to ensure that these candidates will actually ease their plight?

Complex lives designed to forget

But we are too busy dealing with traffic, pollution, flooding, the latest weather disturbance, and our ridiculous income tax rates. We are too busy figuring out how to get customs to not charge us for our balikbayan box. It's as if the

Continued on page 3

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Why Bongbong Marcos is good for Miriam Santiago

David B. Yap II

Predictably a lot of people went crazy when Senator Miriam Santiago announced that her running mate is Senator Bongbong Marcos.

The answer is simple, provided that you have the intellectual capacity and the maturity to look at it objectively.

Senator Santiago chose Senator Marcos for the simple reason that he has proven to possess the qualities that she values the most. Situate the analysis of his accomplishments in a vacuum and assess it objectively. Take a look at but a small sample of what he has done in the 16th Congress alone.

Name another legislator who has pushed forward a bill to provide affordable housing to lower income and lower-middle income households in urban areas (SB 423: Department of Housing and Urban Development Act of 2013).

Who was the author of the bill (SB 422) that sought to provide protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration for children in conflict areas?

Who was the author of the bill (SB 409) that aimed to cultivate a globally competitive soybean industry here in the Philippines – a soybean industry that could take advantage of the growing demand for soy and soy based products both here and abroad?

Guess who authored a bill (SB 408) that was designed to secure funding and support for hydrogen research and development here in the Philippines – a tacit recognition of the potential uses of hydrogen in the near future.

How about the First Class Public Schools and Libraries Act, The National Mariculture Act, The Teachers Education Act, and the Public School Teachers' Salary Upgrading Act?

Wait, there's more. Who were the senators who said no in the patently rigged trial of Corona? Who were the three senators who staunchly defended their position with a demonstration of their mastery of the law?

Recently deceased Senator Joker Arroyo, Senator Miriam Santiago, and...?

Also, who crafted the



Bongbong Marcos and Miriam Santiago

constitutionally sound alternative to the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL)? All BBM.

Every other vice-presidential candidate will be hard pressed to match Senator Marcos in terms of sheer legislative output and acumen, experience in local governance, and scope and breadth of governance platform.

And you wonder why Senator Santiago chose him.

Basically, most any argument that would be hurled against Senator Marcos would be ad hominem. Given that any discussion, any comparison of vice-presidential candi-

dates on the basis of qualifications would be decidedly in his favor. Again, and you wonder why Senator Santiago chose him.

Now the real question is this: Why are you against Senator Marcos?

Let's preface the discussion with the hashtag #neveragain. What does this mean? It's not a complete sentence. It's a phrase. Let's fill in the blanks.

Perhaps it is never again to Martial Law. Given the present configuration of the Philippine government, the dynamics of political power, and the political landscape, any president will be hard pressed to declare martial law. (LOL if you think a vice-president not named Francis Underwood can declare martial law.)

Perhaps it is never again to corruption. Let's define corruption as the use of government resources for personal gain (which is of course the standard definition, and the definition that encompasses more than just plunder). Who again was the president who leveraged the power of government to insulate a large tract of land

from agrarian reform?

Maybe, it is never again to cronyism. Take a good hard look at how the spoils of EDSA were divided to a select few families.

Maybe it is never again to suppression

of free speech. Who was the first president to file a case against a journalist for libel – over an article that contained a metaphor? Which country (not presently a war zone) is the worst country for journalists?

Maybe it is never again to human rights abuses. Remember the Mendiola Massacre? How about the continued maltreatment of farmers in Hacienda Luisita? How about something more recent how about the tens of thousands of families living in squalor in Yolanda-ravaged regions?

At this point some of you might be raring to retort with something along the lines of: "The corruption, cronyism, and human rights abuses were much worse in the Marcos administration."

Save it. If that is your argument then you aren't truly against corruption. You aren't truly against cronyism. You aren't truly against human rights abuses. If you are going to quibble over the scale of a crime – and basically tell me that one scale is acceptable and one scale is not then you are only paying lip service to principles.

Where is your outrage over

the rampant corruption during and after the first Aquino administration? Where is your outrage over the cronyism that has only gotten worse over the past three decades? Where is your outrage over the human rights abuses of the past 30 years?

While we are in the topic of blaming descendants for the sins of their ancestors – why aren't you calling out Noynoy Aquino for the role his ancestor played in World War II? You didn't say #neveragain when Noynoy Aquino ran for president. So what exactly are you saying never again to?

You are saying never again to a Marcos. You are not going to vote for BBM simply because he is a Marcos. Your vote was not decided on the basis of qualifications – it was decided by last name recall.

How then are you different from someone who would vote for a Binay just because he is a Binay? How then are you different from someone who would vote for Grace Poe just because she is the daughter of Fernando Poe?

My point is this: Anyone who is vehemently against Senator Marcos, just because of his last name, is no longer looking purely at qualifications.

If you use any form of ad hominem argument – if you veer away from a discussion centered on issues, qualifications, and platforms, then you cannot call out people as uneducated voters. Put simply, if the last name of a candidate is your sole metric for your judgment, then you are, by definition, an uneducated voter.

They must think we're stupid

From page 2

country's problems are designed to keep us busy and distract us enough so we don't have time to complain beyond what immediately bothers us. When it is life-threatening to get to and from work each day, it is ridiculous to expect anyone else to look past themselves, much less to see what their fellow citizen is doing or what opinions

they have.

Our professional politicians think we don't keep track of their mistakes. Or even if we do, it's not our opinions that matter. They believe that the people whose favor they care about are those who are swayed by a sexy dance, and that those who fill our social media feeds with their complaints cannot

influence what the voters they care about will decide come election time.

We all know our politicians think we're all stupid, but have we actually asked ourselves if we actually thrive in this flawed system where those on the lowest rung never advance? Are our leaders correct in thinking we are stupid because we keep each other dumb?



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Formidable challenges for the next president

By Benjamin Diokno

Who's running for president?

I predict that after the dust has settled, four serious contenders would emerge, namely: Vice President Jejomar Binay, Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago, former Local Government and Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, and Senator Grace Poe.

Assuming he is running for the right reasons, the next President who will assume office on July 1, 2016 should turn over to his successor on June 30, 2022 a better, stronger, and more beautiful Philippines, a people more united and guided by a sense of nationhood, and a country with stronger and more established political institutions.

Do these candidates understand the formidable challenges faced by the country today and in the years ahead? Realistically, there is no perfect candidate. But who among the Magnificent Four has the highest likelihood of preparing a reform agenda and assembling a good, competent, and experienced team that would meet today's challenges?

Below, I think, are the most formidable challenges of the next President.

The first challenge is how to unify a divided people, how to heal the wounds of the past, and how to rally them behind the new president. The new leader should be perceived to be the president of all the people and not only of his party mates.

That is why the next presidential elections should be fair and less contentious. They should be about real problems of the day and how the contenders propose to solve these problems. Prolonged post-election allegations of fraud and massive vote-buying will only further divide the Filipino people, and deepen the wounds that afflict society.

The new president should rise above politics and work for the common good. He should seek the cooperation of all parties concerned and the leaders of both houses of Congress. He should convene LEDAC frequently, as the latter should be seen as a partner in national agenda setting. The president should maintain good relations with the Supreme Court at all times.

He should think less of who will succeed him after his watch and more of what he should do during his six-year term. The Filipino people, his principal, will hold him accountable for what he did and failed to do during his watch – no more, no less.

The second challenge is extreme poverty. One in four Filipinos suffer extreme poverty, surviving on less than \$1.25 ev-



Interior Sec. Mar Roxas, Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago, Senator Grace Poe and Vice President Jejomar Binay

ery day. Easily, half of the 100 million Filipinos perceive that they are poor.

The third challenge is high unemployment rate. The Philippines has the highest unemployment rate among Asean-6 economies (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam). A recent improvement in unemployment statistics is because fewer Filipinos are looking for a job, that is, the labor force participation rate (LFPR) has declined.

The Philippines also has the highest incidence of overseas workers among its Asean 6 neighbors. The joblessness picture would be higher if a huge chunk the 10 million or so overseas Filipinos were to return to the country.

The fourth challenge is the poor state of public infrastructure. The Philippines lags behind its Asean-6 neighbors in terms of road infrastructure, ports infrastructure, air transport infrastructure, railroads, and electricity supply.

Yet, poor infrastructure is a major constraint to growth. Traffic congestion imposes huge external costs to people and firms. The high and unreliable power costs put Philippine manufacturing at a disadvantage, especially the capital-intensive firms like glass and cement manufacturing.

The fifth challenge is the dysfunctional bureaucracy. The next president should take the lead in restoring meritocracy in government. There should be "deep selection" in choosing the president's cabinet.

Hopefully, the members of the president's cabinet should be competent, honest, experienced and are experts in their respective fields. The new president should limit politi-

cal appointees in government. He should appoint only one political undersecretary in each department, and thereafter respect the career officials in each department. The appointment of political operatives in key career positions, even in an acting capacity, should be resisted.

The sixth challenge is the weak preparation and implementation of the budget. The national budget is the lifeblood of any government. But because it involves taxpayers' money, its preparation, authorization and implementation has to be done carefully, openly, and with prudence. The whole budget process has to be done in accordance with the Constitution, existing laws and strict budget rules.

The national budget has to be crafted with extreme care. Only programs and proj-

ects that can be done within the fiscal year should be included in the annual budget. Congress should exercise its power of the purse diligently.

The seventh challenge is the need to reform the outdated, unfair, complicated, and out-of-sync tax system. The next president should be ready with his tax reform package within 100 days of his presidency. The 19-year old income tax systems are out-of-sync with the Asean-6 tax systems. Keeping the present income tax system unchanged is unfair since it has lumped all income taxpayers into higher income tax brackets through inflation.

Keeping the present corporate income tax system unchanged will put the Philippines at a disadvantage in this competitive world, other things equal, with its Asean-6 peers. But the "other things equal" also put us at a disadvantage in terms of poor infrastructure, higher cost of doing business, and policy inconsistency. So, the Philippines is not only in double jeopardy but in quadruple jeopardy.

In this globalizing world, the competition among countries will become keener as Asean embarks on full integration. Asean integration is not going to happen overnight, but regrettably, the Philippines has a huge gap to fill.

In brief, it is the responsibility of the next president to prepare the country in this more competitive world.

Who among the Magnificent Four is up to the challenge and can embark on an aggressive, doable plan for the country so it can compete with its Asean neighbors?

Given these formidable challenges, who wants to be President of the Philippines?

Home again, but



In the aftermath of typhoon 'Lando,' residents of hard-hit City Camp Lagoon in Baguio return to their homes from the evacuation center to slowly pick up the pieces, like this man fixing the roof of his house.

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Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity Holds “Wellness Day”

By Faina E. Abaya

Our premier community organization, the Filipino community of Sacramento and Vicinity headed by Aida Azurin in collaboration with the “Kapitbahay” fitness dance group of Lilia Rivera presented a “Wellness Day” to inform everyone to stay healthy for more productive members of the community.

The event was held on October 3, 2015 at the Jose Rizal Community Center along Florin Mall, Sacramento and the members of the community were invited to join the program. FCSV President welcomed everyone and expressed her thanks for accepting their invitation to be with them and be informed on how to stay healthy all the time.

She further stated that members of the community who are healthy can do better for the best interest of the place where they established their families. Moreover, healthy residents make their community radiant, progressive and livable.

The objective of the “Wellness Day” is to inform everyone to be always aware of their health, especially, diseases usually being taken for granted as we do our day to day undertakings. A team of resource persons from the University of California Hospital Renal Unit were invited to speak the subject about “Renal Diseases and Related Health Problems Treatment and Prevention”

The team is composed of RN Lydia Sohoo UCD, assistant manager of the hospital’s Renal Unit,



The dance exercise led by FCSV President Aida Azurin.

May Padilla and Marissa Aguilar both are also Registered Nurses of the same hospital. All of them spoke about the said subject matter saying that, Renal Disease has something to do with functioning of our kidneys. The disease usually developed slowly over many years damaging the kidney. Accordingly, diabetes, hypertension or high blood pressure, inherited conditions and infections are the leading causes of kidney troubles.

After the UCD team of nurses lengthily elaborated about the subject matter, an open forum followed. Several questions were asked from the audience which was answered satisfactorily by them, concluding that over the counter pain reliever which we always take such as aspirin, ibuprofen and many other related drugs could cause kidney problem when taken frequently over the years. Furthermore, the three resource persons added that chronic renal disease can lead to kidney failure requiring dialysis or transplant.

Sumptuous healthy food for lunch prepared and catered by Roselie Randall was served, consisting of spaghetti, baked chicken, green salad, rolls and assorted fruits.

The Kapitbahay dancers led by Lilia Rivera showed line dancing with varied body movements as form of exercises were demonstrated and repeated with audience participation until closing



Line for salad and healthy food.



The Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity

time. Music was provided by Rick and Margie Pasalo.

FCSV working committee for the occasion were: Mercy Guerrero, Segundo Azurin, Alex and

Ling Avera, Luz Daclan, Divina and Bembem Borromeo, Auring Ramos, Meding Mangosing, Julie Oineza and Maria Bahoric.

4th Annual Breast Cancer Walk

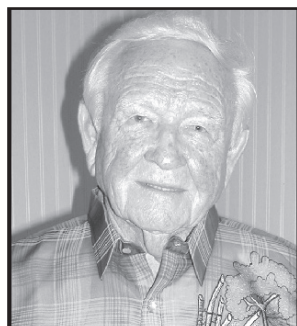


Over 20,000 people participated in the Strides Against Cancer walk in downtown Sacramento, which raised \$380,000 for cancer research. (With Kathleen Unciano, MYra MaYa SoriAno TaeZa, Gina Miguel-Quiamhor, Alma Pamintuan Macaraeg and Jane Jacinto Meraz.

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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

What's causing Obama's sleepless nights?

With the conclusion of a much-ballyhooed summit meeting between the leaders of the two largest economic superpowers in the 21st century, one would expect that peace would reign in the vast Asia-Pacific region. But this is farthest from the truth because the summit didn't really accomplish anything but allow U.S. President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, to pretend that all is sweet and sassy between them. But it soon became apparent that America and China are oceans apart in geopolitical terms just like the way they're oceans apart in geological terms.

But pretension or not, the fact of the matter is that the South China Sea, which is one of the busiest – if not the busiest – maritime routes in the world, has a sprinkling of hundreds of tiny islands, reefs, and shoals that are claimed by six littoral countries in the region. Mostly concentrated in the Spratly Archipelago, these tiny specks of outcroppings are claimed wholly or partly by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines.

The biggest and most aggressive claimant is China who pegs her claim on the “nine-dash line,” a tongue-shaped arbitrary line that runs from east of Taiwan through the Luzon Strait and along the littoral coasts of the Philippines, Borneo, Malaysia, and Vietnam. The area that the nine-dash line encroached represents roughly 85% of the entire South China Sea (SCS), through which \$5 trillion in maritime trade pass every year by way of the Strait of Malacca.

Economic powerhouse

A large number of the goods – including oil -- that passes through are bound for China and Japan, respectively the second and third largest economies of the world. And together with the United



Iran's Hassan Rouhani, China's Xi Jinping, and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

States, whose westernmost territories – Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) – are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the Asia-Pacific region is undoubtedly the world's “economic powerhouse.”

Ideally, if the U.S., China, and Japan could co-exist economically, politically, and militarily, a pacific Asia-Pacific region would serve the best interest of every nation on Earth. Peace can then be achieved. But because of the disputed tiny islands, reef, and shoals in the SCS, the world has never been closer to World War III than it is today. Indeed, what is happening now in the SCS, Middle East, and East Europe has all the recipes of a nuclear war among the great powers: the U.S. against Russia, China, and Iran.

Artificial islands

It all began two years ago when China began building artificial islands by dredging sand and rocks from the bottom of the sea and dumping them on reefs and shoals in the Spratly Archipelago, seven of which have been reclaimed to date. And on these artificial islands, China is erecting infrastructure and buildings including runways for military aircraft, deep-water harbors to accommodate large warships, garrisons for troops, and defensive fortifications.

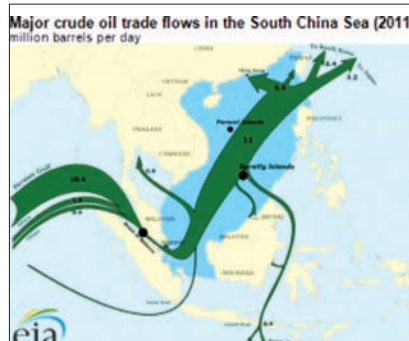
The U.S. did not do anything to stop or warn China about the risks of militarizing the SCS. And the Obama administration's silence on

the matter was interpreted by Beijing that the U.S. was sticking to her position of neutrality on the territorial disputes in the SCS. The Chinese also interpreted Uncle Sam's silence as a “go signal” to China's land reclamation projects in the Spratlys.

Recently, America's military top brass managed to convince the White House to send

American warships to within 12 miles of the artificial islands. Although the White House agreed to notify the Chinese that American warships will be sent to the Spratlys, actual deployment has yet to occur, an indication that Obama might still be trying one more time to convince China to abandon the reclamation projects, diplomatically. China's response was direct to the point: China has “indisputable sovereignty” over the South China Sea and warned the U.S. that she would not allow any foreign intrusion into Chinese waters.

Evidently, Xi called Obama's bluff, which raises the question:



Would Obama stay in the game or fold? As any Poker player can tell: A strong hand could lose to a weak hand if the player doesn't have what it takes – guts -- to win. As they say, “No guts, no glory.” Surmise it to say, Obama would be relieved if the game ended in a draw. But with all the reclaimed islands almost complete, it cannot end in a draw. Obama knows that Xi's hand is weaker than his and Xi knows it, too. Instead, Xi de-

clared that China would go to war to protect her “indisputable sovereignty” over the SCS.

Freedom of navigation

Recently, the Obama administration came out with a strategy. It's called “freedom of navigation” (FON), which is not really a novel idea because it has been around for more than century when the U.S. became the only maritime



Carrier battle group-7 Fleet

superpower on Earth. Since then, there was no country that could match America's naval power. Not China. Not Russia. America became the “policeman” of the high seas.

The U.S. has formidable fleet of 11 aircraft carriers – more than all the other countries put together. In addition, she has nine helicopter carriers that could also carry a limited number of aircraft. She has 14 nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), each carrying 24 Trident ballistic missiles. Each missile has 3-12 nuclear warheads, which can be aimed to hit several targets. That's a total of more

than 4,000 nuclear warheads that SSBNs can carry. They are the vanguard of America's second-strike attack in the event China or Russia launches a first-strike attack against the U.S. With that kind of nuclear punch, the U.S. can and should be able to enforce “freedom of navigation” and stop the militarization of the SCS.

But the problem is that Obama is perceived as a “peacenik” who vowed never to send “boots on the ground” to trouble spots in Eastern Europe and the Middle East; thus, emboldening U.S.'s enemies to grab territories, knowing that he wouldn't stop them. We've seen it happen in Georgia, Libya, Crimea, Ukraine, South China Sea, Iraq,

and, recently, Syria. Who are next? The Baltic States?

FONOPs

At the annual AUSMIN meeting between American and Australian foreign and defense ministers, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter said during a press conference: “Make no mistake, the United States will fly, sail and operate wherever international

law allows, as we do around the world, and the South China Sea will not be an exception.” His warning was directed at China over her building of militarized artificial islands in the Spratlys. When asked about reports that the U.S. had already decided to conduct

freedom-of-navigation operations (FONOPs) inside the 12 nautical mile limits, which China claims around the artificial islands, Carter responded: “We will do that in the time and places of our choosing.”

FONOPs are conducted to test China's reaction by sailing into or flying over territories that China believes she owns without seeking China's permission. The question is: Would the U.S. conduct a FONOP during Obama's soon-to-be lame duck presidency? Or would Obama comfort himself by shelving it and let his successor decide whether to conduct FONOPs or not?

Meanwhile, Exercise Malabar 2015 kicked off last October 14 in the Bay of Bengal. It involves naval forces from the U.S., India, and Japan. Part of this year's Exercise Malabar, which ends on October 19, is to conduct FONOP exercises. In these exercises, carriers, warships, submarines, and aircraft are rehearsing for possible action in the South China Sea that includes challenging China's sovereignty over the SCS.

While it is presumed that Exercise Malabar takes into account a worst-case scenario; that is, China attacks the intruding forces, one wonders what is the battle plan of the joint U.S.-India-Japan forces against the Chinese?

In the real world, would a FONOP in the South China Sea lead to war? Or would China sue for peace? And this is what's probably causing Obama sleepless nights as manifested by those circles around his eyes.

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Ignite Your Passion For God

How I Learned What It Means To Be A Filipino-American

From page 1

My high school was about 40% Filipino, and most of my friends were Filipino too. At our high school proms, we crammed 50 Filipinos into one group picture, just so we could have wallet-size photos to hand out to our friends. We wore “Filipino Pride” T-shirts and sang along to Jocelyn Enriquez songs on the radio. We could name all the famous Filipinos on TV and movies, mostly because there were so few of them.

There was Lea Salonga, Nia Peeples, Tia Carrere, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Rob Schneider from Saturday Night Live. Anyone with one drop of Filipino blood was considered family or someone to be proud of.

Despite this, we didn’t really know much about what it meant to be Filipino-American. Only a few of my friends spoke Tagalog or another Filipino dialect; the rest of us spoke only English. And none of us were knowledgeable about Philippine or Filipino-American history. Although half of my classmates looked like me, our teachers didn’t seem to acknowledge the diversity of our school, even though it was something many students talked about. We did have “Culture Week” once a year: We were encouraged to wear our native garb to school, and student groups performed their cultural dances during afternoon assemblies.

But for every other week of the school year, our classes focused on white American perspectives and histories. Instead of Jose Rizal or Jessica Hagedorn, we had Charles Dickens or Jane Austen. Instead of lessons about the Philippine-American War or the Bataan Death March, we had lessons about the Spanish Inquisition or the French Revolution. Given that the Philippines was an American colony for almost 50 years, it was baffling that nothing Filipino-related was ever mentioned in any part of the curriculum.

We had only one Filipino teacher in our entire school, an American-born Pinay in her late twenties. Ironically, she taught my world history class. The standardized curriculum she used primarily focused on what were considered the most important events in world history: the history of Europe. Even though she identified as Filipino-American, she couldn’t devote even one day’s lesson to the history of the Philippines. The message we got was that our parents’ homeland was not important enough for us to study — at least not during school hours.

At home, my immigrant parents didn’t talk much about being Filipino.

At home, my immigrant parents didn’t talk much about being Filipino. Both my parents were the first

in their families to emigrate (my mom in 1965, my dad in 1969), in search of opportunities for their then-hypothetical children. They said goodbye to their parents, siblings, and friends, not knowing if they would ever see them again. They made a new life in California with the help of a few older relatives (who arrived decades prior and worked as farmworkers and laborers) and each other.

When I was a teenager, my parents told me about the hardships they experienced when they first arrived in the U.S. While they were promised opportunities and open arms, they were actually greeted by racism and ignorance. My mom, a nurse, regularly encountered World War II military veteran patients who said horrific things to her because they assumed she was Japanese. They called her a “Jap” and an “Oriental.” Patients refused my mother’s care because they thought she was “the enemy.” When she’d say she was Filipino, the veterans usually relaxed, since they believed Filipinos were American allies — and sometimes even the “little brown brothers” of the U.S.

My dad, on the other hand, tried not to acknowledge racism at all. He believed no one should have the right to treat him as inferior or as a second-class citizen because he had a college education. Whenever someone assumed he didn’t speak English well, my dad would reply with his version of a perfect American accent, having learned English as a child in the Philippines.

As a teenager, my experiences were varied. Some saw me and my peers as “model minorities” — ambitious children of hardworking Asian parents who knew the importance of education. I knew many non-Filipino adults who enjoyed talking to my parents, because they spoke English fluently. However, many of my classmates made fun of my parents — thankfully, only to me — because of their heavy accents.

Others considered me a “troublemaker.” I’ve been pulled over or harassed by police officers for no reason. Security or store clerks regularly followed my friends and me around in stores or malls. At school, a few teachers and counselors stereotyped the Filipino students as gangsters and did not encourage us to our full potential. I remember a high school counselor telling me I shouldn’t take certain honors classes because he didn’t think I’d do well in them. He later insisted I should go to a community college.

It wasn’t until I went to college at University of California at Irvine that I started to really develop my Filipino-American identity. My campus was 60% Asian-American

and about one out of every eight students on my campus were Filipino. I joined — and later became president of — Kababayan, the Filipino-American student organization, 600 members strong. I



Illustration by Dave San Pedro

danced the tinikling and singkil in our Pilipino Cultural Nights, and we sang the Philippine National Anthem at weekly meetings. And I finally read Rizal and Hagedorn and learned about the Bataan Death March.

In my Filipino-American Studies class, I learned that Filipino farmworkers like Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz led the Delano Grape Strikes of 1965, one of the greatest labor movements in U.S. history. In my Asian-American Psychology class, I learned about the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, which put an end to immigration quotas and allowed for the influx of Asian immigrants like my parents to migrate to the U.S.

I was in college when I learned that October was Filipino-American History Month (FAHM). FAHM was originally founded by Fred and Dorothy Cordova and the Filipino American National Historical Society in 1988, and October was chosen to commemorate the first Filipinos who landed in the Americas: a small group of Filipino seafarers and servants who jumped ship en route to Spain. They landed in what is now known as Morro Bay in California in October 1587, decades before the Pilgrims would land on Plymouth Rock.

For the next 20 years, many states, like California and Michigan, and cities, like New York and Chicago, recognized the month with official proclamations. In 2009, the U.S. Congress and House of Representatives passed resolutions that officially recognized the month. And this past year, the White House hosted its very first FAHM celebration, as President Obama acknowledged that Filipino-Americans have “helped expand our Nation’s promise throughout every aspect of our society.”

I celebrated FAHM every year in college, so I was disheartened when I enrolled at Michigan State University to pursue my master’s degree and discovered that no one

celebrated the month. I became the adviser to the small, but growing, Filipino-American student organization there, and it was through these students I learned even more about my Filipino-American identity.

Because I’d never had any Filipino-American professors, I wanted to become one.

None of these students had similar experiences to mine. They were usually the only Filipino kid in their high schools (and sometimes the only one in their respective towns). By meeting them, I began to appreciate all the

resources I had. It was then when I also realized I wanted to become a professor, so I could educate others about Filipino-Americans and other marginalized groups. I wanted to encourage young people to understand and get in touch with their own cultural heritages and identities. Because I’d never had any Filipino-American professors, I wanted to become one.

When I was accepted into a doctoral program in counseling psychology at Columbia University, I made it a point to study everything related to multicultural issues in psychology. I focused on how Filipino-American culture and identity affect people’s mental health. There was little research on the topic, so I wanted to be the person to change that. While there were books on black psychology, Latino psychology, and Asian-American psychology, I wanted to write the first book on Filipino-American psychology (and I later did).

Ten years later, I’ve learned a lot about being Filipino-American. I’ve discovered that Filipinos are the second-largest Asian-American group (just after Chinese-Americans) and are the second-largest immigrant population (just after Mexican-Americans). I’ve also learned about the issues affecting our community, like the fact that American-born Filipinos don’t go to college or graduate school as much as their immigrant counterparts, or that Filipinos tend to have higher rates of depression than other Asian-Americans and the general population, yet are less likely to seek mental health treatment.

Perhaps Filipino-Americans don’t attend college or graduate school because they are stereotyped or discouraged by their teachers and counselors, paralleling what my friends and I experienced in high school. Perhaps Filipino-Americans have higher levels of depression and seek mental health help less often because, much like how my parents taught me how to deal with discrimination, we try to not talk about our hardships or negative life experiences.

I’ve also learned that, because the Philippines has a unique colonial history, it’s hard for people to place us racially. We Filipinos have brown skin like other Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders; some are even misidentified as black. Because of Spanish colonization, we tend to have Spanish last names and majority of us are (or at least were raised) Catholic, so we’re sometimes mistaken for Latinos. The U.S. also colonized the Philippines for almost 50 years, so most Filipinos, including those in the Philippines, are fluent in English.

Perhaps this is why Filipino-Americans experience so many different types of microaggressions. In my research, I’ve found that Filipino-Americans deal with microaggressions similar to those experienced by other Asian-American groups, like being stereotyped as exotic, a “model minority,” or a perpetual foreigner. However, Filipino-Americans also encounter microaggressions often encountered by African-Americans and Latinos, like being assumed to be dangerous or intellectually inferior.

I’ve also studied how concepts like colonial mentality and ethnic identity affect mental health. Colonial mentality is the idea that people from colonized places tend to view values and standards of beauty of the colonizer as good, while viewing those of the indigenous as being bad. For instance, Filipinos tend to view those with light skin as more beautiful or attractive, and those who speak English without Filipino accents as smarter or more sophisticated. Perhaps this is the reason why so many Filipino-Americans, including me, were never taught by our parents to speak their native language.

In retrospect, the one thing of which I am constantly reminded is that Filipino-Americans are a resilient people. Throughout our history in both the Philippines and the U.S., we have overcome these instances of tyranny, brutality, and inequality. We have fought for independence in the Philippines and marched for civil rights in the U.S. We have organized movements, formed coalitions with allies, and persevered against systemic discrimination, ignorance, and oppression.

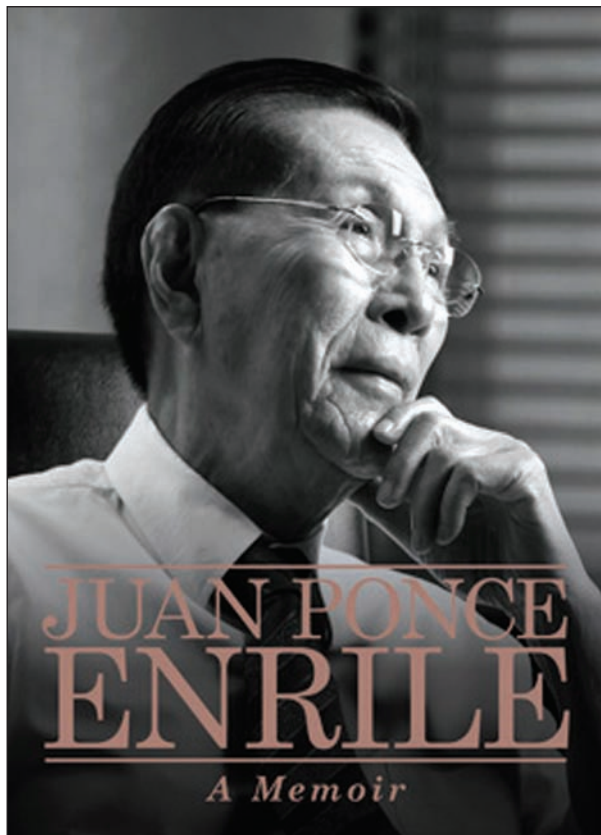
We have comforted each other in times of despair and have supported the trailblazers who have represented us well. We have moved forward and persevered, usually with a smile, and always holding the hands of future generations behind us.

Kevin Nadal, Ph.D. is a professor at the City University of New York, the Executive Director of CLAGS: The Center for LGBTQ Studies, the President of the Asian American Psychological Association, and a National Trustee of the Filipino American National Historical Society.

Enrile's memoir gives me sleepless nights

By Susan F. Quimpo

For the last two weeks, I've had sleepless nights. It was two weeks ago that I saw a front-page newspaper photo of the book launch of Senator Juan Ponce Enrile's memoir. The picture showed President Aquino shaking hands with Senator Enrile, while Imelda Marcos looked on. A chill went down my spine. Just a couple of days before, I sat at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani memorial listening to President Aquino addressing the families of the Martial Law dead.



To us he said:

"May kasabihang 'ang mga nakakalimot sa mga kamalian ng nakaraan ay laging nasa bingit na ulitin ito.' Huwag na nating pahintulutan na maulit pang mailagay sa alanganin ang ating karapatan at kalayaan. Hindi ako makakapayag na maipasang muli sa susunod na henerasyon ang mga pagkakamali ng kasaysayan. Pahalagahan natin ang pamana't aral ng Batas Militar. Tungkulin ng bawat isa sa ating alagaan ito, gamit ang tiwala sa isa't isa, pagmamahal sa katotohanan, at higit sa lahat, sa pagkilala't pagbibigay-halaga sa sakripisyo ng ating mga bayani. Huwag nating sayangin ang kanilang ipinaglaban."

Behind President Aquino was the Bantayog memorial, a granite wall with some two hundred names, a small fraction of the tens of thousands who died fighting the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and then-Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, who was dubbed Marcos' "Martial Law administrator." And on that wall are the names of my brothers – Ishmael F. Quimpo, Jr., and Ronald Jan

F. Quimpo. Some say that it was a magnanimous gesture that PNoy graced Enrile's book launch and shook his hand.

I am not as magnanimous. The video "Batas Militar," produced by the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (available for viewing on YouTube), shows footage of Enrile and then General Fidel V. Ramos during the first day of what-would-be the People Power insurrection. On February 22, 1986, both radio and television media covered Enrile admitting that the 1972 ambush and assassination attempt on his life was staged. The masses outside the gates of Camp Aguinaldo and Crame all heard this on their transistor radios. Millions of other Manileños and millions more outside Metro Manila witnessed or heard Enrile's confession on TV and radio. With multitudes as witnesses, how can the truth be denied?

Good people risked their lives to tell the truth. One of them was journalist Primitivo Mijares. The video "Batas Militar" describes Mijares as a "Malacañang con-

fidante," a favored member of the press corps. On page 49 of his book, *Conjugal Dictatorship*, Mijares writes that Marcos called Enrile before the staged ambush and ordered Enrile to implement the plan, saying:

"Secretary Enrile? Where are you? You have to do it now... ya, ya, the one we discussed this noon. We cannot postpone it any longer. Another day of delay may be too late.... Make it look good. Kailangan siguro ay may masaktan o kung mayroon mapatay ay mas mabuti. (May be it would be better if somebody got hurt or killed)... O hala, sig, Johnny and be sure the story catches the 'Big News' and 'Newswatch' ... and call me as soon as it is over."

Little did Mijares know that the price of the truth would be very high indeed. After a rift with Imelda's brother, Kokoy Romualdez, Mijares left for the US and published his book, a full-throated expose on the Marcos family. Soon after the book's publication in 1976, Mijares joined the ranks of the desaparecidos and was never seen again. A year later, his ten-year-old (other accounts say he was sixteen) son Boyet received a phone call; the caller said his father was alive and wanted to see him.

Boyet excitedly left home to meet him. Two weeks later, the boy's body was found with a bashed head, his nails ripped out, his eyes protruding from their sockets, and his torso punctured with 32 ice-pick wounds.

It is surreal how Enrile fondly says that the typewriter he used to type out the implementing orders of martial law is still in his study. In his memoir, he writes: "I was faced with the problem of how or where to start. There was no model to begin with. I had to literally start from scratch. I had to improvise everything."

Was he referring to the typewriter he used to craft the blueprint of Martial Law, dish out general orders and the letters of instruction? Did these include the order to arrest 70,000 political prisoners, and to hold them indefinitely in Marcos jails without charge or bail, to torture 34,000, and kill 3,240 as reported by Amnesty International? Whether or not Enrile foresaw these atrocities when he crafted the Martial Law decrees and administered Martial

Law itself, cannot be proved, but it cannot be denied that such horrific acts were the practical result of his work. It would have been good to have heard even a few words of regret from him.

Enrile is not alone in wanting to recast history. In interviews, Senator Bongbong Marcos, son of the dictator, characterizes the reports of human rights abuses under Martial Law as "self-serving statements by politicians, self-aggrandizement narratives, pompous declarations, and political posturing and propaganda."

Statements like these leave me sleepless at night. In the Martial Law prisons, my brother Ronald Jan was stripped naked, his feet doused with water while a live wire was tied to his penis. His skin became as taut as lechon from the heat of two par lamps positioned an inch or two from his face for days. My brother Nathan was stripped naked, blindfolded and clubbed by his military interrogators until nearly unconscious. Did the letters of instruction typed on Enrile's typewriter include orders to sexually molest women like my sister Lil and sister-in-law Tina?

Bongbong feigns innocence by saying he was fifteen when his father proclaimed Martial Law. At age twelve I was robbed of innocence when I made the rounds of the Marcos prisons cramped with political prisoners, to visit five siblings and bring them food, clothing and hear accounts of torture again and again.

I am not a politician so I have no need to make self-serving statements, self-aggrandizement narratives, pompous declarations, and engage in political posturing. And it pains me deeply to think that my life, that of my family, that of Primitivo Mijares and his son Boyet, and the lives and experiences of 70,000 political prisoners are dismissed as mere "propaganda."

Truthfulness is a virtue taught to virtually every Filipino child. No one is exempt from the moral imperative to bear witness and speak the truth. It does not matter if one grew up poor and barefoot in Cagayan or in a palace by the Pasig.

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TSPOC (NC) Class 01-92 First Medical Mission in Tanay, Rizal

By Gabriel Ortigoza

Technical Service Probationary Officers' Course (Nurse Corps) class 01-92 [TSPOC (NC) CL 01-92] was conceptualized by our visionary NC leaders headed by Brigadier General Elvigia Ruiz-Mendoza AFP (Ret). On 16 March 1992, the first NC probationary class started with 50 members recruited from all over the Philippine archipelago.

The class is composed of 38 females and 12 males. (Yours truly is the 50th or the last class member to report on 19 March 1992 at Technical Service Officers' School (TSOS) in Camp Meteo Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal). The training lasted for six months which was divided into two phases of three months a piece. The first part was a military phase at TSOS. We named this class Unang Binhing Mapagkalinga. The second part was a technical phase at Victoriano Luna (V. Luna) Hospital in Quezon City. We named this class Sui Generis, a class of its own.

The probationary training was completed on 16 September 1992. Forty eight members were Called to Active (CAD) duty in three major AFP services and General Headquarters assignment. One member, instead of joining the NC, took the Philippine Air Force Flying School entrance examination and passed it. She is now one of our armed forces few female pilots. One member lost interest in joining the service, he is now in London for a Greener Pasteur. Out of 50 probies, three remain active in the service over two decades later.

In 2005 this writer created a facebook group where members could have a venue to communicate and interact with the whole class. An organization has vision, mission, and goals. As a group, we have also our dreams. One of our dreams is to come together and enjoy our class



The 2nd Infantry (Jungle Fighter) Division along with its active stakeholders spearheaded the Medical Mission at Sitio Aguho, Barangay Sampaloc, Tanay, Rizal on September 5, 2015.



camaraderie. Our dreams will remain a dream if we will not make it a goal with a time frame. As commonly known to nursing, a goal follows an acronym SMART which stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and has Time Frame.

During the informal interaction via our class facebook group, members were in agreement to have a class grand reunion. The goal is to hold the reunion in September 2015 to coincide with NC & MNAP foundation anniversaries celebrations on the 7th of the month at Commissioned Officers' Club in Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. I proposed to have the medical mission prior to the foundation

anniversary celebration as a tribute to the NC & MNAP. The class approved the proposal. We then calendared the date of the mission on 05 September 2015, Saturday, in Barangay Sampaloc, Tanay, Rizal.

Thoughts of Tanay in Rizal province brings about green mountainous terrain with soothing cold weather and fresh air. Though that may be true to the some locals and tourists, people in the said town see a much different views.

Why Sampaloc, Tanay? This is the home of 2nd Infantry Division "Jungle Fighter" is located. This is the place where we spent three months in military training in which our carefree civilian lives

were transformed into responsible adults. Furthermore, this is the place where unforgettable memories happened to the members TSPOC (NC) Class 01-92.

On 05 September 2015, our class dream came into reality. Class members

these children do not know Jollibee," said Sitio Aguho leader Mr. Crisanto Delica. "And these kids and some of the adults in the village have not tasted food from Jollibee." Because of this class mission, a number of families, including the village leader, expressed their thanks and appreciation to the group for bringing the mission to their village for the first time.

Funding the first ever class project did not give us difficulty. Class members were willing to give whatever is available monetarily. Some who have challenges with money donated their time to volunteer their services. As a whole, the group was able to raise enough fund to support the mission, not to mention medicines donated by pharmaceutical companies worth over eighty thousand pesos (P80,000.00+) were added on top of our budget. Rough total estimate of expenditure of our first medical mission is two hundred thousand pesos (P200, 000.00).

Coordination of the mission to Tanay came unchallenged due to the fact that the Chief of Staff of 2nd Infantry Division (2ID) is the mistah (classmate) of Oyang's husband who belongs to PMA class 1986. What we did was to send a letter request to the Commanding General of the 2ID via 2ID Chief of Staff and our prayers were answered. All items listed in our requests were approved. Coordination with the barangay and Aguho Elementary School was facilitated smoothly by Civil Military Operation (CMO) or G7 of 2ID.

Because of the success of our first mission, as class chairman of the medical mission committee I would like to thank the following people who helped us realized our dream: 2ID Commanding General Major General Romeo G. Gan AFP, 2ID Chief of Staff Colonel Leonard Agustin PA, G7 of 2ID, Medical Team from 2ID Army Station Hospital, pharmaceutical companies Pharyx, GX, and Prosel, Deputy Brigade Commander of 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade Colonel Arwel Oropesa (MNSA) PA who has been very supportive of the group's activities, Sitio Aguho leader Mr. Crisanto Delica, to the principal of Aguho Elementary School Mrs. Edith S. Mato, the families and friends of TSPOC (NC) CL 01-92 who, in one way or the other, kept us motivated until we reached our goal. Thank you all very much.

TSPOC (NC) Class 01-92 is already planning to have another medical mission at the same location in September 2017 to celebrate the class silver anniversary. (*gabbyortig@yahoo.com*)



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Mabuhay Friends!

By Dale Esperante

It was an enjoyable evening on October 10, 2015 at St. Anthony's Parish Hall, kudos to Mabuhay Foundation International's (MFI) "Fabulous 50's/60's" Dinner & Dance.

Highlights of the evening included: warm and friendly reception by the MFI team, generous volunteer servers and excellent dishes (ang sarap!), huge events hall, sweet dinner songs by DJ Ozgee and Maryann, special song number by Adolfo "Boy" Guevarra, masterful emceeing of Doctor Jessie Rose, inspiring message of Doctor Frank Marasigan, and a passionate address delivered by President Tony Yadao.

The brightest spotlight of the evening illuminated upon two groups of ladies: The UCD Dancing Queens coordinated by Hilda Dacumos, and the FAVA Hula Ladies led by Gigi Perez. Both groups energized the room. The UCD group's focus is on modern dance whereas the FAVA group concentrated on the Hawaiian hula. The colorful costumes of the groups matched their styles. These dance artists definitely kept all the photographers and videographers busiest during their performances. After the evening's set program, the social dance crowd enjoyed DJ Ozgee's selection of popular tunes until the closing hour.

"Mabuhay Foundation International is a non-profit organization that provides relief to disadvantage people in the United States and the Philippines by giving food, clothing, and health related services to the needy." More information can be learned by visiting their website: <http://www.mabuhayfoundationinternational.org/>



Dr. Frank Marasigan



UCD Dancing Queens

Photos by Dale Esperante



The FAVA Ladies



FAVA Hula dancers led by Gigi Perez



The Filipino community of Sacramento



Magellan Hall members (L-R) Jose, Ato, Fred, Joe and Pete.

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December 4 & 5 - 7:30 PM
December 6 - 2:30 PM
Luther Burbank High School Auditorium
Sacramento, CA

All Aboard the Sinag-tala Theatrical Revue

By Dale Esperante

For more than two decades, the Filipino community of Sacramento has been blessed every year with Sinag-tala's Theatrical Revue (STR), an entertaining showcase of our culture. This year, Sinag-tala will be performing at Luther Burbank High School, 3500 Florin Road, in Sacramento. The show schedule will be on December 4 and 5 at 7:30 p.m.; December 6 at 2:30 p.m.

For approximately 25 years, Sonny Alforque has been viewed as Sinag-tala's public spokesperson. Sonny served as the Artistic Director as well as the Producer of the annual Theatrical Revue. The first time I saw Sonny in the mid 1990's, when Sinag-tala performed the December show at Hiram Johnson High School's auditorium, it's as if seeing a proud parent with his adoring child. Sonny



Sinag-tala 2003: Ang Balikbayan Box with BJ Alisago and Lorraine de Arco

Photo by Dave San Pedro

has definitely proven to be a caring leader, an actor, a singer, a teacher, an uncle, a kuya, and overall a very well respected man in our community as well as in the performing arts community.

Last year, Mr. Alforque announced his decision to retire from Sinag-tala. As we watched him take his bow on his final show last December, we felt happy for him, but deep inside, we selfishly wanted him to stay. When the stage curtains ultimately drew

closed, we stood there for a moment wondering, then emptiness as we vacated the now idle auditorium.

After a few months of wondering, the answer came to me via an 8 August 2015 Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) Filipiniana Scholarship Dinner & Dance. FAVA President Fred Aquino introduced a special speaker who we knew as one of Sinag-tala's seasoned board members. President Fred continued his introduction and finally

uttered the words, "The new president of Sinag-tala, Beatriz Alo." President Beatriz (Beep) humbly thanked FAVA for the introduction and invitation. She also expressed her appreciation for the confidence bestowed upon her by the members of the Sinag-tala Filipino Theater and Performing Arts Association (SFTPAA). She also mentioned two of her many coaches for their continued encouragement: Memei Weitzenberg of FAVA, and Rae-

Continued on page 13

Foreseeing a Surprise Party

By Dale Esperante

Aurora Foresee, with friend Lottie Munsayac, planned months ahead to host a surprise milestone birthday party for her husband Jim and her sister Josie Santos. Aurora and Lottie realized that the challenge may be too much for just the two of them. They needed help. Readily, the following accepted Aurora and Lottie's request for assistance: Joe Legaspi, Luz Daclan, Esther Mros, Paz Cajucum, Josie Salindong, Ched Descargar, Barbara & Rudy Orteza, Fely & Rene Dinong, Lydia & Ernesto Mangabat, Rose & Yoly Dela Cruz, and this writer. Local and out of town friends were notified to save 27 Sep 2015 as a rendezvous date at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Elk Grove.

Before 3 p.m. on 27 Sep, more than an hour prior to the start of the party, friends hurriedly took over the venue—setting up and decorating. Aurora's weeks of clandestine operation with her team of friends paid off because everything seemed to be right on schedule. When the guests started arriving at 4 Pm, they were checked in by Fred Aquino, Malou Amper, Bella Nido and Alexander Cheng. The four receptionists took turns guiding the newly arrived guests to their reserved seats. The theme of the party is Hawaiian. The ladies of the Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) led by Memie Weitzenberg, Carina Gonzales, and Warnita Avillanoza sashayed hula style as they arrived. Adorned with leis, flowers, Hawaiian shirt or dress, the party guests personified the essence of the islands. By 4:30 pm, the social hour neared full strength. Given the responsibility, the Master of Ceremonies (MC) introduced himself to share the program—the arrival time of Aurora, Jim and Josie at 5:15 pm



Jim and Aurora Foresee

the most important.

At 5 pm, the MC reminded everyone to prepare for the arrival. Tom Amaba volunteered to be the lookout in the lobby area while Fred Aquino posted himself right outside the venue's double doors. Three knocks on the door by Fred would mean the arrival. The faint lights and the whispered conversations added to the excitement of the occasion. Aurora's family and friends seemed to enjoy standing by patiently, all for the sake of giving Jim and Josie a grand surprise.

At 5:15 pm, all eyes focused on the main entrance door. Slowly, the door creaked open. Ato and Yollie Delacruz peeked in. Seeing the MC standing next to the door inside and the whole room dimmed and quiet, Ato and Yollie quickly retreated. Finally Fred Aquino's long awaited knocks jarred the

door. The MC stood aside clearing the path for the incoming party of three. A slice of sunlight burst into the room as the door opened. As Josie, Jim, and Aurora walked in, applause and birthday cheers reverberated. The DJ spun an instrumental Happy Birthday melody and myriad voices in the room sang along. Jim and Josie seemed glued to the floor as family and friends swarmed them from all directions. The MC found help from Bella and Malou when the duo decided it was time to escort the birthday celebrants to their seats.

Before dinner, Aurora prayed for grace. She especially thanked God for the special people in her life: loving husband Jim, dearest sister Josie, supportive family and good friends who came from near and afar to celebrate this special day. The MC then approached Aurora, Jim, and Josie to lead them first to the buffet line. The buffet featured an appetizing presentation of various island style entrees, vegetables, salads, and desserts. A special TiKi Hut beverage stand built by one of Aurora's artisan friends enhanced the decorations.

A photo slide-show (PSS) accompanied by mood music played during dinner. The producer of the PSS inserted fun scripts to keep the viewers interested and entertained. An audible message from Aurora to Jim and Josie accompanied the last photo. The room was silent as the rapt audience listened to the loving message of Aurora. The audience's round of applause punctuated their appreciation for the PSS and Aurora's message, concluding this segment of the program.



Jim and Aurora with family and friends.



Members of the Filipino American Veterans Association, Inc.

Photos by Dale Esperante

For Kodak moments, every group was visited by Jim, Aurora, and Josie. Photographers and videographers followed the trio as they moved from table to table. A substantial time for photoshoots, hugs, handshakes, and pleasant-ries was followed by the MC's official introduction of the celebrants. The spotlight shifted to the dance floor where Jim and Aurora waltzed their special dance. Next, Josie and her friends took over the dance floor. Josie followed the lead of her partner as her group of friends held hands and danced circles around them. Then came more surprises. Jim and Josie weren't the only ones surprised this evening. Aurora surprised a few guests by announcing them as winners of her secret raffle. Aurora made sure there was something for everyone to carry home from the party: a prize and/or party favor and/or food.

Time for Aurora, Jim, and Josie to just sit back, relax, and be entertained. The MC introduced the fabulous FAVA Ladies for their Pearly Shell hula number. The familiar melody, the smiling faces, the bare feet, the colorful sarongs, the leis, the flowers, and the graceful gestures filled the room with tropical smiles and sunny disposition. The fab FAVA Ladies: Instructor Gigi Perez, Memie Weitzenberg, Mercedes Descargar, Bella Nido, Carina Gonzalez, Malou Amper, Warnita Avillanoza, Lita Calindas, Melita Esperante, and Rose Delacruz.

Still glowing with a smile after the FAVA performance, Aurora took the opportunity to express her gratitude to a team of friends who helped plan this successful surprise party. To all the guests,

Aurora voiced her earnest gratitude.

After Aurora's heartwarming speech, Gigi Perez presented her with two more hula solos. One of the dances is called Hukilau. A "hukilau is a way of fishing invented by the Hawaiians." One could imagine the song was about a fisherman (Jim) catching his prized catch (Aurora). Excellent performance by Gigi.

Jim and Aurora's wedding ninang, Eve Abad, from San Francisco stood up to give a heartfelt expression of her god-motherly love for Aurora, Jim, and Josie. Ninang Eve declared her support, echoed by a company of bay area families and friends in attendance, to the celebrated threesome. Visibly moved, Aurora answered Ninang Eve with equal devotion.

Snapshots of moving moments: the absolute surprise of Jim, the sportsmanship of Josie, the joy of Aurora, the photo slide-show, the graceful performers, and so much more. Aurora finally decided it was time to move all—to the dance floor. DJ Ed Cordero, along with his partner/dad Paul Cordero, obliged by playing favorite tunes that guaranteed everyone moving to the broad space of the dance floor. At this time, the MC (yours truly) decided to park his microphone and join the dancing. To Jim Foresee and Josie Santos, it was such an honor to be the MC for your surprise party. Thanks so much Aurora.

Aurora's "Impossible Mission Foresee (IMF) Team" accomplished quite a surprise party enjoyed by all participants. Mission Accomplished and Well Done!



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All Aboard the Sinag-tala Theatrical Revue

From page 11

selle Lourdes Lao, Sinag-tala's Choral Director.

Beep is a graduate of the University of the Philippines Diliman with a Bachelor of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts, major in Philosophy and Political Science, cum laude. She is certified in General and Senior Management by the Asian Institute of Management, Makati City, Philippines. Her professional career combined her management and law trainings. She practiced law with a major Philippine-based multinational law firm, Romulo Law Offices, specializing in fields of employment and labor law, civil litigation, corporate and estate law. As a human resource management professional, she worked for prestigious companies like Citibank NA, Johnson and Johnson, and Getz Corporation. After managing her family's real estate development company, Beep went back to the corporate world and is currently an Audit Compliance and Training Coordinator with MAXIMUS, a third party administrator for the federal and state contracts for various program like Medical for Families, Medical Access Program (formerly Access for Infant and Mothers), Veterans Choice, MassHealth, etc.

Aside from Sinag-tala, Beep is actively involved in Sacramento's Filipino community, being Past President of the University of the Philippines of Sacramento and Vicinities; Secretary of the Filipino Apostolate of the Catholic Diocese of Sacramento; Steering Committee Member of the Filipino Fiesta Sacramento, and member of the Filipino Women's Club.

In the past, the names Sonny Alforque and Sinag-tala seemed synonymous. Personally it was an automatic thought process. I hear Sonny's name mentioned and I automatically think of Sinag-tala, and vice versa. With Sonny, the little engine that could grew to become part of our cultural joy ride celebrated every December. Knowing Sonny though, he would now want us to say that Sacramento and Sinag-tala are synonymous. Sonny gave his very best to guide Sinag-tala to where it is now. He decided to retire after years of developing, guiding, nurturing, expanding, directing, producing, engineering, and promoting Sinag-tala. Assured by the fact that SFTPAA would be left in the able hands of a new leader, Sonny



Photos by Dave San Pedro

with wife Letty started their well-deserved retirement this year.

Sinag-tala's show must go on. Beep with her team of Sinag-tala's alumni and members will continue the successful growth of their organization. Board members: President Beep, VP Julia Lewis, Secretary Maggie Young, Treasurer Roanne Villasenor, Directors: Dr. Fred Aquino, Febelyn Acosta Green, Jennilyn Felias, Marie Gomez Garcia, Rufina Gee, Robert Simmons.

For the 2015 show, Beep formed a Produc-

ers Team with Dr. Fred Aquino, Jennilyn Felias, Cora Polante Ramirez (Past President), Dick Mazon (Founder), and Raeselle Lao (Choral Director), who collectively set the directions for the show. Sinag-tala's resident artists: Febelyn Acosta Green, Gladys Imperio Acosta, Gigi Perez, Roanne Villasenor, Gennavieve Abeleda, Sarah Sy, Maria Marquez, Liz Green, Angela Zaniboni, Cheryl Rubio, and Andriana Castellano. One of the many responsibilities of the resident artists is to guide the creativity and presentation of the show.

An extremely long list of more names will be left unwritten here due to limited space. So in December, when you experience joy and pride as you watch the show, let them hear your appreciation for all their hard work. It will also be a great occasion to meet, greet, and welcome the new leadership team of Sinag-tala headed by Beep Alo. Particularly special, the December show will again be a celebration for all our Filipino sensibilities. All aboard and enjoy the show—The Legacy Continues!



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Fritz and Christina Encina Wedding Celebration

By Faina E. Abaya

It has been said that marriage is a social institution which simply refers to custom, practice and behavior pattern of importance to society. It is now legally performed in both religious and civil ceremonies binding two individuals of the same or opposite sexes (there are states or countries that recognize both kinds of marriages). Thus, it is the inherent right of anyone who has no legal impediment to contract marriage of his or her own choice.

However, the marriage vows of both kinds of marriages are practically the same in reference to love, support, honor, respect and to cherish each other for as long as they both live.

And so, after living together as lovers with one beautiful child, Fritz and Christina took the vow of marriage in a ceremony before Pastor Miles Byers in a beautiful setting at the Falls Event Center at Elk Grove, CA on October 12, 2015.

The short marriage ceremony was held at the back of the modern complex building in the presence of both the groom and bride closest of friends and relatives. The bride was stunningly beautiful and elegant in her strapless floor length white chiffon wedding gown. Everyone stood up with thunderous applause when she entered the ceremonial place with her father Peter Loy who was smartly wearing a gray suit with a mint necktie ready to give her into the arms of the waiting groom who was likewise sartorially elegant in his gray suit with matching neck tie.

The flower girl Ayla Jade was also wearing a mint colored dress while the Maid of Honor Natalie Loy as well as the Bridesmaids Charmine Encina and Natalie



Christina, Fritz and son Jayce

Higginbotham were likewise wearing mint colored gowns. The Best Man was Resty Aibenza and Grooms men were Alvin Khoo and Gianne Javier who were also wearing gray suits with mint colored neckties blending the gowns of the bridesmaids.

After the ceremony, everyone was invited to proceed at the Lounge Room of the building to take some assorted appetizers of fruits sliced ham, cheese and cookies washed out with few rounds of vintage white and red wines, making the place a rendezvous to meet and know each other by opening up some get together conversations.

Thereafter, the attendees were ushered to the dining room which was magnificently and meticulously arranged to accommodate the more than 200 friends and relatives of both parties. The dining room has 22 tables with 10 chairs

each and both were elegantly covered with matching table cloth of white and mint color to beautifully match the million flowers center piece in a crystal vase.

The great Filipino tradition of dancing with the groom and bride of both parents were performed as everyone followed on the dancing floor to the tune of "You are the apple of my eyes". The usual money tree when all were welcomed to dance with the bride and groom as they pinned any amount on the scarves placed on

the shoulders of both the newly wed. The throwing back of both the bouquet and garter from bride and groom for the bachelors and single ladies were made to the enjoyment and excitement of everyone concerned.

Friends of both bride and groom took the occasion to wish them a long lasting happy marriage and to have more children in their married life. Likewise, the parents of the groom also expressed their profound gratitude to everyone for graciously accepting their invitations to be with them to enjoy

and witness the marriage of Fritz and Christina.

The catered Filipino and American cuisines including lechon for dinner were served and after dinner music was continuously played for everybody to dance. The usual line and circle dancing as well as current modern steps were performed showing the gracefulness and virtuosity on the dance floor of both the young and old alike until closing time.

Fritz and Christina met at a party of a friend nine years ago that started their love story which blossomed into a stronger relationship with the passing of years until they finally decided to make the vow of marriage to live and stay together till the end of time.

And, as Christina said "sometimes I can not believe that we have been together for over 9 years. These 9 years have gone by so fast. We have had our ups and downs but we continue to grow strong couple. The best thing our love has created is our amazing son Jayce. I'm super excited and scared for what the future holds for us but I know I don't want to spend it with anyone else but him".

Sponsors of the wedding are, Francisco and Angelina Encina; Mario and Pilar Encina; Gil and Meihla Encina; Romy and Carmela Encina; Arnold and Lenor Labrador; Jeffrey and Gloria Krahulec; Wilson and Cathy Basa; Sol and Deck Ednave and Eddie and Malou Edjan.

Jayce is the only son of Fritz and Christina, The parents of the groom are, Jesus and Velma Encina, the siblings are Austin and wife Rosemarie, Charmaine and JV, while bride parents are Nancy and Peter Loy, grandma Sue Loy and sister Natalie.



The Encina family



Father and daughter dancing



Maid of honor, best man, bridesmaids and grooms men

Joe Stayner's 90th Birthday



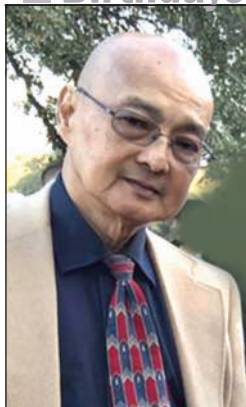
Joe Stayner's 90th birthday celebration joined by his loving partner Fely, as well as the members of the Filipino community and his family and friends was held in Sacramento, California on Oct 24, 2015. A World War II veteran, owner of Capitol Roofing, and active member of the Maharlika Lion's Club, Joe has been a very generous and very active in many Fil-Am fundraising events and gatherings.

Merwin Diaz turns 60



Merwin Diaz' 60th Birthday celebration held at their residence in Roseville, CA on October 24, 2015 with family and close friends. It was a perfect night highlighted by a surprise visit of his son Alex from Virginia, and by musical and singing performances by the Maharlika 7, and Merwin himself, along with his sister Friz, niece Jereen, and friends from church.

Birthdays



JOSE REY DE JESUS
OCTOBER 19



OZGEE GONZALES
OCTOBER 19



CHRIS MARZAN
OCTOBER 22



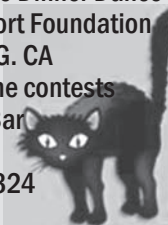
GAMA ORTIGOZA
OCTOBER 1



GAMIEL ORTIGOZA
SEPTEMBER 28

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER 30, 2015 (Friday)
Golden State Lions Club
HALLOWEEN Costume Dinner Dance
Sacramento Asian Sport Foundation
9040 High Tech Ct. E.G. CA
Cash prizes for costume contests
5pm social/No Host Bar
6pm Dinner
lion Eddie 916.690.5324



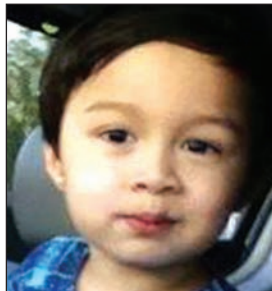
NOVEMBER 1, 2015 (Sunday)
ALL SAINTS / ALL SOULS DAY
Honoring the departed ones
4:30 assembly - 6pm Mass
East Lawn Elk Grove Memorial Park
and Mortuary
9189 E. Stockton Blvd., Elk Grove CA
Aida-916.616.1040
Josie 916.392.6252
Manny 916.505.8555
Lilia 916.524.8008



NOVEMBER 29, 2015 (Sunday)
Filipino Community of Sacramento
& Vicinity (FCSV)
ELECTION OF OFFICERS
9am to 6pm
Sheriff office, 7000 65th St.
Sacramento, CA
Aida-916.616.1040
Mercy-916.266.1923



(L -R) Liza and MIKE VALENTINE (NOV. 9), FAINALITA and HIEU NGO (both NOV.19)



KORBEN ABAYA
NOVEMBER 2



SIMON and DAISY MAGSUCI
OCTOBER 23 and NOVEMBER 2

Anniversary



REGINA and GERRY LOBO
7th Wedding Anniversary, Nov. 8



CINDY and BOBBY RICHARDS
8th Wedding Anniversary, Nov. 10



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Tel 916.732.2020

EAST LAWN
Pet Loss Center
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Sacramento, CA 95841
Tel 916.732.2037

EAST LAWN
Albert Brown Mortuary
3476 Piedmont Ave.
Oakland, CA 94611
Lic. #FD-242
Tel 800.652.1873

EAST LAWN
Elk Grove Memorial
Park & Mortuary
9189 E. Stockton Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624
Lic. #FD-1455
Tel 916.732.2031

EAST LAWN
Andrews & Greilich
Funeral Home
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Sacramento, CA 95820
Lic. #FD-136
Tel 916.732.2026

Award Pennants



Magellan Post 604's 2014-2015 Commander Tom Amaba secured Award Pennants onto the flag of Post 604. Flag pennants and badges were sent by National Headquarter because for the period of 1 Jul 2014 thru 30 Jun 2015, Post 604 achieved 100% membership. The three officers responsible for the Post membership: The current Junior Past Commander Tom Amaba, the former 1st Vice Commander Will Williams, and the still serving Adjutant, Dale Esperante. Current Commander Rick Rafanan congratulated by presenting the award badges and pins sent by National HQ to the aforementioned officers. Mabuhay to Magellan Post 604--Home of Sacramento's Filipino American Veteran Members of The American Legion!

The Unit Member of the Year



The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604 President Olive Jackson presented Bella Anderson-Nido a certificate of appreciation for being nominated "The Unit Member of the Year" from the American Legion Auxiliary District 6 Past President.

Pre-Veterans Day Dinner and Dance

On November 7, 2015

Where: Magellan Hall at 8831 Gerber Road, Sacramento
 Cost: \$15 per person. Time: 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
 DJ: Ed and Paul Cordero.

If you enjoy social dancing, then this is for you.
 If you think you don't know how to dance, we'll show you the basics.

NO OFFICIAL PROGRAM, more time for dancing:
 Ballroom, Latin, Line Dance, Freestyle (no breakdance).
 Proceeds will be used for the following:

- 1.Preservation of Magellan Hall,
- 2.Support Veteran Programs.

Come join and have fun dancing with us.
 Invite your friends.

Contact: Joe Gonzalez at 916-396-7863 or
 Email: esperante1868@frontier.com

Veterans Day



On the 11th Hour of the 11th Day in the 11th Month, in 1918, the world celebrated the end of World War I. After four years of war, a truce was signed ending what was called the "War to End all Wars".

November 11 was named "ARMISTICE DAY" in the U.S. to remember the sacrifices those male and female service members made, during the war for peace. It was a joyous occasion in cities all across America, families and friends celebrated the return of their loved ones. Those who survived the war marched in a parade through their home towns on that day, politicians and veteran officers gave speeches and ceremonies of thanks for the peace they had won. Congress voted Armistice Day a federal holiday in 1938, 20 years after the war ended. Unfortunately, the "War to End All Wars" was not the last one. World War II Erupted in 1939, setting off another struggle for world peace. After the war, Armistice Day continued to be observed on November 11.

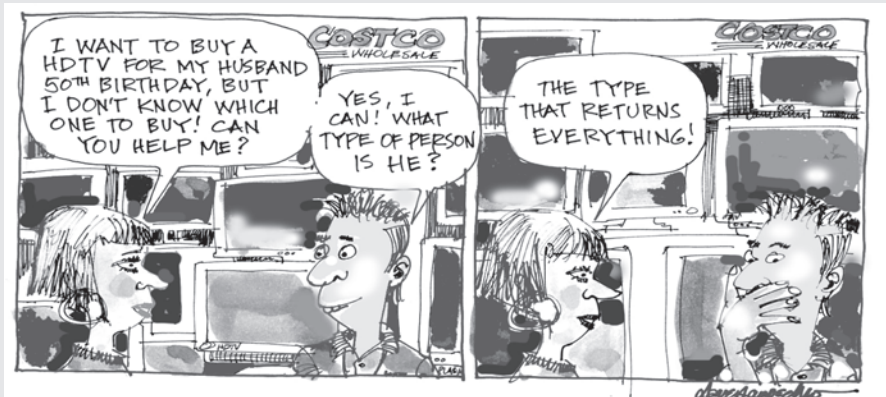
Ironically, the name "VETERANS DAY" did not originate in Washington or from any congressional leaders. Residents in the small town of Emporia, Kan., localized the holiday by renaming it "VETERANS DAY" to pay homage to the veterans in their town. Congress later followed suit and passed a bill that was "VETERANS DAY".

To this day we continue to give thanks for peace and remember the men and women in uniform who have served and sacrificed for it. In keeping with the spirit of tradition, there are ceremonies and speeches and many Americans will observe a moment of silence at 11 A.M., the 11th Day of November.

On Wednesday, November 11, 2015, when you meet a Veteran, greet them with a simple "THANK YOU".



Komiks Buhay Pinoy by Dave San Pedro



FILIPINO MYTH

Compiled and illustrated by Dave San Pedro

*Here are five of the most scary and unusual monsters in Filipino mythology.***5. Aswang**

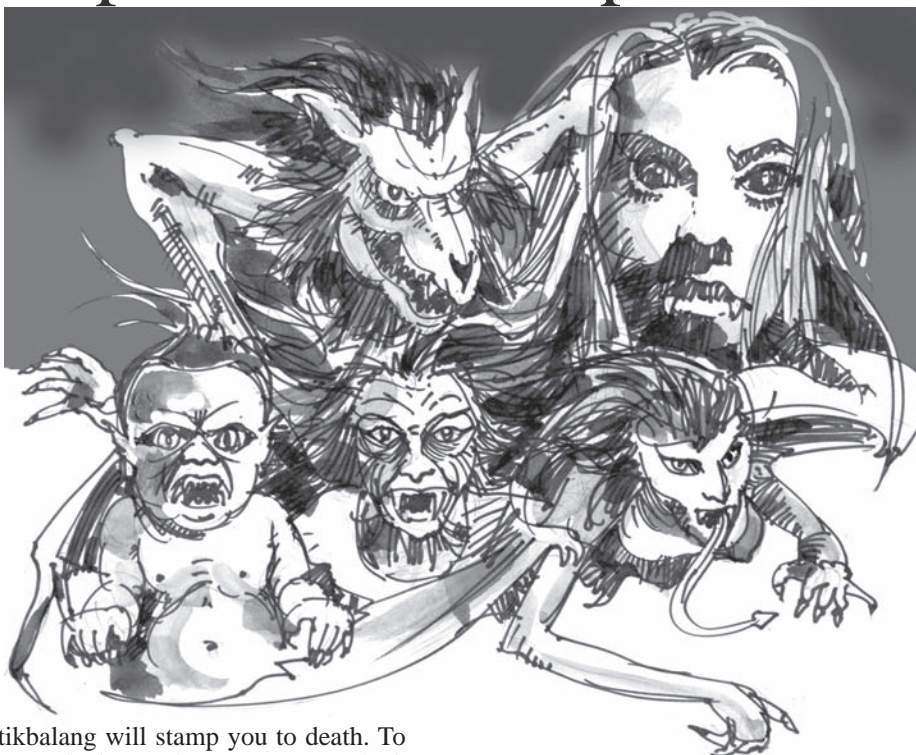
The aswang is probably the most common of Filipino monsters since there are so many different kinds. In general, they are shape shifters who are human by day and then at night turn into a dog, a pig, a bat, cat, snake... the type of animal depends on the regional lore. They break into funeral homes and steal recent corpses. They are also known to enter homes to drink human blood and can turn people into aswang by tricking the human to bite them in return. The aswang are especially hungry for human fetus so some of the more superstitious stories include neighborhoods patrols set up in front of the home of a pregnant woman to protect her from wandering stray animals in case they are the aswang in disguise.

4. Tiyanak

The tiyanak is similar to the Greek mythological siren in that it lures its prey with its voice. A person hears a baby cry from deep in the woods and then follows the sound to rescue the baby. Some stories say the person wanders aimlessly in search for the baby and becomes hopelessly lost. Other stories claim that the person eventually finds a baby in the middle of the woods. When it is picked up, the baby then shape-shifts into a monster with large, sharp teeth. It then eats the person and transforms back to a baby to await its next victim. With either version, the story ends with "... and he was never found again."

3. Tikbalang

The tikbalang is described as having the head of a horse, the body of a man and the hooves of a horse where human feet would be. In northern regions, the tikbalang is considered a nuisance but generally harmless. They enjoy disorienting weary travelers and making them imagine things that don't exist. Travelers can easily stop the pranks by turning their own shirt inside out and asking the tikbalang to stop bothering them. The stories of tikbalang from southern regions paint the creature as a much more sinister monster. He has glowing red eyes, a large cigar and smells of the stench of burning hair. When angered (and he angers easily), the

Top 5 Scariest Filipino Monsters

tikbalang will stamp you to death. To tame the beast, the person must pluck the one of three unusually long hairs found in its mane. After that, the tikbalang is your slave. Folklore states that when the sun shines through the clouds while it is raining, a pair of Tikbalang are getting married.

2. The White Lady / Kaperosa

The White Lady is a specific kind of Multo, or ghost. Most multo tend to be family members who come back to certain relatives to take care of unfinished business but the White Lady is unique in that she doesn't appear to only her relatives or even to specific people she knew when alive. Many sightings have reported her in empty buildings, near forests and on cliffs. However, she is most commonly reported seen along Balete Drive in Quezon City. She was a young lady who was raped and killed by two Japanese soldiers during WWII. While there haven't been stories of the White Lady being a purposefully malicious being, she has been reported as the cause of more than a few car accidents by drivers who look in their rearview mirror and see a young lady in the backseat wearing a white dress. Sure, some strange, unknown lady sitting in your backseat is bad enough but the White Lady is also said to have no face or a face covered in blood.

1. Manananggal

The Manananggal is sometimes considered to be a special breed of the aswangs. They are sometimes referred to as "Tik-tik" because of the sound it makes while in flight. To confuse its victims, the tik-tik sound becomes fainter as she nears. These creatures generally take on the form of a beautiful woman with large, leathery bat wings. The lower half of her body takes root to the ground while the upper part detaches as she flies in search of food. The manananggal has a taste for human blood and a particular craving for the hearts of human fetuses which it retrieves with its long, proboscis-like tongue. Like the Western culture's vampire, the manananggals hate garlic and salt so hanging garlic or placing a bowl of salt near the window is the best way to keep them away. To kill a manananggal, one must find the lower body and spread salt or ashes on the open wound. That prevents the two halves from joining and transforming back to human form when daylight breaks.

ALL SAINTS / ALL SOULS DAY*"Alaala sa mga minamahal na pumanaw"*

(Honoring our departed loved ones)

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4:30 p.m. - Assembly

5:00-5:30 p.m. - Remembrance Walk and Rosary

6:00 p.m. - Memorial Mass

Video Tribute

Reception to Follow

For more information, call:

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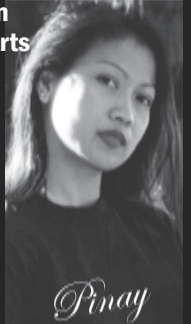
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Richard and Dawn together in primetime soap

They're in the league of local showbiz' most beloved love teams that include Nida Blanca and Nestor De Villa, Carmen Rosales and Rogelio Dela Rosa, Tita Duran and Pancho Magalona, Gloria Romero and Luis Gonzales, Amalia Fuentes and Romeo Vasquez, Susan Roces and Fernando Poe, Jr. – Richard Gomez and Dawn Zulueta typify the teamup that people love to love – good actors who look good together.



Richard Gomez and Dawn Zulueta

They work well with other actors, but when paired, they're magic.

Their screen chemistry – and dramatic prowess – once again shall be in full display in the family drama "You're My Home."

The story of the Fontanillas in the eyes of eldest daughter Grace Fontanilla (Jessy Mendiola), "You're My Home" examines how the loss of a loved one can shatter the very foundation of a family.

When Gabriel (Richard) handles the frustrated homicide case against Christian Vergara (JC De Vera), son of a powerful senator, the family enjoys a new luxurious lifestyle. However, then 12-year old Grace realizes that her dad and mom Marian (Dawn Zulueta) have no time for them anymore.

One night, she leaves the house to be with her friends, and her brother Rahm as well the house helps run after her, leaving Vince alone inside the house. Hours later, the family receives the shocking news that will change their lives and test their family—Vince has been kidnapped.

Twenty-five years, the Fontanillas face the consequences of Vince's disappearance.

Marian and Gabriel are no longer together. Marian has focused her time and strength on putting up her own clothing line while Gabriel found comfort in the arms of Roni (Lara Quigaman), the police officer who handled the kidnapping case. Rahm (Sam Concepcion), at an early age, already has a son and a wife, while Grace continues to blame herself for what happened.

Fate then comes into play as Grace crosses paths with Vince (Paul Salas). Vince returns to their lives, but their life is once again turned upside down.

Also included in the cast are Assunta De Rossi, Tonton Gutierrez, Minnie Aguilar, Diana Zubiri, Joebel Salvador, Mika Dela Cruz, Peewee O'Hara, Belle Mariano, Bugoy Carino, and Raikko Mateo. "You're My Home" is directed by Jerry Lopez Sineneng and is produced by Star Creatives led by business unit head Malou Santos.

Its creative team is led by creative manager and "MMK" headwriter Arah Jell Badayos.

Pacquiao ask SC to stop BIR from confiscating assets

World boxing champion and now senatorial aspirant Emmanuel "Manny" Pacquiao and his wife Jinkee are asking the Supreme Court (SC) to stop the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) from confiscating their assets.



For alleged fraud in tax payments, Manny and Jinkee Pacquiao are being asked to pay almost double their declared assets.

The revenue collecting agency alleges that the couple has a tax deficiency of P3.29 billion for years 2008 and 2009. To cover the amount, it has issued a warrant of distraint and levy and garnishment order against the Pacquiao.

The BIR is trying to collect nearly double the Pacquiao's declared assets.

Their original tax liability was P2.26 billion, but surcharges and penalties bloated it to P3.29 billion.

Pacquiao, who is currently congressman of Sarangani, has a net worth of only P1.185 billion, according to his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth.

The couple said "the premature seizure and liquidation of all of [their] properties" would "destroy them financially."

It also also "forever tarnish their reputations beyond repair, even in the absence of a judicial determination rendered after the trial on the merits of the case," they added.

Manny Pacquiao earlier cited United States Internal Revenue Service documents that he had paid \$8.35 million in taxes from his fight earnings in those years.

In a 75-page memorandum, the couple asked the SC to stop the BIR from enforcing the warrant. They also asked the High Court to reverse the order of the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) that requires them to deposit P3.2-billion cash bond or P4.9-billion surety bond to suspend the tax collection process against them.

The Pacquiao said their right to due process was violated when the BIR proceeded in trying to collect their allegedly unpaid taxes without first serving them a Final Decision on Disputed Assessment (FDDA).

An FDDA allows the taxpayer the chance to question the bureau's final decision.

The couple also said the CTA committed grave abuse of discretion when it ignored the BIR's violation and ordered them to post a bond.

"Respondent Commissioner's failure to validly and completely assess petitioners-Pacquiao couple (given the absence

of an FDDA) a mandatory pre-requisite for collection clearly deprives her of authority to collect against petitioners and make all actions taken pursuant to the collection efforts of respondent Commissioner and her representatives null and void and no effect whatsoever," the memoranda said, referring to Commission Kim Henares.

The Pacquiao also pointed out that Henares started the collection process even before the deadline for them to pay the alleged tax deficiency lapsed. This was in violation of the requirements for summary tax collection remedies, the said.

The BIR's letter of authority to the Pacquiao indicated that it had established fraud in their tax payment. The couple's lawyer, however, told the SC that the bureau never presented proof that the Pacquiao committed fraud their tax payments from 1995 to 2009.

They had not seen the garnishment order from the BIR either, the Pacquiao said.

"Petitioners have been made hapless subjects of a ruthless name and shame campaign designed to strike fear in the hearts of our citizenry in the hope that they will voluntarily pay more taxes than what is rightfully due, or risk the vengeful ire of the tax collector," they told the High Court.

In 2014, the SC issued a restraining order on the tax court's resolution that directed the Pacquiao to post a cash bond or a surety bond to stop the BIR's collection process.

The couple said that by issuing that resolution, the tax court presumed that the BIR's "arbitrary and bloated assessments" were correct even without hard proof being presented.

A list of top individual taxpayers for 2015 released by the BIR shows Pacquiao on the number one spot.

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Philippines' Parul Shah takes 3rd runner-up in Miss Grand International 2015

By Chuck Smith

The Philippines' Parul Shah was named third runner-up at the Miss Grand International 2015 pageant in Bangkok, Thailand on Sunday night.

Binibining Pilipinas, which sent Shah to compete in the pageant, congratulated the 26-year-old beauty queen in its official Facebook page.

Shah also won the Best in National Costume award of the pageant.

"Binibining Pilipinas Tourism 2014 Parul Shah is the 3rd runner up and the winner of the Best in National Costume award in Miss Grand International 2015 Pageant in Bangkok, Thailand participated by over 100 candidates all over the world. BPCI is proud of this achievement and would like to thank everyone who helped Parul in this amazing journey," Bb. Pilipinas said in a statement.

Anea Garcia of Dominican Republic bagged the Miss Grand International 2015 title.

Here is the list of winners:

Miss Grand International 2015: Anea Garcia, Dominican Republic

1st runner-up: Claire Parker, Australia

2nd runner-up: Vartika Singh, India

3rd runner-up: Parul Shah, Philippines

4th runner-up: Rattikorn Kunsom, Thailand

For the pageant's question and answer portion, the five finalists were asked who is the most influential person in their lives.



Parul Shah is third runner-up in the Miss Grand International 2015 pageant in Bangkok, Thailand.

Shah answered: "The most influential person in my life would be my father. I do believe that peace starts at home. I was born by a Filipina mother who is Christian and an Indian father who is Hindu, in a country that is govern by Muslims. And I do believe that we could co-exist together if there is understanding, and when there is no power struggle and no one tries to be above another. I've learned this from my father, he thought me that with having humility and respect, peace can ultimately be achieved."

Shah won the Bb. Pilipinas-Tourism title in 2014 but was not able to compete in an international beauty pageant during her reign.

In August, it was announced that she would be sent to the Miss Grand International pageant.

Her top five placement in the Miss Grand International 2015 gives the Philippines' a streak of good placement in international beauty pageants this year. Earlier this month, Ann Colis won the Miss Globe 2015 title in Canada.

Sharon reconciles with Piolo

All's well that ends well.

Sharon Cuneta on Thursday night took to Facebook to share her feelings about her reconciliation with Piolo Pascual, whom she had a shaky relationship after the actor broke up with her daughter KC Concepcion.

"I was in my wheelchair amongst friends and I didn't see him (Pascual) coming," wrote Cuneta. "He hugged me tight and when I looked at his face, I hugged him back so tight."

The 49-year-old Cuneta, who has admitted to have said words against Pascual, went on to describe him as someone she had hurt and a "son" that she will continue to love.

"I know your apology was sincere. Please know that mine was, too. I think of your mama and feel very badly about how she must have felt, because she too, is a mother like me," she continued.

"I am sorry that you and my baby had to end your relationship, and I am sorry for how very publicly I made my emotions known."

"For what it's worth, I was not that kind of person. Was not, am not, and hopefully never will be. I believe you know that in your heart," she added.



Sharon Cuneta says she has reconciled with Piolo Pascual following their rift caused by the actor's breakup with her daughter.

Cuneta concluded the note by uploading a photo of her and Pascual -- one wherein the two shared an embrace and another where she gave the actor a kiss on his cheek.

Sharon Cuneta shares a photo of her and Pascual during their reconciliation. Photo: Sharon Cuneta's Facebook page

"Thank you, Lord Jesus for forgiveness, restored friendships, and love. Most of all, thank you that my Kristina (Concepcion) is fine now and happy. And thank you, dear Piolo, that I can still call you my son no matter what. God bless you. Love you!"

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