



P4 New COVID omicron XBB.1.5 spreading like wildfire

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P8 FCSV Christmas Party

Filipinos urge Marcos to team up with US, Japan to protect West PH Sea – Pulse survey



In this June 26, 2022, photo, a Philippine flag is erected at Sandy Cay, a sandbar just 4 nautical miles from the disputed Pag-asa island in the West Philippine Sea where several Chinese naval ships have been spotted.

BY DANIZA FERNANDEZ

MANILA, Philippines — The majority of Filipinos want the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to partner with the United States (US) and Japan to defend the country's sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea, a Pulse Asia survey showed.

Pulse Asia President Prof. Ronald Holmes revealed in a forum Thursday that of the 1,200 adult Filipinos surveyed nationwide, 84 percent chose the US while 52 percent picked Japan to help the Philippines secure its jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea.

Others garnered the following scores in the survey:

- Australia – 25 percent
- UK – 24 percent
- South Korea – 23 percent
- China – 20 percent

- EU – 20 percent
- Russia – 17 percent
- France – 12 percent
- India – 2 percent

The survey, conducted from November 27 to December 1, 2022, asked respondents this



Pres. Xi Jinping and Pres. Marcos

question: “Among the following, which entities should the Marcos administration work with to strengthen security cooperation to defend our national sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea?”

The choices, from which respondents may select up to three, were: Australia, China, Euro-

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FCSV's Mrs. Philippines with a Fringe of Glamour and Intrigues

BY MURRAY NAVARRO

The Filipino community in Sacramento has once again proven its strength and solidarity through the success of its major fundraising to build the community center. A very long-existing dream of Filipinos in the area since the 1970s is to have a place called “a home sweet home” for its members.

Mrs. Philippines is a bi-annual popularity contest to raise awareness among members and for its monetary aspect to raise funds. This fiscal year, with the effort of the chair of Mrs. Philippines, 2nd Vice President Mina Guerra was able to convince four gorgeous, sincere, and wanting-to-help women to compete for the coveted crown of the community, and the follow-



Photos by Dave San Pedro

(L to R) Shane Gitmed, Brandon Mazon, Carol Fonseca, Elmalyn and Jun Llamas

ing official candidates are Elmalyn Llamas, Joy Roberts, Carol Fonseca, and Shane Gitmed.

Since the official announcement of the candidates in the FCSV's board meeting in the early month of April 2022, each one started to strategize their quest for the crown. Each candidate has a



Coronation of Queen Carol Fonseca by Erlinda Aglubat

interest from their supporters and financially help them gather money enough to post them on the top rank of the popularity contest.

The first canvassing was a back-to-back event with the scholarship program award last July 16, 2022, at Rizal Community Center.

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New Year's Eve at Magellan Hall

BY DALE ESPERANTE

Despite the windy wintry weather and constant downpour that flooded certain areas of Sacramento County, veterans and friends of historic Magellan Hall arrived ready to party the evening for the coming of New Year 2023. For an hour after 6pm, waves of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen waltzed in the door with a smile, happy to be with new and familiar acquaintances.

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Counting down the seconds before midnight

Photo by Dale Esperante

Remembering the Watsonville Riots of 1930

BY ALANI LETANG

In the early part of the 20th century, Filipinos were U.S. nationals with a legal right to work on the Central Coast. But many of them still faced discrimination and hostility. It boiled over into violence on Jan. 19, 1930, in Watsonville, when Filipino field workers were attacked, beaten and even killed.

“At one point the dance hall was over here somewhere,” said Frank Malodora, while he points to an empty lot at the end of Beach Road in Pajaro outside of Watsonville.

The dance hall during the 1920s and ‘30s was often packed with Filipinos dancing or the men mingling with white women. It is depicted in many of the archival footage provided to KSBW by the Pajaro Valley Historical Association.

“So they would dress to the nines try to impress,” Madolora said.

The hall was also where white mobs attacked Filipino farmworkers during the Watsonville Riots of 1930.

After the mob attacked the hall, Maldolora said the rioters would, “head back downtown and wherever they met Filipinos, they attacked them.”

The attacks against Fili-



Filipino American manong (an Ilokano term of endearment for older men/brothers) and their white dates.

pinos grew into five days of violence from Jan. 19-23. It included throwing Filipinos off the Pajaro Bridge. Rioters also shot up a bunkhouse in Murphy’s Crossing Labor Camp, where they killed 22-year-old Fermin Tobera as he slept.

The violence in Watsonville would spark riots in other California cities across the Bay Area and Central Valley.

Madolora came to the Central Coast at age 5 in 1957 from the Philippines. At the time Filipinos were manual labor workers, mainly in agriculture. They stuck together when others in Watsonville ostracized them.

Madolora remembers growing up his family, “had parties, get-togethers on the weekend.”

“Most of the people we knew were single men, ‘manong.’ Manong in Filipino means brother. To them it was more than a brother, it was family. I was the only family they

had,” Madolora said.

Manong in Filipino is also used to describe the first eave of Filipino immigrants to the U.S., according to Roy Recio, a member of the Asian Cultural Experience on the Central Coast and a Watsonville native.

Growing up and having to learn English, Madolora recalls being harassed, beaten and excluded. But says he didn’t experienced large-scale violence like the 1930 riots, let alone learn about them.

“And I don’t think there was enough written about it,” Madolora said.

University of California Santa Cruz is on a mission to change that.

A team of professors, graduate and undergraduate students are preserving Filipino history through the eyes and voices of Central Coast Filipinos. The project is called Watsonville Is In The Heart.

“I was surprised about how little there was about

the history of Asians in the Central Coast,” said Steve McKay, associate professor of sociology at UCSC.

“The local papers are full of mentions Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Singh and others, at the time. And what’s happened is a slow erasure of that history,” McKay added.

Third-year UCSC Ph.D. candidate and Santa Cruz native Meleia Simon-Reynolds is part of the project. During her kin-

ters because she wants to integrate the Filipino history of migration and vitality back into the grade school curriculum.

“There wasn’t a lot of room for other stories as far as SC history goes. So I think if I had learned about Filipino-American history in the local area or even other Asian-American history, I wouldn’t felt more connection here, more inclusive,” Simon-Reynolds said.

“Because people are so unaware, of these structures and struggles that were happening, I think it really allows these things to perpetuate. As we are seeing now with the uptick in anti-Asian hate crime.”

The project team will also photograph artifacts and old pictures that people donate. They are then uploaded to a digital archive to eventually be a public learning tool. Plus it has become a learning tool for the researchers as well.

“And you kind of get an insight in their memory, and either their struggles, their highlights. It’s a conversation that really you can see kind of who they are as people,” said project team member, Nicholas Nasser, a third-year undergraduate history student at UCSC. ksbw.com

Filipinos urge Marcos to team up with US, Japan to protect West PH Sea -

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pean Union (EU), France, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, the United Kingdom (UK), and the US.

Meanwhile, 4 percent of the respondents admitted that they did not have enough knowledge to give an opinion on the matter, as 0.2 percent answered “none” or did not

pick any from the given choices.

Additionally, Holmes said, half of the respondents think the Marcos administration should strengthen the country’s military capabilities, especially the Navy and Coast Guard to “effectively address issues in the West Philippine Sea” while 29 percent believe

joint maritime patrols and military exercises with allied countries should be conducted.

Also, he noted more than half of the people surveyed consider the protection of marine resources and the environment as the most important reason to strengthen the country’s ability to defend its seas. *Inquirer.net*

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Ahead of Marcos visit, Chinese state media downplays South China Sea dispute

BY SOFIA TOMACRUZ

MANILA, Philippines – As Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. marks his first state visit to China on Tuesday, January 3, *Global Times*, the Communist Party tabloid, sought to downplay Manila and Beijing’s dispute in the South China Sea.

The long-running issue – one of the most heated aspects of bilateral relations between the Philippines and China – was expected to figure in meetings between Marcos and senior Chinese leaders, including President Xi Jinping.

In a series of articles published Tuesday, January 2, a *Global Times* editorial cast aside as “noise” issues relating to the South China Sea, adding that the dispute was one that “some Western media outlets have tried to play up.”

The outlet instead characterized the situation in the volatile waterway as having maintained



President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is expected to raise the issue during his two-day state visit to China

“stability,” although Philippine defense officers and foreign reports have said otherwise.

In December alone, Philippine defense officer-in-charge Jose Faustino Jr. called out China over its continued presence around features in the West Philippine Sea – the portion of the South China Sea that belongs to the Philippines – after several vessels were found

lingering near Iroquois Reef and Sabina Shoal.

The Philippine Department of National Defense also ordered the military to strengthen its presence in the West Philippine Sea in late 2022, following a report by Bloomberg of Chinese construction in several uninhabited features in the Spratlys. Beijing denied the report.

Prior to that, the Philippine government filed a diplomatic protest against China after its coast guard personnel seized rocket debris from the Philippine Navy in November 2022.

In a separate opinion piece, deputy director of the Institute of International Relations in the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Li Kaisheng, instead characterized Beijing as the “biggest victim” in the dispute, saying it “had to take a series of countermeasures” after the Philippines filed a case against China at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague in 2013.

The landmark legal award secured by the Philippines struck down China’s claims in the South China Sea as illegal, though China refuses to abide by it.

The Department of Foreign Affairs earlier said that Marcos would raise the West Philippine Sea issue in his meeting with Chinese leaders, including Xi, but declined to divulge

more details.

Before departing for China on Wednesday, Marcos said he looked forward to discussing “political-security issues of a bilateral and regional nature,” in what appeared to be a reference to the dispute.

“The issues between our two countries are problems that do not belong between two friends such as Philippines and China. We will seek to resolve those issues to mutual benefit of our two countries,” he said.

DFA Assistant Secretary Nathaniel Imperial earlier said among the 10 bilateral deals to be signed during the visit are an agreement establishing “direct communication” on the West Philippine Sea between the foreign ministries of both countries.

Marcos earlier vowed that his government will not give up “even a single square inch of Philippine territory” to any foreign power. - Rappler.com

Martial Law survivor Bonifacio Ilagan receives anonymous threats

BY JAIRO BOLLEDO

MANILA, Philippines – Martial Law survivor and renowned playwright Bonifacio Ilagan sounded the alarm over anonymous threats he received.

“He [caller] said that his unit was tasked to wipe out communists and told me to desist from my activities,” Ilagan said. “He said he ‘knew enough of me and still had some respect for me,’ but he and his unit were just waiting for ‘the final order from the higher-ups,’ and they would surely get me, and that I should not ask for mercy, it would be futile, because I had already been warned.”

This was part of a statement that Ilagan shared on January 3 about a phone call he received that threatened him.

Ilagan is an activist and among the conveners of the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses and Martial Law. The playwright said that although there was no direct mention that he will be killed, the message was clear.

“While the man didn’t say outright that they would kill me, his point was all too clear: They could.”

In an interview with Rap-

pler on Wednesday, January 4, Ilagan said there were no prior indications or incidents before he received the threat. There were indications of surveillance before, he said, but he shrugged them off.

“Yes, mga text ng trolls, I suspect. And some na palagay ko mula [sa] military agents and indications of surveillance. Pero I shrugged them off,” Ilagan said. (Yes, text messages from trolls, I suspect. And some that I think came from military agents and indications of surveillance. But I shrugged them off.)

This, he added, was the worst threat he has received so far.

What happened

The Martial Law survivor said he received the phone call at around 3:14 pm on January 2, while looking for plants for his fish tank along Congressional Road in Quezon City. The call came from an unknown number, and the caller identified himself as “Kumander” (commander).

“I heard a man’s voice. He wanted to talk to Mr. Bonifacio



Ilagan. I asked who he was. He said he was Kumander (I failed to get the complete name), and that he belonged to a unit (whose name I also was unable to remember but I recall him mentioning a ‘sector’).”

Ilagan told Rappler that the call came from a man who is probably in his 50s. “Definitely not the sales pitch kind,” he added.

He said his activism could be the reason behind the threat: “There is no other reason I can think of behind the threat, it’s my activism that goes way back to the 70s. Pero what baffles me is, after the elections, wala

na akong statement sa media. Tahimik na ako.” (But what baffles me is, after the elections, I didn’t give any statement to the media. I was already silent.)

Shortly after the filing of candidacies for the 2022 polls, Ilagan, along with other Martial Law survivors filed the first disqualification case in November 2021 against then-presidential aspirant Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The petition sought disqualification based on the then-candidate’s 1997 conviction for failure to file income tax returns from 1982 to 1985. Martial Law survivor Bonifa-

cio Ilagan receives anonymous threats

During Marcos’ inauguration on June 30, Ilagan and other Martial Law survivors also took an oath at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani, vowing to guard against tyranny under another Marcos presidency.

Meanwhile, Ilagan added that “rank and file” activists are the most common targets of attacks. But for mass leaders and those who often face the public, the threat against him is the most recent one.

According to rights group Karapatan, at least 17 civilians from the peasant sector became victims of extrajudicial killings from July 1 to November 30. This includes Ericson Acosta and Joseph Jimenez, who were part of organizations.

On arrests and detention, Karapatan said they have recorded at least 30 illegal arrests under Marcos – 24 of them peasants, and at least 10 affiliated with organizations.

Ilagan added he is considering various options, including calling on authorities to probe into the incident. – Rappler.com

New COVID omicron subvariant XBB.1.5 is 'spreading like wildfire' in US: Health experts reveal why

BY ANGELICA STABILE

The new omicron subvariant, known as XBB.1.5, is spreading like wildfire across the U.S.

As colder weather brings in peak COVID infections, this novel mutation is beginning to worry health professionals.

So, what are some of the unique features of the strain that is now gripping swaths of the country?

First, this subvariant is immuno-evasive. It's not as susceptible to natural immunity or vaccines — and it is very contagious, health professionals say.

In a phone interview with Fox News Digital, Fox News medical contributor Dr. Marc Siegel explained that there are actually two subvariants at play: XBB and XBB.1.5.

Fox News medical contributor Dr. Marc Siegel, pictured, said that the XBB subvariants sweeping parts of the nation are "highly contagious," with spike proteins acting like "suction cups."

XBB.1.5 is more contagious, said Dr. Siegel, who is also a professor of medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center in New York City.

It's more contagious due to its ability to grip tightly onto a host, he explained.

"The spike proteins are like suction cups," he said.

"Viruses always want to be more and more transmissible and infect more hosts."

"So, the more it can get a grip ... the more easily it transmits from cell to cell," he added.

Both XBB subvariants are "highly contagious," Siegel added, since each omicron variant is "out-competing its predecessor."

Dr. Shad Fani Marvasti, associate professor and director of public health and prevention at the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix, told Fox News Digital that each new strain develops with the intention of overshadowing those that went before it.

Dr. Shad Marvasti, associate professor and director of public health and prevention at the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix, said he hopes that COVID variants will

become "less severe."

"Viruses always want to be more and more transmissible and infect more hosts," he said.

In some cases, there's a "trade-off" between mutations, in which some may become more transmissible but less virulent in terms of the health impact, Marvasti also said.

This is the hope for omicron and its developing variants, such as the "sticky" XBB, he noted.

He said he hopes that "we start seeing [the variants becoming] less severe," he said.

"And that can be both a function of the evolution of the virus ... and also the fact that more people have been exposed to the virus through either vaccination boosters or previous infections," he said.



A nurse administers a pediatric dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to a young girl. Dr. Marc Siegel noted that since fewer hospitalizations are occurring with current COVID subvariants, they are actually less severe, though health professionals are not sure why this is. (ROBYN BECK/AFP via Getty Images)

Dr. Siegel added that so far there's "no evidence" that XBB is more virulent.

"If it's spreading like wildfire and it's not killing more people, that means it's less virulent," he said. "But we don't know the reason for that."

"It's definitely the majority of cases in the Northeast, and we expect that to be for the whole country."

Currently, XBB.1.5 accounts for almost 41% of confirmed COVID-19 cases across the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The XBB mutation has picked up speed, jumping from just 21% of COVID-19 cases on Christmas Eve, the CDC noted.

During the last week of December 2022, XBB.1.5 made up 75.3% of COVID-19 cases in northeastern states.

Those states include Connect-

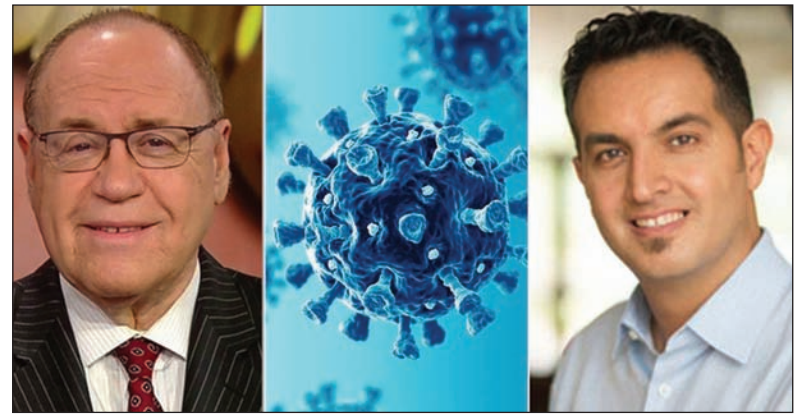
icut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont, the CDC said.

Even though XBB numbers are currently lower in western parts of the country, Dr. Marvasti of Arizona stressed there's no doubt the subvariant will catch on just about everywhere else.

"It's going to increase in the coming weeks no matter what level it's at right now."

"It's definitely the majority of cases in the Northeast, and we expect that to be for the whole country," he said.

"In Arizona, my expectation is that it's going to climb pretty quickly, especially since we



Fox News medical contributor Dr. Marc Siegel, at left; Dr. Shad Marvasti of University of Arizona College of Medicine, at right. A microscopic COVID germ is shown in the center. Both medical professionals encourage people to take appropriate steps to stay healthy, including wearing masks and getting vaccinated, when appropriate.

issue since omicron's appearance.

Keeping up with vaccinations is important, yet Dr. Siegel said the constantly emerging variants question the efficacy of current vaccines on the market.

This is because omicron variants are known for attacking the upper respiratory tract — the nose and sinuses — instead of the lower respiratory tract in the lungs, he said.

"Which is one of the reasons why you see less people on ventilators," he explained.

Fox News medical contributor Dr. Marc Siegel, at left; Dr. Shad Marvasti of University of Arizona College of Medicine, at right. A microscopic COVID germ is shown in the center. Both medical professionals encourage people to take appropriate steps to stay healthy, including wearing masks and getting vaccinated, when appropriate.

Both experts stressed that even though symptoms may be less severe, people who are at high risk or immunocompromised should continue taking appropriate steps toward prevention, including wearing masks and getting vaccinated.

"There are a lot of things you can do to help boost immunity and improve your ability to fight off infections, including COVID."

While keeping up with vaccinations is important, Siegel said, he added that these constantly emerging variants question the efficacy of current vaccines on the market.

The XBB's immuno-evasive properties are "bothering" health experts the most, he noted.

At a recent news briefing, Harvard Medical School assistant

professor of medicine Kathryn Stephenson said that even though the original COVID vaccines may have lost some of their punch against new variants, they're still holding up well against severe illness and death.

Jordane Domain gets a COVID-19 test done by a health care worker on Jan. 13, 2022 in North Miami, Florida. Dr. Siegel noted that more research and better funding are required for COVID prevention, which might include inhaled vaccines in the future.

Jordane Domain gets a COVID-19 test done by a health care worker on Jan. 13, 2022 in North Miami, Florida. Dr. Siegel noted that more research and better funding are required for COVID prevention, which might include inhaled vaccines in the future. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

One possible solution could be incorporating Omicron-updated boosters to further enhance protection, she said.

This would require more research and funding into "better" vaccines such as inhaled vaccinations, said Dr. Siegel.

"My philosophy toward protection from this virus is the more immunity you have, the better," he said.

In an effort for everyone to stay healthy, Dr. Marvasti encouraged practicing other ways to boost immunity, including getting enough sleep, managing stress, reducing inflammation, eating healthier, taking probiotics, staying hydrated and exercising.

"People should recognize that there are a lot of things you can do to help boost immunity and improve your ability to fight off infections including COVID," he said. *Foxnews.com*



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FCSV's Mrs. Philippines with a Fringe of Glamour and Intrigues

BY MURRAY NAVARRO
FCSV Secretary

The four witty candidates voluntarily endorsed their monetary stakes to initially win the crown. As a result, Mrs. Llamas wiped other candidates' names behind her by raising more than \$9,000 that night and the other two candidates just dropped more than a thousand each and the fourth candidate contributed six hundred dollars. (Note that the number of contributions stated in the article is just estimated.) Because of the event, candidates worked harder to bridge their winning strategies and used their charms and wit to produce enough money to stay afloat and win the Mrs. Philippine crown as their goal.

Fast forward, four months after the second canvassing acclaimed the final night among the four candidates' destiny over the crown. A dinner-and-dance was held on November 5, 2022, at Rizal Community Center from 5 PM to 10 PM but was extended due to the complexities of counting the candidates' monies by the canvassers. The highlight of the canvassing was the presentation of each candidate manifesting her reason to support Mrs. Philippines' popularity contest. Each one was respectfully presented on her fashionable walk with elegance and pride of being a woman of honor and dignity. Each one as well presented her talent to the audience and fascinated everyone with a dance or singing or recitation of the poem.

Before the canvassers set forth at the last minute to drop their monies, each candidate sold an auction box. A 5-minute span of time to bid for a dance with a candidate with a donation to support the candidate and the highest bidders will bring home the said box. At 9:30 of that night, no candidate was able to drop any money into her designated box and the counting started.

While the tabulation of money raised was going at the Deacon's Room of Rizal Center, candidates and their supporters continued the festivities by dancing. But the unexpected waiting time happened and most of the supporters were not able to hang on to the results. The scouring waits finally ended after the Rizal Center cleaning crew has already packed the tables and chairs into the storeroom. Restless supporters were seated on the bleachers of the hall awaiting. Ultimately, it is worth waiting for because the winners were announced before midnight. In the end, Mrs. Carol Fonseca won the crown of Mrs. Philippines with a surprising contribution of more than \$60,000. Following



Emcees Megan Sapigao and Vince Sales



Zeny Yagen, Murray and Dinnah



FCSV Board Members and Guests

Photos by Dave San Pedro



Past FCSV Mrs. Philippines



Beautiful ladies of the evening at the coronation night



Marlon Costes, Brian Pastor and Rick Pasalo



Mr. and Mrs. Danny Perez and Carlos Cordero



Entertainment by Queen Carol



Mina Guerra, Mrs. Philippines coronation chair with Margie Pasalo



Entrance of Her Majesty Mrs. Philippines



Presentation of Queens Entourage with the Flower Girl Yumi Pascual and Henry Pascual, Jr.

her were Mrs. Joy Roberts as Mrs. Luzon with more than \$52,000, Mrs. Elmalyn Llamas as Mrs. Visayas with more than \$51,000, and Mrs. Shane Gitmed as Mrs. Mindanao with more than \$13,000. Totaling to an estimated gross revenue of \$180,000 which is the highest turnover of funds raised from the candidates in the history of FCSV's Mrs. Philippines. And

this is just the beginning of the controversial issues that darterd the Mrs. Philippines event.

Based on the knowledge that reached my desk as secretary of the organization, information about the issues is necessary to let them know the comings and goings therein. The prevalent issue that the community talked about was when one of

the candidates, Mrs. Llamas set forth her own coronation event as People's Choice Mrs. Philippines of Sacramento 2022. She had a blast with the title and a complete coronation package with her supporters. What is FCSV's stand on the issue? As long as she is not using her title "FCSV queen," the organization is not intimidated and silently dropped the issue. On another

issue about her picture, Mrs. Llamas decided not to put her picture on the cover page of the souvenir program of the event. The request was honored by the committee but the picture she wanted to be used on her page inside the souvenir program was not granted. She wanted to use a picture of her with her crown during the People's Choice Awards.

Continued on next page

FCSV's Mrs. Philippines 2022-2024



Sash presenters Julie Vergara and Roselie Crandall



Queen Carol with escort Brandon Mazon and Queen Erlinda Aglubat



Mrs. Visaya Elmalyne Llamas and husband Jun



Mrs. Mindanao Shane Gitmed with her son and family



Mrs. Visaya Elmalyne Llamas and husband Jun



Dick Mazon and Queen Carol Fonseca



Royal dance by the Queens and their escorts



A Serenade by Marlon Costes singing "For the First Time".



Final photo with FCSV Mrs. Philippines Carol Fonseca and friends

Photos by Dave San Pedro

The latter issue did not reach the discussion table of the board members because President Dick Mazon took full responsibility for not allowing her to post the desired picture on the candidate's greeting page of the souvenir program.

The issue of Mrs. Luzon Joy Roberts and her husband Kit Clarete is ongoing with some legal proceedings. Kit requested the board to talk and lay out their complaint against the Chairman of the Mrs. Philippines 2nd VP Mina Guerra and Co-Chair Margarita Pasalo. To address his issue, President Mazon set an

emergency meeting on December 9, 2022, at Kapitbahay with the couple together with 1st VP Vince A. Sales and Secretary Murray Navarro composed the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee to hear their side. The committee was only aware of the second notice at that time from the couple dated December 7, 2022, which is a follow-up letter based on the verbal conversation with co-chair Margie Pasalo last December 6, 2022. They implemented a new deadline to get an answer from the FCSV Board of their verbal demand conversation with Margie Pasalo on Decem-

ber 9, 2022 (6 PM Friday) and a cashier's check for the other half of their money on December 12, 2022. Otherwise, they will boycott the coronation night and will coordinate with their donors and contestants regarding building a lawsuit against FCSV as per their lawyer's advice.

Instead of an answer to the December 9 deadline, the Ad Hoc committee met with the couple together with their friend Len. Details of the meeting are held confidential at this point due to the

legal negotiations of their case with FCSV. FCSV's lawyer is currently mediating as legal counsel on behalf of the board against the couple and constantly communicating with their lawyer to clarify the misunderstanding and their demands.

Despite the ongoing legal battle, Mrs. Philippines' Coronation and Ball Night went successfully as scheduled at the California Ballroom of Double Tree Hotel by Hilton on December 17, 2022. It was indeed a night to remember with prestige, glamour, and elegance of championing the triumph of hard work for both the candidates and the steering committee. Chair Mina

Guerra together with Margie Pasalo (Technical), Luz Daclan (Ticketing/Counting/Tabulation), Jocelyn Domingo (Entertainment/Decorations), and Roselie Crandall (Food/Refreshments) were able to mount an unforgettable ceremony to honor FCSV's Mrs. Philippines' 2023-24 Queen Carol Fonseca 1 and her royal court. 1st VP Vince A. Sales and Meagan Sapigao presented the ceremony as hosts. The added controversy was the use of an LED wall as a backdrop for the occasion on stage. It served the festivities stylishly during the coronation night with the camera lens of Board member Frank Zabal.

The highlight of the night started with the entrance of Mrs. Philippines 2023-2024 and Her Royal Court. The correct title's years are from 2023 to 2024 instead of 2022-23 as printed on the sash and souvenir program. A farewell walk and message were seen and heard from the reigning Queen Erlinda Aglubat 1 as Mrs. Philippines 2019-2020. The popularity contest was not conducted to search Mrs. Philippines 2021-2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each queen with her escort was forerun by her tiara, sash, and bouquet presenters.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Luzon 2023-24 Mrs. Joy Roberts was not in the picture that night. Since FCSV did not meet their demand to return the other half of her money on December 12, 2022, she boycotted the coronation night as per earlier demand conditions stated in her second notice.

Unluckily that night as well, the Mrs. Philippines ballots drawing was postponed to another date due to a legal issue pertaining to the raffle ticket permit from Attorney General's office. FCSV is taking care of the situation with the legal counsel.

Thank goodness, the finale was gone gracefully with her majesty and classily with the LED tech as planned. Queen Carol Fonseca 1 was escorted by Brandon Mazon in lieu of his father President Mazon who was on a wheel that night due to a health ailment. Please check the coronation segment of the live coverage on Facebook's FCSV account.

Before the royal dance took place, the queen and her court were serenaded by Marlon Cortes with his rendition of Kenny Loggins' "For the First Time." The final royal festivities started after Chairman Mina Guerra thanked the committee for their volunteer work and dedication in putting up the ceremony and the candidates for their enthusiasm in helping and supporting the FCSV's popularity contest to raise funds for the long dream to build the Filipino Community Center.



Filipino Community of Sacramento & Vicinity Christmas Party

BY DINNAH SAN PEDRO

With just less than two weeks given to chair the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity's Christmas Party for the officers and members, it turned out to be a successful gathering to celebrate the holiday seasons. It's also a gathering to celebrate FCSV's several successful projects throughout the year.

Although the Magellan Hall was booked in advance to hold the Christmas Party on December 11, 2022, from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM, the preparation became a bit challenged due to an earlier event that ended after 1:00 PM. But as visitors arrived, everyone eagerly took part in the decorations, with centerpieces prepared by Sylvia Fortis, and in setting up the tables and chairs. What made the celebration even more festive was the sight of a whole roasted "lechon", as it was being delivered by Ariel Rivera, who roasted the pig himself, accompanied by his wife. The lechon was graciously sponsored by Raul and Ellaine Cupino of Cupino Carehomes for the hard-working officers and volunteers of FCSV and their guests.

With Murray Saturnino as the lively emcee of the program, the invocation was presented by Sister Fe Bigwas after the singing of the National Anthem. Everyone shared and enjoyed the delicious food catered by Carol Munar and also from the food sponsors: Janet Tabora, Rosalie Crandall, and Rosie Sloan. REI gifts, and cash donations were also received from Mena and Henry Domondon, Frank and Nida Zabal, the Philippine Fiesta News, and the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento.

The mere three-hour event was filled with joy and laughter with dance presentations by Alvin Siasayan, Edna Villanueva, and Christine Landiza, Magic by Danedini, song rendition by Marlon Costes, Let's Go Dance Group, with music provided by DJ Raymond.

As the chair of this FCSV's Christmas party, the success of this event was made possible by co-chairs Carol Fonseca and Sylvia Fortis and by several volunteers who contributed their time to participate in the program, to decorate, as food server, and those who stayed to clean and close the hall after the party. Thank you all so much!

Happy Holidays from my family to yours!



Murray Navarro and Dinnah San Pedro



Julie Vergara, Dinnah, Renato Borromeo & Carol Fonseca. Lechon donated by Raul Cupino



Dane, Amanda, Evie & Dinnah



Uke Carolers



Murray, Dan, Jinky, Dinnah, Dave, Mina, Frank and Marlon



Mena and Henry Domondon



Alvin, Rosie, Cristine and Edna



Let's Go Dance Group (Kapitbahay)



Danedini the Magician



Event co-chairs Sylvia Fortis, Carol Fonseca and FCSV members



Members of American Legion Auxiliary

Photos by Dave San Pedro



BY DALE ESPERANTE

Snapshot of New Year's Eve at Magellan Hall

Around 7pm, Emcee Dale welcomed and thanked everyone for making the drive here through the non-stop rainy condition. He also thanked Commander Al Garcia by introducing him to the guests who may be unfamiliar of the new and dynamic leader of The American Legion Magellan Post 604. Commander Al Garcia took over when the former 10-year commander of the Post, Tom Amaba, decided to retire. Handpicked and encouraged by Tom Amaba, Al Garcia easily won the election to become the 2022-2023 Commander of Magellan Post 604.

For veterans, the best way to display their devotion to America worth fighting for is to start the official program by saluting and standing proudly for the Star-Spangled Banner. Mercedes Guerrero then delivered the invocation for all the blessings of the past, present, and the future.

The evening continued with dining, singing, and dancing. Commander Al Garcia's friends provided three excellent danceable songs. Thank you, Adin and Paula Selby, both cantors of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Elk Grove. Edward and Paul Cordero, a father and son team, handled the DJ duties for the enjoyment of all the guests, especially the social dance aficionados.

For the highlight of the evening, the Ladies took over to present the traditional Mrs. New Year's program. Congratulations Ladies! You are much appreciated for your support and contributions to Magellan Hall's traditional New Year's program. Mercedes Guerrero announced the winners: Mrs. American Legion Auxiliary Unit 604 -- Sandy Antonio, Mrs. American Legion Magellan Post 604 -- Mely Mariano, and Mrs. New Year 2023 -- Queen Lena Morelli.

For the new year countdown, DJ Edward Cordero intermittently announced the minutes then seconds with the help of an official Pacific Standard Time online app. A semi-circle of hardy veterans and guests who remained for the midnight countdown stood ready with drinks in hand for the celebratory toast. When the clock



struck midnight, the balloons dropped, and a cacophony of noisemakers resonated within the confines of Magellan Hall. Old and new friends gleamed with happiness as they milled

around toasting champagne glasses, high fiving, shaking hands, fist bumping, laughing, hugging, popping balloons on the floor, and ringing in the new year with hope for peace,

love, and joy! The veterans of the American Legion Magellan Post 604 and the ladies of the Auxiliary Unit 604 are grateful to everyone who braved the inclement weather and partici-

Photos by Dale Esperante participated in their traditional New Year's Eve celebration. Let us do it again next year! Until then, Have a Glorious and Prosperous Happy New Year 2023!



BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

Resolutions: Looking Back

It is said to believe that the concept of New Year's Resolution can be traced back to ancient Babylonians some 4,000 years ago. The Babylonians would make vows to their gods, and the gods would repay their debts, but the Babylonians must keep their word, or they would fall out of the gods' favor, which may result into an unfortunate year for them.

Regardless of its ancient religious traditions, today the concept of New Year's Resolution is mostly a secular practice. Millions of people across the United States every 1st of January make personal decla-

rations of change, whether it is something minuscule --like removing soda from their diet--to something substantial, like exercising to lose weight, people create these changes for their own wellbeing.

In the beginning of last year my personal declaration of change was to seek more opportunities in filmmaking, by challenging and surrounding myself with more work I felt passionate about.

This was fulfilled when I was part of the crew for a short film produced by the Sundance Institute in March and in May, I won 2nd place at the Sacramento Asian Pacific Film Festival in the Short Film category. For both projects, the stories were about people who are marginalized in our community. For the Sundance Institute short film titled, "Do Digital Curanderas Use Eggs in Their Limpas?" the film is about a queer, gender fluid, Indigenous curandera who has lost their magic and must convince their



best friend to support their decision to upload their consciousness into the Internet and leave their body behind. For the Sacramento Asian Pacific Film Festival short film titled "Nothing Can Be Changed Until it is Faced" (which is a quote borrowed by the prolific writer, James Baldwin) I wrote and directed the short film

about Richard, a Cambodian American, rediscovers himself and his family's hardships, while maintaining a yard sale one morning. Without a doubt, I am humbled for both projects allowed me to express and surround myself with like minded creative people. It allowed me to empathize with certain communities and understand their

plight in our country.

Advancing my filmmaking career wasn't the only New Year's resolution I wanted to accomplish last year. I was granted the opportunity to write for the Philippine Fiesta, a well-respected newspaper with online readership that is read internationally. Dinnah and Dave San Pedro granted me this opportunity last March, when I wrote my first piece about the Stop Asian Hate movement.

This has opened many more creative opportunities with writing since then. I have written 8 articles for the Philippine Fiesta and continue to write for them moving into 2023. I will try to bring into fore our great culture and tradition as depicted in our songs, dances and costumes. For such privilege, my profound gratitude to all of you and take this time to wish you HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

It's now or never

BY DINNAH SAN PEDRO

A title of one of Elvis Presley's songs, maybe, but I meant it in a lot more sense!

It's the end of the year, I thought at the moment. As always, every New Year opens up new beginnings for us all.

I'd like to say, to start anew, leave things behind, and forget the past. But I believe remembering the past is important, also! As we move on, they become our reminder, to progress in life.

Would we aspire for better things like hobbies, prized possession, new relationship, or anything just to say we've made some changes for the new year?

Individuality comes into play! There's no sure magic

in what we want to fulfill as we traverse the universe. We have different scenarios, where we are in time. Which means, we should make changes in improving our present situations, accordingly.

But then when I say, "It's now or never", I encourage you to read between the lines!

If it's not now, when? Or will you ever?

First be grateful then jump on new and good opportunities to make your situations better. Always give thanks to the people behind your achievements, and most of all, to our God Almighty. I welcome his presence in the air that I breathe and the lights that guide me to follow the right path, all the time!

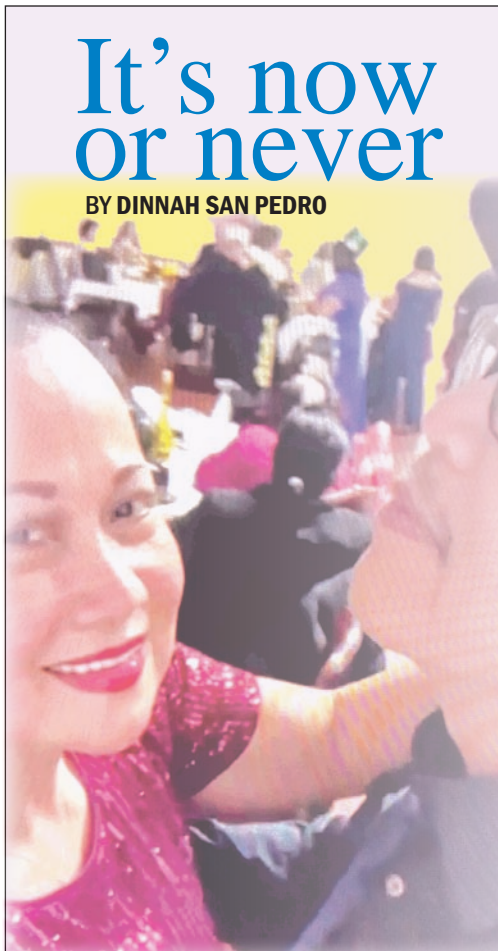
Move with purpose, I mean, in anything! Physically unable to turn and twist my body to my liking due to previous knee injuries, I have to plan my body movement so as not to feel pain on my knees. Most of all, live with a purposeful life. There's always a good reason for our every actions. There's should also be that good intention in everything that we want to accomplish in life.

Goodness and greatness come from within ourselves. Do not expect people to cater or to revolve around us. It's in our hands to make things better for us and for our families. When we realize that, then it would not be difficult to extend a helping hand to those in need.

Families and friends don't

lose them, if anything, make more! As they say, "don't burn bridges". Find a way to connect with them, anyway we can. It's the thoughts that count, so let them know that you're thinking of them, even in the distance. Being close together is the best, but when not possible, reach out and say hello. It can sometimes be the last time you'll hear from each other, especially with the pandemics that can't seem to go away.

Lastly, have that constant presence. However way you approach the years ahead, being consistent is what will help reach your goals. Don't get off track. Focus and determination are keys to getting things done NOW, and NEVER not making any move will be out of the picture!



Madonna, Celine Dion and Bruno Mars snubbed by Rolling Stone in its 200 greatest singers list

BY HANNAH MALLORCA

Not only did American magazine Rolling Stone snub Celine Dion from its list of “200 Greatest Singers of All Time”; it also apparently excluded other noteworthy singers in the musical firmament, such as Madonna, Bruno Mars and Dionne Warwick.

A day after the US-based publication sparked outrage with its new year salvo, fans are still coming up with more reasons to spurn its controversial list, and checking it twice or more, insisting that several other artists should have made the cut.

According to Rolling Stone, “Queen of Soul” Aretha Franklin deserved to be the top pick among the music industry’s greatest, along with Whitney Houston, Sam Cooke, Billie Holiday, Mariah Carey, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, Beyonce, Otis Redding, and Al Green who complete the Top 10 of the 200 greatest singers list.

Dion, however, was apparently not great enough to merit even the 200th spot, sending fans of the Canada-born chanteuse up in arms. Meanwhile, fans of Michael Jackson took exceptions to the fact that the late singer-songwriter did not even make it to the Top 10, and gasp, was even far below the list at 86.

The magazine seemed to take all the censure in stride, and even went so far as defend its list on its official social media accounts.

“Before you start scrolling (and commenting), keep in mind that this is the Greatest Singers list, not the Greatest Voices List. Talent is impressive; genius is transcendent,” Rolling Stone said on its Twitter account.

In a separate post on Jan. 3, Rolling Stone also urged fans to vote “on some of its placements” on its official Instagram account.

“Have an opinion on our ‘The Greatest Singers of All Time’ list? Of course you do. Head to @RollingStone’s Instagram Story to vote on some of the list’s placements and see what others think,” the publication’s tweet read.

Despite this, music fans seemed to not take the publication’s follow-up remarks as they continued to air their dismay on social media.

“I don’t think there’s anything wrong with admitting you f*cked up + adding an addendum — it happens, whatever — but the logic that this is a “singers” list and not a “voices” is a ridiculous justification for omitting Celine Dion,” author Art Tavana said in response to Rolling Stone.

A fan going by the username @kasiaxoxo voiced out their disappointment towards Dion’s exclusion from the list.

Meanwhile, a certain @Madziajestfajna urged the publication to “apologize to Celine.”

Another fan also criticized

Rolling Stone for omitting American pop star Madonna from its list, while placing Michael Jackson on the 86th spot.

“Michael Jackson at 86. Eighty. Six. Delete your account. Destroy your servers. Take all existing magazines out of print. Throw them in a [bonfire]. File for chapter 11. Vacate your office. Demolish the building. Apologize to the world. Repent. Leave the planet for good,” they said.

Music publicist Eric Alper, meanwhile, enumerated the singers who were excluded from the magazine’s list.

Other singers not on Rolling Stone’s list of Greatest Singers:

- Celine Dion
- P!nk
- Bruno Mars
- Jennifer Hudson
- Janet Jackson
- Philip Bailey
- Pat Benatar
- Tony Bennett
- Madonna
- Nat King Cole
- Dionne Warwick
- Barry Gibb
- Phil Collins

...it’s always good to get people talking about music!

Twitter user @hannahsonic14 described Rolling Stone as a magazine



(From left) Madonna, Celine Dion, and Bruno Mars are among the notable singers who were apparently excluded from Rolling Stone’s ‘200 Greatest Singers of All Time’ list. Images: Instagram/@madonna, Instagram/@celinedion, Instagram/@brunomars

that is all about “fan’s appeasement” after the apparent snub of Mars. “Rolling Stones’ lists have never been a credible source, it’s for clicks and to create discussion. Them excluding Bruno Mars and discrediting many artists only proves that,” they added.

Dion has yet to address Roll-

ing Stone’s apparent snub on her social media platforms, as of this writing. She recently made headlines after canceling her 2023 shows in Europe and revealing that she has been suffering from a rare neurological disorder called “stiff person syndrome” in December 2022. EDV

Anniversary



ERNIE and MILA SANTOS
58th Wedding Anniversary,
January 6



NARDO and EBENG PENA
60th Wedding Anniversary,
January 2



NORM and VICKY JOHNSON
60th Wedding Anniversary,
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Photograph by Andri Tambunan



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35% (154) OF INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE OCCURED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (I.E. STREET, PARK, SIDEWALK, PARKING LOT).

*Data pulled from the Bulosan Center's report on California Filipinos which gathered data from Stop AAPI Hate

If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report at **STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV** or call **833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283)**.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE.



The following public awareness campaign is brought to you by the Laban Group: Filipino Ethnic Media Collaborative. Led by Everyday Impact Consulting. Laban Group aims to promote awareness in our beloved Filipino American community and the broader public about anti-Asian hate incidents and crimes; reduce stigma surrounding the reporting of incidents and crimes; enhance understanding of resources; and foster community healing and cross-racial collaboration. This collaborative is funded by the "Stop The Hate" initiative from the California State Library in partnership with the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. Learn more at linktr.ee/labangroup.