



What would Pope Francis tell Pacquiao? - Page 2

Philippine Fiesta™

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Golden Hips and Friends Page 14

Alan to Bongbong: Return stolen riches

Cayetano says rival must apologize for hiding loot



Sen. Bongbong Marcos Jr. and Sen. Alan Cayetano

By Julit C. Jainar

Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. should not apologize for martial law, but he should return the wealth that his family allegedly stole from the nation during their 20 years in power and apologize for his role in concealing it, Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano said on Friday.

Cayetano, who is contesting the vice presidential race with Marcos and four other candidates in the May 9 national elections, acknowledged that Marcos, son of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, should not apologize for his father's iron-fist rule, during which thousands of Filipinos were killed, disappeared or died in prison.

"I stated that the sin of the father is not the sin of the son. If the father did something wrong, the son should not be blamed for it," Cay-

etano told local journalists during a campaign visit to Cebu City.

"But if the son is involved in spiriting away billions of dollars in ill-gotten wealth that the government is trying to recover, that's another story," Cayetano said.

"Operation Big Bird showed that he made arrangements to make sure that the government could not lay its hands on those billions," he added.

"Operation Big Bird" was a failed attempt in 1986 to recover \$213 million (P10.16 billion) in ill-gotten wealth allegedly stashed by the Marcos family in Swiss banks.

It was initiated by retired military general Jose Almonte and banker Michael de Guzman but was called off because it did not have the approval of the administration of then President Corazon Aquino.

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FAVA's 27th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers



Tara Ricks, VA Northern CA Public Affairs Officer and the newly installed FAVA officers for 2016-2017.

Photos by Dave San Pedro



Rick Rafanan and Pres. Fred Aquino presented Mrs. Mercedes Rodrigo Descargar a Posthumous Award Plaque in memory of her beloved husband--Victorio Serquina Descargar.

By Dale Esperante

The vaulted ceiling adorned with a radiant chandelier glowing upon the words Grand Ballroom emblazoned above the entryway of the vast venue attracted the guests to glance up as they arrived for the celebration.

Three FAVA ladies (Rose Delacruz and Yollie Delacruz

along with Melita Esperante) greeted and checked-in the guests. The FAVA gentlemen, some in uniform decorated with military service ribbons, ushered the arrivals to their elegantly set tables.

Women in evening gowns, men in formal suits/tux, and a few veterans in full military accouterment, mingled as they waited for the official start of the program celebrating the Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) 27th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers.

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Editor's Note

I can tell my life's routine is becoming normal again by the past month's community events. I was able to be a part of FAVA's 25th anniversary, at Manang Maria Bahoric's 75th birthday celebration, and at my nephew Anthony's 18th birthday event. Also, I was able to host a get together with our friends at our home, with no occasion to celebrate at all. I'm almost feeling relieved, as I count the days down to finish school in two weeks. It has been a challenging and long 5 years, after all! I salute Dave for putting up with me through all those years, and I'm more than grateful for all his love and for what he has done for our Filipino community through the Philippine Fiesta news publication.

Our community's upcoming events include the Pedro Calungsod movie screening, the Maharlika Lion's Crab Feed, the Bayanihan Club's annual Consulate on Wheels services, and the second Dance event by the Magellan Post 604.

To our new advertisers this month, thank you for your trust in allowing us to promote your business in this month's issue of Philippine Fiesta news.

Best wishes,
Dinnah San Pedro

What Would Pope Francis Tell Pacquiao?

By Ricarfdo Saludo

On that occasion [2013 interview on Rio-Rome flight] I said this — 'If a person is gay and seeks out the Lord and is willing, who am I to judge that person?' — I was paraphrasing by heart the Catechism of the Catholic Church, where it says that these people should be treated with delicacy and not be marginalized. ... And people should not be defined only by their sexual tendencies: let us not forget that God loves all his creatures and we are destined to receive his infinite love. . . I prefer that homosexuals come to confession, that they stay close to the Lord, and that we pray all together.— Pope Francis, The Name of God Is Mercy

WHAT would Pope Francis say about boxing champ Manny Pacquiao's quoted remarks about homosexuals?

"As Christian, same-sex marriage is forbidden. Woman was made for man; man was made for woman. This is just my view: It's only common sense. Do you see male animals with male animals, or female with female? Animals are better, knowing how to recognize [gender]. Now, if men are with men, or women with women, human beings are worse than animals, isn't it? A man really cannot marry another man.

"But I'm not condemning them [homosexuals]. Just [same-sex] marriage. Committing sin against God. But if two of the same sex love each other, there's no problem there. What's important is being good people and just living a simple life. But just don't get married. They just show they love each other. It's enough to live together, but for people of the same sex to marry, that shouldn't be, because that's against the law of God."

Amid the ensuing outcry, Pacquiao posted on his Facebook account: "I'm sorry for hurting people by comparing homosexuals to animals. Please forgive me for those I've hurt. I still stand on my belief that I'm



Pope Francis

against same sex marriage because of what the Bible says, but I'm not condemning LGBT [lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders]. I love you all with the love of the Lord. God Bless you all and I'm praying for you."

Francis the merciful

So what would Pope Francis say to that? For starters, as one who preaches mercy for the repentant, Pope Francis cannot but look positively on Pacquiao's avowed apology, love and prayers for people he

offended.

Secondly, given the Holy Father's compassionate words for people in relationships forbidden by the Catholic Church, he may counsel the eight-division champion that moral admonition — one of seven spiritual works of mercy taught by the Church — is best done without unnecessarily offending those being admonished and provoking them to stop listening.

As for Pacquiao's moral thinking, Francis could very well agree with the boxer that Christian morality forbids homosexual acts, based on verses in the Old and the New Testaments, as well as edicts by past pontiffs and Church councils.

Thus, while preaching mercy, the Pope does say in the quote from his new book, The Face of God Is Mercy: "I prefer that homosexuals come to confession." That means acknowledging and atoning for offenses, asking God's forgiveness, and resolving to avoid such acts in future.

What about the bit about animals? Is that in accord with Catholic doctrine? Francis probably won't go there, to avoid further upsetting LGBTs. More to the point, what determines morality is God's will as revealed in inspired Scripture and teachings, not animal behavior.

Sexuality must serve God

Sex with different partners, for instance, is done by many creatures, but the Church forbids it. Indeed, Christian teaching eschews merely giving in to physical drives, and re-

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China's moves alarm nations

By PNA and AFP

MORE nations expressed concern at China's rising maritime assertiveness with Japan, Australia, India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations expressing "concerns" about tensions in the region.

Senior officials of Japan, Australia and India met in Tokyo on Friday to stress the importance of maintaining the rule of law in the South China Sea and expressing "strong concerns" about tensions in the region amid China's rising maritime assertiveness.

"We shared strong concerns about moves to unilaterally change the status quo that would lead to destabilization in the region," Vice Foreign Minister Akitaka Saiki told reporters after talks with his Australian and Indian counterparts.

The three-way meeting comes as China's deployment of an advanced surface-to-air missile system has stoked concerns the country is pursuing militarization in the South China Sea, adding to tensions already heightened by Beijing's massive and fast-paced reclamation works in the sea.

China is also boosting its presence in the Indian Ocean, which provides essential maritime traffic access for the transportation of oil, gas and other resources from the Arabian Sea.

"We also shared the need to establish a new rule in the region to secure the rule of law and the freedom of navigation," Saiki said.

Saiki was referring to the ongoing discussions between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to conclude the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, a legally binding document that could be used to resolve deadlocks, disputes and tensions in the sea.

Peter Varghese, secretary of Australia's Department of For-



ign Affairs and Trade, and Indian Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jaishankar took part in the three-way meeting, the second of its kind following a meeting in India last June.

The diplomats also discussed their responses to North Korea, following its nuclear test last month and long-range rocket launch earlier this month.

Given the likelihood that the UN Security Council may soon adopt a fresh resolution that would expand sanctions on North Korea, the three officials also agreed to steadily implement the sanctions to prevent North Korea from further promoting its nuclear development, Saiki said.

The trilateral framework is part of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to promote a "security diamond" strategy connecting Japan, Australia, India and the US state of Hawaii to safeguard maritime interests stretching from the Indian Ocean region to the western Pacific.

Abe introduced the concept in December 2012 to counter Beijing's military buildup and perceived attempts to change the status quo in the South China and East China seas.

Ahead of the three-way talks, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told a press conference, "The trilateral cooperation covering the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean contributes to the peace and stability of the region." "Japan seeks to further strengthen trilateral ties," he added.

In Vientiane, officials said Chi-

na's recent artificial island-building and fortification of its garrison in the South China Sea is among the pressing political and security challenges that Asean foreign ministers will discuss when they meet in the Laotian capital.

One diplomat said Asean ministers are "seriously concerned" by recent and ongoing developments in the South China Sea.

Specifically, Asean sources said the ministers will have frank discussions about the land reclamation and escalation of activities in the disputed sea, saying "these assertive moves erode trust and confidence, increase tension and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region."

Charles Jose, a spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs, said the Philippines will focus on maritime security, saying that China's construction of islands in the disputed waters has heightened tensions in the South China Sea.

Jose said that reports claiming Beijing has positioned surface-to-air missiles in the disputed territory in the Paracel Islands chain are a cause of concern.

"We are expressing concern over these developments, including the reported missiles on Woody Island," Jose said.

"Of course all these things raise our concern and its effect on freedom of navigation, over-flight and unimpeded flow of commerce. In this meeting we will continue to express our concern with the developments in the South China Sea."

Laos, this year's Asean chairman, is expected to issue a press statement at the end of the day-long retreat Saturday.

"There are ongoing discussions and consultations on whether to include in the press statement a line that says that ministers reaffirmed their commitment to non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of activities in the South China Sea," an official source said.

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US to step up military operations in West PH Sea

The US Navy Pacific fleet is planning to step up its military operations in the West Philippine Sea. Admiral Harry Harris says China is clearly militarizing the region despite the latter's repeated denial. He also reaffirms the US commitment to "fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows them"

By Ron E.J. Carleon

MANILA, Philippines — The United States Navy will step up maritime patrols in the West Philippine Sea as concerns over China's recent deployment of surface-to-air missiles and jet fighters in the Paracels chain grow over the past weeks among regional powers like Japan, US and Australia.

Speaking before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee hearing early this week, Admiral Harry Harris, commander of the US Pacific fleet, said Washington needs to boost its military operations in the region by sending more warplanes, battleships and submarines to deter China's continued militarization of the disputed island-features currently under its control.

Harris said China is without a doubt militarizing the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea and no amount of excuses from the Chinese government could deny the fact.

"In my opinion, China is clearly militarizing the South

China Sea. You'd have to believe in a flat earth to believe otherwise," Harris told US lawmakers.

Changing the operational landscape

Harris accused China of trying to change the "operational landscape" in an attempt to enforce dominance in the region.

It is along this premise, the Navy official said, that his fleet is planning to send more assets in the contested waterways and counter China's continued aggression that worries other regional powers in Asia and Oceania.

"We will be doing them more, and we'll be doing them with greater complexity in the future and we'll fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows," Harris reiterated.

He added further: "We must continue to operate in the South China Sea to demonstrate that water space and the air above it is international."

Don't use SCS issue

Harris' proposition was met with rebuke from Chinese

Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian who admonished the US admiral for trying to use the South China Sea issue to seek more funds from Congress.

"We don't interfere in your seeking defense budget funds, but you can't carelessly smear China while asking for more money," Wu said in a statement.

In the same hearing, Harris also raised the possibility of providing the Philippines with 'new guarantee' under the existing 1951 U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty that would see the Philippine Marine troops deployed at Ayungin Shoal (Second Thomas Shoal) adequately protected in the event China decides to become more aggressive and try to expel them from the island.

This guarantee would include designing a declaration which states that any attack on Philippine facilities on West Philippine Sea would prompt a US military response.

and the 10-member Asean designed in 2002, according to the officials.

Another Asean official said that Asean wants "substantive development" and "an expeditious establishment" of the code of conduct, a binding code aimed at reducing the risk of conflict in the disputed sea that Asean and China have been trying to hammer out since efforts to reopen talks began in 2012.

Competing claims to the

Alan to Bongbong: Return stolen riches

From page 1

The late Sen. Joker Arroyo had said the operation was not code-named "Big Bird" when it was presented to President Aquino. He said the code name was coined by the media.

Inheritors

"[The Marcoses] inherited the money so for me what is more important than saying sorry is their returning the wealth that they allegedly stole from the nation," Cayetano said.

And Senator Marcos, he said, should apologize for his role in concealing his family's billions of dollars in alleged ill-gotten wealth.

If the Marcoses would insist that they legitimately owned those billions, they should explain where all that wealth came from, he said.

The Inquirer's efforts to reach Marcos or his spokesperson for comment on Saturday were unsuccessful.

The Marcoses have repeatedly denied amassing ill-gotten wealth, insisting that the family wealth has been legitimately acquired.

They fell from power in 1986, ran out of the country by the EDSA People Power Revolution. They lived for years in Hawaii, where the ousted dictator Marcos died in 1989.

\$10-B ill-gotten wealth

Unofficial estimates put the alleged Marcos ill-gotten wealth at \$10 billion. According to the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), created in 1986 to recover the alleged loot, \$4 billion had been recovered and given to the national treasury.

Recovered funds have

been used mostly for land reform. As ordered by a Hawaii court, \$210 million (P10 billion) was used to compensate about 10,000 victims of human rights abuses during martial law.

The government hopes to raise \$17.7 million from an auction of some confiscated Marcos jewelry, property and stocks, sources said this month. PCGG head Richard Amurao said the government was still seeking to recover \$1 billion through 100 court cases in the Philippines and other countries.

"We don't really know if the \$10-billion estimate is accurate but what we can tell you [about the \$1 billion now sought] is based from estimates of the court cases and from what we already recovered," Amurao said.

More than half of the court cases are civil lawsuits to recover shares of stock, real estate, cash and jewelry, he said.

A quarter of the cases involve "behest loans" that state-owned banks gave individuals with political connections to the late strongman, he said.

Former PCGG Chair Andres Bautista, now head of the Commission on Elections, said most of the cases under litigation were complicated and difficult because government prosecutors could no longer locate witnesses and find documentary evidence.

"Some of the key players are also back in power," Bautista said.

Members of the Marcos family remain active in politics. The matriarch, former first lady Imelda Marcos, is a congresswoman from Ilocos Norte province, the family's political base where her eldest daughter, Imee Marcos, is the governor.

Now Senator Marcos is trying to win the vice presidency, which, if he wins, will put him next door to the presidency—and the ultimate political comeback for his family.

No apology

Marcos, tied with Sen. Francis Escudero for the first place in voter preference polls for the vice presidential race, has never apologized for his father's abusive rule.

"What am I to say sorry [for]?" he said during a television in-

terview last August.

He said that during his father's administration thousands of kilometers of roads were built, the Philippines had one of the highest literacy rates in Asia, and the country was an exporter of rice, not an importer, as it is now.

Marcos, 58, is pressing a revisionist view of the Philippines' harrowing experience during martial law, aimed at rehabilitating his family and putting it back in power.

He has built a coalition from his father's remaining supporters and young people who were not yet born when martial law was declared in 1972.

President Aquino, son of Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., the leader of the opposition to Marcos who was assassinated in 1983, is trying to prevent the election of the late dictator's son to an office that would put him within reach of Malacañang.

On Thursday, at the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution that toppled Marcos from power, Mr. Aquino pushed hard against Senator Marcos' revisionist campaign, belying the candidate's claim that the Philippines saw its best years during his father's administration.

Without naming Marcos,

Mr. Aquino blasted the senator for refusing to apologize for the sufferings Filipinos went through during his father's rule instead of asking the nation to be given a chance to right the wrong his father had done.

Both Nacionalistas

Both Cayetano and Marcos belong to the Nacionalista Party (NP). Cayetano said he had no plans of dropping his campaign even if he ranked fourth in the polls, behind Escudero, Marcos and Rep. Leni Robredo.

"We run because we believe we are the better choice," he said.

Cayetano was in Cebu for a dialogue with patients at government-run Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center.

His visit was part of the dialogue with the people strategy of his campaign with his presidential running mate, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte.

China's moves alarm nations

From page 3

As of Thursday night, an Asean official said the draft press statement still contains paragraphs on maritime security and the South China Sea "that may or may not be there [in the final statement]."

Like in past meetings, the ministers are expected to stress the importance of maintaining peace, security, stability, and freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea.

Asean officials said the ministers will again "emphasize the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation" in the disputed sea.

The ministers are also expected to underscore the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea that China

South China Sea have for decades been a source of tension in the region.

China's recent moves to conduct massive land reclamation in the sea have further escalated tensions, leading even non-claimants like the United States to voice concerns.

The overlapping territorial and maritime disputes involving China and four Asean members—Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam—have divided Asean on how to deal with the issue.

Interest in the Veterans

By Dale Esperante

The stories of our veterans will not fade away because of the efforts of a group of Sac State students. Renz Mercado, speaking for her classmates (Cyrill Castro, Gabrielle Evangelista, Dory Lazaro, Sherylley Lomboy, Allison Olaes, Tiana Sandoval & Janina Bernas) asked the adjutant of Magellan Post for help in connecting with veterans of WWII and the Korean War.



Dale Esperante with Sac State students, Renz Mercado and Janina Bernas.

On 21 Feb 2016, Renz and Janina visited The American Legion Magellan Post 604 on Gerber Road and sat through the veterans' rituals and deliberations during their meeting. Before adjourning the meeting, Commander Rick Rafanan asked the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort Ms. Renz to the speaker's podium to explain her group's interest in WWII and Korean War Filipino-American veterans. Regretfully, the few remaining WWII veterans of Post 604 are no longer able to attend the monthly meetings due to their advanced age. The lone Korean War veteran who is still a regular attendee of Post functions is Pastor Engkabo. Pastor was unanimously recommended by his fellow members to speak with the college group. After the meeting, Pastor agreed with Renz and Janina to meet again at a later date for the official interview.

Renz Mercado will be graduating from Sac State and she is planning to continue into nursing school. The gerontology community has sparked an interest in Renz. "The Gerontology commu-



The American Legion Magellan Post 604 with Korean War Veteran Pastor Engkabo.

nity has been forgotten, neglected, and unappreciated especially the Filipino-Americans," according to Ms. Mercado. However, the main objective for her interest in the veterans, "is to learn about my friends and Filipino roots. So many Filipinos have taken a big part in our history." Renz and her group will learn immensely from Pastor Engkabo, not only from his experiences during the Korean War, but also the struggles of the Filipinos in the Sacramento region in the mid-1900s. Besides being a member of The American Legion, Pastor is also an active member of the Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS). And he is willing to share his wealth of knowledge especially with the younger generation of Filipino-Americans.

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What Would Pope Francis Tell Pacquiao?

From page 2

quires fasting from food and other normal amenities as a Lenten sacrifice.

So comparing homosexuality with animal heterosexuality is irrelevant to morals. Instead, the key precept is faith, hope and love toward God, sexuality's place in this paramount relationship, and the precepts He has conveyed through the Bible and other material inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Even outside Scripture, there are good reasons for strictures on sex. First, through intercourse man participates in creating human persons in the divine image with eternal souls. Surely, such an act of God and man should not be used for mere self-gratification and against His edicts.

Sex also stirs an intense drive

and experience which can consume one's thoughts and feelings to the point of drawing one away from God. And also provoking destructive acts, from King David's plot to have his concubine's husband killed, to countless rapes, jealous violence, abuse of the young, and today's explosion in human trafficking, bondage and cyberporn.

Finally, the Holy Family ideal of husband and wife raising offspring in love, remains valid, doing much good for society and the couples living by it despite all the difficulties.

Now, many Christians deviate from and even disagree with Church teachings on sex, as they do with other commandments. Under Francis, the Church has sought to avoid harsh words and

thus encourage those violating ethical teachings to seek forgiveness for sin and grace for reform.

For his part, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, one of the leading theologians of our time, warns against reducing Christianity to mere moralism, where following do's and don'ts supplants the building of a loving, trusting and forgiving relationship with God.

So is Pacquiao wrong in his remarks? To paraphrase Pope Francis, if the sportsman-legislator sincerely shared what he believed are holy edicts, who are we to judge? We can only pray that by God's intervention, the candidate's words has somehow made people, even those attacking him, more mindful of the Lord's will, mercy and grace for their bodies and souls.

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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. and Francis “Chiz” Escudero are not related by blood or political affiliation, but their provenance – Bongbong’s biological roots and Chiz’s political roots -- comes from the same person: Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. Bongbong is the biological son of the late dictator and the Escudero political clan was deeply associated with the Marcoses during the martial law years. Chiz’s father, the late Sorsogon Representative Salvador “Sonny” Escudero III was the last agriculture minister of the Marcos regime.

But while Bongbong and Chiz belong to opposing political parties, their personal relationship seems to be more professional if not impersonal. Indeed, there is no reason why the two political “gladiators” would end up fighting each other to death... that is, politically speaking.

However, the intensity of their rivalry, which is now warming up, would increase in crescendo over the next few weeks, as the May 9th election gets nearer. The question is: Who will fire the first salvo? Heck, who cares? But once the shooting starts, all hell is going to break loose!

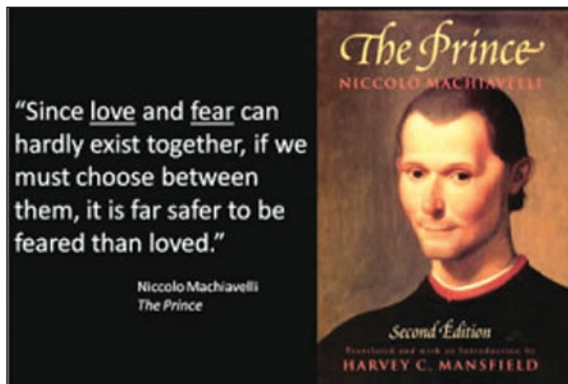
Right now, Chiz and Bongbong are probably sizing each other up, probing the other’s weaknesses, particularly their Achilles’ heels. And both of them know that their

current popularity ratings are at a statistical dead heat, in which case they have to go negative and pierce the other’s armor to gain advantage. It wouldn’t be surprising if, at this very moment, their “black op” squads were busy digging up dirt in the other’s backyard hoping to uncover some skeletons.

Ghost of Machiavelli

Am I beginning to sound like it’s war out there? Hell, yes! And it’s a war where not only the strong survives, it’s also survival of the cheater! As someone once said, “In Philippine elections, there are no losers, only the winners and those who were cheated.” Can we then say that for a candidate to win he has to resort to cheating? Clearly, it all comes down to using the Machiavellian mantra “The end justifies the means.”

Indeed, the ghost of Machiavelli seems to play a role in every ambitious politician’s game plan these



“Since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved.”

Niccolo Machiavelli
The Prince

days. In the case of Bongbong and Chiz, one wonders that while they’re both considered formidable presidential timbers with strong political pedigrees, why didn’t they run for president instead of playing second fiddle to two presidential candidates who may not even be around or disqualified to run for president?

Bongbong vs. Chiz

In the case of Bongbong, his presidential running mate is Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, one of the fightingest politicians who came close to winning the presi-



Bongbong Marcos and Chiz Escudero

dential election in 1992. Yes, Miriam is a good – nay, fantastic! – choice to run under as her vice presidential running mate. However, she is fighting the greatest battle of her life – stage 4 lung cancer, which she claims is now controlled. However, at their kickoff campaign last February 9 in Batac, Ilocos Norte, Miriam told the crowd that Bongbong is the “best person” to succeed her potential position as president “if something happens to her.” Indeed, the odds are great that Bongbong would ascend to the presidency by way of presidential succession.

In the case of Chiz, his presidential running mate, Sen. Grace Poe, is facing disqualification charges against her before the Supreme Court in regard to her citizenship status and residency. If Grace were disqualified from running,

then Chiz would end up without a standard bearer. He would be like the Japanese “ronin” of old, a samurai whose master had died. And he’d be campaigning solo for the rest of the campaign season. Is it good or bad? I’d say neither. Actually, Chiz could turn the situation around into a winning strategy. Being a “ronin,” he can find a “master” in any of the top three presidential candidates: Jejomar Binay, Mar Roxas or Rodrigo Duterte. They all have the potential of winning but their respective vice presidential running mates – Gregorio Honasan, Leni Robredo, and Alan Peter Cayetano – are no match against Chiz... or Bongbong, who, like Chiz, could also end up a masterless “ronin.”

But regardless of whether Chiz and Bongbong become a “ronin,” it shouldn’t make a lot of differ-

ence; that is, either one could win the vice presidency on their own strengths and resources. And whoever wins would become a strong candidate for president in 2022.

Taste for power

In my article, “The 2022 presidential derby is on” (October 16, 2015), I wrote: “As I have postulated earlier, whoever wins the vice presidency in 2016 would be the next president in 2022, which begs the question: Of the six [only five left now] vice presidential candidates in 2016 – Robredo, Escudero, Trillanes [he’s out], Cayetano, Marcos, and Honasan -- who wouldn’t want to run for president in 2022 if he or she were elected vice president in 2016? What I am seeing in my crystal ball is that all of them, with the exception of Honasan, will run for president in 2022. But Honasan,



Vice-presidential candidates: Escudero, Robredo, Marcos, Honasan, and Cayetano.

who might not have any inclination to seek the presidency at this time, might have a change of heart midway through his term in 2019 and decide to run for president in 2022. Once he tastes power, he can get used to it. Indeed, power is aphrodisiac: you taste it once; you’d want more... and more.

“With all six [only five left] vice presidential candidates who harbor a desire to seek the presidency in 2022, you’d expect each and every one of them to use all re-

sources they have at their disposal to win – by all means -- the vice presidency in 2016. It would be shooting two birds with one stone; whoever we elect vice president in 2016, we’re also electing president in 2022.”

Three-way battle royale

The latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey conducted last February 5-7 showed Chiz and Bongbong tied in first place with 26% ratings. What is interesting is that Bongbong overcame Chiz’s three-point lead in the SWS survey conducted on January 8-10, 2016. But this is a small gap compared to the SWS survey on December 12-14, 2015 that showed Chiz at 30% and Bongbong at 19%, a whopping 11-point difference. That was the biggest gap between Chiz and Bongbong since March 20-23, 2015 when Chiz’s popularity rating was at 6% and Bongbong at 3%.

Interestingly, Leni Robredo at 19% is not too far behind Bongbong in the latest SWS survey. Can Leni catch up with either Chiz or Bongbong? With President Aquino’s support and the Liberal Party’s huge war chest, she can prevail over Chiz and Bongbong. What’s going for her is she’s untainted and the wife of the popular late DILG Secretary Jesse Robredo. Indeed, what we’re seeing here is a three-way battle royale.

But barring a bloody and dirty battle between the two ronin –

Chiz and Bongbong – that could end up with both of them losing out to Leni, these two heirs to two powerful dynasties – the Marcoses of Ilocandia and the Escuderos of Bicolandia – would put all their resources to use to win – by all means – the vice presidency. And this is where Bongbong might have an edge because of the Marcoses’ reputedly

amassed wealth, which, if true, could make a lot of difference.

Both Chiz and Bongbong have one shot at the vice presidency. And as I said before, it would be like shooting two birds with one stone; whoever is elected vice president in 2016, would be elected president in 2022.

Yes, the battle for the 2022 presidency has begun!
(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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Search for Marcos' wealth: Compromising with cronies

What the entire world knows after 30 years is a mere fraction, and not the entirety, of the Marcos loot

MANILA, Philippines – Months after its creation in 1986, the Presidential Commission Good Government (PCGG) saw tangible results of its quest for the return of the illegal assets of the Marcoses and cronies.

It negotiated the first compromise deal with crony Jose Yao Campos, a Chinese Filipino entrepreneur who owned the controlling interest of United Laboratories Inc., a major drug firm, for the return of the Marcos assets listed under his name.

Campos, low key and unassuming, was probably the most cooperative among the known Marcos cronies. Unlike other cronies who chose to slug it out with the post-Marcos government, Campos cooperated fully in surrendering the Marcos assets under his name. Marcos used him mainly as caretaker of those illegal assets.

A friend of the dictator, Campos surrendered to the PCGG the 197 titles representing pieces of real estate property in Metro Manila, Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, Bataan and Baguio City, and P250 million (\$5.3 million) in cash. The pieces of real estate property have a combined value of over P2.5 billion (\$52.5 million). (READ: Recovering Marcos' ill-gotten wealth: After 30 years, what?)

In 1987, the PCGG recovered P375 million (\$7.9 million) from the accounts of Campos and Rolando Gapud, reputedly the dictator's financial adviser, in Security Bank and Trust Company, a local commercial bank. Decades later, the Honolulu court decided to compensate the human rights victims of the Marcos regime and ruled the sale of two pieces of property in the US to pay them. They were listed under Campos' name.

Among the Marcos assets under Campos' name, which the PCGG sold to the private sector, were: the Dasmariñas property in 1994 for P200 million (\$4.2 million); IRC Antipolo property in San Isidro in

1995 for P27.6 million (\$580,000); the IRC Antipolo property in Victoria Valley Subdivision 1996 for P35.2 million (\$740,000); Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company shares in 1999 for P74.2 million (\$1.6 million); and Anscor and PLDT shareholdings in 2005 for P41 million (\$860,000).

Also sold were: Manila Bulletin shareholdings in 2008 for P163 million (\$3.4 million); the Wack-Wack property in Mandaluyong City in 2011 for P127 million (\$2.7 million); Hans Menzi Compound in Baguio City in 2012 for P93 million (\$2 million); Banaue Inn compound in 2012 for P10 million (\$200,000); Mapalad property in Paranaque City in 2013 for P247 million (\$5 million); and the J. Y. Campos property in Baguio City in 2014 for P160 million (\$3.4 million).

Banana magnate, too

In 1987, banana magnate Antonio Floirendo entered into a compromise deal with the PCGG and turned over P70 million (\$1.5 million) in cash and assets. The Marcos assets he gave to the PCGG included the Lindenmere Estate and Olympic Towers in New York and the real property listed as 2443 Makiki Heights Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii.

The PCGG sold the Marcos assets under Floirendo's name such as: Beverly Hills property in California in 1994 for \$2.52 million and its residual items for \$42,300; the Makiki property in 1995 for \$1.35 million; and the Lindenmere Estate in 1996 for \$40 million. Since the Lindenmere property was heavily mortgaged, the PCGG's share was \$1.62 million.

Philippine Ambassador to Japan Roberto Benedicto, the dictator's close friend since their law school days at the University of the Philippines, followed suit in 1990. In a compromise agreement with the PCGG, he surrendered \$16 million in Swiss bank deposits, shareholdings in 32 corporations, 100 percent of the California Overseas Bank shares, and 51 percent of his

agricultural lands, and cash dividends in his firms.

The PCGG sold the Marcos assets under Benedicto's name, which two pieces of Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation property in Cebu in 2001 for a total P228.5 million (\$4.8 million), received P58.3 million (\$1.2 million) as its share of just compensation of 40 percent of the proceeds of the 2003 sale of three tracts of sugarland in Negros Occidental, and privatized in 2008 the Eastern Telecommunications, Phils., Inc. shareholdings for P104 million (\$2.2 million).

The PCGG recovered illicit assets from persons, who were not necessarily cronies but lesser known caretakers to whom Marcos entrusted his ill-gotten wealth. When the volume of his illegal operations grew at the height of martial rule, Marcos recruited unknown persons to do the job for him.

The PCGG entered into compromise settlements with low profile Anthony Lee, who surrendered shareholdings in Mountainview Real Estate Corporation in 1991; Alejo Ganut Jr., who surrendered P50 million (\$1 million) in 1996; and Antonio Martel, who ceded a 4.6 hectare property in Bacolod City in 1996.

Crony Herminio Disini, who worked as agent for the sale of the ill-fated but overpriced Bataan nuclear plant, refused to cooperate with state authorities. After lengthy court battles, the PCGG secured from the Supreme Court in 2012 a decision declaring as ill-gotten

the \$50.56 million commission he received from Westinghouse, Inc., the supposed contractor of the Bataan nuclear plant.

The SC ordered the Vienna-based Disini to return the entire amount plus interest charges to the Philippine government. Disini has yet to respond to the SC decision.

Eyeing big companies

What the entire world knows after 30 years is a mere fraction, and not the entirety, of the Marcos loot. A number of their illegally acquired assets in the country have been identified.

What has been stashed abroad remains a big question, although it has been estimated that the loot could be between \$5 billion to \$10 billion.

Marcos was not content to receive huge under-the-table commissions from foreign contractors of big ticket state projects. Marcos and his cronies had set their eyes, too, on major firms long regarded as blue chips by the stock market. These included Manila Electric Company (Meralco), Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), and San Miguel Corporation.

Marcos, using brother-in-law Benjamin Romualdez, took control of Meralco and sent its owners, the Lopezes, to exile in the US shortly after he declared martial law in 1972. Marcos secretly used Ramon Cojuangco as his nominee in PLDT. Marcos used crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr to use coconut levy funds and take

control of SMC.

The PCGG did not lose time in filing claims on blocks of shareholdings believed to be owned by the Marcoses and their ilk in those three firms. The judicial grind was taxing to the spirit, but after years of court litigation they bore fruit as the government had recovered billions of pesos from the sale of the contested shareholdings.

The PCGG recovered and sold to the private sector the first batch of Meralco shares held by Benjamin Romualdez in 1994 for P13.5 billion (\$280 million); the second batch in 1997 for P2.6 billion (\$55 million); the third batch in 1998 for P53 million (\$1.1 million); and the fourth and last batch in 2008 for P2.1 billion (\$44 million), or a total of P18.7 billion (\$393 million).

The recovery of the Marcos assets in PLDT took a more circuitous route. The court litigation was characterized by earlier decisions only to be overturned by motions for reconsideration. In the end, the PCGG has secured in 2006 the final decision from the Supreme Court saying that the contested shares belonged to Marcos and not to the family of Ramon Cojuangco.

In 2006, the PCGG sold to the Metro Pacific Holdings., a local firm owned by the Hong-Kong based First Pacific Group, the PLDT shares worth P25.2 billion (\$530 million), ending 20 years of court battle.



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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

The politics of balut

“Balut” is a popular delicacy in many Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines. In particular, the Philippines is arguably one country where her people not only love balut, they live it! Call it balut mentality or balut syndrome, eating balut is healthy for the body and mind... and, as many Filipino men would attest, it’s aphrodisiac! The male balut lovers call them “macho food” because they’re believed to boost virility and libido. Yes, balut are indeed the Philippines’ “much loved delicacy.”

With all the good things that balut lovers get from eating those fertilized duck eggs – thank God, they’re cooked! -- it is no wonder that many Pinoys would eat balut every night. And for those who have extra money to spend, eating half a dozen balut -- or more -- would make them stronger and ready for action! Indeed, many believe that balut is radioactive, which may be the source of the eater’s strength and stamina.

But before you try eating balut, you need to know a little about it. Pronounced bah-loot, it’s produced by fertilizing duck eggs under the sun and then storing in baskets to keep them warm. After nine days, the eggs are held to a light to see the outline of the

embryo inside. About eight days later, the fertilized eggs – the balut -- are ready to be cooked just like cooking hard-boiled chicken eggs.

The vendors then put the cooked balut in buckets of sand to retain the warmth. They go around neighborhoods at sundown and shout “bah loot... bah loot...” They’re sold with small packets of salt and they’re eaten best while still warm.

Kinds of balut

There are three kinds of balut, two of which are okay -- the fertilized balut and the unfertilized penoy. The ideal fertilized balut is 17 days old. It is called “balot sa puti” (“wrapped in white”). After 18 days, it becomes recognizable, complete with a beak, head, claws, body, and bones. However, after a few more days it becomes too old and you’d see feathers on the chick, which many people don’t like eating.

On the other hand, if after nine to 12 days old the chick has remained unfertilized, it is called penoy and it looks, smells, and tastes just like a regular hard-boiled chicken egg, albeit a little more expensive.

But the third kind is very bad. It’s the undeveloped duck egg called “abnoy” or “bugok,” which means, rotten. When you crack a balut and it smells awful, don’t eat it!

Believe it or not

But in Pateros, Rizal where the production of balut is the town’s main industry, the people have a way of putting an abnoy to good use. Are you ready for this? They use abnoy to make “bibingkang abnoy.” And just like the smelly

abnoy where it’s made from, bibingkang abnoy smells and tastes awful. It’s cooked like a fried egg torta and dipped in spicy vinegar. But take it with a grain of salt when you hear abnoy lovers say, “It smells like hell but tastes like heaven!”

However, if you’re adventurous enough (this is a challenge to CNN’s Anthony Bourdain of the “Parts Unknown” series) and wouldn’t want to miss the experience of eating bibingkang abnoy, here’s some suggestions to follow: “Don’t breathe, cover your nose, grab a small slice of the bibingka, dip it in vinegar to enhance its taste, bite it, don’t puke, feel the exotic taste.” [Source: ivanlakwatsero.com]

How to eat balut

1. Crack a small hole on the rounded part of the shell.
2. Chip away pieces of the shell until the hole is the size of a bottle cap. Pierce the membrane and suck the broth-like liquid (albumen of the duck fetus).
3. Make the opening bigger. Sprinkle the inside with “rough sea salt,” which is provided by the balut vendor.
4. Enlarge the opening so you can bite off the yolk (yellow part).
5. Eat the chick. The hardened white lump is edible but most people don’t eat it.

Balut syndrome

Some people are like balut. While they might love balut for any perceived benefits, some people live their lives like balut, especially the politicians. And just like the three kinds of balut (balut, pe-



noy, and abnoy), politicians are categorized in the same manner. The penoy politician is someone who is new in politics: a novice or a rookie. Like a penoy, they’re cooked but unfertilized. They’re new in the political game so they haven’t been exposed to corruption yet. But after being exposed to corruption or “fertilized,” the penoy politician transforms into a balut politician – corrupt and greedy. However, just like a duck egg that didn’t develop properly, that politician might turn out to be an abnoy – rotten to the core!

But regardless of whether these politicians are penoy, balut or abnoy, the people keep on electing them from the president down to the barangay captains. It’s a phenomenon particularly in Philippine politics where people look up to their politicians as their benefactors. A lot of times politicians are asked to be the godfather (ninong) of people getting married or baptized. And when someone dies, the politicians are there to give financial aid to the bereaved. Indeed, it is not uncommon for

politicians to dole out or give small amounts of money to their constituents in time of need. And for these acts of charity from their benefactors (padrinos), the constituents would be forever grateful and will vote for them come election time, which begs the question: Where does the politicians’ “charity fund” come from?

The beneficiaries (constituents) know where the “charity fund” originated. They come from the padrinos’ ill-gotten wealth that was generated through corruption. In order to keep the flow of “dirty money” coming in, the politicians use bribes and kickbacks to grease corrupt government officials and functionaries. It’s a vicious cycle that keeps the politicians in power and, sadly, the people in perpetual bondage. Yep, the politicians are just like bibingkang abnoy: Their corrupt practices smell like hell, but their dirty money tastes like heaven. That in essence is the politics of balut.

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FAVA's 27th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers

From page 1

The program started at approximately 7 p.m. with Master of Ceremonies (MC) Pete Delacruz calling all veterans to assemble and prepare for their march to the center stage of the room. As part of the Presentation of Colors, all veterans in attendance proudly marched to their assigned area, then sang the national anthems of the United States of America and the Philippines. The veterans sang proudly and resonantly again when the service flags were presented, finishing with a thundering "ooo-Rahhh!!!"

Patriotic rituals are not only about flags and anthems and service songs, it also includes remembering ALL who gave some and SOME who gave ALL. Marine veteran Carleton Enloe called everyone's attention to a small table set for one, occupying a place of dignity and honor, as a "physical symbol of the thousands of American POWs and MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America." Following the POW/MIA ceremony, MC Pete solemnly remembered the departed FAVA veterans, mentioning the most recent: Dominador Agregado and Victorio Descargar.

FAVA Chaplain Will Williams, sharply dressed in his formal marine uniform, echoed some of Carleton and MC Pete's remarks as he delivered the invocation before dinner. Dining in a grand ballroom, lit by elegant chandeliers, and in the company of amiable community friends could only be described as par excellence. Double Tree by Hilton Sacramento extended their largest venue to FAVA because of the abounding RSVP confirmations received beforehand.

Restarting the official program, Lilia Rivera introduced the outgoing FAVA president—Dr. Fred Aquino. Doc Aquino not only embraced the moment to welcome everyone, but he also delivered his profound appreciation to all who supported FAVA during his two year term in office. The Awards Presentation came next. The officers for the past two years who came to receive their awards were: Fred Aquino, Pete Delacruz, Dick Weitzenberg, Carlos Cordero, Malou Amper, Olive Jackson, Bella Anderson-Nido, Will Williams, Joe Gonzalez, Alexander Cheng, Tom Amaba, Ato and Yollie Delacruz. Congratulations and thank you for your service!

For his last official act, Outgoing President Fred Aquino asked a sharply dressed navy veteran, Rick Rafanan, to escort Mrs. Mercedes Rodrigo Descargar for a special award. President Aquino presented Mercedes a Posthu-



Tara Ricks, VA Northern CA Public Affairs Officer



Fred Aquino, Pete Delacruz, Dick Weitzenberg, Carlos Cordero, Malou Amper, Olive Jackson, Bella Anderson-Nido, Will Williams, Joe Gonzalez, Alexander Cheng, Tom Amaba, Ato and Yollie Delacruz.



The Fava Ladies with Mrs. Mercedes Descargar



Memie Weitzenberg and FAVA's supporters.



Installed Pres. Dick Weitzenberg



Anniversary Waltz

mous Award Plaque in memory of her beloved husband—Victorio Serquina Descargar. The plaque simply states, "For His Love of God and Country, A Devoted Grandfather and Family Man, Proud and Respected US Navy Veteran, Friend of All and a Gentleman."

Following tradition, FAVA's past presidents were asked to stand up and be recognized: Bobby Aglubat (USN) 1989, Felimon Reyes (USN) 1990, Bobby Aglubat (USN) 1991, Glenn Carrasca (USAF) 1992, Andy Tancioco (USN) 1993-1995, Bill Versoza (USN) 1996-1997, Danny Pascua (USN) 1998-1999, Mario Lardizabal (USN) 2000-2001, Art Calindas (USAF) 2002-2003, Richard Weitzenberg (USA) 2004-2007, Dale Esperante (USAF) 2008-2009, Rick Rafanan (USN) 2010-2011, Tom Amaba (USN) 2012-2013, Fred Aquino (USA) 2014-2015.

Tara Ricks (VA Northern California's Public Affairs Officer) gave

an entertaining and informative speech before officiating the Installation of the 2016-2017 Officers: President Richard Weitzenberg, Vice President Pete Delacruz, Secretary Joe Gonzalez, Treasurer Elizabeth Velasco, Auditor Alex Cheng, Junior Past President Fred Aquino, Directors: Personnel-- Evelio (Bill) Versoza, Ways & Means-- Fernando (Andy) Tancioco, Social Activities-- Aurora Foresee, Education & Welfare-- Ricardo (Rick) Rafanan. Congratulations to the newly installed officers!

Everyone listened attentively to the newly installed president, Dick Weitzenberg, as he shared his experiences as a past FAVA president. He expressed his appreciation to all who came on this, his third installation as president. He also shared his vision—his willingness to work hard for the greater good of FAVA as well as the community. President Dick and First Lady Memie, We



The Weitzenberg and Patria family

Photos by Dave San Pedro

Wish You the Best!

Again following tradition, FAVA presented their Anniversary Waltz. Sarah Enloe introduced the members of the FAVA Dance Ensemble: Dick & Memie Weitzenberg, Joe & Carina Gonzalez, Ato & Yollie Delacruz, Mercedes Descargar & Carlos Cordero, Andy & Edna Tancioco, Bella Anderson-Nido & Fred Aquino, Pete & Rose Delacruz, Art & Aida Calindas, Dale & Melita Esperante, Beth & Jesse Velasco, Rick Rafanan and Olive Jackson.

After the Anniversary Waltz, the dance floor opened to all. The first wave of dancers covered almost every available area of the spacious dance floor, as the DJs of Hi Tech Sound (Paul and Edward Cordero) delivered the lively music. Gowns sashayed, dancing shoes put on, some coats came off, and the fun of dancing ensued. The grand ballroom definitely earned its' description this evening supported by a mix genre

of dance music.

On behalf of President Dick and the entire membership of FAVA, "The overwhelming community support shown FAVA by way of representation from various organizations is greatly appreciated." Among those in attendance were presidents or other representatives from the following: Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity (FCSV), Filipino Family Fraternity (FFF), Ilocano of America, Aklan Association, Mabuhay Foundation, Maharlika Lions Club, Golden State Lions Club, Bayanihan USA, University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Sacramento and Vicinity (UPAASV), Pacific Rim, Bicolandia, Filipino Women's Club (FWC), Kapitbahay, Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento, Sinagtala, Philippine Fiesta Newspaper, The American Legion Magellan Auxiliary Unit 604, and The American Legion Magellan Post 604.

Dr. Fred R. Aquino assumes Leadership of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Sacramento and Vicinity

By Faina E. Abaya

After a delay of several months due to unforeseen circumstances, Dr. Fred Aquino finally assumed the leadership of the University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Sacramento and Vicinity on February 14, 2016. He took the oath of his office before former President Atty. Beatriz Alo in the presence of UPAASV members.

In his acceptance statement, he said that he will continue the role of the Association as a major player of the Filipino American community in Sacramento and beyond for the best interest of everyone.

Likewise, he will always support and participate if necessary any meritorious and commendable mission or objective of any community organization that will result into better interrelationship of the Filipino American community in Sacramento and its outlying areas.

He also assured the members that his administration will continue the Scholarship Program of the Association which is being tied with the educational thrust of their Alma Mater for deserving students.

Dr. Aquino also added that, he created an Ad Hoc Committee to be chaired by Atty. Alo to find ways and means on how to raise funds for our Museo Pilipino. The funds to be generated will finance the place or building which will become the repository of our great Cultural Heritage. It will also be the place where we can permanently showcase our collected or donated Filipiniana items, artifacts and the like to show and bring into fore the depth, beauty and greatness of our Cultural Heritage as depicted in our tradition, literature, costumes, music and songs. The on hand items for the Museo Pilipino are for the moment being cared and managed by Susan Castillo.

The President also suggested that the Museo Pilipino project will be discussed every meeting to determine the progress of any feasibility of the fund raising scheme as envisioned by the working Committee, if there will be any.

Dr. Fred Aquino is from Camiling, Tarlac where he was born and it was also the same place where he spent the best years of his young life with family, relatives and friends. He graduated from the University of the Philippines at Diliman, Quezon City where he obtained his degree in Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1961.

Just after graduation, he became the Ranch Veterinarian for two years with the Del Monte Philippines in Bukidnon, Mindanao. In 1963 he was hired as Adjunct Professor in Veterinary Medicine, Department of Animal Husbandry, UPLB for four years.

While teaching, Dr. Aquino was able to receive a grant from the United Nations Fellow to take up post graduate studies in connection with his profession at the University of Queensland, Australia and University of Manawatu, New Zealand.

On September 27, 1967, Dr. Aquino migrated to the United States and immediately



Dr. Fred Aquino

thereafter, he was employed with the California Department of Food and Agriculture as Veterinarian Medical Officer. He earned the distinction to become the first foreigner and Filipino Veterinarian to be employed by the State of California.

In all the years that he was with the USDA he held several responsible positions until he retired in 2004 after 27 years of government service. However, in 2006 Dr. Aquino was rehired by the USDA as Area Supervising Veterinarian for Northern California. His vast experience, knowledge and expertise in his profession brought him not only in California but also in Oregon, Kansas and Washington D.C.

Dr. Aquino is one of the pillars of the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity having been an active participant since 1988. This iconic community leader, although, there were times that he had been mired in community controversies, yet his devotion, love and dedication to the community where he found comfort and solace to live could never be questioned.

His almost 29 years of community service in Sacramento and vicinity, he was entrusted one time or another to become President of the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Chairman, Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation, President of the Filipino American Veterans Association, President Northern California Association of Filipino Veterinarian and also active member or officer of several other community organizations. Dr. Aquino also holds the rank of Captain (Ret.) from the State Military Reserve, United States Army.

The President of the UPAASV also received several awards for his services from various organizations, such as; Most Distinguished Service Award, UP Beta Sigma Fraternity International, Inc. 1004 Man of the Year. Gawad Parangal, Sacramento, 1988; Plaque of Honors for Dedication and Service to USDA 1987; MPIO Excellence in Supervisory Award Food Safety & Inspection Service, USDA

Dr. Aquino is a proud father of four children namely; Jeff, a Biological Scientist; John, a Pharmacist; Amy, a Nurse and Chris, a Supervisor at Costco. He has also nine grand children, Jeff married to Ar-



Dr. Aquino and former President Atty. Beatriz Alo



The Ladies of UPAASV



The officers of the UPAASV for 2016-2017

Photos by Faina Abaya

lene have Noah, Patrick and Alyssa, John married to Eden have Tommy, Krystle and Haylee, Amy married to Mike have Cullen, Angelina and Chris and Mika have Kenzie. Dr. Fred Aquino lives alone since 1987.

The officers of the UPAASV for 2016-2017 are: President, Dr. Fred Aquino; Susan

Castillo, Vice President; Janice Shiu, Secretary; Johnny Regadio, Treasurer; Anita Felix, Auditor; Faina Abaya, PRO; Board Members, Atty. Beatriz Alo, Art Calindas, Dr. Cecilio Felix and Major (Ret.), USAF Albert Guevarra; ways and Means Committees, Joe Gonzalez and Dr. Fred Aquino.

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Irene and David

The Engagement Celebration for Irene Amaba and David Perez



The Perez and Amaba family



The Filipino American community of Sacramento

Photos by Dale Esperante

By Dale Esperante

In this day and age, most things are expected to happen instantaneously. So it is very refreshing to see that significant matters still take time to grow such as love between man and woman. This grown love has a greater chance to withstand the tests of time.

They have known each other for ten years before David proposed to Irene in October of last year during a trip to Hawaii, on the beach, at sunset. Ten years is just a mere day in the calendar of love. At sunrise, they discovered each other. During the day, they learned from each other. At sunset, they became engaged. Between now and the following day, Irene will be finishing her nursing studies. Then the calendar will start another glorious day, for them as husband and wife. Until then, this engagement will be celebrated with the most significant people in their lives, foremost with their parents, sibling, extended family, and friends.

On the eve of Valentine's Day 2016, approximately 260 guests arrived at The Falls Event Center in Elk Grove for the Amaba-Perez Engagement Party. Guests who arrived between 5:30-6:30 p.m. were welcomed by Thomas Amaba (Irene's brother) and Cherielyn Joslyn (Thomas' girlfriend). Thomas and Cherielyn directed the guests to the lounge where they may serve themselves with some hors d'oeuvres and also enjoy the open bar. For moms and dads who brought along their little kids, this party included a babysitting room. Another amenity is a professional photographer's studio for the pleasure of anyone, complimentary of course. After the cocktail hour, Party Planner Ms. Victoria Garcia invited everyone to proceed to the grand dining room. Before entering the dining room, every gentleman escorting a lady received a long stemmed red rose from Victoria's "flower ladies," friends of the Amaba family. The ladies (Malou Amper, Bella Anderson-Nidoy, and Melita Es-



Italian love song from Leslie Bernabe

ers. Every beverage served, including the cool water, met everyone's approval.

The lovely Irene and handsome David drew everyone's attention after dinner when they expressed their appreciation and acknowledgements. Next came the introduction of Irene's family, parents Tom and Cynthia Amaba, and Thomas (brother). The parents of David, David (Sr.) and Gloria Perez, came up next. The paparazzi captured the whole immediate family (both sides) in photos during this segment of the program.

Major Host Tom Amaba took a moment to express his appreciation and to explain the joy he and his wife, Cynthia, felt when their daughter Irene was born. Having shared his love for his family, Tom then introduced Remy Solomon to perform a special love song for Irene and David. After Remy, Tom introduced soprano Leslie Bernabe who sang an Italian love song followed with an operatic version of What a Wonderful World. Lovely valentines' songs and much appreciated, Remy and Leslie!

After the songs, came dancing the rest of the evening. Those who rested from the dance floor helped themselves with more of the abundant amount of delicious treats, and more of the refreshing beverages. It was truly an affair to remember for being the most organized, lavish, and elegantly planned private party experienced by this writer. Well done Party Planner Ms. Victoria Garcia!

Thanks to the bountiful hospitality of Tom and Cynthia Amaba, the Engagement Party and Valentines Eve 2016 will be recorded as one of the best in the community! Tom and Cynthia are leading members of the Sacramento Filipino American community. Tom has been a three-time commander of The American Legion Magellan Post 604 and a former president of the Filipino American Veterans Association. The greatest strength of the successful past commander and former president comes, of course, from a supportive wife. And the warmest embrace that holds a family together is from a loving mother. Congratulations to the Amaba and Perez Families! Congratulations David and Irene!

perante) advised every gentleman to present the flower to his lovely lady. Also by the entry, a large chart on an easel listing the table assignments helped the guests locate their reserved seats. All these details proved that Irene Amaba found a gold mine of a Party Planner in Victoria Garcia. To paraphrase Irene, "She was amazing! She made sure everything went smoothly for the party! I loved working with her!" Victoria and her parents, Jesse and Beth Velasco, are friends with the Amaba family.

Before starting the dinner hour, Victoria invited all to be in place for Father Ruel Mesa to deliver the invocation. Father Ruel is also a friend of the Amaba family.

For dinner, food connoisseurs were elated. Heavenly Food Creations helmed by Rhue-na Buentipo served a variety of star quality dishes—a taste of heaven indeed! For dessert, a long table filled with treats invited all who craved for sweets. For caffeine lovers, the taste and aroma of the served coffee delighted their senses. A tropical drink catered to the satisfaction of non-coffee drink-



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Maria “Semy” Bahoric turns 75!

By Sarah and Carle Enloe

Maria “Semy” Bahoric turned a glorious 75 on February 18. Semy, as fondly called by her family, continued her 75th birthday celebration on Saturday, February 20, 2016, at King Palace Seafood Restaurant, Sacramento, CA. It was definitely a very special occasion as she was surrounded with her family and friends. Of course there was dancing by guests before dinner. The birthday celebration began with special birthday greetings from her two granddaughters - Chloe and Sophie. They shared that they are truly blessed and thankful for all the wonderful times they have had with Grandma Semy and wished her a happy 75th birthday.

Maria welcomed and acknowledged her guests and indeed was overwhelmed with joy and excitement for their presence in joining her on her 75th birthday celebration. She explained why she celebrates her birthday. It is customary for her to always celebrate her birthday to give thanks to the Lord for giving her life; thankful and gracious to God for all the blessings and the graces bestowed upon her and her family.

She’s happy that she has friends like the guests and also to the community leaders joining her and that she’s very happy for them. Maria wished and expressed her gratitude to her good friend, especially Mercedes Guerrero, currently the President of the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, a very conscientious, dedicated, and sincere person. Because she is always there to help whenever she asks her for help. To Rose Basos, Cleo Sabarre-Ner, and Inday Marzan, for the center pieces they made and Paula, owner of the restaurant for preparing the delicious



The Celebrant with the birthday cakes.



Mr. and Mrs. Ambassador George Aducaeyen with family and friends



The Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity

food. She ended her remarks by asking all her guests to enjoy the evening! Father Joyle Martinez gave the invocation and birthday greetings. Eddie Aducaeyen, her godson, sang a beautiful rendition of the song “You are so Beautiful”, a very fitting song for a beautiful person inside and out. The birth-

day celebration continued with a 10-courses dinner, especially created for her and as expected from Maria, she would only order the best in the house!

The celebration continued as friends from Filipino American Veterans Association danced the



Maria ‘Semy’ Bahoric

guests were asked to write a personal adjectives on a 3x5 that begins with letter M (for Maria) and B (Bahoric). Guest who had the most adjectives will receive a special present from the celebrant. Here are some of the adjectives to name just a few that represents Maria: Majestic; merry; miraculous; marvelous; magnificent; manageable; magical; motivated; beautiful; bold; bright; brave; modest; model; breathtaking; brilliant; blessed and beloved! The winners were: Evelyn Rucker, co-worker and first place; Eddie Aducaeyen; Dr. Joe Villarica; and

Leonardo Velasquez. After the game, it’s time to cut the cake. The birthday celebrant made a wish and blew her candles out as all her guest sang Happy Birthday! The birthday cake (mango flavor) was delicious.



The Waltz

Photos by Dave San Pedro



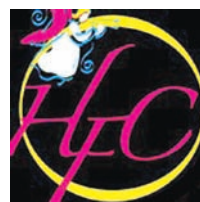
Serenade by Eddie Aducaeyen

waltz followed by another special request from a friend, Joe Carreon to sing. Then, it’s time to roast the celebrant. This time, the

As I sat down to reflect a longer list of things of adjectives being elaborated, I have realized, the gift that I can share with our friend Maria is wishing her many more glorious such years ahead on her 75th birthday! Maria, now that you’ve reached that vintage age of 75, you’re considered a real classic! Take some time to enjoy your special day. And as you celebrate your 75th birthday and beyond, we hope that you are surrounded by love and that the joy that you have given in your life is returned to you. The guests continued to dance the night away.



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The Golden Hips & Friends Tea Party

By Dinnah San Pedro

“Life is good shared with wonderful friends,” a quote I got from a Facebook post by my friend Marilyn, summarizes the evening of another successful get together at our home, with friends of more than 20 years. Carefully planned by Mariflor Ong, it became a night of photo shoot and pure fun and laughter. Everyone came dressed for a tea party with adorable hats and all. Our personal struggles were unsuccessful in defining our future, as we make a dramatic exit to enjoy our golden years, and while slowly reaching the retirement age, all happy and ___! Leaving it to your imagination to fill in the blank.



Philippine National Day Association Preview Night 2016



Thursday, March 10, 2016
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Gina's Filipino Kape
1011 12th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



Event registration is by invitation only. Register with your email address to attend this event.

It's 2016 and PNDA has some MAJOR things happening this year! Join us for our "PNDA Programs Preview Night" at Gina's Filipino Kape in Downtown Sacramento to hear about our annual programs as well as our BRAND NEW projects! Come mingle with our supporters and enjoy some great Filipino food!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/philippine-national-day-association-preview-night-2016-tickets-21466902082>. Use this to RSVP.



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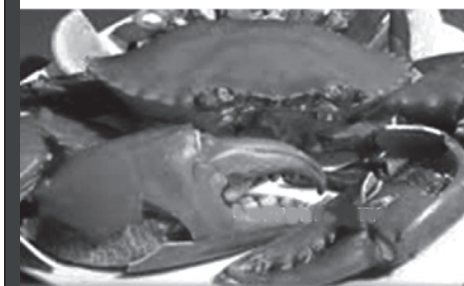


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Birthdays



MARIEL S. MONTERO
MARCH 18



ANTONIO ABAYA
MARCH 4



CJ AND JOJO ABAYA
MARCH 19 and 20



ESTELA RABARA
FEBRUARY 25

Calendar of Events

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Private Movie Screening
Pacific Rim Foundation
Century Laguna 16,
Elk Grove, CA
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Anthony S. Mercado celebrates his 18th birthday on February 13, 2016 in Tracy, California with family, relatives and friends. You are an inspiration to your family and may God continues to bless and guide you. Aunties and lolas, all in attendance to celebrate with you (bottom photo).

Anniversary



Dr. Tony and Remy Solomon with Arya Lumaya
35th year anniversary, February 17



John and Aubrey Abaya
7th year anniversary, February 28

MARCH 12, 2016 (Sat)
Philippine Consulate on Wheels
9 am - 4pm
Bayanihan Club, Sacramento
By appointment only
916.682.3382
remidi50@aol.com
Magellan Hall
8831 Gerber Rd.
Sacramento, CA



MARCH 19, 2016 (Sat)
Social Dinner & Dance
6 pm - 11pm
Joe 916.396.7863
Dale 916.524.9287
Howard 916.761.0384
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Remembering One St. Valentine's Day

By Jose P. Abaya, Jr

The chilly cold and dense morning fog weather in February is really conducive for romance between lovers. Sending bunch of fresh red roses to the girl you are in love is an old way to say what you have felt in your heart. It could be today's unconventional way of expressing your undying love to your loved one, instead, of doing it demonstratively and privately between yourselves.

Indeed, there are many ways to say what you have felt to someone whom you have fallen in love but the most conservative way to say it, is through a hand written love letter expressing in words what you really feel deep into your heart. And, what is more appropriate time and date to send those love letters or red roses than on February 14, when lovers celebrate St. Valentine's Day.

It is still fresh in my memory, though, it happens many years ago across vast ocean in a place where the weather can easily melt a cold cold heart. It was also the place where I met the woman I have fallen in love. How can I forget the day when I have my first glimpsed on her big beautiful eyes, waist length black hair and slight touched of make up on her blushing red cheeks as I extended my hand to shake her cold hand to introduce myself.

After knowing her name, she left with sweet smile but I was frozen and speechless and could not utter a single word, although, deep in my heart I would like to say something but I was bewildered and could not find the proper words that could not simply come out from my mouth.



Illustration by Dave San Pedro

Lonely days have passed with only her captivating image in my mind. To ease the loneliness, I decided to write a letter, a simple hand written message telling her how much I really missed her and hoping that I could possibly see her again at the same place where we met.

The rendezvous was not a lover's lane or an isolated place but in the middle of the university campus where students leisurely and lazily sit on the well trimmed Bermuda grass under the shades of huge Acacia trees. I gave the letter to a friend to deliver for her personally but sadly, I did not receive any answer that made me feel unwanted and the more I was missing her.

The days became weeks, the pain and agony were unbearable, be-

cause where ever I turned, I could see her image always smiling and waving at me to indicate that she was all over the place teasing my inner most feeling that my world could just crumple without her in my life. I am now pushed to a wall and my whole being is consumed day after day for not seeing her, as if my world has been separated from the realm of fantasy to the labyrinth of human emotion.

February, the month everybody is waiting because of the very special day on the 14th. when lovers celebrate and express once more those simple words to their loved ones, saying I love you and continue loving you with all my heart. While those who are just looking

for someone to love are just restless as I am because there is only emptiness devoid of any feeling of excitement for that special day. Obviously, such emotional condition makes one to be feeling lonely and could perceive to be an outcast from the kingdom of those who are happily in love.

Finally, emboldened by my desire to see and talk to her, I decided to write a letter again and let a neophyte of our confraternity deliver to her personally at any place within the university campus where she could possibly see her. The mission was accomplished but the waiting period for her possible answer made me nervous that even went into the inner most of my nerve.

My letter was crafted simply but meaningful and the true expression of the feeling of a man smitten with love to a woman whom he dreamt to be his lifetime partner. Many events have passed but did not obscure a bit the still vivid words I wrote in my letter which went this way... My dearest, I know you will be surprised to receive this letter from someone that you only met once but I can no longer hold the feeling of loneliness without telling this, I love you from the bottom of my heart since the time I first met you. You are the embodiment of the woman of my dream and my life will be empty without you as my partner until the end of time. Will you be my partner on February 14 when our confraternity celebrates Valentines' Day? I will meet you on that date at the place where we were introduced. I hope you will be there... Missing you, I am.

On Valentine's Day, one hour before the designated time I was already at the meeting place under the huge Acacia tree in the middle of the university campus waiting for her. Every girl that comes near the place, my heart palpitates rather abnormally and only subsides when I have a better look at

the passing girl. At the exact time when I am expecting her to arrive, I prepared myself putting into my head the first words to say when I will be facing her but to my bitter frustration she did not appear. I waited her several hours more, the light of the day slowly becoming dark to indicate that the Sun is descending from the horizon.

As darkness covers the whole area of the campus, my feeling of sadness becomes intense and it seems my world is shattered into pieces. I am now inclined to accept my faith that my dream for the girl I have fallen in love from a distance is now far away and unreachable. Feeling sad and alone, I am about to leave the place when I saw a silhouette from a distance, a very familiar figure in my dreams as well as in person. Her sudden appearance put me in trance and became speechless as she approached me and recognized her to be the woman I am longing to see.

She was wearing a red blouse with a symbolical heart shaped brooch on the lapel and a matching skirt. Instinctively, I extended my right hand holding the three red roses that she immediately took it with a smile, then to to my surprise without uttering any word she held my right arm. Of course, there was no need to say anything because action speaks better than words as we walked away, all set for our Valentine's Day date. That was the beginning of a lasting love affair and the ending will never be written.

St. Valentine's Day is not only for young lovers but also for the young at heart. It is, therefore, celebrated by all regardless of gender, age, social status, political persuasion or religious belief because love transcends human boundaries as it emanates from the heart and no one can possibly pierce except the love potion arrow of that naughty half naked Cupid.



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By Nancy Cristi Bautista

Survival Instinct



As I watch a crime program on the television, I cringe to the fact that these things could happen to anyone. It is probably true to say that many have experienced or have known somebody who become victims of those hideous crimes. Upon analyzing what's happening in 'being at the wrong time and place' stories, one of the most of the important facts that I have gathered is that most of the time, people have carelessly let their guards down.

There was a case where a ten year old girl was abducted, molested and killed by a neighbor because her mother let her play in front of their house without supervision. The neighbor used his dog to lure the young victim. He was able to earn her trust by pretending to be a kind man next door, while her mother was doing something else.

Another case was when a mother got busy socializing with her friends in a Christmas party and just let her eight year old daughter get a drink from the water fountain by herself. The maintenance man in that building snatched her and took her in his car and pretended that they will just go and buy fast food, but, instead, molested her and tortured her to death.

Another case was when a seven year old girl was bicycling by herself in a supposed to be a safe neighborhood. A man driving his car saw this young vulnerable child to be an easy target. The driver intentionally bumped the girl's bike to cause her to fall and then he picked her up and promised to take her to the hospital. Instead, he took her to his house, and again, like the other victims, molested and killed her.

These unprecedented cases also happen to adults who became nonchalant about their surroundings. One example was the case where a woman in her thirties just went across her home to buy groceries during daylight. When she came out of the store, she did not bother to see if there were dangers around her because she was in a hurry to go back home to her kids. She did not realize that someone was following her with a vicious intention of hurting her. The man choked her with a rope, raped and stabbed her until she died.

Sometimes, bad things happen because of being embarrassed to be labeled as prejudiced or weak. Even though a person, especially a woman, senses that it would be wrong to take a certain step, she would ignore this feeling so as not to appear racist or afraid. A lot of

times, her original suspicion could be right for her own or her family's security. And instead of avoiding to be in the path of danger, she would choose to continue straight into the criminal's hands where she would be completely helpless. Ever since I remember, I and my family had been exposed to these kinds of danger, and thankfully, we were able to elude to be victims. I always have an exit or an alternative plan, if faced with danger. Some people think that I am so pessimistic, but, I can look back at those incidents and I can say that I do not regret choosing those decisions I made that made me and my family safe.

I remember, in a party, when our oldest daughter was a toddler, my husband, I and some friends planned to have our daughter be watched by a relative so we can go for a short errand. In the car, I asked my husband if he actually saw our daughter with the person who was supposed to watch her. My husband was not so sure. I insisted of going back to check on her. Everyone in the car laughed at me and said that I was paranoid. I ignored them and I insisted. My hunch was right. When we went back to the party, no one was watching our daughter, and our child was away from everybody.

Also, one summer time, when our two daughters were about seven and ten years old, they were playing with other kids in our open backyard, while I was folding the laundry nearby, where I could see them play. All of a sudden, there was an old brown station wagon with four shirtless older men drove by and stopped by them. I screamed for my children to come back home, but, I saw my oldest daughter with arm stretched and pointing at one direction. I ran towards them and the car drove away towards the opposite of where my daughter was pointing at. I looked where the men were going, and they drove towards the freeway. I asked my daughter what were they asking her. With sobs and tears, maybe realizing that what she did was wrong, she explained that they were asking where the community pool was. I calmly told her that they were lying because instead of going towards the pool, they drove towards the freeway. I also added that if I did not intercede, they

could have kidnapped her and we will never see each other again. Unfortunately, during that week, there was a boy biking with a friend who got kidnapped and never was seen again.

Every time I would go shopping with my young daughters, I would physically hold the hoods of their jackets while I looked at the merchandise. I never trusted that they would always stay close to me nor myself of not getting distracted. I get harsh looks from other mothers, but, I did not care, because the safety of my children are the most important to me.

When I used to work at night, I was walking from my job to our apartment. It was a dark evening and I looked around and I saw a man following close to me. I was pregnant then and I cannot run. I was scared that he would do something bad to me, so, I quickly planned something in my mind just in case my suspicion was correct. When he got near me, he bumped my shoulders, so, I hurriedly turned around to face him, with my hand in my coat pocket, I firmly said, "Leave me alone! I have a gun!" At the same time, I pointed my finger inside my empty pocket. He said, "Ops, sorry. I just wanted to know if you have a light." He then hurriedly left away from me, trembling, but, safe.

Another incident was when one afternoon, while I was walking alone towards my work on a rural road along the railroad tracks, an unmarked older green van was slowly driving behind me and stopped by me. The male driver opened the passenger door and asked me if I needed a ride. I hurriedly crossed the street and pretended to knock at a house. The van drove away. Again, I was so scared, but, maybe, my quick response saved my life.

When we used to live in a condominium, I used to leave our unit early in the morning. As I opened the front door, the door would not push open. I looked through

the side window to find out what was hindering the door to open. I saw a man sitting in front of it. Since I was running late, I did not even bother to go back home to ask my husband to accompany me to my car. I just pushed the door open and walked past the stranger. I was lucky that the man was probably

so drunk that he couldn't even move. Thinking now about it, I kind of regret making such decision, because I could have been in a different situation just because I forgot about my safety.

Sometimes, being in a very friendly and controlled safe environment makes one nonchalant about the dangers that surround him or her. While I was working in a very nice hospital, everyone was friendly to everyone and everybody was harmless. One day, a new young employee asked me for a ride home. I figured out that it was still daylight and that he seemed nice, nothing could go bad. Also, as his supervisor, I thought I had an obligation to be civil and understanding to him, so I agreed to give him a lift. He directed me to the worst place in that area. I was praying while following his directions and at the same time, thinking an exit plan, if something bad happen. Thank God, I dropped him off to his destination without adversity. I might be wrong in thinking negative about him, but, I promised myself that I will never do that again, because trusting blindly could bring a bad experience, just like what happened to my coworker.

One day, she was invited by a good friend to her apartment. Since she trusted this friend, she went to her home without any hesitation. As soon as she got into the

elevator, there was a young man inside it. Although my friend was scared, she did not want to look like she was prejudiced. She smiled at him and he smiled

back. As soon as the elevator door closed, the young man grabbed her and forced her to go up to the opened top floor. He beat her up badly and raped her. When we saw her the following day, her face was all black and blue, her lips swollen and she was sobbing to tell her vicious experience.

In my own experience, when it was almost midnight, I was supposed to pick up my husband from work, because his car broke down. My car was on our driveway, and as I opened the garage door to get into my car, I noticed a beige sedan car with four young men passed by and stopped in front of our house. Since they were young, I thought that they could just be people I knew. I stopped to check them out. The driver backed up and upon that, I knew that I would be in trouble. I hurriedly got into my car, but, I cannot turn on the engine because I had a bar on my wheel. The other car drove into my driveway over our grass area next to my car. I refused to look at them for fear of identifying them. I honked my horn and pretended that I was trying to call the attention of somebody inside my house, even though it was empty. I continued honking my horn and fortunately, my next door neighbors looked out their window and I waved my hand signifying that I needed help. The other car drove away when my neighbors came to my aid. The next day, there was a case in my neighborhood of a home robbery. I guess I was saved by my survival instinct.

I cannot emphasize enough about our safety. I have been mentioning all these facts not to scare people, but, to let them realize that having an alert mind and not letting the guards down are probably good defenses of not becoming a victim. I just hope that we can all stop the would be perpetrators by not giving them a chance to confront a vulnerable target. God bless.

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You Are What You Eat

By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

Body weight is a physical factor that we have the power to control. It is a common knowledge that voracious eating makes a person heavy. The solution is simple: CONTROL. Control your food intake by all means.

An old traditional formula for a meal is by the use of our hands. The size of an open hand represents protein, a fist represents carbohydrates, and two open hands together represent the size of vegetables and fruit for each meal (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). In-between-meals, take water or protein drinks. Avoid hunger pangs, this will ruin your meal plan for the day. Drink water if you feel hungry between your scheduled meals. Once you do that, 75% of your weight problem is solved. You leave 25% of your weight to exercise at least one hour a day five times a week.

Proper diet gives benefits economically, physically & anatomically, psychologically, and socially.

Economically, it saves money. Learn to eat clean and healthy food preferably organic food which is free from pesticides and chemicals. Study how to prepare and cook simple food. By learning food preparation, you eat fresh food at home, it is economical. Avoid eating out or buy food at the drive thru, it is unhealthy and expensive.

Physically, it feels good to be light and agile. A person who is physically fit has a better blood pressure and heart rate. It helps blood circulate in the vascular system smoothly which oxygenates cells and tissues at the different parts of the body. It prevents cardiovascular disease such as heart attack and stroke. Proper diet lowers blood sugar for diabetic.

Anatomically, it gives you your desired six packs. How much exercise will give you six packs? Nothing. No amount of exercise will give your desired core curves except diet. No one beats the fork. Six packs are inherent in everyone's body. Just scrape those extra body fat by way of proper diet and you'll see those beautiful packs curve out.

Psychologically prepare yourself for weight lose challenge. Ask yourself: Am I ready to lose weight? If the answer is yes, then you go ahead. We are born in this sinful world and there is myriad of sinful treats around. Have a will to resist temptation. As the saying goes, "If there is a will, there is a way." Control your urge to eat. Don't eat food that is not in your diet list. Self-discipline is the name of the game for success.

Socially, you feel good when somebody notices your transformation and tells you look great. Social acceptance is always a positive thing. If you happen to be in a social gathering, try not to take alcoholic beverages. Instead, choose water or natural juice for drink. Engrave in the tablet of your heart to avoid alcohol. FYI, ETOH (a.k.a. alcohol) prevents burning of fat. It is easy to achieve your goal when you know how to politely say NO, especially with alcohol.

To recapitulate, diet is a major factor in weight lose challenge. If you need to lose weight, try this challenge seriously for a week, a month, or longer and you'll see the difference. An average person can lose four pounds a week. Weight lose is a protracted war against extra fat. Have the patience, it is a virtue. Physical fitness is a lifetime change. Just remember a long journey starts with a single step. Start your beautiful journey of becoming healthy, lean and fit again. Good luck! (gabbyortig@yahoo.com).



Illustration by Dave San Pedro



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Double golds for Philippines as Cray, Richardson top 100-m runs

Eric Cray and Kayla Richardson added two gold medals to the Philippines' SEA Games tallies to push the Pinoys past Myanmar for sixth place overall

By Naveen Ganglani

MANILA, Philippines - Eric Cray's personal best finish in the men's 100-meter competition and Kayla Richardson's impressive showing in the women's 100-meter run resulted to two more gold medals for the Philippines in the 28th Southeast Asian games at the National Stadium in Singapore on Tuesday, June 9.

Cray, a 26-year-old 3-time All-American born in Olangapo, finished with a result of 10.25 seconds - a comfortable margin over Indonesia's Yaspi Boby and Iswandi Iswandi who both had 10.45 second-finishes and placed second and third, respectively.

It was another addition to Cray's achievements, which already include being the first Filipino to reach the 400-meter hurdles finals at the Asian Games since 1982 and ending a 28-year gold drought in the 400-meter hurdles at the SEA Games in Myanmar.

"I just tried to get out as good as possible...I don't think I had the best start. But I am just happy with the win," Cray said after the race.

The Filipino-American became the first Philippine athlete to qualify for the 2016 Rio Olympics in May, meeting the qualifying mark of 49.40 sec for the men's 400 meters hurdles at the Cayman Invitational Athletics.

The 17-year-old Richardson, a resident of Walnut, California whose mother hails from Zamboanga, tied with Thailand's Tassaporn Wannakit with 11.76 second finishes but came away with first place due to a superior reaction time of 0.216 to 0.174.

Their victories increased the number of medals for the Philippines to 12 golds, 17 silvers, and 26 bronzes, which stands at 6th overall in the medal count.

Pole vaulter Ernest John Obiena Obiena finished second in a new Philippine mark



SPEEDSTER. Eric Cray is the fastest man in Southeast Asia.



17-year-old Kayla Richardson is bringing a gold medal back home to SoCal.

of 5.25 meters to Purahong Pooranot, who won in 5.30. Obiena fell away after the bar was raised by five centimeters to 5.30 meters.

Harry Diones, the NCAA MVP from Jose Rizal University, finished a bronze medal by five centimeters in the triple jump. He jumped 15.87 meters.

The Philippines is set to win at least 14 gold medals and at least eight golds will be coming from the Fil-Am athletes. Cray is the favorite to take the 400 meter hurdles and lead the 4x400 meter relay team, Richardson or Princess Joy Griffey the 200 meters, Stuart the discus throw and Donovan Arriola, the men's long jump.

Marestella Torres is aiming to reclaim the long jump, while defending champion Archand Christian Bagsit or Eduardo Alejan are eyeing the 400 meters, Christopher Ulboc is seeking title no.2 in the 3,000 meter steeplechase just like Jesson Cid in the decathlon.

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Philippines may ban pop singer Madonna for disrespect to flag

By Reuters

MANILA – American singer Madonna may face a ban in the Philippines for disrespecting its flag in her concerts this week in the capital Manila, a domestic broadcaster said on Friday, citing a historical commission official.

The 57-year-old entertainer is on a world tour to promote her “Rebel Heart” album, and did sold-out shows on Wednesday and Thursday.

“She ridiculed our flag,” the official, Teodoro Atienza, told radio station dzBB, adding that Madonna violated a law that prohibits the wearing of the Philippine flag “in whole, or in part, as a costume or uniform”.

The singer and concert producers could be held liable for the violation even if they were unaware of the law, said

Atienza, who is chief of the heraldry section of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines.

“They may face deportation and might not be able to return to the country. She also allowed the flag to touch the stage floor, which is another violation.”

There was no immediate response from the organizers of the concerts, held in the same hall where Pope Francis met Philip-



Madonna

pine families last year. Madonna’s next stop will be in Singapore on Sunday.

A Roman Catholic bishop in the Philippines this week urged the faithful to boycott Madonna’s shows over her “suggestive” performance and “vulgar” clothes.

Roman Catholics make up about 80 percent of a population of more than 100 million in the Philippines, where the church has strong influence, blocking legislation on the death penalty, divorce and same-sex marriage.

‘On The Wings of Love’ finale recap: Clark and Leah get their happy ending



Nadine Lustre and James Reid

MANILA, Philippines – Fans got to watch the finale of the hit romantic comedy series On the Wings of Love live at the Ynares Sports Complex in Antipolo City on Friday, February 26. There, the show’s main characters, Clark (James Reid) and Leah (Nadine Lustre) made a special appearance right after they walked the aisle and had their happy ending.

The two were in a tux and wedding gown, the same outfits they had worn during the finale on TV.

After performing a duet to the series’ theme song – “On the Wings of Love” (sung by Kyla for the show) – James and Nadine, a real-life couple, shared a kiss.

Hosts Gretchen Ho and Robi Domingo later asked the newly married TV couple some questions.

Nadine, when asked how special James is in her life, glanced at him and said, “Gaa-no special? Tinatanong pa ba iyon? (How special? Is that even really a question?)”

On the other hand, James said, “Nadine – she’s everything to me right now.”

Dozens of shrieking fans filled the stadium with a wall of sound, as they clearly felt the love that night.

The pair also thanked fans for supporting their show. James said, “We just want to say, ‘Thank you’ from the bottom

of our hearts. We love you.”

Nadine added, “Maraming, maraming salamat mga OTWOListas. Sabi ko na nga ba parang roller coaster ito. I’m sure nag-enjoy kayong lahat. Maraming salamat po. (Thank you very, very much, OTWOListas. I knew this was going to be a roller coaster ride. I’m sure you all enjoyed it. Thank you very much.)”

The two also performed one of their hits songs, “Bahala Na,” from their movie Talk Back and You’re Dead. After, the rest of the On the Wings of Love cast joined them onstage to sing the Eraserheads’ “Ligaya.”

Pinoy tops, 9 more join Forbes’ Asian millennial lists

By Tessa Distor

Leonardo Leviste joined the Forbes’ first ever “30 Under 30 Asia” class and topped the manufacture and energy category list.

The “30-Under-30 Asia” class is comprised of young, bright-minded individuals who are standing out in their respective fields, Forbes’ staff Caroline Howard wrote.

Leviste founded the Solar Philippines, a company which provides solar energy with the aim of bringing down the Philippines’ electricity rates, in 2013. It owns the largest solar farm in Luzon.

The 22-year-old is the only Filipino to be included in the 30 millennials recognized under the manufacture and energy category.

Meanwhile, artist Charice Pempengco, 23, made it to the “30 Under 30 Asia” list for entertainment and sports category. She joins actor Liam Hemsworth and K-pop artist Kim Yoona, among others.

For the arts category, two Filipinos made it to the roster. One is Xyza Cruz Bacani, 29, maid-turned-photographer who captured on camera the modern slavery in Hong Kong. The other is Ronson Culibrina, 24, a painter who deconstructs “figures, symbols, and



Charice Pempengco



Charice Pempengco

other elements to challenge people’s stereotypes”, Forbes said.

A 26-year-old anthropology degree holder, Koh Martinez Onozawa, was included in the retail and e-commerce list for his bamboo music amplifiers. He is the founder of Loud Basstard.

Co-founder and chief technology officer of Cropital, Rachel De Villa, is among the 30 millennials in the finance and venture capital category. She is 23 years old and her company helps finance local Filipino farmers.

In the healthcare and science category, Amin Hataman, 15, of southern Mindanao was recognized. He invented the biodegradable bags made from a coconut by-product that disintegrates after several days.

Belonging in the social entrepreneurs category

are Henry Motte-Munoz, 29-year-old co-founder of Edukasyon.ph and Bantay.ph; Raphael Mijeno, 28-year-old co-founder and chief financial officer SALT lamp, and Valcenie Balace, 27-year-old founder of dating service provider, Peekawoo.

No Filipinos, however, made it to the media, marketing, and advertising category and enterprise tech category.

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