

# PF NEWS

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## 40th Year of Filipino Fiesta Celebration in Sacramento



Photos by Dave San Pedro



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The month of June has been an exciting time for me. It's usually the month where most celebrations are held such as birthdays, weddings, graduations, family reunions, and anything else that can be celebrated, and as the summer season begins. This month of June has become the most memorable time for me especially, as I've achieved one of the most important items in my bucket lists (graduating with an MSN) after 30 years of being in the nursing profession. I'm forever grateful for the unwavering support of my husband and my children and for the constant encouragement of my family and friends.

This June issue of PF news is, once again filled with interesting articles from our contributing writers. Please read on and enjoy.

Happy 4th of July!  
Dinnah

## The Prez and the Press

REGRETTABLY, the conversation between President-elect Rodrigo Duterte and the news media has turned sharp and shrill. All but lost in the noise is the two parties' common duty in law and tradition to serve and to inform the Filipino people on issues, events and policies that affect their interest and welfare.

A president—all at once the chief executive, fount of foreign policy, manager of the national household, guardian of peace and order, commander of the uniformed services, and arbiter of policy conflicts—is the most important pivot of news and policy in the land. The President is mandated by law to lead the nation and to promote transparency, accountability, and good governance.

But the Constitution also upholds the citizens' rights to free speech, free press, free expression, and peaceable assembly. It guarantees as well their right to due process, equality before the law, access to information, justice, and life.

As "the people's private eye in the public arena," the news media serve as custodian and gatekeeper of some of these rights. It's a task that must be accomplished, and the President-elect's predecessors as well as the nation's journey from democracy to dictatorship and back illustrate why and how we must inquire into, inveigh against, and investigate questionable public officials and agencies, on the citizens' behalf.

Thus, despite his vexation with those he calls the "lowlives" and the "mouth-pieces" in the news media, we must at all times cover him, his actions, and his statements. In truth, the news media must report

more—and better—about him, his policies and his actions, with our reports guided by the best standards of accuracy, fairness and context.

This we must do even as we note at least two disturbing "messages" from the President-elect.

First, by saying that "corrupt journalists ... vultures of journalism can die for all I care [because] you're asking for it," he mocks the memory of 172 journalists (at latest count) killed in the line of duty since democracy's rebirth in 1986. The last report filed by a majority of those slain journalists precisely exposed crime and corruption, the same social ills that he says he wants to curb. Sadly, not a single mastermind or principal suspect in these murders, including state agents, local warlords, and criminal elements, have been held to account.

Second, whether intended or not, his volcanic language has dampened, indeed chilled, the daily reportage, so that journalists with valid, if testy, questions are seemingly forced to eat expletives by way of a response.

To be sure, corruption in the news media is as real as the 16-million vote that secured the victory of the President-elect. To be sure, corruption afflicts both individuals and agencies in the news media, and has evolved into a sub-culture with a language all its own.

As anywhere else, however, corruption in the news media is a supply-demand chain. One solution offers a key role for the incoming administration: Slay it at the source. The government's own media agents, as well as politicians and corporate PRs who offer more than stories to get favorable coverage or to spike bad news,

must, in the President-elect's words, "stop it." Another solution calls for quick action from media managers: Provide better pay and protection for journalists.

But here's the thing: The institutional capture of the news media by politicians has begun in some parts of the country. Local politicians and their families have acquired ownership and control of print and broadcast media agencies, and certain local government units have bought block-time segments using public funds. The corruption of the news media thus also involves partisan political interests driving editorial processes—as the President-elect knows full well.

Yet for all the supposed differences, the news media and the President-elect have complete agreement on one factor: the urgency of a Freedom of Information Law. The issuance of an FOI executive order on Day One of his presidency should prevent the 17th Congress from tarrying in its task.

An FOI Law will provide the necessary institutional and legal framework for full and true functional links between transparency and accountability in government, and for the right of all Filipinos to access information in order to take part in nation-building.

We in the news media wish the incoming administration success in all its endeavors. As journalists and as citizens, we commit not only to do journalism right and better, but also to uphold and defend free speech, free press, free expression, and the people's right to know.

## P-Noy and Du30, compared

By John Nery

THE TRANSITION from the Aquino to the Duterte presidencies gives us an opportunity to compare the two presidents. I have chosen the following three points of comparison; others may wish to discuss other reference points. President-elect Rodrigo Duterte comes out ahead in one, President Aquino leads in another. The third is a toss-up, with perhaps the Filipino public ending up losing.

First, their electoral mandate. No one of the presidents elected under the 1987 Constitution has received a majority of the votes cast in their respective elections. The combination of a multiparty setup and a first-past-the-post system all but ensures that all presidents of the Fifth Republic win with a mere plurality of the vote.

Of the five presidents elected since 1987, Mr. Aquino in 2010 won the largest share of the vote: 42 percent. Fidel V. Ramos became president in 1992 with only 23.5 percent. At 39 percent, Duterte's share is the second smallest after Ramos' not only since 1987 but in history.

Only one president elected under previous constitutions received a plurality: Carlos P. Garcia in 1957, with 41 percent. That year, there was a strong third-party challenge from Sen. Claro M. Recto. All other presidents elected before 1987 won an outright majority.

But, statistics aside, what seems striking about the Duterte transition is the rush to join the Duterte ruling coalition. I wish to be clear: In 2010 and in 2013 the Aquino coalition in the House of Representatives also forged supermajorities. But this year the political class has conducted itself in even more obvious self-interested ways. To give just one example: I am certain that, even before Duterte, senators in other years have asked

presidents-elect their preferred candidate for Senate president. But this year we have witnessed the spectacle of senators going to Davao City and saying, in public, that they wanted to know Duterte's choice. So much for the Senate's traditional independence.

Takeaway: Because of his reputation and his language (see below), Duterte even before taking his oath of office has been able to widen his electoral mandate to an extent Mr. Aquino could not have imagined in 2010.

Second, their war on corruption. It doesn't sound like it, judging from the leaks and pronouncements coming from the Malacañang of the South, but

Mr. Aquino was elected on an anticorruption platform, too. The anticorruption fight then is something the two have in common. But could it be they have different definitions of corruption?

Many lawyers might agree with Duterte's analysis of the legal case pending against ex-president Gloria Arroyo; the former prosecutor thinks the case is irretrievably weak. In this light, his campaign pledge, during a sortie in Pampanga, to "release" Arroyo makes sense. But what about his pledge, during a sortie in Cavite, to ensure that Sen. Bong Revilla will be allowed to post bail? He may find far fewer lawyers who will agree with him that the nonbailable plunder case against

Revilla is weak; indeed, the plunder cases against Revilla, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile are solid: powerful arguments backed by hard evidence.

The other day, the President-elect said that if he found out that a member of his Cabinet was engaged in corruption, he would whisper in that Cabinet member's ear: "Go." Why not "You betrayed me, and you're going to rot in jail"?

Takeaway: Mr. Aquino's largely successful war was undermined in part by his

unmistakable loyalty to friends and political allies. If the release of Arroyo and the grant of bail to Revilla are an indication, Duterte's war on corruption might be fought in city streets but not in the corridors of power.

Third, their choice of language. Their choices were already evident in their respective presidential campaigns. Mr. Aquino decided he was much more comfortable, more fluent, in Filipino; unlike Joseph Estrada, he decided to make it his default language, even in the most august of official functions. I think this may help explain why, over his six years in office, he has retained consistently high approval or satisfaction ratings. He is better heard this way (if not always understood).

I hope I am only being fair if I describe Duterte's choice as the language of intimidation. The expletives he deploys are sometimes meant for entertainment (as in his victory rally in Davao City, when the occasional "p\*tang-ina" would meet the crowd's standard of approved scandalousness and result in laughter and applause), but together with his many references to killings and to death, they help create a climate of fear, or at least a threatening air.

It's contagious language, too. Has any incoming finance secretary ever spoken with an incumbent official the same way Carlos Dominguez (a good choice for finance, actually) spoke with Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina? By Dominguez's own recounting, he called Lina to tell him not to issue implementing rules and regulations (or IRRs) for the new Customs and Modernization and Tariff Act. "I called Bert Lina to say not to tie my hands," he said. Otherwise: "There's going to be hell to pay."

Takeaway: Confrontational language may become the new norm, coarsening an increasingly uncivil public discourse.



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# Duterte insists on death penalty by hanging

By Alexis Romero

**M**anila, Philippines - President-elect Rodrigo Duterte has insisted on executing criminals by hanging, just days after Pope Francis issued a statement opposing the death penalty.

Duterte said while critics of capital punishment view it as “inhuman,” criminals under the influence of drugs have been reduced to a “bestial state.”

“I’m asking for re-imposition of death penalty so that I can hang them,” Duterte said yesterday during the turnover ceremony at the Davao City Police Office.

“They say that death penalty is inhuman. But what is so human about killing an 18-year-old child or raping her? Drugs have reduced human killing into bestial state,” he added.

Duterte reiterated that the death penalty is more of retribution than a deterrent to a crime.

“If there is death penalty, you won’t be afraid anymore because you will be killed,” he said.

Capital punishment was abolished in 1987 during the presidency of Corazon Aquino but was re-imposed in 1993 under president Fidel Ramos.

Crimes that were punishable by death include rape, kidnapping, murder and drug trafficking.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo scrapped the death penalty anew on June 24, 2006 after approving Republic Act 9346. Her successor, President Aquino also opposed capital punishment, be-



President-elect Rodrigo Duterte

lieving it would not address criminality in the country.

The restoration of the death penalty is one of the priorities of the administration of Duterte, who anchored his campaign on maintaining peace and order.

On Tuesday, Pope Francis reiterated the Catholic Church’s opposition to the death penalty, saying it goes against the will of God.

He stressed that both the guilty and the innocent have the right to life.

“It must not be forgotten that the inviolable and God-given right to life also belongs to the criminal,” the pontiff said in a video message sent to delegates of the sixth World Congress against capital punishment in Oslo, Norway.

“Indeed, nowadays, the death penalty is unacceptable, however grave the crime of the convicted person,” he added.

Choose life

Ten years after the death penalty was abolished, the Coalition Against Death Penalty (CADP) and Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care

(CBCP-ECPPC) asked Duterte and Congress not to revive capital punishment.

In a statement, the groups asked for an affirmation to the option for life as they vowed to campaign for improvements in the criminal justice system and encourage a rehabilitative and non-punitive correctional system.

Duterte, on several occasions, has asked legislators to re-impose the death penalty, believing this would deter criminals from doing their acts.

But the CBCP-ECPPC and CADP said they would continue lobbying for the non-restoration of the death penalty and help in educating the public on the issue.

“Filipinos share a common vision of a truly just, humane and peaceful society. They have chosen to oppose the unnecessary taking away of life of any individual and uphold the inherent dignity of all persons,” their statement read.

They pointed out that the “death penalty is a violation of the right to life. The violation of the right to life of victims is in no way righted by the deliberate taking away of another’s right to life by the state.”

Both groups regard the death penalty as a cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

“There is no humane method of killing. The penalty, whether carried out or not, exerts extreme emotional and psychological pressures on the condemned and his family,” the statement also read.

They claimed that capital punishment is disadvantageous to the poor, the marginalized and most vulnerable sectors of society as a “majority of those who had been meted with death penalty are poor, uneducated people who have no political connections. They could not afford the services of a good criminal lawyer.”

The groups also claim that, contrary to the belief of some people, the imposition of the death penalty does not prevent crime.

Meanwhile, Sen. Gregorio Honasan cautioned authorities against tolerating the “summary execution of suspected drug couriers” after the number of drug-related deaths and arrests went up a few days before Duterte sits as the country’s 16th president on June 30.

Although not directly opposing the killings, he said law enforcers should ensure that the targets are proven to be involved in illegal

drug activities.

He said it would be difficult to bring back to life a person who was wrongly accused and executed by the police.

Honasan credited the renewed zealotness of authorities to address criminality to the political will of Duterte, adding that every action of the chief executive and his alter egos should be within the realm of respecting human rights.

The lawmaker, who lost in the vice presidential race to Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo, is also open to calls for the implementation of a national identification (ID) system.

An ID system, he said, may determine the actual number of Filipinos, establish their whereabouts and allow the government to get updated data, like the number of those still studying or working.

“It is really important for us to define the purpose of the national ID system, and what we want to achieve with its implementation,” Honasan said.

Unless the purpose is clear, he said the national ID system could be used for harassment, abuse of authority and abuse of discretion.

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## Robredo urges Filipinos: Unite behind Duterte administration

Manila, Philippines – Vice President-elect Leni Robredo on Sunday, June 26, urged Filipinos to set aside their political differences and unite behind the new Philippine leadership that would assume office on June 30.

Robredo made the call at the National Day Celebration for the Filipino community in Tokyo, Japan, where she was invited by outgoing Philippine Ambassador Manuel Lopez.

She said in her speech at the Philippine embassy event – also a farewell party for Lopez, an appointee of President Benigno Aquino III, and the ambassador's wife, Maria Teresa Lopez – that with the elections over, Filipinos again have to “aspire as a people, as a nation.”

“Dahil ho kailangan tayong mag-aspire ulit bilang isang bansa, sana kung ano ang differences na pinagdaanan noong nakaraang eleksyon, handa tayong isantabi iyon para suportahan iyong ating susunod na magiging Pangulo; para suportahan iyong susunod na administrasyon,” she said.



**LENI IN JAPAN.** Vice President-elect Leni Robredo meets with members of the Filipino community at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo for the National Day Celebration on June 26, 2016.

(Because we have to again aspire as a nation, I hope that you can set aside whatever differences you had in the last elections to support the next President; to support and listen to the voice of our countrymen, which is also your voice.)

“Kasi po iyong success ng administrasyong ito, mai-tatranslate iyon sa success ng buong bansa. Sana kung anuman ang pangit na pinagdaanan noong eleksyon, sana handa tayong tanggapin at pakinggan iyong boses ng ating mga kababayan, at boses ninyo rin,” Robredo added.

(The success of this administration will translate

to the success of the entire nation. Hopefully, regardless of any unpleasant experience during the past elections, we are ready to accept and listen to the voice of our countrymen, which is also your voice.)

Robredo made the call as she prepares for a separate inauguration from President-elect Rodrigo Duterte, following the wishes of the latter.

Unlike her predecessors, the Vice President-elect is not expected to get a Cabinet position under the incoming administration. Duterte had

earlier said that they are on opposite sides of the political fence, and that he didn't want to hurt his friend, Senator Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr, who lost to Robredo by a hairline.

Robredo said in an interview that she has not spoken with Duterte, but her camp has already made an appointment with him.

### National unity

Since the event was also a thanksgiving ceremony for volunteers at the Philippine Festival 2014 in Tokyo, Robredo likened national unity to a cultural festival that

highlights the best of what the Philippines has to offer through presentations of its various regions. The end product is boosting national pride.

“Handa kayong kalimutan iyong pagkakaiba ng lahat at pagtulung-tulungan, pagpaguran at pagsakripisuhan para maging successful ang okasyon (You are prepared to forget your differences and instead you focus on working together and making sacrifices to ensure the success of the event),” Robredo said.

The Vice President-elect told Filipinos in Tokyo that

her participation in the embassy event was “last-minute.” She was in Japan with her daughters for a two-day private visit to Osaka.

Robredo said she will celebrate her 29th wedding anniversary with her daughters on Monday, June 27, just as they had done since former interior secretary Jesse Robredo died in 2012.

Robredo and her 3 daughters have been going on trips after the May 9 elections. They have been to Oslob in Cebu, and Myanmar for short trips. – Rappler.com



**FILCOM MEETING.** Vice President-elect Leni Robredo meets with the Filipino community in Japan at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo on June 26, 2016. Photo from Leni Robredo Media Bureau

## Russia Disappoints China, Sides With Philippines Over South China Sea

By Hugh Clement

Russia Disappoints China – The tension over the territorial disputes in the South China Sea seems to have overcome even those caused by the Senkaku/Diayu Islands. Vietnam and China are involved in their worst political conflicts decades already over an oil drilling platform near the Paracel Islands.

And because of the anti-China protests in China brought the relation of both countries' relations to a temporary freeze. Moreover, the Philippines' detention of Chinese fishermen has increased the discord between the China and the country.

And will all these conflicts occurring at the same time, the issue in the South China sea becomes even more serious.

Behind this picture of the issue, we have seen the US criticizing China, express support for Vietnam and shield the Philippine Military. But we haven't heard Russia, China's “strategic

partner,” take a stand on this disputed issue, who now think that the relationship between Russia and China are not as good as before. Even on the Senkaku/Diayu dispute between Vietnam and China, Russia has kept an ambiguous position.

In a report by Mu Chunshan, a Beijing-based journalist on The Diplomat he said, “In my eyes, however, this does not mean that Russia's is of two minds in its relationship with China.”

He also lists down the 4 main reasons of complicated political and strategic factors of both countries.

Chunshan said that China-Russia relationship is different from Philippine-US relations, for China and Russia are not allies. There is no treaty between the 2 countries, unlike US and Philippines as well as Japan and US, that sets obligations to provide political and military support to its partner. In short, this is the highest bilateral relationships in in-



China Seeks Joint Pacific Security Vision With Russia

ternational relations. While China-Russia has a characteristic of strategic partnership, the 2 are not bound by treaty obligations.

Second, “Russia enjoys good relations with countries bordering the South China Sea and does not need to offend Southeast Asia for the sake of China. As noted above, Russia is not enthusiastic about publicly backing China on the South China Sea issue. One of the most important reasons for this is that Russia enjoys good relations with many of the Southeast Asian countries,”

Chunshan continued.

Third, it is not necessary for Russia to directly seek out confrontation with the US over the South China Sea. Russia is currently focusing on Europe, especially in the occurring crisis in Ukraine that has already modified confrontation between the West and Russia.

“Given this, Russia has neither the desire nor the ability to confront the U.S. in the South China Sea,” he added.

He also highlighted that “The U.S. is only an influencing factor, not a de-

termining factor that will determine the future of the situation. In this context, as an outsider and bystander, Russia has even less of a motivation to support China and criticize the U.S.”

Fourth, China's development has actually caused some worries within Russia. To some west people, the tumult between China and other countries in the South China Sea could help restrict China's “expansion” into other regions.

“In Russia, there has always been some concern that China's development

will lead to the Russian far east being gradually “occupied” by the Chinese, with this vast territory, along with its resources, becoming fodder for China's development. Although Russian officials are optimistic about the potential for cooperation in the far east, they have never for a moment relaxed their guard against China's so-called “territorial expansion.”” he said.

No need for China to be doubtful and feel disappointed about Russia's viewpoint on the South China Sea Disputes.



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# Memorial Day Ceremonies

By Dale Esperante

Across the nation, those familiar with the stories of our veterans, Memorial Day is an extraordinary holiday. Remembering that a day such as this was a gift, we celebrate. We can celebrate because countless veterans gave up their all for freedom.

So on 30 May 2016, patriots nationwide gathered wherever they could to pay their respects for our military and freedom fighting veterans who have transferred to Post Everlasting. The Fil-Am community's American Legion Magellan Post 604 paid their respect by answering a special invitation from the residents of Camden Springs Gracious Retirement Living to honor this day. For the first order of the day, a Color Detail consisting of American Legion Veterans Howard Williams along with his comrades, Ted Tabarango and Fred Amper, stood at attention next to the pole, prepared to raise the flag, while a squad of their comrades stood in formation a few feet away. The area next to the entrance of the sprawling complex became crowded with an audience of onlookers, mostly residents and their visiting families.

Legionnaire Amper and Tabarango readied the flag awaiting the signal of Legionnaire Williams to the Cordero Brothers for the sound of To the Colors. Signal was given, the sound resonated, and the flag was quickly raised. During the time span readying and raising the flag, a number of digital photo clicks undoubtedly transpired.

Legionnaire Williams signaled the flag detail to fall out and get ready for the Wall of Honor Dedication. To be conducted in the central lounge. Upon reaching the central lounge of the facility, prearranged seats welcomed the residents and their guests for the special ceremony. The activity director of the residence, Chelsea Erbe, promised the attendees a memorable Memorial Day ceremony. She introduced the adjutant of Post 604, yours truly, to say a few words before introducing the special guest of honor. The adjutant explained one of his duties is to ensure everyone is present and accounted for. This is done by means of a roll call. He offered this roll call as a way to introduce every legionnaire who came this day. He asked the legionnaires to answer loudly but gently and clearly when their names



are called. The following were introduced: 2nd Vice Commander Joe Gonzalez, Director Carlos Cordero, Sgt-at-Arms Bill Bostock, Chaplain Ato Delacruz, Legal Counsel Bill Tyson, Service Officer Howard Williams, Finance Officer Andy Tancioco, Director Bill Versoza, Music Maestros Paul and Phillip Cordero, Historian Fred Amper, and 1st Vice Ted Tabarango. The penultimate introduction was Post 604 Commander Rick Rafanan. Finally, the commander who is responsible for 16 Posts between Woodland and South Sacramento, the Man of the Hour, the distinguished District 6 Commander Will Williams was proudly introduced by the Post 604 adjutant.

The D6 commander delivered his prepared Memorial Day speech. The residents admirably offered their full attention to every word the commander uttered. (Their body language indicated their full attention and active listening) Smiles and lean forward stances were the norm among the listeners. The audience became vigorously engaged when the commander decided to stop using the crackling microphone. Surprisingly, he sounded louder and clearer without the use of a microphone. Preface to the honor wall dedication, he pulled out a list he asked for before the meeting. The list recorded the resident veterans who were in attendance, and whose names and photos will be part of the Wall of Honor. Every resident veteran who was called stood up proudly and each one was met with cheers from friends and families as well as fellow residents.

When Commander Will uttered the name of Danny Mander, everyone looked in the direction of this man who stood before



the commander. Now in his 90s, Danny Mander in his 20s was responsible for the safety of the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. He was also within the circle of the huge historical names of the 20th century, such as, President Roosevelt, Josef Stalin, British Field Marshal Bernard "Monty" Montgomery, and the then-teen Queen Elizabeth. Commander Will stood awed as he spoke, with Danny next to him. Danny Mander has lived and experienced historical events that many of us have only read about in history books.

The residents of Camden Springs Gracious Retirement Living may unquestionably have amazing historical tidbits they could share. On this day, they welcomed a chance to listen to someone else's story. Commander Will shared his personal experiences during his time in the United States Marine Corp, in times of peace and conflict. His rapt audience undeniably proved that the commander's personable approach made their day an enjoyable but inspirational and memorable one.

After the ceremonies, a few of the legionnaires accepted the management staff's offer to stay for lunch. An American menu



Photos by Dale Esperante

was appropriately prepared for this holiday, hamburgers-cheeseburgers-hot dogs. The chef prepared burgers and hot dogs, served by the dining staff, elevated the legionnaires dining experience. Coffee, beverages, salads, main entrée, side dishes and desserts—what a wonderful American holiday luncheon!

A day after, yours truly stopped by to drop off a copy of the photos we've taken at the retirement home. General manager Tammie Benton pleasantly welcomed me back and pointed me to the office where I could speak with Chelsea Erbe again. No sooner than I could ask her how we were received yesterday, she shared that the residents couldn't stop talking about us, especially the inimitable District 6 Commander Will Williams. They would like me to tell the commander that they were inspired by his speech and anecdotes. They also wanted him to know that they thought he was a great speaker, definitely not longwinded at all! I later phoned the commander and reported to him that according to the residents of Camden Springs, Memorial Day celebration was definitely "Mission Accomplished!"

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## What the American revolution can teach us about Brexit

By James Nevius

Last Thursday, as it became clear that the citizens of the United Kingdom were voting to leave the European Union, a lot of Americans began scratching their heads. What was this monumental decision that was sending shockwaves through the financial markets and threatening to rewrite the map of Europe?

And, more importantly, why should we care?

Since the vote, a flurry of articles have addressed the effects of Brexit on globalization, on the US economy, and on our national security.

But Britain could actually learn a thing or two from the United States – after all, we staged our own Brexit in 1776. Granted, ours was fought with muskets and fixed bayonets, but there are similarities between America's fight for independence and Britain's desire for a greater control in its own affairs. Moreover, despite Britain's deep desire to hold onto its American colonies, our revolution also provided unintended economic benefits for Britain. Should Brexit actually happen, there's a chance that this revolution at the ballot box might also benefit the UK in ways that people don't yet realize.

Both the American revolution and the Brexit vote were, at their core,

about commerce. Even those whose knowledge of the war of independence is shaky remember the rallying cry of the colonists: "No taxation without representation!" Laws such as 1765's Stamp Act (designed to defray costs of the seven years' war) made Americans feel as though they were always on the short end of the economic stick. Americans wanted to keep their hard-earned cash in the colonies, not send it off to Britain.

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Similarly, a centerpiece of the leave campaign – walked back immediately after the vote – was the claim that £350m a week sent by Britain to the European Union would instead be pumped into the UK's National Health Service. While this wasn't precisely a matter of "no taxation without representation", the sense that British money was pouring into Europe with little to show in return has direct parallels to America's economic woes in the 18th century.

There's also no denying that xenophobia played a major role in the Brexit vote. What is often forgotten about America's early history is that we were plagued by cultural isolationism, too. In 1774, the so-called "Intolerable Acts", imposed by Britain on the colonies after the Boston Tea Party, included the Quebec Act, which gave French Catholics religious free-

dom in exchange for loyalty to the crown. Many protestants in the the 13 breakaway colonies were united by anti-Catholic zeal and saw this as too much foreign influence. If Catholics were granted rights in Canada, what might happen down here?

But if Americans thought that winning the war would stem the tide of immigration, they were utterly wrong. There's been a tension in the United States since its founding between the native-born and those who have immigrated, and there has never been a moment in American history when some race or nationality hasn't been the focus of anti-immigration fervor. Those in the UK who voted to leave the EU may think they've won a small victory in tightening Britain's borders, but if America's history is a model, there's little that can actually be done to slow immigration.

More importantly, should they even want to? After all, America's strength lies in its rich tapestry of citizens drawn from every corner of the globe. The same is true in the UK. London has been a cosmopolitan city for millennia; even those UK citizens who think of themselves as entirely British have cultural and physical DNA drawn from Danes and Saxons and Romans and French and Celts. Is now the time to turn back the clock to some imagined past that doesn't see

foreign influence? It would be impossible; the idea that Brexit can "Make Great Britain great again" – to steal a slogan from Donald Trump – is at best a fantasy. At worst, it sets a dangerous precedent that says nationalism derives solely from race and heritage, while migrants who choose to embrace a new homeland are interlopers.

In November, we shall see if Americans want to go down a similar path. Donald Trump's rhetoric about congratulating Britain on its newfound "declaration of independence" is just a cover for saying that he, too, would like to reject people in the United States – be they American-born citizens of Mexican descent or Muslim immigrants drawn to the freedoms secured by the American revolution – who do not fit his model of what it means to be an American.

One reason immigration is important is that after America had won the war of independence, it did not suddenly find itself living in splendid isolation. In fact, the country's major trading partner became Great Britain, with the United States importing far more from its former fatherland than it could export in those early years. Like early America, Britain today cannot be a self-sufficient nation. Goods, human capital, and money will continue to need to flow in and out of the country. Trading partnerships with EU coun-

tries may become more strained, but they can't disappear. In the late 18th century, the new United States needed to quickly become a part of a complex global network. While alliances have shifted over the centuries, that network remains intact.

Brexit makes maintaining that network more difficult. As British politicians vie for power in the aftermath of the vote, financial markets will stay volatile. As EU citizens living in Britain wonder what's going to happen to their livelihoods, companies will have to think hard about how much investment they want to make in Britain. History teaches us that the British economy will recover eventually, but it will take time.

What could set that recovery back enormously would be the election of Donald Trump in November. If he imposes even a fraction of his ideas about dismantling trade agreements, building Mexican walls, or deporting immigrants, tremors in the financial markets could become full-blown earthquakes. What the American revolution teaches us is that there's a difference between freedom and isolation; indeed, America's place as a pinnacle of freedom has only been achieved by fighting against its isolationist tendencies. If Brexit is implemented, the UK will sacrifice freedom for isolation. We can't let that happen in America, too.



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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

Had Sen. Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. won the vice presidential contest, it could have been one of the greatest – if not the greatest – political comebacks in the annals of politics. And the 30 years that passed since his father, the late dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos, was ousted and the entire Marcos family booted out of the country, it would have been a saga that historians would consider as the pinnacle of political achievement. No political dynasty in modern times had done such a spectacular comeback. If history had to be repeated, the Marcoses would have been consigned to the dustbin of history, maligned and laughed at.

But like a snail that inched its way – slowly but surely -- to the top, the Marcoses cunningly calculated each movement to achieve the desired result without alarming those who have vowed “Never again!” to their comeback. Had Bongbong run for president instead of vice president, the pushback would have been so great that it would have buried his presidential ambitions for good, never to resurface again. But he must have known that and instead took a path that was safer, a run for the vice presidency.

In my article, “Who doesn’t want to be vice president?” (August 28, 2015), I wrote: “Whoever wins the vice presidency would be in a good position to run for

president in 2022. Statistics show that out of the 10 presidential elections since 1946 (excluding the presidential elections during the martial law), five incumbent vice presidents ran for president in the next presidential election and won. They were: Elpidio Quirino in 1948, Carlos P. Garcia in 1953, Diosdado Macapagal in 1961, Joseph Estrada in 1998, and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in 2004. But three other incumbent vice presidents had opted not to run for president, to wit: Emmanuel Pelaez in 1965, Salvador Laurel in 1992, and Noli de Castro in 2010.

“Based on these historical data, whoever is elected vice president in 2016 would most likely win the presidency in 2022, which begs the question: Does that mean that Poe, Roxas, and Duterte don’t have a ghost of a chance of beating Binay? Not necessarily. A case in point was Aquino who – like Poe – was an incumbent senator when he ran for president in 2010. Out of a field of nine presidential candidates, which included heavyweights former Senator Manny Villar, former President Joseph Estrada, and former Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Aquino beat them all with 42.08% of the vote!”

#### The fall of Binay

There were rare exceptions as in the case of Vice President Jejomar Binay, who ran and lost in the recently concluded 2016 presidential elections. However, his loss may be attributed to a slew of corruption and plunder charges that eroded his popularity ratings during the campaign period. Within a few months, his ratings plummeted from number one position to the bottom among the five ma-

major presidential candidates.

But Binay would have been unbeatable had he kept his nose clean. But the corruption activities that he was allegedly involved with when he was mayor of Makati City were hammered in by his rivals during the campaign.

#### The rise of Leni

On the vice presidential derby, Bongbong and Congresswoman Leni Robredo fought the battle neck and neck. In the end Leni outvoted Bongbong by a razor-thin margin of a little over 260,000 votes. Although Leni was relatively unknown – she had no prior national election experience – her late husband, Secretary of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Jesse Robredo, was very popular with the ordinary people. His habit of wearing rubber flip-flop slippers – or “tsinelas” -- in public had earned him their respect and admiration.

While her husband’s legacy helped her win the support of the common people – masa – Leni got a big boost from the “Kaya Natin!” -- a good governance grassroots movement -- that Jesse founded together with Pampanga Governor Fr. Ed Panlilio and Isabela Governor Grace Padaca. However, with the defeat of Panlilio by the powerful Arroyo-Pineda political alliance and the loss of Padaca in a recount engineered by the powerful

Dy family dynasty, Kaya Natin! was decimated of its leadership. Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo survived the political assault. In 2010, President Benigno Aquino III appointed him DILG Secretary. He served in that capacity until his untimely death in 2012.

#### Solid North

On the other hand, there was Bongbong who is identified with his late father, whose dictatorial regime had rubbed millions of people the wrong way, causing deep wounds in their psyche.

But since the three decades that had passed since the EDSA revolution, a new breed of Filipinos – the post-martial law babies and the millennial generation – has come of voting age. And they were the sources of Bongbong’s strengths, not to mention the vaunted “Solid North” that had brought sons of Ilocandia -- Elpidio Quirino, Ramon Magsaysay, Carlos P. Garcia, Ferdinand E. Marcos, and Fidel V. Ramos – to the presidency in the past.

With the clannishness of Ilocanos, it is not unusual to hear them proclaim their loyalty to Bongbong Marcos, the heir to the Marcos dynasty. “Marcos parin kami” (We’re always be for Marcos) became their rallying cry during the campaign.

#### A waiting game

With Bongbong’s Senate term coming to an end on June 30, 2016, what’s in store for him? Is he going to retire from public service or is he going to seek an appointment from his good friend, president-elect Rodrigo Duterte, so he could remain in the political limelight while he mulls over his future? At 58 years of age, he could still run a great deal of political mileage including another run for a Senate seat in 2019 and the presidency in 2022. By that time, he’d be 64 years old, which would be his last chance to reclaim the glory and power his family had held – and enjoyed -- for so long.

But Bongbong going for the presidency in 2022 would be a lot more complicated – and challenging – than it was when he ran for vice president. Needless to say, Leni Robredo would most likely run for president too; thus, making their face-off a rematch but at the higher heavyweight division. But as vice president for the next six years, Leni would be “president-in-waiting” and just a heartbeat away from the presidency. Indeed, the vice presidency is the best “on-the-job training” without doing much... just waiting.

The clash between Bongbong and Leni in 2022 would set the direction of where the country is going to be in the next quarter century. Surmise it to say, Bongbong represents the country’s elite while Leni identifies with the common tao – the “tsinelas” followers of her late husband. But while Leni’s pursuit of the presidency is a given, Bongbong’s mission in life appears to be to vindicate his father. If he loses, then it will give the people a glimpse of how history will treat Ferdinand E. Marcos. It has been said, “Time heals all wounds.” But the wounds are deep and it might be too soon for healing... if it ever will.

Quo vadis, Bongbong?  
(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

# Quo vadis, Bongbong?



Sen. Ferdinand Bongbong Marcos

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**PerryScope**  
By Perry Diaz

## Digong's bounty killers

In the 1880s, the United States' western and southwestern territories had become known as the "Wild, Wild West," where gunslings ruled and bounty killers abounded. One of the most popular movies that memorialized the bloody history of the "West" was the 1957 movie, "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral." It was so popular that several remakes were made years later, including two versions that were released almost simultaneously: "Tombstone" and "Wyatt Earp," where the good guys -- led by Wyatt Earp -- fought the bad guys known as the "Cowboys."

What's interesting is that Wyatt Earp, his brothers, and a reputed gunslinger named John Henry "Doc" Holliday -- a dentist who preferred pumping slugs than pulling teeth -- went after the "Cowboys" wearing U.S. Marshall badges, which gave them implied authority to kill the bad guys. They're sort of an earlier American version of the modern-day British screen licensed-to-kill agent, "007."

Fast forward to May 9, 2016. Davao City Mayor Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte won the presidency by a landslide. He ran on a promise to rid the country of criminals and drug dealers within six months. But he didn't present a plan on how to fight crime and stop the flooding of drugs into the country. He merely said that he'd kill 100,000 criminals and throw their bodies into the Manila Bay to make the fish fat. He might not mean it literally, but that would send shivers down the spines of criminals.

And to make sure that everybody

in the criminal underworld gets the message, he picked his most trusted law enforcement officer and friend, Chief Superintendent Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, to be the top honcho of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Indeed, if Wyatt Earp had his Doc Holliday, Digong has his Bato dela Rosa. Wyatt Earp did not stop until all the Cowboys were killed. Duterte gave Bato six months to finish the drug dealers. And Bato said, he's ready.

### Wanted: Dead or Alive

To rid the country of criminals and drug lords, Duterte offered bounties for their capture, dead or alive, preferably dead. At a rally, he told his cheering followers, "If they are there in your neighborhood, feel free to call us, the police or do it



Rodrigo Duterte and Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa

me to name you in public because I will only humiliate you." However, he refused to name the three generals.

### Digong's KKK

But Duterte is not only after drug dealers, corrupt generals and police officers. He's also after corrupt government officials including Cabinet Secretaries. Yep, he's not going to spare anybody. The question is: Does he have the political will to punish erring political allies, particularly his friends and classmates whom he appointed to cabinet positions? Which reminds me of President Aquino's KKK (Kaibigan, Kaklase, Kabarilan), many of

whom had erred but he didn't have the courage to fire them.

Aquino loved to say, "Heads will roll" but nothing happened, which only proved that political ties are like the Gordian Knot, you cannot untie it with bare hands. But Alexander the Great knew better that he could do it with a sword and he did it. It worked. Could Duterte do it? Or should I say, "Would he do it?" Perhaps he should ask all his appointees to submit undated resignation letters that he could accept anytime at his pleasure.

### Hang 'em high

One of the things he'd like to accomplish during his presidency is to urge Congress to restore death penalty by hanging, which was abolish in 2006 during Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency. It's interesting to note that if the death penalty were restored, it would also restore death penalty for the crime of plunder. This would certainly make lawmakers -- particularly those involved in the pork barrel scam -- cringe in terror just at the thought of being hanged for plundering the people's money. They'd probably invoke their "Christian beliefs" as pretense for objecting to the restoration of the death penalty.

Needless to say, Duterte would be faced with strong opposition from all quarters. But while the people might be ready and willing to fight -- and kill -- the drug dealers, it doesn't seem like they're as enthused with the idea of stamping out corruption, which is ingrained in every facet of the people's lives. In essence, what took centuries to take root in our society, would probably take as much time to uproot, if not longer... if ever.

### Benevolent dictator

But while Duterte is confronted by a strong defiance to make drastic changes to the Filipinos' way of life, he can start by enforcing strict discipline to his official family --

that is, rule with an iron hand -- while showing compassion for the "common tao."

There is a term for that: benevolent dictator. However, benevolence over time can turn into abuse of power, which was the pitfall of a lot of leaders who had succumbed to the same vice -- corruption -- that they vowed to eradicate. As Lord Acton said more than century ago: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." It was true then, it is still true today.

### P50-million bounty

Faced with such a dilemma -- damn if he does and damn if he doesn't -- Duterte may have to bite the bullet and do the best he could to fight corruption, regardless of who gets hurt, friend or foe alike. The irony of this is that it is harder to punish a friend than an enemy. You can always make new enemies anytime. But building friendships takes a lifetime, which makes one wonder: How many friends would Digong still have left at the end of his presidency? And how many enemies would he have hung by then? Wouldn't that be the true measure of his promise to kill the drug lords and hang the plunderers?

But the drug lords are taking Digong's threat seriously. Bato dela Rosa disclosed the other day during a TV interview with Karen Davila that he received information from the grapevine that the drug lords have put a P50-million bounty on the heads of Digong and himself. He said that the initial bounty they offered was only P10 million for each and there were no takers, which makes one wonder: How high would the bidding go? But right now, bounty killers have already eliminated some drug dealers. And the six-month deadline Digong gave Bato to finish the work has yet to begin.

**Yep, Digong's bounty killers are already at work. Welcome to Tombstone, Philippines.**

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



yourself if you have the gun. You have my support." "If he fights, and he fights to the death, you can kill him," he added. He promised them monetary reward ... and a medal. "I will pay, for a drug lord, five million pesos if he is dead. If he is alive, only 4.999 million," he said, laughing.

He told around 500,000 followers during his thanksgiving party in Davao City: "Corruption must stop. I would have to ask about three generals diyan sa (Camp) Crame to resign. Do not wait for

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Ignite Your Passion For God





By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

# Destination: Corregidor Island

Corregidor Island is officially named Fort Mills, The Gibraltar of the East. Corregidor is also known as The Rock because the island is literally surrounded by rocks.

I was reminded of the movie The Rock which was filmed at Alcatraz.

There is similarity between Corregidor and Alcatraz in the Bay Area near San Francisco, California. Both islands were once used as penitentiaries.

Corregidor island is 47 nautical kilometers from Manila. It takes 1.5 hours voyage by boat. Sun Cruises is so far the only commercial cruise that caters tourists to and from the island. It cost a tour package of P2,000 per person.

There were 23 batteries in the island during World War II. Battery is compose anti-personnel and anti-aircraft tubes.

A Pacific Museum was constructed in the heart of the island to showcase different features and capabilities and weapons used during the war. The first US flag was raised in the island and the flag used in that ceremony is displayed inside the museum.

played inside the museum.

Military barracks were constructed by US Army Corps of Engineer when the Americans occupied the island. The middle of the barracks was assigned to Filipino soldiers fighting with the Americans while the top side of the barracks was assigned to the Americans.

The huge Malinta tunnel was the last military infrastructure surrendered by the American to the Japanese. The tunnel was originally used as storage facility for US military equipments and was used to house American as well as Filipino troops.

President Manuel L. Quezon took oath as president of the Commonwealth at Malinta Tunnel.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur loved the tunnel and stayed there. It took President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to sign three instructions for MacArthur to leave the island otherwise the general will face Court Martial for defying FDR's order. Malita tunnel is a huge and wide that branches bilaterally. It was manually dug by the soldiers.

Japanese made several tunnels in the Corregidor. When General Douglas MacArthur presided the hoisting of flag in the island's parade ground, there were still 20 Japanese soldiers hiding in the tunnel and some were in the ruined barracks. Good thing those Japs did not snipped MacArthur who was standing in front during



the ceremony.

For tourist who love to stay overnight in the island, there is a hotel that can accommodate them. Corregidor Inn has 45 rooms and can cater to tourists who want



to spend the night in the island. It is the best hotel in Corregidor because it is the only hotel in the island.

Aside from military attractions, Corregidor island offers different adventures. It has 40 feet high, 200 meters long zipline. It has biking trails that leads to memo-

rable historic sites. Bird watching for island inhabitants is another attraction among others.

Tourist who stayed overnight in Corregidor enjoy watching skyline of towering Manila and the beautiful lights of Roxas Boulevard. Walking tour at Malinta Tunnel made the visit interesting. Several tunnels branched out from the main one like a fish skeleton. The tunnel has 100 hospital beds.

General Douglas MacArthur stayed in Malinta tunnel during WWII for his safety. It is in the tunnel that President Manuel Quezon took his oath of office.

The ruins are everywhere. During the war hundreds of 2,000 pounds bomb were dropped over the island and its facilities. The scars of WWII bombing are still visible on the structures and military equipments.

Manila became Open City and anybody can go to and from the city without fear of being fired upon and killed.

The Fall of Bataan on May 6, 1942 and the defeat of Corregidor made Gen. Douglas MacArthur and President Manuel L Quezon abandoned the island. On his escape, Gen. MacArthur used PT boat and proceeded to Australia. Speaking before military crowd in Australia, MacArthur stated his famous remarks addressed to the Filipino people, "I shall return."

On October 20, 1944 MacArthur with his troops landed in the island of Leyte and on the same day he made a radio broadcast saying, "People of the Philippines, I have returned!"

Japan formally surrender on 2 September 1945.

An estimated one million Filipinos had been killed. U.S. Registered 10,380 killed in action (KIA) and 36,550 wounded; Japanese registered 255,795 KIA. (*gabbyortig@yahoo.com*)

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# 40th Year of Filipino Fiesta Celebration in Sacramento

By Faina E. Abaya

The epic journey of the Filipinos in the “land of the free and home of the brave” was not strewn with petals of fresh roses but a tough and rocky road where only the very strong in spirit and unyielding will can overcome.

Our forebears quest for social justice since the time they stepped on the shores of Hawaii and mainland United States in the early part of the 19th century was a struggle that lasted for more than two generations. The Filipinos were so discriminated that they were prohibited to live in housing areas, marry one who belonged to a white race and take only menial jobs regardless of the skill they possessed.

So intense was the exclusion of the Filipinos that some of them took refuge in the rural areas to work as migrant workers for seasonal farm products. However, what they thought to be a respite from the rampant inequalities in other employments, farming was just an extension of the glaring discriminatory acts prevailing at that time.

Our ancestors persevered as they fiercely fought with other ethnicities of what they perceived to be a denial of their equal right to be treated fairly in every aspect of human endeavor. Our ancestors, joining hand in hand with other downtrodden minorities, were able to overcome one of the darkest period of their time in the land where equality had been supposedly enshrined in the people’s democratic way of life long before they reached the shores of America.

The old timer Filipinos together with American minorities incessant movements for change, eventually, gained ground as others regardless of race, economic status, religious belief and political affiliation joined the movement that gradually changed the outlook of America.

Today, we joyfully ride the aftermath of that tumultuous journey of our forebears whose triumph over tremendous adversities defined their strong character and steadfast determination to be treated equal in all aspect of human life.

Our inclusion to mainstream America gave us a strong leeway to organize ourselves into a united, vibrant and productive community which we have been enjoying since we gained such equality many years ago. Such unity of purpose, we were able to hold our social gatherings especially our great



tradition of holding Fiesta merry-making which is usually coincided with our Philippine independence day celebration. Although, there was a time when our Fiesta event had been tainted with politics especially during the period of time when our homeland was on political upheaval that threatened the very foundation of our democratic way of life.

Our annual fiesta celebration has evolved since its founding in 1976 by pioneering men and women who believed that there was a need to have our own identity as a people. It is an event that showcase the depth and greatness of our tradition and cultural heritage as depicted in our songs, dances and costumes. It is also an occasion to show our high sense of civility as we invited everyone regardless of nationality, religious belief and political affiliation to prove that we can live in a diversified community.

Just like the previous years of Fiesta celebrations, the center of activities of the June 5, 2016 Fili-



Photos by Faina Abaya & Dale Esperante

pino fiesta was at the Jose Rizal Community Center and its adjacent sprawling park where small and large canopies were erected for business stall owners to display their goods or products. This year’s celebration, the leadership of the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento has appropriately adopted a meaningful Theme which is “A Celebration of Community, Unity and Culture”.

At the park, we can see giant corporations such as Wells Fargo Bank, SMUD and many others

side by side with smaller and even family owned businesses like the Kamiseta stall selling artistically printed shirts owned by Dave and Dinnah San Pedro (Publishers of the Philippine Fiesta News), Face Painting by Maria Dalloway and many other medium scale businesses. The Museo Pilipino, managed by curator Susan Castillo has also a booth where many Filipino cultural artifacts were on display for everyone to appreciate.

Likewise, eateries of Filipino cuisines were also put up for the

hungry and thirsty. The abundance of food in every conceivable Filipino recipe is part of the hospitality and celebratory spirit of every fiesta event. Different models of cars were also on display at the far end of the Park for the avid car enthusiasts. At the middle of the park was a large canopy where the program was held to shade spectators from the excruciating heat of the Sun. At exactly 11:00 O’Clock in the morning when the different community organization contin-

Continued on page 12

# FILIPINO FIESTA 2016

By Dale Esperante

The Philippines celebrate the country's independence on June 12 every year. In Sacramento, Filipino-Americans proud of their cultural heritage celebrate by sharing an annual Filipino Fiesta with the public. It is traditionally held on the first Sunday of June, at Jose P. Rizal Community Center and adjoining park.

Preparation for this year's 5 Jun 2016 fiesta started months ago. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say years instead of months. Forty years of experience from past fiestas helped develop this year's community event.

Thanks to the organizers who were all volunteers. Without their spirit of giving, their cultural pride and joy, and their organizing and logistical skills, Sacramento may not be blessed with this Philippine celebration.

Following tradition, this year's festival started with a parade before the opening ceremonies. Hence at 10:30 a.m., the Color Detail consisting of four Filipino-American veterans (Rick Rafanan, Alexander Cheng, Rudy Delizo, and Bill Bostock) led the colorful and creative lineup of enthusiastic participants. The Grand Marshalls, Liz Fenkell and Liz Rabena, assumed the honorary spot behind the color detail. Next came the dignitaries

from San Francisco's Philippine Consulate, Consul General Henry S. Bensurto Jr. and his key officers. Sacramento's elected officials Dave Tamayo (SMUD Board) and Larry Carr (Sacramento Pro Tem Mayor) smiled and waved as they followed the Consulate. The Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity accompanied by their island queens, Ilocano Foundation of California, Filipino Women's Club, University of the Philippines Alumni Association, Filipino Family Fraternity, Aklan Association of Sacramento and Vicinity, Eskwela Natin, United Federation of Fil-Am Educators, Triskelion Grand Fraternity/Sorority, and Sinag-tala completed the order of organizations who marched in the parade.

Judging the parade fell on the shoulders of Rosie Daus, Zenny Yagen, and Conrad de Castro. Congratulations to all the individuals and organizations who took part in the parade. Following a difficult selection process, the judges' top six were:

- Most Participants: Triskelion Grand Fraternity/Sorority (Tau Gamma Phi)
- Most Enthusiastic: Eskwela Natin
- Most Colorful: Filipino Family Fraternity
- Best Regional Representation: Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity
- Most Creative: Filipino Women's Club
- Group that Best Represents The Theme of the Fiesta: Sinag-tala

Derek Ledda and Sarah Enloe emceed the opening ceremonies. Consul General Bensurto, representing the Philippine government, thanked the organizers for their diligent effort in continuing the Philippine holiday celebration in Sacramento. Started by a small number of Filipinos decades ago, this celebration has become an annual Filipino tradition in towns across this country because of the growth of our population. Following Consul General Bensurto, a number of local and out-of-town elected officials took turns speaking. Congratulations and encouragements flourished with their personal history and relationship with the Filipino community accentuated the speeches of the officials. All were well received by the hospitable audience of Filipinos. For the closing remarks, the highly respected and admired Cynthia Bonta, Mother of State Assembly Member Ron Bonta, did the honors.

Food, shopping, car show, and entertainment after the opening ceremonies kept the approximately 4000 fiesta enthusiasts engaged the rest of the day. For food, of course there were Filipino cuisine booths but also Cambodian, Vietnamese, and other tasty treats. For the shoppers, there were booths selling shirts, hats, fashion accessories, car stuff, and novelty items.

The Car Show was definitely a must see! Cool cars were parked all over the south side of the park. The frames of the cars glistened under the rays of the summer sun. Some "PRides" (short for Pinoy-Rides) displayed custom body-paint designs. This side of the park showed off the cars for sure but it offered more. A DJ from Las Vegas entertained people with his wit and his cut of the latest music genres. Near the DJ hut, a booth selling shirts (some with images of skulls and bones) and accessories triggered a flashback for someone who has lived through the 1960s. With bead curtains and necklaces functioning as see-through walls of the booth, this writer seemed to have glimpse the 60s. For a minisecond, that booth reflected a snippet of a by-gone generation.

Back on the Filipino Fiesta side of the park, two outdoor stages and one indoor venue scheduled day-long performances. The Wells Fargo Stage where the opening ceremonies were held featured the following: L.J. Matias, TAGS, UPAASV-Balagtasán, Makama e Meilia O'Polynesia, Dance Magical, Sinag-tala, The College Fund Street Band, and COHS Poly Club. For Stage One's finale, TV's X-

Continued on page 13



Photos by Dave San Pedro & Dale Esperante



## 40th Year of Filipino Fiesta Celebration in Sacramento

From page 10

gents participating in the parade were assembled and ready for the parade which starts at the corner Florin Mall Drive and Orange Avenue, Sacramento.

With the marching music cadence by the Aklan Association Ati-Atihan Band, the parade commenced led by the American Legion Magellan Post 604 Commander Ric Rafanan and Bill Bostock escorting Alex Cheng and Rudy Delizo carrying the colors of both the United States and the Philippines and just behind them were the Grand Marshalls Liz Fenkell and Liz Rabena. The short route of the parade was towards the large canopy in the middle of the Park where the program was held.

The parade participants from different community organizations were in their best Filipino attires especially the ladies who showed their beauty and elegance in their Filipina dresses of varied colors and designs. And as usual the gentlemen were not far in their sartorial looks with their Barong Tagalog. Some of the participants were even dressed in their regional native costumes such as the Igorots of the mountain provinces and the Ati-Atian group from the province of Aklan.

Just like in the Park, the fiesta atmosphere was also present among the parade participants with their respective officers, such as; Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Mercy Guerrero; Filipino Women's Club, Memie Weitzenberg; Ilocano Foundation of California, Ling Avera; Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation, Joe Gonzalez; Sinag-tala Filipino Theater and Performing Arts, Beatriz Alo; University of the Philippines Alumni Association of Sacramento and Vicinities, Dr. Fred Aquino and Susan Castillo; Filipino Family Fraternity, Nellie Umali; Aklan Association Ati-Atihan Band, Frank Zabal; Eskwela Natin/Unified Federation of Fil-American Education, Dolores Diaz; My Sisters House, Nelda Valmores; Lions Clubs, District 4-C5; Tau Gamma Phi and the Eskrima Group.

As the parade arrived at the place where the program was held which was Emceed alternately by prominent community leaders, Sarah Enloe and Derek Ledda



Photos by Dale Esperante

who also spiced their roles with their wits and humors as they announced the arrival of the different parade contingents. When everyone was already in their respective places, the program started by the singing of the National Anthems of both the United States and the Philippines by Sinag-tala Ensemble and the group of Kristina Garcia, Apollross Reyes and Jasmine Lewis respectively.

The ever energetic Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento President Dick Mazon delivered his Welcome Address who traced the humble beginning of the Fiesta which had been started by well-known group of families and community leaders that gradually evolved into a community wide celebration of the more than 40,000 Filipino Americans in Sacramento and its outlying areas. Dick Mazon also said, "After 40 years of Fi-

esta, who would have thought Six Filipino Organizations would be joined by 10 other Filipino American organizations to showcase our culture and inform our community the contributions we have made in the United States".

Prominent community leader Josie Patria introduced the Program's Guest Speaker, Consul General Henry Bensurto, Jr. of the Philippine Consulate in San Francisco, California who said that, "I commend the community in its quest to honor its roots and to remember the Filipino American Community's contributions to the United States". He further said, "This is an important undertaking that exposes the youth to the Filipino American experience and bring deeper understanding of their heritage and identity".

Likewise, the presence of prominent citizens and politicians were also acknowledged and as they were introduced, each one was given the time to speak about the Fiesta. Nearly all of them are in unison to state their profound appreciation for the organizers and founders of the Filipino Fiesta which attested the fact that United States is really a great country of immigrants. That the country's diversity has made the United States stronger and a better country to live in.

Among the distinguished guests who graced the event were; Amy Alley, communication director

of State Assembly Member Rob Bonta; Don Nottoli, County Supervisor; Larry Carr, Sacramento City Council Member for District 8 and Mayor Pro Tem; Dave Tamayo, SMUD Board Member; Roger Dickenson, State Assembly Member;

It was also the occasion when State Assembly Member Jim Cooper presented Certificates of Appreciation to the founders of the Filipino Fiesta namely; Maxi Vilones, Vince Reyes, Dick Mason, Liz Fenkell, Marlene Pedregosa and Dolores Pizzaro. Special awards were also given to Josie Patria for her long Community Service; Dave San Pedro for his Invaluable Service and Contribution to the Filipino Fiesta and Dick Mazon for his unparalleled role in the founding and carrying out the annual Filipino Fiesta for 40 years.

During the program entertainment was provided by the Sinag-tala ensemble with their interpretation of the song and dance of the "Poetry in Motion" that mesmerized their admiring audience. A choral group also awestruck their audience led by Ben Fenkell with their rendition of a meaningful song entitled "The Journey Never Ends" with lyrics written by Sonny Alforque extolling the people to unite for the common good to make our world a better place for all humanity.

Well known community leader

and President of PNDA Cynthia Bonta who also holds the distinction for being the mother of the first and only Filipino American State Assembly member Rob Bonta of the 18th district of California delivered the closing remarks of the program. She says, among other things to always remember the struggles of our ancestors who fought for our freedom and independence. And also to always bear in mind the significance of Philippine Independence day celebration as well as the indefatigable efforts of our forebears in the United States to attain the life that we are now enjoying today.

The whole day merry making event continued especially musical and dance entertainments performed by various cultural groups and entertainers. Foremost among them was the cultural presentation of the Sinag-tala under the leadership of Beatriz Alo whose performances showed the beauty, grace and elegance of our music, songs and dances. At the back of the Rizal Center where canopies were erected for both entertainers and their audience to shade them from the heat of the Sun, various entertainers thrilled their admiring fans with their latest craze in music, dances and songs. Likewise, inside the Rizal Center itself, entertainments were non-stopped, this time the spontaneous program was emceed by no less than Dick Mazon.

The children were excited and regaled to witness the amazing sleight of hands magic by Dane San Pedro and partner Amanda Newsom who combined their performance with graceful ballet like dancing. The well-choreographed dancing of the Kapit Bahay Dance Troupe led by Lilia Rivera and many other groups of entertainers receiving thunderous applause from their admiring audience. Of course, Line Dancing for everyone of all ages was led by Dance Guru Joe Rivera showing as usual his virtuosity on the dance floor as continuous merrymaking and music gloriously closed the successful 2016 Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento celebration.

The dignitaries and VIP's were treated with sumptuous Filipino cuisine catered by Alex and Ling Avera at the exclusive section of the Rizal Center Auditorium while they were enjoying various shows in the same place. The Filipino fiesta volunteers were also treated with equally delicious meal by the Filipino Women's Club headed by Memie Weitzenberg.

The officers of the 2016 Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento who worked hard for the success of this memorable event are: President Dick Mazon, Vice President Joe Gonzalez, Secretary Mercedes Guerrero, Treasurer Mena Domondon, Auditor Ex-Officio Members Lilia Rivera and Josie Patria.

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# FILIPINO FIESTA 2016

From page 11

Factor finalist and now a seasoned professional singer and dancer, Elona Santiago gave a rapturous performance! Elona's one Filipino number called IKAW would have earned her Four Yesses if she had been competing for the Philippine X-Factor! Maraming Salamat Ms. Elona Santiago!

Stage Two or Rizal Stage (Amphi Theatre), the performers were 3G Rare Band, O'hana Hawaiian Dance Group, Via Manila, Beatles Tribute Band.

In The Indoor Venue a.k.a. the air-conditioned venue, the entertainers were: Benedicto Abelardo, Tri-County Filipino Community Yuba City Dancers, Ballroom Dancing by Ray Oineza, Pabitin & Pinata for Children under 12 years old, Children Magic by Dane San Pedro and Amanda, Zumba by Ricky and Kaiser Employees, Kapitbahay Dancers rep by Roselie, Chinese Community Church Ukelele Fellowship, Joey Guila, Hip Hop History in Sacramento by Chris Marzan (videographers Gabby Agar, Chris Simons, Mathew Simons, and Anthony Simons), B-Boy Challenge by Richard Pasalo.

Before the end of the day, the Logistics and Vendors Coordinator (also Vice President) Joe Gonzalez decided to take a walk and visit some of the vendors. Every vendor greeted Joe as a trusted friend or an uncle. The most common expressions heard from the vendors to Joe, "thank you" and "we'll be back next year" and when apropos "uncle." The Car Show's DJ announced Joe's visit over the loudspeaker saying, "Hello Tito Pepito..." Joe's avuncular rapport with the vendors was evident. His hard work and experience from years past have solidified his value to the Filipino Fiesta as well as the Filipino community of Sacramento.

As Joe headed back to the Rizal building, he met Corporate Sponsors Coordinator Lilia Rivera. As they were talking, five strapping men in uniform approached and thanked Joe and Lilia for being contracted to serve as this year's security force. This photographer took the opportunity to ask Joe, Lilia Rivera, and the five security officers to pose for posterity.

Besides having ample security personnel, a Red Cross tent next to the parking lot staffed ready volunteers from the health care industry. For folks who stopped in to have their blood pressure checked, they were rewarded with bottled water straight from the ice cooler. Cold water was not the only giveaway. Business booths gave away items such as canvas shopping bags, pens, banners, and their business cards. Cache Creek Casino booth handed out a fleece-like blanket



Photos by Dale Esperante



to anyone who wanted one. An American Legion representative offered free coffee cup holders and stationery items. For those who received an official Filipino Fiesta 2016 program, a page included a \$20 cut-out coupon for free slot play at Jackson Rancheria Casino (jackpot!). Great experience, delicious food, free entertainment, and nice giveaways—Salamat Po!

The Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento 2016 Committee Members: Overall Chairperson Dick Mazon, Joe Gonzalez, Mercedes Guerrero, Mena Domondon, Lilia Rivera, Josie Patria, Frank Zabal, Dr. Fred Aquino, Cynthia Bonta, Liz Fennell, Liz Rabena, Ling Avera, Aida Azurin, Luz Daclan, Meding Mangosing, Edna de los Reyes, Nellie Umali, Vickie Debord, Memie Weitzenberg, Alex Avera, Maria Bahoric, Henry Domondon, Edwin Calau, Bill Bostock, Joe Rivera, Bob Rubi, Jinky Dolar along with Lilia Rivera is instrumental in-

viting corporate sponsors, Raeselle Lao, Beep Alo, Chris Marzan, Sarah Enloe, Tyler Mitchell, Dr. Tony Solomon, Dave San Pedro, Ray Oineza, Joey Fortes, Gabby Ortigoza, Susan Castillo, Jay Paular, Bill Tyson, CSUS-Samahang Pilipino, Rachel Cantor, Cleo Sabarner, Rose Basos, Myrna Agbunag, Lourdes Belasco, Remy Solomon, Murray Navarro, Anna Mestidion, Ginna Myers, O Belarma, Maria Plantilla, Emy Emaas, Ed Bacani, Joseph Ancheta, Ruben Ruiz, and this writer. Notable Guests: Jim Cooper, Ron Bonta's Rep, Darrell Steinberg, Don Nottoli, Genevieve Shiroma, Roger Dickinson, Cynthia Bonta, Consul General Henry S. Bensusanto. We hope all committee members and notable guest names were listed. If there was an oversight, please accept my apologies. This report was especially written to congratulate the Filipino community of Sacramento by expressing MABUHAY FILIPINO FIESTA!

## Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation (PRHF) Fund Raising Golf Tournament

July 16, 2016

For the future Filipino Community Center Building

Non-profit EIN: 94-3361494 for tax purposes

Any question please contact:

Dr. Fred Aquino, PRHF Chairman: 916.914.3106  
Guily Fontillas, PRHF Member: 916.362.7541  
Joe Gonzalez, PRHF Member: 916.369.7863



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## Filipino Family Fraternity May Festival



The officers and members of the FFF led by Dr. Nellie Umali at the 56th May Festival celebration held on May 21, 2016 at the Social Hall of Saint Paul Catholic Church on Florin Road, Sacramento.

In Loving Memory of



Herminigilda "Betty" Cortez-Padilla  
September 11, 1962 - June 16, 2016

The Filipino Community of Sacramento & Vicinity (FCSV)  
Invites you to its presentation of Scholarship Award  
& 1st Canvassing of Mrs. Philippines 2017-2018



Candidates:  
Carol Munar, Luz Molina,  
Dr. Louie Oberman  
Esmeralda Maguire and Susan Aquino

Saturday, July 16, 2016  
6:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Jose Rizal Center  
7320 Florin Mall Drive, Sacramento, CA  
Entrance Fee: \$10 (includes light dinner)



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## Birthdays



**CHRISTOPHER A. ERESPE**  
and brother Carl  
JULY 21



**CAMILLE ABAYA PARAS**  
JULY 10



**VIRGIL FAUNDO** and wify Grace  
JUNE 26 SEPTEMBER 1



**LYNN SANTOS-MITCHELL** and hubby Gregg  
JUNE 27

## Calendar of Events

**JULY 16, 2016, (SAT)**

Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation  
Fund Raising Golf Tournament  
For the future  
Filipino Community Center Building  
Joe - 916.396.7863  
Fred - 916.914.3106



**AUGUST 13 - 14, 2016 (Sat-Sun)**

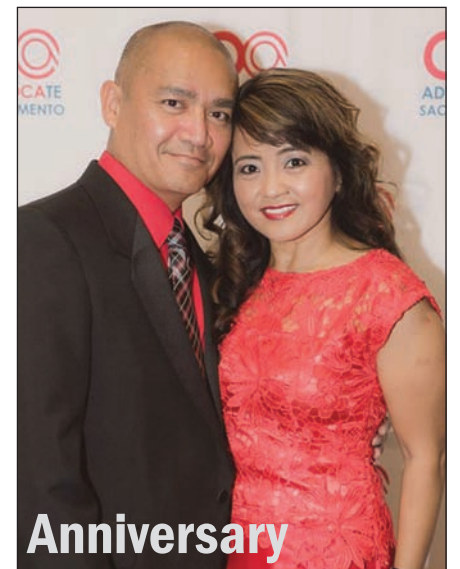
**PISTAHAN Parade & Festival**  
Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco.  
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## Ruben and Edna Nazareno Birthday Celebration

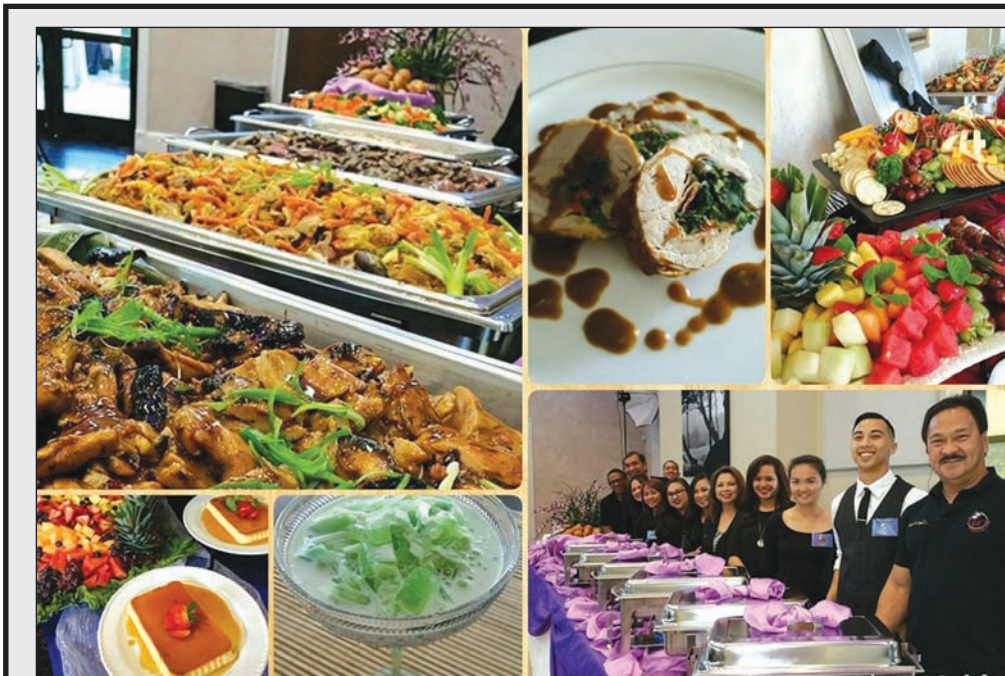


A Luau party in celebration of Ruben and Edna Nazareno's 75th birthday was given by their children and grandchildren on June 11, 2016. It was held at their son Reuben and his wife Christina's residence in El Dorado Hills, CA and joined by their relatives and family friends in the community. (Above photos) Ruben and Edna with their two children, Reuben and Claire and with all their grandchildren.

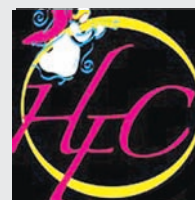


## Anniversary

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JUNE 27



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By Dale Esperante

# Legionnaire Tom Amaba's Fifth Command

On 12 Jun 2016, District 6 Commander Will Williams officiated The American Legion Magellan Post 604 Installation of Officers. Rick Rafanan, the 2015-2016 commander will officially hand over the helm of Post 604 to Tom Amaba effective 1 Jul 2016.

Tom Amaba first served as the commander for Post 604 from 2007-2008. He was reelected for 2008-2009 and again for 2009-2010, serving for three consecutive terms from 2007 through 2010. After his self-imposed sabbatical years from 2011 through 2013, he returned and was elected for the fourth time as commander on 18 May 2014 serving in that capacity through 30 Jun 2015. From 1 Jul 2015 through 30 Jun 2016, Tom served as the Junior past commander, availing his counsel, along with the board of directors, to Commander Rick Rafanan. Comrade Tom Amaba was elected for the fifth time on 15 May 2016 to the position of Commander.

This fifth term of Commander Tom Amaba is a new record for the history of Post 604. If Post Historian Joe Gonzalez researched the past history of the Post, he will find that no previous commander has served as Post 604 commander for five terms.

Speaking of records, Tom follows the progress of the Golden States Warriors. Any Warriors fan will know that numerous records have been surpassed by the "Strength in Numbers" team



Photos by Dale Esperante

this year. As the commander of the Post, Tom will be encouraging every member to emulate the Warriors by participating strongly in Legion activities. As former members of the military, we were warriors ready to give our all for duty, honor, and country. Now we are legionnaires willing to serve the veteran and civil communities.

After being installed and presented the ceremonial gavel by District Commander Will, Commander Amaba voluntarily deferred his ac-

ceptance speech to accommodate the Installation of Officers for The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan (ALAM) Unit 604. District 6 Past President Alice Pambid installed Aida Azurin as the new president of ALAM Unit 604 along with the new board of officers.

After the ALAM instal-

lation ceremony, Commander Tom invited President Aida to deliver her message. President Aida Azurin's dossier includes an extensive experience in leadership, notably as past president of the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity. Aida acknowledged the California Department and District guests of honor. She then turned her attention to supportive husband Segundo, fellow members, and community friends—expressing love and gratitude.

The following officers of The American Legion California District 6 attended the ceremony at Magellan Hall:

**Will Williams:** Comander (Installed the Post officers)

**Alice Pambid:** Auxiliary Past President (Installed the Auxiliary Officers)

**Wendy Obrien:** Candidate California (HQ) Dept. President A.L. Auxiliary President

**Glenda Schultz:** Auxiliary President

**Ramona Tafoya:** 1st Vice President

**Vince Olvera:** Sgt-at-Arms

**Josephine Sullivan:** Past President of Auxiliary Unit 521

Finally, Tom Amaba took his turn to acknowledge the visiting district officers. He then thanked his lovely wife Cynthia, his daughter Irene Joy, and his son TJ. He also thanked the community friends of the Post. To paraphrase a few lines of his speech, "I am humbled

by the trust and confidence bestowed upon me ...Support the veterans now and into the future...We must follow the American Legion's guidance to better serve our fellow veterans... Let us be reminded of the 39 Filipino farmers/laborers who returned as veterans from WWII. The 39 courageously bought this property. They realized owning a property would be the only way they could meet as a community, for times were difficult then..." He ended his speech with a quote, "Old Soldiers Never Die, They Just Fade Away."

Congratulations to the newly installed officers of Magellan Post 604 and Auxiliary Unit 604!

**A Chaplains Thought for the Month of June**  
By Magellan Post 604 Chaplain Dale

A day in May we remember  
Those who gave forever  
So we can celebrate  
All the love, not hate  
To carry us through the fight  
For Independence Day it's right  
To share more to follow  
The days we have to borrow  
From The Lord who blessed us power  
Expect to answer  
When He Prays Come My Child  
It's Time to Stay Inside  
Where We'll Never Part  
In The Kingdom of My Heart

**2016-2017**  
**Magellan Post 604**  
**Officers**

- Commander Tom Amaba
- 1st Vice Commander Ted Tabarango
- 2nd Vice Commander Glenn Carrasca
- Adjutant Luz Molina
- Judge Advocate Luz Molina
- Chaplain Dale Esperante
- Finance Officer Andy Tancioco
- Historian Joe Gonzalez
- Sgt-at-Arms Dave Floresca
- Assistant Sgt-at-Arms Bill Bostock
- Service Officer Howard Williams
- Junior Past Commander Rick Rafanan
- Director Bobby Aglubat
- Director Bill Tyson
- Director Joseph Ventura
- Director Jose Beitia
- Director Andy Tancioco



**2016-2017**  
**Auxiliary Unit 604**  
**Officers**

- President Aida Azurin
- 1st Vice President Jocelyn Banag
- 2nd Vice President Lita Calindas
- Secretary Rosalinda Delacruz
- Assistant Secretary Olivia Jackson
- Treasurer Letecia O'Quinn
- Parliamentarian Lilia Rivera
- Sgt-At-Arms Remedios Mangosing
- Chaplain Alice Pambid
- Marshall Linda Cordero
- Historian Alice Pambid
- Past President Olivia Jackson
- Director Marilou Amper
- Director Penafancia Williams
- Director Godelia Wilfong
- Director Bella Nidoy
- Director Olivia Jackson



# Shriners International Ben Ali Islander Club

By Dale Esperante

“The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, also commonly known as Shriners and abbreviated A.A.O.N.M.S., established in 1870, is an appendant body to Freemasonry, based in the United States.

The organization is best-known for the Shriners Hospitals for Children they administer and the red fezzes that members wear. The organization is headquartered in Tampa, Florida. Shriners International describes itself as a fraternity based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth. There are approximately 340,000 members from 193 temples (chapters) in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Republic of Panama, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Europe and Australia.” “It is an organization noted for having fun, but its constructive purposes, characterized by “hospitality without rudeness and jollity without coarseness.” Credit the first paragraph to benalishrine.org website.

In Sacramento, the Shriners International Ben Ali Islander Club was formed in May 2015 by a group of Filipino-Americans. On 18 May 2016, the Islander Club-- (“Club” will be used for short when appropriate in this article)--hosted a reception for the Illustrious Potentate of Ben Ali, Thomas Nickens, and his Nobles (brothers).

Islander’s President Alex Llanera and Noble Ed Caballero highlighted the evening by reporting on the Club’s first year accomplishments in community service. Their first project took place in the Philippines’ Ilo-Ilo province, where they set up a program called Care for Kids. To care for the kids, a facility was built financed by the fundraising efforts of the Islanders Club.

The plight of children in a mountainous area of Mindanao was brought to the attention of the Islander Club. Learning that the children of the village walked 2 – 6 miles to school without shoes and often without breakfast, a decision was made by the Club members (for their second project) to donate school supplies and rice. Approximately 200 indigent children, as a result, received a supply of school bags, pens, pencils, and slippers. When the Club learned that the children have no rain gear for the rainy season, the Club gave a raincoat to every child.

Because of Mindanao’s recent drought, the membership of Ben Ali Islander Club realized that the local villagers will also require assistance to supplement their food supply. Almost immediately, the nobles of the Club decided to donate four sacks of

rice every month until December. Hopefully, the locals will be self-sufficient by December from a good harvest.

For the final report of Noble President Alex on 18 Jun: Through a coordinated effort among Ben Ali Islander Club, Ahmed Islander Club of Livermore, Sacramento Golden State Lions Club, Mabuhay, Maharlika, and Aguila Shriners of the Philippines, a two-year old burn victim named Cleo will be arriving from the Philippines on 27 Jun 2016. Sacramento Shriners Hospital will be hosting a reception for two-year old Cleo and her accompanying family. To accommodate Cleo and family during their stay in the Sacramento area, Lynne Mitchell of Elk Grove offered to be the host family when asked by President Eddie Aducayen of Golden State Lions Club. Hopefully by the time this report has reached the public, Cleo is already here re-



Photos by Dale Esperante



lated the Islander Club for their successful humanitarian projects, reflecting Shriners International’s commitment to community service. Tom then called each of his staff members to share updates of Ben Ali’s programs and events. An open invitation for the Islander Club to participate in the state-wide picnics, parades, and conferences was extended by Tom and his Nobles.

ceiving treatment and rehabilitation care, thanks to the Shriners Hospital for Children and the aforementioned organizations.

After the reports, President Alex invited Potentate Tom Nickens to the podium. Tom took a moment to review a piece of paper Alex just handed to him.

Proving the Shriners’ propensity for hospitable fun, Tom read the prepared speech given by Alex—in Filipino. Though Tom labored in pronouncing the Filipino words, it was a gesture appreciated by the Club members. To share his joy, Tom called his wife Lady Suzanne to say a few words—also in Filipino. Surprisingly, Suzanne managed to sound a bit more experienced in reading and pronouncing Filipino words, with an American accent. Bravo Lady Suzanne and thank you for being a good sport Tom!

After the Filipino speech, Tom congratu-

Since the evening was an Islander Club’s cultural event (members wore barong-Tagalog), President Alex proudly introduced Sinag-tala for a performance of Filipino traditional dances. After Sinag-tala’s performance, emcee Raeselle Lourdes asked for a volunteer to try out a dance. A true Shriner, the Illustrious Potentate eagerly showed his joy and appreciation by answering Raeselle’s call to give tinkling a go. Not to be outdone, Lady Suzanne volunteered next. On this night, hospitality and jollity ruled! We’re happy to report that no one from the Shriners Hospital staff had to be called in for emergency nursing assistance due to a Filipino bamboo dance mishap. Bravo to the Illustrious Potentate and Lady Suzanne! Congratulations to the Shriners International Ben Ali Islander Club!!!

To Noble Joe Rivera and Noble Oscar Tence, thank you for inviting Philippine Fiesta to your event. We learned from the experience so that we can now share the Islander Club’s humanitarian projects.

Shriners International Ben Ali Islanders Club will be having their next fundraising event on June 25 at Magellan Hall, \$25 ticket cost. Magellan Hall is at 8831 Gerber Road, Sacramento, CA 95828.



By Nancy Cristi Bautista

# The Realization of America

“How beautiful the spacious skies....” looking around America, it is realized how and what our forefathers were thinking and planning for this great country when they created the United States of American constitutions. They were not just creative and intellectual, but also, intuitive. Their work is timeless and very adaptable even to our modern day of living on this great land of ours.



Being its citizens, we are so fortunate to belong to this country. The abundance of its natural resources; the innovations which create and discover advanced technologies; and most of all, the rules of God and men have been probably some of the secrets of its success.

All over the world, whether they admit it or not, life in America is the dream of the majority of the people. Looking around us, it is understandably why there is our clean environment, where the citizens have the self responsibilities of cleaning up after their own mess; there is each state, proud of their individual beauty and developments like their modern and the monstrous buildings, or its natural habitats; magnificent things from the bustling city of New York towards the serene lakes in the Midwest to the warm climate of California; and most of all, to the country's wonderful people.

No other countries could surpass America in most ways. The diversity of its people; the freedom that everyone has; the education this country provides; the controlling of crimes to give people peace; and many, many more benefits of living in the United

States are enough to make each person comfortable and be able go achieve his or her dreams.

However, this coveted lifestyle could also be one of the reasons why America is considered the most hated of all countries, in spite of the tremendous assistance and support it has done and still being done to and for the rest of the world. Other countries or even within this nation, the demise of America and its people are their main goal. Envy and greed have been the most powerful motives of the endangerment of its existence, either politically or religiously. And thus, these ideologies create vicious pursuit.

Ever since the beginning of the United States of America, this country has been the most respected and has been the leader of the world, but, of course, this category has been challenged by some. The next generations have the ability of the continuance of this responsibility, but, it is up to the present generation, especially the guardians and leaders to clear their path.

Let us all help preserve these wonderful gifts given to us and our beautiful land by respecting our constitutions, following our laws, choosing our right leaders honest and smart, and having God in what we think and do.

Have a happy and safe Independence Day!



# Husband Pens Touching Note To Honor His Hardworking Wife

By Barbara Diamond

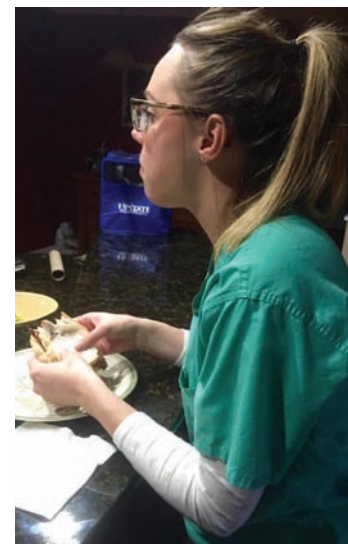
Philip lives in Rome, New York with his wife, Jessica. Jessica is a stroke nurse who dedicates herself every day to caring for the lives of others. Though she never whines or complains, Philip knows that deep down she's exhausted and overworked. Recently, Philip shared a letter he wrote on Facebook in dedication to his hardworking wife.

He watched Jessica sit down for a hurried dinner after a 14-hour shift. Her dinner was a sandwich, by the way. She had just enough time to eat and get ready for bed, then go back to work the next day and do it all over again. “She doesn't like to be bothered in the morning and I respect that,” Philip writes on Facebook. “She showers, throws her hair up, grabs her lunch gives the dog and me a kiss and heads out the door.” Time and time again, we hear about women who feel under-appreciated by their spouses. But none of this is lost on Philip.

ing and I respect that. She showers, throws her hair up, grabs her lunch gives the dog and me a kiss and heads out the door.”

“At work she takes care of people who are having the worst days of their lives. Strokes, Car accidents, motorcycle accidents, falls, breaks, brain damage and more. She takes care of mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, friends and families. It doesn't matter who you are or what happened.

She will take care of you.”



“She works through lunch and rarely has time to sit. She comes home after 14 hours, takes off her shoes that have walked through blood and tears, and just wants to sit down. I don't ask her about her day because She doesn't like to talk about work when she is home and that's fine.

If she does want to talk, I will listen.”

“Sometimes she comes home happy and sometime she's comes home sad. But no matter how she feels, she is always on time for her next shift.

I love her with all my heart.”

“My wife is my hero. My wife is a Nurse.”

Wait until you see this husband's message to the world...

“This is my wife Jessica having dinner after a 14 hour day. She comes home from work, has enough time to eat and get ready for bed and it's back to work the next day for another shift.”

“She is up early to get ready for her day. She doesn't like to be bothered in the morn-

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# Daddy Dingdong

By Angel Javier Cruz

Father's Day may have come and gone but for first-time dad Dingdong Dantes, the happy times have only just begun. When his wife, actress and Kapuso Prime-time Queen Marian Rivera gave birth to their daughter Letizia last November, he knew his world would change in the most profound and wondrous way.



With the abundance of love, time and affection he gives his daughter, Dingdong 'Daddy Dong' Dantes will truly be Letizia's first love and forever hero.

"Fatherhood, for me, is like a rebirth of my own journey. When my baby was born so did a new chapter that would redefine an improved direction of my life," Dingdong said.

"Totoo ang tsismis, if life before having children was dedicated to just ourselves as a couple, this time everything revolves around our Letizia. She is that binding force that makes us realize all the more how beautiful life is."

Being a father has definitely added to Dingdong's appeal making one of local tinseltown's hunks even more desirable. In fact, he now has more reason to maintain good health and work even harder. "If before, I would dread waking up at 5 a.m. to do healthy routines and try to be at my tiptop physiological shape, now I find myself waking up before my alarm goes off, eager to give a peck (or a hundred) on both their (Marian and Letizia's) cheeks."

He wakes up, ready to start the day, and is even considering joining a triathlon. At

day's end, Dingdong is also excited to head home for some family bonding. "The word 'early' has been redefined. If going home early for me before meant a little after midnight, nowadays, you'd see me doing quick feet and high knees towards the door of my workplace, wanting to reach home before her favorite baby show on television would air at 8," he said.

Beyond the cooing and kisses he showers on Letizia, however, Dingdong admitted Marian does most of the work. What he does provide, however, is support for her and their daughter. "I try my best to share tasks with my wife as much as possible. I know that being a father at this stage is really just secondary to the immediate sacrifices and dedication that mothers give their babies. Bath time and playtime could be my turf. When she reaches three, it will surely be my turn," he said.

He's probably downplaying his role in rearing Letizia but there's no doubt that he dotes on her as much as — or maybe even more than — any new father. "I certainly have thousands of photos of her already. I want to be there in

her every milestone if possible."

"Marian and I love to travel and we can't imagine traveling without her. Our first trip was during Holy Week when we visited Busuanga, Palawan. I think I was able to take her best photograph, by far, during that trip. Our first out-of-the country adventure would be something to look forward to. That may happen pretty soon."

This early, Dingdong is already conceptualizing Letizia's first birthday celebration. "I plan to hold an intimate celebration featuring our 12 most favorite photos of Letizia, one from each month since November, in the form of an amateur exhibit. It will be something that's entirely homemade."

Fatherhood, indeed, has revealed a new dimension on the already beautiful heart and soul of Dingdong Dantes. With the abundance of love, time and affection he bestows upon his daughter, Daddy Dong will truly be Letizia's first love and forever hero.

# JaDine: Fans our 'asset'

By Joyce Jimenez

MANILA, Philippines – James Reid and Nadine Lustre consider their fans as their greatest "asset" as a love team.

"Our following, our fans are amazing," said James during the press conference before the MTV Music Evolution concert on Friday.

"The fact that we can also dance, that helps a lot because it gives us that much more energy on stage," James added.

Aside from their upcoming



James Reid and Nadine Lustre see their fans as the greatest asset of their love team.

TV series, the Kapamilya love team also revealed that they have respective

# John Lloyd Cruz after winning best actor: Nothing will change

By Joyce Jimenez

MANILA, Philippines - No major changes for John Lloyd Cruz after his best actor win at the 39th Gawad Urian.

He won his first best actor award for the film "Honor Thy Father," under the direction of Erik Matti.

"Hindi naman ako tumigil sa ginagawa ko kahit anong mangyari," he said when asked if he'll be picky with projects after his win. "Gano'n pa rin ang pagtanggap at paggawa ko ng pelikula. Wala naman nagbabago."

Meanwhile, John Lloyd is busy doing his film



John Lloyd Cruz

with ABS-CBN Chief Operating Officer (COO) Charo Santos-Concio.

Santos-Concio is making a movie comeback after many years of serving as the COO

of ABS-CBN.

"The whole time I was with her, I never saw the Ma'am Charo we know," John Lloyd said about his first shooting days with Santos-Concio.

"She got really immersed with the character," he added.

He said seeing her that way helped him get into his character.

The film is titled "Ang Baang Humayo," under the direction of Lav Diaz.

He directed and wrote the film "Hele sa Hiwagang Hapis" which won the Silver Bear Alfred Bauer prize at the Berlin Film Festival early this year.



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## Eskwela Natin on its fourth year

By Perry Diaz

**S**acramento -- Last May, Eskwela Natin began its fourth summer program. More than 40 students, ages five to 12, registered for the eight-session cultural class that covers various aspects of the Filipino culture. In addition, fifteen high school students were recognized and awarded with scholarship monies.

The program began on May 15, 2016 with an opening ceremony that featured Consul Carlyn Monastrial of the Philippine Consulate as the guest speaker. The Consul delivered an inspirational speech and read the best wishes and appreciation from the Consul General.

The 2016 scholarship awardees were: First Place, Allison Panlilio Suba, Second Place, Heaven Leigh Quintana, Third Place, Alexa Renee Laborete, Fourth Place were Luis Enrique Calona and Anthony J. Lavilla. Honorable Mention recipients were Maria Isabel Javier, Hannah Caigoy Gantuangco, Hannah Della Boctor, Olga Rozmarynowska, Trajan Susa-Coelho, Jonell Elise Aban, Jamie Noelle Meneghetti, Katrine Mae Maningding, Justin Menardo Magadia and Maria Krista Ramos Esperanza.

Josie T. Canlas, Eskwela Natin board member, said in her remarks that "...a child is affected by the village it belongs to and over time that village is affected by that child. Eskwela Natin tasks itself with offering our Filipino children the experience of being in the Filipino village during the summer because while we are undoubtedly blessed to be now part of this great country, we share a common goal to pass on to our children and our children's children the values, traditions and culture that define us as Filipinos."

Vangie Hinnenkamp, Eskwela Natin teacher, describes this year's summer program:

"Like before, our activities will still cover significant aspects of Filipino culture such as Language and Literature, History and Geography, Traditions, Customs and Etiquette, Arts, Music and Dance and Cuisine. Our activities this summer are still designed with a particular theme for each session ...with three stations, each facilitated by the teachers."

"Our intent is threefold: To enhance the level of engagement of our children regardless of their knowledge or familiarity with the Filipino language and it's distinguishing attributes. Second, to provide a more effective medium by which the children can learn their culture and heritage and lastly, to guarantee that our kids have fun. Fellow educators know that lowering the affective filter will ensure greater motivation and permanency of learning."

The first session, which followed the awarding of scholarship, taught the students three of the most celebrated religious festivities – the Santacruzán, Ati-atihan,

and Christmas. The boys were escorts to Santacruzán sagalas who wore tiaras, sashes and various props according to their roles in the procession. They offered fresh flowers to the Virgin Mary as part of the Flores de Mayo. For the Christmas parade, the children made small star lanterns (parols) and marched to Christmas carols.

The Ati-atihan was as colorful and noisy as the real one in Aklan! The children wore large masks and decorated their vests and costumes and marched to the Ati-atihan chant.

On June 5, Eskwela Natin participated in the Philippine Fiesta held at the Jose Rizal Center. The children, who joined the parade wearing Filipino native attires, won the "Most Enthusiastic" award. Eskwela Natin was also in charge of children's games, such as pabitin, palayok and pin the tail on the kalabaw.

The rest of the Eskwela Natin's 2016 summer program included 'traveling' around the Philippines with 'passports' and enjoying the tourist spots in each region (viewing large posters thru the courtesy of the Philippine Department of Tourism). They played games such as Chinese garter, sipa and flying boka boka outdoors. On the session of Philippine music instruments, the children made and decorated colorful maracas from recycled water bottles filled with beans, tamborines out of bottle caps on wood and sandpaper instruments. On Arts and Crafts Day, the children wanted to stay longer and make more of the banig fans. Pencil holders and bouquet of paper flowers. Then there was the story telling session, where they listened to Filipino stories, drew their impressions from the story and created a poem about themselves. The Philippine cuisine featured adobo over rice, lumpia shanghai, Sago and gulaman, turon and

pancit where the children chose which meat or vegetables would top the cooked noodles. Street food such as chicharon, taho, fishballs, fried quail eggs etc were also introduced to the students.

In each session, the children learn at least

25 Tagalog words and phrases and watch videos of the Philippines as they discover the Philippines. Eskwela Natin offers a fun, interactive and unique learning experience for children while educating them about the rich and diverse Filipino culture. It is made possible not only from strong support of the Philippine Consulate, Department of Tourism and community but the unconditional generosity of the dedicated teachers, parents, volunteers and the Eskwela Natin Board.

The summer program, which is held every Sunday at the County of Sacramento Community Room, Department of Human Resources Building, Florin Road, Sacramento, is now half-way through. Graduation will be held on July 17 with a reception at 12:00 Noon following the graduation ceremonies.



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