



PHILIPPINE Fiesta

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Teachers aren't gunslingers
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"The U.S. is under attack!"
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'I am ready to die for my country!'

BY NESTOR MATA

President Rodrigo Duterte reacted to the Amnesty International (AI) report, but if found by AI guilty he is "ready to die" for the country. (This reminds one of his becoming the new national hero after Dr. Jose P. Rizal.)



President Rodrigo Duterte

The AI was wrong in declaring that the Philippines was guilty of human rights, Duterte said, according to presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo. He also pointed out that the President noted that he was not liable for prosecution under the AI's report on the state of the world's human rights was out of concept as far as this country is concerned.

Duterte was referring to AI's claim that this country was among the 161 countries of unlawful killings of drug addicts and drug pushers and threats. On the contrary, he said, this country has protected the lives of innocent people from the

dangerous effects of illegal drugs by drug pushers and users. As a result of the government's anti-drug campaign, millions of them have surrendered to police authorities, but warned them not to resort to

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Kris Aquino invites Paolo Duterte for coffee or beer after being mocked on EDSA anniversary

BY ROSETTE ADEL

Actress and host Kris Aquino on Tuesday took to social media to invite President Rodrigo Duterte's eldest son, Paolo, for a coffee or beer.

Aquino's invite came a week after the resigned Davao Vice Mayor criticized her family and commented on the commemoration of EDSA People Power Revolution. Duterte mentioned



Actress and host Kris Aquino and President Rodrigo Duterte's eldest son, Paolo.

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Fil-Am Community of Sacramento and Vicinity (FCSV) Spring Fever Dinner & Dance



Photo by Dale Esperante

On February 23, 2018, the FCSV celebrated their Annual Spring Fever Dinner and Dance in Florin Creek Recreation Center located at 7460 Persimmon Ave, Sacramento, CA.

FAVA 29th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers



Photo by Dale Esperante

Newly elect Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) officers for 2018-2019.

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Change is coming... 'daw'

BY CITO BELTRAN

P3.5 billion lost to traffic?

If you think that's bad, I just learned that most of the country's "produce" or business is coming out of Greater Metro Manila instead of being served or manufactured nationwide. So it's no surprise that we are losing 3.5 billion a day given that we spend an average of 3 to 5 hours commuting and stuck in traffic. The question is what can we do about it?

Maybe we can just banish the top 1000 businessmen and women outside of Metro Manila or send them back to their roots or provinces so that their entire posse, household staff, sidekicks as well as businesses can then be relocated with them? It may be a joke but for as long as the rich and famous of this country insists on residing inside Metro Manila, chances are, so will their business operations and headquarters.

Secretary Art Tugade was actually right in pitching the relocation of government offices outside Metro Manila and just living satellite units in malls to better serve the public. The DOTr wants to stay in Clark, maybe the Department of Agriculture and attached agencies can move to Los Baños. We can also relocate major hospitals, the Philippine Senate and the House of Representatives to places that are more accessible to their patients and constituents. Many major corporations in the Philippines are now placing all their offices under one roof or in a single sight for operational efficiency, to cut down on renting other locations, and to avoid traffic and minimize travel time.

I know for a fact that our major hospitals in Diliman, Quezon City are running out of space, have started to build up but even that option is slowly running thin. The Heart Center for instance should really have more space to build a bigger and better facility. The same goes for the NKTi and the Lung Center.

Why should members of Congress be physically present at the Batasan when they can actually do half of their work or their legislative work through the Internet, mobile phone or delegate to a smaller staff while the bigger crew stay in their respective congressional district! For the longest time people have been talking about relocating the PNP and AFP headquarters



PH loses P3.5B a day due to Metro Manila traffic

along EDSA and placing them north and south of Metro Manila.

Before we can take off on the program of Federalism maybe we should try baby steps such as trying to relocate colleges and universities, integrating government offices etc., outside Metro Manila. We don't have to cut things up or dislocate the system we simply need to stretch things further out than they are currently located. We should also look into removing factories in Metro Manila and having a plan to actually relocate our piers from Manila to locations outside Metro Manila.

The truth of the matter is that we have outgrown Metro Manila and it is time to spread everything out so that the entire country can take part in the growth and development of the Philippines. Don't just "Build - Build - Build"; Let's "Grow - Grow - Grow."

What happens if the change we are hoping for turns out to be painful, costly and useless? What happens if the change ends up benefiting big business that has money, power and influence on government officials and policies?

"Change is coming" they say and we can assume that it will happen in Boracay, the Jeepney Modernization program, the MRT rehabilitation, etc., etc., etc. But I just realized that in all of the above, the entire picture has not actually been presented. We know that Boracay needs to be cleaned up of illegal structures, illegal businesses, and most importantly have an island wide sewage collection and treatment plant or facility. Boracay also needs wider roads, more footpaths and an actual Master plan that is based on a professional, culturally sensitive and impartial process.

The focus right now is on the sewage system and demolition of illegal structures, but what about the ambulant

vendors, transients or people who don't have a Boracay business address? Will it be "Sewers today" then tomorrow big business takes over island life? I am all for what the President wants to do with the island but I also know that Big Business is pumping big money into Boracay with the vision of making it "more global" and consequently less local or unaffordable for local Filipinos. This early, I sound the alarm and the warning that Boracay should remain accessible and affordable for all but most especially for Filipinos.

Let's all make sure that the Mega Developers and Chain retailers don't call the shots or direct the course for renovation or restoration of Boracay.

Bad habits acquired in a lifetime, cannot not be purged by simply removing dilapidated Jeepneys. For some strange reason, the DOTr is not picking up on suggestions that all Jeepney drivers should undergo a thorough and continuing re-education as public utility drivers. The usual one or two-day seminars given to arrested drivers by the I-Act or MMDA is too short and applies only to those arrested and did not get away with bad driving! Perhaps the reason the DOTr is not talking about it because it will open up another can of worms regarding the fact that many Filipino drivers did not learn from a certified or accredited driving school or training center.

Instead of investigating Bong Go and the frigate deal, the Senate should be investigating how the Philippines produces thousands of drivers every year who never even enrolled in a formal school. This is the more important and relevant matter for public safety and transport modernization and not just selling or making look-alike Jeepneys!

'Slave to no one'

BY JOHN TRIA

The statement read last February 9 in Davao City will be forever remembered by our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs):

"The Filipino is no slave to anyone, anywhere and everywhere. Every unlawful physical injury that is inflicted on an OFW is an injury I personally bear as the head of this Republic."

This strong statement was read as the Philippine government announced a ban on deployment of our Overseas Filipino Worker OFWs to Kuwait.

Many of our OFWs shed joyful tears, gushing at what perhaps is the strongest statement ever made by a Filipino president about them.

They are thankful that for the first time, government has issued strong statements to protect them, and backed it up with action.

As far as I recall I have never heard a Philippine president issue a deployment ban on country on the issue of OFW conditions. Previous bans having more to do with factors such as war or natural calamities in various countries.

Many previous Philippine governments have been careful to tiptoe around the Arab States on this, earning the cynicism of many OFWs who have had to nevertheless swallow the platitude of "Bagong Bayani" (new hero) while

their interests remained under-served by what was an often soft response to abuse at the hands of foreign employers, or even our own embassy staff.

Whether we like it or not, this statement sends shock waves will resound throughout the Arab world.

In turn, Kuwait responded with concern, seeking an agreement with the Philippines on this sensitive matter, a move which is forecast to encourage other Arab States to do the same.

Kuwait, as one of the Middle East countries receives a hefty 6.4 percent of the 2.2 million overseas contract workers. The Middle East in all receives more than half of all OFWs, with Saudi Arabia getting about 25 percent according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

While it is true that many of these countries have stepped up long term indigenization programs to enable their locals to obtain work related skills to eventually replace the Filipinos, the short and medium term labor requirements will necessarily require foreign workers.

Thus, any disruption of this supply of Filipino workers will naturally worry these receiving governments, which will nevertheless take a decade to raise new local talent.

Worse, as China ramps up production of electric vehicles and leads the world in solar panel production, these technologies are expected to claim a major component of the energy and transport mix

of ASEAN countries, slowly reducing their dependence on imported, especially Arab oil. When our mass transit systems are done and jeepneys converted to electric variants over the next five years, we expect a slight dip in our oil imports.

Thus, the flow of wealth into Arab coffers is slowly threatened by countries eventually buying less imported oil.

This forces them to take better stock of their human capital, and compels them to keep highly skilled labor and expertise on hand as they transition from an oil based economy to the information age.

The Kuwaiti response sets the stage for more cooperative and proactive positions from other Arab countries. OFWs are a leg of the Philippine economy, remitting around 20 billion dollars last year according to the Bangko Sentral, constituting the equivalent of about 10 percent of our Gross Domestic Product. Protecting their welfare is a vital facet of our foreign policy.

With this statement, expect more bilateral agreements between us and Arab states to better ensure their welfare and protection from harm and harassment, and better assistance programs as they cooperate with us.

Likewise, this also sends a strong message to our embassies and offshore labor offices to ensure that no OFW is abused or unserved by any one in their own offices.



Editor's Note

It is indeed the season to be freezing in this cold weather. We missed seeing the snow in Sacramento this past Monday. We were MIA, and don't even dare guess, to find out where we were.

Since February is two to three days shorter than the regular months, I feel that the month of March just snuck in unannounced.

Yet, our Fil-Am community is always ahead of the ballgame. Read on about the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, in their successful spring dance, which I gathered was a huge success. In a few days or so will be their upcoming Spring Brunch. I have not heard about the status of their Filipino Community Center building project but Scholarships Award and Health Fair are the other projects of one of the longest running Filipino organization in our community in Sacramento. Congratulations in all your accomplishments to support our Filipino community.

And despite the distance, read about the Naguilian Association (UNLUCAI) president, Henry and wife Tina Bambao, in their efforts to serve our kababayan in need, while on vacation in the Philippines.

In this issue also, most importantly, is the 29th Anniversary celebration and installation of officers by the Filipino American Veterans Association. Congratulations and more power to all the members and officers of FAVA!

The Philippine National Day Association, once again, extends their invitation to graduating elementary and high school students to apply for PNDA's scholarship. Details are on page 13.

Lastly, the LGBT announces their upcoming conference for A/PI LGBTQ and Allies.

Whatever you do to keep warm in this unpredictable Sacramento weather, please be safe. Philippine Fiesta News has always been here to celebrate with you.

With love always,
Dinnah San Pedro

Foreign bases ban: Is China exempted?

BY FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

THE BAN on foreign military bases is still in the Constitution (Article XVIII, Section 25), so we have been waiting for President Rodrigo Duterte to announce what he intends to do about China's building bases on Philippine maritime areas.

On Monday, in a speech before the Chinese Business Club, President Duterte preached tolerance, downplaying the sinister nature of the military bases that China has built rapidly on features in the West Philippine Sea.

It was silly to think the installations would be used against the Philippines, he said, adding that China was just beefing up its defense capability against the United States. Washington has served notice that it would continue to keep South China Sea lanes open to navigation.

Referring to the Chinese facilities erected on disputed WPS features, some of them reefs upgraded into habitable outposts, Duterte explained: "The contending ideological powers of the world or the geopolitics has greatly changed. It's really intended against those who the Chinese think would destroy them and that is America."

Since some of the military outposts or facilities built by China are within Philippine territory, a reasonable mind would think that they should be covered by the constitutional ban on foreign bases.

Has President Duterte and Foreign Secretary Alan Cayetano brought up the ban in their meetings with their Chinese counterparts? If they did, where are the official minutes?

Whether they did or did

not, it is high time they informed the Filipino people – or at least the Senate – in view of the advanced stage of militarization of the WPS isles, especially Subi, Mischief, and Fiery Cross reefs in the Spratlys group close to Palawan.

• President needs advice and consent

WHILE the President is the country's spokesman in foreign relations, under the Constitution his conduct of diplomacy, including the entering into treaties and international agreements, must be with the advice and consent of the Senate.

For reference, Section 25 imposing the ban says in part: "Foreign military bases, troops, or facilities shall not be allowed in the Philippines except under a treaty duly concurred in by the Senate and, when the Congress so requires, ratified by a majority of the votes cast by the people in a national referendum held for that purpose, and recognized as a treaty by the other contracting State."

(Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said recently that Filipinos should be happy about the militarized islets because, he said, they would become Philippine installations when the Chinese leave. Would they, ever?)

The definition of the Philippine territory will crop up during the planned revision or amendment of the Constitution. Aside from the unresolved Philippine claim on Sabah (North Borneo), the status of disputed features in the West Philippine Sea will be brought up.

We cannot blame observers asking if the revising or amending of the Charter has figured in any unre-

ported understanding that the President may have discussed with Chinese leaders in exchange for massive development loans, grants and investments, among other things.

In his Monday speech, Duterte must have been carried away that he slipped in his joke that China could even make the Philippines part of its territory, as a province: "Kung gusto 'nyo, gawin 'nyo na lang ka-ming province, parang Fujian (If you want, just make us a province, like Fujian)."

On Panatag (Scarborough) shoal, Duterte disclosed that China President Xi Jinping has promised not to build any structure on that traditional fishing ground of Filipinos, Chinese and Vietnamese some 120 nautical miles west of the Zambales coast. But Filipino fishermen have been complaining that Chinese Coast Guard vessels and fishing boats were crowding them out of Panatag.

Still upbeat, Duterte said that talks were ongoing for the joint exploration and mining of Philippine maritime resources. In advance, he talked of a two-thirds/one-third Philippine-China sharing.

The President did not explain, however, what was to be shared two-thirds/one-third. Was he referring to the sharing of costs, or gross earnings or net profits?

• Nobody tried to stop China's buildup?

WHEN pressed to explain why Duterte has allowed the militarization of WPS features to the point of virtual surrender of Philippine territory, administration apologists' usual retort is to ask what previous adminis-

trations had done about it.

A sample of what had been done was the filing in 2014 by the Aquino administration of a case against China with the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague. The action won in 2016 a grant invalidating the Nine-Dash Line theory that China uses to claim virtually all of the South China Sea.

That victory of Manila could have been used as legal, diplomatic and political leverage, but Duterte cast it aside as he cozied up to Beijing and pivoted away from the United States.

Shortly after, reports came out that China was transforming Mischief Reef in the Spratlys into an island in violation of the arbitral ruling based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea that China and the Philippines, among more than 100 nations, had signed.

Periodically, photographs showed continued Chinese militarization in the WPS. By the end of 2017, China nearly completed installing military facilities in its "big three" Spratlys islands – Subi, Mischief, and Fiery Cross reefs – complete with airstrips that can handle jumbo jets.

The US-based think tank Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative has reported that China is likely using Fiery Cross (Kagitingan Reef) as its intelligence hub in the Spratlys. It reported: "None of the other bases in the Spratlys so far has a comparable array, though smaller ones have been built on Subi and Mischief, suggesting that Fiery Cross might be serving as a signals intelligence/communications hub for Chinese forces in the area."

Kris Aquino invites Paolo Duterte

From page 1

Aquino in his post, saying she should stop being dramatic and should just play PlayStation4.

Duterte's post also indicated that "the commemoration of EDSA is a reminder of a broken promise 30 years since." It cited the "two Aquinos and the corruption that prevailed," referring to the late President Corazon "Cory" Aquino and his father's predecessor, former President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III. The post also bore the hashtag "eat sh** and die."

Aquino, subsequently, replied to the post and clarified she does not know how to play PS4. Her brother was previously criticized after rumors surfaced that he was allegedly busy playing video games at the height of the Manila hostage crisis in 2010, which he later on denied.

The actress-host said she invited Duterte so that she can get to know him properly and promise there would be no drama during their meeting. She explained that she made the invite online as she already saw an "opportunity to open communication lines."

"To the best of my knowl-

edge we have never actually met or been personally introduced," Aquino said adding that she only met the current president and his daughter, Kitty.

"I have no agenda other than the desire for you to personally get to know me & vice versa... Too much bad blood has already been manufactured between our families... We have the chance to hear each other out," the former president's daughter said.

Aquino said she would rather be rejected than regret not inviting Duterte. She also said she would respect the president's son if he would decline her invite.

"Hihiram ako ng linya kay Julia Roberts from Notting Hill (but of course rewriting it to suit our particular situation): i'm just a girl, unfortunately not standing in front of a boy, but doing it via social media- asking him to give getting to know her personally a chance... I shall await your decision & pray that my effort won't be snubbed," Aquino wrote.

Aquino also earlier addressed trolls and fake news purveyors who are discrediting the legacy of her mother amid the revisionism of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution:

'I am ready to die for my country!'

From page 1

to extra-judicial killings or abuses.

On the purported threats to freedom of expression, Duterte said he does not prohibit journalists and critics from writing their views on any policy or program, but they should not resort to fake news. It is the spreading of false news that distorts the truth

which must be scrutinized, not being protected by the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

Finally, President Duterte, contrary to AI's report, protests and demonstrations, whether for or against the policies of his administration are prevalent, showing that democracy is very much alive under his administration!



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In front of Chinese envoy, Duterte makes bold stand on sea row

BY NESTOR CORRALES

“Those are ours.”

He made his speech at a joint event – the 10th Biennial National Convention and 20th Founding Anniversary Celebration of the Chinese Filipino Business Club, Inc. (CFBCI) – which was also attended by Zhao.

“I am ready, to put my presidency, my career as President, my life and honor [on the line]. Atin ‘yan. I have stated it in black and blue [sic – he probably meant white – Ed.]. It has been the claim of the Republic of the Philippines na atin ‘yan... which we called before the [South] China Sea, now the West Philippine Sea,” he said in a speech he made on Monday at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel.

But the President insisted that the Philippines could only be “diplomatic” in dealing with the country’s maritime dispute with China in the South China Sea.

Duterte said the Philippines would continue to insist its claim in the disputed waterway but reiterated that Manila could not go to war with Beijing.

“Well, we can only be diplomatic. We can only be talking on friendly and civilized terms,” Duterte said. “We cannot go there, ride in our whatever, Navy, the gray ships, the Coast Guard and start waving our rifles. We cannot do that today. It is unrealistic. It cannot be true.”

He said he would not commit the lives of Filipinos to a war against a powerful neighbor.

“Then why would I go there, bring my Navy, my soldiers, my police and ev-



President Rodrigo Duterte asserted in a speech he made on Monday the sovereign rights of the Philippines over the disputed parts of the South China Sea in front of Chinese businessmen and Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua.

everything only to be slaughtered?” he said “I will not commit the lives of the Filipinos only to die unnecessarily. I will not go into a battle which I can never win. We cannot do that today. It is unrealistic.”

China has sweeping claims in the South China Sea, transforming at least seven disputed reefs into island fortresses.

Duterte has been slammed by critics for his soft stance on China. But the President blamed the previous administration, which was headed by President Benigno Aquino III.

“The critics say that I am not doing enough,” he said. “What were they [previous officials] doing during their time? Why did they not start to build things there, structures that China is doing now?” he said.

“So even in the claim itself and in the development of that claim, wala tayong ginawa,” he added, referring to the time when China was just starting building military installations in the

disputed sea during the administration.

Duterte said the military installations in the disputed islands were not intended for the Philippines but for the United States.

INQUIRER.net had earlier reported that China had almost completed transforming artificial islands into military bases.

“Now, nandiyan ang China building structures and military bases. I must admit it. But is it intended for us? You must be joking,” he said.

“It’s not intended for us. The contending ideological powers of the world or the geopolitics has greatly changed. It’s really intended against those who the Chinese think would destroy them. And that is America,” he added.

He said China was willing to talk over the maritime row, citing the ongoing bilateral consultative meetings Manila and Beijing had conducted.

“Why will I fight? China is willing to talk,” he said.

Koko defends PDP-Laban-Communist Party of China alliance

BY PATHRICIA ANN V. ROXAS

“This is a free country.”

This was how Senate President Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III defended on Wednesday the partnership of Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban) with the Communist Party of China (CPC).



Sen. Koko Pimentel III

“The PDP-Laban can choose who to partner with especially if iniimbata kami. Kung ‘di kami iniimbata ng American parties wala kami magagawa,” Pimentel told reporters.

Pimentel, who is also the president of the ruling political party, said their co-operation agreement with CPC since February 2017 does not necessarily mean

that they would adhere with its principles.

The agreement, whose terms have yet to be released, was just like PDP-Laban’s agreement with United Russia, Pimentel said.

“May exchanges kami between high-level party officials, organize round table discussions on sub-

jects of common interests, magpadala experts to talk to other side. Wala naman sinabi na we need to copy the principle of the other side,” he explained.

Pimentel further said Vietnam also extended its invitation to partner with PDP-Laban, adding that no European or Western country has inked any partnership with them.

PDP-Laban’s alliance with CPC is being criticized especially amid China’s continuous militarization of the West Philippine Sea, and naming of some undersea features in the Philippine Rise.

PDP-Laban celebrated its 36th anniversary on Tuesday, with representatives from the CPC led by Vice Minister Guo Yezhou attending the event

No date on Sereno’s return to office yet, her camp says

BY KRISTINE JOY PATAG

Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno would go on an “indefinite leave,” with no date yet on when she would return to her office, one of her spokespersons said.



CJ Maria Lourdes Sereno

In a press conference, lawyer Jojo Lacanilao said that Sereno would be on leave starting Thursday, but the chief justice has yet to determine when she would resume office.

Quoting Sereno, Lacanilao said: “As soon as I feel that my preparations for the Senate trial is over, then my leave is over.”

“When that is, she will decide that. But it is not forever, continuing to resignation” Lacanilao said, stressing that the chief justice has no intention to resign.

On Tuesday, reports citing unnamed sources said that

after a “confrontation” with other justices during the en banc session, Sereno filed an indefinite leave. This was countered by Lacanilao who clarified that Sereno is going on a “wellness leave.”

Facing the press on Wednesday morning, Lacanilao clarified that Sereno has filed an “indefinite leave” that would be charged to her wellness leave as mandated under the internal rules of court.

Part of Sereno’s letter reads: “On the matter of my leave, please take note that due to the demands of the Senate trial where I intend to fully set out my defenses

to the baseless charges, I will take an indefinite leave, until I have completed my preparation for the Senate trial.”

“Resignation is a personal decision”

Lacanilao also stressed that only the Senate could oust Sereno from her position.

“Being an impeachable official of the Philippines, under the Constitution, the only body that can decide to remove her—that is the Senate,” Lacanilao said.

According to several media reports, Sereno was asked to resign from her post by one of the Supreme Court justices.

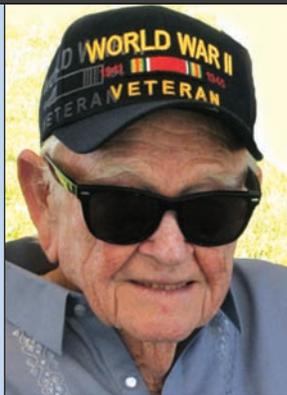
But Lacanilao stressed that if Sereno would resign, it would be her personal decision.

“No body or institution outside the Senate can force the CJ to resign.”

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Palace on US threat report: They're making it hard to be friends

BY GAEA KATREENA CABICO

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang said the United States Intelligence Community report that brands President Rodrigo Duterte as a threat to democracy and human rights in Southeast Asia would negatively impact the relations between the two nations.

In an interview on ANC's "Early Edition," presidential spokesperson Harry Roque Jr. viewed the move "not too friendly" from the country which the Philippines considers a "friend."

"We like to be friends with the United States. But with declarations such as this, it is very difficult to be friendly with the United States," Roque said.

He noted that the administration would view the world threat assessment "with some concerns."

"This is something that we're taking very seriously. It's coming from the intelligence community. It's not even coming from the state department. It's something that the president will take seriously as well," he said.

The presidential spokesperson, however, maintained that the intel report would not affect the ongoing preliminary examination of the International Criminal Court into the extrajudicial killings linked to the government's ferocious drug war as the



Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque

US is not a participant in the international tribunal.

Aside from Duterte, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen also poses threat to democracy and human rights in the region, according to the world threat assessment published last week.

"In the Philippines, President Duterte will continue to wage his signature campaign against drugs, corruption, and crime," the report read.

Warning sign

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV said that the government should treat the US intelligence report as a warning.

"There's a creeping dictatorship. Now this assessment by the intelligence community of the United States government is basically telling Mr. Duterte that there is a red line that you are close to crossing," he said in an interview on ANC's "Early

Edition."

Trillanes, one of the outspoken critics of the administration, called the report "fair."

"From day one that he started killing people, I believe he crossed that red line already. I maintain my position that Mr. Duterte had a policy of killing suspected drug pushers and even suspected drug users without going through any form of validation," he said.

Human rights watchdogs estimate that more than 12,000 have been killed during the course of the government's brutal war on drugs.

The government disputes these numbers and only counts a little over 4,000 "drug personalities" killed in police operations.

Duterte: 'I deserve a higher salary'

BY GENALYN D. KABIGTING

For all the heavy workload and long hours, President Duterte believes he deserves a higher salary.

The President said his "ideal" salary should be at least P1 million from the P200,000 monthly pay he receives as the country's leader.

"Sa pagod ko tapos alam mo ang sweldo ko? 200. Dalawa ang asawa ko [For my weariness, you know how much my salary is? It's P200,000. I have two wives]," he said during a visit to Camp General Adriano Hernandez in Dingle, Iloilo last Thursday.

"Ang ideal salary ko, ako... ako ang mag-estimate, dapat sa akin talaga, walang biruan— 1 million 500. Oo. Sapagod ko [My ideal salary, I estimate I should earn,



Pres. R. Duterte

no joke, one million and five hundred for all my weariness]" he added.

Duterte, now on his second year in office, said he has a busy daily schedule that includes meetings in Malacañang and provincial trips now and then.

The 72-year-old leader, whose workday usually starts at 1 p.m. and lasts way

past midnight, claimed that his present salary does not even include meal allowance.

"Nagrerklamo ako sa kani. 200? Wala akong meal allowance, wala akong representation. Ako lang mag-isa mag-uwi, puntang opisina, tsaka 'yung barge ko na bugbugbugbugbugbug super hina [I have complained to them. P200,000 really? I don't have meal allowance, representation. I go home alone, go to work and then my barge is old and weak]," he added.

President Duterte currently resides at the Bahay Pagbabago, located at the Malacañang Park across the Pasig River from the main Palace. He also commutes back and forth from Manila to his hometown Davao City during week-ends.

Duterte wants Filipino soldiers to train in China

BY ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte wants Filipino soldiers to conduct training in China as he continues to seek warmer ties with Beijing despite the longstanding dispute in the South China Sea.



In this photo provided by the Presidential Photographers Division, Malacañang Palace, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, center, clad in a camouflage uniform prepares to board a helicopter from an undisclosed place to visit troops in Marawi city in southern Philippines Thursday, July 20, 2017. Second from right is Armed Forces Chief Gen. Eduardo Ano.

Duterte said there is a need for "balance" in terms of the training destination of soldiers because

most of them prefer to pursue their studies in the United States, perceived as a rival of China.

"Most of the Filipino soldiers... would immediately choose America. They have forged such bond," the President said during the 20th anniversary of the Chinese-Filipino Business Club in Manila last Monday.

"My suggestion is the next batch should go directly to China... so there would be balance. I'm sure there is an academy there to train good professional Chinese soldiers. Maybe China can accommodate them also and let them... not really to fight the Americans but terrorism," he added.

But Duterte clarified that the Philippines would not cut its ties with its traditional ally the US, which he has accused of interfering with the Philippines' internal issues.

"Let us be very clear on this, we are in good terms with America. Special terms, military alliance — that's why we cannot enter into another military alliance with any country

because there's only one," he said, referring to the Mutual Defense Treaty between Manila and Washington.

"Philippines now is veering towards China. But we maintain good relations. We have this (Philippines-US) pact defense deal, we will honor it, I don't know when. But if we go to war, everything wilts," the President added.

Duterte claimed that the war among countries now is "on trade, not territory."

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the Philippines cannot afford to declare war over the South China Sea row.

"We're in good terms with both the US and China. So, it is not to our national interest to go to war, which is what some people want... They perceive our (position on China to be weak), they want to assert our national sovereignty I guess through military means," Roque said.

"But the President is saying, 'We don't have to do that. We are in good terms with the Americans. We're on excellent terms with the Chinese. If there's conflict

between them, so be it. But we will not take part in it," he added.

Roque said the US has no reason to be concerned because the Philippines will continue to honor its treaty obligations.

"At the same time, as a matter of foreign policy, we're in excellent friendly relations with China which has resulted in tangible results, including terms of military assistance at the time when we needed the assistance," he said.

Duterte has expressed hopes that the tensions in the region would not escalate as he claimed that North Korea, which had boosted its nuclear capabilities, seemed to be "tempering" its policies.

"North Korea is the wild card and it appears to be tempering its policies... I have to pray... once, twice, when it enters my mind about what's happening with the world. One mistake and if all those nuclear weapons are launched, China will join the fray, Russia, Britain, France and Iran," he said.



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Hail blankets Sacramento - or was it snow? - and social media goes wild

BY BENJY EGEL

The City of Trees is resilient. Weathered, like the I Street bridge leading across the Sacramento River. Passionate, as seen in the Kings' fan base's successful push to keep the team in town.

And brick by brick, Sacramento will overcome the hail storm that blanketed the city Monday.

The Sierra Nevada felt closer than usual yesterday, as coffee breaks turned into time spent building snowmen and legislators posed with snowballs near Capitol Mall.

Truth is, Monday's weather was only remarkable in it that it fell over densely populated regions such as downtown Sacramento, midtown and Natomas. Frozen precipitation typically accumulates at a similar elevation somewhere in the greater Sacramento area every year or two, said Erick Kurth, National Weather Service meteorologist.

"This one was important because of where it happened. If it happened out in middle of the rice fields, very few people would have known," Kurth said. "I've been here 11 years and I haven't seen one hit Sacramento like this before."

So what exactly fell Monday? Some said snow, others said hail and still more said graupel, a phenomenon often referred "snow pellets" or "soft hail" where liquid droplets freeze to snowflakes' exteriors. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, the word graupel is "Germanic in origin; it is the diminutive of Graupe, meaning "pearl barley."

One Twitter user from Rocklin compared the disagreement to "The Dress" debate that began exactly three years ago Monday, when "blue and black or white and gold?" became the question du jour.

The answer: a mix of hail and graupel, Kurth said. With temperatures in the low



Photo by Mike Ramos

Downtown Sacramento



Photo by Ling Avera

Elk Grove, CA

50s during Monday's thunderstorm, snow was never a realistic possibility, though it did fall as low as 2,000 feet in the foothills.

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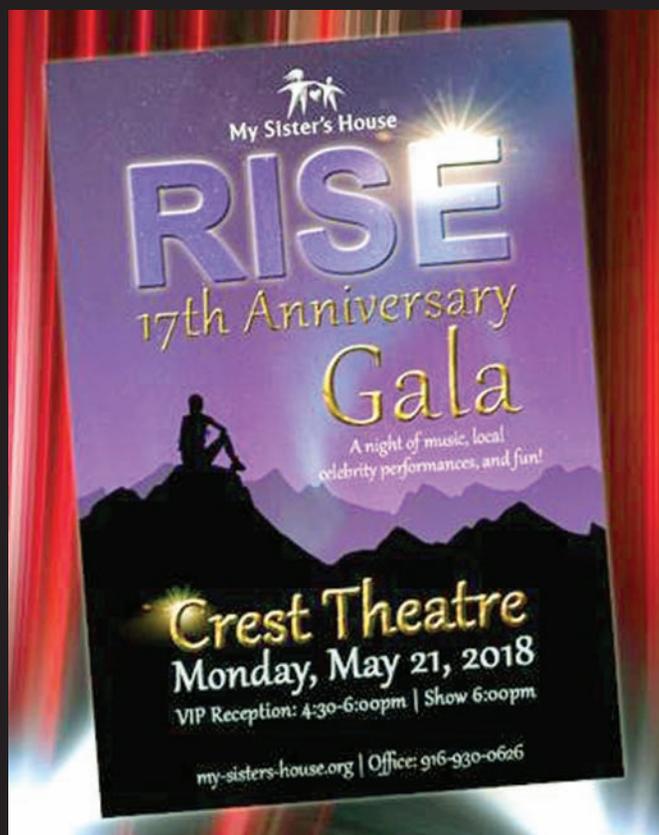
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Trump revives push to limit family sponsorships for immigrants

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — When the U.S. government approved Ricardo Magpantay, his wife and young children

to immigrate to America from the Philippines, it was 1991. By the time a visa was available, it was 2005, and his children could not come with him because they were now adults.

More than a decade later, his children are still waiting.

Magpantay gets worried when he hears the White House is aiming to limit the relatives that immigrants-turned-citizens can sponsor, a profound change to a fundamental piece of the American immigration system.

“It is really frustrating and it is very dreadful for me, because after a long wait, if this will be passed, what will happen for them?” said Magpantay, a 68-year-old mechanical engineer in the southern Californian city of Murrieta. “I won’t be able to bring them forever.”

Central to U.S. immigration law

For the past 50-plus years, family reunification has been central to U.S. immigration law. Those who become naturalized citizens can bring spouses and minor children and petition for parents, adult children and siblings to get their own green cards and become Americans in their own right, with their own ability to sponsor.

Many on opposing sides of the immigration debate have long felt the family reunification system needs reform. Immigration advocates want a reassessment of the quotas on how many people can come from a given country in a given year, which has created decadeslong backlogs for citizens of some countries.

Self-described “restrictionists,” including President Donald Trump, want a narrower, nuclear definition of family, making spouses and minor children the only relatives a citizen could sponsor. That’s a central plank of the sweeping immigration overhaul Trump has proposed, a move that activists say could cut legal immigration in the U.S. by half.

Congress rejected competing bills last week meant to resolve the status of hundreds of thousands of young people brought to the U.S. illegally, including one plan that mirrored Trump’s overall immigration proposal. The lack of resolution on an issue that was pivotal to Trump’s election leaves it as potential tinderbox for the midterm congressional elections this fall.

‘Chain migration’

In his State of the Union speech last month, Trump referenced an attempted bombing by a Bangladeshi immigrant in New York in December as proof of the need to curtail what he and others term



Filipino American Jeff DeGuia, 28, holds up family pictures at Unidad (Unity) Park in Los Angeles, Feb. 1, 2018. DeGuia, 28, says it took his mother more than a decade to bring two sisters from the Philippines. AP PHOTO

“chain migration” in favor of a more skills-based system.

“This vital reform is necessary not just for our economy, but for our security and for the future of America,” he said.

Trump is giving a spotlight to an idea that “was clearly out in the wilderness” in a policy sense, and something only its advocates were really talking about, said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, which has long pushed for limits on family sponsorships.

“He has forced issues to the forefront that need to be debated,” Krikorian said.

Advocates of family reunification call the rhetoric around merit and skills a smoke screen.

“They’re being disingenuous — their goal is to reduce immigration overall,” said Anu Joshi, director of immigration policy at the New York Immigration Coalition. “This is just about cutting family, it’s a family ban.”

Prior to 1965, U.S. immigration was tightly controlled, with parts of the world all but ineligible and caps that ended up favoring immigrants from northern Europe.

Families of Italians and other Europeans pushed to change the law, resulting in a system that opened visas to all countries equally, with preferences for family reunification and, to a lesser extent, those with advanced skills or education.

Main beneficiaries

At the time, politicians didn’t think the changes would make a great deal of difference and that European immigrants would be the main beneficiaries. Instead, Asians and Latin Americans started coming and then were able to bring their parents and siblings.

Dividing the available visas equally among countries also had an unanticipated impact. In countries where the demand was higher, like China, India and the Philippines, the line has grown so long that it can take years for someone to get a green card.

That’s a reality immigrants and their advocates wish more Americans knew, in the face of Trump’s

State of the Union assertion that “a single immigrant can bring in virtually unlimited numbers of distant relatives.”

Jeff DeGuia, 28, recalled that it took his mother more than a decade to bring two sisters from the Philippines.

“There’s definitely this idea you are not really complete without your huge family,” said DeGuia, whose grandfather came to the United States for an engineering job in the 1970s. His family settled in Chicago, though he and his brother now live in Southern California.

“Your cousins are like your brothers and sisters, and your uncles and aunts are like second dads and second moms,” he said.

Dividing families

Proposals to scale back the number of immigrants allowed into the country will end up dividing families and drive more people to enter the country illegally, making them vulnerable to exploitation, said Angelica Salas, executive director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles.

Family immigration is also important, advocates said, because it signals immigrants’ commitment to make America their home, not just take a job that lands them here. For years, relatives have helped newcomers integrate into society.

Royce Murray, policy director for the American Immigration Council in Washington, said immigrants bringing family to join them once they settle in the United States is the foundation of the country.

“The idea someone came before us and wanted to work hard and bring their family is actually a very unifying value, a very bipartisan value,” she said. “Wanting to reunify families should be common ground, and we’re struggling against this hostile branding to make it something that it’s not.”

After shooting, students brace for emotional return to Florida school

Students and teachers preparing to return to the Florida school that was the scene of a gruesome mass shooting continue to urge politicians to act swiftly to address gun violence

Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON DC, USA — Students and teachers preparing to return to the Florida school that was the scene of a gruesome mass shooting called the prospect “daunting” and “scary” as they urged politicians to act swiftly to address gun violence.



RETURNING TO SCHOOL. People visit Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 25, 2018 in Parkland, Florida. Joe Raedle/Getty Images/

“Imagine being in a plane crash — and having to get on the plane every day and go somewhere else,” David Hogg, a survivor of the February 14 shooting at a Parkland, Florida high school, told ABC television’s “This Week.”

“I can’t imagine, emotionally, what me and my fellow students (will) go through that day.”

Some students and teachers went to the school for “orientation.” Teachers and staff are to return full time Monday and Tuesday (February 26 and 27) to prepare their classrooms for students coming back on Wednesday, February 28.

Seventeen people died in the attack. Authorities have charged a 19-year-old former student, Nikolas Cruz, in the assault.

One teacher who has already been back told NPR radio that the shock of returning to a classroom left exactly as it had been during the attack — notebooks still on desks, the calendar still set to February 14 — made her so physically ill she had to leave.

Amid ardent demands by students like Hogg for action, President Donald Trump has said he is open to raising the minimum age for gun purchases and to banning so-called bump stocks, which can effectively convert semi-automatic weapons into automatic firearms.

‘Red flag’ law

A new CNN poll, conducted a week after the Florida shooting, shows surging public support for stricter gun laws — surpassing levels seen even after other horrific shootings of recent years — and for a ban on powerful semi-automatic weapons like the AR-15 used in Parkland.

Overall, 70% of those surveyed said they supported stricter gun laws, up from 52% in October, and 57% favored a ban on semi-automatic arms, an increase from 49%.

There was a marked shift in the intensity of feelings, CNN said — a “massive increase” in those who strongly favored stiffer gun laws compared to those who strongly opposed it.

Florida Governor Rick Scott has laid out a plan to station a police officer at every public school in the state, raise the legal age for

gun purchases from 18 to 21 and pass a “red flag” law for authorities to more easily remove guns from the mentally ill or people with violent histories.

The age change and “red flag” law are staunchly opposed by the influential National Rifle Association, of which Scott is a member.

Scott, who holds the NRA’s highest rating of A+, noted on “Fox News Sunday” that “there will be some that disagree. But... I want my state to be safe.”

Florida was also the scene of a June 2016 shooting at an Orlando nightclub that left 49 people dead.

Dana Loesch, an NRA spokeswoman, told ABC that her organization opposes most of the proposed gun bans.

Instead, she placed blame on politicians, for their inaction, and on law enforcement — specifically the Broward County Sheriff’s Office, which she said had had ample warning of Cruz’s violent tendencies.

She accused the sheriff’s office of “abdication of duty” for not arresting Cruz sooner.

‘A terrible idea’

But in an often contentious interview on CNN, Sheriff Scott Israel strongly defended his department’s work.

Of the 23 calls to his department about Cruz’s erratic or threatening behavior, nearly all were minor and had been handled appropriately, and a few others were being investigated, he said.

Asked about a deputy who stood outside the school building for long minutes even as the slaughter unfolded, Israel called the man’s inaction “disgusting,” but said he appeared to be alone in failing to respond adequately. The deputy has since resigned.

“We will investigate every action of our deputies, of their supervisors... and if they did things wrong, I will take care of business,” he said.

US media have reported that 3 other Broward County Sheriff’s deputies also stayed outside the school and did not enter during the crisis.

Some Republican lawmakers in Florida have called on Scott to suspend Israel, accusing him of “incompetence and neglect of duty.”

Continued on page 8



PerryScope

“The U.S. is under attack!”

BY PERRY DIAZ

Last January, CIA Director Mike Pompeo met with Russia intelligence officials in Washington, DC. Two of them, Sergey Naryshkin, the head of Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service or SVR, and Alexander Bortnikov, who runs the FSB, which is the main successor to the Soviet-era security service, the KGB, met with Pompeo. The head of Russia’s military intelligence, the GRU, also came to Washington; however, it is not clear if he met with Pompeo.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) had pressed the Trump administration to explain a report that Moscow’s foreign intelligence director entered the United States last week despite being subject to sanctions. Interestingly, Naryshkin’s entry into the U.S. occurred a day after the Trump administration said it would postpone the imposition of new sanctions against Russia, which Congress sought in bipartisan legislation last year. Schumer told reporters: “The Trump administration must immediately come clean and answer questions. Which U.S. official did he meet with?” [Source: Politico.com/Schumer presses Trump on report that Russian under sanctions entered U.S.]

The top-level Russian visit was looked upon suspiciously. But regardless what purpose the Russian master spies had behind their mysterious visit to the nation’s capital, it alarmed the U.S. Senate. Last week, the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee conducted a hearing and invited Pompeo

and the nation’s other intelligence chiefs to testify, including Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Dan Coats, FBI Director Christopher Wray, and National Security Agency (NSA) Director Adm.



CIA Director Mike Pompeo

Mike Rogers.

Mysterious visit

All of the intelligence chiefs were of the common belief that the Russians are a security threat to the U.S. But it was DNI Coats who spelled it out clearly and loudly, “The United States is under attack!” It is likened to the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor in 1942. But it’s a new kind of warfare, never before tested in the battlefield. And the Russians appear to be ahead in the game.

And if they continue to penetrate the U.S.’s defenses, it could lead to the destruction of the U.S. as a superpower. It could disable the country’s power grid, which could render the country politically impotent, economically inutile, and militarily worthless.

In his testimony, Coats said that “Russia, China, Iran and North Korea pose the greatest global cyberthreats, but terrorists, criminal organizations and even individuals are engaging in cyberoperations as well.” He added: “Russia is likely to continue to pursue cyberactions against the U.S. “using elections as opportunities to undermine democracy, sow discord and undermine our values.”

Coats also mentioned that North Korea’s continuing nuclear am-

bitations would pose the greatest threat in terms of weapons of mass destruction in the coming year. Other nations considered as threats with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are Russia and China. However, Russia and China don’t have to resort to using WMD. They have taken long strides in the development of cyberspace technology, electromagnetic radiation, and electronic warfare.

But nothing could be easier for the Russians than to penetrate America’s weakened political structure, which if they succeeded would hasten the destruction of Pax Americana, not unlike the demise of Pax Romana that had spanned 206 years from 27 B.C. to 180 A.D. However, historians have questioned when Pax Romana actually ended? Many believe that it ended long before Rome fell, beginning in the reign of Augustus Caesar and extended through the reign of subsequent emperors until the death of Nero in 68 A.D.

The fall of the Roman Empire

Sad to say, what’s happening to America today is not unlike what happened to the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire in 1453 A.D. when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire. But the fall of the Byzantine Empire started to happen long before the Ottomans took over the empire.

The fall of the Western Roman Empire began in 410 A.D. when the Visigoths successfully sacked Rome. In 455 A.D., Rome was again raided, this time by the Vandals. Finally, in 476 A.D., the Germanic leader Odoacer staged a revolt and deposed the Emperor Romulus Augustulus. From then on, no Roman emperor would ever again rule from a post in Italy, leading many to cite 476 A.D. as the year the Western Roman Empire suffered its deathblow.

Pax Americana’s decline

Basically, the Western Roman Empire was weakened due to several reasons, two of which were similar to Pax Americana’s decline. The first was overexpansion and military overspending. Rome’s territories covered a lot



of ground, all the way to Britain where Rome had to maintain large number of troops just to keep the enemy at bay. As more and more funds were funneled into military spending, infrastructure fell into disrepair for lack of funds. Isn’t that what’s happening to the U.S. right now?

The second was due to government corruption and political instability that are precisely what the U.S. is going through today. If Rome’s sheer size made it difficult

waned and many Roman citizens lost trust in their leadership. [Source: Wikipedia/history.com]

Trump budget deficits

With the excessive military spending that President Donald Trump has earmarked in his budget and the \$1.5-trillion tax cuts for the wealthy that he railroaded through a Republican-controlled Congress, who do you think would suffer from the humongous budget deficits and the \$20-trillion debt?



President Donald Trump

What’s happening to the U.S. government under President Trump reminds us of the Roman Emperor Nero, who fiddled while Rome was burning. Isn’t it bad enough that Trump is playing golf while the White House is burning, scandal after scandal?

The recent indictment of 13 Russians by the Special Counsel Robert Mueller signifies Russia’s attempt to change or manipulate the outcome of the 2016 U.S. presidential election in favor of Donald Trump, who won the electoral votes but lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by more than three million votes.

Looking back at history, DNI Coats’ warning to the U.S. Senate may have reminded him when the Visigoths were at the gates of Rome: “Rome is under attack!” the Praetorian Guard sounded the alarm. Indeed, what’s happening to the Trump administration has an eerie similarity to the year 410 A.D. when the Visigoths sacked Rome. Rome never regained its supremacy. Thus, the decline of the Western Roman Empire had begun.

However, the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire continued to exist for another 1,000 years. It’s a feat that no empire on Earth had duplicated, including modern-day empires that thrived for just a few years. The U.S. is now 242 years old, which begs the question: Is the U.S. going through what Rome had gone through during the time of Nero?

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

After shooting, students brace for emotional return to Florida school

From page 7

A defiant Israel insisted he had provided “amazing leadership,” adding: “Of course I won’t resign.”

Trump has also proposed arming some teachers, a step many teachers passionately oppose.

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, told C-Span in an interview that “it’s a terrible idea, period, full stop.”

Children, parents and teachers, she said, “want schools to be safe sanctuaries for teaching and learning, not armed fortresses.”

Meanwhile, Delaney Tarr, another young survivor of the Florida shooting, said she was girding herself as best she could to return to school.

“It’s daunting... (and) scary because I don’t know if I’m going to be safe there,” she told Fox.

“But I know that I have to.”



personal bodyguards -- assassinated and installed new sovereigns at will, and once even auctioned the spot off to the highest bidder. The political rot also extended to the Roman Senate, which failed to temper the excesses of the emperors due to its own widespread corruption and incompetence. As the situation worsened, civic pride

Cambio Climatico:

A Hurricane Named Maria and the Warming Caribbean Sea Across the Shores of Puerto Rico

BY R. CARADO DIZON, PH.D.

A Series of Three Parts

"The Inconvenient Truth is that hundreds of scientists declared just recently that Climate Change is no longer a distant threat but has moved firmly into the present.

In some parts of the country, weather-related disasters like drought, fires, storms and floods are going to get harsher and costlier. This is not some distant problem of the future but affecting Americans right now."

Al Arnold Gore, Jr., 45th U.S. Vice-President and 2007 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Awardee with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He also authored "An Inconvenient Truth", a book on Global Warming, published in 2006, and was in the New York Times' best seller list that year. When translated into film, it also won two 2006 Academy Award Oscars for Documentary Feature and for Original Song, "I Need to Wake Up."

Part I - A Weapon of Mass Destruction

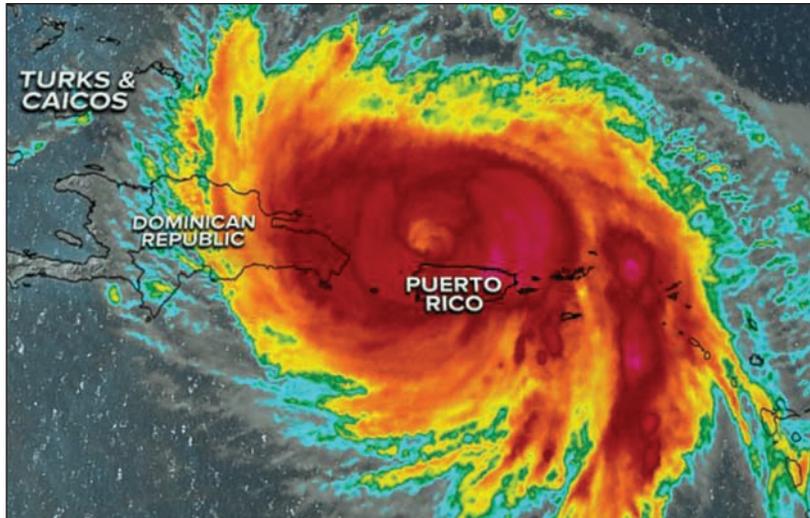
Modesto, California Central Valley, Winter 2017. In the Old Farmer's 2017 Almanac, a "Hurricane Threat" was the forecast for early September in the Florida region and vicinity (Weather Region 5). The warm humid conditions in this region do not differ much with those of Puerto Rico, a U.S. Commonwealth/ Territory, about 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) in the southeast. Both are in the Tropics, i.e. they lie 1,600 miles (2,500 km) north of the Earth's equator.

The almanac's average temperature prediction for the southern tip of Florida for the September-October 2017 period is quite hot, at 85 degrees Fahrenheit (F). Quite similarly, in the lowlands of Puerto Rico, 86 degrees F is the forecast for the same period. The waters of tropical seas are also hot during September to October.

One such sea is the Caribbean. Puerto Rico is right across the Caribbean Sea in the tropics. This hot condition in both the land and in the sea is best explained by the World Book Encyclopedia (1981) thus, "Tropical places are hot because the sun's ray shine almost straight down at noon. Such direct rays shine more intensely and therefore produce higher temperatures than do slanted rays."

The hot tropical waters at this time of the year also breed storms. This is the forecast of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) climatologists (The New Yorker, 07-24-2017). Three months before that, the National Geographic Climate Change issue (April 2017) read, "By heating the ocean-the storms' energy source- it's likely to make them more intense, if less frequent."

And so, it came to pass that on the day before the season changed from Summer to Autumn, on September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, the autonomous U.S. Territory, across a warming Caribbean sea. Packing howling and turbulent winds at 155 miles per hour (mph), the near category 5 storm made landfall on the island's southeastern corner and in less than 24 hours, the 3,425 square mile (8,897



Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, the autonomous U.S. Territory, across a warming Caribbean sea.

sq. kilometer) island was raked clean by the deadly hurricane, also known as (aka) "a weapon of mass destruction" (TIME Magazine, 9-25-2017). To the 3.4 million inhabitants, the destruction was total.

Research by the local climate Impact Lab (probably college-owned), concluded that no larger area had been hit so comprehensively anywhere in the world in the past 60 years. It was the fifth strongest storm ever to strike the U.S., the most destructive one on record. TIME magazine (10-09-2017) reports, "The inland hills that rise more than 300 ft. above the heart of Puerto Rico were drawing moisture out of the storm, which loosed torrents of rain. Flash floods tore through valleys, and hill-sides collapsed, pulling down houses already shorn of their roofs. Roadways were turned into tunnels as trees on both sides fell into one another. The entire electricity grid came down taking with it the pumps that supply drinking water. The main aviation radar at the top of the wooded summit had been knocked out."

The whole island seems to have been carpet-bombed with a defoliant/herbicide not unlike the "Agent Orange" chemicals that the US Navy warplanes dropped in the jungles to expose enemy snipers during the Vietnam War. Woe to all the verdant palms, trees and myriad other green plants that abound in the island and the nuts, fruits, leaves; and the canes they bear.

Hurricane Maria destroyed them all! The vast sugarcane haciendas were flattened. Tons and tons of sugarcane that have just been cut and ready to be loaded and trans-

ported by ferrocarril to the seven huge sugar centrals for immediate non-stop milling and refining, were all carried away instead to the Caribbean Sea by the rampaging waters. The angry waters left behind on its wake thick mud and alluvial silt that buried the flattened canes and render them unfit for harvesting. The sugar factories themselves, all battered partially by the strong winds, had to close.

They will have to wait at least another year before the inundated cane crop will have been ratooned (regenerated) and be harvestable by then. Lots of matured and unhusked coconuts as well as tons of copra that were being dried in communal sun-driers, side by side with tons of matured coffee beans, were found floating with the storm debris. They were mingling with countless stranded land and sea creatures, dead or alive. As did many farm livestock like cattle and goats, struggling hard to swim themselves out of the muddy waters right in the Condado Lagoon at the river mouth of San Juan, as major portions of this capital city was under water. Street after street in the other municipios (townships) throughout the valley were lined with mounds of stinking garbage mixed with slime, trees and even dead animals.

Every town's nook and corner makes a veritable breeding place for rats, roaches and all sorts of nasty diseases. And even though the floodwaters have finally subsided, the risk of epidemic grows as the fetid piles of garbage remain uncollected and disposed of (Tribune News Service, 10-14-2017). It is suspected that infectious

diseases may have been the main cause of why the death toll has risen from 16, at Disaster Day (D-Day) plus seven, to 41, the Sunday before Halloween 2017 (NBC Meet the Press, 10-29-2017). Overall, the high-ranged estimate of the total hurricane damage is a whopping \$95 billion or \$27,000 on a per capita basis. The loss of income alone from the expenditures of about a million tourists who frequent Puerto Rico's beautiful beach resorts almost every day of the year has been estimated to reach \$ 424 million annually.

This is indeed a terrible blow to Puerto Rico whose population is already reeling from a per capita debt of \$ 20,366 (TIME, 10-16-2017).

(Part II - Massive Relief Operation will be continued on next issue.)



The island was raked clean by the deadly hurricane, also known as (aka) "a weapon of mass destruction".



R. CARADO DIZON

The author is a retired Professor of Ecology from the Capiz State University in the Philippines. He completed his Ph.D. (Biology) degree at the Bowling Green State University in Ohio in 1984, on a NEDA-USAID scholarship grant. His book, "Ecology of the Coconut Crop in the Philippines" was published in 2004. He is at present on a sentimental tour of the U.S. visiting his daughters, brothers, sisters and several other relatives and Filipino friends from California to Washington, D.C

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Fil-Am Community of Sacramento and Vicinity (FCSV) Spring Fever Dinner & Dance

BY DALE ESPERANTE

The soiree organized by FCSV on the evening of 23 Feb 2018 was just what the doctor ordered! This year's wintry season has been brutal causing most folks to stay indoors. Staying indoors though may cause some to experience cabin fever. Cabin fever is defined by the Urban Dictionary as "a kind of claustrophobic reaction which can occur when people are shut in together over long period of time. It could cause irritability and restlessness."

Thanks to FCSV President Mercy Guerrero and fellow officers Cleo Sabarre Ner, Carol Munar, Ling Avera, Emilia Caoagas Dones, and Bembet Borromeo for organizing a fun filled party held at the newly discovered Florin Creek Recreation Center located at 7460 Persimmon Ave, Sacramento, CA 95823.

The doors opened at 5:30 p.m. when members of the community started filtering in. They were welcomed by Luz Daclan and Rose Basos as they stepped in the interior of the nicely designed building. The organizers decided to have no official program except for a few intermittent announcements. The dinner catered by Carol Munar met everyone's dining pleasure—yummy!

Three dance troupes performed three different dance styles. First up, the two Hip Hop partnership of Alvin Sisayan and Christine Jones. They made quite an entrance as Alvin entered with Christine rested on his shoulders. Christine descended acrobatically to the rhythm of the rousing hip hop beat. The two rocked the room with their upbeat and intricate lifts and moves. What really caught this audience's attention was the indelible smile of Christine throughout the dance routine. The smile enhanced the performance of these two creative dance artists.

Next up, D'Dreamgirls Dancers. This dance crew included three lovely ladies, also wearing that indelible smile, wowed us with their Latin flavored dance routine. The outfit they wore befit their shapely built. They all looked like models ready to go on a fashion catwalk. Do we have a Filipino Cosmopolitan magazine?

The Kapitbahay Dancers performed as the third dance ensemble. As always, the ladies did their specialty dance—the cha-cha-cha. The apparent camaraderie of this group showed, inspiring and always appreciated by the viewing audience.

Thank you to all the dance performers who warmed up the evening for the next stage of the evening—nonstop open dancing. Seen dancing: a lovely lady in red outfit with a tall partner who has an apparent advance knowledge of leading her partner in ballroom dancing; everyone up and circling the dance floor to the beat of the



Photos by Dale Esperante

music—all smiling and really getting into it; Alvin dancing the swing and salsa with a couple of different partners including Edna Villanueva. This was the first time I've seen Alvin danced non-Hip Hop like the swing and salsa. Alvin impressed everyone with his leading, timing, and musicality. No wonder Christine was all smiles when they performed the first hip hop dance number. Long-time friends Henry and Filomena Domondon who seemed interested in dancing, but only as observers, finally got on the floor and loosened up with a couple of freestyle and waltz numbers.

The five organizers of FCSV—Cleo, Carol, Ling, Emilia, and Bembet—all contributed to the fun by always taking part in the mission of the evening—Dancing. We are grateful to FCSV and President Mercy Guerrero for scheduling a fun Friday night experience. It made us forget about winter for a couple of hours as we enjoyed the Spring Fever Dance! (Proceeds will go to the FCSV Scholarship Fund)



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FAVA 29th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers

BY DALE ESPERANTE

On 3 February 2018 at The Hilton Double Tree Hotel in Sacramento, FAVA welcomed family and friends for an evening of military/veteran celebration with the community.

The program started with the entrance march of the veterans. The veterans proceeded from the back of the room to the front standing in formation facing the audience. The Flag Detail then marched up the center then stopping, facing their comrades in formation. FAVA Conductor Pete Delacruz then walked to the center of the room to lead the veterans in singing the national anthems (US and Philippines) and the military service songs. The proud voices of the veterans resonated and inspired all those standing in the large event hall. The songs started with "The Star Spangled Banner..." when all the veterans saluted the flag, then to the "Bayang Magiliw..." when most placed their right hands over their heart, to the Army's "First to fight for the right..." followed by the Navy's "Anchors aweigh, my boys..." to the Air Force's "Off we go into the wild blue yonder..." cruising to the Coast Guard's "We're always ready for the call..." and finally the Marine's "From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli..." To punctuate the conclusion of the service songs, Conductor Delacruz led the veterans to holler ARMY! NAVY! AIR FORCE! COAST GUARD! MARINES! OORAH! The audience erupted with applause and hollered their appreciation for the veterans' moving rendition of the anthems and service songs!

A veteran ceremony is not complete without remembering the veterans who may still either be incarcerated as a prisoner of war or missing in action. Air Force Retired Master Sergeant Jose "Joe" Gonzalez approached the POW/MIA small table for a solemn ceremony calling "attention to Americans still unaccounted for from WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and other conflicts involving the United States of America." MSgt-Ret Gonzalez began with "The TABLE is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors. The TABLECLOTH is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. The SINGLE ROSE in the vase signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith while awaiting their return. The RED RIBBON on the vase represents an unyielding determination for a proper accounting of our comrades who are not among us. A SLICE OF LEMON on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate. The SALT sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait. The GLASS is inverted. They cannot toast with us at this time. The CHAIR is empty. They are NOT here. The CANDLE is reminiscent of the light of hope, which



President Richard Weitzenberg



FAVA's welcome table



Pres. Richard Weitzenberg and Lion Derek Ledda

lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to the open arms of a grateful nation. The AMERICAN FLAG reminds us that many of them may never return—and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom. Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks. Let us remember—and never forget their sacrifice. May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families." The above POW/MIA ceremonial descriptions were copied from the American Legion Manual of Ceremonies.

The Invocation of veteran Joe Zaragoza of St. Charles Borromeo Parish preceded President Dick Weitzenberg's Welcome Remarks. After the invocation, the president proclaimed that FAVA is not an insular organization. Based on the presence of the guests representing the various organizations of the community, FAVA is indeed not insular but also a proud part of the community! Present were The Maharlika Lions Club, Bayanihan of Sacramento, Kapitbahay, The Ilocano Organization, Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Pacific Rim, The American Legion Magel-



Newly elect FAVA officers for 2018-2019.



March of the veterans and color guards.



The Installation of Officers with Maharlika Lion's Club's Mr. Derek Ledda.



The FAVA ladies.

Photos by Dale Esperante

lan Post 604, The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 604, The Bicolanos, The Kapampangans, The Dreamgirls, The Masagana Club and regrettably many more organizations that escaped this writer's memory. President Dick also shared—emotionally—that for the first time, he had to plan for this event without Memie to lead and help him. He was not sure if this year's event would be successful without Memie. The answer became clear when most of the friends of Memie showed up to support her loving husband and also their faithful friend, President Dick Weitzenberg of FAVA. It was a successful evening Dick, Memie would be proud!

Vice President Ato Delacruz respectfully acknowledged the past presidents of FAVA: Bobby Aglubat (USN) 1989, Felimon Reyes (USN) 1990, Bobby Aglubat (USN) 1991, Glenn Carrasca (USAF) 1992, Andy Tancio (USN) 1993-1995, Bill Versoza (USN) 1996-1997, Danny Pascua (USN) 1998-1999, Mario Lardizabal (USN) 2000-2001, Art Calindas (USAF) 2002-2003, Richard Weitzenberg (Army) 2004-2007, Dale Esperante (USAF) 2008-2009, Rick Rafanan (USN) 2010-2011, Tom Amaba (USN) 2012-2013, Fred Aquino (Army) 2014-2015, Richard Weitzenberg (Army) 2016-2017.

Continued on page 12

FAVA 29th Anniversary Ball and Installation of Officers

From page 11

During dinner hour, Cleo Zabarre Ner mesmerized the guests by her solo expression of an indigenous Philippine dance called Pangalay and Taking Baile Fusion, a Mindanao Muslim dance. Fully outfitted in black with a wide beige sash, dancing barefooted, she commanded the floor with intricate and defining dance patterns. From this audience's perspective, Cleo's performance honored her culture while behind her, posted in attention, were the national flags of the United States and the Philippines, the military service flags, along with the banner of the Filipino American Veteran Association (FAVA)—a scene symbolizing the fusion of two cultures.

The Installation of Officers started with President Weitzenberg introducing The Maharlika Lion's Club's Mr. Derek Ledda. Mr. Ledda proceeded to professionally and engagingly fulfill his duties as the Installation Officer:

Relief of the Outgoing Officers of 2016-2017 / Installation of New Officers (2018-2019)

Richard Weitzenberg - PRESIDENT (Richard Weitzenberg)
 Pete Delacruz - VICE PRESIDENT (Ato Delacruz)
 Joe Gonzalez - SECRETARY (Joe Gonzalez)
 Elizabeth Velasco - TREASURER (Elizabeth Velasco)

DIRECTORS

Evelio (Bill) Versoza - PERSONNEL (Pete Delacruz)
 Fernando (Andy) Tancioco - WAYS & MEANS (Fernando (Andy) Tancioco)
 Aurora Foresee - SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (Olivia Jackso)
 Ricardo (Rick) Rafanan - EDUCATION AND WELFARE (Evelio (Bill) Versoza)
 Fred Aquino - JUNIOR PAST PRESIDENT (Fred Aquino)

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Will Williams - CHAPLAIN (Will Williams)
 William Bostock - SERGEANT-AT-ARMS (William Bostock)

President Weitzenberg expressed his appreciation again to all who supported FAVA in the past and current times. He followed his



remarks by introducing Treasurer Elizabeth "Beth" Velasco. Beth is also FAVA's de facto Dance Choreographer with the help of her loving husband, Jess. Paraphrasing Ms. Velasco, "FAVA Anniversary is not complete without the presentation of an Anniversary Waltz number by the FAVA dance troupe." The FAVA dancers include Jess and Beth Velasco, Rich Rafanan and Warnita Avillanoza, Andy and Edna Tancioco, Dr. Fred Aquino and Bella Anderson-Nido, Joe and Carina Gonzalez, Ato and Yollie Delacruz, Dick Weitzenberg and Carmelita Pangilinan. Waltzing to the music of Nat King Cole's Fascination, the dance troupe swayed and glided demonstrating a good frame of dance, full of synchronized grace and beauty delivered with body language and great partnership. After the performance, the audience robustly showed their appreciation with cheers and applause. The anniversary waltz culminated the official program.

From 9 to 11:30 in the evening, Hi Tech Sound DJ Ed Cordero provided dance music non-stop. Seen on the dance floor were several professional dance instructors and seasoned dance enthusiasts, such as Rusty and Zeny Baluyot, Benj Hisoler and Lani San Luis, Fred Aquino and Beatriz Alo, Carlina Victoria, Ben and Remy Poquiz, Bella Anderson-Nido, Fred and Malou Amper, Beth and Jess Velasco, me and my wife Melita, Mercedes Descargar, Carmelita and Fred Calindas, Remy and Tony Solomon, Edna Villanueva, Lena Morelli, Leila Pereira, Mercy Guerrero, Lilia and Joe Rivera along with countless others who enjoyed the evening. The dance aficionados surely showed up this evening. They kept the DJ busy until the closing hour of the celebration.

Congratulations again to President Dick Weitzenberg, a four-time FAVA president, and to all of FAVA! It was such an enjoyable evening because of the presence and support of all the community organizations! Maraming Salamat Po at Mabuhay Sacramento Fil-Am Community!



Photos by Dale Esperante



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UNLUCAI Works on Mission After Global Reunion

BY FAINA and JUN ABAYA

Members of the United Naguilian La Union Circle of America Incorporated based in Sacramento, California, USA who attended the town's Global Reunion and other festivities have decided to work on their other mission.

Coordinating with the personnel of the town's social welfare, UNLUCAI President Tina Bambao and her team requested that their donations consisting of reading glasses, assorted clothing, bottled water, chocolates and can goods be distributed to the remotest Barangays. The reading glasses, clothing and goods were donated by the members and friends in Sacramento while they were preparing their travel for the Global Reunion which were shipped ahead of time to be received by them on time of the festivities.

The residents of two Barangays Gusing Norte and Cabaritan Sur were selected as the recipients and the distributions of the goods were simultaneously conducted on February 19, 2018 and both places were well attended by the residents. Each recipient entitled to receive at least one or several items was given a number to freely pick up what he or she needs. The distributions were smoothly conducted and all the recipients were thankful for such commendable generosity, especially, coming from sons and daughters who returned home to their beloved town with sincerity of purpose to help their town mates in



time of need. In addition, Henry Bambao donated 150 pesos each to 50 indigent residents of Cabaritan Sur. Likewise, he also donated Tennis net and balls which the children can use at their playground.

The residents also expressed their profound gratitude for the UNLUCAI other meritorious undertakings such as Medical/Dental

Mission, Scholarship Grants for deserving high school students, as well as those who are now enjoying their vocational studies and other assistance in time of need during natural calamities.

The other members who assisted President Tina Bambao were husband Henry Bambao, Edgar and Charity Avena, Jun and Josie Pabros, Carol and

Erna Bambao, Mannie and Cora Ojascastro, Dick and Marilyn Bernal, Eli Floresca and Estennelle Dumaguang.

After the successful Naguilian Global Reunion, the members also attended several festivities such as the Tinuno festival at the karayan (river) and had boodle where each barangay has their own booth and any residents of Naguilian with their guests could eat for free at any of the Barangay booths. All the festivities they attended were very successful and enjoyable which will always linger in their memories.

Celebrating 70 years

On 18 February 2018, James and Aurora Foresee welcomed family and friends for a day of celebration in their lovely home. A cornucopia of tasty dishes filled their sunroom, ready for the taking. Every dish was prepared by friends of Aurora, mentioning just a few: Lydia Mangabat, Lottie Munsayac, Esther Mros, Luz Daclan, Mercedes Descargar, Melita Esperante, Josie Salindong, Garlin Hora, and many more. Tables and chairs were set-up out in the splendid garden for those who enjoy al fresco dining. Inside, the guests were serenaded by romantic music as they dined and socialized. What a beautiful day for a celebration! May Aurora and Jim have many more birthdays and celebrations to come in the future! Your family and friends love you and Jim, Aurora!



Remember: Outstanding Filipino Youth Award Applications are still available to 8th graders and 12th graders until March 9th!

REMEMBER

Outstanding Filipino Youth Award Applications

Applications open now until Friday, March 9

Visit www.pnda-sac/ofya for the app and more info





Calendar of Events

APRIL 28, 2018 (SAT.)
HAWAIIAN LUAU
 Hui o Hawaii of Sacramento, Inc.
 Dinner 5:30pm / Show 6:30PM
 Ben Ali Shrine
 3262 Marysville Blvd. Sac 95815



MAY 19, 2018 (SAT.)
 Dinner and Dance and
 Coronation of Santa Elena &
 Emperador Constantino
 Time: 6/pm/11/pm
 Donation:\$20,00
May 20,2018 (SUN.)
 Santa Cruzan
 Procession and mass
 2/pm. Procession
 3/pm. Mass
 Place : St. Paul Catholic church



JUNE 3, 2018 (SUN.)
FILIPINO FIESTA of SACRAMENTO
 10AM - 5PM
 Jose Rizal Community Center
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento
 FREE Admission



Birthdays



MARIA A. ERESPE and mom Norma
MARCH 15



FRED CALINDAS and wife Lita
FEBRUARY 27



BOBBY G. ROY
MARCH 21



ZYRUS ELLERSICK with Leila & Emma
MARCH 28



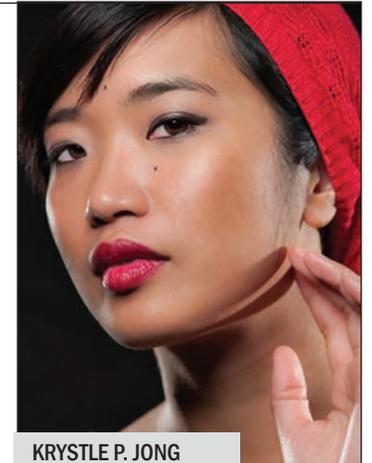
ALEX CHENG with Jenn & Nikka
MARCH 4



JOJO FRANCISCO and family
FEBRUARY 27



BO APOSTOL and wife Sorcy
MARCH 5

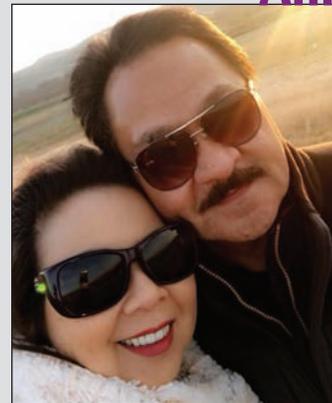


KRYSTLE P. JONG
MARCH 26

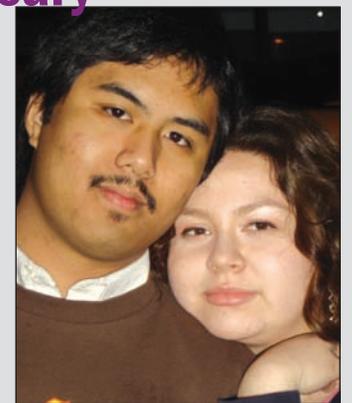


NOLI ESMANE SAN PEDRO celebrated his birthday on February 4, 2018 with family, relatives and friends in San Leandro, California.

Anniversary



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37th Wedding Anniversary, February 27



JOHN and AUBREY ABAYA
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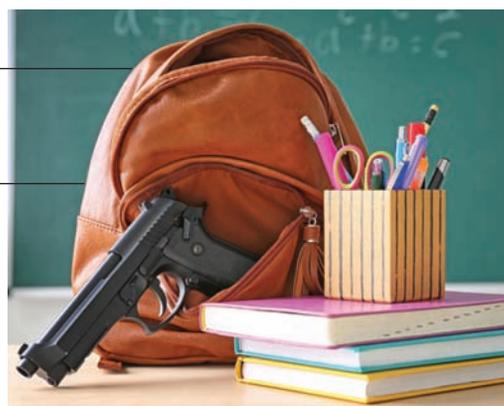
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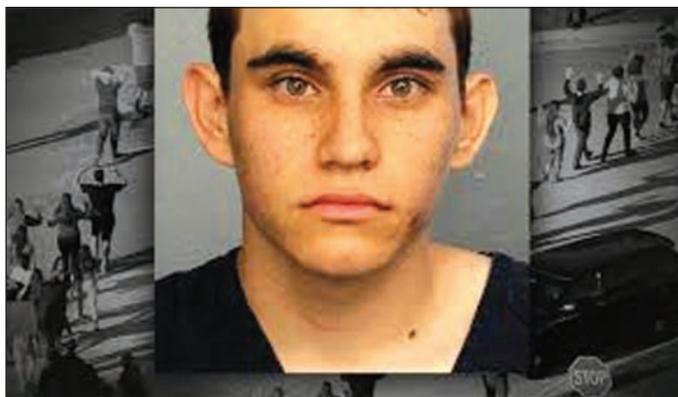
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PerryScope
By PERRY DIAZ

Teachers aren't gunslingers



If President Donald Trump had his way, teachers would be required to carry guns in school. Yes, just like the Wild West where just about everybody carried a gun. No license required. No "Second Amendment" to make it lawful to carry a gun. But in the Wild West, there was one exception: Teachers didn't carry guns. There were enough gunslingers to scare psychos away from schools.



The killer, identified as 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, used a semi-automatic assault rifle in his murderous spree, which also wounded 14 other people including five with life-threatening injuries.

But those were the good old days when good guys – like Wyatt Earp and his brothers -- killed the bad guys. Today, there are no more good guys to go after the bad guys because the bad guys don't carry six-shooters anymore; they carry "assault rifles" that can fire six hundred rounds a minute. That would certainly scare the hell out of any good guy who's armed with just a handgun.

And that's probably what Trump had in mind when he suggested that teachers carry guns to kill psychos armed with "weapons of war" like the AR-15 that was used to kill 17 people at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida last February 14. Trump had tweeted that there were "many signs the Florida shooter was mentally disturbed."

It was reported in the news that the

FBI was alerted six months ago after a YouTube user named "Nikolas Cruz" posted a comment stating "I'm going to be a professional school shooter" on the video site, which makes one wonder: What did the FBI do to stop Cruz from pursuing his evil plans? Could the FBI have the same nonchalant attitude in dealing with other potential terrorists?

But the FBI can't be blamed for their perceived inaction. They don't have enough manpower to deal with the problem. The 35,000 people employed by FBI include special agents and other support professionals such as intelligence analysts, information technology specialists, scientists, and others.

"Have gun, will teach"

So whose problem is it then? Trump and National Rifle Association (NRA) Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre are of the same mind about guns in schools: they both want more guns in schools. Trump wants to arm teachers to protect themselves and the school children. LaPierre agrees with Trump in the sense that arming the teachers would be consistent with his convoluted philosophy, which he reiterated dur-

ing the recently concluded Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC): "The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." The only problem with this is that oftentimes the good guys gets killed, simply

because they're under-armed and don't have proper training in handling guns. Simply put, teachers teach children, not shoot people. But Trump and LaPierre believe otherwise. They're convinced that teachers can be made into good shooters; that is, killing people. But that's not what they were taught to earn their teaching



President Donald Trump had his way, teachers would be required to carry guns in school.

credentials. They were taught to teach children, not to kill people.

It is interesting to note that when the shooting started at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, there was an armed deputy on

duty at the school -- someone tasked, specifically, with keeping the students inside safe. Needless to say, the deputy was armed with a handgun, which was typically what most deputies would carry. So, when the mass murderer started shooting with his AR-15 in a rapid-fire fashion, the deputy on duty must have gotten so scared and he froze. For the next four minutes he stayed out of the school while the shooter murdered 17 people inside.

The problem in America today is that there is a proliferation of assault rifles. And Congress isn't doing anything to rid the streets of these dangerous weapons of war. Their use should be limited for law enforcement purposes. And there must be laws that restrict their sale to civilians and minors. Strin-

gent background checks must be enforced and people with mental health problems must be banned from purchasing them.

But nothing is being done about it. Lawmakers refuse to enact

gun control laws for fear of losing the endorsement of the NRA and their campaign contributions. To be blacklisted by the NRA would spell the end of their legislative careers. In other words, the NRA and their lackeys in Congress control the deadly game that has been putting the lives of school children in danger.

Never Again!

But the gruesome massacre of 17 people during the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School changed all that. The survivors of the Parkland school decided to bring their case to the State Capitol in Tallahassee, Florida. Busloads of students and others took the seven-hour trip to Tallahassee. They were joined by thousands of other students and supporters. They called their movement, "Never Again." After four days, the movement has spread across the nation. The organizers plan for a nationwide protest rally in Washington, DC on March 24. They call it "March For our Lives."

Yesterday, six teen-aged students in Kansas took a bold step into the murky waters of politics – they declared their candidacies for governor of Kansas. More are expected to run for legislative seats and other political offices as well.

Finally, the dragon has awakened, ready to challenge the political dominance of the NRA that has for so long been at the apex of power. Indeed, the Never Again Movement could usher in the dawn of a new age in America.

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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The War Brides

BY VINCE REYES

World War II was quickly coming to an end. Manila was a jungle of wreckage. Office buildings, churches, homes, hotels, factories and docks lay in ruin. In other parts of the country, people poked through similar scenes of destruction, looking for food or belongings or the remains of family members killed by either the retreating Japanese or the bombardment of the advancing Americans.

“Our family survived by gathering wild cassavas, bananas, guavas, pineapple and jackfruit,” recalled Flory Bautista, then a teenager in war-torn Leyte. “There was never enough food, but we hardly thought about it because we were afraid. We just wanted to survive.”

A few months later, Bautista would leave behind that tragic chapter of Philippine history and sail for America as the “war bride” of a Filipino serviceman in Uncle Sam’s army. Her journey was part of a larger phenomenon—the beginning of the Second Wave of Filipino immigration to the United States.

The Second Wave of Filipino immigration was short in duration but profound in its impact on the size and composition of the Filipino community in America. The bulk of the wave came into the United States directly after the war, between 1946 and 1953, as Filipinos who served in the armed services were granted U.S. citizenship for their contribution to the war effort. Many of these servicemen had been living in the United States before the war as younger members of the First Wave of immigration.

Returning with their Florys, they would, for the first time since the beginning of Filipino immigration to the United States at the turn of the century, build a more stable community and produce a second generation of “baby boom” Filipino Americans.

Before Flory Bautista’s arrival in 1948 the pioneering Filipino immigrants of the ’20s and ’30s bore the brunt of the anti-Asian sentiment that earlier victimized the Chinese and the Japanese. Most Filipinos worked for low wages in the agricultural fields of the West Coast or as domestics in the large cities. The Great Depression made them easy scapegoats as “dark-colored aliens” who were displacing white workers and “causing un-

employment.”

Because of the colonial relationship between the United States and the Philippines, Filipinos were regarded as “nationals” or “wards.” They were ineligible for citizenship and could not buy property. Anti-miscegenation laws barred them from marrying whites. The scarcity of Filipino women prevented the rise of a full-fledged community and the emergence of a large second generation.

“It was off to war. The scene at the docks was different for the Filipino GIs. While their American counterparts were receiving long goodbye kisses from their sweethearts, the Filipino GIs had no women to leave behind. What they had was the opportunity to bring back “war brides” with them.”

Filipino women were not encouraged to immigrate as U.S. labor recruiters mainly wanted young, single males to carry out the arduous and transient work demanded by the emerging agriculture industry. Of the 331,092 Filipinos who entered the United States between 1920 and 1929 (the majority 93 percent) were males. Females were outnumbered roughly 13 to one. World War II and the invasion of the Philippines by Japan would change the bachelor society of Filipinos in the United States.

On January 3, 1942, the day after Manila fell to the Japanese forces, the U.S. Selective Services national headquarters scrapped the rules that had prevented “nationals” from joining the U.S. military. It opened the way to Filipino participation in all war-related efforts.

On February 20, 1942, the Secretary of War announced the formation of the First Filipino Infantry Battalion of the U.S. Army. Thousands of Filipinos volunteered. The First Filipino Infantry at Fort Ord, California had more than 5,000 men within a few weeks, and the number grew steadily.

Some infiltrated the Philippines as commandos as early as 1943. The U.S. command gave the majority the “eventual opportunity of fighting on the soil of their homeland,” when Gen. Douglas MacArthur “returned” to the Philippines in October 1944.

It was off to war. The scene



Filipinas decked out in their Filipino ternos; many came after the '30s. (Photo from the Alex Fabros Sr. Collection)



Filipino American GI trainees enjoy a Sunday lechon (roast pig) parties with civilians; Patricia Todtod (third from right) is the first Filipino woman to edit a newspaper, the Philippine Mail of Salinas, California.

at the docks was different for the Filipino GIs. While their American counterparts were receiving long goodbye kisses from their sweethearts, the Filipino GIs had no women to leave behind. What they had was the opportunity to bring back “war brides” with them.

When the Filipino GIs arrived in the Philippines—for some after more than a 20-year absence—they were hailed as part of the “American liberation forces.” Carmen Valerio of Alameda, California was a teen-ager at the time and recalled that “when American tanks rolled in everyone just came out of their houses to greet the soldiers. People brought glasses of water for the war-weary soldiers. The GIs distributed rice, army rations and pork and beans.”

Their patriotism aside, many Pinoy GIs saw the trip back home as a chance to find brides and start families as soon as they got back to the United States. On July 31, 1945, the Philippine Examiner, published in Stockton, California carried a story announcing that the U.S. State and Justice departments would “permit Filipino nationals, who are either married to U.S. citizens or who have children born in the United States, to

enter the United States without visas and at the expense of the U.S. government.”

Many of the Pinoy GIs were already in their late thirties or early forties. The denial of a normal family life in the United States had only sharpened their awareness of the opportunity that was now in front of them.

Since their tour of duty was limited, GIs hurriedly proposed to their prospective brides as soon as they met them, or to their parents, whoever would facilitate the marriage. An abbreviated romance led directly to the altar. The young Filipinas knew their suitors and had to make quick decisions that would completely change the course of their lives. Sometimes their parents made the decisions for them. Many of the women were still in their teens, and their flashy GI beaus were sometimes 20 years older.

“Actually, there was no courtship. His people and my parents talked about the marriage. I had no part in the talks at all,” Sixta Vinluan reminisced.

Carmen Valerio met her husband while he was with the Philippine Civic Affairs Unit in San Juan, Rizal. His office was in charge of distributing rations.

Valerio said that one morn-

ing when she was standing in line for rations, people were cutting ahead and kept her line moving.

“I got so mad I went to the front to complain,” she recalled. “I complained to the first person I saw and it so happened that person was my husband-to-be. I found out we were province-mates from Pangasinan.

Immediately, he gave me the rations as well as other goods.

“The next day, he was at our house to visit me, and everyday since. Within one week we were engaged and within a month, we got married. It was so funny! Our wedding reception was at the army headquarters and the food we served was all ration food!”

Carmen Mapanao from Agno, Pangasinan, had a similar story. “He was working in the naval base as an airplane painter. He went home to find someone he could marry. He went to my hometown to visit his cousin. The cousin and his wife visited me one day in the school where I was teaching. It did not take long.

“He talked to my parents, not to me. There was no mention of love. In fact, it was the cousin’s wife who told me he was in love with me! After three days, he talked to my parents about marrying me. There were other war brides from my hometown.”

An International Migration and Naturalization document showing the number of immigrants per country reported a 2,500 percent rise in Filipino immigration to the United States between 1945 and 1946. The war brides were among these new arrivals. In 1947, the number of immigrants again doubled from the previous year and steadily rose in succeeding years.

With the massive influx of Filipino women, Second Wave immigrants altered the character of the Filipino community. Before the war, the U.S. Public Census of 1940 listed a total of 1,502 Filipino women in California; the 1950 U.S. Census showed a jump to 5,141. The number of married Filipinos increased phenomenally. In 1940 there were only 5,327 married Filipino males of the 26,313 Filipinos listed in

California. In 1950, 17,616 men were listed as married.

For the most part, the war brides did not face the same degree of economic instability previously experienced by their husbands or other members of the First Wave. At least for men who stayed in the military, certain essential needs were provided, such as government housing, PX (post exchange) privileges and medical care. Even for those who left the armed services, special veterans loans helped people buy homes and automobiles. And most important of all, the returning GIs were granted full citizenship, which opened doors to civil service positions.

In many ways, the security provided by military benefits, combined with the influence of the McCarthyism that was gripping the country, contributed to a conservative political climate in the community. Labor organizing also became less of a priority as more Filipinos began to leave the fields. Besides, McCarthyite witch-hunts put the trade union movement on the defensive. Although Filipinos were still victims of discrimination, the task of settling the new family and the atmosphere of a post-war economic boom discouraged open involvement with the issues of the day. Furthermore, many a marginalized bachelor of the First Wave now had citizenship, GI benefits, government jobs and war brides. And they naturally were Americanizing with a vengeance.

As for the war brides, their presence was immediately felt. The old, established all-male clubs such as the Caballeros de Dimasalang, Gran Oriente Filipino and Legionarios del Trabajo now formed women’s auxiliaries. Veterans of Foreign Wars chapters and regional clubs sprang up in towns and cities with women as part of their peripheries.

Coronation balls and box social dances quickly replaced the taxi-dance-hall-bachelor-culture of the ’20s and ’30s. Also, for the first time, scores of small Filipino American children—a second generation—could be seen trailing behind their parents. Seen, but for the succeeding two decades, not heard in a community that politicians loved to describe as a “model minority.” That is, until the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War and the nationalist resurgence in the Philippines in the ’60s shattered the post-war serenity. But that’s another story.



BY NANCY CRISTI BAUTISTA

365 Guidelines To Live By



Some of the followings do not have any scientific proof behind them. These are just personal tips or guidelines on how to live healthy, easily and happily. Get medical approval prior to the medical applications. Doing just at least one of these everyday may bring a positive outlook in life.

March:

1. Smile:
Smile uses lesser facial muscles than frowning. Go, smile! Be contagious.
2. Protect Yourself And Your Family:
Learn and teach yourself and your family to protect one another.
3. Adult Sex Life:
For adults, have a safe and happy sex life.
4. Junk Foods:
Avoid junk foods to avoid inflammation, diabetes, heart diseases, and bone loss.
5. Shower Everyday:
Daily showering is good for your health and pleasant to others near you.
6. Charity Contributions:
Be charitable. Donate.
7. New Haircut:
Try a new haircut today. If the result is unfortunate, it will grow back.
8. Detox:
Detox the body. According to Lorraine Bracco, Naturally Detox Your Body, January 5, 2017: These foods will give your

liver a helping hand so that they work at peak efficiency all the time to keep you clean from inside out. Munching on these 30 foods will naturally clean and detox your body, every single day.

1. Apples
2. Artichokes
3. Asparagus
4. Avocados
5. Basil
6. Beets
- 7 Brazil Nuts
8. Broccoli and flaxseed oil
9. Brussel Sprouts
10. Cabbage
11. Carrots
12. Cauliflow
13. Cilantro
14. Collard greens
15. Dandelion [tea]
16. Fennel
17. Flaxseeds
18. Garlic
19. Ginger
20. Kale
21. Lemon
22. Olive, hemp
23. Onions
24. Parsley
25. Pineapple
26. Spinach
27. Turmeric
28. Walnuts
29. Watercress
30. Wheatgrass

9. Car Maintenance:
Make sure that your vehicle is professionally well-maintained. Mechanic friends might be cheaper, but, could be more expensive and dangerous in the long run.

10. Guard Down:
Do not let your guard down. Always be alert.

11. Reflux Medicine:
Reflux medicine can cause bone loss. Refer to your physician.

12. Daily Good Deed:
Do a good deed everyday.

13. House Chores:
Hum or sing when doing house chores or turn on your favorite music.

14. Socialize:
Meet and join happy group of people. Dance. Play sports.

15. Hatred From Heart:
Remove the hatred from your heart and let the love in.

16. Vacation:
Vacation needs not to be expensive or far. There are numerous beautiful places locally.

17. Eat Plenty Of Greens:
Eating greens is healthy and there's abundance of these around.

18. Heel Drops:
Exercise your bones. Tip toe and drop your heels.

19. Believe:
Be self confident. Nobody would believe you, if you do not believe in yourself first.

20. Risk:
Take a risk, but, carefully. See tip number 10.

21. Calcium:
Too little calcium results to bone loss. However, too much is bad for the arteries.

22. Spring:
Spring is in the air. Feel the sun and the warmth it brings.

23. Good Posture:
Maintain a good posture at all times. It will carry you through your mature age.

24. Whole Food:
Eat whole food and as fresh and natural as possible.

25. Best Exercise:
The best exercise is the one you keep.

26. Protein:
According to Dave Asprey of Bulletproof Diet: "Eating too much protein, especially along with a poor overall diet, can damage your cells, impair your cognitive performance and decrease your longevity. When you eat too much protein, your body can become overwhelmed by the task of digesting it. Unlike fats, which are clearly burned in your cells, your body will try to oxidize the excess protein in your liver. This produces several major toxins that can decrease your performance and damage your health.

27. Jotting Down:
Always jot down ideas or plans so you won't forget to do them later.

28. Eat To Regret:
Do not eat what you know you will regret later.

29. Careful Movement:
No matter what your age is, be careful with your steps and movements.

30. Hip Fracture:
Ninety percent of women die of hip fracture more than breast cancer.

31. Church:
Do your religious duty.

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BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

Scarce Organic Produce

When God created the earth, everything was natural. Adam and Eve ate fruits from the tree. Human ancestors ate naturally grown produce fresh from the farm. Today, however, there is scarcity of organic produce because most farmers are dependent on synthetic fertilizer and pesticides to grow their plants.



Organic produce

the years go by because natural beneficial microorganisms in the soil are killed by harmful effect of synthetic chemicals and pesticides. Shelf life of organic is longer than non-organic produce.

To solve the problem on scarce and expensive organic produce, we

Growing vegetables and fruits using synthetic fertilizer is now common to farmers. Commercial ads on pesticides are frequently seen in media which greatly influence farmers to purchase the products which are readily available in the market. The danger with non-organic farming is the effect of synthetic fertilizers on human health. According to PANNA (Pesticide Action Network North America), farmers exposed to pesticides developed prostate, ovarian, and skin cancers. Organic farming is the answer to this phenomenon.



Vegetables and fruits grown naturally are healthier. Clean natural food nourishes our body while food nurtured by artificial fertilizer brings forth illness. According to PANNA, "In the U.S., one of every two men and one of every three women are likely to develop cancer over the course of a lifetime — and pesticides are part of the reason why." Organic produce is preferred by health-conscious people because of its health benefits. Organic produce lengthens life. Eating clean food provides nutrients that nourishes the body and makes a person live healthy long life.

The economic benefit to the farmer of organic produce is obviously excellent. Farm input for organic agriculture is low but the harvest is high. On the other hand, farm input for non-organic agriculture is very expensive and the farm yields are getting lower as

that will eventually mandate farmers to grow vegetables and fruits to augment the scarce organic produce sold in the market.

The people and the government should work hand-in-hand to solve the problem on scarce organic produce.

In US, 57 percent of kids on track for obesity by 35: study

BY AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

More than 57 percent of children in the United States will be obese by age 35 if current trends in weight gain and poor eating habits continue, researchers warned Wednesday.



Children with severe obesity -- which affects 4.5 million children in the United States -- face only a one in five chance of being normal weight adults.

The risk of obesity is high even among children whose present weight is normal, said the report in the New England Journal of Medicine.

"Only those children with a current healthy weight have less than a 50 percent chance of becoming obese by the age of 35 years," said the study, led by researchers at Harvard University.

Some 36.5 percent of the US adult population is now considered obese, a condition federal health officials define as having a body mass index of 30 or higher.

The annual medical costs of obesity in the United States are more than \$147 billion per year, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Adult obesity is linked with increased risk of diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer," said lead author Zachary Ward, an analyst at Harvard University's T.H. Chan School

of Public Health. "Our findings highlight the importance of prevention efforts for all children as they grow up, and of providing early interventions for children with obesity to minimize their risk of serious illness in the future."

The study was based on a simulation model that predicted future trends based on height and weight data from five nationally representative studies of more than 41,000 children and adults.

"Obesity will be a significant problem for most children in the US as they grow older," it said.

"Of the children predicted to have obesity as adults, half will develop it as children."

Weight gain in a child's early years is particularly hard to reverse in adulthood.

Researchers found that among obese toddlers aged

two, three out of four will also be obese as adults. Children with severe obesity — which affects 4.5 million children in the United States — face only a one in five chance of being normal weight adults.

Racial and ethnic disparities in weight are already apparent by age two, with black and Hispanics more likely to have obesity than whites — yet another trend that persists into adulthood.

"It is critically important to implement policies and programs to prevent excess weight gain, starting at an early age," said senior author Steven Gortmaker, professor of the practice of health sociology at Harvard.

"Plenty of cost-effective strategies have been identified that promote healthy foods, beverages, and physical activity within school and community settings."

Komiks Buhay Pinoy by Dave San Pedro



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Sunshine Cruz stuns in red bikini, denies undergoing tummy tuck

BY CODY CEPEDA

There is no secret when it comes to maintaining a happy and healthy lifestyle. There is, however, a formula. For mom-of-three Sunshine Cruz, it's boxing, spinning, Zumba at least three times a week, and enough headspace and shut-eye. Confidence and sexy knows no age after all, even for Cruz who turns 41 this year.

Just three days ago, Feb. 23, Cruz shared a photo of her with fellow actresses Alice Dixson and Ina Raymundo during the Century Tuna Superbods go-see in Glorietta 3. The three stunned in red hot swimsuits, and looked statuesque in nude high heels.

Being fit and fab while being 40 and up is no mean feat indeed. But of course, there will always be snide comments from skeptics. One netizen (@wamille) commented on Cruz's photo, tagging another friend (@ongthe-humanboy) to ask if Cruz ever underwent a tummy tuck.



Sunshine Cruz



Sister Tess, Maricel and Sunshine.

The latter replied, saying, "Maybe? Look at the bellybutton."

"I don't think she'll admit it but it's too obvious tho."

Their scrutiny didn't escape Cruz, who replied to the three of them to deny the tummy tuck allegations.

"Lol! Please do check out my photos from way back if you can. I have one when I was just 15," wrote Cruz. "I have nothing against women undergoing the procedure pero hindi pa ako nagpapa (but I do not undergo) tummy tuck. Excuse my small belly button. Maliit talaga yan (It's really just small) just like my sisters pusod (belly button)."

And as if to prove her claims, Cruz shared a picture of her two days ago with older sisters Tess and Maricel lounging by the pool.

"My real fitspirations, my 2 gorgeous and FIT sisters," wrote Cruz. "You girls should join #superbodsageless!"

Perhaps there is a secret, after all. It's in the genes.

Angelica Panganiban takes another jab at ex-BF's girlfriend

It seems like actress Angelica Panganiban has no plans of slowing down when it comes to making hugots about her still-nameless ex-boyfriend. In a YouTube video called "Ask Angelica Season 3 Finale" uploaded on Jan. 24, Panganiban was once again put into the spotlight for a situational question and answer.

In the episode, one question asked was whether a person should fight for an ex that used to be a "great love," even though this person is already in a relationship.

Panganiban seemed to not be able to control herself when she said, "May kilala akong ganito ngayon. Yung asawa niya may relationship dun sa ex niya. Diyos ko, tigilan niyo yung mga may asawa, yung mga may ka-relasyon na! Kung may relasyon na wag niyong piliting sirain."

"Yan kayo eh, iba kayo! Kapag may relasyon na may relasyon na, wag niyong inaagaw. Tapos kung makapagpost kayo kala niyo wala kayong mga sinaktan," Panganiban continued in her self-deprecating humor. "Kunyawari masaya kayo, edi wow. Excuse me ha inagaw mo lang yan sakin. Hindi kayo

nakakatuwa."

In another question, Panganiban was asked how one could restore their trust in a person who had wronged them in the past. "Never," Panganiban answered in fits of laughter. "Kasi trust yan eh. Yun nga eh, hindi sila nag-Trust."

Panganiban seemed to allude to the condom brand Trust. "Kaya yun ang kinalabasan.

Tapos ngayon bibili sila ng mga gamit ng bata (So that's what happened. And now they're going to start buying



Angelica Panganiban

other personalities such as talent manager Lolit Solis have hinted at the pregnancy and a wedding in the making.

Adarna, on the other hand, seemed to be in good spirits as she uploaded last night a throwback photo of her with Cruz, Panganiban's ex-boyfriend.

In another post, Adarna shared an Instagram story of her with her friends singing to "Pero Atik Ra" in Bisaya language by singer Jacquelyn Chang.

The lyrics go: "Move on, move on, murag uyab. Ambot ning dughan ko pataka la'g pasagad. Ngano mang naglisud ko og buhi. Nga wa man ta ko guniti, pugngi sad ko bi."

When translated, it goes, "Move on, move on, parang magsyota. Ewan ko ba sa puso bakit kung ano ano na lang pinagagawa. Bakit ako nahahirapan na bitiwang ka. Hindi ka naman nakahawak sa akin, pigilan mo naman ako."



Ellen Adarna and John Lloyd Cruz

things for the baby)."

It should be noted that rumors have been circulating that Ellen Adarna, John Lloyd Cruz's current girlfriend, is pregnant with his child. Although not confirmed by Cruz and Adarna,

Mark Bautista's 'bromance': Was it with Piolo Pascual?

BY APRYL GALANG

On February 7, netizens went gaga when excerpts leaked from the upcoming tell-all book by singer-actor Mark Bautista.

The book is not just an ordinary tale of the 34-year-old performer's life. Some juicy details

are hinted to be dished out in his book titled "Beyond the Mark" which the actor swears he personally wrote.

One of the chapters in his book will be tackling about his certain "bromance" with a male friend some years ago. Many see this detail revealing of long-swirling rumors on the singer's preferences for romance.

In the book, Mark admits



Mark Bautista and Piolo Pascual

that he became intimate with a "male friend," but he left out his name.

Speculations that it was actor Piolo Pascual were fueled by another detail Mark disclosed: that his "intimacy" with his male friend ended when his girlfriend found out about the close friendship between the two boys. Years ago, Piolo was rumored to have broken up

with then-girlfriend KC Concepcion.

Sources knowledgeable about the people involved, however, confirmed to Philstar.com that it

was not Piolo Pascual that Mark is referring to in his book. While the sources were mum on the mystery man's identity, they hinted that he might also be a celebrity.

Will Mark personally come out in the open to shed light on his revelations? As seen on social media, LGBT groups are already welcoming him with open arms.

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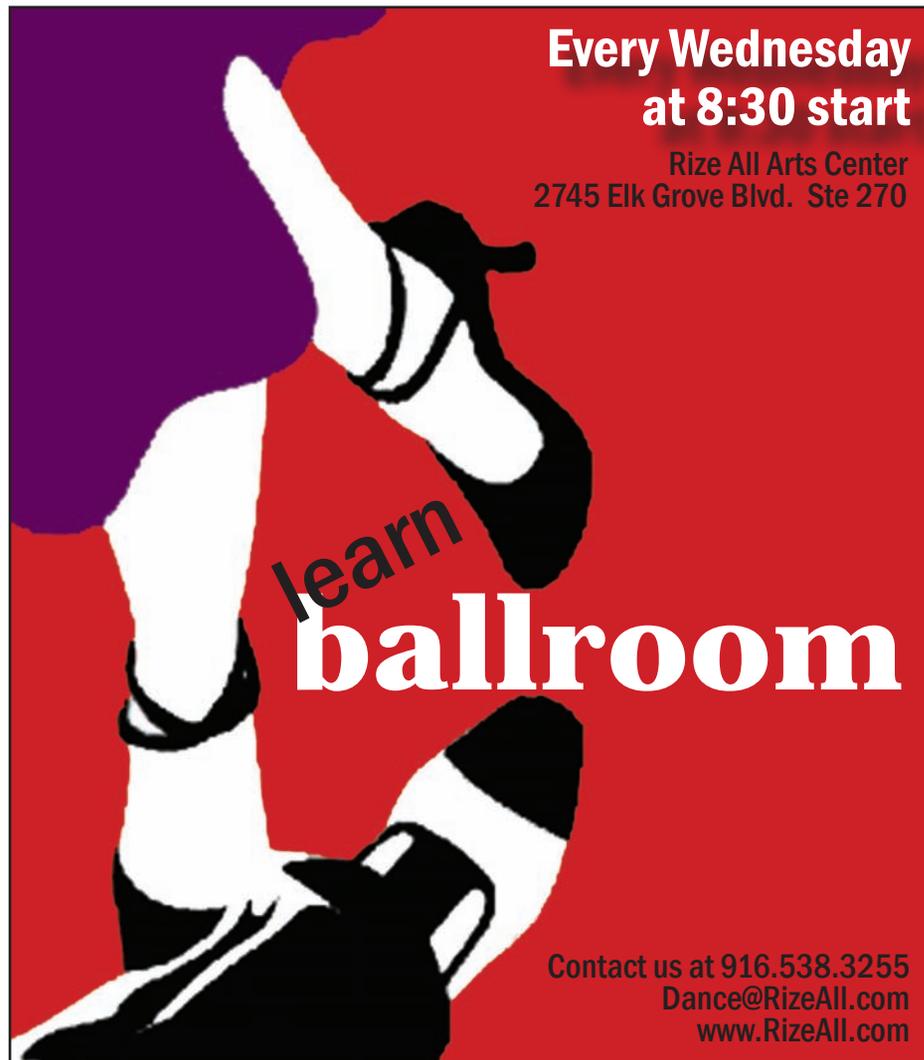
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