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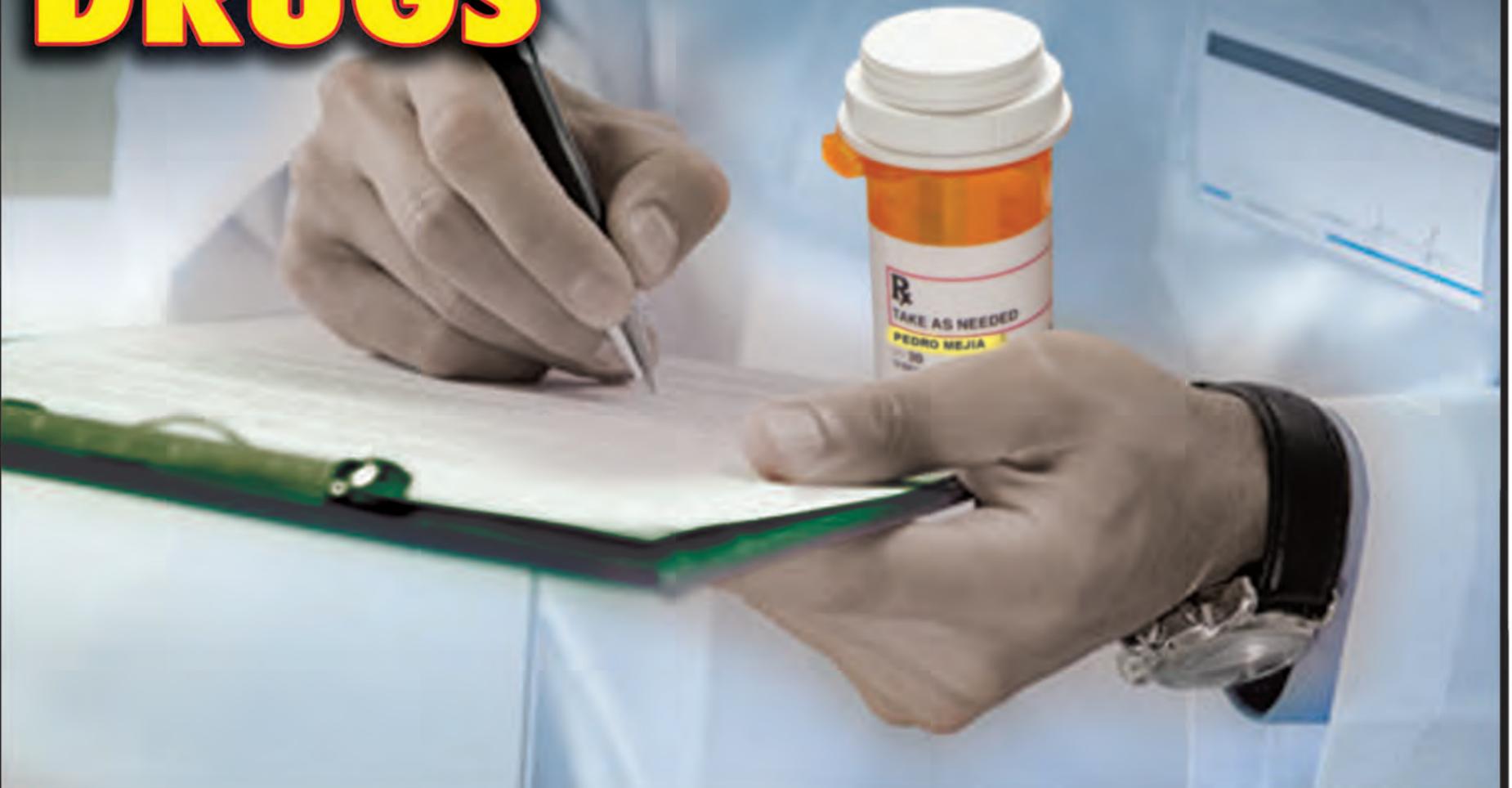
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ MAY 21, 2016 ◆

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EDITORIAL

Lowering the High Cost of Prescription Drugs

Doctors prescribe sick people medication for a variety of reasons—to fight infection, prevent stroke or ward off depression. These medicines won't help if not taken but at times patients forget or stop taking them because of unforeseen side effects. Recently, more and more people are skipping their medications altogether because they simply can't afford to pay for them. Statistics show that nearly one in five Americans between the ages of 19 and 64—35 million people—do not get their prescriptions filled due to exorbitant costs. Even with health insurance, the copayments alone are cost-prohibitive. Still, there are cancer patients and others who have no choice but to bite the bullet and spend over \$100,000 a year on life saving prescription medications.

Congress needs to address the high cost of prescription drugs and start listening to the American people, rather than to the pharmaceutical industry which has profited immensely by charging whatever the market will bear for medicines that patients literally can't live without. A good start would be to allow Medicare to negotiate with drug companies for better prices. Medicare is currently not allowed to do so under the law, despite the fact that other countries have national health insurance plans that negotiate better prices for their citizens.

A second measure would be to allow the importation of prescription drugs from licensed pharmacies in Canada and Europe. Thirdly, the practice of "pay for delay" between brand and generic drug makers should be prohibited. These anti-competitive deals allow drug prices to remain artificially high and cost patients and taxpayers more money. The government needs to also enact stiffer penalties for fraud and hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable for off-label promotions, kickbacks, anti-monopoly practices and Medicare fraud. Finally, there should be greater transparency on how prices are set. Drug companies routinely overinflate the true costs of research and development to justify skyrocketing prescription drug prices.

These common sense solutions need to be implemented and passed into law. It is not right that in America, the richest country in the world, its citizens go bankrupt or die because they cannot afford life-saving medications. It's time for Republicans, Democrats and Independents in Congress to do something about drug prices and start putting people ahead of profits for drug companies.

What to Do With the Rail Project

That collective gasp heard across Oahu came from taxpayers upon learning the latest estimate of the rail's project ballooning price tag. The cost is now a staggering \$8.1 billion, according to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Announced in 2005 by the administration of former Mayor Mufi Hannemann as a 20-mile, 21-station project that would cost \$3.7 billion, rail's price has more than doubled since then, caused by lawsuits by opponents that delayed the project, as well as a red hot construction industry that further drove up cost for labor and supplies.

Honolulu Authority For Rapid Transportation (HART) officials will get a clearer financial picture by year's end, when a "Risk Refresh" report and updated Financial Plan are completed. Additionally, the City has two significant contracts out for bid—the Airport section and its four stations and the City Center guideway and its eight stations. The winning bids should give HART a better indication of the actual cost of the project.

There are also utility concerns primarily along Dillingham Boulevard that remain unresolved. HART has informed the City Council that negotiations are on-going with Hawaiian Electric

FROM THE PUBLISHER

A

nother school year is drawing to a close and as the Class of 2016 counts down the few remaining days, graduation season will soon be upon us. To our students,

I encourage you to push hard until the very end. Study like crazy for your final exams and complete all assignments. You won't regret it!

Our cover story for this issue delves into the high cost of prescription drugs and how prices got so high in the first place. As a result, many people, especially seniors and others on fixed incomes, are finding it difficult to afford their prescriptions. To find out more on this growing problem, please turn to page 4 for "The Painfully High Cost of Prescription Drugs."

Speaking of painful, one state lawmaker is urging Gov. David Ige to call a special session to address the overcrowded conditions at James Campbell High School in Ewa Beach, which is home to many Filipino families. State Rep. Bob McDermott is upset with legislative leaders for cutting funds for a new building at Campbell when more classrooms are needed to alleviate severe overcrowding. Although chances are slim to none that lawmakers will convene a special session, one has to at least admire the good representative for going to bat for his community. Read more about this on page 7.

In our continuing coverage of the recent presidential election in the Philippines, contributing writer Seneca Moraleda-Puguan in her Personal Reflections column (see page 9) discusses the ramifications of Rodrigo Roa Duterte winning the presidency. She and others who voted for the former Davao City mayor are hopeful that Duterte can eradicate the country's long-standing problems of corruption and crime.

In closing, please take some time to read the other informative articles in this issue and feel free to email us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com with any story idea, suggestion or concern you may have.

Until our next issue...*aloha* and *mabuhay!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido



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The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle is published weekly by The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle Inc. and is located at 94-356 Waipahu Depot, Waipahu, HI 96797. Telephone (808) 678-8930 Facsimile (808) 678-1829. E-mail filipinochronicle@gmail.com. Website: www.thefilipinochronicle.com. Opinions expressed by the columnists and contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle management. Reproduction of the contents in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the management. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

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Company (HECO) regarding placement and location of power lines. However, from a construction perspective, there are always risks involved with undocumented power, utility and cable lines when digging up roadways that could further impact construction schedule and overall cost.

The challenge ahead is coming up with additional funds to cover rail's cost. Convincing the State Legislature and City Council to approve another GET surcharge extension would be a tough sell. The Council has gone on record as opposing any extension beyond what was agreed to in Bill 23 (2015) which extended GET collection an additional five years to 2027. However, all options need to be brought to the table, including additional funding sources, seeking public-private partnerships, reducing the number of stations or shortening the alignment to Aloha Stadium. The last two options would violate the Full Funding Grant Agreement signed at the start of the project, but FTA officials have indicated a willingness to be more flexible to get the project done.

The coming months will be crucial for the viability of Hawaii's largest ever and most expensive public works project. Let's hope that the Council, mayor, HART, FTA, governor, Legislature and private developers can begin discussions sooner rather than later on how to pay for rail.

CANDID PERSPECTIVES

Sanders Presumed Done? Not Quite Yet



By Emil Guillermo

When Bernie Sanders won 17 delegates in the Hawaii Democratic Caucus back on March 26, I thought that was a sign.

In Obama country, you figure the president, a big Hillary supporter, would make Hawaii as automatic as it gets for Hillary. But there was Sanders with 23,530 votes, more than double Clinton's 10,125, for an overwhelming 69.8 percent to 30 percent victory.

What was the dynamic? At the Star Advertiser, my former colleague and veteran political reporter Jerry Burris said it's all about those who were finally engaged enough to participate in the process.

"A lot of people had become used to letting the 'regulars' deal with caucuses which normally attracted the seriously committed or the terminally bored," Burris told me. "It was interesting that these folks paid little attention to the elders who were all for Clinton (with the exception of Gabbard). What remains to be seen is whether this kind of turnout—nearly a record—will repeat itself when there isn't something novel at stake."

Oh, you mean like the future of American democracy shifting to oligarchy? Filipinos know oligarchy. They're the ones who rule when there's no middle class, just an elite and a sub-elite. Have you noticed? The U.S. is looking more and more like the Philippines politically.

Jerry also noticed the defection wasn't among the older, largely Asian, Democratic constituency, but rather an influx of new and less loyal participants. Jerry said the surge of newcomers was heavily Caucasian.

That's usually the rap on

Sanders that he does well with whites, not so much with people of color. But in an appearance in Stockton, California last week, the crowd was as diverse as it gets. Sanders is energizing people on the margins. He's waking up people who formerly didn't care. And now he's getting them to realize, it's time to take action.

You can be presumptive all you want. But I thought that Bernie Sanders' trouncing of Hillary Clinton in West Virginia last week should trouble establishment Democrats. Clinton should be cakewalking to the convention. She's even being wind-aided by the media with stories about how Clinton's lead is so "insurmountable."

But Sanders has raised more than \$182 million. You don't think he should give any of it back, do you? Nah, he should take all that money and let it ride for democracy. Just to keep them all honest.

And with California's 546 Democratic delegates up for grabs on June 7, why not?

So there was Sanders in Stockton on May 10. And the non-white, Asian American faces were pretty much front and center. In California, I call Stockton "the red part of the blue state." It's traditionally conservative. Until the demographics change.

Historically, Stockton has been an important place for Asian Americans. For the Chinese during the Gold Rush of 1849, you don't get Hop Sing cooking on the Ponderosa in TV's "Bonanza" were it not for the Chinese in Northern California, with Stockton as its base.

Stockton was important for Japanese Americans, who made their livelihoods farming the Central Valley, once again with Stockton as a base.

And for Filipino Americans, Stockton was the home of Little Manila, at one time the largest community of Filipinos in the U.S. in the 1920s and 1930s. One of the papers there, The Record, is famous for anti-Filipino editorials that called Filipinos "unassimilable."

Many years later, it was the height of irony for me to work for that paper (under its new owners) and to tell Filipino stories on the front page.

This week, Sanders made the paper's front page, just for showing up and recognizing Stockton as a rustbelt city with the demographics of the West. Of a population of 302,000 people, Stockton is 12 percent African American; 1.1 percent American Indian; 40.3 percent Hispanic; 21.5 percent Asian.

It's 37.5 percent white, but just 22.9 percent "white alone." And that alone tells you this is as mixed and diverse a city as you're going to find anywhere in America. And by the look of the crowd, it seemed like they were all represented at the rally.

Some may think people of color aren't attracted to Sanders. But the vast majority of Asian Americans are still recovering from the recession that started at the tail end of the Bush years. They've felt the burn.

"People of Stockton know Wall Street very, very well," Sanders said from the podium. "You know what Wall Street's greed and recklessness and illegal behavior have done to this community."

Of all the nation, California's Central Valley was one of the hardest hit areas in terms of bad loans, foreclosures and job losses during the recession. Recovery after devastation has not been easy. The city of Stockton itself was hit, filing for bankruptcy in June 2012, more than \$700 million in debt. At the time, it was the largest city to

seek Chapter 9 protection.

Just last year in February, Stockton came out of the hole, but was still being sued by Franklin Templeton for its full share of the debt owed, \$37 million. Seeing the faces of diversity, the oft-forgotten victims of the recession, it just seemed natural for the city and its people to see Sanders as their hero.

Stockton can't easily relate to Hillary's comfort and wealth. Stockton isn't Chappaqua. And I've been to both.

Throughout the nation, there are Asian Americans who aren't in the 1 percent. They work in restaurants, hotels and service jobs. They work in the Chinatowns of America. They live in forgotten cities like Stockton.

Sanders' visit to Stockton made me wonder if the Democratic race was really over. There are people out there who haven't been heard from, who know the economic pain that

only he seems willing to address head on.

So maybe it's not quite over yet. Clinton has 1,716 delegates. Sanders has 1,433. The race to 2,383 is mathematically difficult but not insurmountable. There are 714 super-delegates and many can be up for grabs if the convention is contested.

Will it? There are 1,065 delegates left to be distribute. On June 7, California's 546 and New Jersey's 142, are available. On May 17, there's Oregon with 71 and Kentucky with 61.

It's been a strange campaign year, but maybe Hawaii was the harbinger for a long-shot scenario that is still possible.

EMIL GUILLERMO is an award-winning journalist and commentator who writes from Northern California. He recently won the 2015 Dr. Suzanne Ahn Award for Civil Rights and Social Justice from the Asian American Journalists Association, California.



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The Painfully High Cost of Prescription Drugs

By Dennis Galolo

Honolulu resident and retiree Ernesto Bumanglag (name changed due to privacy) suffers from severe joint pain whenever his gout flares up. To ease the pain, doctors prescribed him an anti-inflammatory drug called Colchicine, a gout remedy so old that the ancient Greeks knew its effects. Originally derived from a plant known as the autumn crocus, Colchicine was found to be effective for lowering levels of uric acid in the blood.



Colchicine was affordable for gout sufferers like Bumanglag who remembers at one point paying roughly 10 cents per pill. But no longer. The cost for Colchicine has skyrocketed in recent years to \$5 per pill—a mind boggling increase for Bumanglag and the estimated 2 million acute gout sufferers in the U.S.

“I no can afford to get sick anymore,” says Bumanglag, who lives on a small retirement pension.

For patients like Bumanglag, the cost for certain prescription drugs has increased to a point where many of them can no longer afford their medicines.

What Happened?

Colchicine was on the market before the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) was established as a federal agency and “grandfathered” in without receiving government approval. In 2006, the FDA began a push to get all “grandfathered” medications tested and officially approved. A

pharmaceutical company called URL Pharma, Inc., seized an opportunity by releasing Colcris, the first branded Colchicine.

In July 2009, the FDA approved the newly-branded drug Colcris and a year later ordered all unapproved Colchicine off the market. When gout sufferers like Bumanglag refilled their prescriptions, they found that the generic Colchicine was replaced by the more expensive Colcris which proved to be a tremendous pain in the wallet.

Another well-established drug that recently saw a tremendous price increase is 17 alpha-hydroxyprogesterone caproate (17OHP), a synthetic hormone that prevents premature birth in high-risk mothers. Specialized pharmacies previously formulated an unapproved form of 17OHP but when the FDA approved a new drug under the trade name Makena, the cost jumped from \$10 per dose to \$1,500. The cost of getting pregnant for some expectant

mothers, who typically require 20 injections during the course of their pregnancy, was now about \$30,000.

The company that produced Makena, K-V Pharmaceutical Company, has warned specialized pharmacies of FDA action if they continue to sell non-branded versions of their drug. Not surprisingly, some members of Congress have called for price gouging investigations into K-V Pharmaceutical.

The cost for other so-called specialty drugs, sometimes known as the Rollys-Royces of the pharmaceutical industry, is even higher. These specialty drugs are placing a growing burden on the entire health system. Nineteen of the 28 drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 2013 were specialty drugs, marking the third year in a row that specialty drugs accounted for the majority of FDA approvals.

Waipahu physician Dr. Charlie Sonido says drugs that treat cancer, hepatitis, HIV and other chronic illnesses are among the highest priced.

“The most expensive drugs are now anti-viral drugs and for rare diseases that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per year,” he says. “This includes drugs for hemophiliacs that cost \$1 million per year.”

Every year, more brand-name drugs become available. These drugs treat

serious illnesses but come with a high price tag due to costs associated with research, development and marketing. Overall, these expensive brand-name drugs drive up health plan costs.

Out-of-Control Greed

According to observers, the exorbitantly high prices for certain prescription drugs are for the most part profit-driven, given the fact that the same drugs are available in other countries at much cheaper prices. For the most part, the setting of drug prices in the U.S. is relatively free from government regulation, other than limited control in the veterans’ health care system and Medicaid. Prices are generally determined by what the market will bear.

But since low-income patients and the elderly are typically at greater risk for debilitating illnesses, the burden of paying for these drugs will likely fall on Medicaid and Medicare. Consumer advocate groups like the AARP fear that the high cost of specialty drugs will ultimately bankrupt the system.

“Prices for medications push up health care costs and consistently exceed inflation,” said AARP President Jeannine English in a written statement to the media. “While Americans with prescription drug coverage do not pay the full amount, the high prices are ultimately passed on to taxpayers and

health care consumers.”

Ending ‘Pay For Delay’

Some observers blame a practice in the pharmaceutical industry referred to as “pay for delay” in which a brand-name drug company pays off a would-be competitor to delay it from selling a generic version of the drug. Without competition, the brand-name company can continue demanding high prices for its drug—translating into a windfall of higher profits.

“Pay for delay” allows drug companies to maintain their strangle hold on the market long after their active-ingredient patents expires. As a result, consumers who rely on these drugs are often forced to pay these higher prices for years before a generic version enters the market.

According to the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), such “pay for delay” deals end up costing patients \$3.5 billion each year in higher drug prices.

In testimony before a U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights, PIRG’s federal program director Mike Russo urged Congress to take action to protect consumers.

“Because of these pay-for-delay deals, Americans pay inflated drug prices or go without needed medication,” says Russo. “These payoffs need to stop. We can’t wait for years for litigation to solve

(continued on page 5)

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COVER STORY

(from page 4, THE PAINFULLY ...)

this problem. Consumers need relief now.”

Go Generic

Patients whose prescription drug needs take a heavy financial toll are resorting to a patchwork of strategies in order to control costs. Some mitigate expenses by shifting to generic drugs, while others hunt for the best deals.

Physicians like Dr. Sonido are pushing generic drugs for patients on a tight budget. A generic drug is a chemically equivalent, lower-cost version of a brand-name drug, costing 30 to 80 percent less. A brand-name drug and its generic version have the same active ingredient, dosage, safety, strength, usage directions, quality, performance and intended use. Generic drugs are thoroughly tested to make sure their performance and ingredients meet FDA standards.

When a company develops a new drug and submits it for approval to the FDA, a 20-year patent is issued which prevents other companies from selling the drug during the life of the patent. As the drug patent nears expiration, any drug manufacturer can apply to the FDA to sell its generic version. These manufacturers can sell their generic drug at a discount since they did not have to pay for years of research, clinical trials, advertisements and other costs. Once the generic drugs are allowed, competition keeps prices down.

For example, a one month supply of the cholesterol drug Lipitor costs \$194. The generic equivalent is \$16. Another drug, Plavix, is used to prevent blood clots. It costs \$205, while its generic equivalent is \$13 for a one-month supply. Thirdly, there's the antibiotic Cipro which treats a number of infections. It costs \$52 but the generic equivalent costs \$7.

Other than price, generics may differ from brand name drugs in color, shape and taste, but they do not affect the quality of the drug. The bottom line is that generic drugs are the more cost-effective option for patients looking to save

money on prescription drug costs.

“Ask your physician to write prescriptions for generic drugs whenever possible,” says Dr. Sonido. “You can use generics with confidence and they are safe and effective.”

According to the FDA, nearly 8 in 10 prescriptions filled in the U.S. are for generic drugs. The use of generic drugs is expected to grow over the next few years as a number of popular drugs come off patent through 2016 and beyond.

Dr. Sonido also encourages patients to visit Walmart's drug program where a 30-day supply of generic drugs like Pravastatin, which is used to lower cholesterol levels, can be had for \$4.

“When I have no samples to give my patients, I refer them to Walmart's generic drugs program,” he says. “That's what patients should be demanding from their doctor—substitute medications that are just as good.”

Reigning in Costs

Consumer advocates have lobbied for solutions to curb the exorbitant costs for prescription drugs. One idea is to allow consumers to purchase drugs from other countries. Millions of Americans routinely order prescription drugs online from Canadian and other international pharmacies and save upwards of 75 percent if the same drugs were bought in the U.S. While doing so is against the law, the FDA normally does not prosecute individuals who import drugs for personal use, particularly if the amount is only for a few months' supply. However, the FDA has warned of the dangers of buying medications online due to the risk of buying from fake online pharmacies.

A second alternative would be to allow the federal government through Medicare to negotiate drug prices—an idea that has been touted by Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Governments in Europe routinely bargain with pharmaceutical companies on behalf of their citizens,

which help to keep costs down. However, critics say the logistics of bargaining on consumers' behalf would be tricky, if not impossible. Negotiating the price for every drug on the market is a process that would be time consuming and unwieldy. A better alternative, supporters say, would be to push for rebates for drug coverage for low-income people, seniors and the disabled.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has also been sharply criticized by consumer watchdog groups for its failure to keep pharmaceutical companies from getting too big, crushing competition and hurting consumers. In 2015, the FTC approved a merger between Allergan and Pfizer which created a massive pharmaceutical drug conglomerate. Earlier this year, the FTC allowed Shire Pharmaceuticals to acquire Dyax in a \$6 billion deal, without raising questions.

“The FTC has been far too lenient in allowing massive mergers,” says Murshed Zahed, Deputy Political Director of CREDO Action, a social change organization that speaks out and pressures decision-makers from the local to the national level on a variety of social issues. “When Americans are paying the highest prices for pharmaceutical drugs of anywhere in the world, we deserve more aggressive protection. The simplest and clearest way to help consumers isn't new legislation, but for regulators to use the antitrust provisions that have been part of U.S. law for around 100 years.”

The National

Coalition on Health Care, a non-profit comprised of more than 80 medical societies, health care providers, insurers and other groups, has launched the Campaign for Sustainable Rx Pricing. Coalition members have witnessed firsthand the harm caused to patient health and personal finances by unsustainable pharmaceutical drug prices and want to spark a national dialogue to find solutions.

“Exorbitant drug prices deny patients access to life-enhancing medicines and result in higher out-of-pocket costs, premiums and taxes,” says President John Rother. “To prevent our health care system from going bankrupt, we need to establish a drug pricing structure based on value and data-driven evidence and balance between the interests of innovative drug manufacturers and those of society and our health care system.”

Skyrocketing costs are a concern for U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz who says more needs to be done to ensure the

promise of affordability, especially for the elderly and those on a fixed income.

“We have seen proposals from policymakers on how to tackle some of the causes of high prescription drug costs, including lack of transparency for consumers and payers, stifled competition and profiteering,” Schatz says.

“These are complex issues and I have been monitoring how we can best move forward on the federal level. All the players in the health care sector have a role to play to achieve high quality care and improved access to care at lower cost.”

Dr. Sonido agrees that action is needed to reign in the costs. He says pharmaceutical companies have a moral obligation to adjust prices to a more reasonable level.

“If not, millions of patients will be unable to afford the cost for health care,” he says. “Pharmaceuticals should be allowed to make a profit. But the prices for certain drugs are way too exorbitant and unreasonable.”



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Those Who Know Congress Best Are Shaking Their Heads

By Lee H. Hamilton

O had the good fortune last week to spend some time in Washington, D.C. with about a dozen former members of Congress. As you'd expect, we got to talking about the current Congress. Very quickly it turned out that the same question was troubling all of us: Why is it held in such low public esteem?

We represented both parties and a variety of eras, and had a range of experience under our belts. But we all found ourselves chagrined by what we've been witnessing. You have to understand that most former members of Con-

gress believe deeply in the value of the institution for American representative government. We might take opposite sides of particular policy debates, but on one point we all agree: we want the institution itself to succeed and thrive. These days, it's doing neither.

For starters, we were hard-pressed to come up with any real accomplishments for this Congress. It did pass a revision to No Child Left Behind, and a controversial expansion of cyber-surveillance capabilities — which it slipped into a must-pass budget bill. It also took the entirely uncontroversial step of broadening sanctions on North Korea. But that's pretty much it.

In the country at large, people are fretting about control of our borders, stagnant wages, college expenses, the cost of health care, the opioid addiction crisis, the spread of ISIS, the

strengthening effects of climate change. The administration is trying to keep the Zika virus from gaining a foothold in this country, and congressional inaction has already caused Puerto Rico to default on one set of obligations, with a much bigger default looming — and doomed airline passengers to longer and longer waits as the TSA struggles. Yet on Capitol Hill, no one seems particularly concerned. Instead, its members left town to campaign.

This may be unfair, but I can't help but think about my first year in Congress. We enacted 810 bills, including the passage of Medicare and Medicaid, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Water Quality Act, and setting up the Departments of Transportation and of Housing and Urban Development. Not every year was like that, but the contrast is inescapable. Among the group of people I was with last week — people who watch Congress closely — there was unanimity: this will go out as

one of the least productive years in congressional history.

Worse, members show little interest in making Congress more productive. Our little group all remembered times when we or our colleagues pushed reform efforts to make the institution work better — and were struck that current members aren't doing so. Most Americans belong to some group or another that's trying to accomplish change for the better and improve itself at the same time. Why would Congress be an outlier? But it is.

Some of the observations we shared last week are old hat. Congress is excessively partisan, with too many of its members highly distrustful of the other party and inclined to blame it for Capitol Hill's ailments. As an institution, it seems incapable of ridding itself of the bad habits it's gotten into: the reliance on omnibus bills and continuing resolutions; timidity in the face of presidential power; a marked reluctance to use the levers of congressional authority — es-

pecially control of the federal budget — to prod or check executive action.

None of us believed this is irreversible. We are all convinced that strong leadership in Congress could make an immense difference. In the past, effective legislators on both sides of the aisle — as committee chairs and as caucus leaders — have left behind them a legacy of great accomplishment.

I won't waste your time with a list of them, because the point is simple: it may be a different time and legislative environment from 50 years ago, but strong leadership can make Congress work. On that, my former colleagues and I, Republicans and Democrats, found ourselves in full agreement.

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LEE HAMILTON is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar, IU School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

State DOH Convenes Rat Lungworm Disease Task Force

The State Department of Health (DOH) and the East Hawaii Liaison to the Office of the Governor have established a Joint Task Force to assess the threat of rat lungworm disease (Angiostrongyliasis) in Hawaii. The mission of the task force is to share scientific knowledge in the application of diagnostics, treatment, mitigation and public education activities.

Rat lungworm disease is caused by a roundworm parasite called *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*. The parasitic nematode can be passed from the feces of infected rodents to snails, slugs and other animals, which become intermediate hosts for the parasite. Humans can become infected when they consume, either intentionally or otherwise, infected raw or undercooked intermediate hosts.

“Establishing a joint task force with local experts in the medical field and leaders in government will produce a set of best practices that will be used to target rat lungworm disease not only on Hawaii Island, but on a statewide scale as well,” said Wil Okabe, East Hawaii Liaison to the Office of the Governor. “There is no specific treatment yet identified for this disease, so finding the best ways to prevent its spread and educate the public is crucial.”

Although rat lungworm has

been found throughout the state, Hawaii Island has a majority of the cases. Some infected people don't show any symptoms or only have mild symptoms. For others, the symptoms can be much more severe, which can include headaches, stiffness of the neck, tingling or painful feelings in the skin or extremities, low-grade fever, nausea and vomiting. Sometimes, a temporary paralysis of the face may also be present, as well as light sensitivity. This infection can also cause a rare type of meningitis (*eosinophilic meningitis*).

The public is advised not to eat raw foods contaminated with the slime from snails or slugs, wash produce thoroughly and boil snails, freshwater prawns, crabs and frogs for at least 3-5 minutes. Also, do not handle snails and slugs with bare hands.

For more information on Rat Lungworm Disease, call the Hawaii District Health Office Disease Investigations office at (808) 933-0912.

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WHAT'S UP ATTORNEY?



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

How Aliens Can Get Advance Parole to Travel to the United States

What is “parole”? “Parole” allows an alien to physically enter the U.S. for a specific purpose — usually for humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. See Immigration and Nationality Act Section 212(d)(5).

Family members of Filipino World War II veterans who are beneficiaries of approved family-based immigrant visa petitions will be given an “opportunity to receive a discretionary grant of parole on a case-by-case basis, so that they may come to the United States while waiting for their immigrant visa to become available” beginning June 8, 2016 according to an announcement by USCIS on May 9, 2016.

The Department of Homeland Security issues an Advance Parole document to an alien authorizing the alien to appear at a port of entry to seek parole into the United States. This document may be accepted by a transportation company in lieu of a visa as an authorization for the holder to travel to the United States. The alien must have a

passport. The Advance Parole document does not, by itself, entitle the alien to enter the United States. When the alien arrives at the port of entry, the alien will be inspected by the Customs and Border Protection. The alien must present the Advance Parole document to the CBP agent who will review the case to determine whether the alien is admissible under the Immigration and Nationality Act. If the CBP agent denies parole, the alien may be detained and subjected to expedited removal or placed in removal proceedings before an Immigration Judge as authorized by law and regulations. If the CBP agent grants parole, the agent will issue a separate document authorizing the alien to be paroled into the United States, and specify the terms and conditions as the agent may deem appropriate. An alien who has been “paroled” has not been “admitted” to the United States in immigration parlance but remains an “applicant for admission”.

USCIS announced that Form I-131 is to be used by an alien seeking advance parole. Here is the link to Form I-131. <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-131.pdf>

Aliens seeking to use Form I-131 must read carefully the Instructions in filling up and filing the form. Here is the link to the

Form I-131 instructions. <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-131instr.pdf>

Pay particular attention to the part of the Instructions for aliens applying for Advance Parole Document for a person who is outside the United States. There are documents that must be attached to the Petition, including, the reason why advance parole is requested (such as the parole policy of the United States for beneficiaries of approved family-based immigrant visa petitions filed by Filipino World War II veterans that was announced on May 9, 2016), an affidavit of support (Form I-134), an explanation why a U.S. visa cannot be obtained or why a visa was not sought, an explanation why a waiver of inadmissibility cannot be obtained to allow issuance of a visa or why a waiver has not been sought. Most importantly, a copy of the approved immigrant visa petition and evidence regarding any pending immigrant petition must be attached. The alien must also submit passport-style photos, size 2” x 2”, in color, in accordance with the prescribed requirements. USCIS will notify the applicant if biometric collection is required. At the time of this writing the filing fee for Form I-131 is \$360. Applicants must

check with USCIS at www.uscis.gov/forms or call 1-800-375-5283 before filing for information on the current fee. Contact the U.S. Embassy for the method of payment. Applicants who can demonstrate that they are unable to pay should file Form I-912, Fee Waiver Request. Contact the USCIS for information on where to file at www.uscis.gov/I-131 or call 1-800-375-5283.

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 specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. Office: American Savings Bank Tower, 1001 Bishop Street, Suite 2305, Honolulu, HI 96813. Tel. 808 225 2645 E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com. He is from Laoag City and Magsingal, 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. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice.



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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

McDermott Calls For Special Session

State Rep. Bob McDermott has sent a letter to Gov. David Ige to call the State Legislature back into a special session to fix the “emergency situation” at James Campbell High School.

Lawmakers cut the original \$30 million appropriated for a new building at the high school to \$12 million for planning and design, which is not enough to build the facility on time under the original full Design Build appropriation. The reduced funding also means it will take at least four years before students can enjoy a new building under a new phased bid and procurement process, McDermott says.

The Legislature instead approved \$37 million for in Kihei, Maui where enrollment has been

falling. McDermott says the money should have gone to Campbell which is overflowing with students and where average classroom sizes have reached upwards of 40 students. To add insult to injury, up to 600 additional students are projected to enroll at the school within the next three years.

“Campbell got short changed,” says McDermott. “What makes matters worse is that Ewa is an undeserved community, a minority community with lower economic equality than Kihei.”

State Sen. Will Espero, whose district includes much of Ewa and Ewa Beach, defended the reduction in funding for Campbell and said that McDermott is simply “making noise in this election season.”

“The Legislature does its best to consider all public school requests statewide but unfortunately not all requests are appropriated due to a lack of funds,” Espero says. “Next session begins in eight months and the remainder of the funding for construction will be a top priority.”

Espero also doesn’t expect the Legislature to reconvene in a special session to discuss the needs of a single high school.

McDermott is reviewing legal options with a team of lawyers and may consider filing a class action lawsuit.

“It is a shame that it has come to that,” he says. “Rest assured, I will continue to fight for the children attending Campbell High School.”

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SOCIETY PAGE

2016 Filipino Fiesta Parade and Santacruzán

In case you missed it, here are some highlights of this signature cultural event for the Filipino community held last May 14 at Kapiolani Park.

Photo Credit: Renelaine Pfister



Elvis impersonator Leo Days waves to the audience at the Filipino Fiesta and Parade.



Members of the Santacruzán court pose with Miss Universe 1st Runner Up 2012 Janine Tugonon.



Filipino actor and recording artist Sam Milby performs a number for fans at the Filipino Fiesta.



Filipina actress and singer Giselle Tongi graces the parade en route to Kapiolani Park.



Nona Baldonado (left) and Venus Vilorio from KNDI 1270 AM display traditional Filipina attire.



A few of the wide variety of booths on display at the Filipino Fiesta.



(from left): Edmund Aczon, Donnie Juan and Arceli Rebolledo from the FilCom Center manning one of the many booths at the Filipino Fiesta.



Jordan Segundo from Good Morning Hawaii addresses the audience at the Filipino Fiesta.

Filipino Fiesta entertainers gathered for a festive **Meet and Greet** reception held May 12th at the Trump International Hotel and Tower.

Photo Credit: Renelaine Pfister



PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

A Brighter Future For the Philippines?

by Seneca Moraleda-Puguan

The elections of the new set of leaders in the Philippines are almost over. We now have a presumptive president who has taken over the polls by a mile. As for the vice president, it's still a wait-and-see. But so far, we now know who will be leading the country during the next six years.

Before we move forward and look ahead, I would like to thank and give credit to whom credit is due. Leading a country is by no means an easy task. It takes courage to lead, let alone run a whole country. I believe that President Benigno "NoyNoy" Aquino III gave his best in leading and serving the nation. He deserves to be honored.

Unfortunately, many have expressed dissatisfaction with the administration of President Aquino, despite leaving a legacy of strong economic growth. Many believed that this growth did not necessarily translate to the hungry being fed and the homeless having roofs over their heads. There has not been a radical move to address poverty. In addition, many felt that the government's incompetence and inefficiency in solving the MRT breakdown, 'laglag-bala' scheme in NAIA, Yolanda victims' rehabilitation and so many more have been a let-down to the Filipino people.

Many Filipinos clamored for change. Many, including Overseas Filipino Workers, have questioned the fulfillment of the 'Daang Matuwid' promise by Aquino and his government. This led to the call for someone nicknamed "The Punisher" and "Dirty Harry" to run for president.

Mayor Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the mayor of Davao City, is known for his strict implementation of laws in his city. He has been elected several times and led Davao City for more than two decades. He has transformed the killing fields into a city that has be-

come one of the safest cities in the world.

He is not statesman-like as Secretary Mar Roxas. He is not as eloquent as Senator Grace Poe. He is not as intellectual as Senator Miriam Santiago. As for Binay, I could not find a word to describe him. Mayor Duterte is rugged, tactless, foul-mouthed and crude. He is not the traditional politician I am used to. He was the candidate I rooted for.

I was one of the many people whose hearts he captured. His political will, competence, reputation as a "man of action" and value for discipline caused me to overlook the many fiery darts that were thrown at him during the course of his campaign. I was not swayed, not even my whole family who were "Dutertards." We were among the many people who used social media to fight for him, defend him and testify about his good leadership. Others shared their personal encounters with the mayor and how he helped them, even in simple ways. This was what made Mayor Duterte stand out from his competitors. He started from the grassroots. He was someone people could relate to. He spoke the language of the masses. He voiced their frustrations and anger against a government that does not seem to care about them. He was a symbol for radical change.

I have been to Davao. I have a lot of friends from Davao City and relatives from Manila who decided to stay there for good. Indeed, it's a city one can be proud of. It's clean. It has world-class facilities. It has 911. It has no face of Duterte flashed in major city projects. The people are disciplined. It's the mayor's Exhibit A. It is proof of his excellent leadership and selfless service to his people.

Fortunately, he won. By a mile.

But can he do for the whole Philippines what he has done for the city of Davao?



Mammoth crowd in Duterte's *miting-de-avance* in Rizal Park

Can he eradicate corruption, drugs and crime as he has promised? Can he deliver what his many supporters expect of him? Is change really coming like what his voters believe? Will he be one of the greatest presidents the country ever had?

There are so many questions that are waiting to be answered in the next six years. Things are uncertain but surely exciting. The Filipino people are hopeful.

There will be many changes for sure. And these changes will not uncomfortable at first. The implementation of a curfew, smoking ban in public places and many more rules will be strictly enforced. But this is a good start. It will help to inculcate self-governance and discipline, which, unfortunately, we as a people are not known to have.

When there is discipline, there is order. When there is order, there is progress. Mayor Duterte's platform also includes the change of govern-

ment system from a unitary form to federalism. Areas that don't have access to government projects can now be reached and dealt with. It will no longer be "Manila-centric" but the power will be distributed to federal states. This is something that still needs to be intently reviewed but it sounds promising especially since many remote areas in Mindanao are too often overlookd.

My family plans to stay here in South Korea for quite a long time because of the nature of our work. We will be unable to experience firsthand the effect of the former mayor, now presumptive president of

the Philippines, Rodrigo Roa Duterte's leadership. But seeing his political will and utmost desire to see the nation changed gives us hope, especially as Filipinos living overseas, that the Philippines we will return home to someday will be a place where we can feel safe and where the citizens can enjoy the fruits of their taxes because corruption is not deemed as a norm anymore.

Hopefully, the next time we go home, we will not need to cover our luggage with plastic wraps because no one will secretly plant bullets in our bags.

To our "soon-to-be" former President NoyNoy Aquino, thank you and we wish you the best. To our president for the next six years, Rodrigo Duterte, we will pray for you and support you all the way. We hope that the mayor the Davaoenos love and we, Filipinos have learned to admire, will stay the same and serve with full conviction, with integrity and with excellence for the love of your people.

Cheers to a bright future for the Philippines!

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Hawaii FilAm Named Foreign Affairs Secretary by Duterte

By Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

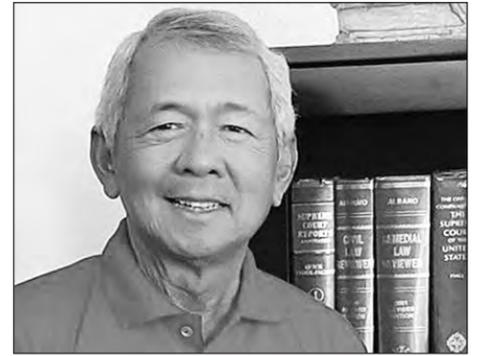
Prominent Hawaii Filipino American, Perfecto “Jun” Yasay, Jr., will be appointed Acting Secretary of the Department Foreign Affairs (DFA), incoming President Rodrigo Duterte announced on May 18, 2016. He will serve for at least a year until Duterte’s running mate, Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, will assume the post, unless Cayetano decides to continue serving as Senator for the next three years. The DFA is a premiere cabinet post, equivalent to the Department of State in the United States.

Duterte and Yasay are both from Davao and were roommates while in school.

Yasay is an outstanding lawyer who has practiced law in the United States and in the Philippines, specializing in Corporation Law and Securities Regulation. He obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines.

Yasay who is 69 years old was the former Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission of the Philippines under the Ramos administration and for a time under the Estrada administration. He was one of the principal witnesses in the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada.

He is an eloquent speaker. He was



Perfecto Yasay Jr. Photo Credit: www.philstar.com

a Speaker at the United Nations meeting on the Growth of Domestic Capital Markets in Geneva, Switzerland in 1998. He is a frequent guest on The Tipon Report and other radio shows on KNDI radio in Honolulu.

He is a prolific and articulate writer. He has written two books: Terminal Four: Corruption in America’s Only Colony in Asia and Out of the Lion’s Den: The Travails and Triumphs of a Public Servant. He writes articles for Filipino American newspapers.

Yasay is married to Cecile Joaquin Yasay who is a member of the staff of Hawaii Senator Donna Mercado Kim. They have three children, Oliver, Raveena and Stephanie. They live in Kahala.

The original core group of Filipinos for David Ige strongly endorsed Yasay for a cabinet post in the Ige administration, but they were spurned. Hawaii’s loss is the Philippines’ gain.

New Automated Passport Kiosks Reduce Processing Time For Int’l Travelers

New Automated Passport Control (APC) kiosks now in use at the Honolulu International Airport Customs Facility have significantly reduced processing times by 35-45 percent, saving people 5 to 15 minutes in line and continuing to maintain the highest level of safety and security.

Eligible passengers are processed through U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s (CPB) Primary Inspection area. The APC guides passengers through easy to follow instructions using a touch screen machine that asks a series of questions beginning with the preferred language. Passengers are asked to verify biographic information and complete an electronic Customs Declaration. The machine scans the passenger’s passport and fingerprints and takes a photograph of the individual. A receipt is then issued, which the traveler must present to a CBP officer to finalize

their inspection. The entire process takes about one to two minutes.

“The new technology is already reducing the amount of time travelers stand in line which will help get them on to their vacation or business faster,” says Ford Fuchigami, Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) director.

The reduction in wait times for incoming international passengers has also improved airport efficiency and helping international flight operations stay on schedule. Since the APC activation, the number of gate holds at Honolulu International Airport has decreased by 55 percent compared to the same time last year.

The APC is a free service that does not require membership or pre-registration. The cost for equipment and installation of the 32 machines is \$1.7 million paid by the HDOT Airports Division.

TRAVEL & LEISURE

ILOILO: FROM ISLAND HOPPING TO SNACKING ON P1 SCALLOPS

set view of the entire city and the nearby island of Guimaras.

SNARK WITH HEART
By Cate De Leon

Nothing goes on there,” an Iloilo native who had left the country three decades ago quipped. We were having lunch at a new restaurant in Rockwell, and I had just told him that I was visiting the city for the first time.

Three days later, sleep-deprived and fresh from a two-hour delayed 5 a.m. flight, I was worried that I had forgotten to buy a few essentials at the airport. But after a 20-minute drive, I was simultaneously greeted by the sight of the Injap Tower Hotel—my accommodations for the next three days—and the fact that it stood right across SM City Iloilo. It also had a 7-Eleven at the ground floor.

Brunch at Horizon Café on the hotel’s 21st floor provided a bird’s eye view of the city. Peering out of the glass panes, we had a clear view of the Ayala and Megaworld developments in the vicinity, the transportation hub right across the street, which could take you anywhere in Iloilo, along with top universities, Chinese schools, the Iloilo Convention Center, and nightlife hubs that had sprouted about in the last two to three years.

But miles away from stressful Manila, here we got a good dose of the warm and easy going Ilonggo hospitality, along with paved bike and jogging lanes along the Iloilo River (kept clean, mind you) for fitness and outdoor enthusiasts. Touted the most livable city in the Philippines, Iloilo is the perfect mixture of a laid back provincial vibe and the convenience of living right smack in the the middle of development. Popular food and beverage chains such as Bon-Chon, Moonleaf, J.CO, and many more have also made it into the city. “Dati wala kang mapaglagyan ng bag sa bag-



gage compartment galing Manila kasi puno ng J.CO boxes,” a former Xavier teacher now residing in Iloilo observed.” Now they have so much more than the standard list of restaurants and cafes, in addition to homegrown food establishments, which are a must-try for visitors.

Historical churches, ancestral houses, and foodie havens

An important city during the Spanish era, Iloilo is home to centuries-old churches such as the Miagao Church, which was once used as a fortress against Muslim raiders. The UNESCO World Heritage Site is notable for the detailed carving on its facade. We also paid a visit to the Molo Church, with its all-female ensemble of saints along the main aisle; and the Jaro Cathedral, known for its Romasque Revival style of architecture. The scenes we beheld almost transported us back to Europe, save for the 30+ degree weather.

Iloilo is also home to several ancestral houses, which have opened their doors to visitors. It is here that I learned to appreciate the relaxing rustle of capiz shell chandeliers blown by the wind, and how well-ventilated these old residential structures are, keeping you cool even during the worst of summer. At first, I balked at the idea of having hot chocolate in an open, non-airconditioned dining room. But we did, and it wasn’t the least bit uncomfortable. We enjoyed thick cups of

Tsokolate eh at the Camiña Balay Nga Bato, with a side of biskotso and mamon tostado. We were told to ring a little bell if we wanted refills—which I did, because it wasn’t every day that I got to sip such rich, concentrated tablea goodness. The ringing of said bell to call the servers had a very old Spanish, “Yaya!” feel to it, which is probably what kept all the other visitors from ringing—and why they all turned to look at me when I did. The chocolate was worth it.

It is also here in Iloilo that

I realized that the only batchoy I’ve had in my entire life was of the Lucky Me sort. This was instantly rectified by a trip to Netong’s, located in the maze of La Paz Public Market. With its savory, garlicky flavor, contrasted with slivers of liver and topped with crispy chicharon, it was the ultimate bowl of comfort—and full-bodied authenticity, which unsurprisingly I didn’t get from any of my instant noodle packets. We finished it off with P40 glasses of iced native coffee at the iconic Madge Café.

Our day tour ended atop Injap Tower Hotel’s helipad, the highest point in Western Visayas, with a panoramic sun-

Off to paradise

We started the next day at the ungodly hour of 5 a.m. to visit the Gigantes Islands in Carles, Iloilo. Roughly two hours away by land and another hour by boat, we began our island hopping at Cabugao Gamay, the most Instagrammed island of the group.

Most of the visitors at Islas de Gigantes seemed to be locals, enjoying the white sand beaches, crystal clear waters, and breathtaking limestone formations (those on Antonia beach looked like giant slabs of sliced bread, falling against each other).

With little to no establish-

(continued on page 12)

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Exercise Reduces Risk of 13 Types of Cancer

by Alixandra Caole Vila

M

ANILA, Philippines — Don't just exercise to get shaped abs, exercise to get rid

of the deadly cancer.

A large new study conducted by researchers at the US National Cancer Institute found out that leisure-time physical activity combats 13 types of cancer.

To analyze the effects of exercise in human's whole body system, the group examined data from 1.44 million people, aged 19 to 98, from the United States and Europe.

The individuals were followed for 11 years and their physical activities, whether moderate or intense were noted.

No one had cancer at the time the study began, but even-

tually about 187,000 new cases of cancer occurred.

The study revealed that those people who had claimed to engage in moderate to intense physical activities had a reduced risk of 13 types of cancer compared to the people who were in the lowest 10 percent of their study groups.

Below are the 13 types of cancer and the percentage the risk is reduced for each category:

1. Esophageal cancer, a 42 percent lower risk
2. Liver cancer, a 27 percent lower risk
3. Lung cancer, a 26 percent lower risk
4. Kidney cancer, a 23 percent lower risk
5. Stomach cancer of the cardia (top portion of the stomach), a 22 percent lower risk
6. Endometrial cancer, a 21 percent lower risk
7. Myeloid leukemia, a 20 percent lower risk
8. Myeloma, a 17 percent lower risk
9. Colon cancer, a 16 percent lower risk
10. Head and neck cancer, a 15 percent lower risk
11. Rectal cancer, a 13 percent lower risk
12. Bladder cancer, a 13 percent lower risk
13. Breast cancer, a 10 percent lower risk



Dr. Steven Moore, who led the study said that you do not even have to go to the gym to do exercise. The biggest exercisers got in the equivalent of just over an hour a day of brisk walking.

The study cited different ways exercise directly affects tumor: it lowers hormones that trigger breast cancer, helps the body better regulate insulin, and lower inflammation.

The study was published in journal, JAMA Internal Medicine. (www.philstar.com)

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TRAVEL & LEISURE (from page 11, ILOILO)

ments on the islands, occasionally you'd see tents for camping, including some which had been used to temporarily house Yolanda victims. More than two years after the super typhoon hit Visayas, you wouldn't be able to tell that these islands had been razed. The only signs were the occasional UNHCR tents, and stories from those who knew the area before the tragedy struck. "There used to be two coconut trees on that little island. Kinuha ni Yolanda yung isa," our guide shared. Or, "Everybody who lives on this island is family. There used to be 14 families here, but three of them moved to the mainland after the typhoon. Natakot." These were little cracks in paradise, only visible upon closer inspection.

Be prepared for a bit of rock climbing

There are quite a few rock formations to climb in order to see the best views, or enjoy the most beautiful parts of a particular island, so bringing a pair of aqua shoes is recommended. Tangke Saltwater Lagoon is one such gem. Concealed behind towering limestone and

accessible through a narrow, rocky entrance, it's a majestic little haven tucked away from the open sea. A troop of Philippine long-tailed macaques lurk here silently, so mind your belongings as they sometimes scavenge unguarded objects.

Another must-try when you visit Islas de Gigantes is their daily catch of seafood, which they sell for practically nothing. On Bantigue sandbar, scallops (locally called tikabtikab) sell for P1 a piece. We bought 100 and snacked on them like peanuts during the remainder of our island hopping trip. Preparation was nothing fancy. Straight from the ocean, they were steamed and served with a side of spicy vinegar if you liked. But we found that the sweet, fresh meat tasted so much better on its own.

We wound down the day's tour on the peaceful Balbagon Island, with the calm low tide lapping against a long, empty stretch of white sand. Here the locals served us a late lunch of seafood, after which we took much-needed naps under the trees while waiting for the harsh noon sun to soften its rays. At dusk, we sailed into the

sunset for home. Back at the hotel at around 9:30 in the evening, I slapped on a Korean cooling facial mask and fell asleep with it still on.

With no set itinerary for our last day in Iloilo, I marinated in the glorious comfort of sleeping in under the duvet. The hotel was kind enough to still serve me breakfast when I showed up 30 minutes late for their breakfast hours. What followed was a chill mini city tour, driving along Iloilo's decongested roads. We tried a few more items of food, such as Roberto's famous siopao and Maridel's ice cream cakes in Plazuela de Iloilo. Most known for their mango brazo ice cream cake, I especially liked the unassuming lightness of their lemon merengue pie.

We had one last coffee session, editing our beach photos and dreading our impending return to Manila ("At least here, even if it's hot it's windy"), and we were off to the airport. Back in the capital, over the next few days, I'd dream of dipping in cool emerald waters, sipping thick, nutty hot chocolate, and the gentle rustle of capiz shell chandeliers in the afternoon breeze. (www.philstar.com)

LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Proposed H-2C Visa to Benefit Nurses and Less Skilled Workers

workers, the H-2A visa for temporary or seasonal agricultural workers and the H-2B visa for temporary or seasonal nonagricultural workers. But they do not address the need for year-round workers with less than a bachelor's degree.

Foreign nurses and other health care workers will be eligible to apply for the H-2C visa. Registered nurses are generally not eligible to file for H-1B visa because nursing is not considered a specialty occupation under the H-1B program. A bachelor's degree is not required to become a registered nurse.

The H-2C visa would be available only in counties or metropolitan statistical areas where the unemployment rate is 4.9 percent or less.

Employers will be registered with the Department of

Homeland Security and they will have to attest that they had actively recruited workers but were unable to find a qualified US worker and that they have no labor dispute or layoffs.

There will be a flexible cap of 65,000 in the first year and 45,000 to 85,000 in the subsequent years depending on the economic demand. At least a quarter of the number of registered positions initially allocated for each 6 month-period shall be reserved for small business employers.

The H-2C visa would be granted initially for up to three years but could be renewed within the ten-year pilot period. The employees could be employed at any worksite and the employers could employ them at any worksite provided such location was advertised.

The law will require the

Director of the Bureau of Census and other government agencies to conduct a study on the impacts of the H-2C program on home ownership rates, housing prices, access to quality health care, criminal justice system and employment and wage rates. Within three years from the enactment of the law, they will report to Congress on the findings of their study.

Senator Jeff Flake said that "this kind of flexible, market-based visa program designed to better meet economic demand

is exactly the approach we need to bring US immigration policy into the 21st century".

Several groups have applauded the introduction of this bill. The American Health Care Association said that it will help ease the nursing shortage by "making it easier for foreign nurses and other health care workers to get jobs at skilled nursing centers."

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

A bill to create a new visa program for temporary foreign workers has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Jeff Flake. Known as the Willing Workers and Willing Employees Act of 2016, the bill would create a 10-year guest worker pilot program.

The new visa would be called H-2C and it will allow employers to hire foreign workers with less than a bachelor's degree to perform nonagricultural work in the US.

At present, there are several nonimmigrant visas available to temporary workers such as the H-1B visa for professionals and other highly skilled

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Group Warns of Rise in Rights Abuses Under Duterte Government

by Rhodina Villanueva
Thursday, May 19, 2016

MANILA, Philippines – While Filipinos are about to welcome Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte as the country's new president, an international rights group warned that his administration might pave the way for more human rights abuses.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) cited its report in 2009, which showed that Davao City officials and police were directly involved in the killings of hundreds of people, including 14-year-old children in Davao City.

"Although there is no evidence showing Duterte ordered the killings, we found proof that city officials and policemen were involved in this. And Duterte was publicly applauding the targeted killing of what he called 'criminals,'" the group said.

Phelim Kine, HRW Asia

deputy director, said that in May 2015, Duterte invited him and his colleagues for some rest and relaxation in Davao City.

In a statement on Tuesday, Kine quoted Duterte as saying: "To all the bleeding hearts of US-based Human Rights Watch, you want a taste of justice, my style? Come to Davao City, Philippines, and do drugs in my city. I will execute you in public."

Kine said it was a threat, a response of Duterte to the HRW's criticisms of the mayor's public support for the gangland-style killings as an anti-crime measure.

The group said Duterte's response was no one-off, career-ending, slip of the tongue.

"It embodies the key elements of his political rhetoric, which lumps together crime and universal human rights (and their advocates) as twin toxic threats to Philippine so-

ciety. Duterte delivers that message in crude, hyper-aggressive language that's as lurid as it's unrepentant," Kine said.

The HRW official said Duterte's successful presidential campaign espoused political positions that are as disturbing as they are unlawful.

"He has managed to convince the Philippine electorate that he would solve drugs, criminality and corruption in three to six months – by whatever means necessary."

OUT OF CONTEXT

However, Duterte's campaign spokesman Peter Laviña described as unfortunate Kine's interpretation of the mayor's statement.

Laviña said Kine took Duterte's statement out of context and made it appear that the Davao mayor specifically threatened him and his colleagues. (www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE



DAYASADAS
By Pacita Saludes

Aldaw Dagiti Inna (Mother's Day)

No madanon ti aldaw dagiti Inna, adu dagiti annak ti agsagana ti MOTHER'S DAY. Naragsak a pangkabilaaw kadagiti Inna -

kuna met ti kaaduan a ti "kiss" ket umanayen a pangkabilaaw ken ni Nanang. Daya ti pudno, saan a ti pammarang a pangkabilaaw ti makaparasak kadagiti dadduma, nupay sabali met ti panirigan dagiti dadduma. Kadagiti kaaduan nga Inna maragsakanda lattan kadagiti makitada a kinasimbeng ken panagraem dagiti annakda a pangbigbig kadakuada no madanon daytoy nga aldaw.

Maragsakan dagiti Annak - isu ti pannakariknada ti kinapateg ti Inada ta no saan awanda iti daytoy a lubong. Utang dagiti annak ti kaadada, pannakamulida a dimmakel ken napatanor manipud ti kaubbingda.

Kaaduan kadagiti Annak ti mangpanunot a paragsakenda ni Nanang tapno manayon ket maipalagip kenkuana daagiti aldaw a kaadda dagiti annak a dimmakel kadagiti arakup

ken nabisked a takiag, tu-manor a namuli iti awan makapatas a pannakangipateg bayat ti idadakkel dagiti annakna. NARAGSAK NGA ALDAWMO NANANG!

"HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!" ti nasuabe a panagkikinnablaaw dagiti Inna ken agkakadua. Dagiti ANNAK isu met ti panakalagipda a ni Nanang adda latta met a makitinnarabay kadakuada. Adu dagiti annak a di mangikakano no dadduma aglalo no masaliw-anan dagiti planoda. Hawaii ditoyen kunada latta. Wen nga agpayso

Hawaii-en ket masapul a suroten ti kaugalian ti aglawlaw.

Daya ti gapuna a rum-beng nga aginayad ni Nanang a mangsupang ti kabaruan a wagas dagiti agtutubo tapno maraemda a kas Nanang. Hello mothers, watch your steps so the younger generation will appreciate you. Agbalinka a Nanang dagiti taga America ken tapno naragsakka met a Filipina Mother.

BELATED HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO ALL MOTHERS!

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Axed PNP Chief Purisima, 10 Others Ordered Arrested

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan ordered on Thursday the arrest of former Philippine National Police chief Director General Alan Purisima and other police officials over an anomalous courier service deal.

The warrant, signed by Associate Justices Rodolfo Ponferrada and Oscar Herrera Jr. of the Sixth Division, stated that the pleas earlier filed by Purisima and other respondents in the graft case are considered moot

and academic.

The magistrates said the content of the motions are "matters of defense" and are better raised during trial.

Along with Purisima, ordered accused were Gil Menezes, Napoleon Estilles, Allan Parreño, Melchor Reyes, Ford Tuazon, Mario Juan, Salud Bautista, Enrique Valerio, Lorna Perena and Juliana Pasia.

The Office of the Ombudsman filed graft charges against the respondents tagged in the

questionable contract between the PNP and Werfast Documentation Agency Inc. (Werfast) in 2011.

Ombudsman investigation bared that Werfast had no corporate existence and juridical personality when the PNP engaged its services for the delivery of firearms licenses through an agreement in May 2011 without conducting a public bidding.

The Office of the Ombudsman argued that the fees were overpriced as courier services normally only ask for P90 within the metro. (www.philstar.com)

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Nanang, sika ti nakabuklan kinataok Sika ti kaduak a mangsupang kadagiti adu a pannubok Narigat a pudno ti agbalin nga ina sagabaen adu a tuok Ngem sanguek met batangko, akuek a situtulok.

Manipud kinaubingko awan nakitak a sidungetmo Naragsak 'ta rupam uray kasano a bannogmo Lima kami nga agkakabsat nagdudumat' galad ken uso Ammom a tinimbang ti kasapulan ket naragsak tayo.

Nanang, uray imbukbukko amin a panawenko Ammok a di mapatas dagiti natuok a panagpatanormo Sika ken dagiti kakabsatko agdayaw no kasano Naisakadmo't obligasionmo kadakami a di mi matupo.

Aldawmo ita, Nanang, sarungkaranka iti tanemmo Nalabbaga a rosas idatonko a tanda't panagdayawko Awan katukad sakipisom, anus ken andurmo Kayatko, Nanang, a tawinden naka-aapal a sapatosmo Bareng annakko matubayda a kas kadagiti patanormo

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FILCOM CENTER'S 24TH ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA & PARADE | May 14, 2016 | KAPIOLANI PARK, WAIKIKI | For details, contact 808-680-0451

STROKES OF BRILLIANCE, HOSTED BY PHIL SABADO, CO-SPONSORED WITH MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | May 26, 2016 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM | KAUNOA SENIOR CENTER, 401 ALAKAPA PL., PAIA, HI 96779 | Contact: (808) 270-7308

MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER'S GINTONG PAMAMA'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS BANQUET | June 16, 2016 | MAUI BEACH HOTEL. | Contact: Jenna Gamboa at (808) 419-1617

FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS | July 16, 2016 | 6:00 PM | TAPA BALLROOM, HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE | Contact: Bernadette Fajardo @ 342-0890

SANTANIANS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII-USA INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS | July 16, 2016 | 6:00 - 11:00 PM | HIBISCUS BALLROOM, ALA MOANA HOTEL | Contact: Dr. Julius Soria (722-9958); Amy Quides (255-6380); Aurora Garcia (722-3150) or email santaniansofhiusa@gmail.com

FILCOM CENTER'S BAYANIHAN GALA DINNER 2016 | October 14, 2016 | 6:00 PM | SHERATON WAIKIKI HOTEL | Contact 808-80-0451 for more information

PASKO SA FILCOM | December 4, 2016 | FILCOM CENTER | Contact 808-680-0451 for details.

MAINLAND NEWS

Undocumented Children in Calif. Now Eligible for Health Care

by Christina M. Oriel

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of low-income children in California, regardless of their immigration status, are now eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal coverage beginning this week.

The health care expansion, known as "Health for All Kids," was rolled out on Monday, May 16, and will benefit approximately 250,000 children under 19 years old.

An estimated 185,000 undocumented children are expected to enroll this year.

"It is sad that children — until Monday, that is — had to worry about hospital bills instead of their grades," state Senator Ricardo Lara (D-Bell Gardens) said during a press conference on Friday, May 13 at the Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center.

Lara authored Senate Bill 4, which ensures that undocumented children enrolled in restricted-scope "emergency" Medi-Cal will be automatically transitioned to the full-scope version. Last year, Governor Jerry Brown signed that bill, along with Senate Bill 75, which includes an investment to expand full-scope, comprehensive Medi-Cal to all low-income undocumented children under the age of 19.

Currently, 114,981 children are receiving restricted-scope benefits, according to the Department of Health Care Services.

"Here [in California], we value immigrants. We understand that immigrants are an essential fabric of our society. The roof is not going to fall if we give undocumented immigrants health care," Lara said. "We're actually going to save money in the state. We're actually going to

be able to have preventative services so that people don't end up in our emergency rooms."

Cynthia Buiza, an immigrant from the Philippines who now serves as executive director of the California Immigrant Policy Center, added that this health care initiative is "an investment in the future of the state."

"As a member of the Filipino community, I understand how important health coverage is to keep immigrant families healthy," Buiza said. "As we celebrate this historic step towards Health for All, we will continue to work to include undocumented adults and families who remain excluded from coverage, so that all Californians have the opportunity to access coverage, no matter where they were born."

Under full-scope Medi-Cal coverage, children can receive services such as annual checkups, regular doctor visits, vaccinations, mental health care, and dental care and treatment.

To qualify, undocumented children younger than 19 must come from families whose incomes are at or below 266 percent of the federal poverty line. The income eligibility varies depending on family size. For a family of four, the income is \$5,387 per month or \$64,638 annually.

Families can apply in person at their local county human services office, over the phone, online, with a mail-in application, or at a local health center.

The state-funded program is projected to cost \$40 million in the first year and \$132 million annually after that.

Some families may be hesitant to apply for the program because they fear that they will be vulnerable

to deportation. However, community health organizations assure that information provided during enrollment will not be shared with immigration officials.

In a push to get ethnic communities to apply for the program, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles is working with 22 other organizations to provide "culturally competent outreach, education and enrollment services targeting undocumented children [ages] 0-19."

"When people think of the undocumented community, they often do not recognize the diversity of immigrants in California. There are thousands of Asians and Pacific Islanders to Africans to Middle Eastern immigrants who contribute so much to our country but whose children have no access to critically important health care," said Stewart Kwok, executive director of Advancing Justice - Los Angeles.

The organization encourages community members to call its helplines for additional information at 888-349-9695 for English or 855-300-2552 for Tagalog.

More health care options for undocumented adults are also under consideration in the Legislature.

Lara is sponsoring SB 10, which would allow undocumented adult immigrants and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients to purchase a Covered California health plan without subsidies, and SB 1418, which would widen Medi-Cal benefits to adults, regardless of immigration status.

California is now the fifth and largest state in the country to expand state-funded health care to undocumented children, following Massachusetts, New York Washington and Washington D.C. (www.asian-journal.com/)

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