



Oplan Tokhang under fire
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"Simbang Gabi"
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Police tell one story of drug killing, videos tell another

BY AARON RECUENCO

Barangay 19, Manila – The police report was clear. Anti-drug officers shot and wounded three men in this poor Manila district and “rushed” them to a hospital where they were pronounced dead on arrival.

But security camera footage obtained by Reuters tells a different story of what happened just after midday on October 11 here. It shows that police took at least 25 minutes to haul away the men they had shot. The victims show no signs of life; police are seen carrying them by their arms and legs and loading their limp



Children attend the wake of Rolando Arellano Campo and Sherwin Bitas inside a house two days after they were killed in a police operation captured on CCTV, in Tondo, Manila.

bodies onto pedicabs to take them to hospital.

The footage casts new doubts on the official ac-

counts of police killings in President Duterte’s 17-month war against drugs.

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Veterans Day Celebration



The Filipino American veterans and the American Legion Auxiliary paraded proudly in the Elk Grove Veterans Day Parade on November 11, 2017. After the parade, they gathered for a social luncheon for members and invited guests at the Magellan Hall in Sacramento.

SC allows justices to testify vs Sereno

BY EDU PUNAY

MANILA, Philippines — Supreme Court (SC) magistrates and officials will attend the hearings by a congressional panel on the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno if invited.

Voting unanimously in session yesterday, Sereno’s fellow magistrates decided to allow members of the judiciary invited by the House justice committee to testify in hearings on issues raised in an impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Lorenzo Gadon.

The voting was done in Sereno’s absence as she was on leave.



CJ Maria Lourdes Sereno

House justice committee chairman Oriental Mindoro Rep. Reynaldo Umali thanked the justices for their decision.

“This is very important to us so that we can resolve these issues the soonest,” he said.

The committee is trying to establish probable cause to

impeach Sereno.

Three magistrates – incumbent Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-de Castro and Noel Tijam and retired Associate Justice Arturo Brion – have manifested to the House panel their intention to testify in the impeachment case.

In a press conference, SC spokesman Theodore Te said any official of the high court would be allowed to appear before the House panel and testify on administrative matters of the Court raised in Gadon’s complaint.

“Those who are invited to testify on administrative matters may do so if they

Continued on page 4

My Sister’s House Run for a Safe Haven



Asian and other communities joined to support My Sister’s House fundraiser in Sacramento. This is their 14th year, in serving the needs of Asian Islander women impacted by domestic violence.

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BY DINNAH S. SAN PEDRO

True-to-Life Encounter with Stroke

I know it's about time that I write something about my health situation. My intention, first and foremost, is to make awareness. To all my family in California, Virginia, and in the Philippines, I know I have not said anything about what happened. I waited, as I wanted to make sure first, that I'm clear and alright to tell about my shortfall. Anyway, I have to practice what I preach, right?

More than a month ago on Oct. 12, I was uncertain of my physical wellbeing. I suffered an acute ischemic stroke, which affected my speech and the right side of my face. Hence, my Facebook post: CPU stalled-rebooting! The CPU, or central processing unit is what holds together computer equipment. Any malfunction could produce a glitch or the entire computer system will not work at all. That's my analogy of the human brain.

I was unsure after a few days, regardless of how mild of a stroke it was and all the symptoms have immediately resolved, if I will fully recover, or if the symptoms will recur. This was also around the time when a young Filipino-American community friend in Sacramento had just passed away from a hemorrhagic stroke. Also about the same time of the Filipino celebrity Isabel Granada's falling into coma from aneurysm while attending a function in Qatar. The most tragic of all, was the mass shooting by a lone gunman in Las Vegas that killed several people. I didn't want to feel selfish and couldn't afford to make others worry more about my own condition. I have been back to feeling normal after being off work for two weeks since the incident. I was also able to go on a previously scheduled trip to Europe without any setback at all. I have to say; I came back around with a different perspective in living!

I was fortunate, this happened when I arrived early in the morning at the hospital where I work. As a nurse, I should be knowledgeable on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of stroke, and to know how immediate treatment can increase the chance of survival and in order to produce a better

prognosis. We are drilled and trained to respond to this kind of patients' scenarios. In my case though, I almost failed to respond to my own emergencies.

Recognizing the signs of having a stroke

I remember feeling a little bit off, barely thirty minutes after I arrived at my workstation. Before I left the house, I already felt the inside of my mouth feeling thick, as if, it was inflamed. I also felt having some difficulty in speaking, which I thought was due to my previous dental works. I ignored what I was feeling and went on with my morning routine. I was thankful to my co-worker who recognized the droop on the right side of my face, and suggested that I go to the emergency room to get examined.

Types of stroke

With my coworker, I decided to walk to the emergency room. Immediately upon my arrival, I was placed in a room and underwent several blood test, carotid ultrasound, echocardiogram, CT scan and MRI, in no amount of time. I was first diagnosed with having a TIA (trans ischemic attack), then to an acute ischemic stroke after the MRI findings confirmed a small blood clot was found in the left side of my brain. The symptoms that I experienced, which included slurred speech and facial droop were from decreased blood supply due to the blood clot, interrupting the blood flow to the vital areas in the left side of my brain. Arms and legs weaknesses or paralysis can also be seen, but symptoms vary depending on the areas in the brain that are affected. I felt relieved at the time, as I didn't experience any of those other symptoms. If the blood vessel (artery) was weak, that blood clot could have caused it to rupture leading to aneurysm. It is a hemorrhagic type of stroke resulting in bleeding inside the brain. It is often a debilitating, incapacitating, or a fatal type of stroke, as I hear what had happened in Isabel Granada's case.

Lessons Learned

Since then, I was placed on several different medications to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, including low-dose Aspirin to help thin my blood. For the first two weeks, I was placed on continuous heart monitoring to detect abnormal heartbeat (atrial fibrillation) that could have pos-

sibly contributed to the blood clot forming in the blood vessel. I take these medications religiously, as prescribed by my doctor, who I just met for the first time. My former primary doctor died in January last year. He was only in his late 30's. Even before then, I hardly saw him. In suffering a stroke, I realized I'm not invincible!

Self-First Before Others

Before all these, I have had experiences when I postponed, delayed, and cancelled my medical appointments. In short, I didn't give them priorities. I thought I was invincible like Wonder Woman, who does everything with all her power and might. Work, family and other obligations came first. We love helping in our community through our newspaper publication. I realized now, how can I continue to take care of my family and to pursue my community's mission with my failing health? It's just like how the flight stewardess would remind us to put on our oxygen mask first in emergencies, to be able to help others, especially the children. And so, the way I live these days and many more years ahead of me

are changing. I have to rearrange my priorities.

Signs and Symptoms of Stroke

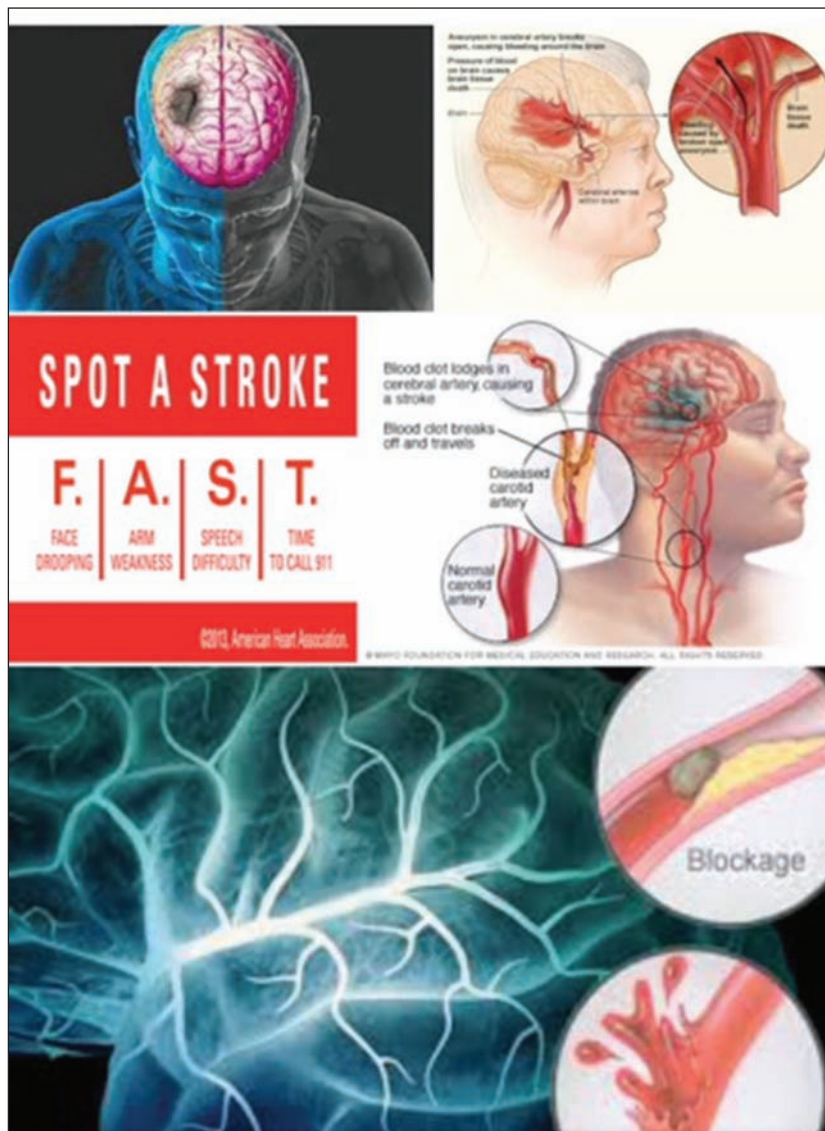
Remember the acronym FAST, to recognize the signs and symptoms of stroke. In my case, the FACIAL droop without the ARMS' weakness was apparent. I had the slurred SPEECH. After recognizing the signs and symptoms, think of the emergent and needed treatment. TIME is important. Call 911 or be seen at the nearest emergency. This reminds me of this past, so-called black Friday

experience. I had to call 911 and be transported by an ambulance to Kaiser emergency. I suffered a very painful neck and upper back spasm, which I associated with having a massive brain bleed. I didn't take chances but I got sent home after it was ruled out. I was just having some muscle spasms and was given Valium to relieve the pain.

Increase knowledge about ones health

Information nowadays are vast and easier to find with computer technologies. Google and search engines can provide us the information that we need to take better care of ourselves. Research, seek medical treatment, and get advice from health professionals. Since my most frightening experience, I have been watching everything that I put in my mouth. I eliminated eating anything that has complex sugars, increase fats, and other food with artificial additives. With that alone, I see better results in controlling my weight and lowering my glucose and cholesterol level. We have it all in our hands. We do not need any magic ball, heavy weight lifting, and expensive fitness gadgets. At the convenience of our homes and determination, we can increase our physical activities and achieve a healthier lifestyle to survive the years ahead.

During my brief hospital stay, I have come to realize how unprepared I was when it comes to financial planning, advance directives, living trust, and if things could have turned for the worse, my funeral arrangement. Suffering from a stroke has become an eye opener for me to make plans for the years ahead. I have yet to see my children have their own families, take care of my grandchildren, and enjoy retirement life. I'm making plans to LIVE a lot longer to make them all happen!



'Constitutional crisis looms'

BY DJ YAP

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon and Sen. Francis Escudero on Monday said lawmakers neither had the power to issue a subpoena nor order the arrest of Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno in an impeachment hearing.

Drilon, a lawyer, former secretary of justice and former Senate President, warned that imprudent exercise of these powers may trigger a serious constitutional crisis.

Escudero, also a lawyer, issued a similar warning.

Oriental Mindoro Rep. Reynaldo Umali, head of the House justice committee, said in a radio interview on Sunday that the panel was studying if it could subpoena Sereno to answer the allegations in the impeachment complaint against her, as the Chief Justice had repeatedly refused to face her accuser, insisting instead on representation by counsel.

Umali said the committee would exercise its power to order Sereno's arrest if the Chief Justice refused to honor the subpoena.

Drilon told reporters on Monday that the power of Congress to issue a subpoena and order the detention of a witness who refused to obey the summons were available only in investigations in aid of legislation, not in impeachment proceedings.

A subpoena, in effect, will compel Sereno in an impeachment complaint to testify against herself, Drilon said.

Forcing Sereno to attend and testify against herself in an impeachment hearing cannot be done without triggering a constitutional

crisis, he said.

"When the House of Representatives conducts a hearing on an impeachment complaint, the hearing is not in aid of legislation. The Chief Justice is not being asked to testify as a resource person who can be subpoenaed to assist the [House] discharge its legislative function," Drilon said.

He urged Umali to "exercise extreme caution" in using the coercive powers of Congress to issue a subpoena to Sereno, as there is no basis for it and it will only provoke a needless constitutional crisis.

"Requiring her to testify against herself would place her under the strongest temptation to commit perjury, and subject her to an extortion of confession by duress," Drilon said, adding that issuing summons would violate Sereno's constitutional rights and the principle of separation of powers.

Constitutional crisis

Senator Escudero said respondents in impeachment cases could not be compelled to give evidence against themselves.

He said the refusal of Sereno to attend the impeachment proceedings if summoned "may result in a constitutional crisis if the Chief Justice refuses to attend."

"[I]f I remember correctly, the attendance or participation of the respondent in an impeachment case, or in any case for that matter, cannot be compelled. [He cannot be forced] to give evidence against himself or herself even if he or she attends," Escudero said.

The House justice committee went into executive session briefly on Monday

to discuss whether the panel had the right to compel Sereno to come to the impeachment proceedings.

When the committee members returned for the public hearing, Umali did not raise the matter of Sereno's possible arrest but stressed the "extraordinary constitutional powers" wielded by the impeachment panel.

Umali noted that only the justice committee, as an impeachment panel, was mandated by the 1987 Constitution "to give attention to the very important process of checks and balances."

He added that impeachment proceedings "take precedence over other all legislative processes."

Umali said Sereno was only one of the Supreme Court's 15 members, and thus did not hold the powers of the entire judiciary.

"This is precisely why some of the members are complaining. One of the allegations is there is usurpation or arrogation of power of one supreme body in one person," he said.

Speaking to reporters before the executive session, Umali clarified that his bringing up the possibility of Sereno's arrest was only "hypothetical" and under the assumption that she would ignore an official summons from the panel.

"I was just speaking my mind because I firmly believe the extraordinary power given to the committee on justice as an impeachment committee is a constitutional mandate that ought to be followed by everyone," he said.

Sereno, he said, is not an ordinary accused in a criminal case, and thus does not enjoy the rights of such an accused.

3 justices to testify vs Chief Justice

BY EDU PUNAY

MANILA, Philippines — Three magistrates of the Supreme Court (SC), including a retired colleague, have expressed their intention to testify in the impeachment proceedings against Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno at the House of Representatives.

Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-de Castro and Noel Tijam as well as retired justice Arturo Brion yesterday said they want to accept the invitation of the House justice committee. But they would first seek consent of the SC sitting as a collegial body.

De Castro and Tijam have raised the issue with their colleagues and the matter is set to be tackled at their regular session today.

Brion said he would also wait for the SC's approval, since the issues they are called upon to testify involve internal matters of the tribunal.

All three magistrates sent separate letters to the House panel asking to be given more time to answer the invitation, pending permission from the SC.

"May I request that I be given time to seek clearance from the Court, during the session on Tuesday (Nov. 28, 2017), to produce at the hearing all internal communications, memo-



Lawyer Lorenzo Gadon

randa and other documents relevant to the allegations in the Verified Impeachment Complaint. As soon as the clearance is granted, I shall honor your invitation to attend the aforementioned hearing," read De Castro's letter to the House panel.

"Considering that this issue involves the actions of the members of the Court, the undersigned deems it appropriate to first secure their approval before participating in the aforesaid proceedings. Likewise, there is a need to collate records for an informed and accurate recollection of relevant information," explained Tijam in a separate letter.

Brion, for his part, said he would also await the decision of the SC on the matter even if he has retired from the judiciary.

De Castro, who earlier reportedly agreed to testify in the impeachment hearing, was invited by the House over the internal memoran-

dum she filed in the SC last July questioning several administrative orders of Sereno, including appointment of a Philippine Judicial Academy (Philja) official and provision for travel allowances of her staff.

In the memorandum, De Castro specifically assailed the appointment of lawyer Brenda Jay Mendoza as Philja chief of office for the Philippine Mediation Center, which she said violated their Administrative Order No. 33-2008 that required the appointment to be approved by the SC collegially.

The magistrate also assailed Sereno's grant of foreign travel allowance to members of her staff without required approval from the SC.

She revealed that the Chief Justice's staff members were being given travel allowances even when their trips abroad were on "official time," which should not involve expenditure of public funds.

De Castro has also questioned the "long delay" in the appointment in vacant key positions in the SC pending before Sereno's office, "which is prejudicial to the best interest of the service."

These issues are among the allegations raised by lawyer Larry Gadon in his impeachment complaint against Sereno.

"She is a respondent ... This is more akin to an administrative case," he said. Contempt threats

The justice committee also threatened to cite for contempt two spokespersons for Sereno for describing the impeachment proceedings a

"dog and pony show."

The committee issued an order directing lawyers Joshua Santiago and Aldwin Salumbides to explain within 72 hours why they should not be cited for contempt for making the statement last week.

The panel issued a similar order for Human Rights Commissioner Roberto Cadiz, who was quoted in a news report as saying last week that the "law of the jungle" seemed to be prevailing in the impeachment case against Sereno.



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Police tell one story of drug killing

From page 1

In June, Reuters revealed that police have shot hundreds of people during anti-drug operations, then taken them to hospitals where they are declared dead on arrival. Police say they're trying to save lives. Bereaved relatives and other witnesses allege police are sending corpses to hospitals to disrupt crime scenes and cover up extrajudicial killings.

Police have shot dead at least 3,900 people in anti-narcotic operations since Duterte took power in June 2016 – always in self-defense, police say. Human rights activists blame police for thousands more killings attributed to vigilantes, but authorities deny any involvement.

A witness to the Barangay 19 killings told Reuters that the three men were executed and not, as the police claim, shot in self-defense. Police say they only use deadly force in self-defense, but a series of investigations by Reuters suggest they are summarily executing people.

The report said Rolando Campo, 60, sold drugs to an undercover officer, who signaled for back-up. Campo "sensed the presence" of the police officers and ordered his two associates – Sherwin Bitas, 34, and Ronnie Cerbito, 18 – to draw their guns and open fire on them, the report said.

The police retaliated, leaving the three men "fatally wounded," it said.

But the footage shows Campo chatting with people in the neighborhood in the minutes before the police arrive, and not, as the report said, selling drugs to an undercover officer.

Legitimate operation

The security camera footage not only contradicts the police account of the Barangay 19 killings. It also provides further evidence of another drug-war tactic: the disabling of surveillance cameras at crime scenes by the police. In the footage, filmed simultaneously by four security cameras, an officer is seen

turning the camera that captured the action away from the scene.

The police understand the dangers posed by such footage, which can expose their actions. An active-duty commander involved in the drug war told Reuters earlier this year that police collude with local officials to unplug security cameras in areas where they plan to carry out a drug-war killing.

Reuters has obtained footage from all four security cameras, each capturing the episode from a different angle. Together, the cameras provide a unique record of a police operation from start to finish.

"The operation was legitimate," said Superintendent Santiago Pascual, the commander of the station that conducted the raid, in a statement to Reuters. A station investigation showed that his officers had followed correct operational procedure, said Pascual, and eyewitness testimony that they had opened fire on unarmed men was "untrue and unfounded."

Police carried out the Oct. 11 raid a day after Duterte ordered them to leave anti-drug operations to the state-run Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. The October memo marked the second time that Duterte has publicly told police officers to stop waging his drug war.

In the video footage, at least 15 armed policemen were seen clearing an area in Tondo, Manila before the three drug suspects were reportedly shot dead.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said, "I have not seen the video footage. There will be no cover up on this." But two days after the incident, dela Rosa absolved the policemen involved in the Tondo buy-bust of any wrongdoing. Dela Rosa said the cops were not at fault because "the executive order of the President has not yet reached them when the operation was conducted."

Manila Police District director Chief Superintendent Joel

Napoleon Coronel also insists it was a legitimate operation.

"It was a high-risk police operations conducted in Tondo against three suspected drug traffickers reported to be armed and dangerous. Precisely why our police operatives took the necessary precautions to secure the area while conducting police operations," said Coronel.

'Following orders'

The police operation doesn't seem to be undercover. The footage shows mainly plainclothes officers, most of them visibly armed and some wearing body armor, entering the area through the alley on which Campo and Bitas lived. The officers pass in full view of the victims' house seven minutes before the shooting starts.

Arlene Gibaga, Bitas' wife, told Reuters that she witnessed the shooting and the three men were unarmed. "We don't have the money for guns," said Gibaga, who has three young children with Bitas. She said her husband didn't deal drugs.

Police detained the men in an alley next to her house, she said, and asked her to get Bitas' ID. When she produced it, said Gibaga, one officer shouted "Positive! Positive!" and then the officers fired on Bitas.

"Don't do that to my husband!" she screamed, as the police shot Bitas. "I will report you! There are CCTV cameras here!"

One of the officers then aimed his gun at Gibaga and ordered her inside, she said.

The footage doesn't show the police shooting the three men, but does show an officer appearing to open fire on an unseen target. Campo then falls backwards into the frame, his body hitting the ground. His arms move for a while before resting motionless.

Less than a minute later, the camera that captured the scene of the shooting is effectively put out of action: someone turns it to face the wall. A second camera shows a police officer reaching up and turn-

SC allows justices to testify vs Sereno

From page 1

wish. The Court is not requiring them but the Court is granting them clearance if they so wish to appear and testify on administrative matters," he explained.

But on matters involving decisions of the Court, Te said only Justice De Castro has been authorized by the SC with specific conditions.

"On adjudicative matters, meaning matters that go into the decision of cases, which would include deliberation of cases, only Justice Teresita de Castro has been authorized to appear and testify before the House committee on justice and only in relation to three matters," he added.

De Castro is allowed by the Court to discuss the exchange of communications with Sereno on the issuance of the temporary restraining order in a case involving senior citizens.

She may also testify on the merits of the decision she penned that declared unconstitutional the clustering of shortlisted nominees made by the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) last year in connection with the vacancies in the Sandiganbayan.

De Castro has also been authorized by the Court to discuss the merits of her separate concurring opinion in the August 2014 ruling that voided the JBC's decision not to include the name of then solicitor general Francis Jardeleza in the shortlist of nominees for SC justice post after Sereno raised an

integrity issue against him.

The magistrate, however, is barred from discussing matters involving the deliberations of the Court on those three cases, which are covered by the confidentiality rule under SC rules.

Apart from De Castro, Tijam and Brion have also been invited by the House panel.

Tijam has been invited by the House committee to shed light on the complaint that Sereno had caused delay in the transfer of the rebellion cases against arrested members and supporters of Maute terrorist group in Marawi City to a court in Metro Manila.

Brion, for his part, has been asked to talk about his concurring opinion in the SC ruling on Jardeleza's appointment.

Also invited by the House panel were Te, Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez, Clerk of Court Felipa Anama and chief judicial staff officer Charlotte Labayani.

The SC had allowed in August the release of court records and documents sought by impeachment complainants to bolster their case against Sereno.

Among the records ordered released were the SC's revocation of Sereno's order in 2012 to reopen a regional constitutional administrative office (RCAO) in Cebu without the collegial approval of the Court.

The SC also allowed the release of Sereno's memorandum on the appointment of lawyer Solomon Lumba as her staff head and the subse-

quent letter of Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio withdrawing his signature from the appointment paper over an internal issue.

But the high court rejected the request for the release of a memorandum from De Castro questioning Sereno's orders regarding the appointment of a Philippine Judicial Academy (Philja) official and the allocation of travel allowances for her staff.

The SC explained that such memorandum could not be released pending resolution from the Court.

With the SC decision, Umali said he told committee members – many of whom are lawyers – to work among themselves some ground rules or guidelines for propounding questions to the SC justices, to make sure they would not feel disrespected.

Before the committee adjourned yesterday, Umali discussed the guidelines with his colleagues Vicente Veloso of Leyte, a former Court of Appeals justice; Henry Oaminal of Misamis Occidental and Deputy Speaker Gwen Garcia, among others.

Umali said the justices would be notified of the dates or time of their appearance before the committee. The next hearings will be on Dec. 4 until Dec. 6.

"We will invite them one at a time and on a particular date para naman hindi masayang ang oras nila (so we'll not be wasting their time). There will be an allocation of one hour each per (impeachment) charge," he said on Monday.

ing it away.

Station commander Pascual said the camera was averted for a "valid security reason" and to ensure the operation wasn't compromised. His statement reiterated the police report's version of events – "that the suspects first drew firearms and shot the operatives," who returned fire in self-defense.

Later that day, at Police Station 2, Gibaga said officers told her it was useless to complain. "It's the government you will be fighting against," she recalled one officer saying. "Don't get angry at us. We are just following orders."

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Oplan Tokhang under fire!

By PERRY DIAZ

One of the most controversial police operations is Oplan Tokhang where police officers have killed suspected drug pushers and users in the past 16 months. "Tokhang" is derived from two Bisayan words: "toktok" (to knock) and "hangyo" (to plead). It is a police operation where in the police knock on the doors of suspected drug users or pushers and ask them to surrender. In most cases, when the police go to the house and the household people refuse to allow them to enter, the police force their way in, which could lead to a shoot-out... and death.

Since President Rodrigo Duterte took office through the end of 2016, around 6,000 people have been killed in the campaign, 2,000 of which were killed during legitimate police operations while the remaining 4,000 were extrajudicial killings (EJKs) or vigilante-style killings. Based on these numbers, Duterte claimed the anti-illegal drugs campaign to be a "success."

Records also show that the number of deaths during legitimate police operations dropped to an average of five persons daily in 2017, compared to an average of 30 deaths per day in 2016.

Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said "the government's crackdown on narcotics also pulled down the country's crime rate by 32 percent."

"People feel safer in the streets and at night because the number of theft, carjacking, robbery, rape, physical injury has decreased. At the end of the day, this is what counts," Andanar noted. However, local and international human rights groups have condemned the Philippine government for the human rights violations and extrajudicial killings.

Police abuse

Last January, Duterte suspended Oplan Tokhang following the kidnapping and killing of Jee Ick-Joo, a South Korean businessman whose body was found within the grounds of Camp Crame, the headquarters of the PNP. Consequently, Duterte stripped the PNP and the NBI of the authority to conduct Oplan Tokhang operations and designated



Pres. R. Duterte and Gen. 'Bato' Dela Rosa

the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), backed by the Army, as the lead agency in Oplan Tokhang operations. He also abolished the anti-drug units of PNP and vowed to cleanse the PNP of "scalawags."

But it was the death of two teenagers, which stirred public furor. One was Kian delos Santos, 17, who was murdered according to the NBI and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO). "The boy was killed kneeling down," the NBI report said.

The other, Carl Arnaiz, 19, was killed with excessive violence, according to the PAO report. Bruises were found around his eyes and his wrists were swollen from the metal handcuffs. The autopsy revealed four gunshot wounds to his chest and one to his arm. The PAO report said that it was a case of "overkill."

"Sole agency"

As a result of the two teenagers' killing, Duterte's satisfactory rating plummeted by 18 points. Alarmed by the sudden drop in popularity, Duterte issued a memorandum, which ordered the PNP, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Bureau of Customs (BOC), the Philippine Postal Office and other "ad hoc anti-drug task force" to leave the implementation of the drug war to the PDEA. But despite removing the PNP from the drug war, Duterte directed the PNP to maintain its visibility "at all times" as a "deterrent to illegal drug activities." Does that translate to a "shoot to kill" order?

But citing lack of manpower in the anti-drug war, Duterte later decided to tap the PNP again in the war on drugs. However, he stressed that only the "qualified" ones would be allowed to join Oplan Tokhang. Hmmm... Does it seem like it's "business as usual" where the police could "neutralize" suspected drug pushers or

users if the need arises? As the Amnesty International has said, the designation of PDEA as the lead agency to conduct the war on drugs could just be a "PR" move by the government. Like they say, "Pa PR PR lang yan" ("That's just all PR"). But "PR" or not, Oplan Tokhang is finally being challenged, not in the streets of Metro Manila but in the halls of justice.

Last October 11, a group of human rights lawyers urged the Supreme Court (SC) to stop the implementation of Oplan Tokhang by revoking two orders that serve as the campaign's blueprint. The three petitioners are represented by the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), which filed a petition before the SC to declare the PNP Command Memorandum Circular 16-2016 and the DILG Memorandum Circular 2017-112 unconstitutional.

"Double trouble"

FLAG Chairman Jose Manuel Diokno said the CMC 16-2016 known as Project Double Barrel is unconstitutional because: "It expressly authorizes the police to kill suspected drug personalities; it replaces the police function of evidence-gathering and case build-up with that of compiling lists of suspected drug criminals; and the house-to-house visits under Project Tokhang are based on the 'furtive fingers' of unknown informants."

The other order MC2017-112 known as Masa Masid orders all barangays to establish a drop box system to anonymously report suspected criminals, which Diokno said "violates the right to due process of law and to be presumed innocent."

He explained that reporting crimes is done by witnesses who have knowledge of criminal activity while submitting names of alleged criminals "can be done by anyone who suspects, rightly or wrongly, that another person is a criminal." He likens this to the Kempeitai during the Japanese occupation in the Philippines and the secret police Gestapo in Nazi Germany. He said allowing the submission of complaints through a drop box gives any person the opportunity to "report any



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Rape-slay suspect admits holding victim's cell phone

BY NON ALQUITRAN

MANILA, Philippines — The prime suspect in the rape-slay of bank employee Mabel Cama last Nov. 12 has admitted to holding the victim's cell phone, Pasig City police chief investigator Roberto Garcia said yesterday.

This admission, according to Eastern Police District director Chief Superintendent Romulo Sapitula, made the case against suspect Randy Oavenada stronger, especially after the EPD crime laboratory found matching fingerprint marks on the phone and linoleum used to wrap Cama's body.

He also directed Pasig City police chief Senior Superintendent Orlando Yebra Jr. to secure the suspect's admission in writing.

Rape and homicide charges



Mabel Cama

He added that Oavenada insisted that two other persons could have attacked Cama, killed her and later set her body on fire.

The Pasig City police already held the two for questioning and subjected them to paraffin tests to determine whether their fingerprints matched those found at the crime scene.

Sapitula refused to name the two pending the result of the investigation.

The EPD crime laboratory recovered five aluminum foils at the crime scene but Oavenada refused to confirm he was among those who sniffed shabu inside the abandoned office where Cama's body was found last Nov. 12. Investigators also found her underwear and shorts near her body.

Crime lab chief Isidro Carriño said Cama died of traumatic injuries in the head.

person even if they are completely innocent." On November 21, the SC began hearing oral arguments on the constitutionality of the "bloody drug war." FLAG lawyers argued that the raids where police would enter the homes of suspected drug users without a warrant and then proceed to "neutralize" them

is in violation of the Philippine Constitution. The lawyers further argued that the word "neutralize" could be misinterpreted by police officers to mean, "kill."

Three decades ago, the military and the police under the martial law regime of the late dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos used the word "salvage" to indicate

killing somebody who is on the government's hit list. "Salvaging" is now a relic of the dark days of the brutal era of Marcos' reign of terror. In today's political culture, "neutralize" seems to be more acceptable than "salvage." But make no mistake, they both mean the same thing, "kill." (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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Aree Tomes
David Bui

2017 Award winners
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Best Costume Pet: Chase
Best Costume Adult: Jerome the T-rex
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Hawaii reinstates 'attack warning' siren to prepare for possible North Korean missile

BY HEIDI CHANG

"It was quite traumatic and totally unexpected," said the 96-year-old World War II veteran, who was a student at the University of Hawaii at the time. "That morning the radio called for all University ROTC [Reserved Officers' Training Corps] to report to the university armory. We were issued rifles to help guard the city and our regiment was converted into the Hawaii Territorial Guard."

Ted Tsukiyama served in World War II with the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team before being reassigned to the Military Intelligence Service in India and Burma.

Sirens were installed around the city after the war started, Tsukiyama added, and there would be periodic tests. "I remember hearing the sirens going off. The radio would give us a warning: 'This is only a test, don't get alarmed,'" said Tsukiyama, who was born and raised in Hawaii.

Along with other Nisei [second-generation Japanese Americans], he joined the Varsity Victory Volunteers and the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team, then was reassigned to the Military Intelligence Service in India and Burma. (One of the characters in the new movie, "Go For Broke," is based on Tsukiyama's life and he also made a cameo appearance in the film.)

These days, Tsukiyama says he isn't surprised the air raid warning sirens will be wailing again come December — only this time, it's due to the rising tensions between the U.S. and North Korea and



Ted Tsukiyama still recalls how quickly life changed when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor.

because Hawaii has long been a military defense outpost.

"I suppose that's necessary as a precaution, but I don't think North Korea is gonna attack," Tsukiyama said. "They'd be foolish to threaten South Korea or Japan or the United States."

But concerns are growing. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has repeatedly threatened to drop a bomb over the Pacific Ocean, and President Donald Trump has threatened North Korea with "fire and fury" and designated North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism.

So what is the probability of a North Korean missile striking Hawaii? According to Vern Miyagi, administrator of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency

(HI-EMA), which is part of the state's Department of Defense, the chances North Korea will act are unlikely, but making sure Hawaii is prepared is still vital.

"If North Korea launches against us or our allies, the retaliation would be complete and they would defeat North Korea's ambition to continue its regime. The regime would probably end," explained Miyagi. He notes Hawaii is protected under the U.S. Pacific Command's defensive umbrella, the anti-ballistic missile system, and it is home to the Pacific Command, the military's headquarters for the Asia-Pacific region.

But, Miyagi points out, "Hawaii is a likely target because we're closer to North Korea than most of the continental United States... As we track the news and see tests, both missile launches and nuclear tests, it's the elephant in the room. We can't ignore it. People of Hawaii need to know what Hawaii is doing in preparation for this."

Because of the North Korean threat, the Aloha State is currently ramping up efforts to educate its 1.4 million residents, as well as its visitors, on how to prepare for a nuclear attack.

Hawaii has become one of the first states in the nation to initiate a nuclear preparedness campaign, and starting Dec. 1, it will reinstate the "attack warning" siren, which it hasn't tested since the Cold War. The siren will follow the monthly "attention alert" signal, which warns people of an incoming tsunami or hurricane.

The state has also been holding community meetings and broad-



North Korean missile

casting public service announcements on TV and the radio to prepare people for a possible attack.

Most importantly, officials are encouraging people to have a plan. Gone are the days of "duck and cover" during the Cold War; today, the mantra is "shelter in place," preferably in a concrete structure. Officials also recommend having enough food and water to survive for 48 hours, and being prepared with supplies to last up to 14 days.

If North Korea launches a missile, officials estimate it could take about 20 minutes to reach Hawaii. It would take about five minutes for the U.S. to determine where it's going, which would leave about 12 to 15 minutes to warn the public.

"Each individual, each family should have a plan to be resilient, so they can take care of themselves, while we focus on getting the critical infrastructure, the

harbors, the water, the roads, all back to some sort of normalcy," said Miyagi, who's also a retired U.S. Army Major General and has extensive experience in domestic and international humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

Officials are also advising everyone to stay updated on what's going on in North Korea, get more knowledgeable about nuclear affects, and learn what they can do to prepare for a nuclear strike.

Based on a nuclear threat now, officials predict 80 to 90 percent of the population could survive.

"I would be remiss in not doing my responsibility, or our responsibility at Emergency Management to not consider this, and list this as one of the hazards and prepare for it. That's our job here, to prepare for hazards. If we save one life, it's worth it," Miyagi said. "If we save lives, that's the whole purpose of our existence, and we're very passionate about what we do."

Pope holds minute of silence for Egypt mosque attack victims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

VATICAN CITY — The pope has led a minute of silence in St. Peter's Square for the victims of the deadly attack on a mosque in Egypt.

Francis said following the traditional Angelus greeting on yesterday that the victims "were praying in that moment. We also pray in silence for them."

The pope said the attack on Friday "brought great pain," adding that he continued to pray for the dead and the wounded "and for the whole of that community, that has been so hard hit."

The pope previously expressed in a telegram his "strong condem-



Pope Francis delivers a blessing during the Angelus noon prayer in St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican.

nation" of the attack, which killed 305 people in the deadliest assault by Islamic extremists in modern Egyptian history.

The pontiff also asked for prayers for his six-day trip Myanmar and Bangladesh, for which he departs later yesterday.

WALK IN THE NEW YEAR WITH THE STICKS—DEC 31, 2017 & JAN 1, 2018

The Sacramento Walking Sticks Club will be hosting walks on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day for everyone, including the family dog, to join in on. The walks will both start from the Pioneer Congregational United Church of Christ, 2700 L Street, Sacramento CA 95816. Registration for the New Year's Eve walk, December 31st, is between 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. and the New Year's Day walk, January 1st, is between 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. There will be a different 5K (3.1 miles) and 10K (6.2 miles) route available on both days. Flashlights are recommended on the New Year's Eve walk. Dogs are welcome on all the walks but they are not allowed inside the Church; strollers and wheelchairs will be able to traverse all routes. Rain will not stop these events from taking place.

Volkswalking is a family sport and parents and grandparents are encouraged to bring their children and grandchildren out and get them walking. These events are a wonderful way to see the old year out and see the new one in. This makes for a great new year's resolution; to get fit, meet new people and see sights in your home town and surrounding areas that you've never seen before.

The New Year's Eve route will take people through the brightest and most celebratory streets of downtown Sacramento to enjoy the spirit of the New Year. The walks are non-competitive and not timed so people can stop along the way to enjoy the sights and sounds — so long as they return for check-in by 9:00 p.m. at the Church.

The New Year's Day route is entirely new and people will be touring the new murals on walls all around the midtown area. They'll see many other enjoyable art works in sculptures, quirky bike racks and call boxes. This is a fun walk and a feast for the eyes.. Everyone must be checked in by 3:00 pm. Each participant will receive a set of written directions with a map for the route they will be walking and typically the route will also be marked.

The walks are open and available to everyone. They are FREE and there is also an incentive program provided that allows people the opportunity to track their mileage. This incentive program can be started by purchasing a New Walker Packet for \$5.00. There is also a limited edition commemorative patch available for \$4.00 each.

Volkssporting (translation means sport of the people) originated in Germany in the 1970's. Many US military families stationed there enjoyed the sport and eventually brought it to America; there are currently under 300 clubs nationwide. The Sacramento Walking Sticks Club continues to be the largest volkssport club in the entire USA with 550 members and it offers everyone a wide array of walking and bicycling adventures for people of all ages, including their dogs.

The Sacramento Walking Sticks Club offer group walks on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings (5 and 10K routes to choose from) as well as Wednesday night group walks that are always 5K. There are also group bike rides of 25K offered every other Thursday morning throughout the year. Check out our website's Calendar of Events link for all the details or people can sign up to receive weekly walk alerts by e-mail.

Contact:
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PerryScope

BY PERRY DIAZ

At the urging of his Filipino-Canadian constituents, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau dared to bring up “human rights” when he met with Philippine president Rodrigo “The Punisher” Duterte at the end of the 31st Summit of Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Western nations in Manila. Had Trudeau taken the cue from former U.S. president Barack Obama, he would have skipped the subject matter. But like they say: the devil made him do it.

Obama, who tried to “lecture” Duterte on human rights last year at the ASEAN summit in Laos last year, earned the epithet of Duterte who warned that if Obama asked his government’s extrajudicial killings, “Putang ina (“son of a bitch” in Filipino), I will swear at you.” Well, Obama cancelled their meeting and said that Duterte was a “colorful guy.”

Indeed, Trudeau was only among a few world leaders who daringly raised the issue of human rights at the ASEAN summit. Known for championing human rights, Trudeau told a Canadian reporter that he discussed the issue with Duterte when they met for the ASEAN-Canada Commemorative Summit. He told Duterte that Canada was “concerned” over the human rights violations and extrajudicial killings happening in the Philippines as a result of Duterte’s “war on drugs” which has claimed the lives of thousands of drug suspects. He said in a press conference: “I also mentioned human rights, the rule of law and specifically extrajudicial killings as being an issue that Canada is concerned with. “I impressed on him the need for respect for the rule of law, and as always offered Canada’s support and help as a friend to move forward on what is a real challenge.”

Tons of garbage

But notwithstanding the appeals from Filipino-Canadians,

Trudeau incurs the wrath of the Punisher

Trudeau’s trip to Manila was confronted with another issue: Canadian trash dumped in Manila – 2,500 tons declared as “recyclable plastic scrap materials.” Chronic Plastics Incorporated (CPI), an export company base in Ontario, Canada, shipped it in 2013. It was consigned to Live Green Enterprise. In January 2014, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) discovered the garbage when they opened the container vans as part of procedures on shipments not claimed for a long period of time. What they found was plastic bottles, plastic bags, newspapers, household garbage, and used adult diapers. The garbage was then classified as “hazardous” as per Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste and Control Act of 1990, or Republic Act 6969.

In February 2014, the BOC filed a smuggling complaint against

opment had said that there was nothing hazardous in the material shipped and that no laws exist to force Ontario Chronic Inc. to recall the shipping containers. This is in contradiction to what the BOC had found out when it inspected the cargo.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and President Rodrigo Duterte



estimates is placed between 7,000 and 10,000 drug users in first year of his presidency.

Can’t win this battle

It’s interesting to note that while Trudeau had courageously brought up the issue of human rights and extrajudicial killings with Duterte, Trump avoided the subject – uncharacteristically -- when the two met. Trump’s press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said that human rights came up “briefly in the context of the Philippines’ fight against illegal drugs.” After their meeting, they issued a joint statement saying they “underscored that human rights and the dignity of human life are essential, and agreed to continue mainstreaming the human rights agenda in their national programs.”

Trump’s soft-pedaling on the issue of human rights may have prevented another outburst from Duterte, who would have gone ballistic. Trump probably thought that this is one battle he’s not going to win. He’d rather taunt

would put a dark cloud over his political future.

Duterte on the other hand reacted with his usual expletive-laden attacks. He considered Trudeau’s comments as an “insult” both at personal and official levels. “It angers me when you are a foreigner and you do not know exactly what is happening in this country. You do not investigate ... I only answer to the Filipino. I will not answer to any other bullshit, especially foreigners. Lay off,” he said.

But following Trudeau’s informal meeting with Duterte, Trudeau told the media, “We impressed upon him the need to respect the rule of law and, as always, offered Canada’s support and help as a friend to help move forward. This is the way we engage with the world, this is the way we always will.” Then he added, diplomatically, “The President was

Theoretically possible

Trudeau is now saying that it is “now theoretically possible” for Canada to remove the trash. However, he explained that several issues need to be worked out, including who should bear financial responsibility? He said that “legal barriers and restrictions” are preventing Canada from taking the trash back. “Those impediments have now been addressed,” Trudeau said during a press briefing. Malacañang responded by saying that Duterte has faith that Trudeau will keep his promise to resolve the garbage issue.

One has to feel sorry for Trudeau because, (1) he wasn’t the Prime Minister when the garbage was shipped to the Philippines; and (2) he can’t find a way to go around Canadian law, which does not provide a mechanism to compel the return of illegal shipments to the port of origin. In other words, the Philippines is stuck with garbage that nobody wants.

Ultimately, Trudeau, who is now under pressure from world leaders to remove the trash, would have to bite the bullet and do what is right: take back the garbage at Canada’s cost. He is putting his reputation on the line as a strong advocate for climate change. He has to exert a strong political will to settle this stinking mess. Failure to do so



A welcome ceremony for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Adelfa Eduardo, owner of Chronic Plastics, and its licensed Customs brokers Leonora Flores and Shejun Saldon, for violating the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines.

In 2015, the Manila City Council adopted a resolution seeking to remove the 50 shipping contain-



Canadian trash at the Port of Manila.

ers. Today, the container vans are still at the Port of Manila. But Canada had said that taking the garbage back is not that easy due to legalities. A spokesperson for Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Devel-



President Rodrigo Duterte and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau lik arms during the ASEAN-Canada 40th Commemorative session in Manila.

North Korea’s leader Kim Jong-un, which would keep his political base agitated and revved up, than treat another loose cannon like a Sicilian Mafia don. The last thing Trump would want to see is to start a word war, which is worse than World War III where nobody has to suffer because all humankind will be annihilated.



President Donald Trump offers a toast to President Rodrigo Duterte and his partner Honeylet Avancena.

receptive to my comments and it was throughout a very cordial and positive exchange.” But Duterte later told the media that he had refused to provide an explanation for the killings, which by some

Well, Trump got off the hook easily. The Punisher spared him. He was able to “discuss” human rights with the Punisher, albeit in passing. Indeed, age has its advantage after all. But the boyish-looking Trudeau, who has the temerity of a tiger but a novice in the art of war, had incurred the wrath of the Punisher. (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

PerryScope
 By Perry Diaz

Trump makes a fool of himself again

President Donald Trump would have achieved a five-star rating during his five-Asian tour. But while one can say that he would easily have breezed through Japan and South Korea, who were more than happy to accommodate him, the China visit looked like a vassal kowtowing to the Chinese emperor.



President Donald Trump

While some people might suggest that Trump's "America First" is going to bring the jobs back to the U.S., the fact remains that China continues to bring her products – from paper clips to heavy machineries – to U.S. markets. Meanwhile, U.S. exports to China are at an anemic pace.

It is interesting to note that during the 2016 presidential campaign, Trump accused China of currency manipulation. He said that China was "raping" the U.S. through unfair trade practices. And he vowed to straighten things out in Asia. He even took the bold -- and daring -- step in challenging the "One-China Policy." However, he stepped back when not even America's allies agree with him.

In my column, "Trump's geopolitical miscalculations" (May 12, 2017), I wrote: "After he assumed the presidency, he must have realized that foreign policy –

which he had no prior experience – is a complicated and complex game of statesmanship and adroit diplomatic leadership and maneuvering. It must have been a rude awakening for him to recognize that the practice of brinkmanship is quite different from the 'art of the deal,' which he proudly claims to be his forte.

"His tough stance against China gave Japan and South Korea, America's closest treaty allies, a sigh of relief. At last, they have an American president who would stand by them if attacked, unlike Trump's predecessor, former president Barack Obama, whom he criticized for appeasing China and didn't do anything to stop China's construction of artificial islands in the Spratly archipelago.

"And to make things worse, he appointed Rex Tillerson to the post of Secretary of State. With no prior experience in foreign policy – or government for that matter – poor Tillerson was thrown into the murky waters of geopolitics. And between him and Trump, how do you think they'd handle bullies like Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and Kim Jong-un

in the world stage? They are no ordinary world leaders; they are authoritarian dictators who love to threaten the U.S. with nuclear destruction. In particular, North Korea's 'Supreme Leader' Kim Jong-un seems to have rankled Trump who doesn't appear to know how to handle the unpredictable Kim."

Good chemistry

After the first Trump-Xi summit at Mar-a-Lago in Florida last April 2016, Trump's hard-line



Welcoming ceremony for Trump upon his arrival in Beijing.

stance against China melted like marshmallow over a fire. After two days of negotiations, Trump declared that China was not a "currency manipulator" and decided to maintain the status quo on trade issues. That's a 180-degree turnaround from his position during the presidential campaign.

When Xi went back home, he ordered shipments of coal from North Korea to be turned back. Trump was ebullient when he got the news. He said that China took a "big step" in easing tensions between the two countries. He described his relationship with Xi as one with "good chemistry" and praised Xi for banning North Korean coal.

But that was just about it. Banning coal imports from North Korea was just a ruse to make Trump think that China was doing its end of the bargain. Trump felt so good at what he had achieved at Mar-a-Lago that he virtually ceded control of the South China Sea (SCS) to China. With China calling the shots at SCS, it wouldn't be long before China begins to populate the islands and deploy missiles, warships, warplanes, and troops. There would be Chinese cities

on these islands just like Sansha City on the Paracel Islands, which is contested by Vietnam. Sansha has been designated as a prefecture-level city of Hainan. It administers the Paracel Islands, Scarborough Shoal, Spratly Islands, and Macclesfield Bank.

Meanwhile, North Korea was unperturbed by the Chinese ban on North Korea coal and had launched more than a dozen missile tests including detonating a hydrogen bomb. And Xi didn't lift a finger to stop Kim, who is out of control.

Showcasing Chinese power

When Trump visited China last week, as part of his five-nation Asian tour, Xi laid out the red carpet for his friend and gave him the royal treatment including a rare official dinner in the Forbidden City and a grand welcoming ceremony featuring hundreds of cheering children in front of the Great Hall of the People. The whole event made the Mar-a-Lago welcoming ceremony for Xi looked like a meeting of two business leaders, which was pretty much what it was.

The welcoming ceremony in Beijing turned out to be more of a showcase of Chinese power and prestige, choreographed for the American viewers, specifically, and the international community, in general. It was a demonstration of Chinese

hospitality at its best, and it was orchestrated to project China's emerging role as a world superpower. A visitor who shows disrespect for the Chinese host would be violating Chinese hospitality customs.

But while the desired effect might have been to show China and America as co-equals, the end result was that Trump handed world leadership to Xi simply by giving what China wants, which is "respect on the global stage" and as a co-equal. During their bilateral meeting, Xi told Trump, "The Pacific Ocean is big enough to accommodate both China and the U.S." He said the same thing to Obama during their summit in California in June 2013. Global Times, a Chinese state-run, said Trump "seems to be pragmatic on his Beijing policy, and has no interest in ideological diplomacy." But Trump could have graciously responded to Xi's suggestion without disrespecting Xi, and asserted America's preeminence in the Indo-Pacific Region.

Capitulation

Unlike his predecessor Barack Obama, Trump did not raise the issue of human rights, knowing that China's ideology is not compatible with human rights. "He hasn't used the issue of human rights to make trouble for China so far, and this means the Sino-US relationship can focus on substantive matters," Global Times said.

But what wiped out any credibility Trump had was when he told his Chinese audience, "I don't blame China, who can blame a country for being able to take advantage of another country for the benefit of its citizens. I give China great credit," Trump said. He said that what criticism he had for China on trade imbalances was caused by U.S. policy, not Chinese.

In a joint speech, Trump heaped praises on Xi, saying the American people were "very proud" of him and hailing the "very good chemistry" between the two of them. Then he blamed past American administrations for China's huge trade surplus with the U.S. He then saluted

Xi for leading China that he said had left the U.S. "so far behind." He also said that he could not blame the Chinese for taking advantage of weak American trade policy. Then he said that he was confident that Xi could defuse the threat from North Korea. Didn't he try that at Mar-a-Lago before... and failed? Xi, on the other hand refused to take questions from American journalists. Why?

However, behind closed doors, American officials said, "Mr. Trump forcefully confronted Mr. Xi about the chronic trade imbalances between the two countries. He also pressed China to take tougher measures toward North Korea, including a suspension of oil shipments." However, Xi did not make significant concessions, just like what happened at their Mar-a-Lago summit.

Which makes one wonder: "What exactly did Trump accomplish in China? On trade, there were no substantial agreements that would address the trade imbalances. On the North Korea dilemma, Trump consigned to China the responsibility of stopping North Korea, which we know that's not going to happen simply because China needs North Korea as a buffer against South Korea and the U.S.



The North Korea dilemma.

On global leadership, Trump relinquished ceded it to Xi. Trump has put an end to Pax Americana and what we're seeing is the emergence of Chinese hegemony -- Pax Sinica.

And the only thing that Trump accomplished was that he makes a fool of himself again, which has become so frequent that some people call him, "moron-in-chief."

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John Abaya and Amanda Tomajcik *Wedding celebration*

BY FAINA E. ABAYA

If we are to believe that even in the early stages of our lives, destiny has already predetermined what will happen to us in the future, then such perception could have been true in the lives of John Abaya and Amanda Tomajcik.

John and Amanda were born in different places, a vast ocean apart and both were raised culturally distinct from each other yet fate played an important role in their inadvertent meeting. Perhaps, destiny for the two had its own way to cross their paths and that happened in a party at Fond do Luc, Wisconsin when they were attending a birthday celebration at the residence of a friend in 2012.

The first meeting was followed with several more and as always they had their eyes for each other until their relationship became emotionally deeper. Their cultural difference was never a hindrance in their relationship because they blended it so well to become a strong foundation of what they felt for each other. Just like any other professional and matured adults in the United States who are sports minded, John and Amanda have their own respective teams to cheer. That started when they were both in college cheering for their favorite team, the Wisconsin Badger football team. John attended the University of Wisconsin and completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration while Amanda earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Marian University in Wisconsin.

Both are avid fans of the Milwaukee Brewers baseball team and while tailgating a game of their favorite team at their home stadium in the company of their close friends, John surprised Amanda as he proposed to her to be his lifetime partner. The positive answer of Amanda set their church wedding after consultation with their respective family members.

The engagement was formally announced by the groom's parents, Mike and Liza Valentine, on February 11, 2017 at Seasons 52 Fresh Grill, Arden Mall, Sacramento where 40 of the family members of both parties were invited to hear about the wedding plans of the engaged couple. Accordingly, the church wedding



Amanda and John



Godparents



Mike and Liza Valentine



Abaya Family

will be on October 21, 2017 at the Cathedral of Blessed Sacrament while the reception will be held at the iconic Tsakupoulos Library Galleria in Sacramento, a popular venue for social events.

A month before the wedding, Hieu and Fainalita Ngo hosted a Bridal shower for the bride at their residence where they showed their culinary skills by serving their guests with unique Spanish influenced arrangement of miniature lunch boxes with assorted appetizer like dishes. To those with discriminating taste, the dishes

served about eight of them were likening to a symphony of musical instruments that complement each other to hear a melodious music. And the pastries served were likewise assorted homemade macarons rich in flavor and taste. The night ended with Amanda expressing her thanks to the hosts and everyone who attended the memorable event as she opens their gifts in their presence.

The church wedding of John and Amanda was a magnificent showcase of the blending of Filipino and

American cultures. The men on the bridal entourage from the ring bearer to the best man regardless of ethnicities were all wearing the national attire of the Philippines, the Barong Tagalog with matching black pants and shoes. On the other hand, the ladies from bridesmaids to the maid of honor were wearing their western designer's beautiful navy blue gowns.

The bride and the groom, as expected, were at their best showing the embodiment of elegance, grace and beauty of the bridal entourage. Amanda was a stunning

beauty in her all-white strapless intricately handmade bridal gown with sparkling tiara and a well-placed bridal veil attached on her partially blonde hair and adding a golden necklace with crucifix around her neck to complement her impeccable complexion. The groom was not far behind with his sartorial stance in his hand embroidered Barong Tagalog with matching black pants and shoes. And both were radiantly beaming with happiness as they repeatedly said "I do" during their exchange

Continued on page 12

Veterans Day Celebration 2017

BY DALE ESPERANTE

The day started out beautifully with temperatures in the high 50s then mid-60s. The Filipino-American veteran organizations of The American Legion Magellan Post 604, The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604, and The Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) participated in the annual Elk Grove Veterans Day Parade that began at exactly eleven o'clock in the morning on the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

Some members of the Fil-Am group walked the entire parade route while others rode the flag-decorated Float provided by Post 604. As they passed the main grandstand, the public speakers blared: The Magellan Post 604 veterans are proud members of The American Legion. They have been active participants of the Elk Grove Veterans Day parade every year. Their commander this year is a former United States Air Force captain, Commander Luz Molina. The Members of the Post meet at Magellan Hall, a building built by Filipino-American farmers. The farmers bequeathed the property to The American Legion WWII veterans in the 1940s. Today's veterans are striving to preserve Magellan Hall, a legacy from their predecessors. Legion youth programs such as Boys State and Oratorical Program have been supported by Post 604. President Lilia Rivera of the Legion's Auxiliary Unit 604 and FAVA President Dick Weitzenberg participated in the parade with Post 604 Commander Luz Molina. The sidewalks of the estimated one mile parade route were lined with red, white, and blue flag-waving citizens cheering the participants consisting of marching bands, uniformed groups, decorated floats, old and young veterans walking or riding as passengers or riding as bikers (motorcycles). The parade ended in Elk Grove Community Park where the Rotary Club waited to serve free refreshments such as hot dogs, soft drinks, and chips.

At about 1:30 p.m., the Fil-Am group reassembled at Magellan Hall for their official ceremony of



Veteran Fred Calindas

Photos by Dave San Pedro



Fil-Am Veterans Associations



WWII Veterans Cpl. Demetrio Lorenzo and Dr. Dionisio Tonel.



Grand Marshal Roy Herburger



Miss Liberty Carmelita Pangilinan



FAVA Pres. Dick Weitzenberg and Commander Luz Molina



FAVA Ladies



MC Fred Aquino and Luz Molina

Veterans Day. Two WWII veterans attended: Bataan Death March survivor Gilmore Perla who will be receiving his Gold Medal of Honor from the United States Congress, and Demetrio Lorenzo who already received his Congressional Gold Medal of Honor. A third WWII veteran, Melecio Antonio Guillermo, was posthumously awarded his Gold Medal of Honor. Melecio, represented by his daughter Millie, was recognized during the ceremony.

The ceremony started with the Posting of the Color. The Color Detail was represented by Marcos Evangelista, John Picazzo, and Federico Calindas. Glenn Carrasca invoked the opening prayer. Master of Ceremonies Fred Aquino introduced Post Commander Luz Molina for her welcome address. The POW/MIA ceremony was officiated by Marcos Evangelista. Tom Amaba acknowledged the special guests and introduced the guest speaker—Commander

Anthony Bumatay (USN). Commander Bumatay is the son of veteran and Post 604 member Marcelo N. Bumatay. The younger Bumatay spoke about the Filipino-American's Dreams, Sacrifices, Brotherhood and Unity. The current generation is blessed with today's benefits and privileges because of the dreams of their predecessors, eventually reaching America—the land of opportunity. The sacrifices to survive in the new land had to be endured for

the sake of the present and future generation of the family. In order to maintain the progress achieved, we must not forget where we came from, and we must stand as one for the greater good of all. Commander Anthony Bumatay ended his speech profoundly with a quote from Herman Wouk, author of The Caine Mutiny, "The Beginning of the End of War Lies in Remembrance. Happy Veterans Day!"

Continued on page 15

John Abaya and Amanda Tomajcik

From page 10

of marriage vows in accordance with the Roman Catholic Rites.

Included in the wedding party were Maid of Honor, Julie Hernandez, Best Man, Tyron Fonseca; Bridesmaids were Myra Salas, Elizabeth Abaya, Liz Reyes, Kiley Valencia; Groomsmen were; Will Longie, Ryan Weber, John M. Abaya and Benjamin Abaya. Junior Groomsmen Dakota Tomajcik, Lennox and Korben Abaya. Godparents were Jose Patricio and Michelle Abaya, Joseph and Beverly Estepa, Hieu and Fainalita Ngo and George and Josie Sy; Veil Sponsors were Mark Valentine and Hong Nguyen; Cord Sponsors were Michael Valentine and Nicolette Salas, Coins bearers were Jose Valencia and Abby Salas.

The wedding reception at the Galleria where 14 round tables and a separate head table for the wedding party were meticulously arranged under the watchful eyes of the groom's mother who personally oversaw the place for the enjoyment and comfort of the wedding party and 120 expected guests. Each table was covered with white linen and blue color cloth across and a decorated candle light container as its center piece surrounded with goodies and French Macarons to savor.

When the social hall was filled up with the number of expected guests, the groom's brother, Mark, delivered the opening prayer to bless the occasion and invoking the guidance of the Divine Providence for the success of the newlywed married life. Thereafter, Mike took the honor to introduce the wedding entourage to take their seats at the head table.

One after the other, they were introduced with their own gestural antics of either body movements or dancing until everyone reached their respective reserved seats receiving applauds and even joyful laughter. Finally, the newly married couple was introduced receiving a prolonged thunderous applause as they stood up, a congratulatory gesture for their appearance. Two of their closest friends in Wisconsin, Julie and Tyron, took the privilege of narrating the many happy memories on how the newlywed showed their love for each other in the many occasions that they were seen together. And for every narration, they offered a toast for continued health, success and happy married life. Mike Valentine followed with an inspiring and witty speech for the couple.

Subsequently, the bride took her seat and within the view of others, the groom removes the garter from her leg with his hand which he tosses it into the waiting hands of the bachelors. Likewise, the bride went to the second floor of the open space social hall and tossed the bridal bouquet to be caught by one eligible lady among the crowd of so many, a part of the wedding tradition that has been enjoyed by all who are eager to walk to the altar with their love ones. Slices of wedding cake were served to all the guests with French Defainas Macarons as the wedding favors.

In accordance with Filipino tradition, the money dance for the newlywed was performed and to the tune of Filipino music, the relatives and closest of friends of the couple danced with them one after the other as they pinned any amount of money on their attires. This part



The brides party



The bridal entourage

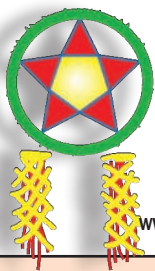
of the celebration was bolstered by old tradition of the Filipinos on the belief that the money they received will give them luck as they start their married life.

The wedding reception served delicious pierogi, pork kebab and lumpia for Hors d'oeuvres while the main courses were roasted suckling pig, grilled salmon filets, pancit bihon guisado, chicken adobo, beef steak, steamed rice,

creamed cucumber, jalisco fruits, artisan breads and homemade focassia. Assorted wine, beer and soda were also complimentary served.

Continuous music and dancing until closing time ended the celebration. Seen enjoying the memorable occasion were Jack and Judy Schneider, Justin Tomajcik, Roy and Kathy Kunes, Jun Abaya, Joey

and Sheryl Abaya, Audrey Abaya, Anton and Anna Austria, Anthony Abaya, Fely Esplana, Rudy and Sonia Delizo, Romy and Olga Samaniego, Bessie Samaniego, Elizabeth Belvis, Dave and Dinnah San Pedro, Al and Alma Guevarra, Lea Samaniego, Philip and Eleanor Sy, Kim and Ryan Samaniego, Kristina Balneg, Fritz and Christina Encina, Gianne and Krista Javier and many others.



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FAVA CHRISTMAS PARTY



Saturday, December 2, 2017

2:30 pm (1430)

Magellan Hall

8831 Gerber Road, Sacramento, CA

Bring your kids and Apo to see Santa. Cost is \$10 for adults (over 12).

For the little ones, bring an envelope with \$5 for Santa to hand out.

Please contact Olivia Jackson, 916-262-6273, oliviajaxon@yahoo.com

UNLUCAI



Tina Bambao, president of UNLUCAI donated six large boxes of clothing to Salvation Army in Sacramento, CA on October 11, 2017.

Mercedes 85th Birthday



Lagasca clan celebrating the 85th birthday of Mercedes Lagasca Belvis on October 15, 2017 at the residence of Elizabeth Belvis in Tracy, California.



Maria Bahoric
Mrs. Ilocandia 2017-18

On November 17, 2017 The Ilocano Foundation of California held their last canvassing for Mrs. Ilocandia for 2017-18 at the Rebekah Hall in Sacramento. Maria Bahoric is the winner and the new queen of the foundation. The coronation, dinner and dance will be on January 13, 2018 at the Double Tree Hotel Sacramento.

Below photo is the group celebrating the pre Thanksgiving Day with President Ling Avera and the officers and members of the IFC.



Sister Luz of the Divine Mercy Human Development Foundation



Sister Luz Manrique, as chair of the fundraising for the Divine Mercy Human Development Foundation with the support of St. Paul Parishioner and friends. She wants to extend her heartfelt gratitude for everyone's continued support for the nonprofit charitable organization.

In Loving Memory
Engr. Cornelio Bueno Quedado
JULY 9, 1948 - NOVEMBER 6, 2017

Viewing
November 30, 2017 6pm - 8pm

Rosary & Memorial Service
December 1, 2017 5pm - 8pm

St. Mary's Cemetery & Funeral Center
6509 Fruitridge Rd. Sacramento, CA 95820

Funeral Mass
December 2, 2017 TBD
St. Anne's Catholic Church
7720 24th St. Sacramento, CA 95820

Burial to Follow
St. Mary's Cemetery

Reception
Holiday Villa Restaurant
7007 South Land Park Dr.
Sacramento, CA 95831

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER 2, 2017 (SAT)
Bayanihan of Sacramento, USA
"An Event to Remember"
 Spaghetti Dinner, Dance & Fellowship
 6:00 pm / Donation \$20
 Semi Formal
 St Charles Borromeo School Gymnasium
 7580 Center Parkway, Sacramento 95823
 916.995.2563



Birthdays



NILDA VALMORES
 NOVEMBER 22



GILBERT GARRUCHO
 DECEMBER 29



JUN ENRIQUEZ
 DECEMBER 14



MANNIE BUENTIPO & wifey Rhuena
 DECEMBER 24



HOWELL FELIX
 DECEMBER 20

DECEMBER 9, 2017 (SAT)
Rize All "Story Time"
Dance Recital
 Cosumnes Oaks High School
 Elk Grove, CA
 2pm and 6:00 pm
 Buy Tickets at tututix.com/RizeAll
 916.538.3255



BOBBY AGLUBAT and wife Elma
 DECEMBER 8



JOSLYN SABINIANO and hubby Celso
 DECEMBER 29



OLYMPIA SANTIAGUEL and Dinnah
 DECEMBER 17

DECEMBER 10, 2017 (Sun)
Be Among the Star
Sinag-tala 2017 Showcase
 The Light Christian Church
 7257 E. Southgate Dr. Sacramento CA
 3pm-5:00 pm
 Donation \$10
 916802.1708
 916.217.5226
 916.806.5110



PHILIP AND ELEANOR SY
 Wedding - October 6, 2017



JOE and IDA ALVAREZ
 60th Birthday and 31st Wedding Anniversary
 November 10

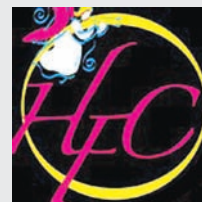


FRANK and JENNY AYRAN
 7th Wedding Anniversary
 December 11

Anniversary



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BY CHAPLAIN DALE ESPERANTE

Veterans Day Celebration 2017

After the speech, Commander Bumatay received congratulatory and grateful remarks. Master of Ceremonies Fred Aquino then concluded the official program to be followed by the Veterano Day program organized by Kappa Psi Epsilon of Sacramento State University.

First, Sofia Gasacao with the University of California-Davis Bayanihan Clinic made their presence known, for the veterans to have their blood pressure and glucose check before the start of, or during, the festivities. The Bayanihan Clinic regularly attends the monthly meetings of the veterans to provide medical information and services. The Co-Community Action Chairs of KPsiE, Alreeze Crystal C. Mercado and Cyrill Castro finally took over the microphones to introduce the program for the rest of the day. The entire KPsiE sorority sisters started the program with their rendition of Bayang Magiliw. The accent of the lyrics was spot on even though most of the singers were American born. After Bayang Magiliw, food was a priority!

The veterans and their guests were first to be served dinner prepared by KPsiE and Magellan Hall volunteers. Just a bit after dinner, the friends of KPsiE assembled on center stage and performed a song and dance number of Stand by Me. For the veterans, the entertainment was certainly a treat. Glenn Carrasca, a Vietnam veteran, was so thrilled that he dragged a chair center stage to sit on for a photo op surrounded by the smiling and beautiful faces of youth. A second number, My Girl, was performed by the girls with one lone guitarist, the only male in the group. Another great and uplifting performance delivered by the cheerful group of youngsters, and appreciated by the older generation!

Games and gifts followed the performances. A traditional group photo op of the veterans, families, and the KPsiE members and friends took place before the conclusion of a bright and wonderful day for the veterans. The



Magellan Hall Veterans Day Ceremony



WWII Veteran Gilmore Perla



Commander Anthony Bumatay (USN)



KPsiE members with Post Commander Luz Molina and Dale Esperante.



KPsiE members with Veteran Glenn Carrasca

Magellan Hall members consisting of Magellan Post and Unit 604 including FAVA wish to thank all who supported the 2017 Veterans Day activities.

A special THANK YOU to guest speaker Commander Anthony Bumatay, the University of California-Davis Bayanihan Clinic, and of course, The Kappa Psi Epsilon (KPsiE) and their friends! MABUHAY!



A Thanksgiving Tribute

BY DALE ESPERANTE

I am my big sister's baby brother. Estela was my Ate. In Filipino, a big sister is respectfully addressed as Ate (At-TEh). She would call me on the phone when I needed a big sister, when I needed some uplifting.

At least once a week, Ate Estela and my wife would spend minutes, if not hours, on the phone. My wife Melita probably knows more about Ate Estela than I do because of their hours spent on the phone. Melita would tell me about Ate Estela's younger years in the Philippines up to her early years here in the United States.

I am here today because of a decision Ate Estela made years ago. My siblings and their families are here today because of Ate Estela's love and dedication. When she made up her mind about something, there was no wavering. She would forge on until she got her way, or at least try to get her way.

My sister was very independent. She needed to do things her own way. Independence is a trait I also have and perhaps everyone in the family had already discovered about themselves. I'm not sure if the strength of our independence could match Ate Estela's.

She was born before the war, she lived through WWII, and in the early 1950's moved to the United States. I'm sure she had to adjust rapidly to the culture of a new country. She dedicated her early life here as a good wife, a great mother, and for a long time, the only Esperante sibling in the United States. Our mom visited

from the Philippines to help Ate Estela at about the time she gave birth to my first niece. My mom took me along and we stayed here for two years. I'm not sure if we stayed here for two years because my second niece soon followed my first niece. In the pictures, I think I've seen old photos of my first two nieces and me. I'll have to check the old photos again.

In recent years, during the long chats between my wife and Ate Estela, the phone would be passed on to me at times for me to say hi to Ate. I would tease her and say, "hey beautiful." She would answer, "my baby brother." With all due respect to my other sisters, Ate Estela stood on a pedestal in my eye. She took care of all of us, she sheltered us, fed us, supported us, and she was always there for us when needed.

I respect her so much to the point that I view her as my second mom. I told her so when I called her one Mothers' Day a few years ago. When I needed discipline, all she had to do was look at me a certain way then I would behave. I'm sure my other siblings had seen that look also. I feel a tremendous loss today as I am sure everyone in the family and closest friends are feeling the same way.

My great sister who was also an inspiration and a faithful friend is no longer with us in this life. A chapter of my life has ended. The rest of my life must live up to the example set by my dearest sister, Ate Estela.





Ang Depresyon Sa Araw Ng Kapaskuhan

BY NANCY CRISTI BAUTISTA

Nagniningning na ang mga palamuti sa mga lansangan, sa mga tindahan, at sa ibat-ibang pook para sa kaarawan ng Kapaskuhan. Ang mga panahong ito ang nagsasaad ng kaligayahan, kapayapaan, at kasaganaan. Ito ang nagpapahayag na kinakailangang kalimutan ang mga kalungkutan at maging masaya ang buong sanlibutan. Napakadaling sabihin ang mga ito, ngunit, sa isang nilalang na may dinaramdam na kalungkutan o depresyon, ito ay isang malubhang karamdaman.

Kadalasan, sa mga panahong ganito lumilitaw ang mga ganitong pakiramdam, habang ang iba ay nagdiriwang at nagsasaya, ang iba naman ay nakakaramdam ng pangungulila o paghihirap. Sa Phillipinas lalo na, masasabing isa siyuro sa mga dahilan nito ay ang pagkaka salat sa kabuhayan. Sa isang magulang, gusto niyang maibigay ang kinakailangan ng kaniyang mga anak, lalo na sa araw ng Kapaskuhan. Nais niyang mabigyan ng mga laruan, mga bagong damit, at masasarap na pagkain ang kaniyang mga anak na maliliit. Sa ordinaryong araw, masuwerte na sila kung sila ay makakain ng tatlong beses isang araw, lalo na ang kumain ng masasarap sa araw ng Pasko.

Ang iba naman, ayaw nila na dumating ang araw ng kapaskuhan kapag sila o ang kanilang mga mahal sa buhay ay mayroong malubhang karamdaman. Lalong lalo na ang matinding dalamhati tuwing araw ng Pasko kapag ang kanilang mga mahal sa buhay ay nawala na nang tuluyan. Itong kaganapang ito ay pinakamasakit na pangyayari, mapa Pasko man o hindi. Sa ano pa mang dahilan, sa ganitong panahon ng kapaskuhan lalong tumitindi ang pangungulila at pagkalumbay ng isang nilalang. Ang pagkakaroon ng depresyon ay isang malupit na karamdaman sa dahilang makumplikasyon o mahirap malaman agad na ang isang tao ay mayroong ganitong kalagayan. Karamihan ng mga taong nakapaligid sa nasabing may karamdaman ay hindi agad napapansin na ang taong ito ay nangangailangan ng tulong ng isang dalubhasa sa ganitong uri ng sakit. Kadalasan, sa ibang mga karamdaman, ang mismong tao o pasyente ang nagpapahayag na ito ay may mabigat na dinadamdam. Kaya nga, agad-agad itong natitignan ng isang manggagamot. Samantala,

ang taong may depresyon ay malamang, itinatago nito ang talagang nararamdaman. Sa harap ng mga tao, ngumingiti ito at ipinapakita na siya ay masaya, at kaniyang itinatago ang kaniyang paghihirap ng ka-looban.

Minsan, kapag ang depresyon ay napupuna na ng iba, inaakala lamang ng mga tao na ito ay panandalian lamang at ito ay lilipas din, at ang mga namamalas ay binabalewala na lang. May mga pangyayari na ito ay natutuloy sa malubhang depresyon, at hindi ito basta biglaang lumilitaw na la-

da. Inaakala ng kaniyang mga pamilya na ito daw ay na "homesick" daw siguro.

Kadalasan, ang mga taong may depresyon ay nagpapahiwatig ng paghingi ng tulong sa pamamagitan ng bagay-bagay, kagaya ng pagsisiwalat ng kaniyang nararamdamang paghihirap ng ka-looban. Sa dahilang lahat ay abala sa iba't-ibang mga bagay-bagay, ang problema ay natatabunan. Kadalasan din, ang mga taong nakakaalam nito ay hindi naniniwala na ang mga nararamdaman ng may sakit ay hindi seryoso, na kinakailangang mabigyan ng lunas ng isang dalubhasa sa mga karamdamang ganito. Inisip nila, na ayaw nilang manghimasok at inaakala nila na ang mga ito ay lilipas din. Lalo na sa mga kabataan, nalilito sila sa mga pangyayari at hindi nila masabi ang kanilang mga sa-

loobin. Sa ganitong situwasyon, ang mga magulang o mga nakakatanda sa kaniya ang dapat makinig sa mga hinaing ng bata. Kinakailangang pagtiyagaang usisain ang sinasalooob ng anak at magmasid sa mga bagay o taong nakikihalimula nito. Tignan kung may mga taong nambu-"bully" ng harap-harapan o sa mga "internet". Kinakailangang magtanong-tanong at humingi agad ng payo sa mga guro nito, sa mga pinuno ng relihiyon, o higit sa lahat, sa isang dalubhasa.

Mapabata man o mapabata, ang karamdamang ito ay hindi kinakailangang ipag bale wala. Huwag hintaying ito ay lumubha o kaya ay ito ay humantong sa pananakit o pagkitil sa sarili o sa iba, Napakarami pang kinakailangang paghahanap ng mga paliwanag at kalunasan tungkol sa depresyon. Sa pagkakataong ito, ang mahalaga ay ang pagamin o pagtanggap ng mga malalapit sa may kapansanan na may problema na kaylangang lutasin o lapatan ng lunas. Hindi dapat ikahiya o pagtakpan ang ganitong kapansanan. Hindi kailangang magaksaya ng panahon. Nararapat na agad-agad, kailangang humingi ng tulong bago maging huli ang lahat. Dito sa Northern California, maraming lugar na maaring makatulong sa ganitong karamdaman. Maski na sa "internet", ilagay lamang ang salitang "depression" at ihahanap na ang mga bagay-bagay na puedeng mahingan ng tulong.

Ating tulongan at paligayahin ang iba sa araw ng Kapaskuhan. Patnubayan tayo ng Panginoon.



'Simbang Gabi' won't grant wishes - Bishop



Completing nine-day simbang gabi or dawn masses leading to Christmas Day is not like a genie in a bottle that will grant wishes, a Catholic bishop said yesterday.

BY EDU PUNAY

Completing nine-day simbang gabi or dawn masses leading to Christmas Day is not like a genie in a bottle that will grant wishes, a Catholic bishop said yesterday.

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo reminded the faithful that the purpose of the novena is to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ and spiritually prepare Catholics for celebration of Christmas Day.

He called on priests to also remind their parishioners that going to dawn masses is not meant or designed for their wishes to be granted by the Lord, which he described as a misconception.

"Completing the nine days of simbang gabi is not for their wishes to be granted. That is a wrong belief. That is not what going to the simbang gabi is for," Pabillo said in an interview. "These should be explained in the masses in order to correct the people's thinking."

"The nine days of praying is

part of the preparation for the big feast of Christmas. For the formation of the faith and thanking God for His generosity," he explained.

The prelate added that the novena was designed to represent the faithful's devotion to God.

"The nine days is a manifestation of the people's persistence. Imagine you will wake up early for nine straight mornings... It is a sign of your love of God," he explained.

The dawn masses started last Friday, Dec. 16, and will end with the Misa de Gallo on Dec. 24, eve of Christmas Day.

Meanwhile, another bishop reminded the faithful that the Christmas season is a perfect time to make sacrifices for others.

Cubao Bishop Honesto Ongtioco has urged the faithful to reach out to the poor and victims of violence as a sign of love to fellow people.

He also appealed that acts of compassion, generosity and love should not be limited to Dec. 25 but should be done every day.



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Behind the Charmer May Hide an Abuser

BY **CHERIE M. QUEROL MORENO**

CHARMING. Life of the party. Generous to a fault. Who does not know someone who matches that description?

Few would think twice before bonding with a person who seems to possess the qualities idealized for a lifetime companion.

But to paraphrase the adage about an old medium, fonts don't make the book. Open it and browse before purchasing to avoid buyer's remorse.

Same rule should apply to potential intimate partners: Appreciate the appealing first impression, but don't rush into a commitment. Because behind the affability may be malevolence exposed only to the most unsuspecting beholders -- the ones who get captivated, literally.

Survivors of dating and domestic violence say their partners who abused them have two faces: the one they show the public and the one they take home, behind closed doors.

Marlene Caballero knows too well.

In her testimony to raise awareness of domestic violence October 1 in Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in South San Francisco, California, Caballero related how her ex-husband hardly was around when she gave birth to their four children, minimized a serious ailment and rifled through her closet rummaging for evidence of an imagined affair when he was the one who was fooling around. He tried to strangle her with the telephone cord and stopped only when he realized she was a breath away from death.

"I never saw this abusive behavior before we married," Caballero

told some 150 medical professionals, resource providers, public officials and individuals seeking help for their troubled relationships at the program organized by ALLICE Kumares & Kumpares, the all-volunteer domestic violence prevention education non-profit based in Daly City. "He was always honest and humble about his upbringing, hardworking and always poured all-out efforts into his professional projects."

"Abuse, say experts, is a learned behavior. People who abuse employ tactics they've observed to be effective."

Had their partner been obnoxious when they first met, survivors say they would not have paid a second look at the person they thought was heaven-sent in the beginning but who revealed a devious side later.

Neither wiser was accountant Nette Flores of South San Francisco, among the attendees supporting fellow survivors at the ALLICE gathering.

"I thought he was the answer to my nightly prayer for a partner who would love and protect me," Flores spoke of the dashing Californian she met after fleeing Manila and her first husband, who beat her up when they quarreled over his gambling and womanizing.

Her then-suitor only had eyes for her and swept her off her feet with his chivalry. He made every date special, complete with flowers, which thrilled the object of his attention.

Her guard down, she found every reason to accept his marriage proposal after a brief courtship.

"I never suspected that his affection would deteriorate into unrea-

sonable demands for sex," Flores said, knowing now how pleasure can turn to pain on several levels. "He insisted on intimacy so often to the point where he ordered me to skip work."

He broke her prescription glasses to prevent her from driving to the office.

"He was relentless, forcing sex even after I had just survived a car accident trying to get away from him," Flores told Positively Filipino.

That incident drove her to the ER, where a question from a caring nurse about her home situation unlocked a secret that one out of every four women suffers in the United States.

Abuse, say experts, is a learned behavior. People who abuse employ tactics they've observed to be effective.

Likely to grow up an abusive adult is a child who witnesses his or her abusive father constantly berating if not beating up the mother into an unhappy, fearful wreck. The child may see the domineering parent as the better model than the submissive one.

Who wants to be the sorry victim when the dominant party gets all the attention?

"Abuse is about power and control," stressed Dr. Jei Africa, a licensed psychologist in the San Francisco Bay Area. "Many abusers can be charming and 'nice' not to control others but to mask their abusive behavior."

"Abusive behavior" is a phrase frequently used and misunderstood.

Merriam-Webster defines abuse as a corrupt practice or custom,



improper or excessive use or treatment, deception, vilification and physical treatment.

What one culture may find appalling, however, another might consider typical. Bribery may be a way of life in a particular society and an act of treason in another. Similarly, one culture frowns on extra-marital or multiple partnerships, which might be a tradition in another.

To therapists and counselors in this country, cheating or having a relationship outside an intimate relationship is unhealthy and potentially abusive behavior. It is a form of dating and domestic abuse they say betrays and humiliates the offended partner whether or not the former is aware of the infidelity.

The home is not the only place where abusive behavior begins and explodes.

"Abuse may be learned through many different things: media, personal experience and seeing others go through the experience, misinformation," Africa said, with a caveat. "When abusive behavior is normalized or reinforced, it can be seen as an acceptable response."

Some communities approve of spousal battery as a means to resolve a domestic conflict, for

example. When a celebrity athlete is charged with perpetrating domestic violence, he or she gets a pass from most fans who say the matter is between the intimate partners because only they know what actually triggered the incident.

By the time the abuse turns physical, therefore visible and obvious, perpetrators will have already inflicted silent or unseen attacks causing tension, making the victim feel she or he is walking on eggshells around the perpetrator.

San Francisco Bay Area licensed marriage and family therapist Jennifer Jimenez Wong reminds clients to be mindful of how their partners behave and how the behavior affects them to assess if the relationship is unhealthy and potentially abusive (see side bar).

Wong, a clinical supervisor at Fred Finch Youth Center, says that if an individual constantly worries about angering the partner, the relationship may be in trouble.

Knowing the signs for a tendency to crave power and control indeed may save someone from a lifetime of sorrow.

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BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

"Look, everybody is looking at us." - Cable Car Driver

Friday, November 17, 2017 was the designated date for Southern Baptist College (SBC) alumni's arrival, meet and greet in San Francisco, California hosted by Aldea "Ading" Arcenio. Early birds got treated with Ferrari ride driven by Ading herself in the hilly town of Tiburon.

While waiting for other alumni coming from Texas, whose flight was delayed, and while the table was ready, we started dinner at the host's house. Table conversation covered stories from 1970s, 80s, 90s, 2000s and the latest happenings at SBC, in Mlang, and the Philippines.

Some of the highlighted stories were the presence of "Santermo" in Mlang plaza seen by the locals and passengers of Mintranco when the bus used to go around municipal plaza area to pick up passengers traveling to Davao at 4 am for the first trip and 5 am for the second trip.

The ghost of Jackson Hall was likewise underscored. Some alumni and faculty members saw the ghost while majority of us were not privilege to see it. During the September 2017 global reunion at SBC, school guests stayed at Nash Hall and I did not hear somebody stayed at Jackson Hall. It may be Nash Hall is beautiful place to stay while Jackson Hall is dilapidated old building or maybe because of the lingering thoughts and fear to see up-close and personal the building's loyal inhabitant(s). Ading is a living witness while her older sister Jocelyn did not see the ghost at Jackson Hall. The house of Arcenio sisters is located fronting Jackson Hall. SBC faculty ma'am De Luso is another witness.

Lela Mae Salazar-Delgado, HS '78, shared a story every time she and her classmates hear helicopter sound they will look at each other's eyes and say, "si sir Ortigoza manog abot" (sir Ortigoza is arriving) and they will shout "helicopter" and everybody in the classroom, even at the middle of class instruction, rushed out of the door and proceeded to the direction of the sound as the helicopter comes closer and when the UH-1H can be seen as it zeroing in to-

SBC Alumni Reunion in San Francisco

wards the landing zone either at SBC field or to the empty space between administration building and Founder's Hall (the area is now occupied by the High school building). Same was true to our class, to Elementary, High School, and College, everybody rushed out to see the helicopter. Some tripped on their way out of the building and even from the houses. One of our house help even jumped out of the window just to see the helicopter. My father was a soldier from the Philippine Air Force and every time he comes home from military camp in Awang, helicopter pilots, who were graduates of PMA in the 70s like Lt. Red Capunan from Capiz, Lt Islao from Baguio City, etc., flew him to and from our hometown in Mlang.

More stories about SBC and Mlang were shared and it was a good feeling to reminisce history. This is one of the reasons, aside from seeing classmates, schoolmates, teachers and friends, alumni attend school reunion.

We ended the night with a short alumni meeting. As the president of this newly created alumni association I presided the meeting with Pastor Rolly Delgado led the opening and closing prayer while his wife Lela Mae Salazar-Delgado served as our musical director for our hymns. Our host Ading Arcenio delivered a welcome remark. Vienna Villasor-Quiroz, association's vice president, shared highlights of the minutes of March 23, 2017 initial alumni meeting at the Yacht hosted also by Ading. Alumni treasurer Garry Bianzon gave us updates on the current health of our infant finances. Members are encouraged to pay \$20 annual membership fee. Our money in the treasury is intact and has not been touched. We reserve to use it for our future project at SBC. Alumni in the United States and Canada who want to contribute for our future project can start small with your annual membership because if we gather it all together it becomes big. The whole is greater the sum of its parts. We concluded the meeting by singing SBC alma mater song. (Trivia: The lyrics of SBC Alma Mater song were written by T. Bergante, Jr. and E. Ballenas. Original melody from "He Lives on High" by B.B. McKinney).

We ended our alumni "sweet" conversation at past midnight.



Southern Baptist College (SBC) Alumni and family.



Some alumni and family were billeted at Ading's main house on top of the hill while others at Ading's guest house down the hill kissing San Francisco Bay.

Saturday, November 18. Aside from personal knock by Keren Calapardo, SBC alumna who works and flew from Singapore to attend the reunion, Ading uses facebook messenger to notify us when the table is ready. Because we went to bed past 1 am we woke up late and had breakfast at 10 am. After breakfast we had group video and photo using Ading's drone. For our activity of the day we gathered at the guest's house about 0.8 miles by Waze or a 5 minutes' walk downhill. While walking with Pastor Rolly, Lela Mae, and Keren, I observed high-end cars passing by. Pastor Rolly and I counted 2 Porsche SUVs, 2 Tesla sedans, a Jaguar, and other high-end vehicles on that short walk less than a mile downhill.

While waiting at the Ading's guest house for our 2 pm pick up by the cable car, we walked to the guest house ramp by the bay to enjoy the sun in the cold San Francisco weather. At about 2 pm Lela Mae pointed to a cable car, about half mile away, plying the route near the shorelines coming to our direction. I said, "This is it." We went to the front of the guest house for our ride. That cable car built in 1920s was chartered by

Ading. Of course, individual and group photos were taken before we boarded the car and shared the photos to the world via social media knowing fellow alumni and friends were waiting for it.

From the town of Tiburon in Marine County on the way to downtown SFO people were amazed upon seeing the cable car which prompted our woman cable driver to say, "Look, everybody is looking at us." Aside from the driver, the car has

tour guide who told us via microphone the history and important spots in the city. After an hour of city tour we stopped at Pier 49 for a 15-minute break and bathroom privileges. Our second stopped was at the iconic Golden Gate Bridge. The tour guide told us the official paint color of the bridge is international orange. I thought all the while it was rusty brown. We were safely dropped off at the beachfront guest house in Tiburon at exactly 5 pm.

From the guest house we drove uphill to the main house for a military-style "Boodleflight" dinner. One thing most of us observed at commencement after the grace: Deafening Silence. Everybody was hungry and very much focus on the food eaten using barehand. Shout out to Bonbon Calauod for deliciously prepared food for us. Story telling resumed after everybody was full after the mouthwatering sumptuous dinner mostly seafoods.

November 19, Sunday. Alumni story telling continuous while we gathered at the kitchen island during breakfast. Story telling made alumni attentive and participated in the conversation. If we can do the same at the church I'm sure no one will sleep while the minister delivers the message. After the breakfast we drove to Clipper Yacht Harbor in Sausalito, around 7.5 miles distance by Waze from Ading's house, for our 10 am to 2 pm scheduled activity: Cruise by the Bay.

When all were aboard Ading's yacht, the contracted captain introduced himself and his fellow captain. The captain oriented us on the salient points while on board especially on how to operate a digital flush for the head (toilet) and other features of the yacht. Food was also prepared for us. While on our way to San Francisco Bay I had a chance to talk

with the female captain Leslie Carson. I learned that Leslie is the wife of the yacht captain as she told me and the couple are both maritime captains. As Leslie and I conversed on California politics, she mentioned she used to work at the office of the state governor Gerry Brown and she is a friend of state appointment secretary Mona Pasquil, the first Filipino-American to hold the post. Leslie also told me she was once a city mayor in Yuba. Both captains were experienced in maritime field and I'm glad Ading took them to pilot us on our cruise.

The first landmark we cruised at was the iconic Golden Gate Bridge. I told my fellow alumni "We used to see Golden Gate as cover photo of school notebook while studying at SBC in 1970s and 80s now we personally see it not only from the top and sides but also view from under the bridge." Very few people were privileged to see the bottom of bridge. It was my second time to see it courtesy of Ading. The next point of destination was Pier 39 where the famous seals lay afloat marine logs. Then we proceeded near AT & T Stadium, the home of San Francisco Giants. The water was calm in the area so the captain suggested we eat our lunch there. We then proceeded to Angel Island passing under the new Bay Bridge and Alcatraz Island. The architectural design of the new Bay Bridge as seen from below is beautiful. We docked at Angel Island for 45 minutes. The island used to receive immigrants coming from different parts of the world mostly from Asia. This island is also known as the "Tears Island" because migrants who were denied entry to San Francisco were deported back to country of origin. The island was also used to isolate migrants inflicted with contagious diseases. At about 2 pm we were back to Clipper Yacht Harbor to end our cruise and to say goodbye to our fellow SBC alumni.

November 20, Monday. While most of us went back to work on this day, Ading and family together with some SBC alumni chartered a jet and flew to San Diego for the continuation of their vacation. Yes, Ading chartered a plane from San Francisco to San Diego. I can just shake my head in awe seeing my fellow SBC alumni in a chartered plane on their next thanksgiving week vacation.

Thanks to all alumni and family who came for the gathering of God's people and to Ading for hosting our first SBC alumni reunion in San Francisco. Indeed, God is great and worthy to be praised.

Happy thanksgiving everyone.

Michael Keaton: 'I am the best Batman'

BY JANET NEPALES

Los Angeles – In the upcoming action thriller, “American Assassin,” Michael Keaton portrays Stan Hurley, a Cold War veteran who gets assigned to train a grief-stricken but highly motivated CIA black ops recruit, Mitch Rapp (Dylan O’Brien) how to thwart terrorist operations.



Michael Keaton as Batman

Asked if he had one memorable mentor, Michael revealed, “No, not specifically, not one person.”

He narrated, “I had the same woman working for me from El Salvador for 35 years. Her kids were around, but specifically one, who grew up in my house and he calls me dad. He calls me pop, because his dad wasn’t really all that around. He always tells me he loves me and I love him. He was my son Sean’s kind of brother and pal. So in that sense, when you have a guy around like that, you just want to try to be a good example and he is kind of my kid in a way.”

Father to multi-platinum songwriter Sean Michael Douglas, his son with the late actress Caroline McWilliams, we asked Michael if his relationship with his father inspired him to be a good dad.

He frankly said, “No, I had a different type of dad, I only had one and he had seven kids. Actually, my mom and dad had nine kids and they lost two babies. Back then, that was not uncommon. My dad had to work two jobs most of the time. Sometimes, he would have three jobs, But he was terrific. He was just different because of his lifestyle.

“My dad was always working and a really good dude. Even back then, it was just different. When he would make breakfast, which was his specialty, it was just that somebody had to do it. In retrospect, you look back then and my dad would have to do certain things. It wasn’t that he was this amazing father, it was that



Michael as Stan Hurley in 'American Assassin'

somebody has got to do it. My mom would be at church or something and some of us would be home. Somebody had to feed these kids. He would be pretty good at it. So if you look at ‘Mr. Mom,’ I say this all the time, ‘Mr. Mom’ was way ahead of its time, and it actually made a statement.”

Looking good at 65 (remember his underwear scene at Times Square in “Birdman?”), Michael admitted he tries to be physically fit all the time. He revealed, “I stay in pretty good shape regardless whether or not I am doing movies. I eat pretty well and I look after myself. I wish I stayed out of the sun more than I did, because I am always outside. It’s hard to avoid.”

His advice: “Don’t eat sugar. Try to get sleep. Eat a little less meat. It’s how you eat and how you live. I run and my whole life, I have been doing something physical. It’s hard.”

And what does he think of the superhero fad these days and does he feel he was ahead of his time when he did “Batman” with Tim Burton in 1989?

Michael said, “We were way ahead of our time and

Tim Burton especially. He changed everything and no one saw that coming. No one saw his interpretation of Batman coming, and that made everybody sit down and rethink all of that stuff. And if you notice after that, everything had a kind of Tim Burton feel to it for a long, long time.

“There were colors and shades of blues and blacks and grays and the tone and no one could really quite get it. But later on, everybody had their own version of it. Now you have seen Jon Watts’ version of ‘Spiderman’ which was actually very far away from what Tim did, almost a 180. It worked great. Now honestly, people want to draw a parallel but it’s just another job. It’s interesting that you go from the superhero to the villain, but it’s interesting. It’s just like you have that job. You take them for different reasons.”

Does he take sides when there are conversations of who is the greatest Batman, we asked.

“No,” he quickly replied. “Because I am the best Batman.”

South African self-defense trainer crowned Miss Universe

BY ROBERT REQUINTINA

Las Vegas – A South African woman who helps train women in self-defense was crowned Miss Universe on Sunday at the pageant held in Las Vegas, with Miss Colombia and Miss Jamaica also making it to the final three.

Her passion for self-defense was reinforced when she was hijacked and held at gunpoint about a month after winning her title as Miss South Africa, she said in a video on the Miss Universe website.

Miss Colombia, Laura González, 22, was the first runner-up.

She has been preparing to be an actress since the age of 16. After graduating from a performing arts school, she moved to Bogotá to build her career.

The second runner-up was Miss Jamaica, Davina Bennett, 21. She is a model pursuing a degree in marketing at the University of the West Indies.

Rachel Peters finishes in Top 10

Miss Philippines Rachel Peters finished in the Top 10 of the 2017 Miss Universe beauty pageant held in Las Vegas, Nevada last Sunday night (Monday morning in the Philippines).

But another Peters – Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters – of South Africa was crowned 2017 Miss Universe from the field of 92 contestants.

Demi-Leigh is the second Miss Universe from South Africa in the 66-year-history of the prestigious beauty contest.

The last time a South African beauty won the title was 39 years ago when Margaret Gardiner won the title in 1978.

Demi-Leigh has been one of the favorite candidates to win the crown since the



Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, 22, who unleashed a big smile when she won, hails from Western Cape Province and recently earned a business management degree from North-West University.

candidates arrived in Las Vegas for the competition.

She even topped gambling portals from around the world as bettors placed their money on her, along with candidates from Thailand, Colombia and the Philippines.

Miss Japan Momoko Abe won the Best in National Costume award.

Pageant fans around the world became the seventh judge of the 2017 Miss Universe pageant as they cast votes during the selection of Top 16 semi-finalists, and Swimsuit and Evening Gown competitions.

Great job

Gines Baja Enriquez of the Bb. Pilipinas Charities, Inc., which sends Philippine delegates to competitions abroad, said that Peters did a great job during the finals.

“We did a great job! At the end of the day, it’s really the judges’ pick. Mrs. Araneta prepared Rachel well. It was a great experience for her because she made a lot of friends. We will continue to learn from the winners and will keep on doing our best,” said Enriquez.

Several media men also reacted to the Top 10 finish of the Bicolana beauty queen and why she did ad-

vance further.

“Perhaps because the judges preferred either Colombia or Jamaica over her,” said Norman Tinio, of normannorman.com, a popular website on beauty pageants.

“Perhaps she was not what the judges were looking for, and she was overshadowed by the ones who showed personality. The others’ backgrounds were quite impressive, too! And the program highlighted this aspect of the delegates through the videos that were presented,” commented Armin Adina, a pageant expert from a major newspaper.

Christmas Tour

The winners of the 2016 and 2017 Miss Universe beauty pageants are expected to participate in the Miss Universe 2017 Christmas Tour which will take place in Manila beginning December 6.

The event, which is reportedly being organized by the Department of Tourism, will include activities such as meet-and-greet for the press, fashion show and gala night.

Sources said that the final activities for the Miss Universe Christmas Tour are expected to be announced in the coming days.



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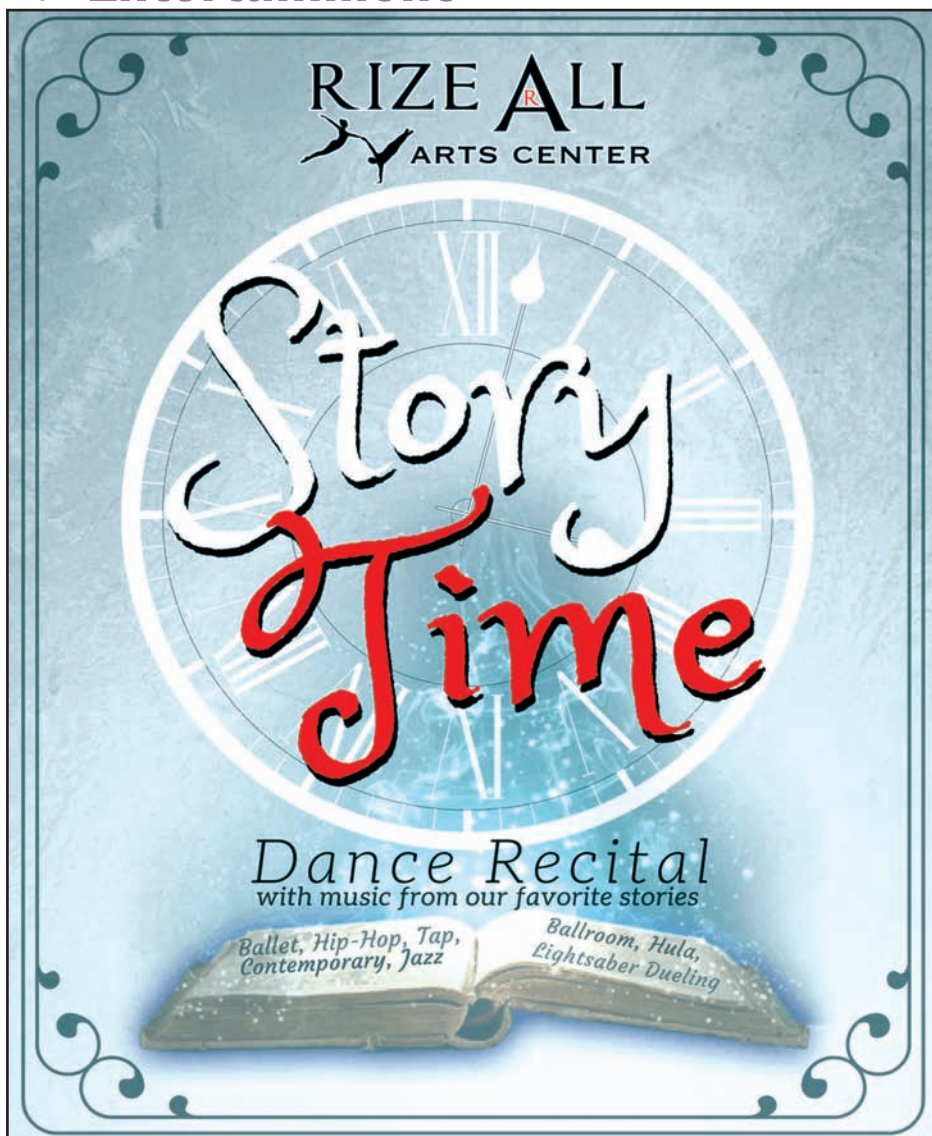
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