



PF NEWS

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Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards
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Celebrating the 16th year of
Philippine Fiesta News

Asean leaders wrestle over China at summit



Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) link arms in the iconic ASEAN way during the 30th ASEAN Summit Retreat at the Coconut Palace, Manila on April 29. (L-R) Malaysian Prime Minister Dato Sri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Abdul Razak; State Counsellor for Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi; Thai Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha; Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Philippine President Rodrigo Roa Duterte; Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong; Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah; Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen; Indonesian President Joko Widodo; and Lao Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith.

Agence France-Presse

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte faced pushback on Saturday at a regional summit over his efforts to weaken Southeast Asian resistance to Chinese expansionism in the contested South China Sea, diplomats said.

Duterte was due to release a chairman's statement at the end of the one-day Association of Southeast Asian (Asean) leaders meeting that ignored an international

tribunal ruling rejecting China's sweeping claims to the strategically vital waterway.

Ahead of the summit Duterte said the Philippines and other nations were helpless to stop Chinese artificial island building in areas they claimed, so there was no point discussing it at diplomatic events such as Saturday's summit.

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China wasn't there, but ruled the summit

By Federico D. Pascual Jr.

THE SUMMIT meeting of the 10 leaders of the Association of Southeast Nations held this week in Manila was dominated by a non-member that was not even in the conference hall.

Through President Rodrigo Duterte, the summit chair, China succeeded in throwing into the dustbin the 2016 award by the Permanent

Court of Arbitration at The Hague declaring as a violation of international law its claim over virtually the entire South China Sea.

The arbitral ruling on SCS issues has been the focus of public speculation, yet there was no mention of it in the summary statement issued yesterday by Mr. Duterte as chair.

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Inside secret cell: 'You're like pigs'

By Aie Balagtas

It's hard to keep things private inside the secret jail cell in the heart of Tondo, where detainees urinate, defecate, eat, bathe, and sleep in a space that's roughly 1 meter by 5 meters.

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) called the lockup a holding area for suspects who had complained that they were being used by drug enforcement officers as milking cows. Supt. Robert Domingo, the station chief, denied the allegations.

Inside the cramped, dark passageway where Raxabago police station hid and packed drug

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'JUST MAXIMIZING SPACE' Supt. Robert Domingo (above), chief of the Manila Police District Station 1, shows the media the narrow jail cell that he says he built to "make the most" of the station's limited space. A woman detainee tearfully recalls how the police allegedly forced them to pay their way out of the harrowing conditions inside the secret cell.

Lacson hits Dela Rosa's 'arrogant' defense of 'secret jail'

By Maila Ager



Several men sit inside an alleged secret cell at the Manila Police Station 1 in Tondo.

Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Director General Ronaldo "Bato" dela Rosa's defense of policemen behind the reported "secret cell" at a Manila police station was "incomprehensible" and "very arrogant," Senator Panfilo Lacson has said.

Dela Rosa said his men did nothing wrong when they

kept drug suspects in a dark, cramped and windowless cell behind a shelf at the Manila Police Station 1 in Tondo, Manila.

"As long as they haven't hurt or extorted from the detainees, it's OK with me," the PNP chief said in a television interview over the weekend.

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PerryScope
By Perry Diaz

Duterte's teetering balancing act

When Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message to President Rodrigo Duterte on the occasion of his inauguration as president of the Philippines, Duterte heaped praise on Xi, describing him "a great president." "I was honored, receiving a congratulatory message from a great president, uh prime minister," Duterte said. The Chinese foreign ministry released a statement that it is a standard diplomatic tradition for heads of state to send congratulatory messages. But to Duterte, it was a big deal. Thus began the "friendship" between Duterte and Xi.

Duterte then made a series of announcements, one of which called for the withdrawal of U.S. Special Forces troops from Mindanao, saying their "presence could complicate offensives against Islamist militants notorious for beheading Westerners."

Duterte also declared that the upcoming U.S.-Philippines joint military exercises would be "the last" and ruled out any joint navy patrols in the West Philippine Sea. However, he pledged to honor the country's security treaty with the U.S. He said that China opposed joint marine drills in the Philippines. He said that there would be no more war games with the U.S. after that. "I am serving notice now to the Americans, this will be the last military exercise," he said.

During a state visit to

China last October where he announced his military and economic "separation" from the U.S., Duterte told an audience of business leaders, "America has lost now. I've realigned myself in your ideological flow." He added, "And maybe I will also go to Russia to talk to Putin and tell him that there are three of us against the world: China, Philippines and Russia. It's the only way."

But when President-elect Donald Trump called Duterte last December, Duterte was on cloud nine. During their seven-minute conversation, Trump praised Duterte for doing "the right way" in his fight against illegal drugs. He later told the media, "I could sense a good rapport, an animated President-elect Trump. And he was wishing me success in my campaign against the drug problem." At that time, Duterte's "war on drugs" had left 4,500 dead – killed by the police and vigilantes.

Obama's neutrality

Last March, speaking before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines convention, Duterte berated the U.S. for failing to stop China's building activities in the disputed West Philippine Sea. In an indirect reference to then President Obama, he said: "Why did you not at the first instance, go to the Chinese working and building structures there? Why didn't you admonish them? Why didn't you deploy five aircraft carriers and threaten to fire on them?" Of course, it was common knowledge



that Obama's oft-repeated answer when he was asked about China's construction of artificial islands on several reefs in the Spratlys was: The U.S. remains neutral in the territorial and maritime disputes between China and the other five claimant nations. Needless to say, Obama's neutrality in the disputes gave China a carte blanche to do whatever she wants to do in the South China Sea (SCS). It's no wonder then that Duterte couldn't rely on the U.S. -- in spite of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) -- to maintain the status quo in the SCS. With no war-capable warships and warplanes, the Philippines doesn't have the capability to protect her sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Trump's ascendancy

But the geopolitical calculus has changed since Trump assumed the U.S. presidency. His predecessor, former president Barack Obama's

doctrine of "strategic patience" – a euphemism for appeasement – didn't work with China and North Korea. Obama should have known that these two communist countries see appeasement as a sign of weakness. It didn't surprise anyone then that China played Obama's "strategic patience" to her advantage and took possession of several islands in the SCS. Obama maintained his "neutrality."

Recently, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence visited South Korea to reassure Seoul of the U.S. commitment to defend the country from North Korea. He told South Korea that the era of "strategic patience" is over and warned North Korea not to test Trump's resolve, noting that Trump had ordered a missile strike against Syria.

Trump's order to strike a Syrian airbase and to drop the "mother of all bombs" on an ISIS camp in Afghanistan must have convinced Duterte that there is a new ball game Uncle Sam is

playing on the world stage. It didn't take long for Duterte to cozy up to Trump. Speaking in Doha, Qatar, he heaped praise on Trump, calling him "a realist and a pragmatic thinker." "Trump is profound even if he does not seem to be one. Just like me, I am not that bright but I am very deliberate," he said. "Just like me..." cements the affinity of the two leaders, who are in so many ways similar in their idiosyncrasies and brashness.

Consequently, Duterte agreed to hold the joint U.S.-Philippines exercise known as Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder), despite earlier pronouncements that he might cancel joint exercises with the Americans, including withdrawal of U.S. forces from the country. And this begs the question: What caused Duterte to change his anti-American rhetoric to a friendlier tone?

Could it be that recent incident of Chinese intrusion into the Benham Rise and news report of China's plans to build an "environmental monitoring station" on Scarborough Shoal awakened Duterte from his dream of everlasting love affair with China? But the reality is: China dreams of becoming the undisputed hegemon in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. And that entails having naval superiority over the entire Pacific Ocean all the way to the Indian Ocean.

Balancing act

A recent news report said, "A group of Filipino fishermen accused China's coast guard of shooting at their vessel in the disputed South China Sea." A Philippine Coast Guard statement said that a Chinese speedboat fired seven times at the vessel. The incident happened near the disputed Union Banks atoll in the center of Spratly Islands, 143 miles from Palawan, which is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Asked about the incident, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said: "I have no information on that. And as you have said, it is unclear who was responsible. China will also need to verify the facts."

Last April 21, it was reported in the news that the Chinese Navy challenged two Philippine fighter planes, one of which was carrying Defense Secre-

tary Delfin Lorenzana and Armed Forces Chief Gen. Eduardo Ano, who were enroute to Pag-Asa Island in the West Philippine Sea. The Chinese warned that the aircraft were illegally entering Chinese territory and they should leave to avoid "miscalculation." Beijing expressed alarm over the visit, saying it ran counter to an "important consensus" related between the leaders of the two countries. Which raises the question: Did Duterte relinquish sovereignty of Pag-asa Island to appease China?

Duterte has so far reacted by playing a balancing act, pitting the U.S. against China. While this kind of "balancing act" might work with Vietnam and Indonesia, Duterte doesn't have the temerity that the two leaders of Indonesia and Vietnam have in asserting their sovereignty.

In the past several weeks, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, and Vice President Mike Pence visited several Asian countries and Australia. None of them visited the Philippines, which raises the question: Why is Uncle Sam ignoring Duterte? Is Trump sending Duterte a clear message that he has to do more than a "balancing act" – teetering back and forth between China and the U.S. -- to become a key geopolitical player in Asia?

Last April 11, former President Fidel V. Ramos, speaking during the commemoration of the Bataan Death March of 1942 – where some 30,000 Filipinos and 2,000 Americans died -- said that the U.S. is the Philippines' "most sincere, devoted, patriotic, and fearless" ally. He then expressed his hope that Duterte would "realize in time the great importance of the decades-long relationship between the Philippines and the U.S."

Duterte and Trump will have a chance to meet in November during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) summit and East Asian Summit in Manila. This would give Duterte and Trump a chance to measure each other up and work to reinforce their countries' alliance, which has endured for more than 70 years.

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



Editor's Note

Each passing year and this 16th year is a momentous occasion for Philippine Fiesta News in serving the Filipino-Americans in our community. It makes it feel like going down memory lane, to look back at the previous issues of PF News.

Stories have been written, thousands of pictures have been taken about our community celebrations and events. But really what's important is about the memories that we have kept in our heart, how they have made us feel at the time, and how we have interacted with one another, until now that several years have gone by.

As we go on, our hope is that you continue to join us in making more memories about our Fil-Am community in Sacramento.

In this issue, I ask that we open our heart in this Big Day of Giving Event. Filipino-empowered organization to keep in mind in making donations include: the (PNDA) Philippine National Day Association, the Sinag-Tala, My Sister's House, and the (COED) Creating Opportunities for Educational Development. Also, please support and donate to Rize All Art Center's scholarship project.

With you in community service,
Dinnah San Pedro

Inside secret cell: 'You're like pigs'

From page 1

suspects like sardines, Beatrice (not her real name) saw three different penises in the four days she was kept there.

Beatrice admitted she was a drug pusher. She started selling drugs to fund her schooling. Three of her family members sold "shabu" (methamphetamine hydrochloride) too.

Raxabago officers arrested her last month. She said at that time she committed no violations. She just happened to be on their list of targets. They picked her up and brought her to their office on Capulong Street.

The cops did not bother to get her full name and there was no record of her in the blotter. They just ordered her to come with them to the station for violating the Dangerous Drugs Act.

From the office's front door, the officers told her to stand in front of a brown wooden bookshelf on one corner of the drug enforcement unit (DEU) office.

She did not understand why she had to stand there until an officer removed a hidden latch in one of the shelf's racks. Then, the bookshelf swung open like a door and led to the dungeon-like secret cell.

"There were about 20 people there at that time. I couldn't believe it. There were men and women. Some were sitting, some were standing. You can't lie down because you won't fit," she said.

The secret cell was kept and maintained by the DEU on Capulong Street. The office looked like a typical police office. There were also couches, a computer, a TV. Up on the walls were the prints of the mission and vision of the Philippine National Police, neatly framed.

On another wall was a copy of the Miranda Doctrine, which protects and ensures the rights of an arrested suspect. She never heard the officers read it to her. Close



Hidden cell containing detainees found inside MPD

to it were portraits of the Virgin Mary and a figure of Michael the Archangel, leader of God's army of angels.

Another wall separates the religious figures and the bookshelf filled with documents, also known as the secret door.

"Once inside, you can hardly move and breathe. There's no window. There's no light. The urinals were not working," Beatrice said. "If someone stands, you have to sit. If someone sits, you have to stand. There's no space. Nothing."

The male and female detainees were separated by metal bars. Technically, there were two cells behind the bookshelf. Female detainees stay close to the shelf, while the male detainees are cramped close to a garbage dump filled with plastic bottles, among others. Another metal divider separates the trash heap from the male inmates.

It's in that garbage dump that these detainees dispose of their feces and urine. So technically, they sleep beside their excrement.

"When someone defecates, sometimes the officer outside would shout at us asking who had relieved himself. 'You're like pigs! We can smell it outside, what more inside,'" she said.

When men piss or take a bath, they do so in full view of everyone. But the women use a green towel-

like cloth as makeshift bath curtain as cover.

Fellow female inmates hold the towel up and face the men to ensure no one's peeping.

Secrets

The secret cell keeps the secrets of the DEU office, too, the detainees interviewed by Inquirer said. These allegedly include torture and under-the-table negotiations for a suspect's release, according to CHR's Gilbert Boisner.

Beatrice said suspects detained there were often involved in illegal activities, such as drug dealing and drug use. They're a mix of legally and illegally arrested suspects, according to the detainees.

The suspects are held usually for one week, the time given to the suspects to raise money for their release — from P40,000 to P200,000 per head.

"If you fail to provide money within one week, they will file a case against you and transfer you to the regular jail cell at the station's main entrance," Beatrice said.

A team of CHR lawyers uncovered this secret cell during a surprise inspection late on Thursday. Boisner, the CHR National Capital Region chief, said four former detainees went to their office to complain against the police.

Domingo, the station commander, denied any wrongdoing and insisted the suspects were kept there because he needed to "maximize" the use of available space.

He initially denied there was a secret cell. But Boisner relentlessly searched for it until he saw the odd bookshelf.

Telling time

Inside the dark cell, there was no way to tell what time it was — chowtime — breakfast, lunch and dinner.

There's no clock or a window to

show the time of day. The meals given to certain inmates three times a day serve as the only sign that there is still life outside.

"Certain inmates" because not all detainees get to eat, according to Ezra (not his real name). The police station does not provide food to people they arrest.

"No family visit, no food. Some steal other inmates' food. Some depend on the kindness of others," Ezra told the Inquirer.

'Meet bulldog'

There are times secrets are heard behind the door and there are times you have to press your ear against the wall to listen to what's going on on the other side.

Beatrice said she had heard men cry and shout "aray" (ouch!) after meeting "Bulldog." Bulldog is a wooden paddle used to hit suspects' thighs, Beatrice said. Only men have been beaten this way.

Some of the detainees have been in and out of the secret cell several times. "They keep doing their illegal activities so the cops keep rearresting them. No cases were filed because, like me, they paid in exchange of their release," she said.

The hellish experience sank some of the detainees to bankruptcy, and dragged them even deeper into the illegal drug business.

"They are buried deeper in debt and then they go back to (drug) dealing because they have to recoup what they had paid," Beatrice said.

When Beatrice first arrived, she thought she'd die. But a fellow inmate told her: "You don't have to worry as long as you have money."

She had paid P40,000 for her freedom. Her family had to sell their house to raise that amount.



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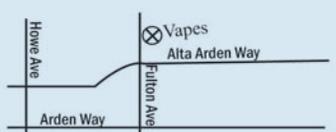
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Duterte calls for 'drug-free' Asean

By Charina Clarisse Echaluze

Tells outsiders not to interfere

President Rodrigo Duterte called on Southeast Asian leaders Saturday to band together to quash the illegal drug menace, or else risk the destruction of their societies, as he reiterated the region's policy of non-interference in each country's internal affairs.

"We must also be resolute in realizing a drug-free Asean. The scourge of illegal drugs threatens our gains in community-building. I have seen how illegal drugs have ended the hopes, dreams, future and even lives of countless people, especially the youth," Duterte said in a speech to open the 30th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) leaders' summit in Manila.

"The illegal drug trade apparatus is massive. But it is not impregnable. With political will and cooperation, it can be dismantled, it can be destroyed before it destroys our societies," he added.

This week's Asean meetings saw the adoption of the "Asean Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025" to address illegal drug activities. Authorities are also crafting the "Asean Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2017 to 2019."

Regional leaders lauded the 10-nation bloc's narcotics cooperation center for "identifying early warning signs of emerging drug problems as well as establishing information networks," and information sharing and intelligence exchange efforts by airport and seaport interdiction task forces.

'Mutual respect'

Amid international condemnation for his own crackdown on drugs that has claimed thousands of lives, Duterte insisted on Saturday that outsiders should not interfere in Southeast Asia's affairs.

"Let me say again, relations bear fruit when they are based on mutual respect and benefit. Dialogue relations can be made more productive and constructive if the valued principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Asean member states is observed," Duterte told his fellow Asean leaders.

Duterte had last year branded then US president Barack Obama a "son of a whore" for criticizing the drug war, and more recently called European lawmakers "crazies" for issuing a statement condemning the killings.

Duterte was elected last year largely on a law-and-order platform in which he promised to eradicate illegal drugs in the Philippines by killing drug traders. Police have since reported killing 2,724 people as part of his anti-drug campaign.

Many thousands of others have been killed by shadowy vigilantes, according to rights groups. A Filipino lawyer filed a complaint this week against Duterte at the International Criminal Court, accusing him of "mass murder" and alleging that as many as 8,000 people had died in the drug war.

Duterte has relentlessly railed against criticism of his drug war, which Amnesty International and other rights groups have warned may amount to a crime against humanity.

He said last year he would be "happy to slaughter" mil-

lions of addicts in his quest to stop the Philippines from becoming a narco-state, and repeatedly insisted human rights should not stand in the way of eradicating drugs.

'Club of dictators or rights abusers'

Observers said in the lead-up to the summit that Asean leaders were unlikely to criticize Duterte, with Human Rights Watch calling the bloc "a club of cozy dictators or rights abusers."

Among the heads of undemocratic regimes in Manila were Thai military junta chief Prayut Chan-O-Cha, Cambodia's Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge cadre, and Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei.

Some ASEAN leaders expressed support for Duterte and his drug war.

"We also share your country's concerns on the devastating effects of drugs upon society and I understand your personal resolve in combating it," Bolkiah said as Duterte hosted him at the Malacañan presidential palace on Thursday.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, whose government has executed drug traffickers, expressed his personal affection for Duterte because they had "so much in common."

"I believe that you and I are not fancy people. I believe that you and I are driven by healthy common sense and by love for our people," Widodo said on Friday.

Many Filipinos also continue to support Duterte's drug war, believing that extreme measures must be taken to solve the drug menace.

Trump-Duterte meet in November

US leader issues White House invitation, confirms visit to PH

By Genalyn Kabiling

The much-anticipated meeting between two controversial world leaders is finally happening in November.

United States President Donald Trump has invited President Duterte to visit the White House to advance the improving alliance between the two countries.

Trump extended his invitation to Duterte during a "friendly" phone conversation that also tackled the North Korean nuclear conflict, his visit to Manila this November, and the Philippine government's campaign against illegal drugs, according to a statement from the White House.

The US leader called up Duterte last Saturday night on the sidelines of the Association Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders' summit in Manila.

"President Trump also invited President Duterte to the White House to discuss the importance of the United States-Philippines alliance, which is now heading

in a very positive direction," the Office of the US Press Secretary said in a statement.

"President Trump enjoyed the conversation and said that he is looking forward to visiting the Philippines in November to participate in the East Asia Summit and the US-ASEAN summit," it added.

The White House did not say when the two leaders would meet in Washington DC. Malacañang confirmed the White House invitation but gave no indication of when the visit would take place.

Apart from the planned visits to each other's countries, Trump and Duterte discussed "concerns" of the ASEAN on regional security, particularly the threat posed by North Korea, according to the White House.

Trump likewise expressed his understanding about the Duterte government's war on illegal drugs. "They also discussed the fact that the Philippine government is fighting very hard to rid its country of drugs, a scourge



US Pres. Donald Trump

that affects many countries throughout the world," the White House said.

Meantime, Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella said the US leader has affirmed his commitment to the alliance between the Philippines and the United States. He said the US leader likewise expressed interest "in developing a warm, working relationship with President Duterte."

"The discussion that transpired between the presidents was warm, with President Trump expressing his understanding and appreciation of the challenges facing the Philippine President, especially on the matter of dangerous drugs," Abella said.

Lacson hits Dela Rosa's 'arrogant' defense of 'secret jail'

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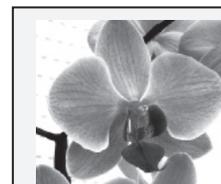
But Lacson said dela Rosa "misses the point entirely."

"Defending policemen for maintaining an unlivable secret prison cell hidden behind a book shelf inside a police station is incomprehensible. It is also very arrogant," he said in a text message Sunday night.

"Ewan ko nga bakit ganun naging comment niya. Plain view pa lang, kahit wala nang magbigay ng salaysay, kita na natin na may viola-

tion of law. In short, he's defending the indefensible," added the senator, who chairs the Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs.

Lacson also headed the PNP during the time of former President and now Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada. CBB



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Tourist arrivals in February 2017 hit four-year high

By Charina Clarisse Echaluze

The total number of tourist arrivals in February 2017 has broken the highest number of monthly visitors since 2013, the Department of Tourism (DOT) disclosed.



Tourists in Vigan

Tourism Secretary Wanda Corazon Teo said a total of 579,178 visitors was recorded in February, noting an increase of at least 27.81 percent over the past four years; and 5.36 percent higher than what was recorded in the same period last year.

It was revealed that visitors from South Korea topped the other markets in February 2017, reaching 150,598 and representing 26 percent share of total inbound traffic in the Philippines. There was also a 9.51 percent increase in Korean arrivals compared with the same period last year.

"We have maintained and even increased figures from

South Korea and we expect to see further growth, as Korean tourists perceive our country as a distinctive global destination built on unique experiences and rich natural beauty," said Teo.

Completing the top five markets for the period are United States with 137,598 or 23.76 percent; China with 78,251 or 13.51 percent; Japan with 53,957 or 9.32 percent; and Taiwan with 20,472 or 3.53 percent.

The Philippines has also welcomed a total of 8,176 cruise passengers through various ports in the country.

The DOT disclosed that Manila remains the country's top cruise destination with recorded arrivals of 2,785 passengers; followed by Boracay with 1,145; Bohol with 692 passengers; and Pangasinan with 640 passengers.

"These numbers show that cruise tourism is one of the fastest growing segments in the Philippine tourism. This certainly gives us a positive outlook for the country's cruise tourism market for this year," Teo noted.

China wasn't there, but ruled the summit

From page 1

China captured the ASEAN summit by working quietly well in advance of the proceedings in Manila, using as capital the multimillion-dollar investments and loans it had promised Mr. Duterte.

Many Filipinos have expressed concern over China's grabbing resource-rich and strategic areas in the West Philippine Sea, building them up and militarizing the artificial islands that are now a threat to the peace and security of the region.

But President Duterte refused to bring up the PCA award at the summit. It seemed to him that whatever the common tao thought had no bearing on the agenda, the debate and the final communique of the summit.

What's the point? he had asked, stressing that there was nothing anyway that the Philippines could do to make China give up the isles, reefs, shoals and other maritime features it had taken over in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Philippines.

Mr. Duterte refused to see that his being the ASEAN chair gave the Philippines an opportunity to call attention in a diplomatic way to the PCA award and to open an amicable discussion of similar territorial disputes with China of such neigh-

bors as Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam.

(China disdained facing an ASEAN common front in resolving territorial disputes, apparently on the belief that it can handle more effectively bilateral negotiations. It looks like another resort to the divide and rule tactic.)

Why is Duterte scared of upsetting Xi?

APPARENTLY, Mr. Duterte does not want to antagonize China at this early stage of their blooming relationship, at this point when Beijing has not yet made substantial delivery of its promised package of investments and loans.

To forestall public disappointment in his limp stance on citing the PCA award, he promised to bring it up, not now, but at some hazy future time.

But when is that? When is that already too late because by that time China would have cemented its occupation and possession of the features it has grabbed in the Exclusive Economic Zones of its neighbors?

When all is lost, of what value will be the Code of Conduct that Mr. Duterte wanted to discuss outside the context of China's aggressive expansionism and the relevant PCA ruling?

But what was the point of going to the arbitral court under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea if we would just waste the favorable decision won? Or is Mr. Duterte refusing to invoke it because it was filed and won by his predecessor President Nynoy Aquino?

At another time, he rationalized his hesitation to play The Hague card by pointing out that war is not an option as the Philippines, the petitioner and beneficiary of the arbitral award, is a pygmy compared to China.

His numerical comparison has basis considering that China is 9.6 million square kilometers in area, and has a population of 1.4 billion and a gross domestic product of \$10.87 trillion.

The issues are muddled by his view that a discussion of territorial disputes is something that could lead to war, a confrontation that would pit a neighbor against another – in the same way that police raiders checking on reported drug abuse invariably end up killing somebody.

"You want us to go to war?" sounds like a shut-out question calculated to stop the debate.



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Asean leaders wrestle over China at summit

From page 1

But diplomats said other Asean nations, unhappy with intense Chinese lobbying of the Philippines, had sought to toughen up the chairman's statement and there were hot debates on the issue leading up to Saturday's summit.

"It can't be seen that Asean has totally given in to Chinese pressure," a Southeast Asian diplomat in Manila for the event told AFP.

China has been turning reefs and shoals in areas of the sea claimed by the Philippines and other nations into artificial islands, and installing military facilities there.

The United States has criticized the construction work, warning against militarization in the waterway where \$5 trillion in annual trade passes.

Asean members Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei also claim parts of the sea, but China insists it has sovereign rights over nearly all of it.

The Philippines, under previous president Benigno Aquino, had lobbied hard at Asean summits for the bloc to voice its strong opposition to the Chinese expansionism, and official statements at those events often reflected that.

Aquino also filed a case at a UN-backed tribunal asking it to reject China's claims and artificial island building.

The tribunal last year ruled

largely in the Philippines' favor. But the ruling came after Duterte took power.

China win

Duterte steadfastly refused to use the verdict to pressure China, instead pursuing warmer relations and billions of dollars' worth of trade and aid.

In a speech to open the summit, Duterte made no reference to the South China Sea.

Duterte's chairman's statement, which is meant to reflect the views of all Asean leaders, will voice concern but not mention the ruling nor China directly, according to excerpts of the latest draft on Saturday obtained by AFP.

China, through its ambassador to Manila, had this week been campaigning to weaken it further, delegates and diplomats told AFP.

"The lobbying is quite intense. They (China) want it further watered down," one diplomat told AFP.

China had wanted Asean to remove a reference to "respect for legal and diplomatic processes", and it was taken out of the South China Sea section of the latest draft of the chairman's statement.

Filipino diplomats said the phrase was important because "legal and diplomatic processes" encompassed the entire process of the filing of the case in the tribunal until its resolution.

Nevertheless, the new

draft statement reintroduced a call for no further "land reclamation and militarization" of the sea.

Diplomats said the reinclusion of the reference to land reclamation and militarization meant that some Asean countries were not comfortable with "total acquiescence" to China.

"This has to be reflected in the statement," one diplomat, who did not want to be named, told AFP.

Another diplomat said Vietnam had insisted the references to the land reclamation and militarization be reintroduced.

The chairman's statement was due to be released on Saturday afternoon, after the Asean leaders finished their meetings and ahead of an informal dinner.

The summit was also being closely watched for how Duterte, who has shocked with curse-laden tirades against the United States and other critics of his deadly drug war, handles hosting his first major diplomatic event.

Duterte's drug war, which has claimed thousands of lives and led to warnings by rights groups about a possible crime against humanity, has been widely condemned in the West.

But he has enjoyed support from some of his Southeast Asian guests this week, including Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkhiah and Indonesian President Joko Widodo.

Celebrating 100 Years of Volunteer Service with the Lions Club

By Jason Sullivan-Halpern

When Dolores and Perry Diaz of the Maharlika Lions Club approached us in January to discuss planning a celebratory tree planting for the Lions Club's 100th anniversary, we were more than happy to help. The Lions Club has a long history of protecting our environment in addition to their other humanitarian projects. The Lions Club International District 4-C5 even received SacTree's Austin B. Carrol Tree Hero Award in 2012 for their commitment to tree planting, care, and stewardship efforts as well as effective education and public awareness.



Lion Club's volunteer



Perry and Dolores Diaz with the Maharlika Lions Club and District 4-C5 DG Kumar

The Maharlika Lions Club's goal was simple: plant a tree for each year of the Lions Club's volunteer service to our community and region. Since they wanted to plant 100+ trees, we decided that Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge would be the perfect place for them to do so. The federally-protected 17,640-acre refuge, composed of reclaimed agricultural lands, was developed in the 1990s to offset increased development in the Elk Grove area and is home to thousands of species of native wildlife. SacTree has planted thousands of trees there over the last several years in order to increase the

amount of habitat for wildlife there, but was still plenty of work left to be done.

On March 25, volunteers from the Lions Club International District 4-C5, AmeriCorps NCCC, and the general public gathered on the North end of the refuge to plant 300 more native oak acorns across a large open area bordering a boat launch. All the trees, tools, training, and



Lion DG Kumar

snacks were provided by SacTree. The Lions Club's International District 4-C5's District Governor, Kumar, was in attendance to plant the first acorn and say a few words

about the importance of this historic achievement for the Lions Club as our volunteers finished their snacks and grabbed their tools.

All 300 of the acorns were planted in record time. We finished an hour early! Each acorn was not only planted, but mulched with hay and covered with a tree tube to retain moisture and protect the tree from wildlife that might eat or trample it. The absolute best part of the experience was how much fun everyone had though! SacTree hosts a lot of plantings, but this was one of the most enjoyable

thanks to the natural beauty of the planting site, the highly-motivated volunteers, and the delicious lunch that the Lions Club provided afterwards.

Following the planting, the Maharlika Lions Club stated: "We all felt accomplished and ready to plant more trees in the future and invite all 52 local Lions Clubs in the district to participate. We pledged to return and help maintain the Lions Centennial Grove at the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Thanks to our partner, Sacramento Tree Foundation and to the support of the Friends of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, by all means, this was not the end of the project but the start of a lasting environmental partnership."

All of us here at SacTree are looking forward to growing and protecting our urban forest with the Lions Club again soon. In the meantime, we wish you all the best of luck with your next 100 years of volunteer service.

Do you want to host a special group volunteer opportunity for your company, school, church, or service group? Call or email me at 916-974-4310 or volunteer@sac-tree.com. We're always interested in planting and caring for more trees!

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Source: gettyimages.com

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16th Anniversary Gala



PURCHASE TICKETS TODAY WITH THIS LINK: <https://msh16anniversarygala.eventbrite.com>

On behalf of My Sister's House, we are pleased to announce our 16th Anniversary Gala on Monday, May 15, 2017, at 6:30 pm, at the Crest Theater, located at 1013 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. This year My Sister's House is proud to honor Mike Belote, President, California Advocates and ABC10 Sacramento as its 2017 Heroes of Hope.

This year's theme "Sweet 16" reflects My Sister's House sixteen years of combating domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. In 2016, My Sister's House answered 2,615 crisis phone calls, provided 870 individual counseling sessions, provided 4,008 nights of shelter (emergency, transitional, and anti-human trafficking), utilities, food, case management services, and legal services to more than 400 women and children.

By popular demand, Mayor Christopher Cabaldon of West Sacramento will be back again this year as emcee for this must-see event! You will want to join us for this fun-filled evening with live entertainment featuring local celebrities, talents, leaders and supporters who will take the stage to perform songs and dances. Last year, more than 600 people attended.

California gas prices to rise under bill signed by governor

By Associated Press

Sacramento Calif. (AP) — California drivers will see gas prices jump in November and will pay more to register their vehicles come January after Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law Friday a tax hike of \$5 billion per year to fix the state's crumbling highways.

But drivers will have to wait months before crews begin repaving neglected roads with the fruits of their higher taxes.

State transportation officials have not begun the engineering work, environmental assessments and other necessary preparations before construction workers can begin tearing up pavement.

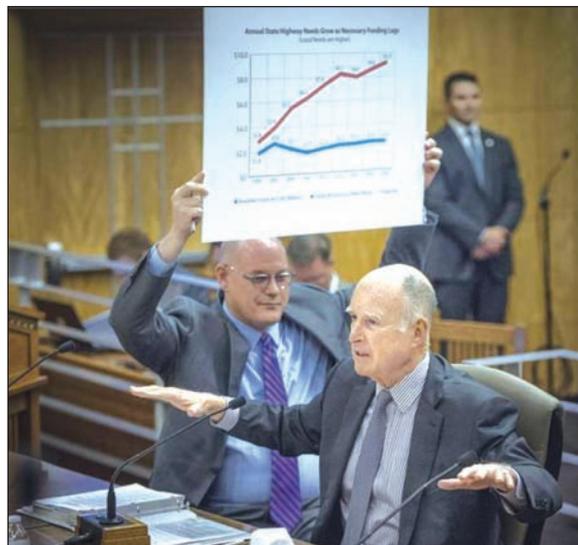
Brown and his legislative allies said the money was badly needed to fill potholes and repair rutted roads that lengthen commutes and damage vehicles.

"Safe and smooth roads make California a better place to live and strengthen our economy," Brown said in a statement. "This legislation will put thousands of people to work."

In the bill, SB1, the money is split roughly evenly between state highways and local roads.

California road repair deal will raise gas tax, vehicle fees

Specific projects haven't been determined, said Mark Dinger, a spokesman for Caltrans. The California Transportation Commission, appointed mostly by Brown, will prioritize projects for the funding, he said, and the first construction



Gov. Jerry Brown

work will likely begin in the summer of 2018.

A few projects are known, however, including an extension of a commuter rail line between the Central Valley and Silicon Valley, a parkway linking the University of California, Merced to a major state highway and highway expansion in Riverside County. Those projects were promised to undecided lawmakers to win their support for the legislation.

On Friday, Brown also signed the legislation authorizing those projects, SB132, and a bill by state Sen. Anthony Cannella to shield architects, engineers and land surveyors from liability in certain circumstances, SB 496.

Cannella was the only Republican in the Legislature who voted for the gas tax increase. He won funding for transportation projects in his Central Valley district as part of the deal.

Most of the money from SB1 will go into Caltrans' budget for major maintenance projects. More than filling potholes and making

spot repairs, the crews will completely rebuild roads in particularly damaged areas, Dinger said. Potential projects include major commuting corridors near Sacramento, Highway 101 in Sonoma County, Interstate 580 in the East Bay and a variety of bridge and pavement projects in the Los Angeles area.

The plan aims to address a \$59 billion backlog in deferred maintenance on state highways and \$78 billion on local streets and roads. It raises gas taxes by 12 cents per gallon in November, rising to a 19.5-cent increase by 2020. Diesel taxes will rise by 20 cents per gallon and diesel sales taxes by 4 percent. Drivers will pay a new vehicle registration fee ranging from \$25 to \$175 depending on value of their vehicles.

The fees and taxes will all rise annually with inflation in perpetuity, raising an estimated \$52 billion over the next 10 years.

APIQSC presents 2nd Annual Homecoming Conference

By Nikki Abeleda

The Asian/Pacific Islander Queer Sacramento Coalition (APIQSC) hosted their second annual "Asian/Pacific Islander Queer Homecoming: A Conference for A/PI LGBTQ and Allies" on April 8, 2017, at Sacramento State University. The event, born out of organizing in response to appropriation of Asian cultures within the mainstream Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community, served as a space for LGBTQ Pacific Islanders and Asians to express their identities, issues and concerns on their own terms.

The event began by recognizing place, and culture, by honoring the event location, and its Native people, with a blessing from Albert Titman, Sr. (Miwok), a counselor at the Sacramento Native American Health Center (SNAHC). Mr. Titman, an ally to the LGBTQ community, discussed the importance of LGBTQ/Two-Spirit people in Native American cultures, and highlighted a healing circle for members of the LGBTQ/Two-Spirit Community at SNAHC.

Homecoming's morning centered the Pacific Islander Community, usually rendered invisible by the problematic "Asian/Pacific Islander" construct. An opening hula performance from 'Ohana Dance Company continued the prayers of welcome initiated by Mr. Titman. Led by Kumu Hula Ke'ala'anuhea, the 'Ohana Dance Company performed traditional (kahiko) and modern ('auana) hula, inviting audience participation for "Going to the Hukilau." This performance was followed by an opening plenary on Pacific Islander LGBTQ identities. Panelists Ne'o Ve'ave'a and Terisa Siagatonu discussed navigating their Sāmoan and



LGBTW identities, western versus traditional notions of their community roles and responsibilities, and both fighting with and leveraging the "Asian/Pacific Islander" construct, finding ways to use an oppressive construct for the Pacific Islander community's benefit. Breakfast was provided by Kalua Island Grill of Sacramento.

There was strong Filipino representation at Homecoming. A breakout session by Kirby Araullo, Program Coordinator in Asian American Studies at UC Davis, focused on "gender benders" in Philippine history, sharing pre-Hispanic to contemporary examples and how colonization shifted acceptance of traditional gender roles and expression. Additionally, Rejie Baloyos, a Senior Advocate at My Sister's House, presented Today's Immigration Policy and Its Impact on A/PI and Other Marginalized Communities, examining the current administration's policy on Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other marginalized communities. Next, Daniel Domaguin, along with Dr. Swati Rao, and James Her, lead an integral Roundtable Discussion on Trauma and Resilience, focusing on the unique mental health needs of the A/PI community. With a similarly impactful team,

Nikki Abeleda delved into the impacts of identity in dating in the LGBT community, discussing A/PI cultural core values relative to relationships, challenging the LGBTQ stereotype, the stigma of online dating, the tokenism of A/PI individuals, and the fetishizing of API bodies.

The highlight of the day was a guided healing by a Filipinx artist and activist, prefaced by a lunch provided by South Villa Restaurant, including everything from vegan options (guinitang pakbet) to a whole lechón. While attendees enjoyed the meal, a performance and discussion on self-care from Jade Phoenix Martinez helped center the individuals attending Homecoming, reminding LGBTQ community members that showing love to themselves is, in itself, an act of revolution. Attendees also enjoyed the works of Filipino artists at Homecoming, including painter Talitha De Mesa, as well as founder of Gold & Thread apparel company Hagen Valencia. APIQSC plans to continue the tradition of the A/PI Queer Homecoming conference space, returning to Sacramento State University in April 2018.

Please email apiqsc@gmail.com to engage in this important community event.



Photos by Nichole Huerta and Kristina Morente

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PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

In the wake of the Tomahawk cruise missile strikes on a Syrian airbase and after dropping a 2,100-pound “Mother of all Bombs” – MOAB – in Afghanistan, North Korea had threatened to test another nuclear weapon, her sixth test. In reaction, senior U.S. intelligence officials told the media that the U.S. is prepared to launch a preemptive strike with conventional weapons against North Korea if they’re convinced that North Korea is about to perform a nuclear weapons test.

Now that Trump has shown that he has cojones and is willing to risk going to war with North Korea, the geopolitical chess game has changed direction. What happened at the summit meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping at Trump’s Mar-a-lago resort in Florida was one for the books. Trump told Xi as they were having dessert, “Mr. President, let me explain something to you. We have just fired 59 missiles, all of which hit by the way, unbelievable, from hundreds of miles away.” Trump said the Xi paused for 10 seconds and then asked the interpreter to please say it again. Then Xi told Trump, “Anybody that was so brutal and uses gases to do that to young children and babies - it’s ok.” In a chess game, that was a brilliant end game: Trump checked Xi and Xi resigned to avoid a checkmate.

“We have a good chemistry,” Trump now said of Xi. Not too long ago, when he was campaigning for the presidency, Trump accused China of being a currency manipulator and a thief of American jobs. He said that China should no longer be allowed to “rape our country.” If elected, he promised to impose heavy tariffs on China and take her to court for shady trade practices.

But, ever the consummate dealmaker – or I might say, a wily wheeler-dealer -- Trump flip-flops on the issues and went easy on Xi. He must have taken note of what Xi said at the start of their meeting, to wit: “There are a thousand reasons to get China-US relations right, and not one reason to spoil it.” Trump abandoned his position on U.S.-China trade, which gave Xi a sigh of relief. He did not declare China as a currency manipulator and the South China Sea

and Taiwan were not discussed, as they would surely have caused some friction. Trump paid a heavy price for whatever concessions he got, if any. But they agreed to form a working group with a “100-day plan” to bolster American exports and reduce the US bilateral deficit.

China’s burden

It’s interesting to note that on April 5, on the eve of the Trump-Xi summit, the Chinese government-owned Global Times published China’s “bottom line” on the situation on the Korean Peninsula. It said that China would not allow a “hostile government” in Pyongyang. It also said that Beijing would “not tolerate a U.S. military push toward the Yalu River.” It did



U.S. destroyer fires Tomahawk cruise missile.

not then come as a surprise when Beijing deployed 150,000 People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops to the China-North Korea border at the Yalu River. This reminds us when hordes of Chinese troops crossed the Yalu River in October 1950 during the Korean War to stop the northward push of the United Nations (UN) forces under the command of Gen Douglas MacArthur. The Chinese intervention pushed the UN forces back and the war seasawed until it ended on July 27, 1953, when an armistice was signed. Technically, the two Koreas are still at war today.

Indeed, China hasn’t changed her position since the time of Mao



Trump tells Xi, “Mr. President, let me explain something to you. We have just fired 59 missiles...”

Zedong, which is to protect and preserve the communist regime in North Korea. Let’s face it: Korean reunification under the existing South Korean government would

Trump’s North Korea dilemma



missiles. He vowed to “beat down enemies with the power of nuclear justice.”

Within hours after the parade, North Korea attempted to launch a ballistic missile and failed. “It blew up almost immediately,” an observer said. But the fact that North Korea tried to launch the missile in spite of warnings from South Korea and the U.S., is an indication that Kim is obsessed with making his country a nuclear power. It is estimated that North Korea may already have at least a dozen nuclear weapons, which she can use against South Korea, particularly targeting the huge U.S. base near the DMZ.

Some experts believe that North Korea could build a hundred nuclear weapons within five years.

North Korea could then become a very dangerous threat to the peace and stability in East Asia. With that in mind, Japan and South Korea might decide to build their own nuclear capability. In particular, Japan could produce nuclear weapons within six months if she



North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un and his generals.

wanted to. She has 47 metric tons of weapons-usable plutonium, which is enough to make nearly 6,000 warheads like the one the U.S. dropped on Nagasaki. This huge cache was the by-product from reprocessing of spent uranium and plutonium used in Japan’s nuclear plants, which makes one wonder: Would Japan make nuclear warheads and use them if she were threatened with nuclear extinction by North Korea? Well, your guess is as good as mine. But I think your guess is: Yes, she would. Who wouldn’t?

The U.S. and China’s goal is the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. But for as long as Kim Jong-un is in power, that is not going to happen. And with North Korea fast-tracking her production of nuclear weapons and the development of land-based

and submarine-launched medium- and long-range ballistic missiles capable of reaching as far as the U.S., she could become a nuclear superpower within a decade. And this begs the question: Would the U.S. allow a rogue nuclear superpower to threaten not

only the security of Japan and South Korea but the existence of America as well? Trump’s dilemma is that there is no easy solution to the North Korean problem. He might just bite the bullet to keep the peace in Asia-Pacific. (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

not be palatable to the Chinese rulers. The best thing that the U.S. could hope for would be a regime change that would usher in a friendlier communist government like Vietnam is today. But would Xi agree to that? I don’t think so. Don’t be fooled by his affability and “soft power” approach to world economic dominance. But deep inside him, he is a dogmatic and hard-line communist in the mold of Mao.

Putin scared stiff

In the case of Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Tomahawk cruise missile strikes in Syria must have scared the daylights out of him. It caught him flat-footed and dealt a humiliating blow to his ego. His inability to stop the strikes is a repudiation of Russia’s much-ballyhooed air defense system and proves that Putin is an unreliable ally. Indeed, the Tomahawk strikes

Crimea might look like a geopolitical victory for him but are actually a big setback for him. Prior to the Ukraine invasion, Russia’s relations with the Eastern European countries -- her former satellite states -- were mutually economically beneficial. Now, these Eastern European countries, fearful of Putin’s aggressive behavior, have turned to their NATO allies for

protection. The U.S. and several other NATO countries responded by sending thousands of troops and hundreds of tanks including heavy weapons to Poland and the three Baltic countries -- Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They formed a “wall of steel” along the border with Russia.

Kim Jong-un’s obsession

Trump’s slogan “Peace through strength” is finally put to a test. A few days after the Trump-Xi summit meeting, Trump ordered the USS Carl Vinson carrier strike group to sail to the waters off North Korea in response to North Korea’s planned nuclear weapons test, which was scheduled to coincide with the 105th birth anniversary of North Korea’s founder and Supreme Leader Kim Jong-



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad.

diminished Putin’s image as a fearsome bully who uses nuclear blackmail to get what he wants. Not anymore. The new bully in the neighborhood is Trump. The difference between the two is: Putin is unpredictably predictable while Trump is predictably unpredictable. That makes Trump more dangerous than Putin.

And to show that Trump means business, he dropped the “Mother of all Bombs” -- America’s most powerful non-nuclear bomb -- on a network of fortified underground tunnels in Afghanistan that ISIS used to launch attacks on Afghan forces. The strike also killed at least 94 ISIS fighters.

On the European continent, Putin’s misadventures in Ukraine and



U.S. Carrier Strike Group.

un’s grandfather Kim Il-Sung last April 15. The occasion was celebrated with a parade showing a variety of offensive missiles. During the parade Kim threatened to annihilate the U.S. with what he called “game-changing”

Reunited at City by the Bay

By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

Millions of people around the world wish to come to the United States of America but only few are chosen and allowed entry.

Southern Baptist College alumni permanently residing in the US are some of the few lucky individuals who were allowed to migrate to pursue their American dreams.

On 20 March 2017, Boston based SBC alumnus Rolly Coronica decided to create SBC alumni association. After consulting with other alumni on what to name the association the group decided to call it SBC Alumni Association of North America covering the United States and Canada.

On the same day, yours truly volunteered to write the association's Constitution and Bylaws and published the same at the newly created association's facebook page for members' perusal. Minor amendments were done and incorporated to finish the CBL.

On Thursday, March 23rd, SBC alumni who were available in the vicinity of Northern California reunited for the first time as an association in San Francisco.

These alumni were so lucky to have their first initial reunion not only in the beautiful City by the Bay but inside the Yacht owned by Aldea "Ading" Arcenio, SBC alumna (Elementary 96, HS 00). Ading's husband was not available to pilot the boat on that day so she contracted a licensed captain and a maritime officer to bring us to different tourist sites in the area.

Our first destination was the world's famous Golden Bridge. I told my fellow alumni we used to see this bridge in a note book but now we see it up close. Tourists usually take photos of the bridge from either side to get a good view. Very few were privileged to shoot under the bridge. I and my fellow alumni were one of the privileged few to



The SBC Alumni Association of Northern America



Gabriel and Aldea Arcenio

see both sides and under of the bridge.

Our second destination was the popular Alcatraz Penitentiary. Regular tourists avail of the commercial ship from Pier 39 in San Francisco to the island prison and vice-versa. Our pilot sailed us close to the island, and had the chance to wave back to tourists, who were waving their hands, inside the commercial ship bound to Alcatraz.

Our third destination was the newly built Bay Bridge. Again, I was able to take the once in a million opportunity to shoot under the bridge.

Our fourth destination was AT & T Park, the home of San Francisco Giants.

Our fifth destination was president Franklin Delano Roosevelt white painted yacht, the POTOMAC.

Our sixth destination was the San Francisco cargo port, one of the world's busiest ports.

Our last destination before we dock was Angel Island. This island served as the immigration center long time ago. It is equivalent of New York's Ellis Island, the isLand of tears. It is called such because immigrants shed a lot of tears when they were denied entry to the mainland by the US immigration officers.

The successful and memorable reunion was attend-

ed by Garry Bianson who flew in all the way from Arkansas and his friend Fervyl from Los Angeles, California, Vienna Villator and family from the city of Stockton, California, Gabriel

Ortigoza and wife from Elk Grove, California, and our host Ading Arcenio from San Francisco. So far all of us who attended the first reunion were all registered nurses.

From the Yacht Club we drove to Ading's state-of-the-art house in the hilltop overlooking Golden Gate Bridge and the beautiful bay area.

Just like her mother Alma Arcenio, Ading was gifted with the art of cooking. Ading prepared us a mouth-watering macaroni salad.

The house ambiance is exemplary. While savoring every bite of the salad, I enjoyed the panoramic view of the bay from inside Ading's living room.

Our next SBC alumni reunion will be in October 2017 at the same venue. Ading is generous enough to host again our next reunion.

As a designated president of the association, I am inviting all SBC alumni in the US and Canada to come join us on our next reunion to enjoy camaraderie with our fellow SBC alumni and to see the beauty of the City by the Bay.

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Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards 2017: A Celebration of Scholarship, Leadership, and Mentorship

By Chris Mateo

On Thursday, April 20th, 2017 Armaans Palace Event Hall in Elk Grove was the place to be. With 160 guests in attendance, a few student performers from the Rize All Arts Center (and their parental paparazzi), and a half dozen or so volunteers that kept the event running from 5:00 p.m. to just before 10:00 p.m., the 8th and 12th grade recipients of the Philippine National Day Association's staple program, the Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards, felt nothing short of celebrated, as evidenced by the joyous facial expressions and the cheers coming from their tables. Oh, and as the one who got to shake each of their hands and present them with their certificates and medals, I can confirm their nervous excitement.

As the incoming president of PNDA's Board of Directors, I will remember many things about this evening, mainly due to the fact that they all related to the mission of the organization. PNDA's mission is to carry out educational, cultural, and arts programs that empower the community. PNDA also reinforces positive perspectives of the Filipino American identity, fosters a spirit of partnership among all sectors within and outside the Filipino American community, and empowers the Filipino American community as a contributing member of the broad multicultural society.

The educational component was the most obvious. With ten 8th graders and seven 12th graders - all of whom had exceptional grades, extra-curricular activities, and strong personal goals - it was obvious to our audience, both familiar and new to PNDA/OFYA, that they were there to celebrate the future leaders of our community, well-rounded students with ambitions to contribute to society.

Then, as proven with some of the traditional attire, the singing of both the American and Philippine National Anthems, and the delicious food, there was a very strong sense of Filipino American identity throughout the room. With words shared by some of the evening's guest speakers such as Prosy Delacruz, author of "Even the Rainbow has a Body" and the 2017 Lakandiwa (keynote speaker) Geraldine Alcidi, Executive Director of Filipino Advocates for Justice, the message to both current and future leaders in the event hall was pretty consistent, "Let us learn from our past, celebrate our present, and empower our future."

And to foster PNDA's spirit of partnership, we were honored to see so many leaders in attendance, most of whom I consider mentors, and all of whom I know that share my vision of building bridges, both within and outside the Filipino community. Because of PNDA and our many partner organizations in the Filipino community that were represented like Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento, Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation, Maharlika Lions Club, Filipino Women's Club, the Filipino American Veterans Association, the Filipino American National Historical Society, Barkada Sacramento, Sinag Tala, and so many others that work so hard to give our youth the resources they need to succeed, we will continue amplifying the Filipino voice to make sure our families and the larger community contin-



2017 Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards 8th Grade Recipients Photos by Dave San Pedro



2017 Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards 12th Grade Recipients



Cynthia Bonta with 2017 PNDA Lakandiwa Geraldine Alcidi



The new PNDA logo with Rosie Daus and emcee Irene Cruz from ABC 10



Author Prosy Delacruz



PNDA Board of Directors Photos by Dave San Pedro



Dane and Amanda with RizeAll Arts Center students.

ue to celebrate and appreciate the Filipino culture, its history, its contribution, and its journey alongside so many others that make up our society.

Speaking of my vision, there were many things I was able to share in my closing remarks, yet to respect everyone's time (and considering it was a school night), I cut it

short. With that said, I would like to share most of these and other remarks below:
Thanks again to Irene Cruz from ABC 10 for being our emcee. Thanks to my colleagues on the PNDA Board of Directors for being one of the BEST teams I've had the honor of working with - especially to our outgoing president, Dr. Charles Panadero, and outgoing treasurer, Bobby Roy, for your continued dedication to PNDA, its students, their families, and our community. Thanks to the families, the community, our partners, our volunteers, and our sponsors for making this evening a reality and a true celebration for our students. And thanks to my family in attendance, my sister-in-law Evelyn, brother-in-

law Joe, mother-in-law Cora, and, of course, my wife Elaine and our son Alan - without whom we wouldn't be driven to do everything in our power to create a better world for you and your generation.

Thanks to PNDA's alumni for coming full circle: To our Lakandiwa, Geraldine Alcidi, for your time and your words of wisdom; to Dane San Pedro who continues to give back to the community alongside his partner Amanda Newsum; to our scholarship panelists Jane Vergara, Lisa Mayberry and Jofil Borja who continue to serve students who, like them, are supported by PNDA and its growing network of leaders. To all of you, all of the former board members, all of the former Lakandiwa, and all of the PNDA volunteers throughout the years that were present, thanks for your ongoing support.

I had the honor of introducing some BRAND NEW projects making their way through the PNDA pipeline. First is the revival of LahiARTS, PNDA's Arts Initiative. In partnership with several Filipino artists, we are hoping to grow this network and showcase the many talents of individuals in our community. And in the tradition of empowering our youth through scholarship and leadership, we are pursuing mentorship. The PNDA Mentoring Program will give our students the opportunity to learn from Filipino professionals first-hand, while attending regular workshops on topics such as leadership development, professional etiquette, goal setting, college preparation, and so much more.

My biggest goal for the organization during my two-year term as president is growth. Since the Board of Directors is a 100% volunteer group, our ideas and dedication are limitless, but unfortunately our time is not. With that said, we are hoping to accomplish two things: growing the Board and hiring PNDA's first-ever Executive Director, a staff member under the supervision of the Board. Stay tuned!

That's PNDA's "Big Picture" but we still have 7 full months remaining in 2017, and we plan on continuing our work in the community to empower our students. First up in May, along with 600 nonprofits in the Sacramento region, PNDA is once again participating in the annual Big Day of Giving on May 4th. Last year, we aimed at raising \$10,000 to support our scholarships and our leadership conference. Now, in addition to helping fund more scholarships and host even more students at the conference, we want to make sure the arts initiative and the mentoring programs are well-funded for our students as well. With that said, please consider supporting our efforts by dropping by our events on May 4th (including breakfast at Gina's Filipino Kape in downtown Sacramento, and dinner at Savory Fried Chicken in Elk Grove) and by visiting/sharing this link to schedule donations as early as today: www.bigdayofgiving.org/PNDA.

Then, in June, along with the other Filipino organizations I mentioned, PNDA is participating in the 41st Annual Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento on June 4th at the Jose Rizal Community Center in South Sacramento.

Next, we are now accepting applications for student participants and counselors for the annual Filipino American Youth Leadership Conference at Sac State, happening August

Continued on next page

PNDA Remembers a Well-Loved Community Leader and Dear Friend

By Cynthia Bonta

Memie Weitzenberg has always been involved in the Filipino community in Sacramento as far back as anyone can remember.

When her two children, Raymond and Anna were little, the family, including husband, Richard, joined the Filipino Cultural Dance Association of Sacramento who taught Filipino folk dances and put on shows. Memie, a dancer and dance teacher, herself, assisted.

The family also belonged to the Filipino Family Fraternity, Filipino Women's Club, and the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Inc. (FCSV.) Memie became the president of FCSV for four years. It was during her presidency that the annual Philippine National Day Barrio Fiesta and Food Faire, as one event, was renamed Filipino Fiesta. This is a history marker to be remembered. It was led by major Filipino organizations each year for the enjoyment of the whole Filipino community in the Sacramento County. Consistent in those early years were FCSV, PNDA, and FAVA. Memie worked to bring leaders and their organizations to work together for the good of the whole Filipino community. That was her goal.

She involved herself in organizations that would also bring the Filipino community in unity with other Asian and Pacific Islander communities: She became a founding member of CAPITAL, Council of Asian Pacific Islanders Together for Advocacy and Leadership and was one of the Filipino leaders who organized around the 2000 Census Campaign. One campaign that drew Filipinos together across organizational lines, more than ever before, was

the campaign to elect Christopher Cabaldon to the City Council, then Mayor of the City of West Sacramento, then to the California State Assembly. Memie was in the middle of it all. No wonder, Memie became known as one of the Filipino Godmothers. Five women leaders who were prominent in the community at the time from the perspective of CAPITAL and the API community were Josie Patria, Memie Weitzenberg, Sorcy Apostol, Marina Camia and Cynthia Bonta so much so that Jerry Chong, Esq. of API leadership, coined the name, "Filipino Godmothers".

It was because of Memie's leadership and her unifying outlook that the VIP Receptions of PNDA's Sinag-Tala Theater Project became such a success and its strongest fundraising tool. The same Filipino Godmothers were at the core leadership of Friends of Sinag-Tala who organized the VIP Reception for many years. The VIP Reception drew people from far and wide beyond the Filipino community to the annual Sinag-Tala Theatrical Revue on the first weekend in December. Those were the golden years of PNDA's Sinag-Tala Theater Project.

Indeed, it was also the beginning of a working friendship between Memie and the Philippine National Day Association, PNDA for short. Memie served in the Selection Panels for the Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards and so did the other Filipino Godmothers who took their turn. Memie introduced PNDA to individuals who served as panelists or became donors to the OFYA College Fund. The Filipino Godmothers helped with re-



Photo by Dave San Pedro

Memie Weitzenberg

freshments after the Awards Ceremonies. The OFYA candidates got to know about the scholarship opportunities that FCSV offered and availed themselves of it. When she was President of PNDA she made it a point to invite as many leaders of other organizations to attend the OFYA ceremonies. After that particular OFYA Ceremony, I heard a comment that said: "So that is OFYA, now I can see why there is nothing like it around." When CAPITAL coordinated the Ronald McDonald ASIA Scholarship, it drew Filipino community leaders to work together once more, doubling, even tripling, the number of Filipino students who received scholarships. How true it is that when we join together, we are much stronger.

Yes, while Memie kept

up with her earlier community involvements with new additions like Filipino American Veterans Association and later the Bayanihan of Sacramento, USA, she also was serving PNDA in her unique way making her contributions to PNDA's Sinag-Tala Theatrical Project until 2004. If she was not refining the statement about the meaning of the title, Lakandiwa, she was assisting schools with their nominations to the OFYA recognition and scholarship program. Because PNDA had three projects, the other being the Filipino American Youth Leadership Conference, she left her impact there, too. She was a member of a youth and parent panel at the second FAYLC. Not only did she reach out to young people to attend but she volunteered to provide the first breakfast each year for many years when FAYLC was held at UC Davis.

Her best recruitment success was bringing her daughter Anna into PNDA's Board in 2005 when she directed the OFYA project until her son, Tyler, came along.

Finally, after being with PNDA Board of Directors for a while she agreed to

run and was elected PNDA President in 2010. Memie was a pillar of strength when the skies over PNDA were covered with dark clouds. She worked quietly but surely doing her part to bring out that silver lining once again.

PNDA enjoys countless blessings from Memie's contributions in a span of two decades. That is an awesome long time.

This slightly built woman, with a ready smile, so warm and personable, 'there is always a way' kinda attitude - unstoppable - how did she take care of the community so well?

She served so many organizations since she got to this country providing amenities of leadership such as stage sets and table decorations, her own cooking, her own chairs.

She organized community wide events many of us do not even hear about - the Consulate on Wheels, the Filipino Women's Club's Pista Sa Nasyon events that recognize outstanding women in the community.

She lent her influential hand in the historic events that we celebrated community wide: Tani Cantil Sakauye becoming an Associate Justice of the Court of

Appeals and again when she became the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court;

Mona Pasquil becoming the first woman to occupy the position of Lieutenant Governor of California, then Appointments Secretary to Governor Edmund G. Brown ;

Rob Bonta becoming the first Filipino American in the California State Legislature.

She gives speeches in the limelight or she works the kitchen; she provides spiritual as well as logistical support to grieving families. And still meets the demands of her various family roles as grandmother, mother, wife and daughter-in-law. Part of the answer to our marvel is her partnership with her family and the inner strength she nourishes by staying in tune with her faith and beliefs.

This year's OFYA Awards and Banquet will be the first one without Memie. But her presence will be felt as we remember the legacy she leaves with PNDA. PNDA wishes to pay homage to Memie, a role model to be emulated, a servant leader and dear friend who will always be remembered with love and gratitude.

"Memie was the embodiment of extraordinary leadership, grace and elegance. In her tiny frame she packed boundless energy, contagious enthusiasm and wise advice. I really miss her."

- Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, Tani Cantil Sakauye

"Memie had a wonderful spirit. Everyone who met her saw it and felt it in their hearts. Her enthusiasm was abundant. She was committed to our community and to helping others. She touched many lives in a real and meaningful way. She put smiles on their fac-

es, and love in their hearts. Her legacy lives on in those whom she helped. She will never be forgotten."

- Superior Court Judge Trena Burger Plavan and Frank Plavan

"I will always treasure my memories of Memie and the lessons she taught all of us by her extraordinary example. Our community is stronger today because of her efforts to teach, guide and lead with grace and kindness. She lit up every room with her smile and reminded us of the importance of community, remembering and honoring those who came before us and working hard

to achieve our dreams."

- Mona Pasquil, Appointments Secretary, Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

"Memie led a life of community service that touched so many and made so many lives better. Her boundless optimism, steadfast hope for our future, and ever-present warmth inspired us. Our Sacramento Filipino community cannot be more grateful for the profound impact she made and the legacy of service she has left behind."

- Rob Bonta, California Assemblymember, District 18

Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards 2017

4th through August 6th.

Lastly, after many community events taking place in October to celebrate Filipino American History Month, we will be hosting what's simply called "Filipino Fork" a farm-to-fork/celebrity chef dinner. Stay tuned for details this summer.

For these details and to find out more, please email



Niilda, Geraldine, Leila, Remy and Dinnah

us at PNDA.Sac@Gmail.com. From there, we will be able to connect you to our new website (www.PNDA-

Sac.org), our social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), and add you to our email distribution list, where all of our updates are sent exclusively to recipients at least once a week.

Thanks again to everyone that made the 2017 Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards a major celebration and a huge success! Hope to see you at one of PNDA's many upcoming events in 2017!



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UNLUCAI 35th Anniversary Celebration on May 27, 2017

By Faina E. Abaya

Like the many celebrations and projects undertaken by the United Naguilian, La Union, Circle of America, Inc., a flawless preparation has been going on for several months to ensure the success of the forthcoming 35th Anniversary celebration of UNLUCAI on May 27, 2017 which will be held at the Hilton Arden West Hotel on Harvard Street, Sacramento. Greater efforts have been exerted by all the Committee members involved in the preparation to attain such degree of success as envisioned by all concerned to make it significant and memorable.

UNLUCAI President elect Cristina Bambao, the Overall Chairperson of the celebration convened all concerned at the Sacramento Sheriff Community building on April 15, 2017 to hear the reports of the chairmen of the different committees the extent of their preparations for the Anniversary Celebration. Vice President elect Dickie Bernal, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee who was also assigned as the coordinator for all the committees reported that he already signed the contract of the celebration with the Hilton management for an expected attendance of at least 120 members and guests, although, everyone believes that the number could swell to no less than 150 or more that would surely attend. Further, he also assured everyone that the food to be served which will be buffet in style will be enjoyed by all.

The evening's program during the celebration will also coincide with the installation of the UNLUCAI set of officers for the term 2017-18 is being prepared by Sonia Delizo and Cristino Floresca who will jointly Emcee the program. Entertainment is also being handled by Erna Bambao who reported that there will be partici-



Henry Bambao watching recipients of clothing.



UNLUCAI Steering Committee



Joven Aromin Jr.



K6 - Innovative Mission Advocacy



Donated canned goods

pants from other Naguilian organizations in California and other places. The guest speaker and also the inducting officer for the incoming UNLUCAI officers could be a well-known California politician or a government official from the

municipality of Naguilian. Moreover, there will be continuous music and dancing which will be, of course, the most enjoyable part of the evening's celebration. In addition, raffles and dance contest will be conducted with prizes of either

cash money or in kind. A souvenir program is also in the making as a lifetime remembrance of the anniversary celebration.

A Posthumous Award will be given to Eddie Vita, the founder and former President of Annak Ti Naguilian for his numerous accomplishments during his lifetime that benefitted not only his community but at large the people of the town of Naguilian. Appreciation awards will also be given to former UNLUCAI Presidents Pete Ferrer and Henry Bambao for their many contributions to their community and likewise the town of Naguilian during their respective terms as head of the organization.

The United Naguilian La Union Circle of America, Inc. is duly registered non-profit organization in the State of California and as such all profits that will be generated from the anniversary celebration will be spent to many projects that benefitted those who are in need. Lately, the organization sent 160 pieces of clothing and assorted canned goods through Henry Bambao to the Municipality of Naguilian which were distributed to the residents of the remotest barangays selected by the social

welfare of the town officials on the criteria of the residents need.

During the meeting, Joven Aromin, Jr., a very active member of UNLUCAI in line with the above mentioned objective also announced Scholarship Grants for Vocational Courses given to 15 interested and employable persons from Naguilian. Accordingly, the amount of the Grants to be spent for such endeavor was placed to about six thousand dollars (\$6,000.00). For such benevolence, the Municipality of Naguilian expressed their gratitude to Mr. Aromin who personally shouldered the expenses of the scholars.

The different committee members who attended the meeting are: Edgar and Charity Avena, Henry and Tina Bambao, Dickie and Marilyn Bernal, Teddy and Letty Cheng, Mannie and Cora Ojascastro, Jun and Faina Abaya, Fely Esplana, Erna Bambao, Sonia Delizo, Zaldy and Lydia Estepa, Cherie Nairn, Joven Aromin, Julie Banks, Pat Banayat and Carole Bambao.

WE WELCOME EVERYONE TO JOIN THE CELEBRATION PLEASE CONTACT ANY MEMBER FOR INFORMATION.

Consulate On Wheels



Consulate on Wheels morning volunteers held at The Magellan Veterans memorial Hall on March 18, 2017.

Mauro Cyrus (MC) Paradela
Pianist-Singer/DJ Host/Karaoke Host

Tel. 916.544.3287
email: cyrus.paradela@gmail.com



Rize All Arts Center

By Dale Esperante

After hearing about a free first dance lesson on 26 April, my wife and I showed up early at 7:30 p.m. We were followed by two families who arrived to join a class for ballroom dancing, Mike and Barbara Lowler accompanied by their charming daughter, and Tim and Cindy Muscat with their two charming daughters as well. My wife and I joined along with Dave and Dinnah San Pedro.

At about 7:45 p.m., Dance Instructor (DI) Dane invited all to take their places, Leaders (men) to the art gallery wall side and the Followers (ladies) to the mirrored wall side. DI Dane demonstrated the fundamentals of the following dances: Waltz, Rumba, Bachata, Fox Trot, Tango, and the Swing.

The fundamentals are essential to advance properly in anything worth doing. Just like in life, one must learn how to walk before one can run. Especially in dancing which could be considered as walking rhythmically to the beat of a music. Wikipedia's, "In dance, musicality is the matching of movement and form to the rhythm, melody, and mood of the music being played." In Waltz for example, the beat is Slow-Quick-Quick and the Count is 1-2-3. The tempo or the beat, the count, and the steps were all explained and demonstrated by Dane San Pedro.

When dancing and holding a partner, one must lead (man) and the other follow (lady). Every few minutes, DI Dane rotated the partners, meaning the dancers had to change partners. The best reason for switching partners is learning how to adjust. If one



of the partners is a new dancer, the other must be pleasantly patient. Patience and practice are essential for all dancers, new or skilled, especially married couples. If both partners are experienced, there may still be some adjustments necessary depending on their individual knowledge of the dance. Couples can benefit much more from ballroom dancing because of the unspoken communication required to complete a good dance. Dancing is an exercise in unspoken communication. The better the unspoken communication, the better the dance. The "Hold" channels the communication between the partners, and an instructor like Dane San Pedro can demonstrate the correct Hold.

Three amazing teenagers participated in our dance class. One teenager surprised me when I heard the exclamation, "I LOVE

THIS DANCE" during the Tango lesson. Being a beginner/intermediate dancer, I learned how to lead my partner to a Tango Corte in this class. I will show this move when my wife and I attend the next community social dance. Another teenager said during the Triple Step Swing that she's danced the Swing before. She said it to encourage her partner to lead her to a spin, a quick twirl and turn.

I was reminded about some-

thing very important in class, to never again assume that the youth is only interested in modern dances. There are young folks who appreciate Latin/Rhythm (ballroom) dances, as I was a witness to it this evening. Evidently, ballroom dancing is an enjoyable social dance for any age, young or old! Just don't be afraid to try it, ballroom dancers are usually pleasantly patient and understanding. So, c'mon and dance!

Rize All's group lesson in ballroom dancing is scheduled every Wednesday evening starting at 7:45 p.m. It is an hour-long class. I was pleased to hear that for four lessons (four Wednesdays), the price is only \$40 per person or \$60 per couple.

Rize All Arts Center is located at 2745 Elk Grove Blvd, in Elk Grove, California.

The hours of operation are:
 Mon.-Friday, 3:30p.m. to 8p.m.
 Tuesday - 10a.m. to 12:30p.m.
 Saturday - 9a.m. to 1p.m.

The Co-Founders and Directors are Dane San Pedro and Amanda Newsum. Both are also highly skilled dance instructors. The faculty includes Site Managers Allie Braithwaite and Mai Tong Xiong, both are also dance instructors. Last-but-not-least are the rest of the Dance Instructors: Mona Fan, Josh Johnson, Ashley Her, David Phasavath, and Gemma Coloma.

Looking for an instructor in the following dance arts? Rize All can help you:

Ballet, Hip Hop, Jazz, Breaking, Hula, Ballroom, Tap, Pointe, Contemporary, Hmong, and more...
 Phone (916) 538-3255 or email Dance@RizeAll.com



Annual Spring Brunch



Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation Annual Spring Brunch headed by President Joe Gonzalez, held at Jose Rizal Community Center, on April 22, 2017.

Graduation



April 28, 2017 at Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, Arizona with Mike & Liza Valentine, Jumpy Ngo and Michelle Abaya.

Calendar of Events

MAY 4, 2017 (THURS)

BIG DAY OF GIVING!

www.bigdayofgiving.org/COEDscholarship
 www.bigdayofgiving.org/Sinagtala
 www.bigdayofgiving.org/PNDA
 www.bigdayofgiving.org/RizeAll

MAY 15, 2017 (MON)

MY SISTER'S HOUSE 16th Anniversary Gala

6:30pm
 Crest Theater
 1013 K Street, Sacramento, CA
<https://msh16anniversarygala.eventbrite.com>

MAY 21, 2017 (SUN.)

ESKWELA NATIN (Our Filipino School)

Reception 12-2pm
 Class 2-4:30pm
 County Human Resources Bldg.
 2450 Florin Rd., Sacramento, CA
 Dolores Diaz - 916.396.2351

MAY 27, 2017 (SAT.)

UNLUCAI 35TH Anniversary
 Dinner and Dance / 6pm
 Hilton Sacramento Arden West
 Sacramento, CA 95815
 Attire: Semi Formal
 Donation \$60

JUNE 4, 2017 (SUN.)

FILIPINO FIESTA of Sacramento
 Commemorating the 75th Anniversary
 of the Bataan Death March
 10AM - 5PM
 Jose Rizal Community Center
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento, Ca
 916.524.8008
 916.266.1923
 916.396.7863

Birthdays



AYDEN SALGADO
APRIL 2



FELY ESPLANA
MAY 11



DANE SAN PEDRO
APRIL 17



JOSE RIVERA
MAY 18



JOSE VILLARICA
MAY 22



DALE ESPERANTE and wife Melita
MAY 12



ARDEN ABELEDA and wife Nelda
MAY 11



TESS SANTOS and family
APRIL 27

Anniversary



BEN and AIDA SAN PEDRO with Dinnah
53rd Wedding Anniversary, April 18



JER and SHEILA CRISOLOGO
28th Wedding Anniversary, April 29



NANCY and FRANK BAUTISTA
48th Wedding Anniversary, March 6



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By Dale Esperante

FAVA Ladies Night Out



The FAVA Ladies on 29 April, 2017 at the Del Webb ClubHouse in Elk Grove.

Held on 29 Apr 2017 at the Del Webb Club House in Elk Grove. The FAVA Men showed their sincere appreciation to the FAVA Ladies with a fun evening of wine, dine, and dance.

President Dick Weitzenberg welcomed all before dinner of Lechon, Texas BBQ, Bread, and Salad. Wine and beverages were available for everyone's enjoyment. Happy birthday songs were sung for Andy Tancio who brought the lechon and a huge delicious cake ordered from a Freeport Bakery. Also celebrating birthdays were Dick Weitzenberg and Warnita Avillanoza. DJ Edward Cordero delivered some great music for all to enjoy! Thank you so much Ladies! We are blessed to have such wonderful FAVA Ladies.



Photos by Dale Esperante

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Join the Memorial Day Flowers Foundation in Honoring Our Nation's Fallen Troops and Veterans for Memorial Day

Memorial Day may be billed as the start of summertime fun and sales, but for many people, the holiday holds a deeper meaning. Since 2011, the Memorial Day Flowers Foundation has placed roses to honor fallen service members and veterans at Arlington National Cemetery, and in the last two years, the project has expanded to several other cemeteries.



You can donate flowers to honor our veterans and late service members, as well as volunteer to place flowers at participating cemeteries, through www.MemorialDayFlowers.org.

Participating cemeteries include: Arlington National Cemetery (Virginia), Fort Snelling National Cemetery (Minnesota), Houston National Cemetery (Texas), Sacramento Valley National Cemetery (California), San Francisco (California), Washington Crossing (Pennsylvania), Miramar (California), South Florida, Jacksonville (Florida), Beaufort (South Carolina), Arizona, Southern Maine, Long Island (New York), New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Fort Jackson (South Carolina), Lancaster Cemetery (Pennsylvania).

Last year, 191 retail florists and main street businesses handed out roses from their shops to the public for placement in cem-

eteries across the country to honor fallen service members and late veterans. This year, for \$250, retailers receive 250 high-quality roses, 10 flower food sachets, 250 handouts with sponsor information, and a large Memorial Day Flowers Foundation banner. Orders are due by May 12, 2017 for this year's event on Memorial Day (Monday, May 29, 2017) and can be placed online.

Eight cemeteries participated last year and 240,000 floral tributes were placed to honor our fallen service members and veterans. But organizers say more needs to be done.

"We were thrilled to place as many flowers as we did last year, but every year, thousands of veterans' gravesites go unvisited and unrecognized on Memorial Day - the national day to honor our fallen troops and decorate their gravesites,"

said Johan Sohn, the co-director of the foundation.

Sohn said that anyone can sponsor roses for gravesites at participating cemeteries. A \$10 Donation places a Rose and Flower Tribute at 12 Arlington National Cemetery gravesites. A \$100 sponsorship provides a bucket of 125 roses to be placed by a volunteer.

Flower growers from Colombia, Ecuador, California, and Ethiopia donate some of the flowers for the Arlington National Cemetery event. The event is widely supported across the floral industry, but more support is needed.

"Due to the growing season this year and the calendar - with Mother's Day so close to Memorial Day - we will receive fewer donated flowers this year," said Sohn. "We need additional support to bring in more flowers."

On Sunday, May 28th, more than 600 volunteers from the D.C. area, including Boy Scouts, will honor fallen troops, by placing 130,000 roses at headstones at Arlington National Cemetery. They will also distribute flowers at the Arlington National Cemetery Visitors Center and to families at section 60 on Memorial Day.

2017 Outstanding Filipino Youth Awards

Best Essay Awards

Discovering My Filipino Identity



Myracle P. Franco
8th Grade Recipient



Merielle U. Macaraeg
12th Grade Recipient



At birth, I was three pounds and ten ounces. A premature baby, they identified me. However, my true story and identification begins with my roots and my Filipino identity.

My name is Myracle Pascua Franco, an 8th grader at McCaffrey Middle School in Galt, CA. Some words that describe me are: diligent, goal oriented, punctual, dedicated, and responsible. As seen on my resume, I have joined various school organizations and city involvement, to sharpen my leadership and communication skills. In school, I appreciate all subjects, but have an interest in science. I aspire to be part of the medical field, specifically- optometry, and pediatrics. I seek more volunteer experiences because it will help me be a better person.

In the future, I hope to serve the inner city children and families. I desire to serve as an inspiration to the Filipino youth. My parents are Leo and Imelda Franco. I have one sibling, Mariah Pascua Franco who graduated Valedictorian at Galt High School, and is now pursuing a B.S. Biochemistry and Cell Biology with a Psychology minor, at UC San Diego. My paternal aunts and uncles are: Vivian V. Franco, Pat F. Cabero, Senon Franco Jr., and Daisy V. Franco. My maternal uncles are: Efren Q. Pascua and Enrique Q. Pascua. The following elements: family background, Filipino consciousness and pride, shapes and influences the individual that I become.

My family background begins with my paternal and maternal grandparents. My paternal grandparents are: Senon F. Franco Sr., WWII Veteran (U.S. Army) and Maria V. Franco from Batac, Ilocos Norte. In his teens, of the year 1927, my paternal grandfather began his long journey to California aboard a ship, along with his five uncles. It was dangerous, but he was a teen with

a dream, and with great perseverance and courage, he began a new life in California. He took up simple jobs and soon after, enlisted in the U.S. Army, and was destined in Arayat, Pampanga. There, he met my paternal grandmother in a fish market. Soon after, with their children, they immigrated to California.

Sadly, I did not meet my paternal grandparents, but I am very grateful that my family teaches me about their character, hard work, and sacrifices which shaped my future. In addition, my maternal grandparents are: Estanislao A. Pascua and Leonida Q. Pascua from Caoayan, Ilocos Sur. My paternal grandfather was a construction foreman in the Philippines, while my ma-



ternal grandmother sold fish and vegetables at a market. Soon after beginning a family, my maternal grandfather made the sacrifice of leaving our home country and traveling abroad to Saudi Arabia, to provide for the education of his children.

Then, in the year 2000, my maternal grandparents finally immigrated to California to join my parents. By learning and understanding, my grandparent's humble beginnings, I discover the Filipino spirit- brave. Filipinos are determined and persevering. We work hard to overcome our challenges and we take risks. We strive to do our daily best, and our

family is our priority. It is these lessons instilled in me by my grandparents that I take to heart, and try to live by their example each day; hoping I make them proud in each step.

My Filipino consciousness helps develop my character and inspires me. For example, the Philippines is a tropical island, that experiences typhoons and floods. The citizens support each other and lift one another. Filipinos are resilient because no matter what comes our way, we work hard to get through it. The OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers), are hired in foreign countries because we are well qualified and responsible. We must commend these OFWs because they bring honor and pride to our home country. Not only is there strength in our character, but we are multitalented. It is shown through: our words, music, artistry, talents, and achievements. The Filipino talents that represent us in the international arena are: Dr. Connie Mariano, Lea Salonga, Christine Gambito, Bruno Mars, Monique Lhuillier, Allen Pineda, Manny Pacquiao, Hidilyn Diaz, and Pia A. Wurtzbach.

In addition, I admire the Filipino hero, Jose Rizal for the importance he gives to children because he believes that we will deliver a brighter future. He once said, "The youth is the hope of our future." Jose Rizal is a hero because he fought for our independence peacefully, and loved our country unconditionally. These talented people listed above are passionate about their fields and continuously put their best effort forward. I have learned from them, and will take the lessons and values to heart. I will do by best to demonstrate their character traits in school, organizations, leadership positions, and future career.

Continued on next page

The weight behind what being Filipino-American meant took 16 years of my life for me to appreciate. My siblings and I would boast about our Asian pride all the time when we were younger: reciting Asian pride parody songs made by Youtubers, and only ex-erting Filipino pride when it came to food. Our dad would playfully remind us that we are American, but we would laugh it off and deny it out of ignorant blissfulness. Being Asian gave us uniqueness.

However, little did we understand that being a Filipino AND American carries a truly profound pride that takes understanding the hardships our parents made to make it here. My name is Merielle Ugaban Macaraeg and I am my family's first-generation of Filipino-Americans. My parents were born and raised in Philippines' well known province for bangus and bagoon: Pangasinan. My mother's family resided in its capitol, Lingayen, and my father's in Manaoag. My parents happened to meet in medical school as they were aspiring to become doctors. Although, unable to pay for college anymore, my dad joined the brutal ranks of the military with just a GED—where he fought hard in the middle east and worked diligently to be promoted as a Chief Warrant Officer 2, something nearly impossible for someone with such little education. As soon as my mom graduated as a medical technician she followed him to Guam, where they would begin their family: the first generation of Macaraeg-Ugaban Filipino Americans.

Now, as a military child, I have moved three times within my high school career—and I have been blessed with the opportunity to have three homes. Despite community being a touch and go subject for

me, I still try to give back and make long-lasting impressions, regardless of any time restrictions.

This effort began when I was little, in my birthplace, Guam, my parents were separated and my mom ran a local fish business to provide for my three siblings and me. We helped her deliver fresh fish to numerous homes across the island. Their smiles as the fish came for them to cook and share with their families sparked my eagerness to be involved with my community, as well as looking up to my hardworking mother.

Later, my parents reunited and we followed my dad to Virginia. There, I grew up in a bedroom community near Washington D.C., where the diverse culture



and rich history vitalized me to do something. I became my middle school's student body president and lent my hand to a project helping kids with terminal illnesses or life-limiting disabilities experience a ball dance. Pairing up with the local church who hosts the grand event, Cinderella Ball, I used my position to spread the news throughout my community and collect gowns and tuxedos for kids to wear. Also, undeterred by my family's big move to California after my dad got relocated, I continued servicing my D.C. community by helping low-income families at community fairs or feeding the homeless.

Next, my time in Fresno was short but eye-opening. In spite of its bad reputation of pollution, poverty, and crime, the heart of that community inspired me. I teamed up with my peers to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving and also worked to increase the confidence and happiness of people around the city through a school-wide "small acts of kindness" movement.

Upon moving to a suburban community near Sacramento, I was motivated to continue ensuring people had the opportunities to strive. I am currently working on social, economic, and cultural projects under my internship with Assemblymember Jim Cooper's office and the Teen Action Committee. Whether it is serving a community through short- or long-term efforts—all of these actions touch my community before I go off to continue this effort at college.

In addition, the people I have met throughout my journey, especially the Filipino leaders, have truly sparked a fire inside of me. I know now that being Filipino-American is more than the food. I know now that the check boxes to identify my ethnicity should not be limited to "Asian" or "Asian/Pacific Islander" or not even sure which one you are because the US Census Bureau has trouble itself. I know now that I cannot be satisfied that Larry Itliong, an important organizer of the Labor Movement, has just recently been accredited to be in America's curriculum. I know now to distinguish between a leader who is more concerned with what their reputation is than what they can contribute with their power. I know now that the path is still being paved for Filipinos here in America and it is a journey worth continuing. I know now that I can be a catalyst for another Filipina or Filipino to not back down from what they can reach.

Best Essay Awards

By Myracle P. Franco

Annually, my family watches the productions of the Sinag-tala Filipino Theater and Performing Arts Association and various Filipino concerts. It is so important because it is a



primary source to learn about my culture, and I am ecstatic to learn new things. I love to watch Filipino soap operas with my maternal grandparents because it is a way for me to bond with them, as well as keep in touch with my roots. I enjoy all Filipino dishes my maternal grandmother prepares. She teaches me Tagalog and Ilocano. As Filipinos, we are: hospitable, family oriented, and courteous. Unlike Americans, we respect our elders by addressing them as: Nanay or Tatay, Tita or Tito, and Ate or Kuya. It is important to connect and understand our origins. I urge all Filipino youth to discover the Philippines on a deeper level, and I plan to travel home to reconnect with my roots and to re-discover it all over again, first hand.

I am proud to be Filipino because we are one of a kind. We have a rich history. Although several foreign lands have conquered and influenced the Philippines, the mixture is grand. In my hometown Galt, the population is mostly Caucasian and

Latino. It was an honor and a privilege to represent Filipinos. I was the first Filipino from my school chosen to lay the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington D.C. I am the only Filipino part of youth group and an altar server at St. Christopher's Catholic Church. I demonstrate my Filipino pride by sharing my culture with my peers, and in the way, I express myself. The Filipino trait that I demonstrate most is diligence because I always do my best to reach my goals. Upon researching for this essay, I have learned that it is through the cumulative efforts and talents of the Filipinos then and now, that we are able to contribute to the international arena. I am grateful for these brave Filipino hearts. I am grateful for their strength. I desire to emulate the great Filipinos who came before me, in my future educational and career experiences.

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June 11	July 23
June 18	July 30

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Shades of San Francisco Features Filipinos History

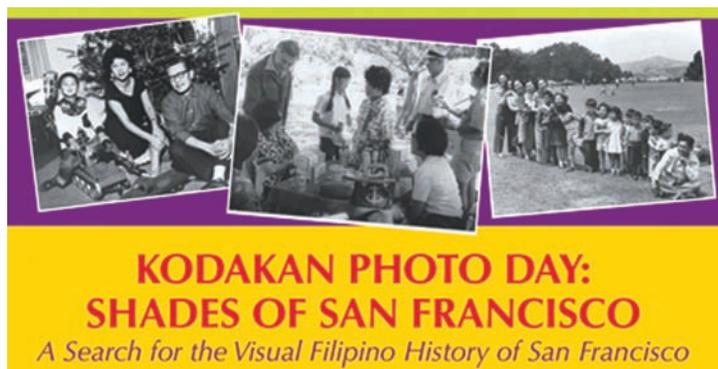
San Francisco - May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, which is now widely celebrated in the nation, to pay tribute to the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have enriched America's history and are instrumental in its future success.

Not long ago, Filipinos were mentioned in a pictorial-essay book (1983) by Mr. Fred Cordova as "forgotten Asian Americans" because according to him "very little is known about them and even less is available in libraries, resource centers or institutions of higher education," even though the Filipinos are among the largest Asian communities in California and in the nation.

The San Francisco Public Library in partnership with the SoMa Pilipinas community are making sure that Filipinos will never be forgotten.

A joint venture, entitled "KODAKAN PHOTO DAY: SHADES OF SAN FRANCISCO, A Search for Visual Filipino History of San Francisco" is scheduled on Saturday, May 13, 2017, from 10 am to 4 pm in the San Francisco Public Library.

Shades of San Francisco is



KODAKAN PHOTO DAY: SHADES OF SAN FRANCISCO

A Search for the Visual Filipino History of San Francisco

a neighborhood and ethnic community history photograph collecting project conducted by the San Francisco Public Library. Its mission is to copy photographs from the family albums, private collections, and computers of current and former San Francisco residents. The copied photos will be added to the San Francisco History Center's photo archives in order to create a permanent record of the daily lives of San Franciscans as well as the historical, political and cultural contributions of the many neighborhoods and ethnic communities that make up the city.

With the adoption of the San Francisco's Board of Supervisors the SoMa Pilipinas as a Filipino Cultural Heritage District in San Francisco on April 12, 2016, it is of paramount importance to generate the visual Filipino history and cultural heritage in San Francisco.

San Francisco Public Li-

brary and SoMa Pilipinas invite past and present members of San Francisco's Filipino community to get their photos into the archives for present and future generations. There are many stories to be told, many photos and multi-media to be gathered and properly stored and shared, and the time is now, as a community that is integral in the shades of San Francisco.

On Saturday, May 13 Photo Day, the San Francisco Public Library with their staff and volunteers will copy photos and have the contributors to meet and socialize with the SoMa Pilipinas community.

Photo albums, loose photographs and digital photos are welcome. Appointment are recommended. To make an appointment, call (415) 348-8042 or email jolene@bayanihanc.org or visit www.sfpl.org/kodakanphotoday to register online.

PNDA features Author, Prosy Abarquez Delacruz Her Book, "EVEN THE RAINBOW HAS A BODY"

By Cynthia Bonta

Prosy is a very accomplished woman - a BS degree from the University of the Philippines, a Juris Doctor from Whittier College School of Law in California, a certificate of 21st Century Leadership from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. But I know her best as a Journalist for the Asian Journal writing feature stories and a weekly column, called Rhizomes. And as a Journalist, I find her to be an 'original.' Her writing voice does more than report the facts of a newsworthy story. She delves into the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the people in her stories and interacts with them in order to do justice to the portrait she projects with words. This is what I found in reading "Even the Rainbow has a Body: Distinct Artistic Legacies."

Prosy finds the stories about these outstanding Filipino Artists intriguing, admirable, and empowering. Because of that she is convinced that these stories should be shared



draws out our own humanity as readers.

This is an inspiring book for all ages. The artist heroes of the stories are inspirations. The author is an inspiration in the way that she has used her journalism career to empower the Filipino community. LA may have its Hollywood Walk of Fame, we have Prosy's book about Filipino artists who are the embodiment of the rainbow promise that dreams do come true.

Her title is intriguing and challenges each of us to find its meaning. The title is meant for you to find your meaning in it. Prosy has her meaning. I have my meaning. What do you find to be your meaning to Even a Rainbow has a Body.

This book is not a fiction novel to be analysed for its plot, conflict, climax or denouement. It is a collection of true stories, a documentary in print, for you to experience. It certainly is a "must read" for any aspiring youth or Filipino or immigrant, a poetic resistance to the anti-immigrant climate we find ourselves in under the Trump administration.

with Filipinos so they will be proud; and with non-Filipinos so they will relate to the immigrant experience and see how immigrants make a contribution to this country. Very often these success stories became possible only after overcoming tremendous odds and adversity.

When Prosy listens to these stories, she listens with her soul so that something happens to both teller and listener - something transforming, something empowering. So what flows from the pen of the listener turned writer communicates the humanity of the artist's art or craft and



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Jazz/Contemporary	7 to 10	4:30-5:00pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	3 to 5	11:30-12:00pm
Ballet	10 to 13	5:00-5:30pm	Ballet	5 to 7	4:00-4:30pm
Hip-Hop/Breaking	10 to 13	5:30-6:00pm	Jazz	5 to 7	4:30-5:00pm
Contemporary/Jazz	13 to 18	6:00-6:30pm	Ballet/Jazz	3 to 5	5:00-5:30pm
Hip-Hop/Breaking	13 to 18	6:30-7:00pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	3 to 5	5:30-6:00pm
Contemporary	18+	7:00-7:30pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	7 to 10	6:00-6:30pm
Hip-Hop/Breaking	18+	7:30-8:00pm	Ballet	10 to 13	6:30-7:00pm
Wednesday, March 1	age levels	time	Contemporary/Jazz	10 to 13	7:00-7:30pm
Kid and Play	6mnt to 3 & 18+	10:00-10:30am	Thursday, March 2	age levels	time
Hip-Hop/Breaking	3 to 5	4:00-4:30pm	Ballet	5 to 7	4:00-4:30pm
Ballet/Jazz	3 to 5	4:30-5:00pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	5 to 7	4:30-5:00pm
Jazz/Contemporary	10 to 13	5:00-5:30pm	Ballet/Contemporary	7 to 10	5:00-5:30pm
Hip-Hop/Breaking	10 to 13	5:30-6:00pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	7 to 10	5:30-6:00pm
Jazz	5 to 7	6:00-6:30pm	Ballet	13 to 18	6:00-6:30pm
Hip-Hop/Breaking	5 to 7	6:30-7:00pm	Jazz/Contemporary	13 to 18	6:30-7:00pm
Contemporary/Jazz	13 to 18	7:00-7:30pm	Contemporary	18+	7:00-7:30pm
Ballroom	10+	7:30-8:00pm	Hip-Hop	18+	7:30-8:00pm
Friday, March 3	age levels	time	Saturday, March 4	age levels	time
Hmong	5 to 10	5:00-5:30pm	Ribbon Cutting	all ages	10:30-11:00am
Hula	5 to 10	5:30-6:00pm	Register/Capezio	all ages	11:00-1:00pm
Hula	10 to 18	6:00-6:30pm	Ballet/Jazz	3 to 10	11:00-11:30pm
Hmong	10 to 18	6:30-7:00pm	Hip-Hop/Breaking	3 to 10	11:30-12:00pm
Master Class	all ages	7:00-8:00pm	Ballet/Jazz/Contempor	10 to 17	12:00-12:30pm
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How Maja Salvador got her 'revenge body'

By Deni Rose M. Afinidad-Bernardo

In ABS-CBN's summer station ID, of the many sexy stars featured, one summer body stands out.

Actress Maja Salvador has always been a #fitspiration for many. In her current soap opera, "Wildflower," she plays Ivy, a woman who will do everything to avenge her father's death brought about by a powerful political clan.

Maja admitted in an interview with Philstar.com that being sexy is important for her role as there are scenes that call for her to use her charm and sex appeal to get the vengeance she wants. She bared, however, that staying in shape and looking after her health have also been a struggle since she has to do tapings for the show three times a week, while her weekends are allotted for the Sunday noontime variety show "ASAP."

Since dancing in "ASAP" is her only means to workout, how does she manage to still look good?

"Control sa pagkain talaga. I'm not following any diet plans. Kumakain ako pero nagkokontrol ko. Kasi kung mag-iwas ka ng pagkain, baka mawalan ka ng happiness!" quipped the actress, who loves shrimps and squash. She confessed that she eats junk food when she is too tired to eat.

She is sad that this summer, she has no chance of going on a vacation.

"I only have two days off in a week, so I'm already burned out, so kapag may staycation or travel opportunities, I grab them kahit overnight lang," she shared.

"Wildflower" is not more on "pa-sexy," she clarified.

"May part n'ung soap na gagamitin mo 'yung pagkababae mo, pero 'di lang 'yun 'yung 'Wildflower.' Boys lang 'yung nagpa-pa-sexy!"

What sets Ivy apart from the roles she held before?

"Siguro 'yung bigat na dinadala ng character, 'yung pain and anger. Ang dami n'yang emosyon, ang dami n'yang dala e. 'Yun ang



"Wildflower" star Maja Salvador. ABS-CBN/Released

pinakapagkakaiba sa iba."

If she is very different from Ivy, where does she get the anger needed to portray the character?

"Wala namang pinaghuhugutan, iba lang talaga ako mag-embrace ng character... Since the character is very different from the real me, honestly, it takes time before I can be Ivy every time we shoot."

Though Ivy and her are poles apart, she has learned a lot from the character.

"Wag ka magkikimkim kasi at the end of the day, ikaw 'yung hindi makakatulog. Lagi mong piliin na magkaroon ng peace of mind," Maja said.

Like Ivy who has three hot men drooling over her, does Maja also have something like that in real life?

"Wala! Busy sa work!" she said, stressing that rumors of her seeing someone outside showbiz are not true.

Playing Ivy is more of a "workout" for her since she and Ivy are very different.

"Revenge, ang powerful n'un, ang bigat n'un sa pagkatao. 'Di ko pa 'yun na-feel 'yun ever. Hindi kasi ako nagkikimkim ng galit eh. Ang dali kong magpatawad. Ang dali kong kalimutan 'yung mga taong sinaktan ako. Ba't mo pa pipiliin na mag-dwell d'un sa sakit na idinulot ng mga taong 'yun? Move on at 'wag mo na silang gawing parte ng buhay mo. Always choose to be happy!"

Grateful

By Jojo Panaligan

Gerald Anderson is more than happy to work again with Kim Chiu, several years after they went their separate ways as lovers



Kim Chiu and Gerald Anderson

Personal issues soured the partnership of actors Gerald Anderson and Kim Chiu a couple of years ago and fans thought seeing them together again on-screen would be as preposterous as, well, the birth of a unicorn.

Yet here they are on the noontime drama "Ikaw Lang Ang Iibigin," a development that Gerald deems a "gift from God." Boom.

"Ako personally masaya ako na may ganitong oportunidad, na makasama ko ulit si Kim, isang tao na napakalaking parte ng buhay ko, simula pa lang ng nag-umpisa ako sa industriyag ito. It's such an honor, a privilege."

He denied simply "missing" the presence of the actress-singer with whom he enjoyed several lucrative outings not only on TV but in movies.

"It's more than that eh. Kasi katulad ng iba, akala ko imposible ito eh. Pero eto tayo ngayon 'di ba? I could only be grateful," the actor said.

Four years after they last worked together on "24/7 In Love," Gerald attested Kim is still the simple, down-to-earth girl he met on "Pinoy Big Brother."

"Nakakatuwa na kahit ano na ang narating niya sa buhay, 'yung success niya, ganu'n pa rin siya, walang pinagbago and it's a good thing," he said. "Kung meron man siyang pinagbago is that she is now even more passionate with her job, more determined. Pero the rest - 'yung kakulitan, 'yung energy, 'yung pagiging happy - ganun pa rin."

Produced by Dreamscape for ABS-CBN, the story of "Ikaw Lang Ang Iibigin" will revolve around three triathletes portrayed by Gerald, Kim and Jake Cuenca.

"Ako dito si Gabriel," shared Gerald. "Isang simpleng lalaki na lumaki sa probinsiya, sa Zambales."

"Si Gabriel gagawin niya ang lahat para sa pamilya niya. He's very hard-working and naturally athletic. Magaling lumangoy, mag-bike at tumakbo. Kaya naman naging madali sa kanya naging triathlete."

The sport, Gerald noted, serves as metaphor for the challenges in one's life.

"Lahat kasi tayo parang triathletes competing in the game of life."

The lead stars immersed themselves in the sport as part of their preparations for their roles.

"Ang triathlon kasi hindi pwedeng dayain," Gerald pointed out. "People would know if you're faking it kaya necessary ang immersion."

But, of course, they're aware of the hardship that goes with it.

"Kaya nga bilib ako kay Kim," said Gerald. "There was one time wala pa siyang gaanong tulog and she actually competed and finished a 21K race the very next day."

"Si Jake Cuenca din, very intense din ang preparation niya," Gerald revealed. "But like I said, I like it that my co-actors are really into it kasi it rubs off on me. Mas nagiging inspired ka to do your best."

So when do they revert to simply acting? "Well, ako personally, I just listen to my body. As far as my experience tells me, it always tells me when I've done enough."

"We go to great lengths trying to approximate how a real triathlete would do things for the show but, siyempre, we all have our limits din."

For real, too

Gerald actually competed as triathlete even before he took on the role of Gabriel in the show.

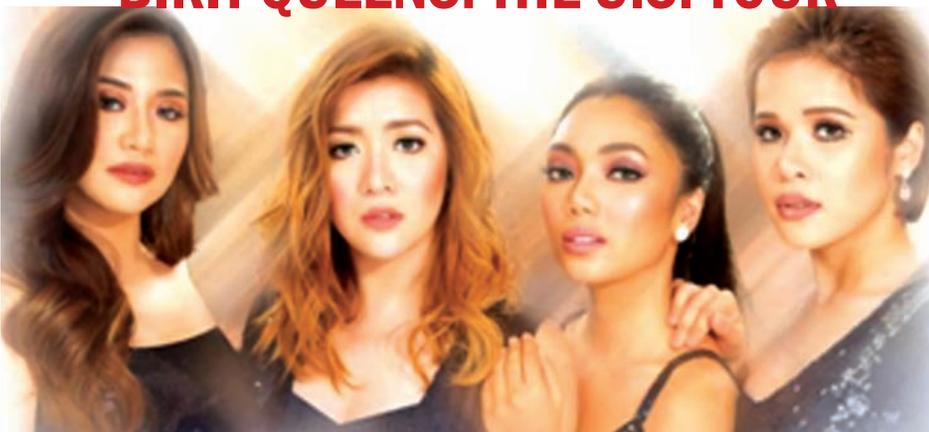
"Yeah I did, once and I also ran a marathon abroad so may background ako ng konti sa sport and 'yun din ang gusto kong ibahagi sa mga manonood nito. Triathlon is such a rewarding sport and I hope to inspire viewers to try and experience what I experienced with it."

Starting May 1, "Ikaw Lang Ang Iibigin" airs right before "It's Showtime," something that surprised many given the caliber of the cast. In fact, many people insist it should air on primetime.

"Sa akin hindi importante kung ano oras kami lumabas," said Gerald. "Basta ang sa akin maipalabas kami at makita ng mga tao ang pinaghirapan namin."

"All of us gave more than a 100% to come up with a good product, so morning or evening man siya ipalabas it doesn't matter as long as people see it."

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Philipino Santa Cruzan

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Note: If you have relatives who were in the Death March, please contact us so we can include them in our “Honor List”.

Sunday, June 4, 2017

Jose Rizal Community Center
Sacramento, California
10 am to 5 pm
FREE Admission

Contact: www.sacramentofiesta.org
Information: Lilia Rivera - 916.524.8008
Information: Mercy Guerrero - 916.266.1923
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