

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

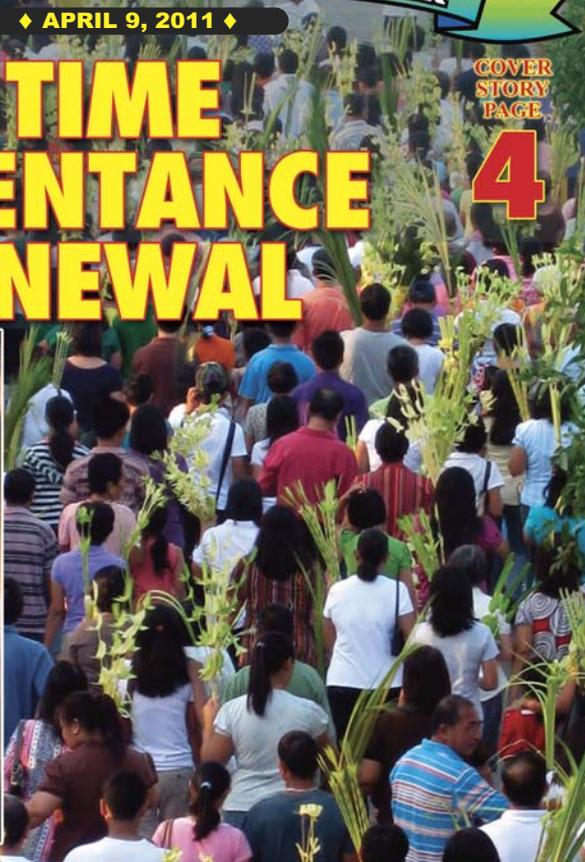
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ APRIL 9, 2011 ◆

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EDITORIAL

A Time of Repentance and Renewal

Filipinos value a good number of virtues such as personal fortitude, our friends' loyalty and the strength of our families—all of which help us to survive and succeed. But aside from these values, most Filipinos are also deeply spiritual.

The Spaniards brought Roman Catholicism to our homeland almost five centuries ago. Since then, it has become a dominant cultural and political force, influencing our history from the first mass to Limasawa to the EDSA Revolution of 1986. One can therefore rightfully say that religious traditions, particularly those of the Judeo-Christian heritage, have always played an important role in shaping our identity as a people.

Particular customs and rituals become mere externalities of faith when they come face-to-face with the true purpose of religion, which is to bring us all closer to the divine. For Filipinos, the Season of Lent does just that. For Catholics and Christians, Lent is the season to repent for the sins they have committed, remember the sacrifices of the Savior and be joyful for their salvation. But Lent is also primarily a celebration of repentance and renewal—desires that are universal and all-encompassing. Lent is about sacrifice. It is about having the courage to face our mistakes. It is about reflecting on the things that we can do so we can become better persons. At the end of the day, Lent is about that aspiration for change, which is the very essence of life.

The word "Lent" itself means "spring," and we call Easter the "Pasko ng Pagkabuhay." We therefore celebrate not only the Lord's resurrection, but also our own renewal. We are joyful for our rebirth and thankful to God for the change within us. It is our very own springtime.

This Lent, let us all remember the true, universal meaning of the season. We hope that you will realize how beloved and sacred traditions such as Lent can become unifying forces that will ultimately strengthen Filipino communities, no matter what our faith and wherever we may be in this world.

State Committee Kills GE Tax Hike

Kudos to the Senate Ways & Means Committee for killing a measure to raise the state's general excise tax from 4 to 5 percent. The 1 percentage point increase would have raised an estimated \$500 million to \$600 million a year and helped to close a budget shortfall of \$1.3 billion over the next two years.

However, the committee moved forward a portion of the bill that eliminates GE tax exemptions granted to local businesses such as Hawaiian Airlines, shipping companies and general contractors. Removing the exemptions is expected to generate \$191 million a year.

Opponents say any increase in the GET would damage the state's struggling economy and increase the cost of living in Hawaii, which is already among the highest in the nation. Supporters say that tax increase says is more equitable since social service programs funded by government and government workers have already been cut to the point where services for the needy and the public have been impacted.

With the GE tax hike off the table for now, the task at-hand for our elected officials over the remaining few weeks of the legislative session is to look for other ways to balance the budget via other tax hikes, budget reductions or a combination of the two. Republicans insist that there are over 100 options for increasing revenues or cutting expenses in state government and encourage the public get involved in the process of balancing the state budget by themselves via an interactive website. Democrats may also want to reconsider Gov. Neil Abercrombie's proposals to eliminate Medicare Part B reimbursements and repeal state income tax deductions, as well as taxing pensions, soft drinks, alcohol and timeshares. Most

FROM THE PUBLISHER

C

an you believe how fast 2011 has flown by? It's now nearly mid-April, the school year is winding down and Good Friday and Easter just around the corner. Before you know it, summer and a nice long vacation will be here!

Speaking of Easter, this issue's cover story was written by our Philippine correspondent Gregory Bren Garcia, who delves into the Season of Lent—a very important time, particularly for the majority of devout Filipinos who are of the Catholic faith. Garcia covers everything you ever wanted to know about Lent, including its many unique and traditional practices as observed by Filipinos here and in the Philippines. We hope you will take time to read this very interesting story beginning on page 4.

We have other news, updates and regular columns in this issue that you will find useful. With natural disasters headlining much of the recent news, we have provided an article entitled "Tips on Surviving Flash Floods," on page 8. Please read it carefully and educate yourself and your loved ones on what precautions to take in the event of a flash flood—a frequent occurrence in Hawaii.

Also, we have a tidbit on page 8 regarding the upcoming Fourth Annual Taste of Waialua. If you enjoy community celebrations, good food and entertainment, why not head out to the historic Waialua Sugar Mill on the North Shore for the Fourth Annual Taste of Waialua on April 23rd? Or if a theatrical production is more your cup of tea, you may be interested in taking in Diamond Head Theatre's latest production "The King and I" which is now playing through April 17th. Several key cast members are of Filipino ancestry, giving the musical a distinct Filipino flair. Please read more about this musical production in our Entertainment Column on page 9.

There are other articles in this issue that we hope you will enjoy reading, including Legislative Connection on page 3, Legal Matters and Social Security Update on page 7, Family Corner on page 12 and Legal Notes on page 13. As always, it is our pleasure to continue providing our readers with the very latest news affecting Filipinos not just in Hawaii, but globally. Thank you once again for faithfully supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle—the leading Filipino newspaper in the 50th State!

Until next time...*aloha and mahalo!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

of his measures advanced through the legislative process but have been watered down.

As lawmakers wrangle over the budget, it is vital for the tax-paying public to continue to make their voices heard, especially during the final days of the legislative session. Please contact your elected officials, share your concerns and let them know what you feel is important for government to do to balance the budget. Speak out on measures you support or do not support. Do it for the sake of our state, its people and generations to come!

LETTERS

ADDICTED TO IMMIGRATION GUIDE

I would like to express my appreciation to the editor(s) and staff of the "Pinoy" Chronicle for having Atty. Tison as one of its contributing writers. He writes in such a creative and witty way that one can't help but chuckle after reading his column.

I was down with the flu when I came across his article ("There They Go Again—Blaming God For Tsunami," March 26 edition) and the title got me reading. I have to say it made my day for I was laughing despite my aches and pains. God bless you Atty. Tison.

A big mahalo to your publication.

*Elizabeth Parker
Pearl City*



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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

Homelessness

where the government issues public land to a private developer with the requirement that the complex have say, 25% of units priced for lower income individuals or families." Jason says.

Homelessness continues to be a major problem on Oahu and in our nation. From Waimanalo to Waianae, North Shore to Waikiki, homeless individuals can be found in parks, along the road, wandering about downtown, and anywhere they can find a place to sleep without being asked to leave.

Many circumstances drive people out of their homes: serious health problems, mental health conditions, war veterans, foster youths who have aged out of the system but are still not ready to be on their own, substance abuse, migration, and for many, the inability to earn enough money to pay rent.

The University of Hawaii's Center on the Family and the Department of Human Services' Homeless Programs Office, in 2010, there were 15,604 homeless persons statewide, with 11,101 of those on Oahu alone. Thirty-five percent of those who live in shelters and 10% of those on the streets are children

and youth. Mothers and their children comprise 76% of the families who live in shelters and 62% of the families on the streets. About 1/3 of those in shelters and 42% of those on the streets have been homeless between 1-11 months.

This year the legislature has tackled this problem through several bills and resolutions. Two measures I introduced are SB 95, which would have allowed a tent city or safe zone at Sand Island, and SCR 95 / SR 52, which would allow a homeless person who own a car to park at Aloha Stadium or other government parking lots during certain evening hours such as from 10pm – 6am. Too often homeless persons with cars park in residential neighborhoods, along public parks or beaches, in downtown or areas where they will not be noticed or bothered. Parking at Aloha Stadium, for example, would allow them a place that could be safe with security and toilets as well.

A tent city at Sand Island is somewhat isolated yet still close to downtown. There are no homes nearby so the NIMBY factor should not be an issue. The park is seldom used, and it is large enough for partial usage

only. Toilets and showers are already in place, and services can be provided there by government, churches, and non-profits. Security would have to

be provided, and rules followed by those staying at Sand Island. As of this writing, my Sand Island bill is not moving, unfortunately.

Measures that are still alive include:

HB 70, Return-to-Home Program – establishes assistance for eligible homeless individuals to return to their home state if a support network is able to receive them.

HCR 225 / HR 196, Kanaka Villages for Homeless Native Hawaiians – requests the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to study the feasibility of establishing kanaka villages for homeless native Hawaiians.

HCR 265 / HR 227, Homeless on Leeward Coast – urges the Governor to release or restore funding for programs serving the homeless population in leeward Oahu.

SB 897, Interagency Council – establishes Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness under the Department of Human Services.

SB 900, Safe Havens – appropriates funds for safe haven for homeless.

SB 904, Housing First – require Department of Human Services to locate suitable properties for a housing first program to implement affordable rental housing projects.

SB 912, Housing Placement & Other Programs – appropriates funds for the housing placement program, and to improve and increase existing stock of public and affordable rental housing.

If you would like to support any of these bills or resolutions, you can testify in favor of its passage. Go to www.capitol.hawaii.gov, and click on "Submit Testimony." Testimony can be taken online, by email to the committee hearing the bill, fax, or in person. You can also click on "Bill Status & Documents" to view all bills still alive and being considered in this year's Legislature

Homeless advocate and worker Jason Espero sees the problem every day in helping find shelter for the homeless who live on the streets of Waikiki: people who are down on their luck, hopeful for a job that will pay enough to enable them to afford a decent apartment, with children to support, and no family to help them ride out the tide of misfortune. The confluence of shrinking private and public funds and the rising cost of living have led to an increase in the numbers of persons and families forced out of suitable shelter to the outdoors.

"One major problem is that people's income is not enough for market housing, so they end up on the street. The solution – this is easier said than done – is more availability of low-income, affordable housing. It could be government owned or public-private partnerships,

HELP LINE

New Zealand Prof Hopes to Reunite WW II Fil-Am Vet, Family

Dear Editor:

I am doing historical research re. the children of U.S. servicemen and indigenous women in the South Pacific during World II.

I have information about a Filipino man named Paulo Cruz from Hawaii. He was attached to a guard unit on the west coast of Guadalcanal in Solomon Islands where there was a New Zealand radar station. The guard unit consisted of some men from the 298th Infantry Division, originally the Hawaiian National guard. It seems this unit was supposed to have been replaced by another unit and left to defend Hawaii, but some elements were attached to the 25th Infantry and ended up on Guadalcanal in February 1944.

A lady from the village of Konggeva in Kopau Harbour near West Cape became the mother of this man's child. She is still alive as is her daughter.

If anyone can assist in tracing Paulo Cruz or his Hawaii-based family, please contact me at the address below. Email is: Judy.bennett@otago.ac.nz

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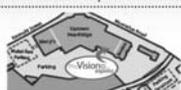
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Lent: A Time of Repentance and Renewal

By Gregory Bren Garcia

As a predominantly Christian nation, the Philippines faithfully observes Lent. This six-week period in the Christian liturgical year is considered by most Filipinos as a season of fasting, repentance, prayer and renewal—a yearly commemoration of the Messiah's death and resurrection. Lent is also an integral part of the country's heritage, with many a colorful tradition celebrated each year in honor of it. As the Philippines moves into the modern age, however, can these centuries-old religious and cultural customs live on?

Lenten Season in the Philippines

The celebration of Lent predates the Spanish missionaries who brought the tradition to the Philippines in the 16th Century. Although the exact date of when the early Christians first began celebrating Lent is unknown, most historians put it at around 250-300 CE. Early Christians used to observe a 40-day period known as *Quadragesima* in preparation for the members' baptism on Easter. In fact, the nomenclature of the Latin term *Quadragesima* survives today in

the word *Kwaresma*, which is the Filipino version of the Spanish term *Cuaresma* (Lent).

The term "Lent," on the other hand, was introduced in Europe during the Middle Ages when vernacular languages began replacing Latin as the language of choice during religious sermons. Lent is Germanic in origin and originally meant "spring" since the season coincides with springtime. Nowadays, Filipinos also call the period *Mahal na Araw* (Holy Season).

In the Philippines, Lent is

observed by Roman Catholics and by most Protestants and other Christians. The Lenten Season proper begins on Ash Wednesday when people go to church to have wet ash placed on their foreheads, usually in cruciform. The ash is a sign of repentance and a reminder of the transience of life. They connect the idea of ash to dust as mentioned in the Bible: "for dust you are and to dust you will return."

The centerpiece of Lent in the Philippines is the last week before Easter known as Holy Week or *Semana Santa*. The

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday wherein people commemorate the triumphant entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. They go to church with stylized palm leaves known as *palaspas*, which is usually made from coconut leaves and decorated with ribbons, preserved or ersatz blooms made from wood chips or crepe paper. It is common for superstitious Filipinos to place their *palaspas* on their doorways supposedly as a means to ward off evil spirits or even lightning bolts. Others place them on that spot as a sign of welcoming Christ into their homes.



The procession of religious statues depicting the 14 Stations of the Cross is one of the Roman Catholic traditions during Lent in the Philippines.

Beginning Maundy Thursday, most business establishments close down. Roman Catholics go on a pilgrimage known as *Visita Iglesia* wherein they visit 14 churches representing the 14 Stations of the Cross. Other Filipinos visit only seven churches.

On Good Friday, Christians commemorate the death of Jesus Christ. More traditional Roman Catholics, especially in the provinces, chant the *Pasyon*, a beautiful, poetic narrative of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

In some areas like San Fernando City, Pampanga, a few people even perform extreme ascetic rituals like self-flagellation, wearing crowns of thorns, bearing heavy wooden crosses and even crucifixion, imitating the sacrifices made by Jesus Christ. While the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines distances itself from such practices of "mortification of the flesh," practitioners continue to do them as a form of penance. San Fernando has become a famous tourist attraction for these severe rituals, especially among westerners with a penchant for the unusual.

The solemn atmosphere of Lent is maintained until Black Saturday, and Filipinos will continue to fast and avoid merry-making or making noise.

Finally, on Easter Sunday,

everything comes back to life.

The *Pasko ng Pagkabuhay* or Pasch of the Resurrection is a joyful celebration of the Messiah's coming back to life. At the break of dawn, churchgoers go on a procession known as *Salubong*, wherein they remember the first reunion of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary by making their statues meet in the end. In contrast to the sober mood of the three days prior to Sunday, the Easter atmosphere is jubilant, and people sing psalms of praise for the risen Christ.

Reinventing the Filipino celebration of Lent

During Lent, Filipinos go on a massive exodus from the cities to the provinces. While many Filipinos go to their home provinces for religious or spiritual reasons, nowadays, we're seeing the Lenten season becoming more secularized.

More and more people are going out of town or out of the country with only leisure in mind. Urban professionals and party-minded young people in particular love heading to the beaches, and it is during the holy week when hip and trendy locations like Boracay become full to the brim with visitors. Nonetheless, others make it a point to observe religious practices first before going on ex-

(continued on page 5)

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COVER STORY

(from page 4, LENT...)

tended vacations to re-acquaint with friends and family.

On Easter, Filipinos also enjoy secular and commercial icons and activities like the Easter Bunny, Easter egg hunts and Easter mall sales. Roman Catholic churches are quite open about these and even organize activities like Easter egg hunts for the enjoyment of children. A few Christian denominations, on the other hand, denounce the tradition's "pagan" origins.

To keep pace with the modern times, the Roman Catholic Church is now also trying to go high tech. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) recently launched the *Visita Iglesia* Online (<http://visitaiglesia.net>), a website where people can log on and celebrate Lent in the comfort of their own rooms. The website has a feature which enables a virtual churchgoer to "visit" 14 shrines and pilgrimage churches, like what one will do on a real *Visita Iglesia*.

However, CBCP Media Office Director, Msgr. Pedro Quitorio III warns that the site is not for people who are physically able to participate in Lenten activities but refuse to because they're just lazy.

"This is for Filipinos who live in countries without Roman Catholic churches, and it is for those who live in far-flung areas where church access is limited. This is also for our countrymen who are ill and bed-ridden. However, this is not for those who feel lazy. Lent is a communitarian activity; it is an act of community wherein people should be one in worshipping God," he says.

Hawaii residents share their Lenten Season practices

Most Filipinos in Hawaii grew up in Catholic or Christian households. Those who were originally from the Philippines can still vividly remember the vibrant traditions practiced in their homeland. For instance, Jo Farina, a retiree from Honolulu, recalls her experiences of the *Pabasa* (reading) of the *Pasyon*, Stations of the Cross and *Visita Iglesia*.

"These beliefs were outside of the fact that we had to practice abstinence and fasting. In addition, it is only in the Philippines that one can see some re-

pentant believers actually nailed on the cross to ask for the Lord's forgiveness for whatever grave sins they have committed in their lifetime. Some even use this as a means to enhance the power of their *agimat* or amulet," she says, acknowledging the animistic origins of some of the beliefs of Filipino Catholics.

Hawaii resident Eva Laird Smith, on the other hand, grew up in a family whose religious beliefs were influenced by a mixed cultural heritage. She was a student of the Holy Ghost School in Manila (now College of the Holy Spirit), which was then known for the strict religious practices of its German nuns.

"They [the nuns] were very austere, stringent in observance of Catholic traditions. We observed Lent, as well as Advent with all the rituals of a monastic convent life," she recalls.

In her family, it was her grandmother who was a firm believer in the Catholic tradition of Lent.

"Every year, without fail, she would employ a group of professional readers of the *Pasyon*. The sing-song pattern of saying the Stations of the Cross was very mesmerizing and not easily forgotten, especially when you are young and impressionable. Religion was very sacred, scary, very all-hellfire-and-brimstone type of devotion. It dominated lives of people back then, whether good or bad," she explains.

But what is the relevance of these traditional Lenten customs, especially when juxtaposed with the modern and often secular North American lifestyle?

Physical therapist and Milani resident Elvira Gabriel, says it's too convenient and expedient to follow and live the lifestyle in the secular world. But she believes that modern-day virtues like "political correctness" is "just temporary and dependent on the whims and caprices of popular advocacy groups of the time." Rather conservative, she says that it is "simply ludicrous" to compare and contrast the ways of a secular life with Lenten customs, which are timeless and never just a trend.

"Political correctness is temporary and whimsical, Lenten customs and its rele-



"Palapas"



"Pabasa"

vance has survived and will continue to live on forever," Gabriel says.

Laird Smith on the other hand believes that religious beliefs these days are more personal and there is no longer a cookie cutter form of adherence to doctrinal beliefs; people are offered more freedom of choice.

"Whereas it was then considered a sin to even consider other faiths in a positive light, modern times have lessened the burden of unilateral belief for secular, or ecumenical thinking," she says. "If taken to extremes, religion, in whatever form can hinder one's personal growth and development. Taken in a more positive light, faith and beliefs can shape a person, provide a moral compass, and become an anchor for personal development. All faiths, I would like to think, serve a greater Being. It may be called by different names, but in the end, we all hearken to the call of one true goodness that glows within ourselves."

How do modern day Filipino-Hawaiians celebrate the Lent? Some still adhere strictly to religious traditions, while others choose to do without the age-old rituals.

"I definitely still observe Lent," says Gabriel. "In particular, I observe Passion Week which culminates on Good Friday and continues to Black Sat-

urday. As a Roman Catholic, I never forget the Lenten Season practices I grew up with in the Philippines, whether I'm in the U.S. or any other place. Of course, there are differences, but these differences are irrelevant to how I observe the season. I become more self-aware and introspective of my Christian faith."

For her part, Farina is quite open to observing Lent via other avenues like technology. "With modern technology, we can do *Visita Iglesia* through the internet. I heard this practice

was sanctioned by the Church in the Philippines which is good for me as I do not have to feel guilty for not really practicing it the way we did in the past," she says.

Laird Smith, on the other hand, chooses to observe Lent on a more personal level, and not really according to the established rituals and externalities of the Catholic faith.

"I don't consciously observe Lent these days. It has been quite a while since I practiced Catholicism per se. Although as I age, I revert to the traditions of the faith that give me comfort and solace. I pray the rosary regularly, and I even have a 'Weeping Wall' at home, made up of various types of crosses and iconic images of the orthodox faith as we know it. Lots of the images remind me of relics, and are derived from my various travels," she shares.

The Lenten Season can mean a panoply of things for different people. At the end of the day, however, Lent is really all about hope, sacrifice and renewal.

"Lent for me is the time spent to reflect on what I did or what I am doing to gain the love and forgiveness of God. It is a season for repentance, which means sorrow for sins committed and, ultimately, conversion so that God can purify my heart and renew my life," Farina says.

"As home is where the heart is, Lent is within us in terms of meaning. It is the ultimate sacrifice to help mankind heal again," says Laird Smith.

Joseph M. Zobian, M.D.



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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Philippine Issues, Conflicts Debated at Joint Asian Studies Conference

By Maita Milallos

The Association for Asian Studies (AAS) held a four-day conference last March 31 to April 3, 2011 at the Hawaii Convention Center. The event was the largest gathering of Asian studies scholars and students as the AAS marked its 70th anniversary by jointly holding the conference with the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS). Both the AAS and ICAS seek to promote the study of Asia through a comparative cross-border/cross-discipline approach.

There were over 760 panels, roundtables and workshops on China, Japan, Korea, South Asia, Southeast Asia as well as on issues that cut across borders and disciplines. The joint conference also had exhibits, a video program, music and theater performances, business meetings, receptions and other social functions.

The Philippine delegation came from the academe and non-profit organizations to discuss a wide array of contemporary Philippines issues. Dr. Belinda Aquino (University of Hawaii-Manoa) chaired the panel on enduring themes in Philippine politics. She also discussed corruption in Philippine society.

Dr. Virginia Miralao, a Fulbright Visiting Senior Scholar (Columbia University) and the new Secretary-General of UNESCO Philippines presented her paper on poverty and Philippine politics. Dr. Federico Magdalena (UH-Manoa) discussed the Moro problem and the peace process.

The panel presentations

sought to explain the continuing centrality of poverty, politics, corruption and the Moro problem in the lives of Filipinos. These themes command public interest that paradoxically becomes sources of fascination and derision at the state's failures to effectively address these problems.

The discussions that followed suggested that the interest in these themes endure and have become embedded in Philippine language. This is manifested in civil society, political opposition groups and insurgents advancing their political agenda through the continued use of these themes in public discourse. The proliferation of research studies and organizations devoted to exploring these issues further contribute to keeping these themes alive in Philippine society.

The panel on the challenges of peace and development in Southern Philippines discussed the roles of local and national governments, donor agencies, the Philippine military, civil society and international players in the peace process between the Philippine government and Muslim rebel groups.

Ms. Rufa Guiam (Mindanao State University) talked about whether work for peace can be outsourced, while Dr. Rhodora Ilagan (Ateneo de Davao University) tackled peace-building initiatives of the Philippine military in Mindanao. Mr. Steven Rood (Asia Foundation) made a presentation on the internationalization of

the peace process within the Muslim separatist fronts, while Mr. Hideo Nagarie (Nagoya University) discussed Japanese aid policy in Mindanao.

The discussions that ensued emphasized the importance of greater involvement of local stakeholders in working towards peace. This entails a more assertive Philippine government in setting directions for peace-building. This is a welcome break from a government that is seen as reactionary to ideas of donor agencies, foreign missions and other concerned international players.

The panel discussion also emphasized the need for political and cultural sensitivities on the part of donor agencies in planning and implementing programs in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao. These agencies may have good intentions but intervention sometimes fail because their expectations do not reflect what is happening on the ground.

The employment of government and civil society machinery to anticipate post-conflict scenarios is another welcome development in the region. A peace-building course called "Op Kors" (Operations Peace Course) is a comprehensive peace course designed for peace-builders in Mindanao. It was organized in 2005 by the Balay Mindanaw Foundation, Inc. and aims to produce peace cadres from different sectors of society. A customized course for the Philippine military has been developed and continues to be implemented until today.

Other panel presentations include Philippine elections in the age of automation. Dr. Paul Hutchcroft (Australian National University) chaired this roundtable discussion with Dr. Nathan Quimpo (University of Tsukuba), Cleo Calimbahin (Institute for Po-

litical Economy) and Julio Teehankee (De La Salle University) as discussants. Also seen was Ms. Marites Vitug of Newsbreak, an authority on Mindanao issues.

A panel from the University of the Philippines led by Dr. Eduardo Tadem, Dr. Maria Elia Atienza and Dr. Ruth Lusterio-Rico presented their papers on the impact of globalization and responses of selected communities in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the Philippine Studies Group sponsored a discussion on the cultural production and negotiation of ethno-national identity in the Filipino Diaspora. Lily Villaraza (Northern Illinois University), Nenita Pambid-Domingo (University of California) and Roland Tolentino (University of the Philippines) made up the panel of presenters.

Jacqueline Siapno (Seoul National University), Jose Hernani David (Inha University) and Vina Lanzona (University of Hawaii, Manoa) discussed engendering Philippine studies. Jose Buenconsejo, Patricia Silvestre, Flora Mirano of the University of the Philippines and Jose Regalado and Alexandra Chua of the University of Santo Tomas presented on the Philip-

pines' music in the mid-19th century print culture.

The panel presentations on the Philippines reflect the diversity of research interests about the country that range from the political, social and social-economic as well as security. They underscore the continuing search for greater understanding of the Philippines, its people and culture, and the challenges that the country currently confronts.

In her opening remarks during the session of enduring themes in Philippine politics, Dr. Aquino stressed the need to re-think how Filipinos look at the enduring problems of the country. She claimed that Filipinos need to search for commonalities among these themes to enable them to work towards an effective social transformation.

While this may sound difficult to achieve, it is worth knowing that the Philippines has a reason to be optimistic. In the past several years, the country has seen the phenomenal growth of civil society organizations and political literacy among Filipinos. These developments are crucial towards the search for lasting solutions to the enduring problems of the Philippines.

Celebrate National Library Week in April 2011

nologies to find a job, people in our libraries are creating new stories for themselves."

Free programs throughout the month will be held at select public libraries to celebrate National Library Week. In addition to featured performers, programs will offer storytellers, artists, singers and dancers, musicians, and author talks.

With that in mind, Hawaii's public libraries are inviting the public to join in several events marking National Library Week from April 10-16, 2011. This year's theme, as chosen by the American Library Association, is "Create Your Own Story at Your Library."

"Every day, Hawaii's public libraries are helping people create their own unique stories," says State Librarian Richard Burns. "Whether it is by opening a book to explore distant lands or learning how to use new tech-

Scheduled guests performers include the MahaloHalo Ensemble, which will introduce music and rarely seen dances such as Igal (a dance with extended fingernails) and Kapagpir (a fan dance) that originate from Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago of the Southern Philippines. The music derives its lineage from traditions predating the 16th century and is related to gong row traditions in North Borneo, Malaysia and North Su-

(continued on page 7)

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LEGAL MATTERS



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

Barry Bonds and Steroids: Tricky Dick vs. Crooked Dick

displayed a caricature of a crooked dick. Bell added that Bonds had trouble maintaining an erection.

Bond's defense counsel could have objected to Bell's testimony on the ground that she is not an expert on steroids and its effect. Anyway, such testimony can be debunked by asking the court to take judicial notice (not necessarily personal knowledge since the Judge is a woman) of the fact that there are thousands of men who have never used steroids but whose balls have become smaller or their dick has become crooked. Why? Lack of use or over use. Or aging. Furthermore, thousands of men cannot have or maintain an erection even without taking steroids.

Napilco

Remember the story I wrote about an elderly Ilocano who went to the Philippines to marry a teenager. On their honeymoon at Fort Illocandia, the only 4-star hotel in Ilocoslovakia, the groom excitedly whispered to

his bride "Honey, na feel mo?" (Honey, did you feel it?). "Napilco." (It is crooked), lamented the disgusted girl.

Lying to Bonds while lying with him

The defense has been digging at Bell's background. They could imply she is a "gold digger", which Bell denies. Other facets of Bell's character can be attacked. There are alleged instances where she was lying to Bonds while lying with him. Furthermore, if she was having sex with Bonds, even though he was married then she is an adulterous broad.

Bell's motive is questionable. "Hell hath known no fury like the fury of the woman scorned," goes the old saying. Bonds married somebody else.

Bell reportedly sent an email to Bonds in April 2004 listing the women Bonds was having sex with. Bond's lawyer asked Bell "This is the guy who you described as having penile dysfunction. That's a lot of action."

Physical Examination

To further discredit Bell's testimony, Bonds could have a physical examination to show that his balls have not shrunk and his dick is not crooked.

President Bill Clinton was accused of sexual harassment by Paula Jones when he invited her to a hotel room and then dropped his pants as she entered. Many people scoffed at her claim. I sent a check to Clinton, who went to the same Yale Law School as I did, as my contribution to his Legal Defense Fund. I penned a note: "Yale men do not drop their pants at the mere sight of a pretty woman. And she is not even pretty." Clinton sent me a thank you letter. When my beloved saw the letter, she remarked: "You could have used the money to buy milk for the children." I riposted: "They have lactic intolerance."

Jones said that Clinton's dick had some distinguishing features. Clinton could have asked her what those distinguishing features were. Then Clinton could have had a physical examination to disprove Jones' allegation. A federal ap-

peals court rejected Clinton's defense that a sitting president cannot be sued. The court held that a president can be sued for his private acts. Like showing his private parts?

Bonds Defense rested

The prosecution presented 25 witnesses. Bond's defense counsel rested without presenting a single witness. By the time you read this, the jury might have rendered a verdict. What's your verdict?

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He practices in Hawaii, specializing in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: flamantiv@yahoo.com. Website: www.immigrationservices-usa.com. He is from Laoag City and Magsalad, Ilocos Sur. He served as an Immigration Officer. He is co-author of "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed." an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Listen to the most funny, witty, and useful radio program in Hawaii on KNDI at 1270 AM dial every Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. and on KHBC at 1060 AM dial every Thursday at 8 p.m. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice. No warranty is made by the writer or publisher as to its completeness or correctness at the time of publication.)

“I don't mind a Tricky Dick but I don't like a Crooked Dick.” Pat Nixon reportedly exclaimed when her husband, President Richard “Dick” Nixon was attacked by the pro-Democrat liberal press as a “Tricky Dick”.

Barry Lamar Bonds, the San Francisco Giants homerun king, is being tried in U.S. District Court in San Francisco for perjury and obstruction of justice. (Case No. CR 07-0732). He allegedly replied “Not that I know of” or “No” when asked by a grand jury whether he took steroids. Kimberly Bell, Bonds former girlfriend, testified against him, portraying him as a liar and a steroid user. Her proof – Bond's body became bigger but his balls became smaller. Jay Leno, the late night comedian,

SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

Social Security Uses Star Power to Promote Online Services

By Jane Yamamoto-Burigsay

Entertainment icons George Takei and Patty Duke have teamed up to tell Americans to “Boldly Go” to www.socialsecurity.gov and apply for retirement, disability, Medicare, and much more. The two celebrities have joined forces in a new campaign to help the Social Security Administration promote its online services as an easy and secure way for people to do business with the agency.

“Social Security has a great website and the top-rated online services in the U.S.,” says

Michael J. Astrue, Social Security commissioner. “We now have a fun new way to get the word out. Having George join forces with Patty will help us reach the millions of people who can take advantage of this convenient way of doing business with Social Security.”

Those ready to retire, apply for disability benefits, or delay retirement and apply only for Medicare, can do so from the comfort of their home or from any computer. Two million people took advantage of Social Security's convenient online benefit applications last year. People already receiving Social Security benefits can go online to let Social Security know about a

change of address or phone number, start or change direct deposit, get a proof of income letter, or replace a lost Medicare card.

“Won't filing for Social Security benefits online be confusing?” George asks Patty in one of eight new commercials. “It's simple and easy,” Patty assures George. “It's so easy, even Kirk could do it.”

Social Security's website “is for everyone,” Patty tells George in another commercial. Workers can get an online estimate of their future retirement benefits and use Social Security's planners to plan for a secure retirement.

In addition, Patty says, “Young people can help their grandparents with retiring online or getting extra help with their

Medicare prescription drug costs.” To which George concludes, “Everyone, of all ages, should go to www.socialsecurity.gov.”

Takei played Mr. Sulu in the television and film series Star Trek and has more than 40 feature films and hundreds of television guest-starring roles to his credit. Duke won an Oscar at the age of 16 for her performance as Helen Keller in “The Miracle Worker” and briefly starred in her own TV comedy, “The Patty Duke Show.”

Social Security's online services not only provide a convenient option for the public, they are a lifeline for the agency in a time of fast growing workloads as baby boomers begin retiring in record numbers and millions more need Social Security's services due to the economic downturn.

To learn more about Social Security's online services and to view the new George Takei and Patty Duke public service announcements, Boldly Go to www.socialsecurity.gov.

(from page 6, CELEBRATE...)

of these unique cultural traditions. The Mahaloalo Ensemble will perform on April 13, 6:30 p.m. at Waipahu Public Library and on April 30, 10:30 a.m. at Aina Haina Public Library.

Please visit the Hawaii State Public Library website at www.librarieshawaii.org for a complete listing of National Library Week 2011 programs, or call your local library to find out what programs will be offered.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

North Shore to Host 4th Annual Taste of Waialua

Waialua residents and business owners are inviting the public to come and enjoy a resurgence of the former sugar mill town during the Fourth Annual Taste of Waialua, scheduled for Saturday, April 23, 2011 from 8:30 am to 5 pm.

Hosted by Island X Hawaii/Old Sugar Mill Brand Coffee & Chocolate, the event is a celebration of North Shore grown coffee, cacao, produce, food, art, film, music and surf industry manufacturing.

Waialua was once a bustling sugar mill town that produced what locals once billed as the "World's Best Sugar." In 1996, the Waialua Sugar Mill stopped production and closed its doors after over 100 years of operation.

In recent years, there has been a quiet resurgence of shops, businesses and local product manufacturing that has transformed the Old Waialua Sugar Mill into one of Oahu's newest visitor destinations. The mill is also the processing site of Waialua Coffee and Cacao/Dole. Free mini tours of the coffee and chocolate mill as well as

free Waialua Coffee samples are offered daily.

"Come join us for a gathering of local art, food, music, and community groups and to celebrate the rebirth of the Old Historic Waialua Sugar Mill town," says event organizer Bill Martin.

Events include the following:

- 8:30 am—A farmers' market featuring Waialua-grown fruits and veggies. The Co-op is made up of former sugar workers who grow their produce on what was previously sugar land.
- 9:30 am—A coffee Seminar featuring Dr. Shawn Steiman of Coffea Consulting who will present a history of coffee in Hawaii and the emergence of Waialua Coffee and Cacao. Dr. Steiman will also demonstrate several different brewing methods using Waialua Coffees, which will be available for sampling. Exclusive behind-the-scenes Coffee & Cacao Mill Tours will also be offered to attendees.
- 10:00 am—Concert per-

formances by Makua's (Coco Leong) Sunset Beach Elementary School Ukulele Class. This will kick off a special day of North Shore Hawaiian music, hula and the open market exhibition of Waialua arts, crafts, food, and community groups informational booths.

A new addition to the Taste of Waialua is an all day concert stage funded by Friends For Waialua Town through a grant

from the Hawaii Tourism Authority and the City & County of Honolulu. Featured will be North Shore and Waialua based artists Bla Pahiniu and Friends, the Abrigo Ohana, Kalei Gamiao, Ke Kani Nahe, Halalu Hula Makana a ke Aloha and Roshan & Shivani/ Clear Sky. Members of the Waialua Sugar Mill Surf industry will open their doors to visitors with free tours of their surfboard factory and showings of their films "Finding Aloha," "North Shore Experience" and "Hawaii Shark

Encounters."

Sponsors include Castle and Cooke Waialua LLC, Friends for Waialua Town, City & County of Honolulu, Hawaii Tourism Authority, Dole's Coffee/ Cacao, Waialua Farmer's Market Co-Op, Community Kitchen, Hawaii Coffee Association, North Shore Chamber of Commerce, Hawaii Department of Agriculture Seals of Quality Program and the people of the North Shore.

For more information about the Fourth Annual Taste of Waialua, please contact event coordinator Bill Martin at 779-7439.

Tips on Surviving Flash Floods

If earthquakes and tsunami warnings weren't enough, Hawaii residents deal regularly with another natural disaster that can be just as devastating—flash floods.

The National Weather Service's last flash flood warning was issued on April 7, 2011 when an unusually late winter storm hit the islands. The April 7 warning from John M. Cummings III, public information officer with the City's Department of Emergency Management, stated: "This is a dangerous storm system. If you are in its path, prepare immediately for heavy rains and possible lightning strikes. If outside, move immediately to a strong building and stay away from windows."

According to emergency services officials, flash flood warnings are issued in the anticipation of severe weather and means that flooding is eminent or occurring in streams, roads or low lying areas. Their advice? Move to high ground as soon as possible.

The City's Emergency Op-

erations Center is activated and monitors the storm system until the flash flood warning expires. Emergency services officials say that when a flash flood warning is issued for your area, or the moment you realize that a flash flood is imminent, act quickly to save yourself. You may have only seconds to get to higher ground of climb to safety.

Keep in mind the following tips:

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, washes, etc.
- Avoid already flooded and high velocity flow areas. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams.
- If driving, be aware that the roadbed may not be intact under floodwaters. Turn around and go another way. NEVER drive through flooded roadways!
- If the vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle and its occupants and

sweep them away. Remember, it's better to be wet than dead!

- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.
- Move to a safe area before access is cut off by floodwaters.
- Continue monitoring NOAA Weather Radio, television, or emergency broadcast station for information.
- Avoid areas subject to sudden flooding.
- If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, STOP! Turn around and go another way.
- Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. The depth of water is not always obvious. The roadbed may be washed out under the water and you could be stranded or trapped.
- Never allow children to play around high water, storm drains or viaducts.

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

DPWH to Hire Children of Displaced OFWs

by Evelyn Macairan
Friday, April 8, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - An estimated 20,000 people, among them children of displaced workers from Libya, will be hired as roadside maintenance workers for the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson said he has directed the 182 district engineering offices nationwide to select workers from different sectors.

"They should also give priority to the qualified children of OFWs displaced by the civil war in Libya," he said.

Singson said they would also give priority to out-of-school youths, belonging to the

age bracket 18 to 24, and other marginalized members of society identified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The work ratio is one worker for every 3.5 kilometers of national roads except in Metro Manila, he added.

Singson said the DPWH would start hiring workers, on job order basis, this month.

(continued on page 9)

ENTERTAINMENT

'The King and I' Has Filipino Flair

By Linda Dela Cruz

Several key cast members in Diamond Head Theatre's current production of "The King and I," are of Filipino ancestry, which gives the musical a Filipino flair.

The play is set in 1862 in Siam. The memoirs of British schoolteacher, Anna Leonovens (Tricia Marciel), are transformed into an elaborate musical production. The King of Siam (Paolo Montalban) has summoned Anna to serve as a tutor to his many wives and children. After a rocky start, Anna and the King grow to understand and eventually respect one another in a truly unique love story.

One local review billed Diamond Head Theatre's version as a "marvelous revival" of Rodgers & Hammerstein's classic Broadway play that debuted 60 years ago.

Due to an enthusiastic response, "The King and I" has been extended through April 17, 2011. Show dates through April 17 are Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Saturday matinees at 3 p.m.; and Sundays at 4 p.m. A new date of Wednesday, April 13 at 7:30 p.m. was recently added.

Meet the Cast

Born in the Philippines, Montalban grew up on the East coast in New York and New Jersey. He is perhaps best known as the prince in the ABC/Disney movie musical Cinderella and as Kung Lao in the TNT series

Mortal Kombat. Other supporting and featured roles include Just Wright, The Great Raid, American Adobo, Law & Order SVU and One Life To Live. In addition to film and television, Montalban has an extensive theatre background including Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional credits.

Montalban, who is on Oahu just for this show, first heard about it while attending a PBS taping of "South Pacific." He ran into friend Greg Zane who was directing "The King and I" and encouraged him to take a look at leading role.

So far, Montalban has thoroughly enjoyed being the King of Siam.

"The most fun part about playing the King is being able to explore a wide range of human emotional colors in the course of the show," he says.

When asked to pick his favorite number in the show, he picked "the Moses scene," saying it's the first time that the audience gets to see the king's humorous side.

In a previous production of "The King and I," Montalban played the role of Lun Tha, a Burmese emissary who brought Tuptim (played by Meilan Akaka), the king's newest wife. Lun Tha has a secret relationship with her.

In Diamond Head Theatre's version of "The King and I," Lun Tha is played by another Filipino—community theatre veteran Jay Flores.

By day, Flores, who owns Waipahu Therapy Center, helps people get better with his physi-

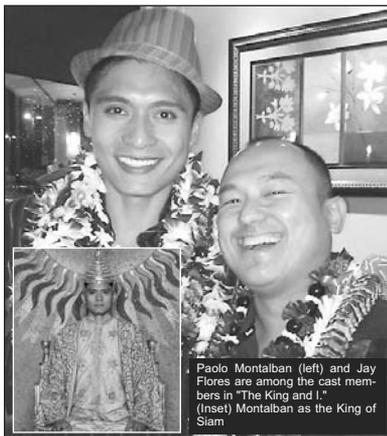
cal therapy practice, and at night, he helps lift people's spirits as a musical entertainer in community theater.

One of Flores' favorite numbers as Lun Tha in this production is "I Have Dreamed."

"It is the happier of my two songs with Tuptim," he says. "The other song I like is 'We Kiss in a Shadow.' It is my first romantic role after 10 years of doing community theatre."

Flores' theatrical career in Hawaii started in 2001, when he played a part in Diamond Head Theatre's "Cinderella." Since then, he has gone on to several productions with Army Community Theater and Hawaii Opera Theater. His most recent musical was "Les Miserables" ensemble at Diamond Head Theatre in 2008. Flores was also in local productions of "Miss Saigon," "Cats," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Godspell," "Aida," "Pirates of Penzance," "Mulan" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat."

Other cast members include Aaron-Michael Ota (Ensemble), Rick Manayan (Guard/Ensem-



Paolo Montalban (left) and Jay Flores are among the cast members in "The King and I." (Inset) Montalban as the King of Siam

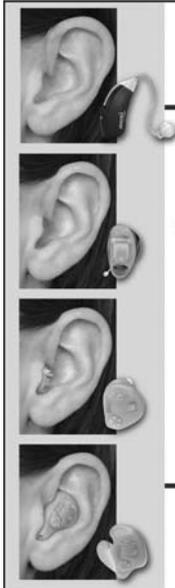
ble/The Interpreter Understudy), Chevy Martinez (Simon of Legree/Ensemble) and Ariana Kashimoto, who plays the role of Princess Ying Yaowlak/Fan Dancer. She is half Filipino.

"The King and I's" musical include "I Whistle a Happy Tune," "Getting to Know You," "Hello Young Lovers," "Something Wonderful" and "Shall We Dance?"

Guest artist Greg Zane directs and choreographs the show, with musical direction provided by Emmett G. Yoshioka. Music

is by Richard Rodgers and book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. The play is based on "Anna and the King of Siam" by Margaret Landon. The original choreography was done by Jerome Robbins.

Single tickets for "The King and I" are priced from \$12 to \$42, with discounts available for children under 18, full-time students, seniors 62 and older and active-duty military. Call 733-0274 to charge-by-phone or purchase tickets online at www.diamondheadtheatre.com.



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(from page 8, DPWH...)

Singson said they would act as augmentation workforce to the regular maintenance crew of district engineering offices in undertaking various roadside and carriageway maintenance activities, including the cleaning of roadsides, desilting of drainage canals, longitudinal pipes and cross drains.

Other work involves the cutting of vegetation along shoulders up to the road-right-of-way, manual reshaping of gravel shoulders and carriageway, manual pothole patching,

clearing of sidewalks and immediate response to calamities, he added.

For proper identification of these government workers, the DPWH offices should also provide common designed uniforms, he added.

Based on DOLE guidelines, roadside workers would receive an average minimum rate per day of P404 for those in Metro Manila, P300 for those in Central Luzon, Calabarzon and Davao region, and P250 in the other regions.

(www.philstar.com)



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or email: dwhitelaw@leseae.com**PHILIPPINE NEWS****FM's Aussie Daughter Axed from Reality Show**by Paolo Romero
Friday, April 1 2011

MANILA, Philippines - Former President Ferdinand Marcos' Australian daughter with a former Playboy model has claimed she was axed from an Australian home makeover reality show after telling producers the identity of her father last week, a report on PEP.ph said yesterday.

The report said Analisa Josefa Hegyesi, 40, an interior designer, told The Daily Telegraph in Australia that she made it to the final cut after several rounds of audition, but was dropped from the planned television show "The Renovators" after revealing who her father was.

"The thing is that I've had to juggle my business and clients to make time for the show after I was asked to audition and then chosen from hundreds of people around Australia," Analisa told The Telegraph. "I was chosen on my own merits but then I was dropped due to aspects of my private life which I will not discuss... I was told there was a fear, too, attention would be paid to me and not the show and other contestants."

The PEP.ph report quoted The Daily Telegraph citing an insider at the production company Shine Australia who said the staff believe it was harsh and unfair to ax Analisa for the "the sins of her father."

But a spokesperson for Channel 10 which will air The Renovators was quick to point out that Analisa's removal was routine

and they, in fact, have not finalized the cast.

Analisa's mother is former Sydney swimwear and Playboy model Evelin Hegyesi, who met Marcos when she was 19 and reportedly became involved with him in the 1970s.

During that time, the former dictator already had three children with wife Imelda.

Evelin is believed to have named her daughter after Marcos' mother.

In 2004, Analisa and her mother were accused of having ties to Marcos' secret bank accounts in Switzerland and Liechtenstein that supposedly contained ill-gotten wealth.

In an exclusive report in July 2004 by Fairfax media, Evelin was said to have been "at the center of renewed attempts to locate millions of dollars sent out of the Philippines by Marcos."

Evelin at that time was said to be an eastern suburbs multimillionaire with various investment companies and a waterfront Point Piper mansion, the Fairfax exclusive report said.

It was also mentioned in the same report that Analisa was living with Dean Fleming, son of the wealthy racing and fruit markets family worth \$270 million.

The Sun Herald, an Australian newspaper published in Sydney by Fairfax media, discovered documents that showed that some of Evelin's Australian companies had financial links with secret accounts of Marcos in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. (www.philstar.com)



Analisa Josefa Hegyesi

US Tags Quiapo as One of World's 'Notorious Markets'by Pia Lee-Brago
Thursday, April 7, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - Quiapo district in Manila has been identified as among the "notorious markets" around the world in which pirated or counterfeit goods are reportedly available.

"Quiapo is just one example of several locations and neighborhoods, especially in Metropolitan Manila, known to deal in counterfeit and pirated goods such as clothing, shoes, watches and handbags," according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative's latest annual report "Out-of-Cycle Review of Notorious Markets."

The Notorious Markets review identifies markets that are particularly prominent examples of markets in each category, and does not constitute an exhaustive list of all notorious markets around the world.

The report said inclusion in the Notorious Markets list does not reflect a finding of a violation of law nor does it reflect the United States government's analysis of the general climate of protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights in the countries concerned.

But the broader analysis of IPR protection and enforcement is contained in the annual "Special 301" report, published at the end of April every year.

The Special 301 report is an annual review of the global state of intellectual property rights (IPR) protection and enforcement, conducted by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). It identifies a wide range of serious concerns such as troubling "indigenous innovation" policies that may unfairly disadvantage US rights, the continuing challenges of Internet piracy in countries, and the ongoing systemic IPR enforcement

(continued on page 11)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Whistle-blower Heidi Named COA Commissioner

by Aurea Calica
Wednesday, April 6, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - President Aquino yesterday appointed Finance Undersecretary Maria Gracia Pulido-Tan as chairman of the Commission on Audit (COA), while whistle-blower Heidi Mendoza was appointed commissioner.

Tan replaced Reynaldo Villar with a term expiring on Feb. 2, 2015, while Mendoza was appointed vice Evelyn San Buenaventura with a term expiring on Feb. 2, 2018.

Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office Secretary Ricky Carandang said Tan was undersecretary of the Department of Finance until 2005 for revenue operations while Mendoza was a career officer of the COA.

Mendoza had revealed the extent of corruption in the military during her testimony before the Senate hearing on the plea bargaining agreement of former military comptroller Carlos Garcia, who was accused of plunder before the Sandiganbayan.

Carandang said Tan "fits the bill" as she was chosen for her extensive accounting experience apart from being a lawyer.

He added Tan already had experience in government service and would not have any difficulty heading COA.

Asked why Mendoza was

not named COA chief, Carandang said Malacañang "wanted to have a mix of people who first of all were in sync with our vision for good governance."

"We also wanted people who had a mix of skills, administrative, operational and also investigative, which both of these two have," he said.

"We wanted a balance of people who had proven administrative and operational experience which Grace Tan has and of course the investigative abilities and the proven anti-corruption record of Heidi Mendoza," Carandang told a news briefing in Malacañang.

He said Tan and Mendoza are highly qualified and would make a very good team at the COA.

"We expect them to carry out the duties of COA in the proper manner and we believe they have qualifications to serve their posts," Carandang said.

Carandang said Mendoza had proven that she was very serious about her anti-corruption advocacy.

"We believe that she will continue the efforts for good governance," he said.

Carandang though could not tell whether Mendoza could continue to testify in Senate hearings after her appointment.

Carandang said the position of COA chief was not formally offered to Mendoza.

Former foreign secretary Al-

berto Romulo was also reportedly interested in the position but Carandang said he was not aware if Romulo would still be given any post.

Based on the records released by Malacañang, Tan has legal, finance, governance and administration expertise acquired from 28 years of professional work in the Philippines, United States, China and the Kyrgyz Republic.

Tan served as tax consultant and legal adviser, professor at the University of the Philippines, Commissioner of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, partner at the Tan and Venturillas Law Offices, tax specialist, and associate at the Sycip, Salazar, Feliciano and Hernandez law office.

The new COA chief earned her master's degree at New York University and graduated from the College of Law of UP, where she also finished her pre-law course in business administration.

Tan is a member of the International Bar Association, American Bar Association, Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, UP Women Lawyers' Circle and was president of the Tax Management Association of the Philippines and vice president of the Asia-Oceania Tax Consultants Association.

Mendoza, on the other hand,

is also a CPA with a master's in national security administration and public administration and is a reserve officer with a rank of lieutenant colonel.

Mendoza worked for the COA for over 20 years and had been part of fraud audit investigations of government transactions.

Before she testified in Congress, Mendoza had resigned from the COA in 2005 and worked with the Asian Development Bank.

She also had to leave her job at the ADB to appear in the congressional probes.

One of her past investigations led to the conviction of ex-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao governor Zacaria Candao for malversation of government funds worth P21 million.

Lawmakers hailed the appointment of Mendoza as COA commissioner.

Senators Vicente Sotto III and Gregorio Honasan said Mendoza as COA commissioner will help the Aquino administration in the battle against graft and corruption.

"It's okay. It's a very good chance for her to show her sincerity and her competence in combating graft and corruption, especially that I know that there are many local government officials that she charged before," Sotto said.

Sotto said he respects the decision of the President to ap-

point Mendoza as COA commissioner.

"The general overview should be that she (Mendoza) will not show any bias or give extra protection to anyone," Sotto said.

Sotto noted a point where Mendoza tried to elude questions during the Senate inquiry into the alleged corruption in the military, pertaining to the alleged anomalies she supposedly discovered when she was tasked to audit some of the key cities in Metro Manila.

"Was she a whistle-blower, a resource person or witness? I really do not know what her exact role was (in the exposé of corruption in the military)," Sotto said.

Honasan said Mendoza could help Congress in sharing her views on what procedures needed amendment under the Audit Code of the Philippines.

"Considering that she was a (self-confessed) whistle-blower, she might be of help in the amendments of the Auditing Code Law of the Philippines... they are outdated... especially on provisions regarding intelligence funds... endangering lives of the assets and compromising the operations," Honasan said.

Honasan is optimistic that Mendoza can help institute change within the COA since "she is now in the position to initiate reforms effectively in the COA." (www.philstar.com)

(from page 16, US TAGS...)

challenges in many countries around the world.

The report pointed that "global piracy and counterfeiting continue to thrive due in part to marketplaces that deal in infringing goods."

The Notorious Markets list identifies selected markets, including those on the Internet, which exemplify the problem of marketplaces dealing in infringing goods and helping to sustain global piracy and counterfeiting. These are marketplaces that have been the subject of enforcement action or that may merit further investigation for possible intellectual property rights infringements.

The Notorious Markets list reflects an effort to further expose these markets, and is in response to the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordi-



inator's 2010 Joint Strategic Plan on Intellectual Property Enforcement. This document is the result of an Out-of-Cycle Review of Notorious Markets and follows a separate, dedicated request for comments from interested stakeholders, which was initiated on Oct. 1, 2010.

Also identified as Notorious Markets are Bahia Market (Guayaquil, Ecuador), China Small Commodities Market (Yiwu, China), Ciudad del Este (Paraguay), Harco Glodok

(Jakarta, Indonesia), La Salada (Buenos Aires, Argentina), Ladies Market (Mongkok, Hong Kong), Luowu Market (Shenzhen, China), Nehru Place (New Delhi, India); PC Malls (China), Petrivka Market (Kyiv, Ukraine), Red Zones (Thailand), San Andresitos (Colombia), Savelovskiy Market (Moscow, Russia), Silk Market (Beijing, China), Tepito (Mexico City) and Urdu Bazaars (Pakistan).

The identified notorious markets sell large quantities of illicit goods, many of which are either counterfeit products, cited as a center for wholesaling of infringing goods, making them the origin of many counterfeit goods available internationally, selling counterfeit and pirated goods, particularly notorious for pirated optical discs or reportedly sources of pirated books. (www.philstar.com)



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FAMILY CORNER



By Grace Fong, Ed.D. and Sylvia Yuen, Ph.D.

Playing, Discovering, Learning

Young children are natural learners who learn through a continuous process of discovery through play, active exploration, and interaction with others. As a parent or a care provider, you can take advantage of just about anything, whether they are common items found in your child's environment or everyday interactions with your child, and turn them into opportunities for learning. Water, for example, is an inexpensive, readily available material that can be used to provide lots of activities that are not only fun but can help your child learn valuable skills necessary to be ready for school—skills such as understanding cause and effect, verbal skills, paying attention, observing, and listening. Here are some water-related activities you can do with your young child. Adapt them to match your child's abilities and interests—simplify an activity for a younger child or vary it to make it more challenging for an older child.

Infants. Every child can enjoy water play, even infants! Fill a small container or bucket

with a few inches of water and splash the water with your hand (or do this while bathing baby). Ask your baby if he wants to splash too! Talk about the sounds he hears when splashing the water, or about how the water feels. As he gets a little older, give him a small plastic container and let him scoop and pour the water. These simple activities will help your baby begin to examine characteristics of objects, develop eye hand coordination, and associate words with what he experiences through his senses—what he sees, feels, hears, tastes, and smells.

Toddlers. For toddlers, you can vary the splashing activity by making bubbles! Add soap to the water and swish your fingers in it to make bubbles. Ask your toddler if he can make bubbles the same way. Encourage him to pick up a bubble or poke his finger or toe through one. Ask him what happens when he touches a bubble and count the number of bubbles he bursts! Show him how to blow some of the bubbles from his hand into the air. If available, add a few drops of food coloring to the water and have your child describe the colors he sees. Doing

this type of activity helps your toddler strengthen his eye-hand coordination, use and strengthen his small muscles (facial muscles, fingers, hands, and toes), and begin to recognize math concepts like numbers, sizes, shapes, and sequences.

You can add variety and complexity to water activities by creating simple and fun experiments (e.g., what will happen if we add sugar or salt to the water or pour it into a different size or shape container). Inquisitive questions followed by a hands-on discovery of the answer help your child to further develop his natural curiosity about how things work, and stimulate his creativity and imagination.

Preschoolers. Give your child a clean, unused sponge to play with. Describe to your child how it feels hard when it is dry but soft when it is wet. Ask him what he thinks will happen when he puts the sponge at the bottom of a container of water and lets it go—will sink or float? Let him try it and describe what happens as you watch it float back to the top. Try floating other objects and have your child guess whether each object will float or sink before you put it in the water. You could also find some small, rounded rocks and let your child wash them with the wet sponge. Ask him to watch how the rocks change to



SAFETY ALERT!

Young children love water! It's fun to explore! But never take your eyes off your child while he's in the bathtub, playing with a container of water, or playing near a pool or on the beach. Your child's top-heavy head may cause him to fall forward into the water and not be able to get up. Children can drown in just a few inches of water.

a different color when they are wet and how they slowly fade back to their original color when they dry.

Have your child fill up a small plastic container with water and tell him you're going to put it in the freezer. Ask him what he thinks will happen to the water. Show him the container of water after a half hour and ask questions such as, "Did it freeze completely yet?" Once the water is completely frozen, let your child touch the ice and describe how it feels. Put the container outside in the sun and describe to your child what happens. After the ice has melted, put a paper towel over the water

and allow your child to watch the water be absorbed into the towel. Ask him what happened to the water.

When doing these types of activities with your child, try to focus on playing and having fun rather than improving one particular skill. It's important to understand that a child develops as a whole person and that a single activity can promote learning in many areas. Remember, when your child is playing, he is learning! More importantly, when your child is playing with you, you are creating special memories that both you and your child will cherish forever.

PHILIPPINE NEWS

DOLE Honors 1st Pinoy Passer of Japanese Nursing Exam

by Edward Sumile
Wednesday, April 6, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - Being the first Filipino to pass the Japanese Nursing Licensure Examinations, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) honored Ever Gammed Lalin as the Woman OFW Achiever of 2011.

"Ever Lalin made history being an exceptional woman achiever in migration. She had proven that Filipino nurses, and OFWs in general, are professionally competent and skilled

as they join the world labor market," DOLE Secretary Rosalinda Dimaplis-Baldoz said in a press statement.

Baldoz said the department cited Lalin's achievement as the Japanese Nursing Licensure Examinations is "famed for its difficulty."

Lalin was the only passer of the exam taken by 254 foreign board takers.

Baldoz, along with POEA Administrator Carlos Cao Jr., welcomed Lalin's family in an awarding ceremony at the DOLE Building in Intramuros,



Ever Gammed Lalin

Manila, last week.

Aside from the award she accepted, Lalin also received an overseas exit clearance (OEC) from the DOLE, which frees her from the lengthy clearance processing. (www.philstar.com)

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Cancellation of Removal for Deportable Aliens

proceedings or upon the commission of certain crimes.

This period of physical presence is broken when the alien leaves the U.S. for more than 90 days, when all the departures total more than 180 days, or when the alien leaves the U.S. on voluntary departure.

Second, the alien needs to show good moral character for the 10-year period measured backward from the date the application for cancellation is resolved by the judge or Board of Immigration Appeals. Although the term is not defined, the law enumerates persons who cannot be deemed to have good moral character, such as habitual drunkards, prostitutes, smugglers, and persons convicted of crimes of moral turpitude, multiple crimes or most

drug crimes.

Third, he/she must not have been convicted of certain offenses specified under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Fourth, the alien must establish that deportation would result in "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship" to a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident spouse, parent or child. The applicant's burden is to demonstrate not his/her hardship, but the hardship that would be experienced by the qualifying relative.

The factors to be considered include the "age, health and circumstances of the qualifying family members, including how a lower standard of living or adverse country conditions in the country of return might affect those relatives". Other factors are the age of the respondent, family ties in the U.S. and abroad, length of resi-

dency in the U.S., health conditions, economic and political conditions in the country of removal, financial status, community ties and immigration history. Hardship factors are considered in the aggregate.

Like most types of relief, cancellation of removal is granted in the discretion of the immigration judge. The application may only be made at a removal hearing. This means that individuals who want a cancellation of removal but who do not have pending deportation cases must first subject themselves to removal proceedings. In these situations, cancellation of removal is generally not the first option because of the risks involved.

On the other hand, for those who are already arrested and who can satisfy the eligibility requirements, cancellation of removal is an important option.

Even when granted, however, cancellation of removal does not give derivative status to the spouse or children of the applicant. Each family member must independently qualify for this relief.

Certain classes of aliens are statutorily ineligible for cancellation, such as some J visa holders, crewmen, individuals who are deemed security threats, and those who have previously been granted cancellation of removal, suspension of deportation or voluntary departure.

There is a yearly quota of 4,000 on the number of aliens who may be granted a cancellation of removal and allowed to adjust to permanent resident status.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 695 5281 or log on to his website at www.seguritan.com

PHILIPPINE NEWS

BIR Files P73.8-M Tax Evasion Raps vs Mikey, Wife

by Edu Punay
Friday, April 8, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - Ang Galing Pinoy Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and his wife Angela were slapped with criminal charges by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) before the Department of Justice (DOJ) yesterday for allegedly evading payment of taxes worth P73.85 million from 2004 to 2009 while his mother was still president of the country.

BIR Commissioner Kim Henares told reporters in the DOJ that her office filed the complaint after gathering ample evidence during investigation, preempting the claim of Arroyo that the case was part of a purported battery of harassment suits against the former administration.

But Arroyo maintained that he has been faithfully paying the correct taxes and accused the BIR of going out to "crush" him.

In its complaint, the BIR accused the couple of wrongful declaration of taxable income and non-filing of income tax returns (ITR), which are punishable under section 254 and 255 of the National Internal Revenue Code.

It was learned that the law-

maker only paid BIR P2.4 million, P1.7 million and P376,000 in taxes for the years 2004, 2006 and 2007, respectively, when he and his wife bought several properties worth millions from 2004 to 2009 - including residential houses in the US, in Lubao, Pangasinana and in La Vista Subdivision in Quezon City.

The BIR patterned its investigation on the Arroyo couple's case to the method used by US authorities against gangster Al Capone and found out "substantial underdeclaration of income by over 30 percent" in those three years.

"Under the Tax Code (NIRC), underdeclaration of taxable income of more than 30 percent is considered a prima facie evidence of fraudulent return," Henares said.

Arroyo also supposedly did not file ITR in the taxable years 2005, 2008 and 2009, while his wife also did not file any ITR from 2003 to 2009.

"The act of non-filing of their ITRs is evidence of their fraudulent scheme to defeat payment of taxes," the BIR chief said.

If found guilty, the couple could face imprisonment of up to four years and fine of at least P30,000 for each count of un-

derdeclaration of taxes and imprisonment of up to 10 years and P10,000 fine for each count of non-filing of ITR.

Pure political harassment

Arroyo described the charges against him as "pure political harassment" since he was given from April 5 ten days to answer questions on his statement of assets and liabilities and net worth (SALN) and suddenly Henares announced to the media the filing of a tax evasion complaint against him two days later.

"My conscience is clear. I pay my taxes properly. I don't know where these (charges) are coming from. I have nothing against any government looking

into our tax payments or running after those who have tax issues," Arroyo told The STAR.

"All that I ask is (for them) to observe due process but if that's how they do it, they're really out to crush me," he said.

He said after he received the notice from the BIR on April 5 or the birthday of his mother, former President and Panganga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo asking him to explain the alleged discrepancy between his known assets and tax payments, he immediately consulted his lawyer, Ruy Roldain.

Roldain advised him to personally go to the BIR office with all his documentary evidence. But he said it was in "bad faith

and in bad taste" that Henares sought his prosecution before the 10 days have lapsed.

Arroyo said obviously the Aquino administration is looking for a whipping boy and resorting to gimmickry to cover up its failures, even citing that unlike President Aquino, he does not have a Porsche sports car.

"I would say there is no case because Mikey is not hiding anything. But let's wait first for the copy of the charges otherwise we'd be speculating or making innuendoes and be no better than them," Roldain told The STAR.

He said despite the attempt to pillory his client before the public, he is confident that the court would rule in their favor. (www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

78-Year-Old Cebu Plumber Gets College Degree

by Liv G. Ocampo
Friday, April 1, 2011

DALAGUETE, Cebu, Philippines — Poor health and old age did not deter a plumber from this town from getting a college degree.

Seventy-eight-year-old Miguel Lajos Sr. was among the first batch of graduates of the University of the Visayas-Dalaguete campus Wednesday afternoon.

"My strong desire is to finish my studies despite the hardship and my age," said Lajos in an interview with *The Freeman*.

Lajos said he is set to pursue his other dream, which is to become a lawyer, the reason why he took up Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, a pre-law course.

His problem, however, is how to get to law school without having to worry about finances. His income as a plumber funded his college education.

Lajos' three children by his second wife, now all professionals, also supported him financially, he said.

Lajos though will not have to worry about his law studies

as Cebu first district Rep. Eduardo Gullas, president of the University of the Visayas (UV), who was guest speaker in the commencement rites, offered to give him a scholarship, along with other senior citizens who may want to get a college degree.

Although happy that her father finally had a college degree, Regina, Lajos' eldest daughter by his second wife, still feels uneasy about his father pursuing law studies.

Regina, a teacher at the Langkas Elementary School, said she and her siblings only agreed that their father, who is suffering from high blood pressure, would finish college after they made him promise that he would not remarry.

She said her father has this penchant for women. He currently has two girlfriends and if he would marry one of them, she said he would have more children.

Lajos has 18 children, although only 12 of them, nine by the first wife and three by his second wife, are alive. He has 39 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, whose names, he said, he could not memorize.

Lajos, whose mother was a vendor while his father was jobless, first enrolled in the UV main campus in 1954 but only finished the first month of the semester due to financial constraints.

At 20, he married his first wife, then 17, hoping to bear children who would then send him to school. He said he really planned to have several children from the start.

It was in June 2007 when UV opened a satellite school in Dalaguete town. Despite his age, he decided to re-enroll.

On Wednesday afternoon, he marched to receive his college diploma at the town's sports complex, assisted by two children, one a teacher and the other an architectural draftsman at the Dalaguete municipal hall. Two other children were also there to witness the event.

Lajos said he would still pursue his dream to become a lawyer, especially now that Gullas has given him a scholarship.

But as to how her father would do that, since the university's law department is in Cebu City, is another problem, Regina said. (www.philstar.com)



Cebu first district Rep. Eduardo Gullas (left), president of the University of the Visayas, congratulates 78-year-old Miguel Lajos Sr. who was among the first batch of graduates of the UV-Dalaguete campus, during the commencement rites.

PAUL JUN ROSAROSO/
THE FREEMAN

MAINLAND NEWS

Filipino Priests in U.S. Planning Historic National Assembly



A group of Filipino Roman Catholic priests in the U.S. have recently banded together to form the National Association of Filipino Priests (NAFP), a group that promotes unity, support, continuing educational training and networking among its members.

An estimated 900 Filipino priests serve as pastors and associate pastors of parishes all over the U.S. A growing number of Filipino priests are in highly-visible leadership positions, even in national organizations that traditionally have been led by Anglo-Saxons.

In 2004, the Most Reverend Oscar Solis was the first Filipino-American bishop ordained in the U.S. A native of Nueva Ecija, Solis currently serves as the auxiliary bishop for the San Pedro region of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

"The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2001 issued the Pastoral Statement entitled 'Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith' acknowledging the strong presence of Asian and Pacific Catholics in America, affirming their gifts and contributions to the local church and setting plans in response to their pastoral needs and con-

cerns," he says. "On its 10th Anniversary, it is an opportune moment to celebrate this milestone as an integral part of the Asian and Pacific communities in order to highlight the special role of Filipino-American priests in the evangelizing work of our local church."

The group is preparing for a historic National Assembly of Roman Catholic Filipino-American Priests scheduled for November 8-11, 2011 in Los Angeles, California. The event is aimed at gathering the scattered hundreds of Filipino Priests throughout the country. Some 12 workshops are being planned to address various needs and topics that are relevant in the life and ministry of Filipino priests in the U.S. There will also be two keynote addresses by prominent prelates who will set the tone for the whole assembly.

"For the first time in the history of the church in America and the Filipino priests in the States, we hope to gather as one group in 2011 in order that we may be one in the service of the church in America," says the Most Rev. Solis.

More information on the NAFP is available online at: www.filipinopriests.org.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ILOCOS NORTE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TRADE 12TH ANNIVERSARY AND 4TH MS. INCAT SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / SATURDAY
 April 16, 2011, 6pm • Pacific Beach Hotel • For more info, contact Larry Ramirez @ 391-9364

BIG ISLAND FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S MS. HAWAII ISLAND FILIPINA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT / SATURDAY
 April 16, 2011, 6pm • Afook-Chinen Civic Auditorium, Hilo • Contact Lito or Milli Asuncion at (808) 895-4103 or (808) 959-3255 for more information

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 2011 FILIPINO ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AND 2011 YOUNG FILIPINO ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARDS / FRIDAY
 April 29, 2011, 7pm • Hale Koa Hotel, DeRussy Ballroom • For details, contact Bernadette Fajardo at 342-8090 or Jamesner Dumlao @ 728-5767

2011 FILIPINO FIESTA / SATURDAY
 May 7, 2011 • Parade: 9 – 10am
 Fiesta at Kapiolani Park: 10am – 4pm
 • For more information, call the FilCom Center at 680-0451

BAYANHAN CLINIC WITHOUT WALLS' 2011 COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR / SATURDAY
 May 7, 2011, 10am – 4pm • Kapiolani Park • For more info, call JP Orias @ 387-8297

UNITED PANGASINAN ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII'S 43RD ANNIVERSARY AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS / SATURDAY

May 21, 2011, 6pm • Pacific Beach Hotel
 • For more info, contact Cely Villareal @ 778-2481 or Fred Martinez @ 358-8049

UPCH'S MRS. HAWAII FILIPINA / SUNDAY
 May 29, 2011, 6pm • Ala Moana Hotel •

Contact: Lynne Gutierrez-728-1700

OFFCC'S MS. OAHU FILIPINA / SATURDAY
 June 4, 2011, 6pm • Hawaii Prince Hotel
 • Contact: Maria Etrata-392-2962

OFFCC CONVENTION / SUNDAY
 June 12, 2011, 7:30am – 4pm • Philippine Consulate • For more info, Contact: Mario Palma @ 397-8626, Maria Etrata @ 392-2962 or Amado Yoro @ 699-9814

UPCH CONVENTION IN LAS VEGAS / FRIDAY
 July 15, 2011, 7:30am – 4pm • Contact: Lynne Gutierrez-728-1700

ILOCOS SURIAN ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII, DINNER AWARDS AND FUNDRAISING / SATURDAY

August 27, 2011, 6pm • Coral Ballroom, Hilton Hawaiian Village • Contact: Danny Villaruz @ 778-0233 or Maria Etrata @ 392-2962

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GLOBAL NEWS

DFA: Filipino Nurses in Libya Relocated, Not Abducted

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) today belated reports that 10 Filipino nurses are being held hostage in the rebel-controlled city of Misurata in Libya. Philippine Ambassador to Libya Alejandro Vicente said in a radio interview that the Filipino nurses are just being transferred by anti-government forces to a safer place.

"I understand they are just being transferred," Vicente said, adding that Philippine embassy people will try for the second time today to enter Misurata.

In a separate radio report, DFA Secretary Albert del Rosario said that Philippine embassy officers tried to enter Misurata yesterday to fetch the nurses, but they were refused entry into the city that is under siege by the forces of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi.

Del Rosario said Libyan authorities will try to escort the embassy personnel into the city today to fetch the nurses. He, however, clarified that the Philippine embassy will not force the Filipinos, mostly medical workers, to come with them.

Father Allan Ase-buche, a Filipino priest in Tripoli, announced during a television interview that at least 10 Filipino nurses were taken by armed men.

Asebuche said they were not sure if the Filipino nurses were taken to treat the wounded comrades of the armed men or if they are being used as human shields. He said they are also not sure if the nurses were taken by pro- or anti-Gadhafi forces.

He said that the information was relayed to them by wounded "military men" who were being treated at the hospital where the Filipino



Amb. Alejandro Vicente

nurses are working. "Yes, military [men] who were injured and brought to the hospital. They talked about this concern with other Filipino nurses, and they are worried about the situation of our brothers and sisters there," Asebuche said in an interview on ABS-CBN News.

Migrant International, a group of overseas Filipino workers, had asked the DFA to verify the report.

The group's chairperson, Gary Martinez, said that based on information they received from a source who requested anonymity, the nurses were being used as human shields.

He said that according to the source, the nurses were taken in time for the attack launched by Gadhafi forces in Misrata. He said the nurses were taken 20 days ago.

(www.phlistar.com)

Fraud Recruiter in London Uses Fake Government Job Orders - DFA

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) was alerted by the Philippine embassy in London on the use of fake government stamps and papers of the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) to advertise job vacancies in the United Kingdom.

In an advisory to the DFA, the embassy in London said a certain job recruitment agency identified as JP Recruitment Agency, with address at 290 Queens Road, Bootle, Liverpool, UK, was using forged Job Order Verification Stamps and signatures of authorized POLO officials in the UK.

"It has come to the embassy's attention that a certain JP Recruitment Agency with address at 290 Queens Road, Bootle, Liverpool, United Kingdom and contact number 00-44701114753 has presented a Manpower Request/Job Order bearing a fake POLO-UK verification stamp and the

forged signature of the Labor Attaché based in London to a Philippine recruitment agency," the embassy said.

"The public is advised not to entertain any transactions for recruitment and employment from the said entity which allegedly bear the stamp and signature of POLO without first verifying this with the POLO-UK Office at the Embassy," the embassy further advised.

The embassy reiterated those looking at jobs at the UK should verify the authenticity of any employment opportunities there, particularly those secured online, with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency at its website (www.poea.gov.ph) or the POLO-UK at polo.london@yahoo.co.uk or embassy@philemb.co.uk. (www.phlistar.com)

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