



**Sovereignty without security**  
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# PHILIPPINE Fiesta

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**The History in the Struggle for Freedom** - Page 16

## China confronts US warships in South China Sea

BY LOURDES VIRAY

China has sent warships to ward off US warships sailing near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, the Chinese Ministry of Defense confirmed on Sunday.



Photo by Sarah Myers

The guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54) transits the Philippine Sea during MultiSail. MultiSail is a bilateral training exercise improving interoperability between the US and Japanese forces.

The US Navy's guided missile cruiser USS Antietam and guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins sailed within 12 nautical miles of the Paracel Islands, according to a report from The New York Times.

The US warships, which were conducting freedom

of navigation operations, passed within 12 miles of four islands—Tree, Lincoln, Triton and Woody.

Chinese Ministry of National Defense spokesperson Wu Qian said that the two US warships entered

Beijing's territorial waters without permission.

"The United States once again dispatched warships to enter the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands without authorization

Continued on page 5

## Territorial defense top priority of Duterte government – Lorenzana



Photo by Edd Gumban

BY MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Manila, Philippines — Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana yesterday said defense amid ongoing territorial disputes is a main priority of the Duterte ad-

ministration. "We are facing a different challenge now – the threat of terrorism, climate change and environmental destruction, poverty, corruption,

transnational and cyber-crime and territorial disputes," he said in a speech in Malolos, Bulacan on the occasion of National Flag Day. Continued on page 2

## Duterte hails AFP as 'best in the world, entire universe'

BY JHOANNA BALLARAN

Despite severe limitations in resources and capacity, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is the best in the world and the entire universe for President Rodrigo Duterte.

The President expressed his admiration for the Philippine military during the change of command ceremony at the Presidential Security Group (PSG) on Wednesday.

"Last na lang ako. Kung may pera pa maiwan, kung wala na... go by for the best Armed Forces of the world and of the universe," Duterte said in his speech.

The AFP, usually listed as one of the weakest military forces in the world, got a significant budget increase under the



President Rodrigo Duterte

Duterte administration, with the government allo-

Continued on page 4

## Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Religious May festivities

BY FAINA E. ABAYA

On May 19, 2018, the coronation of Julie Victorina SooHoo I as her Majesty Imperatriz Sta. Elena and Mhiko Jaye Nanca Tagatac as his Highness Emperador Constantino, both to reign as such for 2018-20 and the event was held at St. Paul Catholic Church on Florin Road, Sacramento, California.



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## Why can't PH do a Vietnam?

BY ALITO L. MALINAO

While the Philippines is mum on what moves it has taken to counter China's aggressive actions in the South China Sea, at least on the diplomatic front, Vietnam has been vocal in condemning China's militarization of the disputed area.

On May 22, Vietnam, China's ideological brother but mortal enemy, accused Beijing of violating its territory when Chinese bombers landed and took off from Woody Island in the Paracels—an activity that Beijing said was part of its training exercises.

"Vietnam demands that China stop these activities, cease militarization of the area, and strictly respect Vietnam's sovereignty over the Hoang Sa islands," Vietnam foreign ministry spokesperson Le Thi Thu Hang said in a statement, using the Vietnamese term for the Paracels. She said the presence of the bombers in the area had an adverse impact on ongoing negotiations between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

Woody Island is being claimed by China, Vietnam and Taiwan. But according to an American think tank, the bombers could affect a radius of more than 1,000 nautical miles, meaning the Philippines is within range.

Earlier this month, Vietnam also called on China to withdraw military equipment from the nearby Spratly Islands in the disputed waters, following news reports that China had installed missiles there. Vietnam said China should show responsibility



Protesters held signs reading "Big China, bad behavior."

"in maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea" (the Vietnamese term for the South China Sea). It also said China should not "carry out militarization activities" and "withdraw military equipment illegally installed on features under Vietnam's sovereignty."

The statement was issued after US news network CNBC reported on May 2 that China had installed antiship cruise missiles and surface-to-air missile systems on three Philippine-claimed reefs in the Spratlys that it had seized and transformed into artificial islands, then developed into military outposts—Kagitingan (international name: Fiery Cross), Zamora (Subi), and Panganiiban (Mischievous).

Unlike the Philippines, Vietnam's claims over some parts of the Spratlys are not even validated by an international court ruling. And yet it continues to stand up to China.

But what have Philippine officials done except to say that the problem has been discussed in bilateral meetings with Beijing? Has Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano actually filed diplomatic protests against China's incursions into Philippine territory, as he has claimed? Or is the government so enamored of the millions of dollars in loans and grants from China that

it now allows Beijing to trample upon its dignity and honor?

All that we hear is presidential spokes-person Harry Roque saying that the government is taking diplomatic initiatives but is "not making a big deal out of it."

At least President Duterte has been candid in saying that the Philippines will not wage a war with China that it cannot win.

Of course, we all know that to go to war with China would be the height of stupidity. But there must be a way, short of going to war, to stand up to, or remind, China that the reefs that it has occupied and developed into military bases belong to us, and that our sovereign rights over these areas are clearly spelled out in the arbitral ruling from The Hague in July 2016.

I was among those who applauded the President when he initiated new foreign policy moves that weaned the Philippines from dependence on the United States. But it is sad that while we have now ceased to be subservient to the United States, we are now unabashedly subservient to China.

No foreign government will respect us if we, as a nation, lose our own self-respect. As Aristotle once said, "It's impossible to win respect from others until you learn to respect yourself."

## Territorial defense top priority of Duterte government – Lorenzana

From page 1

Day. Lorenzana, without particularly citing the country's territorial issues with China, said such challenges need everyone's action.

"To fulfill our mandate and sworn duty, the Department of National Defense continues to defend our nation and every Filipino from external and internal threats to the peace and security of the Philippines," he said in Filipino.

"The defense of our ter-

ritory remains a priority and we work hard to safeguard our integrity and sovereignty," he said.

Lorenzana added that the DND remains alert against groups wanting to destroy the country's democracy and peace.

"We will not allow anger and hate to reign, instead we will make sure that peace and security will prevail," he said.

On National Flag Day, he

called on Filipinos "to reflect on the things that we have learned as a free nation and fill our hearts with love for country and live with the symbols of the flag that represent freedom, equality and brotherhood."

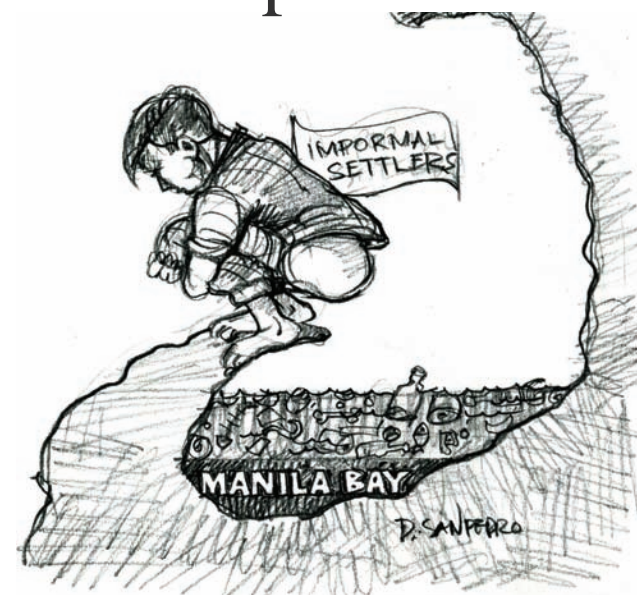
He said Filipinos should also live according to what the dominant colors of the Philippine flag represent—red for valor and love of country and blue for peace, truth and justice.

## The original cesspool

As the cleanup of Boracay continues, the government may want to take a look at the other body of water that has been a "cesspool" far longer than the resort island. In the 10 years since the Supreme Court directed 13 government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay, water quality has worsened. This was the assessment of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources after reviewing the progress of the cleanup.

The failure to implement the SC order could have been due in part to the position of the executive that it was an encroachment of the judiciary into the functions of an independent and co-equal branch of government.

Improving water quality in the bay where the country's biggest port is located is also a tall order. Aside from the international ships that dump all sorts of waste into the wa-



ter, deliberately or inadvertently, many communities around the bay are home to some of the country's most impoverished families. One community in the Manila port neighborhood, where most residents make a living from selling charcoal, is so filthy it was described by a world-renowned novelist as "the gates of hell."

Yet these pollution problems are not insurmountable. Other countries have shown that it is possible to

drastically reduce pollution and improve water quality even in rivers and seas used extensively for commercial purposes.

Obviously, effective enforcement of water pollution laws is critical. Random inspections of ships can promote compliance with environmental laws. In the communities around the bay, local government units and barangay offices must bear the responsibility for waste management. Even in informal settlements, this need not prove impossible. Political will and committed involvement of communities can still save the original cesspool that is Manila Bay.

(The Philippine Star)



### Editor's Note

I can't help but to take notice of the continued dedication of our Filipino community organization in making sure that their annual festivities get celebrated year after year.

Take for instance, the Filipino Family Fraternity's Santacruz and the crowning of the Emperatriz Santa Elena and the Emperador Constantino. This brings me back to how we first got involved in the Filipino community in Sacramento. It was through this organization, when my oldest son Divino Jr. (Jojo) had also become the Emperor Constantino when was 10 years old. It was a humbling experience to have the chance to work with such dedicated members of this organization, to the point where we got so inspired in joining other Filipino community organization in Sacramento, and most importantly, in the founding of this Philippine Fiesta News publication.

The same goes to My Sister's House, a non-profit organization established in 2002. They provide temporary shelter and other social services to women of Asian descent, who have become victims of domestic violence and abuse.

Another festivity that will be celebrated on June 3, is the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento at the Jose Rizal Community Center.

I have witnessed the members' challenges in organizing these events for our community. Being in a committee and getting to meetings, in addition to fulfilling their family obligations can all become overwhelming. I suggest that we all support these festivities, join in the camaraderie, and appreciate all their efforts in making them happen for our Filipino community in Sacramento.

I see June as the month filled with festivities and celebrations. Congratulations to the newly weds, new grads, and everyone celebrating important milestone in life!

With you in celebrations,  
Dinnah San Pedro

# Sereno appeals ouster from Supreme Court

BY EDU PUNAY

Ousted chief justice Maria Lourdes Sereno yesterday appealed the Supreme Court decision removing her through a mere quo warranto petition, noting that the SC violated her constitutional right to due process and overstepped its power.

In a 205-page motion filed minutes before the deadline, the ousted chief magistrate asked the SC to reconsider its ruling on May 11 that abruptly ended her unprecedented 18-year term by granting the quo warranto petition of the solicitor general to invalidate her appointment in 2012.

Sereno likewise urged the court to reverse the decision of six associate justices she accused of bias against her – Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Diosdado Peralta, Lucas Bersamin, Francis Jardeleza, Noel Tijam and Samuel Martires – not to inhibit from the case.

“More than its numerous legal and factual errors, the decision proves that in meeting out justice, an impartial tribunal is crucial and indispensable. The decision illustrates vividly the dire and far-reaching consequences of a denial of due process,” she argued.

Sereno insisted that the SC has no authority to remove her from office because under the Constitution, the chief justice can be ousted only through an impeach-

ment process.

“The indisputable intent of the Constitution is that impeachable officers, save for the President and Vice President, can be removed from office only by impeachment,” read the motion.

She reiterated that the issue on her statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs) cannot be the basis for adjudging her supposed lack of integrity and dishonesty.

“This Honorable Court erred in ruling that the Respondent ‘chronically failed to file her SALNs...’ The filing per se of a SALN neither proves nor negates a person’s integrity,” she argued.

Sereno likewise insisted that the quo warranto petition should not have been granted because it already went beyond the one-year prescription period from appointment.

The ousted SC chief added the decision made baseless conclusions that are unsupported by the evidence, such as her alleged tax fraud when there was no evidence to support it.

“The matters that were never raised by either party are actually mere allegations or charges raised in the impeachment complaint before the House of Representatives, all of which have yet to be proven. Since the allegations stated therein are nothing more than mere charges, they cannot be taken as evidence against the Chief Justice,” she stressed.

Sereno also told The Chiefs in an interview aired Tuesday night on Cignal TV’s One News that her ordeal continues after her ouster as the Bureau of Internal Rev-

enue (BIR) has launched an investigation against her, which she said is “illegal” and part of “persecution” by the Duterte administration.

She said the six justices should have been required by the Court to inhibit from the case due to actual biases.

“The justices’ testimonies and actuations in the hearings before the House committee on justice (and in the oral argument, in the case of Justice Martires) are clear and convincing evidence of actual bias,” Sereno explained.

“The justices’ statements, and the emotional implications that are attached to the same, are evidence of actual bias. Actual bias is anchored not simply on their participation in the proceedings, but rather, on the substance of their statements,” she added.

The SC voted 8-6 to declare the chief justice position vacant and ordered the Judicial and Bar Council to start the search for Sereno’s replacement.

Apart from Sereno’s ouster, the SC also issued a show cause order requiring her to show why she should not be penalized for supposedly violating the Code of Professional Responsibility and the Code of Judicial Conduct “for transgressing the sub judice rule and for casting aspersions and ill motives to the members of the Supreme Court.”

Those in the majority were Associate Justices De Castro, Peralta, Bersamin, Jardeleza, Tijam, Martires, Andres Reyes Jr. and Alexander Gesmundo.

Senior Associate Antonio Carpio and Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco Jr., Mariano del Castillo, Estela Bernabe, Marvic Leonen and Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa dissented from the ruling.

## Tax probe

Sereno likewise revealed that the tax bureau has started looking into her tax records, sent her letters demanding that she surrender her books of account and conducted preliminary conference the other day.

“This is a clear message to everybody – you don’t mess with this administration because we will file charges against you, we will have tax audit and you will have all these kind of difficulties,” Sereno told The Chiefs.

She said the BIR probe is illegal because she was being asked to submit her records from as early as 2004, which supposedly could no longer be investigated.

“The prescriptive period (for whatever possible tax evasion committed 14 years ago) has already lapsed. It’s really unjust; it’s illegal,” the ousted chief justice stressed.

Sereno believed that the BIR probe is part of harassment against her by the administration of President Duterte, whom she has publicly criticized and accused of being behind her ouster from the top judicial post.

She claimed she has paid her taxes correctly and also has not hidden any wealth.

“My house is sitting on a 205-square-meter property. Of the vehicles I own, the most expensive is a



Ousted Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno

P900,000 Innova. You’ve seen my clothes and jewelry. Nothing in my life is hidden,” she pointed out.

“Many people commented on my way of living – it’s very modest. So this is not a lifestyle check; it’s persecution,” she alleged.

The ousted chief justice also revealed for the first time that she was asked by an emissary as early as July or August last year to resign from her post.

“It would be politically smart, according to them, and it would have spared me of difficulties, pain and persecution. But I said if a public official who is ready to face her accusers will just resign and give up, then nothing will be left of our institutions,” she said.

In the same interview, Sereno welcomed the recent Senate resolution signed by 14 senators calling for review of the SC ruling that granted the quo warranto petition of the solicitor general and invalidated the appointment of the chief justice in 2012.

“That was a very pleasant surprise... I was very pleased that they are fighting for their constitutional role of being the sole impeachment court,” she commented.

Sereno said newly elected Senate President Vicente Sotto III should not ignore

the resolution and prove himself a leader by listening to the 14 senators.

She said the Senate resolution gives her hope of pursuing her fight for rule of law and protection of democracy against abuses by those in power.

Sereno revealed that she has been meeting supporters from all walks of life in her speaking events, especially the youth, who shared their sentiments against the administration on issues involving extrajudicial killings, closure of Boracay island and the policy towards China.

“I tell them we have to fight to defend democracy and have an independent judiciary,” she stressed.

The ousted SC chief believed that the justice system is “in ICU (intensive care unit) stage” and the Constitution is in danger because the President does not respect it.



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# Prices of school supplies also up

BY RICHMOND MERCURIO

**M**anila, Philippines — As school opening draws near, manufacturers of school supplies, particularly paper-based products, have jacked up prices due to higher costs of raw materials and foreign exchange.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said several brands of notebooks and pad paper increased prices due to the high cost of raw materials imported from China and the depreciation of the peso against the dollar.

Seven brands of composition, writing and spiral notebooks hiked prices between P1 to P4, while one brand did not make any price adjustment. But trade undersecretary Ruth Castelo said paper manufacturers gave assurance that there will be no more price increase until December.

Two brands of pencil hiked prices by P4.50 and P1 respectively, while other brands maintained last year's prices.

The DTI said most brands of ball pens did not increase prices since last year except for three, which adjusted prices from P1 to P6.

For crayons, two brands raised prices by P2 to P10 for boxes of Regular No. 8, Regular No. 16, Regular No. 24 and Jumbo 8.

There were no recorded price movements for sharpeners, while one brand of eraser increased by P2.

For rulers, two brands hiked prices by P2 and P3, respectively.

"There have been increases in some staples but consumers can check for school items sold in bundle or promo packs which can help them save P30.75 depending on the brand," Castelo said.

Meanwhile, billions worth of support are expected to pour in to thousands of public schools nationwide as the Department of



Photo by Miguel DeGuzman

A girl picks out pens at a school supply stall in Divisoria, Manila yesterday.

Education (DepEd) has launched the annual conduct of Brigada Eskwela in preparation for the opening of classes next week.

Education Secretary Leonor Briones yesterday led the nationwide kick-off of the National Schools' Maintenance Week at the New Society National High School in General Santos City.

Across the country, education stakeholders including students, parents, teachers and community leaders took part in school repair activities in preparation for the opening of classes on June 4.

The Office of the Vice President (OVP) and its private partners will provide more than P700,000 worth of books and construction materials to select public elementary and high schools in Luzon and the Visayas to make their classrooms and facilities more conducive for learning.

The OVP has allocated P100,000 for its Brigada Eskwela package this year, while its Angat Buhay partners donated P541,996 for the OVP's education funds.

Fourteen schools in poor areas in Metro Manila, Cebu, Eastern Samar, Bohol, Capiz, Camarines Sur and Albay will receive the assistance in time for the opening of the new school year on June 4.

"The (Brigada Eskwela program) reminds us that educating our

children is not just the job of our teachers and the schools, it's the obligation of the parents, the community and local government too," Vice President Leni Robredo said as she joined Brigada Eskwela at the Wawa Elementary School in Navotas City yesterday.

Support from the private sector also poured in, including from top corporations such as Nestlé, Smart and Globe that turned over various materials during yesterday's kick-off of Brigada Eskwela.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), on the other hand, gave school supplies to 120,000 Grades 1 to 3 pupils from 400 public schools nationwide through the company's Gamit ni Bulilit program.

Gamit ni Bulilit is NGCP's yearly project that aims to give school bags, notebooks, pencils and other school supplies to pupils in communities hosting NGCP's facilities.

Beneficiaries are from 166 schools in North Luzon, 55 in South Luzon, 81 in the Visayas and 98 in Mindanao.

"We focused our program on children from the lower grade levels on the idea that educational motivation is most effective during a child's formative years," NGCP said.

"The program is also NGCP's way of expressing gratitude to our

host communities who, through the years, have been supportive in protecting NGCP facilities and in ensuring its safety so that everyone enjoys reliable electricity," NGCP said.

Employees of Maynilad Water Services also helped refurbish classrooms and upgraded water and sanitation facilities in 151 public schools throughout its concession area.

Maynilad kicked off its yearly participation in Brigada Eskwela with the installation of 26 bidets and replacement of busted faucets and toilet flushes at Malinta Elementary School in Valenzuela City. The company also donated 500 pieces of bottled water for the volunteers, educational signages and cleaning materials to the school.

DepEd undersecretary Tonisito Umali said the department expects the value of donations and man-hours rendered by companies and volunteers for this year's Brigada Eskwela to exceed last year's almost P5.4 billion.

Over the years, the value of support for Brigada Eskwela continuously increased, from just a few million pesos when it started 15 years ago to P3.6 billion in 2015 and P4.7 billion in 2016.

The number of volunteers also increased in recent years, from 11.6 million in 2016 to 12 million in 2017.

"We all know that not everything we need in our schools are provided for in the General Appropriations Act," said Umali. "But because of Brigada Eskwela, our schools, classrooms and facilities

are a lot better."

Brigada Eskwela is a yearly program implemented by DepEd to prepare thousands of classrooms for the new school year. The program aims to encourage the Filipino community to take a direct role in the education of the youth.

Umali said partnerships should not be limited during maintenance week, noting that engagement can happen all throughout the year.

"The concept of partnering with our community, parents and all our stakeholders to ensure quality basic education for all our children should not be construed to be achieved in just one week. It should be the entire year," he said.

Briones earlier said that public schools nationwide are ready for the 25 million students who will return to school on June 4.

In Bicol, parents and volunteers from the Office of Civil Defense and DepEd have cleaned classrooms for 1.75 million students from kindergarten to senior high school, according to Ramon Fiel Abcede, DepEd regional director for Bicol.

"DepEd has also hired some 6,000 new teachers," Abcede said during the launch of Brigada Eskwela at the Barcelona Elementary and High School in Sorsogon province.

Region 1 is also ready to welcome more than one million elementary and high school students. "Definitely no classes under the trees in Region 1," said Alma Ruby Torio, DepEd regional director for Region 1.

## Duterte hails AFP as 'best in the world'

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cating P140.4 billion in 2018.

The budget increase aims to boost the military's capacity to counter the growing threat of terrorism in southern Philippines.

Duterte led the turnover ceremony at the PSG welcoming Col. Jose Eriel Niembra as the new PSG chief.

Niembra replaced outgoing Commander Bgen. Lope Dagoy, who will head the 802nd Brigade

Command in Leyte.

Prior to assuming his position, Niembra has served as Deputy Group Commander of the Presidential Security Group since 2016. He also served as the deputy commander of the Task Force Davao from 2009 to 2012.

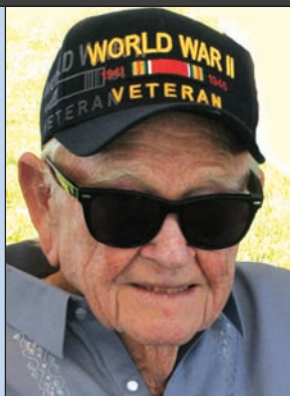
Niembra, a highly decorated military officer, is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Samsibis Class of 1991.

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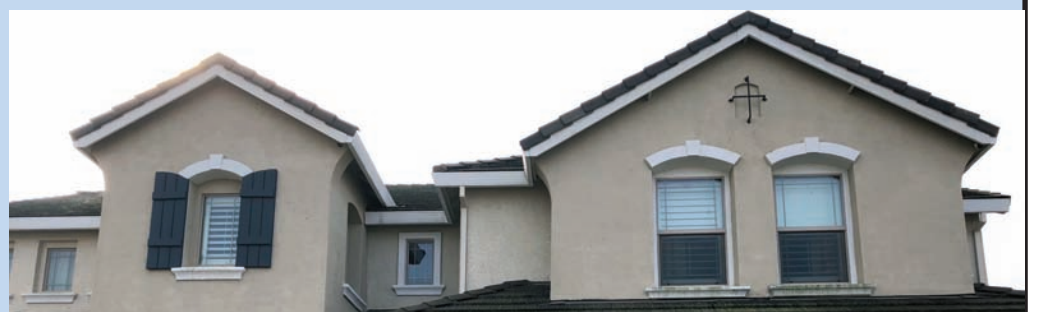


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# 'Garin, Abad diverted P10.6-billion fund for senior citizens'

BY PAOLO ROMERO

**M**anila, Philippines — Some P10.6 billion in funds of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) for senior citizens was illegally diverted in December 2015 and supposedly used for the campaign of Liberal Party (LP) candidates in the 2016 elections, a joint congressional review of PhilHealth's finances showed yesterday.



Garin and Abad

The budget was released to the Department of Health (DOH)'s rural health centers program around December 2015, prompting lawmakers to suspect the amount was used for the LP's electoral campaign, like the P3.5-billion Dengvaxia controversy.

"The diversion of the PhilHealth fund intended for the benefits of senior citizens, for me, is a heinous act three times more cruel than the Dengvaxia fiasco," Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito, chairman of the joint congressional oversight panel, said.

"I can only describe this act as heartless and insensitive to the condition of our senior citizens," Ejercito added.

PhilHealth executive vice president Ruben John Basa said on Aug. 5, 2015, then health secretary Janette Garin and PhilHealth president Alex Padilla jointly wrote a letter to then budget chief Florencio Abad requesting the transfer of P10.6 billion from the Miscel-

laneous Personnel and Benefits Fund (MPBF) in the 2015 budget for the DOH program.

The amount, which was supposed to fund the additional benefits under the Expanded Senior Citizens' Act, was parked in the MPBF.

The transfer was approved by Abad and former executive secretary Paquito Ochoa.

The release of the funds sometime in December was done without the knowledge and approval of the PhilHealth board at the time and was uncovered only when the current board was asking the Department of Budget and Management for the money, Basa and Health Secretary Francisco Duque III told the oversight committee.

Garin and Padilla's request came around the same time the former health chief asked for P3.5 billion for the anti-dengue vaccination program.

Duque said the diversion was suspicious and questionable as

not only was it done without the knowledge of the PhilHealth board, but was also made without any study on its impact on the agency's financial longevity.

He said out of the 3,200 rural health centers that were supposed to have been completed, only 217 had certificates of completion.

"We saw a lot of malgovernance, fund releases were just cavalierly done and proper process was not respected," he said.

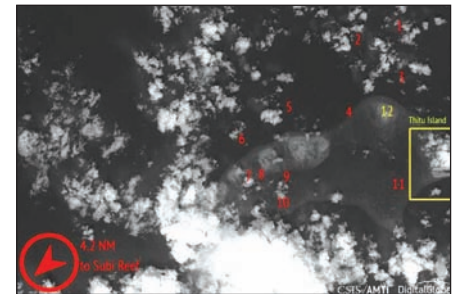
Duque said because of the diversion, the life of the PhilHealth reserve fund was reduced from the mandatory 24 months to just 10 months as part of it was used to fill the P10.6 billion for senior citizens' benefits.

Last March 18, PhilHealth filed a complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman against Garin and Padilla for alleged violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act in connection with the fund diversion.

# Philippines lost Sandy Cay to China, Alejano tells Cayetano

BY PATRICIA LOURDES VIRAY

Rep. Gary Alejano (Magdalo party-list) on Tuesday reminded Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano that the Philippines effectively lost control of Sandy Cay in the West Philippine Sea under the Duterte administration.



Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative imagery of the area near Pag-asa Island from Aug. 13, 2017 show nine Chinese fishing ships and two naval/law enforcement vessels visible near the island (locations 1 and 2), with others possibly under cloud cover. At least two appear to be actively fishing (locations 6 and 8) with their nets visibly in the water.

The Magdalo lawmaker was responding to the DFA secretary's challenge to prove that the country lost an island to Beijing in the time of President Rodrigo Duterte.

Alejano told Cayetano that Chinese coast guard vessels and militia fishing boats have been stationed near Sandy Cay since August last year.

"Every time Philippine government vessels patrol Sandy Cay, they are driven away by Chinese coast guard vessels. This could be likened to the situation in Scarborough Shoal in 2012 wherein our fishermen and military forces are prevented from approaching. Since then, China controlled the shoal," Alejano said in a statement.

Sandy Cay lies over 4 nautical miles from Pag-asa Island, which is part of Palawan province. The cay serves as a traditional rest and recreation area for residents and visitors of the island.

Citing Republic Act 9522, also known as the Philippine Baselines Law, Alejano said that Pag-asa Island, including Sandy Cay, is part Philippine territory under Article 121 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Alejano called out Cayetano for refusing to protest the Philippines' loss of Sandy Cay to China.

"Secretary Cayetano has announced publicly that he is not filing a protest against China's seizure of Sandy Cay, which is definitely a Philippine land territory. This is an undeniable proof that Philippines lost effective control on an island during the incumbency of President Duterte

and Secretary Cayetano," Alejano said.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has been criticized for not being more vocal about China's activities in the West Philippine Sea and because of the secrecy surrounding diplomacy with China, it cannot be verified whether or not the Philippines filed a formal protest.

The Magdalo lawmaker further stressed that the Philippines is slowly losing control of its territory while China is restricting the access of Filipino fishermen and challenges the Philippine military.

"Let us not wait for physical occupation of islands to happen," Alejano said.

"Sandy Cay is just one case. In a bigger picture, if our ability to patrol and supply our islands is slowly being diminished, then time will come China will have effective control of the whole West Philippine Sea. We would lose everything," he added.

Speaking in a flag-raising ceremony at the DFA on Monday, Cayetano said that he would quit public service if his critics could prove which features in the South China Sea were "lost" under the Duterte administration.

"I challenge anyone of them. Whatever their professions are — justice, politician, newsman, journalist — if we lost a single island during Duterte's time, I will pack my bags, go home and I will not serve the public in any elected or appointed position," Cayetano said.

# China confronts US warships in South China Sea

From page 1

violated China's laws and relevant international laws," Wu said.

"Chinese military took immediate actions by dispatching naval ships and aircrafts to conduct legal identification and verification of the US warships and warn them off," Wu also said.

Beijing stressed that the Paracel Islands, which are also being contested by Vietnam, are "Chinese indigenous territory."

Wu accused Washington of violating Beijing's sovereignty, undermining strategic mutual trust between the American and Chinese military and undermining peace, security and good order in the region.

"China firmly opposes this. The Chinese army is determined to strengthen the preparations for sea and air combat readiness,



The disputed South China Sea is where many experts believe a naval conflict could break out.

raise the level of defense, defend national sovereignty and security, and maintain the determination of regional peace and stability," Wu said.

The US Navy ships' passing through the islands came days after the US disinvited China from the 2018 Rim of the Pacific Exercise, the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise. The Pentagon's withdrawal of its

invitation to Beijing was an "initial response" to the latter's increasing militarization of the South China Sea.

On May 18, China's People's Liberation Army Air Force announced that it had landed an H-6K strategic bomber on Woody Island, China's largest outpost in the Paracels.

Following the landing of a bomber aircraft on Woody Island, China reportedly deployed HQ-9 surface-to-air missile systems on the island, according to independent think tank Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

According to the Washington-based think tank, the new weapons were probably placed on the outposts during the Chinese military's drills last May 8.



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# My Sister's House 17th Anniversary Gala

My Sister's House celebrated its 17th anniversary at the Crest on May 21st with timely performances by civic, corporate and community leaders from throughout the Sacramento region performing songs related to this year's theme, "RISE". Acts included songs from Hamilton, The Greatest Showman, and "Praying" with local me-too advocates.

Funds raised support services for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking victims. The event also honored the following Heroes of Hope including (volunteer hero) Nancy Woo; (law enforcement hero) (Seargent John Sydow, Sac County Sheriff's); and (corporate hero) Dignity Health. My Sister's House is a non-profit which specializes in providing services for Asian /Pacific Islander and other underserved victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.



Tia Gemmell Photography 2018



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- ▼ Shelter for abused women and children



Source: gettyimages.com

### TOGETHER SAC REGION



Tia Gemmell Photography

Dave Tamayo and Doris Pittell.

Together Sac Region was a lively panel discussion, with fresh insights and ideas that will help you make a business case for philanthropy by infusing creativity and innovation into your organization's philanthropic model. Hosted by KVIE's Rob on the Road, Rob Stewart. Followed by a cocktail reception.

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## Woman attacks Asian-American service member in racist tirade: 'Go back to f---ing China'

BY MORGAN GSTALTER

A viral video released this week caught a woman on camera launching a racist tirade against an Asian-American service member in a parking lot in California.



Woman launching a racist tirade against an Asian-American.

James Ahn said he was driving earlier this month when the woman pulled up next to him and pulled her eyes back in an offensive gesture.

"This is not your f---ing country," she says in the video. "This is my country."

Ahn is a Korean-American member of the Air Force Reserve, according to HuffPost.

Ahn's passenger recorded the incident and Ahn posted the video on Facebook earlier this week after the altercation.

"As I changed the lane, she kept driving towards my car gesturing to crush me and cutting in front of me to slam on the break," Ahn wrote Monday. "I later realized that this was more like a hate crime than a road rage."

The woman yells at Ahn to "go back to f---ing China, you ugly Chinese."

He reported to incident to the Fremont, Calif., police, according to the New York Post.

Police spokeswoman Geneva Bosques,

however, said investigators determined that no crime was committed.

"What we have here is hate speech," Bosques said. "And we met with her and she does not deny that she did any of this. But she claims he started it by saying to go back to her country."

The female driver reportedly told police that Ahn had started the traffic dispute.

"All that we could establish is that this was derogatory remarks between two parties," Bosques said. "There was no threat and there was no crime committed. We did document everything in a report and we classified it as a disturbance."

The woman's freedom of speech — although hateful — is protected by the First Amendment, police said.

"The other piece of this is that these two motorists were driving in traffic yelling at each other and the situation could've been worse for other drivers around them," Bosques said.

## California debuts 'digital' license plates. Here's what they'll cost you.

BY TONY BIZJAK

California's dramatic new license plate is hitting the streets — a digital display board that allows changeable messages controlled by the driver or remotely by fleet managers.

The new plates use the same computer technology as Kindle eBook readers, along with a wireless communication system.

They come with their own computer chips and battery.

Motorists who choose to buy the plate can register their vehicles electronically and eliminate the need to physically stick tags on their plates each year. They also may be able to display personal messages — if the DMV decides to allow that.

If the car is stolen, the plate's manufacturer says the plate can tell the owner and police exactly where the car is or at least where the license plate is if it has been detached.

California, which has been quietly preparing its roll-out this year, is the first state to try out the new plates.

The state Department of Motor Vehicles is conducting a pilot project with a Bay Area company, Reviver Auto, which makes the plate and is about to begin marketing it for sale at auto dealerships.

Last week, Sacramento became the first city to agree to test the plates, taking a shipment of 24 plates for its in-house vehicle fleet.

The technology comes with a high price, however, and has already prompted ques-



tions about privacy and safety.

Dealerships are expected to sell the plates for \$699, not including installation costs. Users also must pay a monthly fee of about \$7. The plates are not available through the DMV.

Some drivers are questioning whether the device's communications system could allow the state, the police or private companies to track a driver's movements.

In a recent blog posting, Alex Roy, an editor at The Drive website, raised those and other questions.

"What little privacy we have left is annihilated," he wrote. "This makes sense for fleet management. For my personal car? No thanks."

Neville Boston, founder of Reviver Auto, said he expects initial interest to come from companies for their vehicle fleets.

Some businesses will use them as mini-billboards to advertise their products or services, he said, but will be able to do so only when the vehicle is stopped. The license plate number will still appear on the screen when messages pop up, but it will be smaller and tucked into the upper right corner of the screen.

## 7 men accused of touching girls at Roseville water park

BY SARAH HEISE

ROSEVILLE, Calif. — Seven men were arrested and accused of inappropriately touching several young girls on Memorial Day at Golfland Sunsplash water park in Roseville, police said.

At least one victim was under 14 years old.

Sunsplash officials received reports of several men touching girls on Monday, Roseville police said.

Witness statements, in conjunction with Sunsplash security personnel, led officers to have probable cause to arrest the seven men on multiple charges, according to investigators.

After children and family reported the inappropriate behavior, Golfland Sunsplash security separated the victims and kept the males suspects together in a group before police arrived and arrested them.

"It appears that the individuals worked in a coordinated fashion to get a young victim near them or around them and then they proceeded to inappropriately touch the victim," said Rob Baquera, with the Roseville Police Department. "The kids involved in this situation reported it to onsite security and onsite security immediately reported



Golfland Sunsplash water park in Roseville

it to the police department. That's how we were able to apprehend these individuals."

Steve Rodgers, general manager with Golfland Sunsplash, said the men were doing other abnormal behavior before their arrests.

"These guys were -- I think they were -- acting up because they were getting saved in all the pools," Rodgers said. "I don't know if they could swim -- they acted like

they couldn't swim."

Baquera credits the actions of the water park and victims for the arrests.

"It was swift thinking by these young ladies involved in this situation to report it to security," Baquera said. "And we always recommend if you see something or something seems inappropriate, make sure you report it to appropriate personnel."

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PerryScope

BY PERRY DIAZ

# Sovereignty without security

When President Rodrigo Duterte was elected in 2016, he immediately embarked on a journey into uncharted territory that he referred to as “independent foreign policy.” He believed that by adopting the vaguely defined “independent foreign policy,” his country would prosper. But how can a country that is economically underdeveloped, unaligned, unallied, and indefensible, compete in a globalized economy?

Indeed, globalization has made countries economically dependent upon each other. This interdependence has made it virtually impossible for them to go to war against each other. But there are still a few nations – rogue regimes – who do not go along or get along with the rest of the international community. To name some, Iran and North Korea are a “pain in the neck” to the rest of the civilized world.

But of greater threat to world peace are a few world powers that are still pursuing imperialistic ambitions to economically, politically, and militarily dominate smaller and weaker countries. And just like the predators in the animal kingdom, they prey on countries that don’t have the ability to defend their people and protect their sovereign territory from the world’s bullies. Top among these bullies are Russia, the largest country on earth, and China, the most populous country.

But while Putin’s expansionist moves in Eastern Europe were checkmated by a reinvigorated North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance of 29 countries that includes the U.S., China on the other hand, is having some successes. Since the ascent of Xi Jinping as China’s undisputed leader, communist China has succeeded in wriggling out of the defensive parameters established by the U.S. along China’s eastern seaboard, which was to prevent the Red Menace from advancing at the end of World War II.

## Chinese Dream

Today, Chinese President Xi Jinping, who managed to change China’s constitution to allow

the president to run for reelection without any term limit, rules China for as long as he wants. In effect, he has made himself president-for-life and nobody would dare challenge him.

Indeed, Xi has been in pursuit of “Chinese Dream,” a China that would rule the whole of Asia and the Pacific. In fact, China began promoting “Asia for the Asians” about a decade ago in the hope of drawing the Asian countries into China’s orbit and dislodging the United States as the preeminent Pacific power.

In my article, “Xi Jinping’s Pax Sinica” (November 3, 2013), I wrote: “Last October 31, 2013, China’s state-run Global Times published an article, saying that escalating tensions between China and Japan over territorial claims to the Senkaku Islands could ignite a war. It said that Beijing was preparing for a ‘worst-case’ scenario of military conflict over the dis-

to control the First and Second Island Chains by 2010 and 2020, respectively. “The PLA Navy must be ready to challenge US domination over the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean in 2040. If China is able to dominate the Second Island Chain seven years from now, the East China Sea will become the backyard of the PLA Navy,” he said.

In 2014, China began building artificial islands in the South China Sea. These man-made islands were built around islets and reefs in the Spratly archipelago. A total of seven artificial islands have been built. Today, all of these artificial islands have been militarized. Airfields were built to accommodate long-range Chinese bombers and harbors were built to allow Chinese warships to dock. American spy planes have reported missiles and radar sites. Barracks for troops have been installed.

## “In all directions...”

Now, China has undisputed presence in the South China Sea with bombers and missiles deployed in the artificial islands, most of which are just 100 to 150 miles from Palawan province of the Philippines.

In a press statement released by China’s air force last May 18, it said: “A division of the People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) recently organized multiple bombers such as the H-6K to conduct take-off and landing training on islands and reefs in the South China Sea in order to improve our ability to ‘reach all territory, conduct strikes at any time and strike in all directions.’” The H-6K strategic bomber is a top-of-the-line nuclear-capable bomber and can reach Manila and all five military bases identified for development under the US-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). Nearly all of the Philippines falls within the radius of the H-6K bomber. It was also reported that China had installed anti-ship cruise missiles and surface-to-air missile systems on three Philippine-claimed reefs in the Spratly archipelago. The report also warned of China’s future deployment to the “Big Three” bases in the Spratlys. The “Big Three,” the report noted, have been constructed with reinforced hangars that can accom-



President Rodrigo Duterte proudly embraces Philippine flag.

modate bombers, transport, patrol and refueling aircraft. Surmise it to say, they would soon be fully operational ready to strike targets within 1,000 nautical miles.

puted islands. “It seems that China’s worst-case scenario is a deliberate attempt to fulfill Xi’s ‘Chinese Dream,’ which is the revival of imperial China — or Pax Sinica (Chinese Peace) — that had maintained Chinese hegemony in Asia during the reign of the Ming dynasty. ‘The great revival of the Chinese nation is the greatest Chinese Dream,’ Xi said before taking office in November 2012.”



Chinese President Xi Jinping.

in the Want China Times that appeared on June 27, 2013, Admiral Liu Huaqing, the mastermind of China’s modern naval strategy, was quoted as saying in 1982 that it would be necessary for China



President Xi Jinping and President Rodrigo Duterte.

modate bombers, transport, patrol and refueling aircraft. Surmise it to say, they would soon be fully operational ready to strike targets within 1,000 nautical miles.

With the “Big Three” within reach of the Philippines’ military bases, the country is at the mercy of China. President Duterte, who thought that Xi was his friend and protector, couldn’t do anything. In fact, Duterte bragged that on his recent trip to Beijing that Xi had provided him with a personal assurance that Beijing would not allow him to be removed from office. In a speech last May 15, Duterte said: “The assurances of Xi are very encouraging: we will not allow you to be taken out from your office and we will not allow the Philippines to go to the dogs.” However, we need to be reminded what Xi told Duterte in Beijing not too long. Duterte told Xi that the Philippines intended to drill oil in the Recto Bank, which is within the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone (EEZ), because it’s ours. Xi’s response was blunt: “We’re friends, we don’t want to quarrel with you, we want to maintain the presence of warm relationship, but if you force the issue, we’ll go to war.” Duterte should then have realized that Xi was not a friend; Xi is just another expansionist leader who would crush anyone – foe or friend -- who would stand against China’s advances in the South China Sea.

In essence, Duterte seemed to have placed the Philippines under China’s vassalage, short of territorial submission. Indeed, the Philippines has, by Xi’s personal declaration, become a Chinese protectorate. And Duterte couldn’t be happier.

It is very sad because Duterte disregarded the United Nations-backed arbitral ruling that favored Manila, just a few days after Duterte was sworn in as president in 2013. China immediately rejected the landmark decision. Duterte put the award in deep freeze in exchange for warmer ties with China including large amounts of funds

for his ambitious infrastructure program.

## Uncle Sam loses big

And what did Uncle Sam do? All the U.S. could do was send a warning to Beijing of “near-term and long-term consequences” over the growing militarization in the region. However, the U.S. did not say what the “consequences” would be.

If there is one big loser in China’s territorial expansion in the South China Sea, it is the United States. With China creating a “strategic triangle” in the South China Sea, any ship navigating through the waterway would be within strike



Strategic Triangle in the South China Sea.

range from China’s bases in the Spratlys and Sansha Island in the Paracels, which China grabbed from Vietnam in 1974.

The second loser is the Philippines. With the Chinese Dragon breathing fire over Manila and the country’s defense forces, Beijing could make any demand from Duterte. Short of ceding the country, Duterte could only hope and pray that Xi would not annex the Philippines – or Luzon at least – as Chinese possession.

What Duterte is now left with is a sovereign country without security. But as a wise man once said, “If you cannot defend and secure the independence of your country, then you are not sovereign.” If not, what are we then?

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



# USMA: The Most Envied Military Academy on Earth

I was extremely glad when my former neighbor in my hometown of Mlang invited me to the graduation of her son Eli on May 26, 2018 at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

At 1125 pm of May 24th, my wife and I departed Sacramento to Newark via United Airlines. It was a good five-hour straight flight. From Newark we drove to USMA at West Point via a rented car. Thanks to the E-Z Pass provided by the rental car agency. We saved a lot of time from turnpikes in New Jersey and were able to attend Friday morning skydiving and parade shows at West Point.

The United States Military Academy was founded in 1802. It is now 216 years old. USMA is exactly located in West Point, New York, about 50 miles north of New York City. It takes about an hour ride via train from West Point to Manhattan and vice versa.

All 4,400-strong USMA cadets must live on its Motto of Duty, Honor, Country. West Point Class 2018 has 935 graduating from 1,200 original cadets. Cadet's life is not a holiday training, it is four years of devotion to discipline and study.

Thayer Gate is West Point main entrance. It was named after its former Superintendent Sylvanus Thayer. Millions of visitors each year pass through this gate.

Fortress West Point is the U.S. Army's oldest Post. The American flag was raised at West Point since January 27, 1778. The Plain at WP is the US Army's most hallowed training ground. West Point is built with beautifully designed building architectures. West



United States Military Academy - West Point

Pointers call it Military Gothic.

Superintendent's House fronting The Plain was built in 1820. Dean's House at Professor's Row is a classic Victorian Valley Victorian villa built in 1857. Pershing Barracks is a granite walled building opened in 1895 is being used as west academic building. Thayer Hall houses four academic departments. Taylor Hall is a 160-foot Academy's administration building.

Washington Hall is the Cadet Mess that seats the entire 4,400 Corps of Cadets. Cadet officers head each table. "The Gunner" is a plebe (freshmen) assigned at the foot of the table.

Eisenhower Hall has 4,400-seat theater to accommodate cadet's activities like 100th Night Show, Cadet Hops, and Ring Weekend.

West Pointers call their dances "hops".

USMA are the most favored government scholars where everything needed for academic and military training is provided. New cadets are issued computers before academic instructions begins. Bugle Notes is a small book packed with West Point information. It is provided to all the cadets and must be learned quickly and repeated word-for-word.

West Point Cadets Honor Code

states, "A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal or tolerate those who do."

The Cadet Corps is composed of four regimen Cadet Brigade. It has 32 cadet companies.

Teamwork and leadership skills are directly mentored within each companies.

Each cadet company is assigned two-person U.S. Army tactical team composed of a commissioned officer and a noncommissioned officer.

Class standing is measured by academic ability (55 percent), military skills (30 percent), and physical skills (15 percent).

Cadets ranks are structured like army's military grade. Forth Class (freshmen) are privates; Third Class (sophomores) are corporals; Second Class (juniors) are sergeants; and First Class (seniors) hold officer positions.

Long Grey Line is composed of USMA cadets. The First Captain heads each 1,100-strong regimen. The First Captain has six stripes and a star. There are four regimen in the Cadet Corps.

Religious life is strongly sup-

ported by the Academy. West Point has Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish chapels inside Post.

West Point success rate is about 80 percent and its attrition rate is about 20 percent. Accordingly, WP retention rate is better than many highly selective American colleges and universities.

On graduation day, at the First Captain's command "Class Dismissed," white hats soar up the sky which culminates the 47 months of rigorous academic education and military training at USMA.

"The Goat" is the cadet who graduates last in each West Point class. At some point, a loud cheer will erupt from the corps as "The Goat" receives his/her diploma and a bag of cash collected from WP Class.

West Point Gallery of Graduates include Ulysses Grant (1843)



BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

atomic bombs. Both were leading engineers of the 20th century.

Omar Bradley (1915) and Dwight Eisenhower (1915) belong to the same class who led American forces to victory in World War II; Douglas MacArthur (1903) and Maxwell Taylor (1922) served as Superintendents of West Point and became Army Chiefs of Staff. John Pershing (1882) and Norman Schwarzkopf (1956) taught tactics and engineering at West Point at rank of major. As Generals, Pershing led the Army to victory during World War I while Schwarzkopf led the Desert Storm to victory; Henry Arnold (1907) is the Father of The Air Force. Edward White II (1952) is the first American to walk in space. Both are Aviation pioneers.

Fidel Ramos (1950) became President of the Philippines. Jose Maria Figueroa (1979) elected president of Costa Rica. Both are International Cadets at West Point. Alexander Nininger, Jr. (1941) is a Medal of Honor recipient in the Philippines. Richard Shea (1952) is a Medal of Honor awardee in Korea. They exemplify "Duty, Honor, Country."

The above mentioned made USMA the most envied military academy on earth which cause other military academies in the world follow and copy the academic and military training of West Point.

Congratulations to USMA class of 2018 especially to my neighbor's son Eli Arzaga Eichenberger.



Standing with USMA Cadet First Class Eli Arzaga Eichenberger and his mother Fely Arzaga-Eichenberger at The Plain in West Point on May 25, 2018.

who head the Union Army; Robert Lee (1929) who led the Army of Virginia. Both answered the call of duty; George Goehalls (1880) built Panama Canal; Leslie Groves (1818) invented the

## Gen. Dunford Speaks to 981 West Point Grads

WEST POINT, NY. General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff, graces the graduation ceremony at U.S. Military Academy Saturday, May 26.

"To be successful, you have to anticipate and embrace the constant changes." Dunford urges the graduating cadets.

Gen. Dunford, the most senior military officer of the U.S. armed forces, urges the 2018 West Point graduates to embrace change as the approaches in war change and changes fast.

Simone Askew, from Fairfax, Virginia, is the first black woman to lead the 4,400-strong Corps of

Cadets as the First Captain.

The Corps of Cadets has four regiment. Graduating cadets from First Regiment are 234; Second Regiment, 245; Third Regiment, 250; and 252 from Fourth Regiment.

Eli Moses Arzaga Eichenberger, son of my neighbor Fely Arzaga-Eichenberger from Mlang, North Cotabato, Philippines; Paulo Almeida, a nephew of my friend and former military nurse Glenda Almeida-Britanico, are both Filipino Americans born and raised in the U.S.

The most applauded part of the ceremony was when "The Goat", lowest GPA, was called up the

stage to get his diploma.

"The Goat" is few hundred dollars wealthier than his classmates as each graduating cadet has to contribute a dollar which is a time-honored tradition from the top military academy in the world.

The ceremony ended with Hat Toss Participation which is a another time-honored tradition at West Point where the graduates toss their hats after 47 months of cadet education and training. This activity is participated by children 6-10 years old and 42" to 54" tall.

Good luck and God bless to all the graduates. (Gabriel Ortigoza @ gabbyortigoza@yahoo.com)

## Philippine Fiesta

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BY CYNTHIA G. GARCIA

It has been almost two months since our milestone reunion and warm thoughts still abound as we all tried to swing back as normal as we could into our daily comings and goings in our respective home bases. By all accounts, everyone had a wonderful time that at the end of the 2-day event, talks of the next reunion had stirred an interest in the membership.

But let us first recall some highlights of our Golden Jubilee celebration.

Day 1 Event on Monday, April 2nd, actively emceed by Yollie Timog Misa and Oscar Linao, was held at the Alex Laserna Friendship Hall of Atheneum Amcan School in Noveleta, Cavite. It started as early as ten in the morning and lasted to almost past three in the afternoon.

After the customary brief welcome words by our Class 1968 Valedictorian, Aida Achurra Laserna, followed by a morning prayer led by Beth Rubio Lazaro, the highlight of the day's festivities was a special dance number by certain members, gutsy enough to showcase their sways and moves after all the passing of years (fifty to be exact). This dance routine, "apparently choreographed" by Beth Gutierrez and billed as "Bus Stop" was performed by nine "girls" whose names I will mention here with absolute pleasure and according to the line formation of their spectacular demonstration. They are Aida Achurra Laserna, Cora Gahol Leonor, Bernie Santos Neptuno, Revie Tabije Catalan, Lily Cuevas Garcia, Lorna Vergara Perez, Ampy Comagon Lum, Flora Soliven Santiago and Cholly Bañez. Whistles, giggles and laughter with plenty of applause from the enthusiastic audience members ensued until the last step was done. Cell phone cameras were flashing from every angle to record this presentation and kudos to these "bravehearts" for their unbridled ambition to dance. This courageous feat by these "girls" set the wheels in motion for everyone to hit the floor and dance they did. It certainly ignited the fire in everyone's belly to boogie and twist and cha-cha-cha in celebration of this special occasion. Even our

## Afterthoughts and Special Moments... SEC Class 1968 Golden Jubilee Reunion



DAY 1 - On April 2nd, the SEC Class 1968 celebrated their Golden Jubilee Reunion held at the Atheneum School in Noveleta, Cavite

Photos by Dave San Pedro



Line dance routine "Bus Stop" performed by the girls.



Snapshot at the photo booth.



Cynthia Garcia and Aida A. Laserna

most beloved Guest Mentor Mrs. Tita Mendoza Blanco was doing her own moves on the dance floor. It was a real hoot!!!!

A photo booth took charge of anyone so willing to don and wear all the trimmings and props available for the simple pleasure of having a snapshot taken for posterity. It will make for good laughs and giggles when these pictures suddenly bear witness one day as to what this Golden Jubilee had instilled in the minds and hearts of the boys and girls of SEC Class 1968.

To add to the spirit of our milestone event, Yollie Timog Misa and Rod Misa were named Queen and King of Class 1968 Golden Jubilee by acclamation. No other high school sweethearts deserve better than this lovely couple for they are still enjoying their wedded bliss after all these many years as they explore new adventures going into their retirement years. Our best wishes to both of them for their continued good health and happiness.

The day ended with our Guest Mentor Mrs. Tita Mendoza Blanco taking center stage to convey her heartfelt closing remarks and our Fhelz Alcova Abello leading the send-off prayers as thanksgiving for all the wonderful blessings we had received over the years – more than enough reason for our immeasurable gratitude.

This first event day and the next one all came together due to a Higher Being for we all managed



DAY 2 - April 3rd, SEC 1968 at the (Binakayan Hall) Island Cove, Kawit, Cavite.



The final hour, farewell and goodbye of Southeastern College Class '68.

to converge in one place this one time for this heavenly wondrous gift called LIFE.

Day 2 Event on Tuesday, April 3rd, moderated by Aida Achurra Laserna and Beth Rubio Lazaro, was celebrated at the Binakayan Hall in Island Cove located in Kawit, Cavite. It was a much more intimate setting with the same live band as in Day 1 providing the music. Almost everyone came to this second and final gathering to continue the festivities from Day 1.

The entire membership at this juncture wore white t-shirts emblazoned with our Alma Mater's SEC Logo expertly done by our in-house artist Dave San Pedro. Boundless thanks to Dave for his generosity in gifting every member with his tireless effort in making the artwork for our white shirts which he also provided. We stood taller wearing those shirts and parading in them. He and his beautiful wife Dinnah also captured special moments using their handheld gadgets as they toured around the reception hall.

Photo sessions in smaller groups were going on all around the hall for their personal albums. A group singing in front of the podium orchestrated by John Cousart, Lory Cruz, Jhun Atienza and Fred Dimaculangan filled the entire room with their baritones and altos and of course more dancing was the order of the day. A couple of Dance Instructors was available to add to the fun on the dance floor. Everyone was having a great time just talking, exchanging pleasantries and life's experiences, recalling and re-telling stories of high school days gone by – all the precious moments that define what a time-honored tradition called reunion is all about.

As the clock ticked by to its final hour and as a result of the excellent fund-raising efforts managed by Mitz Lombay and Revie Catalan, a surprise raffle in cash envelopes became the highlight of Day 2 with every member present on that scheduled last reunion day enjoying a piece of the pie.

We said farewell to one another on the footsteps of Binakayan Hall – a momentous goodbye to the girls and boys of Southeastern College in Pasay City when on April 30th, 1968 we marched for our Commencement Exercises guided by the anticipation of what the future had in the books for us. And as we now continue this course through the 21st century, we are here, there and everywhere to relish and enjoy our ride, so blessed with our personal accomplishments and share them with our loved ones.

Continued on page 18

# Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Religious May festivities

BY FAINA E. ABAYA

Spain has colonized the Philippines for more than 300 years, a long period of time to brutalize the Filipinos but our great ancestors continuously defied their foreign intruders with pocket revolts until we became fully independent from the yoke of tyranny and oppression against our colonizers.

Spain influenced into the lives of our forebears were few, yet they were profoundly imbedded in our religion, culture and tradition which until now we still observed. One such event is our tradition of holding festivities to celebrate and honor our religious beliefs, foremost of which is our annual observance of our colorful Flores de Mayo (festival of Flowers) usually held in the month of May to honor the Virgin Mary with daily offerings of flowers. On the last day of the religious festivity, Santa Cruzan is held to observe the finding by Queen Elena the true Cross where Jesus Christ was nailed and met His "death".

This religious event has evolved through the passing of time from just a simply religious festivity to become an elaborate and colorful event participated in by beautiful women and well-known personalities with expensive attires to rival even the beauty pageant usually held during town fiesta and gathering for that purpose.

Suffice to say, the holding of Flores De Mayo and Santa Cruzan have become showcases of beauty, grace and elegance of our Filipino ladies in their couture designed colorful dresses, likewise, the gentlemen in their sartorial looks with their tailored suits or hand embroidered Barong Tagalog. And, to top it all, Flores De Mayo with accompanying Santa Cruzan has been held in every nook and corner not only in the Philippines with different versions but likewise around the world where Filipinos could be found.

In May 2018 just like 57 years ago when the Filipino Family Fraternity was founded has once again continued a great religious tradition to hold the Flores De Mayo and Santa Cruzan festivities. The FFF now under the leadership of our well known and energetic community leader, Aida Azurin as the Fraternity's President with the assistance of her officers and volunteers as well as religious entities of both Priests and Nuns joined hand and hand to hold the Flores De Mayo and Santa Cruzan



festivities.

On May 19, 2018, the coronation of Julie Victorina SooHoo I as her Majesty Imperatriz Sta. Elena and Mhiko Jaye Nanca Tagatac as his Highness Emperador Constantino, both to reign as such for 2018-20 and the event was held at St. Paul Catholic Church on Florin Road, Sacramento, California. The so-

cial Hall of the church was meticulously decorated with all the tables covered with white and pink linen table cloth and as a center piece was a bunch of fresh variety of flowers.

The program of the evening's coronation was ably emceed by another community personality Remy Solomon who started the program with the singing of

both the National Anthems of the United States and the Philippines. Immediately thereafter, the invocation was delivered by Sister Josie Tanudtanud, RVM. She invoked the guidance of the Devine Providence to make the events observance successful and to always have with us the Holy Spirit to enlighten and guide us, to strengthen our faith despite trials, difficulties,

conflict of individual differences and shortcomings.

Filipino, Chinese and American food catered by our community chef, Carol Munar were served and while all were enjoying their sumptuous dinner, the D' Dream-girls with their colorful poodle dress pink and black outfit entertained their audience with their usual well-choreographed dance which received thunderous applause from everyone.

Filipino Family Fraternity President Aida Azurin welcomed everyone by saying, thank you all for joining us tonight to witness the coronation of Emperatriz Sta. Elena Julie Victorina SooHoo I and our Emperador Constantino Mhiko Jaye Nanca Tagatac. Most importantly, she likewise expressed her profound gratitude to all who gave their precious times to make the festivities successful.

Community leader Lilia Rivera acknowledged the presence of numerous community personalities who were always willing to lend their assistance and support to make the events attained its goals. Mercy Guerrero, the President of Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity took the honor to introduce their night's Guest Speaker, the Rev. Fr. Joyle Martinez.

The speaker said among other things, "I congratulate the Filipino Family Fraternity and your families for celebrating Flores de Mayo and Santa Cruzan untiringly every year. It preserves the Filipino legacy that we received from our ancestors back in the Philippines". Just after the speech of Father Martinez, Mhiko Jaye Nanca Tagatac captivated the attention of everyone with his song that received thunderous applause from her admiring audience.

Continued on page 12

## Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Religious May festivities

From page 11

The presence of past Emperatriz Santa Elenas in the audience were also recognized for their continuous support on various meritorious activities of the FFF such as Naty Fontillas, Sarah Enloe, Carol Munar and Beth Velasco, they simply exemplified the beauty and grace of our women who are aging gracefully.

At this juncture, the outgoing 2016-17 Emperatriz Santa Elena Beth Velasco I and Emperador Constantino David Hai Velasco Lee in their best royalty attire were requested to have their Farewell Walk receiving deafening applause from their subjects. Both expressed their heartfelt gratitude to all, especially, the officers of the FFF for having honored to have been bestowed such titles on them and served the community in whatever capacity that they were requested to do.

The highlights of the evening's event were the coronation of both Emperatriz Santa Elena Julie Victorina SooHoo I and Emperador Constantino Mhiko Jaye Nanca Tagatac to reign for the years 2018 up to 2020. The coronation stage was well decorated with glowing golden like curtain as a backdrop and atop of which was the iconic Jesus Christ Cross. On the stage were two luxuriously and elaborately designed chairs purposely made for their highness to be seated.

of the incoming Emperador Constantino entourage led by Scepter Bearer Mikah James Rabara Tagatac and Crown Bearer Frances Kesy Urbano. Thereafter, everyone stood up followed with deafening applause with the entrance of His Highness Emperador Constantino Mhiko Jaye Tagatac so handsome in his hand embroidered Barong Tagalog partially covered with red cape, matching black pants and shoes as he walked towards the coronation stage to be seated on his designated chair. A Sash was presented with his embossed title by Lolainne Nanca and Michael Jon followed by Nina Nanca and



ed. Barbara Rabara Tagatac who presented the beautifully arranged Boutonniere.

The coronation pageant started with the entrance of the incoming Emperatriz Santa Elena Julie Victorina SooHoo appeared, she was met with roaring applause as everyone stood up a manifestation of respect and admiration for such a young age to occupy the much-coveted title bestowed by the Filipino Family Fraternity. As expected, the incoming Emperatriz was impeccably dressed in a meticulously couture queenly white attire to project her missions of the Filipino Family Fraternity which will redound to the best interest of the community.

First Vice President Rey Oineza

for his closing remarks expressed his profound thanks to everyone for accepting their invitations to witness the observance of our religious tradition and with their assistance and presence made the occasion extremely successful.

The following day, Santa Cruzan was observed led by the newly crowned Emperatriz and Emperador together with the officers and members of the Filipino Family Fraternity joined hand in hand by the church parishioners led by Fr. Martinez. The procession of the Blessed Virgin Mary started at the Social Hall of Saint Paul Church where all participants were assembled to walk accompanying the Carosa of the Blessed Virgin Mary around the compound praying the "Holy Rosary" and singing "Hail Holy Queen" up to the church for Eucharistic celebration.

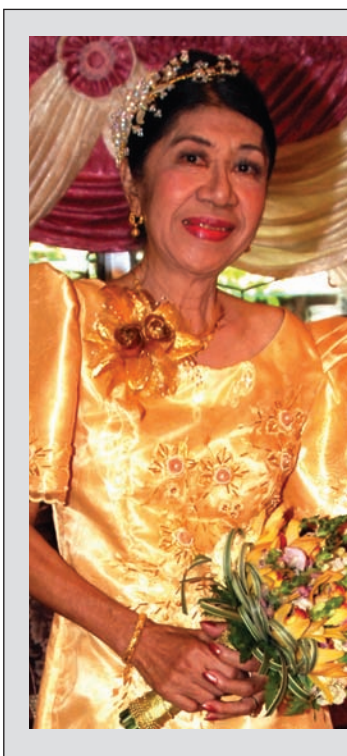
All the participants of the Flores de Mayo festivities were invited to join the floral offerings to the Blessed Virgin Mary during the Mass officiated by Rev. Fr. Joyle Martinez.

The officers, members and volunteers of the Filipino Family Fraternity who made this May festivities successful were; Mercedes Guerrero, Alex and Ling Avera, Dr. Tony Solomon, Norm and Vicky Johnson, RVM Sisters, Rose Basos, Linda Cordero, Cordero Brothers, Luz Daclan, Melchor Munar, Stanley and Edna Villanueva, Lourdes Velasco, Lilia Rivera, Meding Mangosing, Rey and Julie Oineza, Santy Galinato, Ben and Auring Ramos, Nick Catudan, Jerrel Guerrero, Linda Gibson, Clara Llanes, Bembet and Divina Borromeo, and many others.

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### Avelina "Letty" Mendoza Cheng

October 6, 1939-May 19, 2018

Avelina was born in Naguilian, La Union, Philippines to Arnulfo and Agapita Mendoza on Oct 6, 1939. She married Teodorico "Teddy" Cheng on January 14, 1962. They moved to the United States when Teddy enlisted in the US Navy. They were stationed at submarine bases along the Eastern Seaboard of the US with one station in Rota, Spain. In Spain with 3 sons, they traveled around Europe, experiencing the different cultures, art, history, food and landmarks. In their retirement, Avelina and Teddy continued to travel between homes in the US and Philippines and to many reunions.

Avelina worked with Finances as a store controller, casino cashier, and certified teller at Bank of America. She was also an auditor for the United Naguilian, La Union, Circle of America, Inc. (UNLUCAI). Avelina enjoyed the company of friends and family from Naguilian and was very active UNLUCAI member. She and husband Teddy are Life members of the Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA). Avelina loved to dance and enjoyed ballroom and line dancing.

Avelina is survived by her husband Teodorico; children and spouses Michael and Nancy, Richard and Tammy and Edward; Three sisters and one brother, Fe "Tina", Lolita "Lolit", Perlita "Perling" and Triunfo "Amboy"; Grandchildren Isabel, Cooper, Amanda, and Christopher; and great-grandchildren Samantha, Charlotte and Weston.

## The Graduate



Steven parents, Grace and Willie Cristi



Patrick and Steven

Steven Williams Cristi, of Skokie, Illinois, shown in the picture with his older brother Patrick, graduated a Summa Cum Laude from Northeastern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Arts with a degree in Secondary Education (English) and minor in Creative Writing. Steven was so humble, his parents and older brother only learned he was the Summa when the announcement was made during the ceremony. His reason for not sharing, although a great honor was to emphasize the importance of what he learned in school. On a side note, his brother Patrick informed his family that he was a Summa Cum Laude in Physical Therapy in 2015, just a day before going up to the stage.

Steven and Patrick are the sons of Grace and Willie Cristi (Nancy Cristi Bautista's brother). Steven accepted a position in Japan and will assist classes taught by Japanese teachers in English starting August of this year.

## Baptismal



Baptism of Aaron son of Austin and Rose Encina on May 26, 2018 at St. Paul Catholic Church

## Pinoy Cruise Director

Daniel "Dan Dan" Cuasito is currently the Cruise Director of Norwegian Cruise Line's Breakaway. Dan Dan was the life of the party on the ship. He performed his duties and carried his responsibilities admirably. He is a great speaker, both in English and Filipino. He also hosted the greatest and funniest shows on the ship. During the Farewell show, he joined Karl Loxley on stage to deliver a rousing rendition of the song, "Time to Say Goodbye." After the song, the whole audience rose to give him a standing ovation. He is someone that we all could be proud of!



Daniel "Dan Dan" Cuasito

## Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) Annual Picnic



A summer picnic was held by Filipino American Veterans Association to show appreciation to the members and family for their continued support. The picnic at Elk Grove Regional Park on May 12, 2018 was enjoyed by all, with much appreciation to all organizing committee and to President Dick Weitzenberg.

Any active duty military or veteran who served in the United States Armed Forces is eligible to join this organization.

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Everyone is welcome • Classes are free!

Eskwela Natin's Summer Session starts June 10	Class Location	2018 Summer Class Dates								
Join us for the 2018 opening reception, scholarship awards' presentation and first class: <b>Sunday, June 10, 2018</b> <b>Class from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.</b>	County Human Resources Building (Community Room) 2450 Florin Road (entrance 25th St.) Sacramento, CA	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">June 10</td> <td style="width: 50%;">July 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 17</td> <td>July 15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 24</td> <td>July 22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 1</td> <td>July 29</td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">All classes from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.</p>	June 10	July 8	June 17	July 15	June 24	July 22	July 1	July 29
June 10	July 8									
June 17	July 15									
June 24	July 22									
July 1	July 29									

For more information, email [EskwelaNatin@gmail.com](mailto:EskwelaNatin@gmail.com) or contact Dolores V. Diaz at (916) 396-2351. Join us at [Facebook.com/EskwelaNatin](https://www.facebook.com/EskwelaNatin).  
Eskwela Natin is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. Tax ID #46 2747258

# Calendar of Events

**JUNE 2, 2018 (SAT.)**  
**VALLEJO PISTA SA NAYON**  
 10AM - 6PM  
 Vallejo Waterfront  
 Mare Island Way  
 Vallejo CA  
 FREE Admission



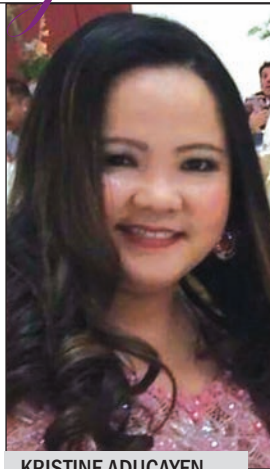
**JUNE 3, 2018 (SUN.)**  
**FILIPINO FIESTA of SACRAMENTO**  
 10AM - 5PM  
 Jose Rizal Community Center  
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento  
 FREE Admission



## Birthdays



SAL MAECELLANA  
JUNE 13



KRISTINE ADUCAYEN  
JUNE 29



NANETTE NERONA  
JUNE 24



JUDY MENDOZA  
JUNE 5



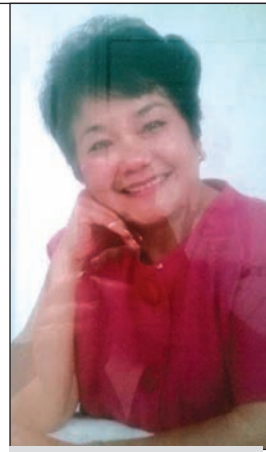
DINNAH S. SAN PEDRO  
JUNE 21



TITO GALLARDO & wife Laarni-  
JUNE 5



LYNNE MITCHELL & hubby Greg  
JUNE 27



TESS CARRASCA  
JUNE 16



NACIAN SANTIAGUEL with Tiffany & Alayne-  
JUNE 18

## Anniversary



NAP and GYNNE DE LEON  
54th Wedding Anniversary, May 3



JOSEREY and SUSAN DE JESUS  
38th Wedding Anniversary, May 3



RAMON and EDITH NAZARENO  
39th Wedding Anniversary, May 26

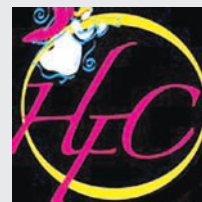
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# 365 Guidelines To Live By

Some of the following 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 at least one of these may bring a positive outlook to your life.



BY NANCY CRISTI BAUTISTA

**June**

- 1. Processed Foods: Try to avoid processed foods, if possible. Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, and drink water instead of soda and alcohol.
- 2. Pets: It is proven that having a pet makes a child more kind and responsible. For adults, having pets can give their lives more meaning and give them comfort.
- 3. Saving Money: Have a habit of saving money daily, no matter how small it could be. A surprise amount would be rewarding in the future.
- 4. Body Movement: Keep on moving your body whenever you can. For example, when watching a television, instead of just sitting on the couch, try to do an activity or exercise at the same time.
- 5. Lavender Scent.: Having a candle with a lavender scent in the house can relax you. For a goodnight sleep, one may use lavender - scented pot pourri, air freshener, or lavender - scented

- linen or tissues.
- 6. Tomorrow/s Outfit: To save time and and to have less stress, prepare the outfit to be worn the night before.
- 7. Flossing Teeth: When brushing teeth, it is very important to floss also.
- 8. Burnt Food: Avoid burning food. Aside from the distasteful reason, it is known to cause some diseases.
- 9. Extra Careful On Your Birthday: There were known cases where the day of birth coincides with the day of death. My own mother sadly proved it.
- 10. Collectible Items: Hobby of collecting must be fun, but, sensible.
- 11. Comfortable Dressing: Be comfortable with any outfit so not to spoil your day.
- 12. Hair Washing: Always use good shampoo and conditioner to achieve a glorious hair look.
- 13. Eye Exercise: Amid all the electronics, it is good

- to rest the eyes once in a while by looking away for a few minutes.
- 14. Political Correctness: Think seriously before applying political correctness.
- 15. Protect The Kids: Always protect the kids at all times.
- 16. Trusting Someone: Scrutinize first before trusting someone \_ and vice versa.
- 17. Do not Covet: If it is not yours, do not covet it.
- 18. Higher Power: Let the higher power guide you.
- 19. Love Thy Child: "For a father to love his child is for him to love his/her mother, and for a mother to love her child is for her to love hi/her father." by Anonymous
- 20. Honesty: Be honest in whatever you do.
- 21. Surrounding Awareness: Always be aware of your surroundings. Do not let your guard down.
- 22. Body Changes: Regularly check any body change and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

- 23. Emergency Cash: Always carry some emergency cash/coins. You might need them like at the toll plaza, parking meters, or places that do not always accept credit cards.
- 24. Grocery Bags: Always have extra reusable grocery bags or boxes in your car.
- 25. Double Checking: Have the habit of double checking anything, like the garage door being closed, or the store receipts, and other things.
- 26. Garage Doors: Make sure that nobody gets into your garage while you are closing it. Culprits can roll underneath the closing garage door without your knowledge. Violent crimes were committed with such negligence.

- 27. Emergency Kit: Always know where your updated emergency kit is. Instruct the member of your family also.
- 28. Check Medical Data: Be smart. Check your medical data to make sure that they are accurate. There were cases that the patients found out medication or diagnosis in the medical file that was not for that person.
- 29. Financial Condition: Plan, save, and straighten your financial condition.
- 30. Green Onions Recycling: Save the unused bottom part of the fresh green onions with the roots attached and place them in a cup with enough water to cover the roots. Place the plant by the kitchen window. In a few days, a new fresh green onions would sprout and ready to be re-used over and over again until they give up.



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*Tumutulong, nakakaunawa, nagmamalasakit para say iyo at sa mga mahal sa buhay. Sa ikatatahimik mg isip, tumawag lang po.*

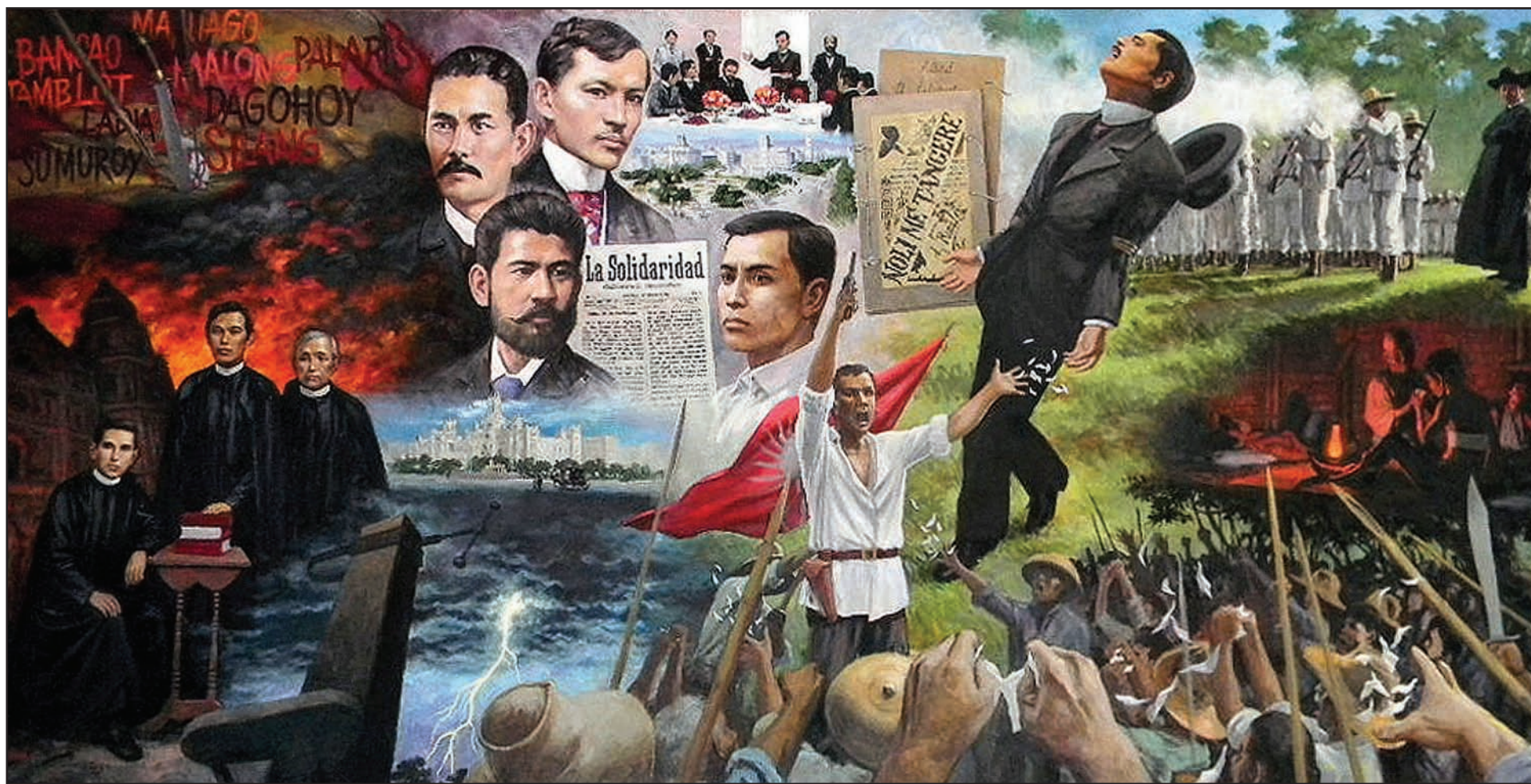
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## The History in the Struggle for Freedom

“The Filipinos have always cherished their freedom long before they were aware of the concept. Filipinos had always wanted to be free.”

Around the end of 1400's European countries developed a taste for Oriental spices which from not only improve the taste of the food but were used instead of salt to preserve the meat longer. When Magellan appeared before King Charles V of Spain, the only naval power at that time, he claimed that the Spice Islands belong to Spain. The King agreed to outfit Magellan five ships for the journey. At that time in the 1600's, the Philippines, which is composed of more than 7000 islands, were grouped into baranghais headed by a chieftain called datu. Social classes in the islands were divided into nobility, called magindanao by the Tagalogs, or datu by the rest; maharlika for the warrior class; the timawa for common people, and alipin namamahay, or serfs. The people of the archipelago; had their method of trade, religious beliefs and idiosyncrasies when Magellan reached the shore of Samar in 1521. To impress native sovereigns, Magellan put on an exhibition with his men with swords and daggers attacking a

soldier in armor on all parts of his body without drawing blood. The kings were rendered almost speechless by what they had seen. Magellan knew that the news of his exhibition will spread far and wide.

### Significant Chapters in Philippine History

#### 1. First Battle of Mactan:

Rajah Humabon of Cebu and Magellan pricked a drop of their blood into a cup of wine as a sign of peace and friendship. Humabon and his men swore obedience to the king of Spain and accepted Christianity by allowing them to be baptized in masse. Magellan called all the chiefs of the island and told them “that unless they obeyed and accepted the King of Spain as their king, he would have them killed and give their possessions to the King. Magellan was angered by Lapu-Lapu's refusal to join the other chiefs that he decided to lead the punitive expedition against Lapu-Lapu. He was not aware that the people of Mactan, a small island, were different from those of Cebu. They were skilled seamen and excellent fighters who loved their freedom too much to submit to a foreign yoke. In a hand to hand combat, Magellan was killed.

#### 2. British Occupation of Manila

The city fell in September 1762 to British forces. The British were defeated later on by the Spaniards.

#### 3. First Revolt of Timawas

People of Pangasinan and Ilocos. Diego Silang wanted to free the Ilocos region of Spaniards. His alliance with the British proved his downfall, and he was assassinated. His wife, Gabriela Silang continued his work.

#### 4. Execution of three young priests in 1872-

Father Gomez, Burgos and Zamora were executed on trumped up charges. They wanted more participation in the religious administration. A small uprising inspired the rise of nationalism in the archipelago.

#### 5. Cry of Balintawak, August 1896:

(Revolution of 1896) On August 30, 1896 Andres Bonifacio led 100 Katipuneros to capture the powder Depot in San Juan del Monte, Manila. Andres Bonifacio, a laborer, was inspired by the book on French revolution and founded the Katipunan, eventually known as KKK which stands for Kataastaasan, Kagalanggalang, Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan. The opening of the Suez Canal brought progressive ideas to the island. The sons of the wealthy Filipinos were sent to Europe to study. Filipino students in Madrid were quietly working for reforms for

more native Filipino representation in their Spanish Courts.

#### 6. Execution of Jose Rizal in December 1896.

Jose Rizal the most talented Filipino of that century was one of the students in Madrid. Through his brother, Paciano, he learned about the execution of the three priests. This inspired him to write about the abuses of the friars in the two novels- Noli Mi Tangere and El Filibusterism. The two novels further fostered unity in the country. He was a peaceful man, a doctor, a poet, a scientist and spoke twelve languages. He was executed for treason and rebellion. His trial and his execution united the country to rise in revolt.

Numerous public executions were designed to scare and discourage rebellion.

#### 7. March 11, 1897 First Philippine President.

Unbeknownst to Emilio Aguinaldo, he was elected President of the Philippine Republic at a convention in Tejeros, Cavite. This was reported to him the day before his 28th birthday because he was needed for the oath-taking. He refused to leave his post on the eve of the Spanish advance. His older brother urged him to take his oath now that the rebels were united.

Apolinario Mabini, a paraplegic wrote the constitution for the

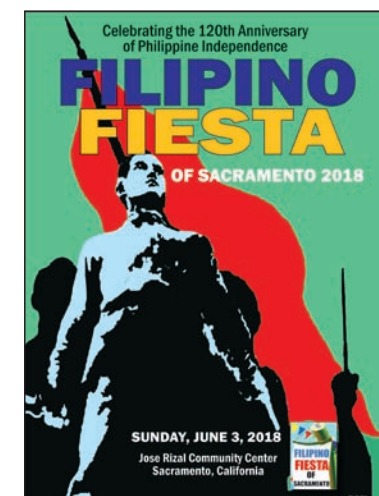
revolutionary government.

#### 8. Tragic end for Andres Bonifacio.

On May 10, 1897, Andres Bonifacio, the man who started the revolution and his brother Procopio were killed at Mount Tala. Having fathered the most successful revolt in the Philippine history, he became a victim to it. The internal struggle for control of the revolutionary forces moved to a tragic end. After the Tejeros assembly in Cavite, Bonifacio drew up in Naic, Cavite a document establishing a new government with an army of its own. He was arrested and brought before a Council of War which found him guilty and sentenced him to death.

Reference: *Filipinos at War* by Carlos Quirino

Submitted by Lilia Rivera





## A Filipina tops London speaking contest

BY ALFRED A. YUSON

Another young Filipina did our country proud on May 19 by besting 52 other student competitors in the annual English Speaking Union's International Public Speaking Competition in London.

Twenty-year-old Jazmin Tan Jabines, a UP Dili-man junior in business administration, thus became the third representative of the English Speaking Union Philippines chapter to win the global competition. Patricia Evangelista emerged as grand finals champion in 2004, while Gian Carlo Dapul did the same in 2008.

Having three champions in only 17 years since its inception in 2002 marks a distinguished record for ESUPhil, whose earliest supporters included then Philippine Ambassador Cesar Bautista, then consular media officer Ed Maranan, and Loline Reed of London, who personally hosted our delegates for over a decade. They must all be smiling proudly up there over their legacy.

Jazmin won the national finals conducted at FEU Makati last February, with ESU-Phil officers as the judges: chair Gigi Virata, Dr. Lourdes Montinola, Erlinda Panlilio, Butch Dalisay and this writer. Other ESU-Phil members include Ed Chua, Atty. Kat Legarda, Santi Dapul, Chito Sobrepeña, and the British Council's Mike Cabigon.

Jazmin was welcomed at Heathrow by Gene Alcantara, who with his wife Carmela hosted her at their home before she joined the other delegates.

For the preliminary heats, Jazmin's five-minute speech was "Great artists have no country" — dwelling on the EJKs and how these have inspired Filipino artists to express universal protest.

She made it to the Grand Finals with six others — from China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Lebanon, Estonia and the United States, with the American lady as the only other female finalist.

The judges' panel was chaired by Alan Johnson, who had served as UK Home Secretary in 2009-2010. The other judges were Tommy Seagull and Amanda Moorghen.

The topic for the finals was



Jazmin Tan Jabines is congratulated by head judge Alan Johnson after emerging as grand finals champion in the English Speaking Union's International Public Speaking Competition in London.

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it." Here's Jazmin's speech, titled "One Hour at a Time."

I had just one hour. One hour was all I needed — to recreate my memories with a person that time and circumstance had yanked away from my life. I was waiting at the international airport in Manila, because after ten years, she was finally coming home. My aunt would be back in the Philippines for her layover! For ten years we had exchanged pictures and video calls, but I knew that these were nothing compared to an hour of meeting in the flesh.

The Filipino diaspora is often talked about in numbers — they are the 12 percent of our nation spread across the continents, the \$US 2 billion in remittances they send home every month — but this neglects a larger part of the story — the daily sacrifices conducted in far-away countries. The stories of our Overseas Filipino Workers aren't just stories of success. They are also stories of invention — of finding new ways to succeed where none exist.

Our clock started ticking when a voice announced the arrival of her flight. We had our faces pressed on the glass as we waited for the balikbayans or the returnees who had come home. As soon as I saw my aunt pass through the airport gates, I knew. I am lucky to have a family that can make the journey back.

Not every Filipino working abroad can make the journey back home. Many of us get left behind. Many remain as TNTs, literally "those who hide." They live as undocumented immigrants, playing an endless game of hide-and-seek with the authorities. They invent new identities, facing the anxiety that comes with hiding, fearful of being deported back home. In the United Kingdom alone,

there are an estimated 600,000 undocumented immigrants, who long for the lives they've left behind.

I have 30 minutes left with her. The sweeping vistas of the countryside we used to visit were now the gray horizon of concrete pavement as we saw airplanes fly in and out. She will leave soon, along with the rest, to a life where she is needed — indispensable yet

invisible at the same time. After all, they are half a million seafarers of the world, travelling to places as far as Malta, Italy, and the Netherlands. They will nurse you back to health as they fill the 5,000 vacancies in this country's health care system. And they will take care of your children when you are too busy with work, when all they wish for is to be back home with their own.

Because this isn't just a story of those who leave. It's also a story of those who get left behind. These are the spouses, the children, the nephews and nieces, who also need to invent their futures apart. In my case, I had to reinvent ours at the terminal, until our ticking clock's time had finally run out. It is an ironic fact of a migrant's life that to show someone you love them, you often have to leave.

But that doesn't mean we can't invent new ways to connect, to be as much a family as ever. Because we families do what we do best. We rebuild our lives across the oceans, reinvent our ties with those we love, one hour at a time — whether it's the hours we spend on Skype calls, or the hours we spend with all our relatives back home for Christmas, or the hours we spend praying for those who are absent — every immigrant family invents their own unique way of spanning that distance and strengthening their love.

We can't change circumstance, but we can predict the future of our families by inventing it. We pick up the pieces they've left behind, and invent a new kind of dream for ourselves and for them.

For the last time, I saw my aunt pass through the airport gates, but this time, without a heavy heart. After all, our futures can still be written — one hour at a time.



BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

For five decades and three years now the Military Nurses Association of the Philippines has been committed to serve the diverse men and women of the armed forces, their dependents, civilian employees, and the Filipino people.

Military nurses are service oriented professionals. Everyone in the nursing service has been inculcated on the importance of accomplishing the mission. It is a no-brainer for military nurse assigned to a hospital (station, general, or medical center) to know the mission. They are even expected to memorize it. Nursing service has its mission posted in a conspicuous place for everyone to read. Nursing Service personnel are there to serve the entire armed forces organization composed of people with different customs, norms and traditions. Knowing everyone is different makes a military nurse to personalize nursing care and approach. Serving diverse people in a military community by improving their health is priceless.

Stability under pressure. Military nurses are trained to endure physical and emotional pressures. Every member of the Nursing Service undergoes training. Basic military training is one of them. It has

## A Steadfast Nursing Service amidst the Challenge of Diversities

military and professional phases. Training is essential in transforming a carefree civilian to a responsible military nurse who can withstand multifarious environmental pressures and still get the results.



cal profession in America 17 years in a row. Moral principles are in the DNA of a nurse. People feel comfortable knowing an acquaintance is a nurse.

I am proud to belong to the most ethical profession.

Dedicated to serve: country first, family second. Exigency of the service takes priority over family affairs. Military nurses took oath to serve the armed forces first before serving his/her family. These nurses are willing to be sent to the remotest military nursing service assignments in the Philippine archipelago to support the fighting strength of the

Security of tenure keeps military nurses going. Job security is an important aspect of life. There are thousands of civilian nurses out there desperately looking for job. Some will land a nursing job but are paid below the minimum wage. Believe it or not, some nurses get a monthly pay of P3,000. This made military nurses unique from civilian



armed forces. These nurses are pliant that can adjust to the environment. They can work 24/7 should their services are needed in times of wars, disasters and calamities. Dedication to service makes military nurses stand out over civilian counterparts.

nurses. Under a current AFP pay scale, a starting monthly salary for a newly Call to Active Duty second lieutenant nurse is P39,356. Yes, that is right: thirty nine thousand three hundred fifty six pesos per month. Aside from fat base pay, a military nurse receives good benefits and allowances to include cold allowance, if you are assigned in Baguio or Tanay, and loneliness pay, if you are assigned in far flung remote areas.

Finally, to MNAP members, continue to be strong, dedicated, committed, and be of service to the nation. As leaders, be a good example to your members who have diverse culture and beliefs.

Congratulations on your 53rd anniversary. God bless MNAP.



## Afterthoughts and Special Moments... SEC Class 1968 Golden Jubilee Reunion

### Side trips and sidelights

After the official 2-day event celebrations, some of us took advantage of the extra time available to do what some will call "life's simple pleasures and indulgences"...

Vic Bautista, Lory Cruz, Estela Aranda, Fe Gigantes, Estrella Aquino, John Cousart, Lito Marcalas and Ferdie Cordero were seen hanging out in the MOA area to probably share the fun and funny moments they had with Fe who missed both event days.



John Cousart (L) and company at MOA

Cora Gahol Leonor and Beth Gutierrez wanted to know what the big deal was all about in Siargao, Surigao del Norte and they were not disappointed. Apparently, the island is still pristine in its conditions and is now becoming a popular vacation destination for local and foreign visitors.



Lorna Vergara Perez and hubby Art

Jette Lumagui hopped in a plane to take her to Tokyo, Japan with her sister Carol Santos for another R & R and explore the beauty of the Land of the Rising Sun.

High school bosom buddies Beth Gutierrez and Jette Lumagui satisfied their curiosity as to the grandeur of Okada Manila. I cannot help but think that they just didn't know what to do with their money since as some sources said, Okada is a well-known casino resort... ka-ching!!!...ka-ching!!!...ka-ching!!!... LOL!



Mrs. Tita Mendoza Blanco with Revie, Lily, Fhelz and Cynthia

hard work, supported by our loved ones over the years, defines where we are now in our lives.

My reunion experience during my 6-week vacation, starting with my long distance travel from my home base to the people I had met along the way, the sights and sounds I had seen and listened to, had brought me a renewed appreciation about a lot of things in general. Without a doubt, life has been punctuated with countless and bountiful blessings. It is so and will always be.

It was good to see everyone who made time to join in our Golden Jubilee Reunion particularly those members who travelled from great distances just to see old friends, rekindle acquaintances and celebrate



Yollie and Rod Misa with family

Lorna Vergara Perez and hubby Art explored some of the most beautiful places in the Philippines: Vigan, Ilocos Sur; Laoag, Ilocos Norte; Coron, Palawan to name a few including visits with friends and relatives in other parts of the country. They were just non-stop in their Philippine escapades.

The Misa Family did pretty much the same tour of the Philippines in exploring the countryside. Each time I wondered what Yollie and Rod were doing, I would just see their postings in Facebook as to their current or previous whereabouts. Good for them.

The same was true with Dave and Dinnah San Pedro for they found time to land their feet in Ishigaki, Japan and Taipei in Taiwan in between their own sight-seeing of certain interesting spots in Bataan and in the Greater Manila Area.



Dinnah and Dave San Pedro

with one another. Maybe one day our paths will cross again. Until then, I wish everyone continued good health, safety and happiness.

**GOD SPEED, DEAR FRIENDS.**

## Ligawan: Traditional Pilipino Courtship

BY FRANCIS AQUINO

Usong pa ba ang Ligawan?  
(Is courtship still being  
practiced?)

When I was trying to research a clear cut definition of "ligawan," which is the tagalog word for traditional Pilipino courtship, I came across a completely different word. I found "lugawan," a fast food place that serves "lugaw," or rice porridge. I don't know how this is related to my topic, but I just find it funny. And all of a sudden I became hungry.

The research wasn't that easy. I had to really dig deep to get a formal definition of "ligawan." I don't know if this sends me a sign that the traditional Pilipino courtship isn't happening anymore, especially if you are a Pilipino who hasn't been living in the Philippines for quite a while, or at all. Or is the art of courtship really dead in this fast paced, internet generation?

What really encompasses the "ligawan"? According to Wikipedia, courtship is "the traditional dating period before engagement and marriage. During a courtship, a couple dates to get to know each other, and decide if there will be an engagement. Usually courtship is a public affair, done in public and with family approval."

Hmmkk. Wikipedia is an awesome tool. Mental note, I need to make myself "Wikipedia-able!" Maybe then, someone can actually be interested in me and court me. HA! So based on the definition, isn't courtship a vital stage in establishing a real honest to goodness relationship? I mean, how else can two people get to know each other and really know if they would like to pursue a relationship without going through a dating period?

With this in mind, it isn't a question of whether "ligawan" is still in vogue or not, but how the manner in which the courtship is done has changed over time. For some, it's the time to put your best foot forward. Time to impress. Or maybe time to be fake? Of course not, but then again you do have to try to impress, but not to the extent of coming up with a totally fabricated YOU. You just try to emphasize your best qualities first. Then ease the other person to the flaws that you might have (good thing I don't have flaws! Lol).

I know some people who skipped the entire process that ended up being together. But after some time, they decided that they



Illustration by Dave San Pedro

didn't really know each other that well and that they didn't have much in common aside from wild, hot, passionate, mind blowing (you get the picture) sex. Which I think is also important. But beyond the physical aspect of relationships, what else is there to do if you don't have anything to talk about. Believe me, for some people I know, this could be the most ideal relationship! But not for me.

Amidst the bitter and jaded postings, putting aside the hard shell and ever growing wall that I put into my façade, I still truly believe in... (dear god, I can't even type without feeling icky) I still believe in... (ok, I can do this), yes, I still truly and honestly believe in love (whew, and I didn't even vomit a little bit in my mouth this time!). And with this out in the open, I want to go through the "ligawan" process.

You know that feeling when you absolutely want to call or text somebody, but you stop yourself, even when you are just dying to see the other person again but you hesitate in asking. When you experience a million butterflies in your stomach every time you see that special someone, but you have to play it cool, all these things happen during the "ligawan" process. I know that the end result, if everything works out well, is for the two of you to be together. And wow, that is truly the best feeling ever!

But one can't compare to the feeling that you can experience in the firsts of the pre-relationship phase ever again. First date, first kiss, first movie, first everything! And that is why I think "ligawan" is so important to making a relationship really valuable to both parties. It serves to help strengthening the relationship, and ultimately making it last.

Yeah, fine. You can laugh at me now. Psh.

## GMA's Martial Law special wins gold at U.S. International Film & Video Festival

The Alden Richards-starrer *Alaala: A Martial Law Special*, which competed in the docudrama category, brought home a Gold Camera Award at the recently concluded 2018 U.S. International Film & Video Festival.

*Alaala* aired in commemoration of the 45th anniversary of President Ferdinand Marcos' declaration of Martial Law. It took viewers through the journey of Martial Law activist and award-winning screenwriter Bonifacio Ilagan (portrayed in the special by Richards), as well as Ilagan's good friend Pete Lacaba, played by Rocco Nacino and his activist sister Rizalina, portrayed by Bianca Umali.

Meanwhile, GMA Network brought pride to the country once again as the most internationally-awarded broadcast network in Philippine Television won six other medals and seven certificates at the prestigious event.

The Network's News and Public Affairs group dominated the recipients of this year's awards with four gold medals (including the one won by *Alaala*). Reel Time's 'Batang Maestro' won a Gold Camera Award in the Social Issues category.

Documentary program Reel Time earned a Gold medal in the Documentary: Social Issues category for its 'Batang Maestro' episode. The winning piece featured



Alden Richards as Boni Ilagan in 'Alaala: A Martial Law Special,' a Gold Camera Awardee in the Docudrama category.

a 12-year-old Dagul, who together with his fellow 'little teachers', braves the long river of Donsol on board a bamboo raft to teach younger children how to read.

Meanwhile, Kapuso documentarian Atom Araullo earned two gold medals—one for his first GMA documentary special, *Philippine Seas*, and another for his I-Witness episode entitled "Silang Kinalimutan".

A special that aimed to uncover the wonders and threats surrounding the Philippines' marine gems, *Philippine Seas* won in the Documentary: Environment, Ecology category. "Silang Kinalimutan", on the other hand, which is Araullo's first documentary for I-Witness, triumphed in the Documentary: Social Issues category. It showed the story of the Rohingya people who had to flee to neighboring Bangladesh after the Myanmar government denied them citizenship.

*Philippine Seas*, Atom Araullo's first documentary

in GMA Network, took home a Gold Camera Award in the Environment, Ecology category.

A Silver Screen Award was conferred to Raffy Tima's *Inside Marawi: A Report On 360 Video*. The video, which was shot and produced by Tima as he traveled through the war-torn city with his 360 degree video camera, won in the Craft/Production Techniques: 360 Video category.

Meanwhile, multi-awarded investigative program *Reporter's Notebook* gave the country a silver medal in the Documentary: Social Issues category. The winning report by Maki Pulido, entitled "Yapak sa Pusod ng Dagat", saw the story of Filipinos who risk their lives diving into the ocean without proper equipment in the hope of mining gold that they could sell.

GMA's Entertainment Group also took home a Silver Screen award for the primetime show *The One That Got Away* in the Entertainment: Dramatic Comedy category. The recently-concluded sexy romantic-comedy series that told a modern-day tale of how women deal with love and friendship was bantered by actresses Lovi Poe, Rhian Ramos, Max Collins, and actor Dennis Trillo.

*Manila Standard Showbiz*

## Review: 'Deadpool 2' is Ryan Reynolds' funniest movie to date

BY STEPH ASONG

20th Century Fox's R-rated "Deadpool 2" is one of the biggest superhero movies from the Marvel Cinematic Universe to hit this year and people are in agreement that it is by far Ryan Reynolds' funniest movie since the 2002 Van Wilder, "Party Liaison."



Scene from "Deadpool 2".

The much awaited sequel is packed with surprises: from Reynolds' perfectly timed humor to all the pop-culture references. Since the film's debut back in 2016, it already has the macabre Marvel super-antihero theme that everyone seemed to have enjoyed. Hardcore fans who knew the character from Marvel Comics did not think it is possible to capture the raunchy, irreverent essence of "Deadpool" on the screen; something that Reynolds was probably born to do.

If you can all clearly remember Reynolds' first superhero debut with his cameo in the 2009 "X-Men Origins: Wolverine," fans were not really too excited with the big-mouth character. Years have passed and everyone deserves to start with a clean slate, right? The first "Deadpool" movie was an instant hit and it surely did a 360-spin to Reynolds' acting career.

### 'Deadpool 2' surpasses 'Avengers: Infinity War'

Known as a mutant mercenary assassin with a foul mouth, hyperathletic combat skills and the ability to heal almost everything in his

body except his poignantly disturbing disfigured face that he often conceals with his mask—not that he is embarrassed or anything—Deadpool is not your typical well-polished superhero.

With its undeniable success in the United States and overseas, "Deadpool 2" is one of the highest grossing movies of all time with an estimated 125 million USD opening weekend according to Fox, toppling Disney and Marvel studios' "Avengers: Infinity War" off the top spot that ran for three consecutive weeks.

Despite having an R rating, "Deadpool 2" has proven that when all the elements are aligned and properly applied, it can definitely work. Surprisingly, people—of all ages and social backgrounds—can very much relate to the perverseness and violence of the movie and it probably has something to do with having a lot of comic relief and at the same time, it offers a more honest approach to superheroes.

Since the very beginning, superheroes have been stereotyped as indestructible, honorable, good looking, incapable of doing

mistakes—in other words, a gift to humanity. All of these things are the opposite of who Deadpool or Wade Wilson is, which makes him such an intriguing and relatable character.

Director David Leitch recreated the fictional character with one important note in mind: his typically fast and shallow-talking persona should match the pace of the humor and this is where Ryan's comedy-savvy talent is realized.

It is quite rare for an action-packed film to combine multiple elements such as emotional pain, fight scenes, and amusement. But this was all made possible by a script that is overloaded with witty references, within and outside of the Marvel universe. In fact, the movie had a singular formula all throughout: action scene, joke, action scene, joke, action scene, joke, all ending into a cheesy pop ballad by Celine Dion and honestly, everyone was laughing their hearts out to even notice its repetitive and simple formula. For the most part, the movie was able to pull through and get away with it (twice already).

## Bee Gees praise Filipino boys' 'Your Face Sounds Familiar' imitation

BY JAN MILO SEVERO

TNT Boys members Francis Concepcion, Mackie Empuerto and Kiefer Sanchez nailed their imitation of the legendary singing group Bee Gees in the recent "Your Face Sounds Familiar Kids" episode.

Their performance trended on different social media sites and amazed viewers. Fortunately, thanks to social media, that video reached the real Bee Gees and they shared the TNT Boys' video on their Twitter account.

"Imitation truly is the sincerest form of flattery! Thank you #TNTBoys @YourFacePH for your rendition of "Too Much Heaven". #MyBeeGees," the singing group posted on their Twit-



TNT Boys

ter account. Judge Gary Valenciano was amazed at the boys' performance and said the boys did an excellent job.

"I'm sure napakaraming lumigaya ngayong gabi na nanonood sa atin. Sana si Barry Gibb, I hope he's watching so he can see how talented this generation of Filipinos is," judge Sharon Cuneta added.

Barry Gibb is the only remaining member of the trio Bee Gees after the death of

Maurice Gibb on 2003 and Robin Gibb on 2012.

The TNT Boys were part of the "It's Showtime" singing competition "Tawag ng Tanghalan." They were grand finalists in that contest.

The boys also appeared on both the UK and the US versions of "Little Big Shots," where they performed Beyonce's "Listen," which impressed talk show host Ellen DeGeneres.

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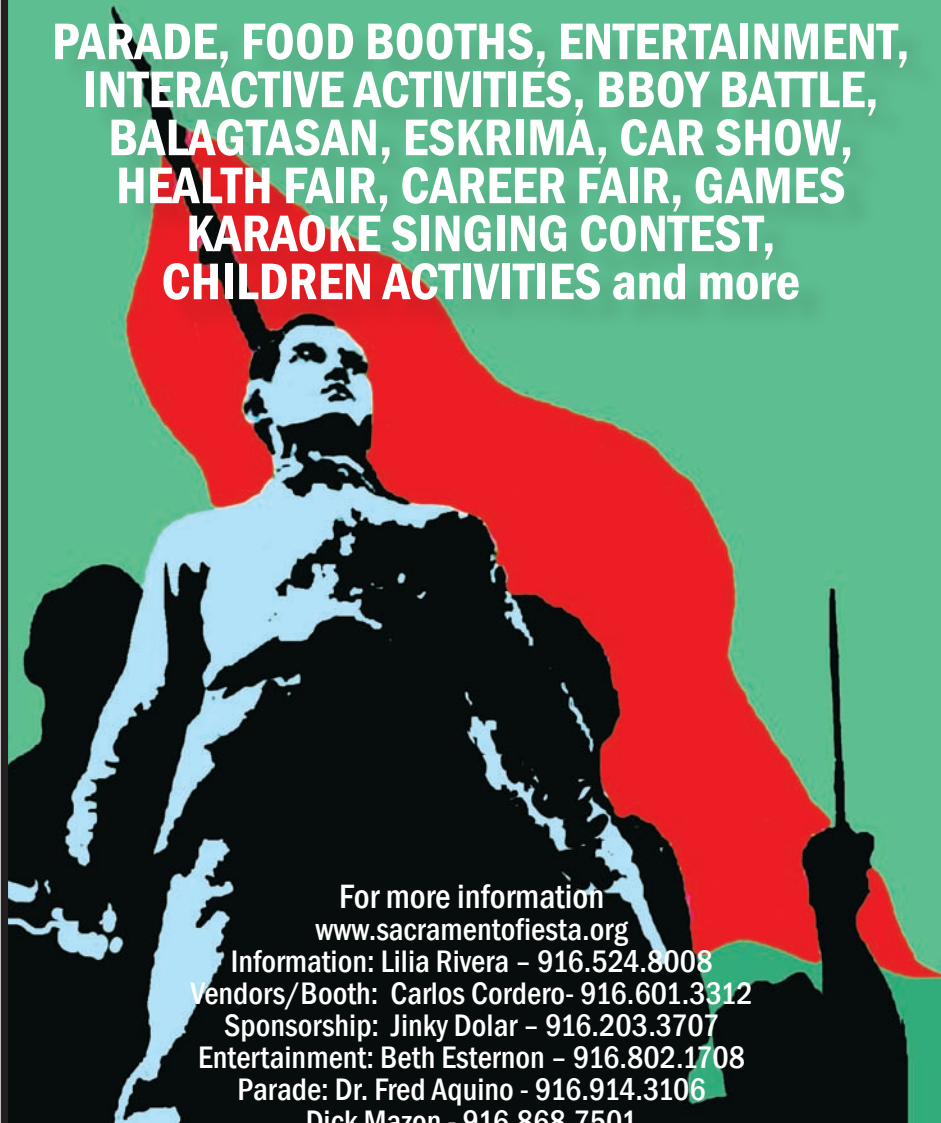
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