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## Duterte's advice to De Lima: Hang yourself



Pres. Rodrigo Duterte and Sen. Leila de Lima

By Genalyn Kabiling

President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday launched another scathing attack at Sen. Leila de Lima, saying she should hang herself in shame after being implicated in the drug trade and engaging in immoral behavior.

"If I were De Lima, ladies and gentlemen I'll hang myself," the President said during a visit to Tacloban City.

"Your life, hindi lang life, the innermost of your core as a female is being serialized every day. Dapat kang mag-resign. You resign. Sa pinapakita mo, you resign. Wala ka ng mukha," Duterte said.

The President rebuked De Lima for not setting a good example to other women.

"Anong ipakita mo sa mga babae? Follow me, sabihin mo? This is how to be a woman of the world?" he said.

Duterte has been flinging barbs at De Lima, who had tried to pin him to the vigilante killings when he was mayor in Davao City. He said De Lima had accused him of leading the so-called Davao Death Squad but failed to produce evidence.

He said he told De Lima that DDS actually stood for "Davao Development System" but she interpreted it the wrong way.

Rejecting criticisms he was violating rights in carrying out the relentless campaign to ferret out drug personalities, Duterte made clear that he has no desire to kill a fellow Filipino. "Sino ba gusto pumatay ng kapwa mo?"

Continued on page 4

## 15 soldiers killed in clash with Abu Sayyaf rebels



A Philippine offensive against the extremist Abu Sayyaf group after a spate of kidnappings has left 15 soldiers dead in the worst violence.

(Associated Press) MANILA, Philippines — Philippine officials say 15 army soldiers have been killed in a clash with Abu Sayyaf extremists in a major offensive in the south.

Military officials said five other soldiers were wounded in fierce fighting Monday that killed at least two militants in Sulu province's mountainous Patikul town, where the Abu Sayyaf have detained many of their kidnapped victims.

It was the largest single-day

combat loss under President Rodrigo Duterte, who ordered government troops to crush the Abu Sayyaf militants last week after they beheaded a kidnapped villager whose family was too poor to pay a ransom.

Officials said Monday's battle setback came after troops killed about 21 Abu Sayyaf gunmen, including an influential commander, on Friday and Saturday in assaults that followed the beheading.

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### Editor's Note

This month of August has gone by fast for us. For one thing, we were gone half the time during our vacation in Barcelona and other parts of Europe. I call this as the most exciting and amazing trip that I have experienced in my life. Two weeks of always on our feet, walking, and spending about 8 miles on average per day were a bit too much. But we survived it all and were able to see historical landmarks that we have only seen in pictures or in movie settings. For those of you who may be wanting to travel, decide to do it now that you can still move and walk around.

Summer is about to end and our students are back in school again. It must be difficult for some parents to see their daughter or son move away for college for the first time. I remember it well with our children, it used to give me nightmares. We've driven back and forth to visit them in San Francisco, almost every weekend. But it eventually got better.

Here is our September issue of PF news. As always, it's full of fun events and gatherings that have happened in our Filipino community in Sacramento and around. Look out for the Filipino Women's Club's recipient of Woman of the Year award that went to Cynthia Bonta, as the former president of the PNDA and the founder of the Outstanding Filipino Youth Award project. Join the FWC on September 10, in the celebration of her leadership and accomplishments in empowering our youth in the community. Lastly, please enjoy reading the rest of the paper!

Ciao with love,  
Dinnah San Pedro

## Sing, Janet, sing!

By Jojo Robles

Cherchez la femme, as the French would say. And the woman will not be hard to find, since she's already in prison.

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre, acting on direct instructions from President Rodrigo Duterte, is seeking a meeting with Janet Lim Napoles, known in the previous administration as "Ma'am Janet," as part of the plan to revisit the pork barrel scandal of three years ago. Aguirre said the President directed him to find out who benefited from Napoles' large-scale theft of Congress' funds and who implemented the massive coverup that followed, after the scandal was exposed.

Duterte had earlier announced that he wanted "a second look" at the controversy, in all likelihood because he was seeking new dirt to throw at his old enemy, Senator Leila de Lima. But the Napoles pork scandal will require from Duterte all of that famous political will that he has, because opening this particular can of worms is going to implicate so many former and current members of Congress—and nearly the entire top-level officialdom of the administration just past.

This is truly a job that only Duterte can take on, just like he took on the illegal drug problem that took many decades to develop into the monster that it is today. Frankly, I'm beside myself with excitement at what Duterte, Aguirre and their investigators will turn

up.

The truth of the matter is, Noynoy Aquino, Butch Abad, Mar Roxas and the rest of that gang were deathly scared of the fallout of the Napoles scandal because all of them (and, to be fair, many more politicians of all persuasions) partook of her legendary largesse. And so the plot to silence Napoles and kill the controversy she generated was hatched, with narratives that went beyond the six-year term of Aquino in order to protect all of her "clients" beyond 2016.

The way they figured, no subsequent government would dare touch the Napoles case because every former or present member of Congress had, at one time or another, using one conduit or another, stolen their pork allocations. And those few who hadn't knew better than to rock the boat, because they, too, had sleazy—if non-pork related—stuff that they wanted to hide.

Aquino and his administration engineered the conviction of the Queen of Pork on the minor charge of illegal detention, in order to get her freed later on when the heat had subsided, if she "behaved." They also threw three senators who weren't allies in jail and then ordered De Lima to make sure that nobody else was charged.

But none of them figured that the successor of Aquino would not care one whit



Janet Lim Napoles

about who gets hurt, as long as he does his job as he sees fit. And now Duterte has ordered the resurrection of the pork barrel case—which means Napoles may finally and freely spill the beans on the whole sordid scandal.

Make no mistake: There were so many who profited from Napoles' not-so-novel idea to pocket all of Congress' pork and to kick back major portions of it to the lawmakers who were never, ever charged.

A lot of them, according to the list of "beneficiaries" that Napoles kept, are still very much around in the current Congress, both in the House and in the Senate. And yet, as befits members of an old boys' network that imposes a policy of Mafia-like omer-ta on the membership, not one of them—Aquino ally or not—really squealed about Napoles' scheme.

It's true that the revelations of Senator Jinggoy Estrada about massive bribery during the impeachment hearing of Chief Justice Renato Corona led to the discovery of the Aquino administration's other financial skimming operation, the Disbursement Acceleration Program. But as far as the pork scandal is concerned, not one Congress member has spoken up—which is strange, given how our

## Bubukol yan'

Under ideal circumstances, a conviction in court is cause for cheer, indicating as it does a functioning justice system. But circumstances are far from ideal in the case of Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada, who last week was found guilty by the Sandiganbayan of one count of graft and sentenced to 6-10 years in prison.



Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada

million. But the price on the contract with ZTE was \$329 million.

His crime had to do with a land deal that took place when he was president and CEO of the state-owned Philippine Forest Corp. in 2007 and 2008. The court said Lozada was guilty of violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act when he gave undue advantage to his brother by awarding him the lease to a piece of land without going through the proper application process. The irregular deal prejudiced and caused injury to the government, the court ruled.

If this were any other defendant on the dock, that conviction would not merit a second look. But this is the whistle-blower who, eight years ago, detonated a political bomb when he testified that the administration of then President Gloria Arroyo was engaged in high-stakes chicanery over a planned multibillion-peso national broadband deal with China's ZTE Corp.

Specifically, Lozada said then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos, supposedly with the backing of Arroyo's husband, Mike Arroyo, lobbied for ZTE to get the contract in exchange for a \$130-million commission. Lozada, technical adviser to then National Economic and Development Authority chief Romulo Neri whose office formulated the project and reviewed the contract, pegged the project at \$262

Before then, according to Lozada, Abalos casually told him he had offered P200 million to Neri for the speedy approval of the project. Neri subsequently corroborated the story in a Senate hearing. Not only that, he said he had informed Arroyo of the outrageous bribe attempt, but that, other than telling him not to accept it, she did nothing to censure Abalos.

For the benefit of those with a short memory, Lozada's life approached a living hell in February 2008. Wanting to evade a Senate invitation to testify on the overpriced national broadband deal, and with the encouragement and support of certain Malacañang officials to the point of being given P500,000 in "shopping money," he flew to Hong Kong to cool his heels.

Lozada eventually decided to damn the torpedoes and to return home. But on his arrival, he was met by airport and police officials, rushed through immigration and customs, and delivered to the custody of armed men who identified themselves as members of the police. He was driven around for hours, to as far as Calamba, Laguna; it was only through the loud importuning of his panicked kin over the media that the armed men released him.

Lozada would next appear before the TV cameras at 2

a.m. in La Salle Greenhills, rattled and weepy. The kidnapping attempt that was meant to scare him into silence had clearly shaken him, but, now under the protection of priests and nuns, he did not back down. He eventually appeared at the Senate inquiry and backed Neri's testimony about the active and personal involvement of the Arroyos in the ZTE deal, and many other damning details: Lozada expressing concern to Neri that, with the huge kickbacks being demanded, "bubukol yan" (it would become too obvious); Neri being sanguine about the reality around them but telling his subordinate to do his best to "moderate their greed"; and Abalos, in Lozada's presence, once castigating Mike Arroyo on the phone for the project's delay.

No one of those involved in Lozada's abduction was ever punished. Abalos, who, as Comelec chair, had no business brokering a non-election-related technology project, was acquitted last May; the Sandiganbayan said the prosecution failed to prove that he acted as an agent in the rotten deal—despite the testimony of Neri and Lozada precisely to that effect. The ZTE deal that would have defrauded the country of up to P15 billion was scuttled in the wake of the controversy, but Arroyo and her husband are not in jail for it.

Meanwhile, the whistle-blower who stood up to them and waved the red flag on attempted plunder in the government has been convicted in a case lodged only in 2012. Is there a message here somewhere? That in this country, exposing corruption will get you hounded, harassed and persecuted, and the powerful simply walk away? @inquirerdotnet

lawmakers love to talk.

But now that the instigators of the biggest government coverup are gone and with a relentless anti-corruption president at the helm, maybe we'll get to the bottom, finally, of the scam Napoles operated so lucratively for so long. And if the hypocritical officials of the previous administration end up in jail for protecting Napoles and preventing her story from being told, well, that's just too bad for them.

It would be truly ironic if the top officials of an administration that proclaimed

itself as the guardian of and guide to the straight path are sent to jail because they pocketed huge sums of government money used to buy congressional loyalty. But maybe it's not so ironic, since pork, in its last incarnation, was a creation of the sainted Cory's immaculate administration.

(It was Ferdinand Marcos, by the way, who abolished Congress' pork after he assumed dictatorial powers with the imposition of martial law. If only for that one single act, I think he already qualifies for burial at the

Libingan ng Mga Bayani.) I'm sure Napoles would be more willing to talk about her multi-billion scam now, not only because the people who alternately threatened and coddled her are no longer in a position to do either. But if I were Duterte, I'd make sure that Napoles is taken to a secure place before she starts telling her complete tale, so she doesn't end up dead like Melvin "Dragon" Odicta.

And then, she can sing her heart out.

# Alleged drug lord, wife gunned down in Aklan

Rody: He was a drug lord whose luck ran out

By Jennifer Rendon

Iloilo City, Philippines – Three days after turning himself in to authorities to deny his links to illegal drugs, a businessman was mortally wounded by gunmen who also shot dead his wife shortly after the couple disembarked from a vessel at a port in Malay, Aklan before dawn yesterday.

Melvin Odicta Sr. and his wife Meriam had just disembarked from a 2Go roll-on-roll-off vessel at the Caticlan Jetty Port when the attack occurred at around 1:30 a.m.

The vessel came from the Port of Batangas.

Odicta, also known by the moniker “Dragon,” was earlier identified by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency 6 (PDEA-6) as one of two top drug dealers operating mainly in the province of Iloilo.

Reacting to the death of Odicta, President Duterte said the victim was really a drug lord whose luck had run out.

“Odicta was hunted, inabot tagala siya ng malas. Sino gustong sumunod dito kay Odicta (Who wants to follow Odicta)?” Duterte said at the wake of a policeman in Samar.

Odicta, accompanied by his wife and their lawyers, showed up at the office of Interior Secretary Ismael Sueño last Thursday to deny accusations he was into illegal drugs.

Malay police said port security guards reported the shooting at 1:23 a.m.

Aklan police chief Senior Supt. John Mitchell Jamili said it was the responding policemen who brought the Odictas to the Malay Municipal Hospital.



Eduardo Regalado clutching the face of his slain sister Meriam Odicta whose body is seen next to a bag containing the cadaver of Melvin Odicta Sr.

Reports said the gunmen first fired on Meriam, who was hit in the back. Her husband sustained bullet wounds in the head, chest and leg.

Odicta family lawyer Gualberto Cataluña said the businessman was still alive as he was brought to the hospital by the police.

He said they were waiting at the jetty port’s gate when they heard gunshots.

He said he was even talking to Meriam over the phone during the attack. Odicta, Cataluña said, managed to call him to say he had been hit in the leg.

Odicta was reportedly able to walk as he was assisted to the patrol car, and even managed to raise his wounded leg.

Cataluña said he was surprised to learn that Odicta had died of gunshot wounds at the hospital.

He said the jetty port was cordoned off immediately after the shooting.

Cataluña said there was a checkpoint outside the port before the vessel arrived. He said he and his companions even went around to check the faces of people in the vicinity.

“We wonder why the checkpoint disappeared after the shooting of the Odictas,” he said in Filipino.

He added they tried to follow the police car carrying the Odictas to Kalibo Hospital but were surprised to learn the victims were brought to the Malay Hospital instead.

“When we went back to Malay, we were shocked to learn they had died. We asked the doctor – the two were no longer handcuffed – they said they’re DOA,” he said.

The lawyer said he was with the Odictas during their meeting with Sueño at Camp Crame.

“We were listening when they were talking with Sueño. They were making denial,” he said.

He said the couple had been advised by the police director in Iloilo to see PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa after they were linked to drugs by PDEA.

Cataluña said he had advised Odicta against going to Manila. He said he asked Odicta to see Dela Rosa instead in Iloilo City as the latter was set to visit the city anyway, and request for security from the PNP chief.

He said he would later learn the businessman had gone ahead to Manila.

Cataluña said the couple had no child of their own but they had children from their previous relationships.

Chief Insp. Mark Evan Salvo,

Malay police chief, said he immediately ordered the setting up of checkpoint to prevent the attackers from leaving the area.

He said there was only one gunman but Jamili claimed there were two.

The couple was gunned down yesterday at the Caticlan Jetty Port in Aklan.

Cataluña and another of their lawyers Raymond Fortun were to fetch the couple from the port.

Quoting Jamili, Senior Supt. Dionardo Carlos, spokesman for the Philippine National Police (PNP), said the couple had walked some 100 meters from the ferry when they were attacked.

He said doctors tried to revive the victims.

“Aklan and Malay are now working to arrest the gunmen,” he added. “Well, let us look for the official statement, mahirap mag assume.”

Carlos said the PNP is now verifying information the Odictas were initially accosted by police at the Batangas port for illegal possession of firearms.

The PNP spokesman said the victims were not declared dead on arrival since the staff at the Malay Hospital still managed to perform medical procedures on the couple.

Fortun said they are gathering more information about the incident.

“The Odictas are good people,” he said, as he urged the media to closely follow the case.

In a text message, the Police Regional Office 6 through spokesman Supt. Gilbert Gorero “expressed deepest sympathy to the bereaved Odicta family and condemns the shooting incident

that transpired at Caticlan, Malay, Aklan resulting in the death of the couple.”

“We appeal to the public who has direct knowledge of the incident to come out to the open and help in our investigation so that justice will prevail,” he added.

Gorero said PRO-6 acting regional director Chief Supt. Jose Gentiles has ordered Jamili to “conduct in-depth investigation to identify the suspects and effect their immediate arrest and to file the necessary case in court.”

Dela Rosa also condemned the killings, saying the Odictas should have been tried in court.

In Catbalogan, Samar, Duterte said Odicta met his tragic fate “because it was his choice.”

“So, I cannot say anything good or bad because it was his choice,” the President said partly in Filipino.

“He was corrupting everybody, including the governor. There is one governor here in the Visayas that – I named him before. If you do not believe me, go to Cebu and try to find time to talk to him. Even his speech – he was already dysfunctional,” he added.

His previous announcement of a list of government officials “involved in illicit drug trade” did not include a governor from the Visayas. – Giovanni Nilles

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## De Lima to Duterte: 'You'll be embarrassed' SENATOR SAYS SHE IS WILLING TO RESIGN, BE SHOT IF EVIDENCE VERIFIED

By Yuji Vincent Gonzales

I'm willing to resign. I'm willing to be shot in front of the President if there is authentic evidence that is not fabricated."

"I'm telling you Mr. President, ayaw ko pong mapahiya kayo. Mapapahiya kayo diyan at ayaw ko pong mangyari 'yan sa inyo. Kung ano man ang ebidensya n'yo diyan, sinasabi ko na sa inyo na ang ebidensya na 'yan ay hindi totoo. Fake, manufactured, fabricated," De Lima said in a televised press briefing in Quezon City.

"Ang unsolicited advice ko po sa inyo, kung sino man ang nagsu-supply ng mga impormasyon na 'yan, pwede ho bang harapin n'yo na sila ngayon at pilitin n'yo na silang magpakatotoo sa inyo... I will stand by my innocence, now and forever," she added.

(I'm telling you Mr. President, I don't want you to be embarrassed. Whatever evidence you have, I am telling you, they're not real. Fake, manufactured, fabricated.

My unsolicited advice to you, whoever is supplying you with that information, please face them and urge them to be honest with you... I will stand by my innocence, now and forever)

Amid De Lima's calls for accountability over the rising death toll in the administration's war against drugs, Duterte on Wednesday slammed De Lima as an "immoral woman" over an alleged affair with her former driver Ronnie Dayan, who he said collected drug money to fund her campaign. Duterte claimed he has evidence and witnesses to back his tirades against

the senator.

De Lima, who will lead the Senate inquiry into the drug war as justice and human rights committee chairman, denounced Duterte's allegations as a tactic to divert public attention from the upcoming Senate investigation.

Citing credible sources, De Lima disclosed a supposed plan to link her to drug coddling in the New Bilibid Prisons, which she found out after the elections.

"Nung first week pa lang po after elections, meron na ho sa aking mga nagsasabi na meron daw pong umikot-ikot sa Bilibid na ang ginagawa ay naghahanap na pwedeng magtestigo... (They are) trying to access certain convicts para ituro ako na isang drug coddler, na ako ay nakikinabang sa droga nila, na ako ay tinutulungan nila noong eleksyon through campaign funds, at palabasin na si Ronnie ay bagman," she said.

"Hindi po ako magtataka kung at this point meron na po silang nakuha na mga ganoon ang sasabihin. Wina-warnangan na ho ako dito, ayaw ko lang pong maniwala. Ano man ang kasalanan ko sa Pangulo, iniisip ko na hindi naman siya hahantong sa punto na ito na lantaran at out and out to destroy me," De Lima added.

(Just a week after the elections, I had been told that there were people going around Bilibid who were looking for witnesses... They are trying to access certain convicts to implicate me as a drug coddler, that I was benefiting from their drug trade,



Sen. Leila De Lima

that they helped fund my election campaign, and to make it appear that Ronnie was my bagman.)

The senator said the private lives of people perceived to be close to her both in a personal and professional level are also being looked into, according to the same sources.

"Ang pinakaayaw ko po kasi na pagdating sa Lunes, simula ng pinakaabangan na Senate inquiry, na-divert ang tunay na issue sa mga personal at foul na bagay na binabato sa akin.

Ang personal na buhay ng isang tao ay sensitibo. Ang personal na buhay ng isang tao ay sagrado. Sinisuguro ko po na ano mang mga krisis na personal na pinagdaan ko ay hindi nakaapekto sa pagganap sa aking mga tungkulin sa buhay," De Lima said.

(What I would hate the most is that come Monday, the start of the highly anticipated Senate inquiry, the attention would be diverted from the real issue and that the personal and foul accusations against me [would get more attention].

Someone's personal life is sensitive. Someone's personal life is sacred. I assure you that whatever personal crisis I have gone through had never affected the fulfillment of my duties in life. ) CDG

## Duterte's advice to De Lima: Hang yourself

From page 1

You think it's easy to kill a fellow human being? You build a nation over the bones of your countrymen?" he said.

Last week, the President said De Lima's political career was "finished" after he released a "matrix" that traced her supposed links to prominent government and police personalities who run or protect a drug network inside the state penitentiary.

Duterte also railed at De Lima for proclaiming to

a crusader for good government despite having an illicit affair with her married driver, who allegedly became her bag man for money collected from drug operators.

De Lima has strongly denied the President's allegations.

Earlier in the day, the President conceded that De Lima could not be forced to attend a congressional inquiry into the alleged narcotics trade at the New Bilibid Prison.

"You cannot compel any-

body, not a senator," Duterte said during his visit to Samar where he attended the wake of a policeman slain in an anti-drug operation.

"If she refuses, you can cite for contempt but the problem is she has immunity for the time being. She is a senator and Congress is in session. But nobody can force anybody just to be there to bear witness to what's going on," he added.

## Duterte to Chinese: Treat Pinoys as brothers, not enemies

By Christina Mendez

Manila, Philippines - President Duterte has urged the Chinese people to treat Filipinos as "brothers and not enemies" as the Philippines and China prepare to work on agreeable terms regarding the West Philippine Sea.

Duterte made the call during yesterday's tribute to Filipino heroes at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, with Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua among the guests.

The two countries are ready to discuss matters that may unite them, amid a ruling of the UN's Permanent Court of Arbitration rejecting Beijing's nine-dash line claim on the disputed territory.

"I hope the Chinese people will find a place in their heart for Filipinos, for after all there is Chinese blood in me. I hope you treat us as your brothers and not enemies and take note of the plight of our citizens," Duterte said.

The President appealed to Beijing to consider the plight of Filipino fishermen, who have been driven out of Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal or Bajo de Masinloc by the Chinese navy.

"Please understand the reason why they are there is because they are poor," he said, apparently addressing Zhao.

Recognizing the superi-

ority of the Chinese military, Duterte said he has no option but to talk peace with China.

"I don't want to go to war. So if I don't, there is always war and peace. If I am not ready for war, then peace is the only means," he said.

The President stressed the importance of taking the peaceful route toward settling the territorial dispute with China.

"For now, Mr. Ambassador, I want to talk to you, and maybe give us time to build our forces. You have so much superiority. But if it comes to parity between as many ships as you have, maybe just maybe. But if we continue and treat each other as brothers and understand, especially the plight of the fishermen..."

Duterte said he respects the decision of the UN tribunal awarding the Philippines historic rights over some areas in the West Philippines Sea.

But he said he would not allow the arbitration ruling to hamper the talks between Manila and Beijing on the matter.

"I will state my case before you. I will never bring the matter up because it might lead to the suspension of talks and that is not good. I propose that I will not use the arbitral judgment now,



Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua

but I will sit in front of a representative or you, and I will lay there my position and I will say: 'This paper, I cannot get out with the four corners of this document,' which is the arbitral ruling," he said.

Beijing open for talks

Beijing is ready for talks with Manila, Zhao said on the sidelines of yesterday's ceremony where he called President Duterte "friend."

"We will talk diplomatic matters that contribute to the well-being of our people," he said as he reiterated Beijing's stance that it does not adhere to the UN arbitral ruling.

"We cannot accept the arbitration award but we look forward to talking to the Philippines bilaterally over the topics that we have right now," he said.

"We need to change our focus from differences to common interests so we can concentrate on cooperation that would benefit our people," he added.

Zhao said Beijing is studying Duterte's appeal for China to allow Filipino fishermen on Panatag Shoal.

## Kontrabida kasi: Walden Bello shares why Duterte's bent on crushing De Lima— and why he's bound to fail

President Rodrigo Duterte is attacking Senator Leila de Lima because he has found in her a worthy opponent, something missing in the ranks of kowtowing politikos he meets everyday.

Former Akbayan party-list Rep. Walden Bello has thrown his support behind De Lima in her ongoing word war with Duterte by vouching for her courage and determination to uphold the law.

While sympathizing with the beleaguered senator, Bello said he is also aware of what De Lima is capable of.

"I also know she (De Lima) is one hell of a woman, who's not going

to allow herself to be bullied into submission by a guy who's admitted [to] fabricating or planting evidence to get rid of people in the past," he said in a Facebook post.

In a government full of Duterte ass kissers, Bello said De Lima is "indispensable" because she isn't afraid to oppose the President, a trait the former lawmaker said "98 percent of our politicians are afraid to provide."

Bello believes it is the senator's gall to stand up to Duterte that's making him angry at her.

"That's really the reason



Walden Bello

Mr. D is persecuting her, because he can't stand any opposition."

Of Duterte's statement to De Lima that she's "finished" as a result of his tirades, Bello had this to say: "Siguro sarili niya (Duterte) [ang] tinutukoy niya, kasi sigurado ako na sa laban na ito, hindi yung senadora ang aatras."



**Glenn D. Carrasca,**  
FBI Community Outreach Program  
**Steve Dupre,** Media Representative-  
Community Outreach Coordinator

## Telephone fraud schemes and scams

Sacramento, CA. The Federal Bureau of investigation Sacramento field office has received numerous reports of individuals impersonating government agencies in a effort to scam the public.

Currently, these unsolicited calls are placed by criminals who claim to be representatives of the FBI or other government agency and demands for money. Several call recipients stated that Caller ID information falsely displayed the call as originating from an FBI office and the caller told the victim to check the internet to verify the number.

Federal agencies do not call or email individuals to collect money. Government impersonation scams vary but most use intimidation tactics to coerce victims to hastily to provide personal information or money. During calls, scammers often tell victims that charges have or will soon be filed against them

and arrest or confiscation of property is imminent unless payment is made immediately by pre-paid credit card or gift card. Often, if a call recipient questions the caller about the authenticity of the call, the caller becomes increasingly more aggressive. In some cases, Caller ID information was replicated to make calls appear to originate from federal agency's legitimate phone number.

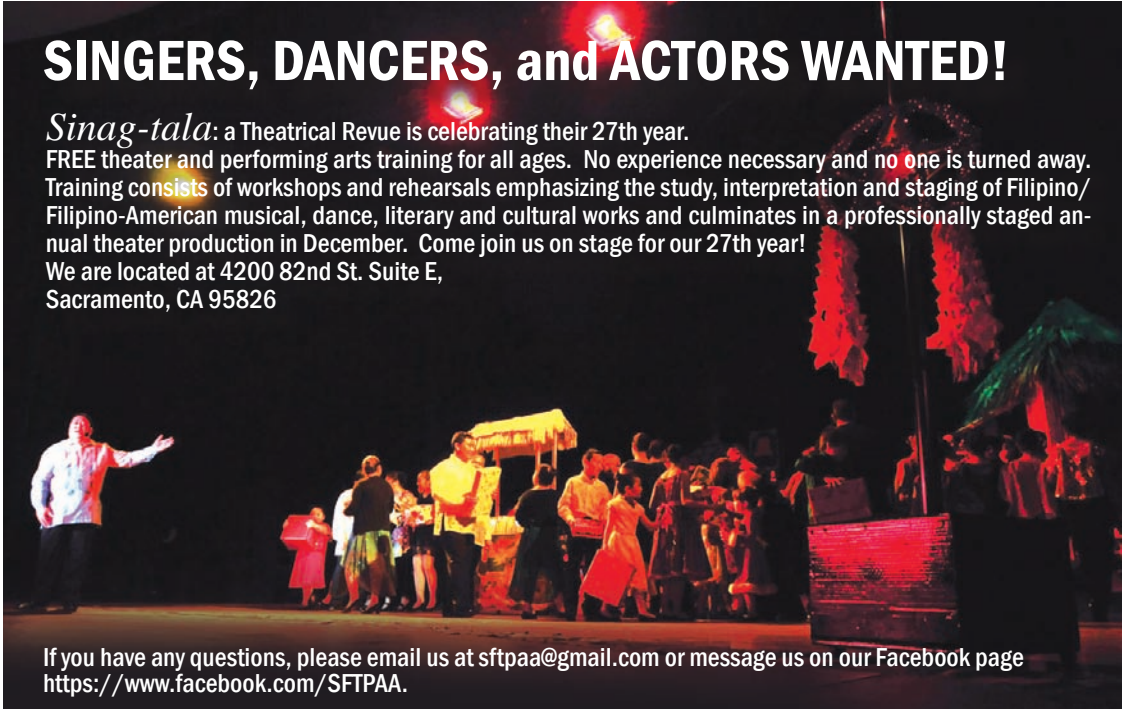
The FBI advises the public to always exercise caution when receiving unsolicited calls and never give personal information when such calls are received. Recipients of scam calls should hang up immediately and report the call. All types of telephone fraud schemes and scams can be reported to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at <https://www.ic3.gov/complaints/splash.aspx>.



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Source: gettyimages.com



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# Filipinos should reject Trump

By Val G. Abelas

I'm not sure if I even wanted to add my voice to the chorus of people from both sides of the political fence in denouncing Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump for his bigotry and reckless demagoguery, but with his recent attack on the Philippines and Filipinos, I know I just have to.

Trump touched the nerves of Filipinos when he lumped the Philippines with the likes of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Morocco, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Uzbekistan as countries whose citizens should be barred from immigrating to the United States because they could potentially be recruited into Islamic terrorist groups.

"You have no idea who they are. This could be the great Trojan horse of all time," he said, repeating his warning that terrorists, including members of the Islamic State extremist group, will sneak into the United States as refugees.

This is a practice that has to stop."

**"We're dealing with animals," he said.**

His unforgivable attack on Filipinos exposed his unmatched duplicity because some years back, when he launched his real estate project bearing his name in Manila, he had high praises for the country: "I've always loved the Philippines. I think it is just a special place and Manila is one of Asia's most spectacular cities."

His recent remark also highlighted his ignorance of history. He has been very busy exploding tirades against Latinos and Muslims, he ignored the fact that hundreds of thousands of Filipinos lost their lives fighting side by side with Americans against the Japanese in World War II and that the some four million Filipinos in the US are contributing significantly to American economy and society.

But Filipinos are not the only

ones shocked and worried by Trump's tirades. Even some ranking members of the party that nominated him have openly said they would not vote for Trump with 50 former national security officials warning he would be the "most reckless president in American history" if elected.

The group, which included former homeland security chiefs, intelligence directors, senior presidential advisors and a former US trade representative, said: "We are convinced that he would be a dangerous president and would put at risk our country's national security and well-being."

They said the brash billionaire is unfit for office, saying that Trump "lacks the character, values, and experience to be president" and displays "alarming ignorance of basic facts" of international poli-



Donald-Trump-mad

tics. They warned that Trump's "erratic behavior" has alarmed America's closest allies and that he fails to recognize the indispensable nature of such diplomatic relationships.

Trump first showed his bigotry and racist character when early in the campaign, he called Mexico a nation that sends its illegal drug traffickers, rapists and killers as immigrants to the US. He then vowed to build a wall between the US and Mexico.

And when pressed on the cases against Trump University, Trump said Judge Gonzalo Curiel, who was handling the cases, can not effectively preside over the cases because of an "inherent conflict of interest" due to his stated call to build a wall on the United States' southern border and Curiel's Mexican heritage.

And then he turned his attention to Muslim immigrants. He said he would stop all foreign Muslims from entering the United States. Last month, Trump belittled the parents of a slain Muslim US serviceman who had strongly denounced Trump during the Democratic National Convention. The soldier's father, Trump suggested, delivered the whole speech because his mother was not allowed to speak.

Pakistani immigrant Khizr Khan galvanized the Democratic National Convention with a tribute to his dead son in which he rebuked the Republican nominee for having "sacrificed nothing" for the country.

US billionaire Warren Buffet rebuked Trump for belittling Khan's speech. "How in the world can you stand up to a couple of parents who have lost a son and talk about sacrificing because you were building a bunch of buildings?"

Buffett is one of several extremely wealthy Americans to back Clinton for president, including

billionaire and independent former mayor of New York Michael Bloomberg and Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban.

It is not just his fellow billionaires dumping Trump. Every time Trump opens his mouth, the list of dissatisfied Republicans who refuse to support him in the elections are growing.

I've never seen a political party divided this badly by its presidential nominee. Only last Thursday, 75 former Republican officials wrote a letter asking the Republican National Committee to divert the funds set aside for the presidential campaign to ensure that the party would keep its majority in Congress by sending funds for the Trump campaign to House and Senate candidates struggling against Democratic rivals.

If he can't unite his own party, how can anyone expect Trump to unite the whole country? In his campaign to become the president and commander-in-chief of the world's most powerful nation, he has only sown hatred, fear, anger and divisiveness.

Many ranking Republicans in both national and state levels have expressed dissatisfaction with Trump and some have even vowed not to vote for the billionaire demagogue. Even longtime Republicans, including several Filipinos, have said they cannot support Trump because he would be a dangerous president.

After just a few days of blabbering and blunders, Trump's three-point lead in the polls over Democratic nominee Clinton just before their respective national conventions has turned into a 15-point margin for the former First Lady, senator and Secretary of State.

The 50 former Republican national security officials have every reason to be concerned about a Trump presidency. With the world precipitously threading on the precipice of war in various fronts, it is frightening to think that a man as imbalanced and as reckless as Trump would be holding the code and the key to the launching of nuclear missiles that could send the world to oblivion.

Filipinos should unite this time and join the only course of action available to Americans – reject Trump.

(valabelgas@aol.com)

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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

In what could arguably be the “mother of all scandals,” President Rodrigo “Rody” Duterte dropped a bombshell in front of Sen. Leila de Lima’s face. Calling it a “drugs matrix” -- known as the “Muntinglupa Connection” -- Duterte released a document showing links between De Lima and several others allegedly involved in illegal drug activities at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) during the previous Aquino administration. The NBP is colloquially called “Munti,” short for Muntinglupa City where the NBP is located. De Lima at that time was the country’s Justice Secretary. Wouldn’t that be like Don Vito Corleone – “Godfather” of La Cosa Nostra fame -- being appointed Attorney General of the United States?

### Drugs matrix

The matrix shows the following: Senator De Lima; De Lima’s former driver Ronnie Palisoc Dayan; former Justice Undersecretary Francisco Baraan III; Pangasinan Board Member Raul Sison; Pangasinan provincial administrator Rafael Baraan (Francisco’s brother); former Pangasinan Governor and now Rep. Amado Espino Jr.; retired general and former Bureau of Corrections (BUCOR) Chief Franklin Bucayo; and a certain “Ms. Cardenosa.”

Duterte said that the matrix explains the dynamics of the illegal drug network at the NBP. While he did not disclose the source of the matrix, it shows De Lima at the top with three lines connecting her to former Undersecretary Baraan, Bucayo, and Dayan. The matrix also shows that Dayan was De Lima’s boyfriend since her

# The Muntinglupa Connection



Duterte to reveal ‘drug matrix’ linking De Lima to Bilibid drug trade

days in the Commission on Human Rights.

Duterte accused Dayan of being De Lima’s link to convicted drug lords, who were supposedly allowed to run their illegal operations at the NBP when she was Justice Secretary. In the government’s pecking order, the NBP is under the Department of Justice. The matrix also shows that Dayan is “a known drug user in Urbiztondo,” and that De Lima gave him a house and lot, money, and vehicles.

### Wiretaps

But what is intriguing is a Manila Times news report, dated August 21, saying: “President Rodrigo Duterte is in possession of wiretaps and ATM records showing that the former driver-bodyguard of Sen. Leila de Lima transacted with drug syndicates at the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinglupa when she was Justice Secretary.” Further, the report said: “The two were intimate, he said, based on recordings of their ‘lovers’ talk over the phone.” Duterte claimed that a foreign country, which he did not name, provided the wiretaps.

The matrix also shows that with the help of De Lima, Bucayo was designated as Philippine National Police (PNP) Regional Director of Police Regional Office 1. It also shows that Bucayo was a go-between of De Lima and Espino. It

is noteworthy that after his retirement from the military, De Lima appointed Bucayo as BUCOR Chief. However, he resigned because of alleged involvement in illegal drugs after contraband was found inside the NBP.

The line that connects De Lima to former Justice Undersecretary Francisco Baraan III leads to Espino through Francisco’s brother Rafael Baraan, whom Espino allegedly used to cover for his illegal activities. The matrix describes Espino as the “richest politician in Northern Luzon.” Both Espino and Baraan were involved in black sand mining in Pangasinan. Recently, Espino has been charged with plunder for an illegal mining case.

### Organized crime

With all these linkages in the “Muntinglupa Connection,” it shows a network that is not unlike the “organized crime” in the U.S. where various layers are used to insulate the boss at the top of the criminal hierarchy. Could Dayan have been De Lima’s conduit -- or “consigliere,” as the Mafia calls it -- to the drug lords at NBP?

But De Lima, as expected, denied the allegations. She also denied the existence of the illegal drug “shabu” inside the NBP compound when she was Justice Secretary. She also denied allegations that she bought Dayan a house in Pangasinan. However,

according to the Urbiztondo Municipal Assessor’s Office, Dayan’s sister owns the land where Dayan’s house was built. But this is a typical modus operandi of corrupt government officials: the titles to their properties are in the names of “dummies” -- relatives, friends or associates. Interestingly, the matrix shows that a certain “Ms. Cardenosa”

is connected to and serving as Dayan’s “dummy” of his properties. The matrix also shows that she is connected to Espino and Sison.

### Congressional investigations

But De Lima, who isn’t taking the whole shebang without a fight, complicates the situation. Calling the accusations linking her to illegal drugs at the NBP “absolute lies,” De Lima who is the Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, is leading the probe into the summary killings of suspected drug offenders. The House of Representatives is also set to investigate the alleged illegal drug operations at the NBP.

While it is commendable what Duterte is doing to rid the country of illegal drugs and stamp out corruption in government, some people doubt if he could accomplish all these within the framework of the law. Indeed, Duterte is getting a lot of flak from self-righteous people who believe that the law -- in the strictest sense -- should be applied in prosecuting those involved in the illegal drug trade. But that’s what had been done in the past and -- guess what? -- the illegal drug problem was getting worse, which is turning the country into a major hub in the international drug trade. And as shown in Duterte’s “drugs matrix,” production of “shabu” is being done inside the NBP under De Lima’s

alleged protection. With 20 of the country’s major drug lords incarcerated at the NBP, they’ve transformed the prison -- with the connivance of prison staff -- into a government-owned “shabu” factory.

### Narco-zombies

But while it’s sad that those who are sworn to uphold the law and protect the citizens are protecting the illegal drug trade in this country, it’s horrible to see a growing number of people suffering from addiction to “shabu” and other illicit drugs. What we’re seeing today are people turning into narco-zombies.

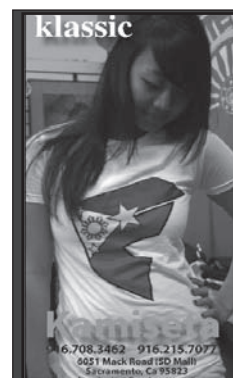
Can you blame Duterte then for trying his best to stop this “beast” that is gnawing at the fabric of our society? And can we blame him if he’s using unorthodox methods to fight an unorthodox enemy who victimizes the people -- anybody -- regardless of age or status in life?

I realize that some people are concerned with the collateral damage in the war against the drug menace. But like any other war, collateral damage cannot be avoided; it can only be minimized. And what would be considered minimal? In an attempt to put it on a positive note, the following statistics show some bright outlook in Duterte’s anti-drug campaign.

The PNP reported that 239 drug suspects were slain in police operations as of July 22. An average of 11 people we killed each day during the first 22 days of the Duterte presidency. In almost all the cases, the PNP claimed self-defense. The total number of drug pushers and users who surrendered to authorities is 120,038. Among them are 7,107 drug pushers and the rest are self-confessed drug users.

While all these police operations help in fighting this vicious plague, the bottom line is: “Cut off the head of the snake.” With an approval rating of 91%, is Duterte doing the right thing in going after De Lima, the alleged head of the “drugs matrix”? But the ultimate question is: Will he succeed?

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



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**PerryScope**  
By Perry Diaz

# “Bato bato sa langit...”

**F**ive weeks after former Davao City Mayor Rodrigo “Digong” Duterte was sworn in as President of the Philippines, his promise to rid the country of criminality and illegal drugs is paying off.

To date, more than 400 people – drug lords, drug pushers, drug addicts, house thieves, and other kinds of criminals — have been killed and more than 4,000 captured. But here’s the stinger: police say that 565,806 have turned themselves in since the crackdown began. And by the looks of it, the purge had just started. What we’re seeing is just the tip of a bloody iceberg that’s sending chills down the spine of those who are involved in the country’s illegal drug trade. Yes! Finally, the government is coming down on them with vengeful fury.

Are we expecting this to happen? Yes, because that’s precisely what Duterte promised he’d do if he were elected president. He vowed that he would get rid of criminality and illegal drugs in the country in three to six months. And the people said, yesss! He said he’d kill 100,000 criminals and dump their bodies in the Manila Bay to fatten the fishes, and the people loved it!

He went on to ride the crest of a popular movement to fight crime and corruption that has laid the country in a dysfunctional state and emotional ruins where life is the cost of a meal. Digong knew these problems because those were the same problems he fought in the 22 years that he was mayor of Davao City. He fixed Davao’s crime problems and he promised the voters he’d fix the country’s crime problems if they elect him to the presidency. Not only did they give him what he wanted, the people gave him a mandate... a bloody mandate!

Some say his victory was sweet



Digong and Bato

and romantic. Nay, it was an earth-shaking revolution. It was no different from any other revolution where blood is necessarily spilled to cleanse the foundation for a new social order to be built upon.

## Digong and Bato

And leading Duterte’s “enforcers” is his most trusted police commander, Gen. Ronald Dela Rosa, whom he appointed as the Director General of the Philippine National Police (PNP). “Bato,” as Dela Rosa is called, is charged with the daunting task of cleaning up the 160,000-strong police force of erring officers involved in the illegal drug trade and getting rid of the drug lords they were protecting, including corrupt politicians who were in cahoots with the drug traders.

At midnight last Sunday, August 7, Duterte dropped a bombshell when he named a long list of mayors, congressmen, judges, policemen, and soldiers whom he accused of involvement in the drug trade. One-by-one he read the names in a nationally televised speech. He said that the police and

military had validated the names, but he added: “I am the one reading it and I am the sole person responsible for this one.” He also stripped the accused government officials of their police escorts and relieved the policemen who were on the list as well. To drive his point across, Duterte issued shoot-to-kill orders against those who resisted arrest.

## Shoot-to-kill

The first on the list was Albuera, Leyte mayor Rolando Espinosa Sr. who surrendered to Dela Rosa after hearing that Duterte ordered to “shoot him on sight like a dog” because he was treating the people like dogs. Meanwhile, Espinosa’s son, Kerwin, who is alleged to be the drug lord responsible for the illicit drug trade in Eastern Visayas, is believed to be hiding somewhere in Malaysia. He had sent surrender feelers, saying that he’d only

surrender personally to Bato. So far, no final arrangement has been made.

But it’s not just politicians and drug traders who are being hit by Bato’s “avengers” – as his special anti-drug police squads are called. It just seems that Bato is living up to a popular Filipino adage, which says: “Bato bato sa langit ang tamaan huwag magalit.” Loosely translated, it says: “When I throw a stone up in the air, don’t get mad if you’re hit on its way down.”

Nobody is exempt from this adage as what had happened to PNP Superintendent Victor Pagulayan — station commander of a barangay (village) in Quezon City — for his alleged failure to rid his area of rampant criminality and illegal drugs. He’s been “exiled” to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARRM) where he joined about 44 other “exiled” police officers for their involvement in the illegal drug trade. Incidentally, this was the region where 44 members of PNP’s Special Action Force (SAF) were massacred by Muslim rebels in Mamasapano,

gulfed their lives? Could it be that their lives’ security hinges on the elimination of society’s number one scourge? Could it be that people are so downtrodden and frustrated that what Digong and Bato achieve would justify the means they employ?

But where do you draw the line between right and wrong or between life and death? We don’t have the answers right now but there is always an opportunity to revisit this question at an appropriate time in the future.

## Duterte’s revolution

And this reminds me of the French Revolution, which had put to an end the centuries of oppression and poverty in a society divided into two distinct classes: the haves and the have-nots. In the end, the people achieved what they wanted: liberty, equality, and fraternity. But it came with a stiff price: It was a bloody revolution and the collateral damage was high. But what was the alternative?

In Duterte’s revolution, there is not a shadow of a doubt that there

would be collateral damage; that is, innocent people would be killed. Some people would use the situation to take revenge against people who had hurt them in the past. And this had happened a whole lot at times in wars where justice might sometime take a back seat or turn a blind eye. But what can one do to avoid collateral damage? Some people say that it comes with the territory. Could it then be rationalized by saying that killing nine criminals and one innocent person is better than letting these nine criminals live to harm a thousand innocent people? It might sound convoluted but that is the reality of life in this imper-



Drug lord or collateral damage?

Maguindanao in 2015.

“We are far from over,” declared Bato. “We still have five months to go. More lives will be lost along the way be they criminals or those of my own men,” he said.

## Lone voice in the wilderness

But while the people were awed and shocked at the speed and intensity of Duterte’s anti-crime campaign, there was one person – Vice President Leni Robredo — who questioned the “extrajudicial killings.” She also deplored the absence of public outcry against the alarming increase in the number of drug traders killed by policemen or vigilante groups.

But could it be that the reason why there is lack of public outcry is because the people are fed up with the criminality that has en-



Robredo and Duterte at the PNP turnover ceremony.

fect world.

So, when Bato throws a stone up in the air, don’t get mad if you’re hit on its way down.” Yep, “Bato bato sa langit ang tamaan huwag magalit.”

Caveat: The “bato” that hit you could be Bato Dela Rosa himself. (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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## The heroes of the past and the heroes of today

By Ambeth R. Ocampo

**N**ational Heroes Day

2016 was a welcome holiday for many of us who were caught in horrendous traffic last Thursday and Friday. While I did not participate in the early morning commemoration at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, I took the day off reflecting on the question of heroes.

Ongoing at the Supreme Court is a hearing of oral arguments for and against the transfer of Ferdinand Marcos' mortal remains from display in Batac, Ilocos Norte, to burial in the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

While the National Historical Commission of the Philippines has issued a strongly worded study on Marcos' war-record (or lack of it), concluding that he is not a hero, the regulations governing the Libingan state that anyone who has served as president of the Philippines is entitled to be buried there. Soldiers dishonorably discharged are not eligible, but there is no such qualification for presidents, even one who was overthrown by the people in 1986 amid accusations of human rights abuses and plunder during his rule.

However, the republic act that created the Libingan states that those buried there must be worthy of emulation by our generation and the next. But the Libingan is not reserved exclusively for human beings; in 1992, "Shadow," a bomb-sniffing dog on the security detail of President Corazon C. Aquino, died of stomach illness; it was buried in the Libingan, its coffin draped with a flag and accorded simple military honors.

A question of heroes came to mind last Monday, making me wonder if millennials still find heroes relevant, and whether their criteria for heroes are different from those of the generation earlier.

In a 2011 SWS survey on heroes (Pulse Asia did their own survey but the data is not available on their website), respondents were asked in Filipino: "Sino-sino po ang mga taong kinikilala ninyong tunay na bayaning Pilipino? Maaari po kayong magbanggit ng hanggang limang tao." [Who are the persons whom you consider



Estrada, Ramon Magsaysay and Jejomar Binay, followed by "unspecified" Marcos (0.8 percent), Chiz Escudero (0.7 percent), and Apolinario Mabini (0.5 percent).

I cannot believe that 0.4 percent of the respondents were "not aware of Dr. Jose Rizal"!

genuine Filipino heroes? You can name up to five persons.]

The top ten were: Jose Rizal (75 percent), Andres Bonifacio (34 percent), Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. (20 percent), Cory Aquino (14 percent), Apolinario Mabini (14 percent), Emilio Aguinaldo (11 percent), Ferdinand Marcos (5.1 percent), Ramon Magsaysay (4.3 percent), Manuel L. Quezon (3.8 percent), and Lapu-Lapu (3.7 percent). I looked at the names and wondered if the respondents remembered them because they are in history textbooks, monuments, markers and even paper bills and coins.

The next 10 on the list are quite interesting because it includes the "Pambansang Kamao" as well as two show biz characters: Melchora Aquino (3.2 percent), Marcelo H. del Pilar (3 percent), Noytoy Aquino (2.9 percent), Emilio Jacinto (2.8 percent), Manny Pacquiao (2.6 percent), Gabriela Silang (2.6 percent), Gregorio Del Pilar (2.2 percent), Juan Luna (1.9 percent), Manuel Roxas (1.8 percent), Joseph Estrada (1.8 percent), Diosdado Macapagal (1.6 percent), and Fernando Poe Jr. (1.6 percent). That Rizal and Bonifacio topped the SWS list was not surprising.

However, to the question "Who is the National Hero of the Philippines, which the rival Pulse Asia survey asked, the respondents had Rizal at the top (81.9 percent), followed by Manny Pacquiao (2.8 percent) and Andres Bonifacio (1.9 percent).

And how could this happen? Ninoy Aquino and his son Noytoy both garnered 1.7 percent as compared to Corazon Aquino's and Emilio Aguinaldo's 1 percent each.

And I am surprised that 2.1 percent claimed they did not know who the national hero is!

Pulse Asia also asked the respondents who they considered a hero comparable to Rizal and the results were: Ninoy Aquino (10.8 percent), Ferdinand Marcos (5.4 percent), Manny Pacquiao (4.8 percent), Cory Aquino (4 percent), Andres Bonifacio (3.1 percent), Noytoy Aquino (3 percent). Tied at 0.9 percent were Joseph

Johnny Walker has launched a campaign to ask Filipinos the question on heroes again: What are heroes to our times? From the above list, it can be gleaned that "official" heroes are those we read about in textbooks, whose images we see in monuments, whose faces we see on postcards, teaching aids, paper money and—for a time in the past—in coins.

It is interesting to see how millennials see their heroes as expressed in Twitter feeds on Rappler which gave some definitions like "Heroes are those who make this country a better place for our children," a quote from the late Jose W. Diokno. Another posted: "We need to make heroes of the ordinary people. We need to make heroes of ourselves."

Rappler proposed Environmental Heroes and Heroes in Public Service. So it seems our definitions of heroes and heroines are fast changing.

When you look at old lists of heroes you notice that they are all old, male, lived long ago—and dead. Do we have to be dead to become heroes today? Do we need to wear a costume or a cape to be a hero? Worse, do we need to wear our underwear over our pants to become a superhero? What is a hero or heroine for the 21st-century Filipino?

Since we make heroes in our image and likeness, our choices and definitions say a lot not about history and the past, but the present we live in.



By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

## Corps of Professors at 75

**M**y family and I extend our warm greetings and felicitations to the Corps of Professors on its 75th founding anniversary.

Being born at Fort Del Pilar Station Hospital in 1970, I am a beneficiary of health services offered by the Philippine Military Academy to its personnel and their dependents. While growing up to adulthood I thought of paying back the services I got from the institution.

When I was in the Nurse Corps of the Armed Forces of the Philippines I made myself available to be assigned at FDPSH to serve PMA. In 1995, two years after I was CAD to NC and assigned at Southern Command in Zamboanga, I was transferred to PMA.

Teaching is a noble profession and I love it. While taking post graduate degree in management at the University of the Philippines in Baguio, I was offered to teach management and social sciences subjects such as public policy, international relation, government, human resources, principles of management, and economics to the Cadet Corps,

AFP. Eventually I joined the prestigious Corps of Professors, PMA via lateral entry.

Serving PMA in two separate capacities, technical and administrative, in eight continuous years made me fulfill my desire to give back and serve the institution which took care of me the day I was born. But teaching PMA cadets, as a member of the Corps of Professors, is the most fulfilling among the two.

Today, the Corps celebrates its diamond anniversary. Happy 75th foundation day to the members of the Corps of Professors, AFP. You are part of cadets' lives because you influence and mould the character of cadets to become leaders of the Filipino nation.

Mabuhay!  
(gabbyortig@yahoo.com)



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# The Golden Rule

By Bernadette Descargar

**C**alifornia Carehomes are premier Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly located in the heart of Elk Grove, California. The care homes were originally started in the 1990's by Victorio and Mercedes Descargar. The focus on family and quality of life was the tenet of their care homes and as the years went on, they expanded and built another care home with the same love and commitment as their first. Soon, Victor and Mercedes's homes became well-known and reputable for being meticulous, having great care, food and most importantly, a loving environment.

As the second daughter to Victorio and Mercedes Descargar, when the time came to take over the family business, there was never a doubt in my mind that I couldn't handle it. It was a pretty easy decision to make. My parents had already set the foundation and built two successful care homes that were built on love, quality care and respect for the elderly. My Social Work Degree was helpful but being grounded in our culture, family belief system and values made the transition easy. Besides, with my parents and two sisters, May Descargar and Monette Stevens as my biggest supporters and cheerleaders, I couldn't go wrong.

Fast forward 25 years from the start of the Carehomes and here we are, still standing, with the same family belief system and values that my parents raised us with. Aside from maintaining the original basic philosophies, California Carehomes is not only a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly but first and foremost, it's a home filled with caring staff, love, laughter, food and quality moments.

In this industry, I have seen many changes to health care standards and regulations. As the owner, I am often asked two questions:



Staff (left to right) Community Administrator- Mary Jan; Caregivers-Vicky, Reina, Agri, Mila, Alex; California Carehomes Owner-Bernadette Descargar.



A successful turnout of both families, friends and community members.



Filipino American Veteran's Association were present to support the Descargar Family and the California Carehomes.



Family, fun and quality moments are the basis of our program and philosophy.

1. What is key to operating Residential Care Facilities For the Elderly?

2. After 25years of service, how have you maintained the family business?

Minus the business, theoretical and practical aspect of running a Care Home, the key is pretty simple. We all hear it growing up as children, we were all taught about it in school, we lived by it through our teenage and adult years and we eventually teach it to our own children/grandchildren.

**It's the expectation, the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."**

We treat our families as an extension of our own family, we care for their loved one as if they were our own mother/father/grandmother or grandfather. We love them as how we would want to be loved.



Community members and community organizations.

Our ability to do what we do requires that we are not only passionate but committed to our purpose. A successful care home is also the result of a great team of Caregivers that have the same belief and drive as myself. I have been fortunate to have a great team of Caregivers, led by my Community Administrator, Mary Jan Mitchell, who ironically started as a Caregiver over six years ago and is now the lead Administrator for both the Monterey and Tahoe Communities. Aside from being

the Administrator, the care homes have become a lifestyle for her. MJ now has visions of also being an owner of a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly with hopes of maintaining that same passion and commitment to the Golden Rule.

Aside from our focus on care, the California Carehomes sees itself as part of a larger community and catalysts to change in our industry. We believe in being active in the community, being an advocate for the elderly and participating in

fundraisers that promote research and funding to those with Alzheimer's. As a Social Worker, I saw the importance of addressing the various stressors in the lives of our residents and families as they make the journey into Assisted Living. Over the course of these last years, California Carehomes has broadened its scope of services to include resource presentations, outreach with community service groups and special events coordination that are geared towards improving the quality of life of not only our residents but their families. We provide not only the love but the support as we would want if we too had a loved one in care. The Golden Rule.

It was simple for Victor and Mercedes Descargar. It's simple for me. It's simple for my Communities Administrator, Mary Jan Mitchell and it's simple for my staff. It's the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

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# The Ilocanos (IFC) give Second Term Leadership to Ling Avera



The officers and members of the Ilocano foundation of California (formerly the Ilocanos of America) is one of the most active Filipino American organizations in Sacramento having been engaged in numerous meritorious community activities that contribute greatly to the best interest of everyone.

By Faina E. Abaya

The Ilocanos are known for being hardworking, gregarious, charitable, respectful and thrifty. Such old traditional values which were inculcated into the minds of today's Ilocanos by their forebears were consistently retained by them wherever they found comfort to live.



The innate natural traits of the Ilocanos have defined their strong and unyielding character against any adversity that could alter the course of their journey to find a better place to live and work. The rough roads they trekked were never hindrances for their determination to fulfil their dreams for a significant better future even at the remote places of the world. Their pioneering spirit to establish themselves in the places where they find solace has been embedded in the annals of Filipinos who sailed vast oceans and crossed continents and no doubt most of them have succeeded.



Photos by Faina Abaya and Dale Esperante

And just like any Filipino regional ethnicity, the Ilocanos have bonded themselves to ease the nostalgic melancholy for being away from their homeland. However, they also whole heartedly welcome other regional groupings and nationalities to show their high sense of civility in diversified communities where they have decided to live.

The Ilocano Foundation of California (formerly the Ilocanos of America) is one of the most active Filipino American organizations in Sacramento having been engaged in numerous meritorious community activities that

redounded to the best interest of everyone. Community leader Ling Avera enjoying the full confidence and trust of the members has been reelected as President of the Ilocano Foundation of California for 2016-2018 term. Likewise, new set of officers were also elected for the same term.

The induction ceremony for the new set of officers of the Ilocano Foundation of California was held at the Jose Rizal Community Center along Florin Mall Rd, Sacramento on August 20, 2016 which was attended by all the members, friends and distinguished guests.

Naturally, the Center was well decorated to conform with the dis-

criminating taste of the Ilocanos. All the tables were covered with white linen cloth and as a center piece was a pleasing to the eyes decor, a small bearing flower plant called "Encantadora" placed on a miniature light red colored clay vase. At the stage covered with wide curtain, the words "The Ilocanos" in bold letters were conspicuously displayed, obviously, referring to the Ilocano people and the lingua franca they speak.

As soon as the Center was filled up to the capacity the program



started by the iconic community leader Dr. Fred Aquino, the incumbent President of the UPAASV as the night's program Emcee who

immediately called some of the IFC officers to sing both the United States and Philippine National anthems. Thereafter, IFC Vice President Rose Basos was called to deliver the invocation. She implored the blessing of the Devine Providence to always guide the officers and members to sustain their usual respect and cooperation with one another for the betterment of the Ilocano Foundation of California and the community where they belong.

Continued on page 12

## The Ilocanos (IFC) give Second Term Leadership to Ling Avera

From page 11

The culinary expertise of the L & L Hawaiian BBB Restaurant brought out their combination of delicious barbecued chicken, beef, salad with rice and for deserts were banana flitters and Filipino favorite "maruya". As everyone was busy enjoying their food, Carol Munar revealed her hidden talent when she mesmerized her audience with her version of Imelda Papin song "Liligaya ka sa piling ng iba".

Aida Azurin, the President of American Legion Magellan Auxiliary Unit 604 delivered her welcome address by congratulating Ling Avera and her incoming officers as she expressed her gratitude to all who graciously accepted their invitations to witness tonight's event. She hopes that all will enjoy the entertainments and dancing and further hopes that the IFC will have more projects for the best interest of the community.

IFC Scholarship Chairman, Ray Oineza and President Ling Avera presented the Scholarship Award to Aleyah Ramos who could not receive her award personally because, accordingly, she is in Hawaii enjoying her summer vacation. However, the grandmother Aurora Ramos received the recipient award, who expressed her thanks to IFC on behalf of her granddaughter. In addition, she also received the Certificate of Scholarship grant from Mercy Guerrero and Ling Avera.

Father Joyle Martinez, the parish priest of St. Paul Church on Florin Road, Sacramento who just celebrated his 25 years as man of God was the Inducting Officer and Guest speaker who was introduced by Mercy Guerrero, the President of FCSV. His priestly formation was taken at San Pablo College in Baguio City where he finished his Bachelor of Arts, major in Philosophy and minor in Sociology. He finished his theological studies



at Immaculate Conception School of Theology in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Eventually, he received Bachelor of Sacred Theology and subsequently ordained on April 6, 1991 as a priest in Holy Cross Parish Church at the place of his birth. Father Martinez held several priestly assignments and duties both in the Philippines and United States before becoming the pastor of Saint Paul Church on July 1, 2014.

In his speech, father Martinez eloquently emphasized in both English and his native tongue Ilo-

cano of being humble in our day to day undertakings. The good Priest cited biblical passages and fictional stories to bolster his contention that humility is a Godliness feeling of acknowledging the extend of our limitation in relation to others good ways. He mentioned a biblical case in point about John, the Baptist who baptized Jesus Christ and when Jesus Christ time to perform the ritual, John without any feeling of rancor or animosity accepted his role to the messiah's Godly acts.

Father Martinez also mentioned the fictional story of composer Salieri who was insanely jealous to his rival Mozart and because of their soaring egos no one was accepting who could be the second best between them. Just like Adam and Eve who were enticed by the devil to eat the forbidden fruit, to become god themselves and because of their greediness they were banished from paradise.

After Father Martinez homily like speech, he officially solemnized the oath taking ceremony of

the incoming officers as he congratulated them for holding such responsible positions. President Ling Avera assumes her second term as she delivered her acceptance speech and said that, she welcomes the new officers and "looking forward to be working with you in the next two years. Together, we will accomplish great things". She also thanks all committees, members and volunteers for their continued cooperation and support. She further said that "I depend on you on the success of this organization. I cannot do everything by myself so please work with me and work with each other without self-reservation. Furthermore, she said that, "the success of our organization is also your success, therefore, we work together, play together and celebrate our success together".

The evening has continued music, dancing and entertainments provided by Kapitbahay dancers under the watchful eyes of Lilia Rivera who choreographed the dancing of the members such as; Julie Vergara, Gigi Perez, Mimi Dillingham, Letty O'Quinn, Carol Munar, Linda Munzon and Carlos Cordero.

Royal Court Dancers also awed their audience with their well synchronized dance and the group members are; Edna Villanueva, Janeth Tabora and Fe Alvarez. Likewise, the Golden Ladies also thrilled and regaled their audience with their colorful dancing and the members of the group are; Mercy Guerrero, Aida Azurin, Luz Daclan, Carol Munar, Ling Avera and Rose Basos.

Officers of the Ilocano foundation of California are: Ling Avera, President; Aida Azurin, 1st. Vice Pres.; Rose Basos, 2nd. Vice Pres.; Aurora Ramos, Secretary; Betty Riganon, Assist. Secretary; Mercy Guerrero, Treasurer; Margie Pasalo, Assist. Treasurer; Ray Oineza, Auditor; Rick Rafanan, Assist. Auditor; PRO, Lilian Batoon, Bembet Borromeo, Carol Munar, Bella Nidoy and Josie Pasion. Peace Officers: Cris Soliven, Melchor Munar, Steve Coloma, Segundo Azurin and Rodney Pasion; Board of Directors: Dr. Fred Aquino, Alex Avera, Maria Bahoric, Divina Borromeo, Lety Cabe, Ofelia Coloma, Dr. Amor Cristobal, Luz Daclan, Emilia Caoagas-Dones, Remy Mangosing, Minda Miguel, Julie Oineza, Elvie Olarte, Rick Pasalo, Fernando Riganon, Faye Soliven, Dina Soria and Nellie Umali. Advisors are Nick Catudan and Frank Ganal.

Community personalities who were seen enjoying the night were; Gary Perry, Admir Soriano, Dale and Melita Esperante, Memie Weitzenberg, Letty O'Quinn, Joe Rivera, Segundo Azurin and Members of the Sons and Daughters of Bangui International.

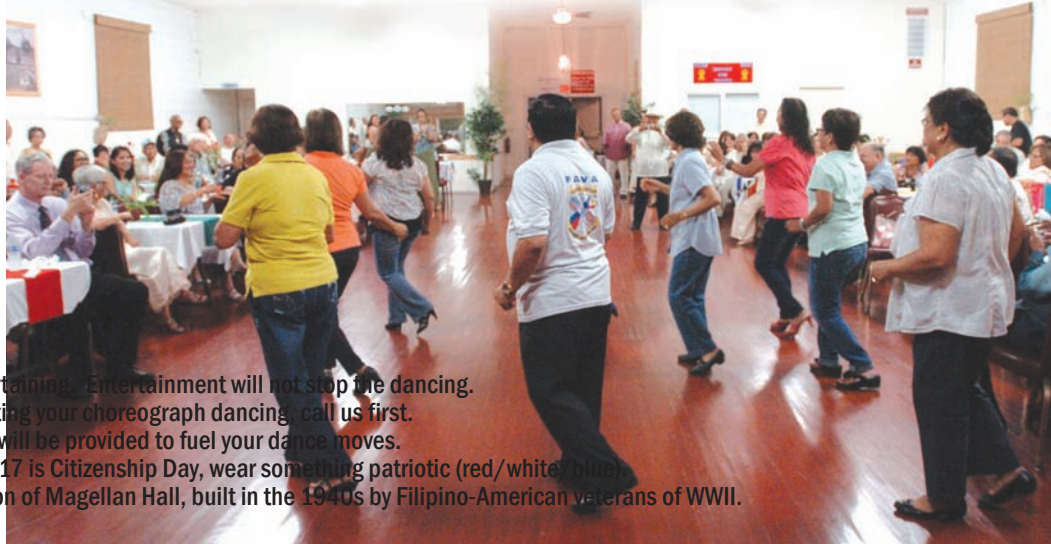
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WHEN: September 17, 2016  
COST: \$15 per person  
TIME: 6 PM - 10 PM

CONTACT: [esperante1868@frontier.com](mailto:esperante1868@frontier.com)  
Bill: 707-495-8949  
Carlos: 916-601-3312  
Dale: 916-524-9287  
Howard: 916-761-0384

No official program, just dancing and entertaining. Entertainment will not stop the dancing. If you wish to entertain by singing or exhibiting your choreograph dancing, call us first. Sandwich Snack, fruits, and other goodies will be provided to fuel your dance moves. RECOMMENDED WEAR: Since September 17 is Citizenship Day, wear something patriotic (red/white/blue). Your participation will aid in the preservation of Magellan Hall, built in the 1940s by Filipino-American veterans of WWII.



**Pangasinan Association**



Annual get together of the Pangasinan Association headed by their President Ray Oineza held at Kapitbahay on August 28, 2016.

**Community Project for Veterans**



(Col. AFP Ret.) Mon Veridiano who just arrived from the Philippines visited Henry Arcangel together with Jun & Faina Abaya with Henry and Tina Bambao, to talk about community project for Veterans which he hopes to benefit them.

**Baguio General Hospital School of Nursing - Class '72**



Baguio General Hospital School of Nursing-Class '72 reunion held at Edison, New Jersey on August 19-21, 2016 with Tina Bambao.

Wish you were here



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**Birthdays**



**Caridad Aducayen**  
and husband George  
September 6



"A family that prays together stays together!" These four generation Aducayen Family pictures were taken after Mass at the Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Elk Grove on Mother's Day, with our cherished children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

**Tom Amaba**  
Surprise  
Birthday  
Party

Tom Amaba walked into the Capital City Room of the Delta King Riverboat to find his family and friends all waiting for him. Held on 13 August 2016. Surprise Party given by his wife, Lerma, with the help of their kids TJ and Irene.



Charlie Delizo birthday at Elk Grove Park with relatives and friends on August 6, 2015.



Fely Esplana get together with family and friends held at her residence on August 6, 2016.

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## Birthdays



NELDA F. ABELEDA  
AUGUST 27



SUSAN DE JESUS  
AUGUST 29



ALEXIS TENCE  
SEPTEMBER 11



MINDA LOCQUIAO with grandkids  
AUGUST 26

## Calendar of Events

**SEPTEMBER 10, 2016 (Sat)**  
**Filipino Women's Club**  
 Pista sa Nayon / 6pm - 11pm  
 Jose Rizal Community Center  
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento  
 Memie 916.482.9541  
 Rose 916.381.3845  
 Josie 916.392.6252



**SEPTEMBER 17, 2016 (Sat)**  
**Social Dinner & Dance**  
 6 pm - 11pm  
 Joe 916.396.7863  
 Dale 916.524.9287  
 Howard 916.761.0384  
 Magellan Post 604  
 Gerber Rd. Sacramento, CA  
 \$15 per person



Birthday of Memie Weitzenberg on August 22, 2016 held at the residence of Rose Basos.



Celebrating Lee Ramirez birthday with her lovely family and close friends on August 27, 2016.

## Anniversary



GEMMA and GABRIEL ORTIGOZA  
18th Wedding Anniversary  
September 20



JOJO and MICHELLE ABAYA  
Wedding Anniversary  
September 9



EDNA and RUBEN NAZARENO  
46th Wedding Anniversary  
September 14

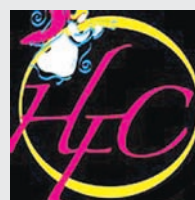


CESAR and FELY SALGADO  
55th Wedding Anniversary  
September 17

**OCTOBER 22, 2016 (Sat)**  
**My Sister's House**  
**Run for a Safe Haven**  
 5k fun run/walk  
 Start and finish at William Land  
 Park at the Village Green area  
 (corner of Freeport Blvd. and  
 Sutterville Rd.)  
 Race Day Registration: 8:00am  
 Register at <http://www.runforasafehaven.com>



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By Dale Esperante

# A Caring Home

For most of us, memories of such a place started in our childhood. We remember our family gathered around the dinner table blessed with the nourishment for life in the company of loved ones. Yet this scene may easily be taken for granted. The grown up kids will venture out on their own one day to establish their own lives. Everyone will discover varying degrees of challenges in the arena of life. Some will suffer loneliness, while others will find the glory of solitude, by being alone.

In adulthood, many paths awaited us, such as, family, career, social, adventure, struggles, service, and on and on. For some, it is all of the above.

As we age, health requires more attention. In this country, we are blessed with government programs benefitting the elderly. Many paths await the retired elders, such as, family, career, social life, adventure, struggles, service, and on and on. Again, for some, it is all of the above.

Then all of a sudden, a search for the right home becomes essential as we get closer to the fragile years. The most ideal situation would be to stay in our own home, with our own family. In this country, the demands of the aged may be too daunting for the busy members of society—our own family included. This time, with help, we venture to find a place.

If life had smiled upon us in our childhood, we should have experienced comfort and care. Hopefully when we turn childlike again, we would find ourselves being smiled upon by life a second time.

An invitation to a Neighborhood Appreciation Event by California Carehomes on 7 August 2016 allowed a peek into a possible future. Residents and their visiting families enjoyed the day seated outside under the shade of trees and patio umbrellas, enjoying the



Members of the Filipino American Veterans Association and the American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604 with Mercedes and Bernadette Descargar.



California Carehomes staff

sight of friends and neighbors of California Carehomes, hosted by Ms. Bernadette Descargar. A Hawaiian Shaved-Ice business called “Da-Kine” was contracted by Bernadette to offer limitless servings to anyone who came for the event. Almost everyone delightedly sampled every flavor available on the menu. Games and street arts also occupied the playful and artistic guests. The cul-de-sac area next to the care home facilities transformed into a pedestrian-only area, coned and supported by the neighborhood.

A member of Bernadette’s staff offered a tour of one of the care homes. The open plan of the home’s living areas (dining, TV room, seating) provided comfort and care. The backyard also offered enough seating for residents to enjoy

a little bit of nature in the well-tended garden. The uniformed staff showed genuine attentiveness towards the care of the residents.

Bernadette learned from her parents, Victor and Mercedes Descargar. Victor was an active member of the Filipino-American Veterans Association and the American Legion Magellan Post 604. After he retired from the Navy, Victor and Mercedes established and operated several well-known and successful residential care facilities for the elderly in Elk Grove. Victor is no longer with us. Though Bernadette is now fully in charge of the family’s care facilities, she still treats her mom, Mercedes, as the Boss.

Mercedes is still an active member of the Filipino-American Veterans Association and the American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604. Congratulations to the Descargar’s California Carehomes LLC!



**ang saya-saya,  
ang ganda-ganda!**

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## Katungkulan

By Dale Esperante

May be pronounced as, “Cat-Two-Ungh-Cool-An.” Practice saying it a few times until it sounds unbroken. The meaning is Responsibility.

Our first and foremost responsibility is to ourselves by being healthy in order to experience more of life. How do we achieve this? Let us start in adulthood, assuming we relied on our parents and elders to take care of us in our youth.

The routine day of adulthood: preparation, work, leisure, home, rest.

The routine day of adults with family: preparation, family, work, home, family, and rest.

For those working, hopefully there are benefits such as a health insurance, sick leave, vacation time, 401K, life insurance, and so forth. With these benefits, it should be manageable to maintain or monitor one’s health.

Self-responsibility also needs a little bit of unwinding and relaxing. Throw in some exercise time as well.

Family responsibility requires commitment, support, patience, understanding, fidelity, enjoyment, sharing, and perhaps a bit of saintliness. Very daunting indeed but should be the most rewarding, ultimately.

Work demands must also be addressed which make this a responsibility, in order for us to have the means to take care of personal and family needs. In general, work will span decades of our lives before we can enjoy the benefits of retirement.

For those blessed with the fruits of retirement, share the wealth of your life’s experience by being involved with community organizations. Those who are still working and able to contribute to the community, you are much appreciated. In the Sacramento Fil-Am community, we have medical, vet-

eran, social, political, cultural, youth, religious, sport, and many other supportive organizations.

Veterans: American Legion Magellan Post 604, American Legion Auxiliary Magellan (Ladies) Unit 604, and Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) Inc. including the FAVA Ladies...

Family and Youth: Sinagtala, Eskwela Natin, Filipino American Leadership Youth Conference (FALYC)...

Medical Missions: Bayanihan Club of Sacramento, Lions Clubs International, Shriners and Masonic Clubs...

Cultural: Filipino Fiesta, Sinagtala, Bayanihan, Philippine National Day Association (PNDA), Filipino Women’s Club, Pacific Rim...

Political: Filipino Fiesta, PNDA, Filipino Women’s Club, Pacific Rim...

Religious: Filipinos are always actively involved in the churches, anywhere...

Sac State and UC Davis: The sororities and fraternities contribute labor and goodwill to the American Legion veterans at least once a year. Specifically: Sac State’s Kappa Psi Epsilon and Chi Rho Omicron, and the UC Davis group.

Sport: Golf Clubs, Basketball Leagues, Bowling, Health Clubs, Martial Arts...

Social: Name the Philippine province and there is a club, and All of the above...

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# Finding Warmth in Iceland

By Gia R. Mendoza

From their usual popular destinations, Filipinos do come to live in Iceland, in the Arctic North. Most of them are seafarers, or simply, adventurous.

Me, I was just an incidental tourist of a kind, a world sampler, and Iceland was another item on my “curious” list. I did not deliberately travel to Iceland were it not for constant and attractive tourism sales pitches. It was also an alternative bridge to European adventures. We booked a three-day trip to see something new and to hop on to a European port for a later cruise adventure.

We started with our leisure trip (coming from an overnight flight on Icelandair) on a Grayline bus from Keflavik airport. In the early morning haze, the bus took us through what seemed to be a lonely, barren flatland with low mountains in the background and a sprinkling of purple lupine flowers in the foreground.

This “treeless” country, as described by many articles, has only one-third of its total land area covered with vegetation due to unchecked sheep grazing and logging for fuel and building materials over the years.

It seemed to take forever for the airport ride. We were tired, and the previous night was too short and we wanted to get to where we were going. It was 31-and-a-half miles just to get into town, which took about 45 minutes. The roads seemed straight with not much traffic; the heavy clouds were at ground level and the fields were just open. We finally got to town, to the bus depot, after which we were transferred to a minivan that was ideal for narrow streets. There we were, at Central Plaza hotel, very early for our body clocks after our normal night was eaten up by a white morning. We were offered an early check-in for a reasonable fee, which included breakfast. Hungry for food and rest, we agreed. It was a Scandinavian type breakfast, slightly more than continental, with some hot food like scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon and various breads and butter and cut fruit all grown in Iceland. A variety of food crops, including vegetables and fruit, are grown in greenhouses heated with geothermal energy.

We took advantage of the long



Gullfoss, the largest waterfall in Europe

day and the early afternoon to do the Golden Circle tour. We gazed at the largest waterfall in Europe (Gullfoss) and the mini-geysers (including Geysir, the term that gave rise to the English word) and other natural wonders. The country arose from the Mid-Atlantic, forming a ridge, separating the North American and Eurasian plates, which created a constant geological tension. New islands are born after a few volcanic eruptions. We were too tired to fully appreciate the new information, but it was good use of our time as we were not staying too long. The next few days were long as the sun hardly dipped below the horizon and promptly rose again.

As opposed to vacation packages (Iceland tours that include airfare) it seemed expensive to go on one's own, as an ordinary hotel room was about \$200 a night and a simple meal was close to \$50 for the two of us. Of course, it was June and peak season.

We took tours in place, and we were certainly amazed at the natural environment and how the country preserves it. Guides were quick to point out that Iceland was a self-sustaining country that produced its own energy from its own geothermal and hydroelectric resources. Icelanders are proud of their pure and healthful water, and there were many thermal pools to luxuriate in, including the famous Blue Lagoon. Iceland almost exclusively runs on renewable energy sources.

One afternoon, we soaked our-



The Filipino-Indonesian Restaurant with John Ace, Fikre, Maricel and Michael Reeves.

selves in one of those natural pools, but had to rent swim suits as we foolishly neglected to pack them. Going through undressing rooms, we had to get into communal showers naked as Eve, separated by gender but not age, before getting into swimsuits and using the pools. It may have been partly psychological or real, but I felt better as I emerged from the healing waters of Reykjavik. The Blue Lagoon was our first choice, but having so little time, we could not make a convenient reservation considering both transport and time schedules; and of course the magic Blue was more expensive than the public pool. With the public pool, as seniors, we were granted a concession rate, which means free. Unbeatable deal.

## Before Long, Signs of Filipinos

We took a hop-on, hop-off bus to see major city sights. We saw a sign along the way, “Filipino Restaurant,” (in Iceland?) and I made a mental note that we should go there the next day. My only landmark was that it was near stop No. 18 (?), which was the Hilton hotel. We walked up the side road, turned left and there it was—Filipino restaurant, with a sub-sign below indicating Filipino-Indonesian food availability.

I met the owners and learned that they constituted a Filipino-Indonesian partnership. The lady



Driving through Iceland countryside (Photo by Gia R. Mendoza)

is Maricel Valle, who changed her name to Kristin (or Christine upon local advice) to harmonize with Icelandic traditional names. She says, however, that nowadays one can keep one's own name. She later met Fikre, an Indonesian, and they got married and had a son, Ricky Alexander, or following Icelandic tradition is now Fikresson (son of Fikre). Maricel herself is called Juliosdottir (daughter of her father Julio). It is normal to be called by first names, and subsequently family names have the parents' names, with

“son” and daughter (dottir) as suffix. They are now citizens of Iceland after more than 20 years in the country and speak Icelandic. Fikresson is fluent in four languages—Icelandic, English, Tagalog and Indonesian.

The restaurant is a year old, and seems to be viable with fellow Filipinos, tourists and some Indonesians as regular customers. Both Fikre and Maricel do the cooking, with Fikre working part-time in a bakery, occasionally helped by Ricky. Fikre is proud of his Indonesian menu offerings including his delicious hamburger, and Maricel of her *laxasupa* (fish soup) and *pancit*. Sometimes another lady (Annalynn) and her young son (John Ace) help out.

There are approximately 2,000 Filipinos in Iceland, the largest Asian group in the country of about 340,000 inhabitants. Many Filipinos work in the fishing and geothermal industries. The Philippine ambassador to Norway has jurisdiction in Iceland.

In spite of the predominantly cold weather and dark nights, they are happy in Iceland. Safety is an important consideration and health care is accessible to everyone. Ricky has grown and lived in Iceland most of his life and found it difficult to adapt to the heat and Philippine air when he visited there once.

Iceland has one of the lowest crime rates in the world (third lowest, next to Singapore and Lichtenstein). Crimes, when they

occur, apparently do not involve firearms even if gun ownership is high among Icelanders. I noted that the hotel in town where we were booked had no room safe, although the reception office had one if requested. Egalitarianism in terms of income and treatment of the sexes is one of the best in the world. There are virtually no class distinctions. Health care is universal and any pregnancy is taken care of by the state. All citizens benefit from free schooling up to university level. With the little time we were there it seemed like a fairy tale country with no tension among people. Corruption is almost non-existent, which makes the recent resignation of the Iceland PM and his connection to the Panama papers mind-blowing in this fairy tale state.

The openness of the Icelandic spirit might have rubbed off on the Filipino-Indonesian couple, or they could have been naturally kind. After an hour of conversation, they offered to lodge us next time we were in Iceland. They also offered to drop us off at our next destination in Reykjavik, like the shopping center, and/or our hotel. They offered us their extra car to drive around if we wanted to. This attitude blew me away. How could people be this trusting and generous, so different from our experience in big, crowded cities?

## Saying Goodbye

We spent the last afternoon, walking through the tourist traps, contributing to the Icelandic economy by patronizing food shops and buying herbal cream products. We tried to see the adorable puffins, but the wind was too strong for them to pose for visitors.

It was too soon, or too late to see the Northern Lights, another enchanting attraction in Iceland. The lights also grace the skies elsewhere, but here there are elves, trolls, mythic creatures and folk tale magic. Yes, we might return. In the album of one's mind, there would always be an empty page or two for more Icelandic memories.

*Gia R. Mendoza worked as an international civil servant for many years, and is now retired in Washington State. She enjoys writing and painting.*



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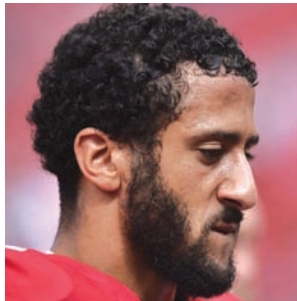
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## Abdul-Jabbar: Insulting Colin Kaepernick says more about our patriotism than his

Let athletes love their country in their own ways.

By Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the NBA's all-time leading scorer, is a former cultural ambassador for the United States and the author, most recently, of "Writings on the Wall: Searching for a New Equality Beyond Black and White."



Colin Kaepernick

During the Olympics in Rio a couple of weeks ago, Army Reserve 2nd Lt. Sam Kendricks was sprinting intently in the middle of his pole vaulting attempt when he heard the national anthem playing. He immediately dropped his pole and stood at attention, a spontaneous expression of heartfelt patriotism that elicited more praise than his eventual bronze medal. Last Thursday, San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick chose not to stand with his teammates during the national anthem. To some, Kendricks embodies traditional all-American Forrest Gump values of patriotism, while Kaepernick represents the entitled brattish behavior of a wealthy athlete ungrateful to a country that has given him so much.

In truth, both men, in their own ways, behaved in a highly patriotic manner that should make all Americans proud.

The discussion of the nuances of patriotism is especially important right now, with Trump and Clinton supporters each righteously claiming ownership of the "most patriotic" label. Patriotism isn't just getting teary-eyed on the Fourth of July or choked up at war memorials. It's supporting what the Fourth of July celebrates and what those war memorials commemorate: the U.S. Constitution's insistence that all people should have the same rights and opportunities and that it is the obligation of the government to make that happen. When the government fails in those obligations, it is the responsibility of patriots to speak up and remind them of their duty.

One of the ironies of the way some people express their patriotism is to brag about our freedoms, especially freedom of speech, but then brand as unpatriotic those who exercise this freedom to express dissat-

isfaction with the government's record in upholding the Constitution. Colin Kaepernick explained why he will not stand during the national anthem: "There are a lot of things that are going on that are unjust [that] people aren't being held accountable for. And that's something that needs to change. That's something that this country stands for — freedom, liberty, justice for all. And it's not happening for all right now."

What makes an act truly patriotic and not just lip-service is when it involves personal risk or sacrifice. Both Kendricks and Kaepernick chose to express their patriotism publicly because they felt that inspiring others was more important than the personal cost. Yes, Kendricks is a world-record pole-vaulter, but every athlete knows that breaking focus and concentration during a high-pressure competition can be devastating to the athlete's performance. The Olympics was filled with favorites who faltered because of loss of focus. Halting his run in order to honor the national anthem could have cost Kendricks his medal. He was willing to take that chance.

Likewise, Kaepernick's choice not to stand during the national anthem could create a public backlash that might cost him millions in future endorsements and affect his value as a player on his team, reducing salary earnings or even jeopardizing his job. If team ticket sales seriously dipped as a result, he would pay for his stance.

We should admire those who risk personal gain in the service of promoting the values of their country. Both athletes are in fine company of others who have shown their patriotism in unconventional ways. In 1989, when a federal law prohibiting flag desecration went into effect, Vietnam

Veterans burned the American flag as a protest to a law curbing the First Amendment. Their argument was that they fought for the freedoms in the Constitution, not a piece of cloth, and to curtail those freedoms was an insult to their sacrifice. Ironically, the original purpose of flag desecration laws between 1897 and 1932 wasn't to prevent political dissent, but to prevent the use of flag imagery for political campaigns and in advertising.

One sign of the maturation of American society is the willingness of those in the public eye, especially athletes, to openly take a political stand, even if it could harm their careers. The modern era of athletes speaking out began in 1966 with Muhammad Ali refusing to be drafted to fight other people of color. In 1967, I joined with football great Jim Brown, basketball legend Bill Russell, Muhammad Ali and other prominent athletes for what was dubbed "The Cleveland Summit." Together we tried to find ways to help Ali fight for his right of political expression. I don't know how much we were able to accomplish on a practical level, but seeing black athletes in support of Ali inspired others to speak out. The following year at the 1968 Olympics, African Americans Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists during the medal ceremony as a protest to the treatment of people of color in the United States. In 2014, NBA players LeBron James, Kyrie Irving, Jarrett Jack, Alan Anderson, Deron Williams and Kevin Garnett and NFL players from the Rams and Browns wore "I Can't Breathe" shirts during warm-ups for a game to protest police killings of unarmed blacks.

What should horrify Americans is not Kaepernick's choice to remain seated during the national anthem, but that nearly 50 years after Ali was banned from boxing for his stance and Tommie Smith and John Carlos's raised fists caused public ostracization and numerous death threats, we still need to call attention to the same racial inequities. Failure to fix this problem is what's really un-American here.

## Robin Padilla eyes for executive clemency

By Ramona Laurel

Movie and television actor Robin Padilla spent three years in jail before he was given conditional pardon by then President Fidel Ramos in 1997

In line with the campaign against drug, Padilla has recently asked President Rodrigo Duterte not to reveal the identities of celebrities involved in the use illegal of drugs

Actor Robin Padilla was found guilty of charges on illegal possession of high-powered firearms in 1994.

He was sentenced to serve for 21 years in prison by the Angeles City, Pangasinana regional trial court.

The "Bad boy of the Philippines" stayed at the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa for three years until he was granted conditional pardon by former President Fidel V. Ramos in 1997.

In 2003, Padilla's conditional pardon already expired. Padilla's legal counsel Rudolf Jurado, on the other hand, said that their camp will apply for an absolute pardon.

Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP) Executive Director Reynaldo Bayang



Robin Padilla

signed a notice recommending to review such cases. The board released a list of prisoners who may apply for executive clemency and Padilla is listed as number 61 (N95P-2112) along with 86 other inmates.

Padilla's civil rights will be restored if he was granted executive clemency. That includes his right to run for public office and to vote.

Meanwhile, Binoe has recently asked President Rodrigo Duterte not to disclose the names of celebrities who are involved in illegal drugs.

The movie actor who campaigned for Duterte during the national elections has instead pleaded to arrange a meeting among the involved artists, their

handlers, and government departments assigned to stop illegal drugs to settle the issue.

"These people are taxpayers, and they also obey the law. I'm sure that whatever mistakes they might have committed could be sorted out in a more diplomatic way," he said.

Nevertheless, he elucidated that drug pushers are not included.

"I am not talking about the pushers—they don't have a place in this industry. I'm more concerned about the users, because I know that they are the victims here," he explained.

"I cannot speak on behalf of these celebrities. I also don't know how they will accept this news from the President. I will not be surprised if most of them would say this is a violation of their human rights," he added.

Padilla believed that Duterte is only doing what he thinks is best for the country and for the welfare of the Filipino people.

"But the President meant no ill will. This is what he has promised to do for us and the country. He is kind and just. He is giving these drug users a chance to change their ways."

## PH Madrigal Singers win int'l choir competition in Italy



The Madrigal Singers' win at the 64th International Choral Competition in Arezzo, Italy qualifies them for the European Grand Prix scheduled in 2017.

The Philippine Madrigal Singers (popularly called as the Madz) won the the Grand Prix at the 64th International Choral Competition in Arezzo, Italy on Saturday, August 27.

In an announcement via Facebook, Chris Millado, vice president and artistic director of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, shared the good news.

Their win qualifies them for the European Grand Prix in Tolosa, Spain in 2017.

"The Philippine Madrigal Singers have won the European Grand Prix twice," said Chris. "If they are successful in their bid in Tolosa in 2017 this will make them the only choir in the world to win the Grand Prix 3 times! Mabuhay ang Philippine Madrigal Singers!"

Mabuhay ang artistang Pilipino!"

"Para sa bayan, sa iyo Ma'am OA, at sa ating Panginoon!" (For country, to you Ma'am OA and to our Lord.)

The choir is currently on tour in Europe and the Middle East with their choirmaster Mark Anthony A. Carpio.

Established in 1963 by the late Andrea O. Veneracion, the Philippine Madrigal Singers is one of the most popular choir groups in Asia, winning various awards including the grand prize in the European Choral Grand Prix in Choral Singing in Tours, France in 1997 and the grand prize (Grand Prix de la Ville de Tours) at the Florilege de Tours choral competition in France in July 2006. — Rapter.com

# Heroes' comeback

By Rowena Tan

Pinoy superheroes like Darna, Super Inggo, Panday, Gagamboy and Captain Barbell have made it to TV and movie screens numerous times. They've been played by different actors under the helm of different directors and, well, the future won't be any different with reports saying there's more retelling to come.

## 'Darna'

Much ado has been made about Angel Locsin backing out of the upcoming film remake of "Darna" due to spinal injury. The actress had undergone surgery in Singapore and is now in the process of healing. In previous interviews, she admitted she's still open to doing the project "but I really need to fully heal, need to fix myself so I can do this right."

But are producers willing to wait? For months now, there have been talks about a possible replacement. Who among Sarah Lahbati, Iza Calzado, Karylle, Nadine Lustre, Liza Soberano, Jessy Mendiola, Julia Montes, Maja Salvador and Ritz Azul will get the role if they are, indeed, being considered for it? Or will it still be Angel? Or perhaps someone not even from the list of all those actresses mentioned?

Your guess, to this day, is as good as ours.

## 'Mulawin'

Director Mark Reyes revealed GMA-7 is planning to do a remake of the fiction TV drama series "Mulawin."



Angel Locsin as Darna



Miguel Tanfelix as Mulawin



Vic Sotto as Lastikman

Note that some Mulawin characters have been incorporated into the story of the ongoing "Encantadia" requel, among them Pagaspas portrayed by Miguel Tanfelix.

On Instagram, Miguel posted a photo of the wings he wears on the show. He captioned it, "Ang kanyang muling paglipad."

Miguel played the character 12 years ago in the original series.

The original "Mulawin," which aired in 2004, starred Richard Gutierrez as Aguiluz and Angel Locsin as Alwina.

## 'Lastikman'

Director Frasco Mortiz hopes to do a TV remake of Mars Ravelo's "Lastikman" and he has Daniel Padilla in mind as lead star.

Frasco first pitched the idea to ABS-CBN after seeing Daniel's performance on "Princess and I" in 2013 but it didn't push through. He said that Daniel was too young then and that, perhaps, the network didn't think it would be the right time.

He is confident, though, that if ever Daniel takes a liking to the idea now, he will definitely do it. "Kung feeling niya bagay sa kanya ay gagawin niya 'yon," was how the director put it.

"Lastikman" was played by Vic Sotto in a movie adaptation in 2003. The same year, Christopher Malonzo wore the Lastikman costume for Bong Revilla's "Captain Barbell." In 2004, Mark Bautista portrayed the superhero in "Lastikman: Unang Banat."

# Matteo looks back at how he courted Sarah

In a rare moment, Matteo Guidicelli looked back at how his and Sarah Geronimo's love story began even before they actually became a real-life couple.

In the September 2016 issue of Star-Studio Magazine, Guidicelli revealed that he has always had a huge crush on Geronimo and his ex-girlfriend, actress Maja Salvador, even knew about it when they were still together.

After he and Salvador broke up, Guidicelli finally found the courage to truly get to know Geronimo.

"I called Billy and I said, 'Introduce me to Sarah, introduce me to her,'" he shared, referring to his conversation with his good friend, Billy Crawford, who had a show with Geronimo in Cebu at that time.

Following their encounter in Cebu, Guidicelli recalled going out of his way to catch Geronimo's show in Batangas, where he even lined up with the singer-actress' fans to get a meet-and-greet.

"I sat down—really, at the back of the Popsters. Tapos pumila ako sa meet-and-greet, and then nagpa-picture of kay Sarah," he said.

Guidicelli said he ended up giving Geronimo a copy of their picture when they were already a couple several years after.

Although Guidicelli may have already caught Geronimo's attention because of what he did during her show in Batangas, it was only after their US concert tour that he officially began courting her.

"After America, talagang sabi ko I like this girl. I want to get her attention. Ki-



Sarah Geronimo and Matteo Guidicelli

napalan ko na mukha ko, ginawa ko na lahat," he said.

Indeed, Guidicelli's efforts paid off as they are now in a relationship for over two years.

According to Guidicelli, they want to keep their relationship low-key as much as possible and very close to normal.

"Siyempre, she's my princess. I take care of her, but I want to show her what reality is, what life is. That everywhere you go, you won't walk around with an entourage, or be treated like a VIP," he said.

Among the things they usually bond over are working out together, and doing outdoor activities. Just recently, the two climbed to Mr. Pico De Loro along with their other friends to celebrate Geronimo's birthday.

While they have some similarities, Guidicelli mentioned that they also have differences just like normal couples do. Nonetheless, the actor appreciates how they complement and bring out the best in each other. ABS-CBN News



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