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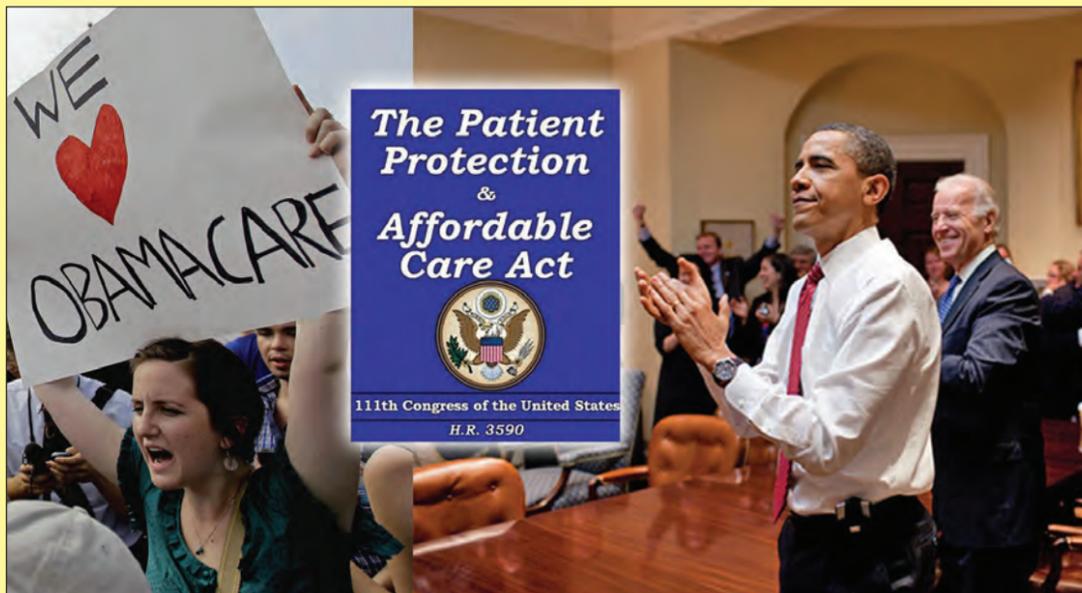
AUGUST 11, 2012

NEWS EDITION

HAWAII'S ONLY WEEKLY FILIPINO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT TO BENEFIT MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

By Sheryll Bonilla



In 1974, Hawaii was the first state to aim for universal health care coverage in its precedent-setting Prepaid Health Care Law. President Barack Obama made secure health coverage in his landmark Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010. On June 28, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the law. President Obama hailed the ruling, saying "Here in America, in the wealthiest nation on earth, no illness or accident should lead to any family's financial ruin."

Local physician Dr. Arnold Villafuerte says the court's ruling is a "major achievement for communities of color and other underserved populations."

"Millions of Americans now have the medical coverage they need to get healthy and stay healthy," he says. "I look forward to the day in 2014 when nearly all citizens will have access to affordable health insurance

and be protected from insurance company practices that unfairly deny and limit coverage.

The ACA's four main points are: (1) ensuring people get the care they pay premiums for; (2) increasing access; (3) improving affordability; and (4) supporting these changes. According to a CNN article, more than 60 percent of bankruptcies are due to overwhelming medical bills. Because medical care is essential, President Obama says that the

law helps families get the assurance they deserve and protects them against abuses by insurance companies.

The ACA also keeps insurance companies accountable to those who pay premiums. One goal was to ensure that premiums paid each month were actually spent on health services. Starting in 2011, insurance companies were required to spend at least 80 percent of the premiums

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THOUSANDS DISPLACED

by Alexis Romero

MANILA, Philippines - The death toll from torrential monsoon rains rose to 19 yesterday, with over 700,000 residents evacuated from flooded areas in



Metro Manila and nearby provinces, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported.

NDRRMC executive director Benito Ramos, however, said only 16 deaths had been verified, including nine landslide victims in Quezon City.

One-month-old Jonica

Castulo and her siblings Jonathan, 3; Joshua, 2; and their mother Jessica, 23, were killed in the landslide in Barangay Commonwealth last Tuesday.

The other victims were Cecilia, 49; Jayvee, 20; Jethro, 18; Jason, 14; and Jessie Lee Joy, 6, all sur-

(continued on page 5)

A CALL TO FILIPINO ORGANIZATIONS

by Belinda A. Aquino, Ph.D.

This is a call to all Filipino community organizations in Hawaii, but especially on Oahu, to support the upcoming Citizenship Course that will be held at the Filipino Community Center (FilCom) on five consecutive Saturdays from August 18 to September 15, 2012, from 10 am to 12 noon.

The course is intended to assist permanent residents, both Filipino and non-Filipino, who want to apply for U.S. citizenship but are unfamiliar



Dr. Belinda A. Aquino, Ph.D.

with the naturalization process. The course will be conducted by an immigration attorney from the Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center at the Legal Aid

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EDITORIALS

Voting Does Make A Difference

By the time you read this article, Hawaii's primary election will either be over or about to take place. Based on voter turnouts in the past, Hawaii voters tend to show up in larger numbers in general elections than primary elections. In 2010, there were 13 percent more voters in the general than primary election.

In the next two months, voters will be exposed to even more rounds of political commercials from candidates and their PAC supporters leading up to the general election. Negative and misleading political ads perhaps will test our patience even further, leaving some voters to tune off to the entire process, and even elect to not vote at all. Hundreds of thousands dollars here, several tens of thousands of dollars there, are spent on ads to win over one vote that could translate to favorable policy worth even more millions to those willing to spend that obscene amounts of money on ads in the first place. Why else would Pacific Resource Partnership, the chief pro-rail super PAC, spend more than \$1 million in public relations since January this year to advocate for rail and oppose anti-rail mayoral candidate Ben Cayetano? In fairness to PRP, it is only one among thousands of PACS nationwide involved in political election advocacy, or others might say, a political election system fashioned almost entirely by propaganda and money.

Even though each year more money is thrown into election campaigns persuading citizens to go out and vote, the opposite effect is occurring. Voter turnout is on a downward spiral. Here's the statistical eye-opener: since statehood, voter turnout in Hawaii has dropped significantly, from a very active voting public of 93.6 percent in the 1959 general election to 55.8 percent in the 2010 general election. Imagine, that's a near 40 percent drop in this time frame -- a very compelling statistic that's not given much attention at all. Why has voter turnout since 1996 to 2010 hovered in the 50s and 60

percent? That kind of number is hardly a mandate on any issue or candidate in a so-called vibrant democracy.

People could attribute low voter turnout to several reasons. It's reasonable to point to the constant cycles of modern economic recessions. Whether a Democrat or Republican held office, that hasn't stopped economic hardship, which seems to worsen for a greater number of Americans across the board. People could also point to the growing disconnect between political rhetoric in ads during an election year and political reality when politicians are in office. This gap, from what is promised to what is accomplished, is so wide that almost nothing in between gets done due to partisan politics. So to an increasingly skeptical, non-voting sector of society (a whopping 45 percent) give or take, the latest set of self-promoting, one-sided political ads in any election year just seem comical and insulting.

WHY VOTE AT ALL?

Despite obvious limitations to what is realistically achievable upon the election of any candidate, or despite an unfair election system heavily influenced by money and the politically mobilized, voting is still the primary catalyst to changing society. The nature of change historically just happens to be one that's exceedingly slow. But it does happen. The end of slavery, women's right to vote, Medicare, Social Security, public education, are all great markers of beneficial change among countless others. The fact is incremental change is cautious, steady, and longer-lasting. And while voting in one particular election may not suddenly bring about the end results to any major movement, that one ballot is a start and could make the difference to bring us closer to it. Use the next two months to think about and research which candidate to vote for and remember to vote in the general election. ■

Measuring Rainfall

From yellow to red – the public got a taste of color-coded rainfall alerts yesterday from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, as heavy rains continued to pound Metro Manila and neighboring provinces. The PAGASA color-coding, launched in June this year, is helpful, but the system could use further fine-tuning.

PAGASA forecasters did warn that the monsoon rains, which started Sunday night, would continue until yesterday, with the weather improving only starting today. And they did issue a "yellow alert" for about two hours of "intensive rain" early yesterday afternoon. By the time the alert was issued at past 1:30 p.m., however, the torrential rain had started pouring, triggering flooding and catching by surprise those who had gone to work in the morning when the weather seemed better. By mid-afternoon, traffic was at a standstill in many areas as floodwaters rose.

There was more bad news for those who returned to work yesterday morning. By early evening, PAGASA raised a red alert, the highest, for more intensive rainfall during the night in the eastern and northern districts of

Metro Manila and neighboring areas.

After typhoon "Ondoy" devastated much of Luzon in September 2009, the state weather bureau sought to improve its capability to measure the amount of rainfall, through the acquisition of Doppler radars. Today two such radars – one in Subic and another in Tagaytay – do the job for Metro Manila and neighboring provinces. The color-coded rainfall alert system was made possible by the radars.

Perhaps the technology is not yet perfect. Obviously, early warning, not real time alert, is preferred for disaster preparedness. A warning that heavy rain will last for two hours is useful, but not for those who are already trapped in the downpour and consequent flooding.

The path and strength of tropical cyclones can be tracked. Is a similar system for the amount of rainfall not possible? Some of the worst floods experienced in Metro Manila were spawned by monsoon rains. If rainfall alerts are issued early enough, schools can suspend classes and everyone can make the necessary preparations for possible flooding. The alert system is better, but there's room for improvement. (www.philstar.com) ■


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Finding the Dream in the US 2012 Men's Basketball Team

INTROSPECTIVE

by Tony KATIGBAK

Olympic fever certainly has taken over late night television these days. I find myself up at night catching the different sporting events. Other than the tennis matchups, one of the events I try not to miss is basketball. I'm sure many Filipinos share this passion, as we are a nation that certainly loves our hoops. I find myself drawn to the basketball games of the many different countries and can't help but notice how the world has progressed in terms of basketball skills and talents. What was once a monopoly of the United States and the NBA has definitely grown and branched out and makes it fun and interesting to see famous NBA players playing for their home countries against their teammates and friends in the National Basketball Association.

Granted, the playing field is still one-sided and despite talents like Pau Gasol, Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili, and Andre Kirilenko all playing for their home teams of Spain, France, Argentina, and Russia respectively, people still feel the major advantage lies with the United States. Who can blame them? After all, the US team has the bright and shining talents of Kobe Bryant, current NBA champion LeBron James, two time scoring champion Kevin Durant, and Carmelo Anthony, the odds are certainly in their favor.

However, this well stacked team is not as invincible as we may have earlier thought as evidenced by their slim win over Lithuania last Saturday. Even US team's star Bryant admitted via social media that it was a tough game versus Lithuania: "They were a very well balanced and coached team and executed their game plan perfectly. They slowed the game down, created a lot of foul situations, and spread the floor with timely shooting." Luckily, the US team responded by creating a lot of turnovers and getting out on the break. It was a near win of 5 points and even had the US team down by 1 with four min-

utes left in the game. They brought it home though with the slimmest of margins considering they were touted to win the game easily with a 15-20 point lead.

The US basketball 2012 "dream" team almost turned into a nightmare had they lost the game to fifth ranked Lithuania. This brings up several of the comments on the actual "dream" of the current 2012 team. The title "dream team" belongs to the 1992 gold medal winning team of Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, and Larry Bird. This is well deserved as many sports analysts claim there has never been a greater team assembled. After all, they had the greatest player ever to play basketball (thus far) on their team. No one has yet come close to Michael Jordan's combination of physicality, unrivaled mental toughness, and heart. In addition, the team also had 2 of the great basketball icons on their roster that had one of the most celebrated rivalries in NBA history — Magic Johnson and Larry Bird. Plus they had a coach that could easily and seamlessly handle several superstars (and several egos) on one team, Chuck Daly of the Detroit Pistons. The 1992 team clearly had it all and was never challenged on their road to Barcelona gold. They won every game by an average of 44 points.

But, it wasn't only their athleticism and wins that made them the "dream team". At the time of their gold wins, they truly helped introduce modern basketball to the rest of the world. They were goodwill ambassadors and they were well loved. Even Charles Barkley who seemed like a bully at the beginning of the tournament turned out to be the people's favorite player. He would go out and thousands of people would follow him just to catch a glimpse of him or be in his presence. The level to which these athletes brought the sport has, thus far, been unmatched.

Many people say that the closest team to match the fervor of the 1992 dream team is the redeem team of 2008. This was due to the fire that was lit by the win of Argentina in 2004. Sud-



denly, the United States was no longer on top of the basketball world, and they realized they were vulnerable. The redeem team headed by Kobe Bryant, LeBron James, Dwayne Wade, Dwight Howard, and Jason Kidd did what it took to bring the gold medal back home. They worked hard as a team and the "magic" of former Olympic teams seemed to be back with a vengeance. There was heart, there was court generalship, and there was a clear sense of working together to get back that which was taken from them. My family and I watched the redeem team prove to the world, once again, that the US Men's Basketball team still had what it takes to be the best in the world.

Which brings us back to the current team. With the state of basketball having progressed all over the world, the US team can no longer take for granted that they will easily bring home the gold. This was seen when superstars like Bryant and James played down to the last few minutes to ensure their victory. The arena of basketball has changed and everyone has had to improve to keep up. While the US clearly still is in the lead they have to be careful not to get complacent as every other team is slowly making their way into their backyard and waiting for the perfect opportunity to snag the gold from them. Just because you are touted as one of the best, doesn't mean you can't lose too. Just ask Spain.

There have been so many debates on the greatness of the 1992 dream team versus the current 2012 team. You can look at it from position to position and still see that, at their prime, the

1992 team would easily dominate in most of the positions on the court. However, that doesn't guarantee they would win over 2012.

In the end, comparing the 2 teams is just basketball fans' ways of looking at great players and seeing how the sport has changed over the years. There can never really be an end all opinion to the debate (unless by some fluke the current team were to lose the gold medal). The great debate of who would win if these two teams were pitted against one another is all just talk in the end, as there is no way to put these teams against one another in their prime. Despite their differences, nothing takes away from the accomplishments of each team and each individual player. Carmelo Anthony put it best when asked for a comment last August 3

after their win against Nigeria, "We respect those guys (the 1992 team) and we understand what they did. We understand the standards they set. But we are playing for ourselves right now, for our country, for this moment. We're not out here on the basketball court making plays and making shots and playing defense and saying 'This is like the '92 Dream Team'. They did what they did in 1992 and now we have the chance to do something special."

Indeed, the current 2012 team is also on their way to making their own dream of Olympic gold come true by week's end if they keep their eye on the prize. Despite their close call with Lithuania, I believe they'll be sporting gold when all is said and done. I think the wake call will only make them better. (www.philstar.com) ■

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(cont. from page 1; **AFFORDABLE...**)

they collected directly on medical care and quality improvement. If not, the companies have to return the extra money to its members. This summer, almost 13 million Americans will get rebates because their insurance companies spent too much of premiums on advertising or CEO bonuses.

Second, health plans are now banned from dropping patients from coverage when they get sick and need medical services. Third, starting in 2014, the law will ban annual and lifetime coverage caps so that people don't lose access to treatments they need. Fourth, insurance companies no longer have unchecked power to charge women more than men.

Fifth, premium rate increases of 10 percent or more must be reviewed or approved by the state to prevent the hardship created by it. Only 20 states currently review rate increases. Sixth, insurance plans must now cover ambulance and emergency services; hospitalization; maternity and newborn care; mental health and substance abuse treatment; prescription drugs; rehabilitation and self-help services and devices; laboratory tests; preventive wellness services and chronic disease management; and pediatric care including dental and vision.

Seventh, because staying healthy is cheaper than being sick, preventive care for many Americans is now free. Over 54 million Americans have benefited from coverage of free pre-

ventive care, such as mammograms for women and wellness visits for seniors. Eighth, insurance companies cannot deny coverage to children with pre-existing conditions and as of 2014, the ban on denial will also extend to adults.

Access to medical services increased during the ACA's two years. Before November 30, 2011, health plans often denied coverage to those with pre-existing conditions. President Obama's reforms changed that, giving insurance to more than 44,852 individuals through high-risk pools. Young adults once fell into a "gap group." They were too old to be their parents' dependents but unable to afford their own insurance. Under the ACA, 6.6 million persons under age 26 are covered under their parents' health plans.

Affordability is also key. Already, 5.3 million seniors and disabled persons have saved an average of over \$600 on prescription medications. In 2011, 24.2 million Medicare patients (the elderly) received preventive health screenings, including a wellness exam, without any co-payments.

Businesses benefit as well. Offering health insurance as a benefit helps employers retain good workers. Companies get tax credits for the health insurance they provide to employees. So far under the ACA, 360,000 businesses that employ 2 million workers have already gained from tax cuts. After the ACA takes full effect, about 18 million individuals and families will get

tax credits for health insurance coverage, averaging about \$4,000 each.

Finally, the ACA adds medical residency slots nationwide to train 500 more primary care physicians by 2015. Preparing more doctors for primary care and temporary increases in Medicaid payments to doctors will support the increase in demand for medical services due to millions more Americans being able to get care.

Medical paraprofessionals also gain. The ACA provides grants to expand nursing education and training, funds clinics run by nurse practitioners and gives financial incentives to physicians' assistants to work in primary care. All of these are designed to get more practitioners into needy communities, which are mainly small rural towns and big city health clinics.

There's a tremendous amount of good that came about from President Obama's courage and vision to make sure that all Americans receive the health care they need. We should be proud of our island son and the courage it took to attain this landmark law.

MEDICAID EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY, BENEFITS ON JULY 1

New Medicaid rules will take effect on January 1, 2014. The changes will expand coverage to 16 million more low-income Americans. State officials are preparing for the increase in newly-eligible persons. Income eligibility changes took effect on July 1, 2012. Income limits for able-bodied adults (QUEST-ACE or QUEST-Net) will decrease to 133 percent of the federal poverty level, while the asset limit will increase from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for individuals. Coverage in QUEST will be unchanged, and coverage for adults in QUEST-ACE or QUEST-Net will be expanded to be the same as in QUEST, which is now known as the QUEST-Adult benefit package.

Coverage remains the same for children, except that the new benefit package name is QUEST-Keiki. The elderly (adults over age 65), blind and disabled will still be covered in the QUEST Expanded Access, with no changes in benefits or eligibility.

Before 2014, people who lose Medicaid eligibility can buy their own health insurance poli-

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Kokua Kalihi Valley
Tel. 791-9400
Malama I Ke Ola Health Center
2239 N. School Street, Honolulu

Waikiki Health Center
Tel. 922-4787
277 Ohua Avenue, Honolulu

OAHU - WINDWARD

Koolauloa Community Health Center
Tel. 293-9216
56-565 Kamehameha Hwy.,
Kahuku

Koolauloa Community Health Center
Tel. 293-9216
54-316 Kamehameha Hwy.,
Hauula

Waimanalo Health Center
Tel. 259-7948
41-1347 Kalaniana'ole Hwy,
Waimanalo

OAHU - LEEWARD

Waipahu Family Health Center
Tel. 676-7233
94-428 Mokuola St.,
#108B & 305B, Waipahu

Kapolei Health Care Center
Tel. 674-9352
91-525 Farrington Hwy., #102,
Kapolei

James & Abigail Campbell Clinic
Tel. 668-2311
87-2070 Farrington Hwy., Nanakuli

Waiola Clinic
Tel. 696-4533
86-120 Farrington Hwy., #C305B,
Waianae

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Center
Tel. 696-7081
86-260 Farrington Hwy, Waianae

MOLOKAI

Molokai Community Health Center
Tel. 553-5038
28 Kamoi Street, Suite 600,
Kaunakakai

KAUAI

Kauai Community Health Center
Tel. 240-0140
4643-B Waimea Canyon Drive,
Waimea

Kauai Community Health Center
Tel. 240-0170
4800-D Kawaihau Road, Kapaa

MAUI

Tel. 871-7772
48 Lono Avenue, Kahului

Hana Community Health Center
Tel. 248-8294
4590 Hana Hwy., Hana

HAWAII

Bay Clinic Hilo Family Health Center
Tel. 969-1427
1178 Kinoole Street, Bldg. B, Hilo

Pahoa Family Health Center
Tel. 965-9711
15-2866 Pahoa Village Road,
Pahoa

Kau Family Health Center
Tel. 929-7311
95-5583 Mamalahoa Hwy,
Naalehu

Keaau Family Health Center
Tel. 930-0400
92-191 Pilimua Street, Keaau, HI
96749

Hamakua Health Center
Tel. 775-7206
45-549 Plumeria Street, Honokaa

Kohala Family Health Center
Tel. 889-6236
53-3925 Akoni Pule Highway,
Kapaau

West Hawaii Community Health Center
Tel. 326-5629
75-5751 Kaukini Hwy., # 101A,
Kailua-Kona

Ka'u Hospital Rural Health Clinic
Tel. 928-2027
1 Kamani Street, Pahala

LANAI

Lanai Community Health Center
Tel. 565-6919
624 A Houston Street, Lanai City

cies. They can also seek medical care at any of the 14 federally qualified health centers. The ACA increased federal funding to community health centers by \$11 billion over five years, to cover services to existing patients and the 20 million more expected to use the centers by 2019.

The Supreme Court ruling ended lawsuits by 28 states, primarily led by Republican governors, that sought to block President Obama's reforms. In sharp contrast is Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer. The high-spir-

ited, third-generation rancher insisted that the president's reforms should go farther. He took senior citizens to Canada to get cheaper prescription medicines. Schweitzer is developing a Saskatchewan-style model for Montana, because Canadians have better health outcomes thanks to their system. His cattleman's sense of finance cut so much waste from Montana's state budget that it added 3,000 more children to the state's health care program. Schweitzer and President Obama agree

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Board-certified ophthalmologist
U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, Philippines
San Marcelino, Zambales
1988 to 1990
Tagalog and Ilokano spoken

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HEADLINES

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named Baylon.

Rescuers recovered survivors Lydia Lyn Simbulan, 40; Maria Leslyn Simbulan, 21; and Jesie Baylon Jr., 24, who were brought to East Avenue Medical Center for treatment.

The landslide buried the houses of the victims that were built near the foot of a hilly portion of the community along Bayanihan Street near Litex Road.

In Caloocan, Gilbert Rabara, 36, drowned due to the floods that submerged parts of the city.

Two fatalities were also reported in Central Luzon that included Darel Flores, 9, who was electrocuted in Pampanga, while Ariem Menes, 19, drowned in Zambales.

The NDRRMC said Marie Pansipane, 7, and her sister Ana Mae, drowned while crossing a river in Barangay Ulanggo in Tanauan, Batangas.

Four persons were injured, namely Jessie Baylon, 24, Kidskin Simbulan, 40, Leslyn Simbulan, 19, and Alex Simbulan, whose age has yet to be determined.

All are residents of Barangay Commonwealth in Quezon City who were injured due to the landslide.

Ramos said the floods have affected 1,230,813 residents in Metro Manila, Ilocos, Central Luzon, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon, (Calabarzon), and Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan.

He said 783,707 persons were evacuated from their

flooded homes.

Ramos said 242,211 persons are now staying at 614 evacuation centers while 607,941 persons are temporarily staying in the houses of relatives and friends.

Laguna, Bataan, Pampanga and Zambales were placed under a state of calamity to allow local officials to tap their respective calamity funds to assist the affected residents.

Officials in Pasig City, Manila, San Juan, Pasay, Navotas, Malabon, Muntinlupa, Marikina, and parts of Bulacan have declared their areas under a state of calamity.

The bad weather had also damaged 535 houses.

As of yesterday, there were at least 90 flooded areas in four regions.

There were 17 flooded areas in Metro Manila, three in Ilocos, 49 in Central Luzon and 21 in Calabarzon.

Affected by floods were Valenzuela, Malabon, Muntinlupa, Makati, Navotas, Mandaluyong, Paranaque, Quezon City, Taguig, Caloocan, Pasay, Las Piñas, Pateros, San Juan, Manila, Marikina and Pasig in Metro Manila and Calasiao, Dagupan, and Bugallon in Pangasinan in the Ilocos region.

In Central Luzon, the flooded areas were Calumpit, Meycauayan, Balagtas, Bocaue, Bulacan, Bustos, Guiguinto, Malolos, Marilao, Sta. Maria, San Jose del Monte, Pulilan, Plaridel, Paombong and Obando in Bulacan; Bacolor, Apalit, Candaba, Florida, Guagua, Lubao, San

Simon, Macabebe, Mabalacat, Masantol, Minalin, Sasmuan, Sta. Ana, Sta. Rita, Sto. Tomas, Porac, San Fernando, and San Simon in Pampanga; Balanga, Dinalupihan, Orani, Orion, and Hermosa in Bataan; Paniqui, Camiling, Concepcion, Mayantoc, Sta. Ignacia, and La Paz in Tarlac; and San Narciso, Subic, San Felipe and Cabangan in Zambales.

In Calabarzon region, the areas hit by floods were Cardona and Cainta in Rizal; Sta. Rosa, Bian, Calamba, San Pedro, Cabuyao, Los Baños, Bay, Victoria, Sta. Cruz, Lumban, Paete, Pakil, Pangli, Siniloan, Mabitac, Sta. Maria, and Famy in Laguna; and Noveleta and General Trias in Cavite.

NDRRMC said a total of 126 roads in Ilocos, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Cordillera and Metro Manila were not passable to vehicles due to flooding.

These roads are located in Pangasinan, Valenzuela City, Quezon City, Taguig City, Caloocan, Muntinlupa, Pasig, Parañaque, Pateros, Makati, Navotas, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Bataan, Batangas, Cavite, Rizal, Abra, Benguet, Kalinga and Mountain Province.

No damage to bridges was reported.

NDRRMC said a total of 5,451 personnel, 34 vehicles and 176 seacraft from the military, police and Coast Guard have been deployed for evacuation and rescue operations.

The cost of assistance pro-

vided by the government, local officials and non-government organizations has reached P12.9 million.

The continuous heavy rains have prompted local government units (LGUs) in Metro Manila and many parts of Luzon to suspend classes today in all levels.

Cristina Ganson, Department of Education Communications Unit director, said that as early as 4 p.m. yesterday, the LGUs of Pateros, Navotas, Makati, Manila, Caloocan, San Juan, Pasay, Mandaluyong, Quezon City and Valenzuela City in Metro Manila; Olongapo City; San Mateo, Rizal; and Bocaue, Bulacan had already informed DepEd of their decision to suspend classes in all levels in their respective areas.

Makati City also suspended classes in all levels today, and also lifted the number coding scheme in the city.

With the heavy rains that again started to pour down Metro Manila yesterday afternoon, Ganson said that they expect some more LGUs to suspend classes for Thursday.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Cavite Gov. Jonvic Remulla suspended work in local government offices early yesterday morning as floods continued.

Soldiers and volunteers with additional rubber boats have reinforced the rescue units of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

MMDA general manager Corazon Jimenez said the military augmentation came from Cagayan, Central Luzon, Region 4-B and Albay.

The MMDA's two water treatment machines have already been deployed to Marikina City, Jimenez said.

Jimenez said that MMDA volunteers who had been trained by the agency in water emergency rescue, also reported for

duty yesterday.

"We have deployed them to the different barangays and to the various command posts across Metro Manila," said Jimenez.

Jimenez advised volunteers that it is best for them not to leave their barangays and just render assistance there if these are still flooded.

Meanwhile, according to the MMDA's Flood Control Information Center (FCIC), as of 2:55 p.m., the northbound lane of the Nagtahan flyover towards Lacson St. (formerly Governor Forbes) was closed to traffic because of deep flooding.

Also reported by the FCIC as not passable to all types of vehicles as of yesterday afternoon were Recto Avenue to SH Loyola St. in Manila; Lerma St. and Ongpin St. which are both still submerged in waist-deep floods.

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) would donate 23 rubber boats to the NDRRMC to augment rescue operations.

Customs Commissioner Rufino Biazon said that the boats, which could be used to rescue people who have been trapped in their homes and to ferry people to safety, have been cleared for transfer.

BOC agents previously seized the smuggled boats.

A joint team of the Office of Civil Defense in Bicol and Albay disaster and relief team was deployed in Metro Manila last Tuesday afternoon to support the ongoing rescue and relief operations.

Gov. Joey Salceda said the Albay team, headed by Nats Rempillo, brought a tank lorry and a filtration machine donated by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECID) which can process 32,000 liters of potable water an hour.

PCSO ASSISTS VICTIMS
(continued on page 11)

(cont. from page 4; AFFORDABLE ...)

that helping people stay healthy and get the care they need is good for America.

Dr. Villafuerte encourages State officials to begin implementing the ACA as soon as possible.

"I strongly urge our state to move forward on expanding Medicaid to all persons with incomes up to 133 percent of the Federal Poverty level," he says. "Should we not choose to expand Medicaid coverage, it could lead to fewer people accessing care. Patients will delay seeing a doctor and will wait to be treated until they are sicker, after which care will be more expensive.

AN OPPOSING VIEW

Another local physician, Dr.

Joseph Zobian, says the ACA may be flawed. In fact, Dr. Zobian says that it may increase the costs of medical care while creating more problems than it solves.

"The more we learn about it, the more we see that there is nothing "affordable" about this 2,700 page law," says Dr. Zobian. "It may help more people get insurance, but it won't help those people find doctors. We already have a national shortage of physicians, a shortage felt acutely in more isolated places like our neighbor islands. The ACA will likely exacerbate the physician shortage as more doctors retire early."

Dr. Zobian, who was past president of Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii (PMAH) and current president of the

Honolulu Medical Society, offers the following solutions:

- Encourage everyone to at least purchase a low-cost insurance plan that covers big expenses such as hospitalizations, emergencies and surgeries.
- Establish tax-free savings accounts so we can create medical 'nest-eggs' for our later years when most of us consume more medical care.
- Require everyone using any form of public assistance, i.e. welfare, housing, Medicaid, food stamps, etc. to quit smoking and stop using drugs.

"Such simple measures will make us a happier, healthier nation. We don't need more expensive laws and programs—just a little common sense," he says. ■

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Cayetano Emphasizes Innovative Solutions to Relieve Traffic

THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (HDOT), in consultation with University of Hawaii civil engineering Professor Panos Prevedouros, a current member of former Gov. Benjamin Cayetano's "Truth Squad," recently widened the H-1 freeway to four lanes from three. The extra lane in both directions has reduced traffic congestion quickly and economically.

"This lane addition is a result of many months of collaborative work studying possible solutions that would ease the traffic con-

gestion on the H-1," says Prevedouros. "This is just one example of work that can be done to provide real traffic solutions without a huge expense to the public."

HDOT officials created the extra lane by making the lanes narrower—from 12 feet wide with 4-foot wide shoulders on either side, to 10 feet wide, with 2-3 foot wide shoulders. The additional lanes in the area between Pali Highway and Puna-hou Street have resulted in a 25 to 30 percent capacity increase in each direction.

This is the third in a series of



Ben Cayetano

projects stemming from collaborative research between the State and UH. Two past deployments include the morning diversion of the Lunalilo Street on-ramp and the permanent lane addition on the H-1 Koko Head-bound between the Liliha Street on-ramp and the Pali Highway off-ramp. Two forthcoming improvements include

the addition of a lane at the Middle Street merge and the PM Zipper lane.

"This is just one reason why Professor Prevedouros was asked to be a member of my truth squad," says Cayetano. "He knows what he is talking about when it comes to providing real traffic solutions and is willing to collaborate with other key partners like the State DOT and contractors to provide real relief from traffic woes."

Dr. Prevedouros also serves as a subcommittee chair of the Transportation Research Board, a unit of the National Academies. He is a registered professional engineer in the European Union with expertise in urban road network management, traffic flow analysis, traffic signal op-

timization, intelligent transportation systems, demand forecasting and evaluation of transportation alternatives, and sustainable infrastructure including transportation, energy, policies and regulation.

"What Honolulu needs is more innovation and collaboration," says Cayetano. "We need more cost effective, long-term solutions to reduce traffic that can be sustained without breaking the bank. The mayoral race will determine what our city will look like and what services we can provide that are sustainable. The question we should be asking ourselves is, what is the best solution or combination of alternatives that can provide real traffic relief and best serve future generations?" ■

City to Offer Classes to Improve Permit Process

THE CITY'S DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & PERMITTING (DPP) and the Building Industry Association (BIA) will hold a series of seminars in August and September 2012 to improve the quality of permit applications.

The goal of this program is to reduce the delays in reviewing and approving permits for construction and development projects. The "how-to" seminars are an excellent opportunity for planning, design and construction professionals to learn more about the City's planning and permitting process.

DPP processed nearly 22,000 building permit applications last fiscal year, with many of them requiring multiple reviews before they were finally approved. In a joint effort to streamline and speed up the issuing of permits, DPP and BIA have collaborated to ensure applications and construction drawings are as accurate and complete as possi-

ble to maximize the efficiency of the review process.

"It's crucial to shorten the time it takes to approve a permit application in order to provide significant savings to both businesses and residents," says Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle. "This is a great example of the public and private sectors working together to improve government services."

Topics will include general planning, land use permits, engineering and subdivision permits, building permits and general permitting. The first session will be held August 28-30, 2012 and will be repeated September 17-20, 2012.

All classes will be conducted at the Building Industry Association-Hawaii center at 94-487 Akoki Street in Waipahu. For more information and a list of classes, visit www.biahawaii.org, or www.honoluluodpp.org. ■

HEADLINES

(cont. from page 1; A CALL...)

Society of Hawaii, a private organization that provides assistance to immigrant groups.

There are many reasons to support the course but one factor is that the number of permanent residents who opt to become citizens and those who register to vote after becoming citizens and those who actually turn out to vote in elections are far fewer than one might expect in such a moderately large constituency. There is a considerable percentage of permanent residents who have remained so for as long as 20 or 25 years.

I'm always astounded to meet individuals from time to time who say they have been in Hawaii for as long as 30 years even but are not yet U.S. citizens.

And of those who have voted in the past, there are again so many of these who have lost their voting rights because they have not voted in the past two elections. Because their names have been dropped from the rolls, they haven't bothered to get themselves reinstated. It appears there is very little interest in participating actively in the electoral or voting process.

Senior Medicare PSA Wins Public Relations Award

A TELEVISION PUBLIC SERVICE announcement (PSA) for the Senior Medicare Patrol received a Koa Hammer Award at the 29th Annual Koa Anvil Awards, hosted by the Public Relations Society of American Hawaii Chapter on July 26, 2012.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is a volunteer-based program established by a 1997 Congressional Act to prevent Medicare fraud, error and abuse. The State Department of Health (DOH) Executive Office on Aging has sponsored SMP Hawaii since 1997, when Hawaii received one of the first 12 SMP Grants from the U.S. Administration on Aging. There are now 54 SMP projects in every state and in Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. Airing from mid-February to

mid-March 2012, the 30-second long, full-color television PSA was a part of SMP Hawaii's media campaign to expand its capacity to conduct statewide educational outreach to protect, detect and report Medicare fraud, error and abuse.

In addition to the television PSA, the media campaign included radio PSAs on ESPN AM 1420 and 1500, Hawaii Public Radio and KNDI. Currently, SMP Hawaii is recruiting neighbor island volunteers through print and online ads in local newspapers, including the Garden Island, Maui News, Hawaii Tribune-Herald, and West Hawaii Today.

To fill a need for Filipino- and Japanese-speaking volunteers, ads also are running in the Hawaii Hochi, Hawaii Herald, and the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle.

Last year, SMP Hawaii's media campaign received the "Innovation in Program Capacity Building and Outreach Award" from the Administration on Aging at the 2011 SMP National Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Koa Anvil Awards began in 1983 as an annual competition to recognize outstanding public relations tactics. Judging is based on creativity, quality of production, persuasiveness of content, technical excellence and appropriateness for the declared audience.

The media campaign was funded by a SMP Capacity Building Grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging. The grant is administered by the State Executive Office on Aging.

SMP Hawaii's PSA may be viewed online at <http://youtu.be/h3M2OwAIQaE>. ■

THE CITIZENSHIP COURSE

To rectify this shortcoming, the FilCom Center aims to accelerate the citizenship process by making it easier to handle and understand with a curriculum that includes mentoring workshop participants in five sessions with assistance from bilingual interpreters and professionals. One of the most difficult parts of the process is filling out forms required by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which are not easy to navigate even by individuals who have attended high school or college.

Participants will also receive instructions on how to answer

questions pertaining to U.S. history and civics (government), which are dreaded by applicants who are not knowledgeable about American history nor literate in English. There will be mock interviews conducted by course instructors to build up the confidence of applicants in the oral interview phase of the citizenship examination, which is intended to test their ability to read, write and speak English. Failure to pass this test will result in the denial of one's application for naturalization.

It is not unusual to run into applicants who have failed the literacy phase not only once but twice and even three times.

This is enough to discourage them from pursuing American citizenship especially because it now costs nearly \$1,000 when all the fees are added up to apply for naturalization. But there are certain exceptions to this rule that will be explored during the course.

In a previous article that I wrote for this paper ("Becoming a Citizen—A Right and a Responsibility"), I argued that while the Filipino-American community is now the biggest ethnic group in Hawaii and the second in the whole state population, it has not yet become a major voting bloc in island poli-

(continued on page 7)



by Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte TIPON

Full Court Press for Cayetano in Mayor's Election

vote for their candidate. The candidate with the "mostest" is predicted to be the winner.

Pacific Resource Partnership, a consortium of various unionized contractors, is against Cayetano, pro-rail and has reportedly spent about \$1 million smearing Cayetano but has failed to dent his popularity. In fact, it has backfired. There are two television ads attacking Cayetano which prominently feature two non-prominent Filipinos, allegedly ex-teachers.

When Filipinos on the mainland quarrel, they do not peddle lies. Instead, they exaggerate with statements like "Marcos was a dictator." When I personally visited Marcos at his Makiki Heights residence and asked how he felt about being called a "dictator," he laughed and replied: "If I were I dictator, would I have allowed Cory and Doy (Laurel) to run against me?"

Iba pala ang Filipinos in Hawaii as this writer has

learned after six years of living in this island paradise. When they attack a fellow Filipino, they resort to blatant lies. They have accused Cayetano of taking money from illegal contributions amounting to half a million dollars when he ran for governor and that he kept it. The truth is that Cayetano never took any money. Whatever money that was contributed was directed to his campaign office and spent in his campaign. It was duly accounted for. Anything remaining was returned.

The so-called "illegal contributions" allegedly came from people ineligible to contribute. The campaign treasurer did not know about it. Cayetano did not know about it. A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of Citizens United has liberalized the requirements for donors to political campaigns so that even those who were formerly ineligible can now spend. This is part of freedom of speech. The former head of the Hawaii Elections Commission has come out with an ad saying that Cayetano is one of

the most honest men he has known.

Cayetano's well-funded de-tractors have started a whispering campaign that Cayetano is not well. They are capitalizing on the fact that Cayetano was brought to the hospital last Sunday because of stomach bleeding. His wife, Vicki, with whom we had dinner Monday night, said that it was not serious and that Ben would be out of the hospital by Wednesday. He was released from the hospital on Tuesday and is now back home.

The main issue for Honolulu continues to be the \$5.2 billion rail project. Without sufficient funds and only promises of funding from the federal government which would be lost if Obama loses or if the Republicans retain control of the House of Representatives, the city has commenced construction of the railroad which is predicted to bankrupt the city, force people to pay more taxes and result in urban blight as the elevated railroad lines run through scenic spots that have

brought tourists to paradise—all without solving the traffic problem.

The real issue, according to Cayetano, is power. Unions and vested interests like the big banks, big businesses and their political allies have controlled Hawaii and want to continue using—and abusing—their power for their own selfish interests. Cayetano vowed to bring power back to the people where it rightfully belongs.

For Cayetano and his supporters, that 50 percent plus 1 vote on Saturday can't come soon enough ■

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. Office: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filam-law@yahoo.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com, and www.ImmigrationServiceUSA.com. Listen to the most witty, interesting, and informative radio program in Hawaii on KNDI at 1270, AM dial every Thursday at 7:30 a.m., rebroadcast at www.iluko.com.)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Campaign Spending Commission Clears Manahan

STATE CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION OFFICIALS have cleared City Council District 7 candidate Joey Manahan for alleged discrepancies involving the use of his campaign funds.

Manahan served for three terms at the State House of Representatives, where he was also vice speaker. However, he raised eyebrows after a TV news report showed that his campaign spent nearly \$30,000 on food and beverages during the first six months of 2012.

A review of Manahan's campaign expenditures by the

commission found no violations. Manahan recently met with Campaign Spending Commission executive director Kristin Izumi-Nitao, whom he says praised his campaign as a "model campaign" due to detailed reporting and record keeping.

"I'm glad we have cleared this issue with the Campaign Spending Commission," says Manahan. "I was confident that all our expenditures would be justified as being campaign-related. We keep detailed records of all our transactions and we report everything so as to be transparent. It's hard work rais-



Joey Manahan

ing funds, so we are very careful on how we spend it."

Manahan's election opponent is Martin Han, whose campaign manager, Arlene Alquero, accused of Manahan using the Commission's ruling as a

"smokescreen to justify his reckless spending."

"Spending the people's hard earned donations on 154 different expenditures is outrageous," she wrote in a press release. "He spent more than all the mayoral candidates combined on personal reimbursements to himself and his wife. If you spend your friends' and families' hard earned donations and manage your money like this, we can only imagine what he will do with the people's tax money."

Manahan campaign co-chair Dr. Amy Agbayani says that Manahan has always

strived for transparency in his reporting and record keeping.

"To spend \$9,660.58, which is the actual amount of the 153 receipts we were asked to justify, on campaign volunteers' meals from January to July 2012 is certainly not unreasonable," Agbayani says. "The State Campaign Spending Commission has cleared our campaign and after careful review of our records found that each and all of our expenditures were legitimate and justified."

The third candidate for City Council District 7 is Lillian Hong. The winner replaces current councilmember Romy Cachola, whose term expires at the end of 2012. ■

HEADLINES

(cont. from page 6; A CALL...)

tics compared with other ethnic groups like the Japanese-American community. That is why the initiative taken by the FilCom Center to serve as some kind of "citizenship clinic" is so commendable because once this process is institutionalized, applicants for American citizen-

ship is expected to steadily grow in numbers.

Actually, this activity is not new in the Filipino community. When my friend and colleague, Dr. Dean Alegado, formerly a professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. While he was still living in Honolulu, he started citizenship classes on a volunteer basis

which were well-attended. It's unfortunate that Dean opted to return to the Philippines after his retirement from the university.

Again in the 1990s, I believe it was Richard Pecson, who was then president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, who started a Voter Registration Program, which included the importance of becoming U.S.

citizens not only for voting purposes but also for other aspects in their lives like how to handle their finances and obtain benefits from government and private sources. His program was called "Tanikala" which translates to "Chain."

The upcoming course at the FilCom therefore continues a practice that has been done be-

fore to assist those who are not in a position to handle the citizenship process all by themselves.

HOW FILIPINO ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP

On Oahu alone, there are over 100 organizations, associations and clubs representing various regional, linguistic, eth-

(continued on page 12)

Fancy a Curry? Games Athletes Have Range of Choice

from www.philstar.com/
Monday, August 6, 2012

LONDON (AP) — Fancy a traditional English fry-up for breakfast? How about a chicken curry or some kimchi? Or would a lamb samosa and some baba ganoush from a halal kitchen be more to your taste?

Step right this way. The athletes' dining room in the Olympic village is a food court like no other, offering the world's elite athletes healthy, hearty food and fuel, 24 hours a day — and doing it the Slow Food way.

The milk is organic, the coffee free-trade and eggs free-range. The chicken, which is flying off the grill as athletes opt for basic protein, carries Britain's "Freedom Food" label, certified by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as meeting its strict animal welfare standards.

Recycling and compost bins proliferate and where possible, local farmers have grown the produce. The seafood part of Britain's famous fish and chips is made from sustainably caught fish.

And yet, off in the back corner of the dining room, next to the coffee bar that's disproportionately populated by Italians queuing up for their morning espresso, lurks McDonald's and its Sausage & Egg McMuffins.

Fast-food giant McDonald's, Coca-Cola and Cadbury are official sponsors of these games and have branding rights inside Olympic Park.

And so the Golden Arches have no corporate competition in these parts — just whatever chief Olympic caterer Jan Matthews and her crew of chefs from around the world can dish up for the more than 24,000 athletes, coaches and team officials from 200-plus countries who pass through her dining room on any given day.

"Our view was that if we got good ingredients and we had



In this Tuesday July 31, 2012 photo, Fresh fruits are on display as Olympic athletes dine at the dining hall inside the Olympic Village in London. The athletes' dining room in the Olympic village is a food court like no other, offering the world's elite athletes healthy, hearty food and fuel, 24 hours a day — and doing it the Slow Food way. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

good chefs, we would get great food," Matthews said over coffee one morning amid the breakfast bustle in the dining room.

She acknowledges the incongruity of McDonald's in her Slow Food-inspired dining room, but says no one is forcing anyone to eat it.

"I think it's a choice thing," she says. "The fact is, people like it." And besides, McDonald's in recent years has changed its menu to reflect demands for healthier food. And it's an official Olympic sponsor.

Matthews' aim in her kitchen was to showcase British food, sustainable food and food that reflects the trend for better animal welfare, because "better animal welfare in many cases actually does mean better meat at the end of the day."

It's an Olympian feat given the numbers involved. Over the course of the 17-day games, Olympic organizers estimate 14 million meals will be served to athlete and spectator alike. On a busy day in the athletes' dining room, chefs will serve 65,000 meals. In the Olympic village alone, that breaks down to:

- 25,000 loaves of bread
- 31 tons of poultry items

- 232 tons of potatoes
- 19 tons of eggs
- 75,000 liters (20,000 gallons) of milk

Matthews goes through the shopping list outlined in her "Food Vision" — a manifesto of sorts for these 2012 Foodie Games — and realizes the numbers are already way off.

"I think we'll probably beat that, and that, and that and that," she says running her finger down the line. "Demand across the board is higher than we anticipated."

But fear not, Michael Phelps. The food won't run out while you're off winning another medal. Matthews says her food budget, which started out in the single-digit million-dollar realm, is flexible and no more expensive than if she hadn't insisted on an environmentally sensitive menu.

"If Michael Phelps comes in and he wants his eggs and his steak, he gets his eggs and his steak," Matthew says.

Phelps is not alone in getting special treatment. The Australians requested jars of their beloved Vegemite, the brown goo (high in Vitamin B) made from brewing beer that's a popular bread spread Down Under. The highly endorsed Americans asked that Kellogg's cereals be available, if not advertised as such.

Matthews brought in the grain spelt for the handful of wheat-intolerant athletes. The three to four Orthodox Jews are getting their kosher meals de-

livered from a London kosher kitchen.

But most athletes are sampling fare from home and far away at the five food "pods" that ring the cavernous dining room. Front and center sits the "Best of Britain" offering traditional English breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, black pudding, roast tomatoes and mushrooms.

For a country whose culinary reputation for years centered on mushy peas and boiled potatoes, the decision to showcase British food might strike some as odd. But the "Best of Britain" food station is the most popular among athletes and coaches, Matthews said.

The selection of fruits at the Europe/Americas/Mediterranean station would make any foodie's mouth water. Condiments take up an entire counter: Balsamic vinegar, rapeseed oil, sweet chili sauce and blue cheese dressing. Conspicuously absent: poppy seeds. ("It will show up on an anti-doping test," Matthews says.) And alcohol. The athletes village is officially dry.

Next door at the halal food station — which provides food slaughtered and prepared according to Islamic law — curried spinach and aubergines vied for attention with the baba ganoush and fava beans.

Rotisserie chickens roasted on a spit at the "African and Caribbean" station while at the bustling "India and Asia's Finest" pod, Hong Kong fencer

Sin Ying Au piled some nasi goreng fried rice next to her bacon and eggs and bowl of hot milk.

"I like it very much," she said. "Every day they have a new style, and I think the taste is very authentic."

Polish team psychologist Maciej Regwelski lined up behind her, looking for some pierogis, the traditional Polish stuffed dumplings.

"We don't have typical Polish food here," he said. "Sometimes there are little pierogis at the Asian station," but not today. He walked away with sushi. For breakfast.

While Matthews is delighted that so many athletes are spreading their gastronomic wings and "tucking in," she's well aware that they eat for one reason only: fuel.

"They're not looking for rich fancy food," she said. "They're looking for good quality, good tasting food that will give them the protein and carbs that they need."

Matthews made the daily menus at the village available to national Olympic committees ahead of time, so coaches could plan down to the calorie what each athlete should eat and when, depending on training and competing schedules.

For athletes without team nutritionists, experts at the "nutrition kiosk" just inside the dining room entrance offer meal-to-meal advice.

Watched over by his two coaches, Nicaraguan swimmer Omar Yasser Nunez Munguia finished his plate of sliced fruit as he surveyed the tempting options nearby, noting that in his previous Olympics at Beijing in 2008 there were only three choices in the athletes' dining room: international, Mediterranean and Asian.

"There's much more variety here," he said, though he acknowledged that he's sticking to fruit for breakfast, and lunch and dinners of grilled chicken with a bit of pasta and salad on the side.

For now. After he competes, he plans to celebrate by breaking his diet.

"I haven't had a Big Mac yet," he whispered, looking wistfully at the McDonald's just a few yards away. ■

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Flooded Quiapo underpass in Manila

U.S. to Provide \$100,000 Aid to Flooded Areas in PHL

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - **THE US EMBASSY IN THE PHILIPPINES** today said the United States will provide \$100,000 to the country to support disaster relief efforts in Metro Manila following severe flooding caused by the southwest monsoon this week.

US Ambassador Harry Thomas, Jr. issued a disaster declaration after reports of widespread flooding in Metro Manila, and offered to provide immediate relief assistance.

"On behalf of the US government and the American people, I extend my heartfelt sympathies to those who are displaced and who have lost homes and livelihoods due to the floods," Thomas said in a statement.

Most parts of Metro Manila and nearby provinces in Luzon have been submerged in flood waters, forcing the cancellation of classes and work.

There is no tropical cyclone existing within the Philippine Area of Responsibility, according to state weather bureau Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) but said the heavy downpour was due to the southwest monsoon.

PAGASA has issued a red warning signal for Metro Manila on Tuesday, warning residents in low-lying areas to evacuate. A red warning means more than 30mm of rain is expected and serious flooding may occur.

Thomas said the US government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), will conduct an initial damage assessment in Metro Manila and surrounding provinces to determine the extent of damage caused by flooding and determine immediate needs within the affected communities.

(www.philstar.com) ■

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

I Love Liliha Town Fest Set for August 26

THE VENERABLE NEIGHBORHOOD OF LILIIHA will be hosting the 9th Annual I Love Liliha Town Festival, which is scheduled for Sunday, August 26, 2012 from 10 am to 4 pm.

The ever-popular annual block party on Kuakini and Liliha Streets attracts numerous business leaders, vendors, healthcare providers, entertainers, government agencies and residents to celebrate the spirit and heritage of Liliha-Nuuanu. Last year's event drew over 5,000 attendees from Liliha and beyond.

Since 2004, sponsors such as Finance Factors, Liliha Bakery and Longs Pharmacy have allowed the Festival to offer free admission, which it will continue to provide this year.

To start the event, the Royal Hawaiian Band will perform from 10 am to 11 am. Two-time Grammy award nominee Earl Stuckey, Jr. who has also been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, is also scheduled to perform. Hawaii's favorite comic Augie T will meet

and greet attendees between 10am and 12. Other performers and live entertainment include singer Lorna Kaeck, oral historian Hazel Ho who will recite tales of her experience growing up in the neighborhood and a Chinese lion dance performed by Kong Siu Lum Pai.

"We are honored to have generous sponsors who support the festival each year," says State Rep. Corinne Ching.

The event also will feature fresh local produce, plant and flower sales, hand-made arts and crafts from local artisans, a Keiki Fun Zone bounce house, health information and screenings, representatives from community organizations such as the FBI, Hawaii State Civil Defense and neighborhood boards.

Attendees will also be delighted by "A Taste of Liliha" which features food samples from Erin's Shave Ice & Cotton Candy and other Liliha neighborhood restaurants. A ride aboard an antique fire truck ride is sure to top off the experience for many attendees.

The public is invited to attend and bring beach umbrellas, mats, chairs. Free parking is also available. ■

Attacks by Breakaway Moro Rebels Could Imperil Peace Talks in Philippines

from www.philstar.com/
 Wednesday, August 8, 2012

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - **THE SIMULTANEOUS ATTACKS ON PHILIPPINE ARMY** units in seven towns in Maguindanao and North Cotabato in southern Philippines on Sunday night could endanger the ongoing peace negotiations between the Philippine government and separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

But the government of President Benigno Aquino, which has revived negotiations with the MILF, has said that the attacks would not derail the ongoing peace process.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles condemned what she termed as "unprovoked and senseless attacks" by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF) but at the same time assured the public that the talks with the MILF would continue.

Deles identified the leader of the BIFF attackers as Usdtaz Carialan, the BIFF chief of staff.

The attacks by the BIFF were made on the eve of the resumption of the peace talks be-

tween the Manila government and the MILF in Kuala Lumpur. The talks reopened today.

Chief MILF negotiator Mohagher Iqbal has said that the two panels had agreed to hold two exploratory talks this month "to wrap up discussions on the mechanisms toward the realization of a new political entity."

In April, the two parties agreed to replace the existing Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) with a new autonomous political entity with far greater political and economic powers.

The MILF has insisted that the new entity should be called the Bangsamoro sub-state with limited sovereign powers but the Philippine government has not yet categorically agreed to this proposal because this could violate the provisions of the present Philippine Constitution.

On Monday, Edwin Lacerda, spokesman of President Aquino, said that the "act of aggression by the BIFF is meant to derail the peace process between the government and the MILF."

In a statement that he read



The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter. (Inset) Ameril Umbra Kato

during a press briefing, Lacerda said that the "primordial consideration" of the government is the safety of civilians caught in the crossfire.

The coordinated attacks by the BIFF have left a civilian and two rebels dead, four militiamen wounded, and thousands of civilians fleeing their homes.

Under cover of darkness, the BIFF commandoes first attacked bases of the army's 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade in Datu Unsay, Shariff Aguak, Datu Piang, Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Ampatuan towns in Maguindanao and in Barangay Kapinpilan, Midsayap town in North Cotabato.

An Army militia base in Pikit, in North Cotabato, was

also assaulted.

Speaking for the BIFF, a certain Abu Misry said over the radio that the attacks were meant "to retaliate for the death of our comrade .. in the hands of the military." He identified the slain rebel only as Mohammad.

Von al-Haq, MILF military spokesman was quoted by reports as saying that the BIFF attacks appeared to be "harassment attacks" because they only targeted government troops, not civilians.

Army Col. Roy Galido, commander of the 40th Infantry Battalion based in Aleosan town in North Cotabato, said BIFF rebels fired rifle grenades at a militia base in Barangay Kapinpilan in Midsayap. No ca-

sualty was reported.

Explosions also rocked North Cotabato and Maguindanao in less than 48 hours since Monday while another attempt to set off a powerful bomb was foiled by alert civilians.

At 9:15 a.m. an improvised explosive device was set off by still unidentified men at a roadside in Pagalungan, Maguindanao, police authorities said.

Authorities believed the series of bombing attempts were related to the armed conflict in Maguindanao, where government forces have been battling gunmen belonging to the BIFF.

The BIFF, the armed wing of the Bangsamoro Islamic Liberation Movement (BIFM) led by Ameril Umbra Kato, is composed of former MILF members who are not covered by the existing ceasefire agreement between the MILF and the government.

Kato is believed to be either dead or seriously ill after suffering a stroke in November last year. He formed the BIFF in 2010 due to political differences with top MILF leaders. By mid-2011, he formed the BIFM and was eventually expelled from the MILF. ■

HEADLINES

(cont. from page 5; **THOUSANDS..**)

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) assured the public yesterday that the agency would shoulder the hospital bills of flood victims who were treated for various ailments in government hospitals in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

PCSO general manager Jose Ferdinand Rojas II said that victims who were treated in government hospitals could coordinate with the PCSO offices for the payment of their hospital bills.

"We expect requests for assistance to come in and we are prepared to attend to these quickly. We also assure the victims directly affected by this calamity who are treated at government hospitals in coordination with PCSO offices that their hospital bills will be shouldered by PCSO," he said.

Rojas said that the PCSO released relief goods to victims of Tuesday's heavy rains.

He said that the charity agency sent 100 sacks of rice,

goods, mats, and other relief items to the local government units of Quezon City, Pasay City, and Bacoor in Cavite among the areas hardest hit by the calamity.

Another 100 sacks of rice and relief goods were donated to ABS-CBN Foundation's Sagip Kapamilya program, while medicine was dispatched to the Department of Social Welfare and Development office in Pasay City for distribution.

Aside from assurance of footing the hospital bill and donation of goods to the victims of the calamity, PCSO also shared its resources by lending its buses to the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) for evacuation operations.

Rojas said PCSO employees who are unable to report to work because of floods in their areas would join volunteers at evacuation centers in their communities.

The PRC delivered power generators to the University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center (UER-

MMC) and Delos Santos Hospital in Quezon City that were flooded and have no electricity.

The PRC also distributed relief goods to patients and employees of UERMMC, Delos Santos, and the also flooded University of Santo Tomas Hospital.

PRC secretary-general Gwendolyn Pang said more relief operations and hygiene promotion would be conducted in some of the 174 evacuation centers where 11,591 families are still sheltered.

The Red Cross would also set up welfare desks in the evacuation centers to provide psychosocial support and other welfare needs of the affected families.

Pang said the PRC will conduct quick assessment of the situation and further needs of the affected families in Metro Manila and other flooded areas.

Globe Telecom through its flagship corporate social responsibility program Globe Bridging Communities (Globe BridgeCom) is conducting simul-

taneous relief operations in the Concepcion Integrated School, Concepcion, Marikina Mother of Divine Providence Parish, and in the Quezon City barangays Payatas, Holy Trinity Parish, and Fairview.

Employee-volunteers from Globe Telecom and partner organizations will be distributing ready-to-eat food, canned goods, rice, assorted clothes and drinking water to an estimated 5,300 families temporarily seeking shelter at these evacuation centers.

Globe has maintained Libreng Tawag operations in the Victory Liner bus station in Cubao, Quezon City Victory Liner bus station in Pasay City,

Concepcion Integrated School in Concepcion, Marikina; Bagong Silangan Elementary School in Quezon City.

Affected residents can make free five-minute local calls to any network, send text messages to all networks or make a two-minute international call at the Globe Libreng Tawag facilities.

Less than one percent of the Globe infrastructure in Metro Manila and nearby areas was affected by flooding.

Globe field engineers and network teams are on alert and have been working 24 hours a day to ensure subscribers get uninterrupted voice or data services. (www.philstar.com) ■

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P5.9-B Calamity Fund Set

by Iris GONZALES/
Wednesday, August 8, 2012

MANILA, Philippines - **THE AQUINO ADMINISTRATION IS READY TO RELEASE P5.95 BILLION** in calamity funds for disaster response efforts amid torrential rains that caused heavy flooding in various parts of Metro Manila yesterday, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said.

Budget Secretary Florencio Abad said the P5.95 billion represents the balance of the government's P7.5-billion calamity fund for the year.

Early this year, the department released P2.989 billion in Quick Response Funds (QRFs) to concerned departments and agencies.

"These funds are readily available to enable national government agencies to immediately respond to the needs of localities and citizens affected by calamities," Abad said.

At the same time, the budget chief said the government is ready to pour in more funds, to be taken from savings or from other budgetary allocations, if necessary.

"We are ready to augment these QRFs and the Calamity Fund if needed. We have enough savings that can be realigned to support disaster response and rehabilitation activities," he said.

According to DBM, the 2012 expenditure program provides P7.5 billion for the Calamity



Hundreds of residents are housed in an evacuation centre in Quezon City Suburban Manila on August 6, 2012 (Photo/Jay Directo)

Fund while a balance of P291.775 million has been carried over from the previous year.

On top of the calamity fund, the different departments can also tap their so-called QRFs.

The 2012 budget allocates QRFs separately under the budgets of departments, unlike in previous fiscal years when the QRFs had been tucked into the Calamity Fund.

The government has appropriated a total of P10.489 billion for the Calamity Fund and QRFs, more than double the P5-billion Calamity Fund under the 2011 budget.

NFA TO OPERATE 24/7

National Food Authority (NFA) administrator Lito Banayo yesterday ordered warehouse managers in cities and provinces affected by flooding to be open round-the-clock to provide relief workers access to rice stocks.

In a phone interview, Ba-

nayo said warehouses in the National Capital Region (NCR), Region 3 (Central Luzon), Region 4 (Calabarzon and Mimaropa), and the province of Pangasinan were to be open 24 hours for the duration of relief operations conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and local government units (LGUs).

"I ordered the operations people to keep their offices open because in times like these, there are needs for immediate

withdrawal (from rice stocks). I told them to assist in relief operations," he said.

Banayo added, based on reports in affected areas, no NFA warehouses have been damaged, even in Bataan, where flooding is especially heavy.

'ROLLING KUSINA' IN EVACUATION CENTERS

Meanwhile, Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. ordered late Monday night the deployment of rolling kitchens to serve food in evacuation centers and areas where people are stranded.

Belmonte asked Ang Kasangga party-list Rep. Teodorico Haresco - whose party-list group initiated the Rolling Kusina two months ago at the House of Representatives - to deploy the mobile soup kitchens.

At least three units have been sent to different evacuation centers in Quezon City and the eastern part of Metro Manila, according to the lawmaker's staff.

Haresco, a member of the Joint Congressional Oversight

Committee on National Disaster Risk and Relief Management, said the Rolling Kusina is originally a livelihood project but can be immediately utilized in calamities by local government units.

"Ang Kasangga is answering the call of the President and the Speaker for unified action for the helpless and the poor in affected areas," the lawmaker said, as he cited Belmonte's foresight in preparing for the torrential rains.

The Rolling Kusina is a yellow multicab whose passenger compartment has been converted into a kitchen unit. It is a fully mobile, self-contained food service unit capable of moving to different areas during the day, and there serve food and beverages.

"Typical calamity responses from the public and disaster relief agencies consist of massive contributions of bigas (uncooked rice) and instant noodles, which is sometimes a problem because often, there is no access to clean water or a heating source to cook these items," Haresco said. (www.philstar.com) ■

HEADLINES

(cont. from page 7; A CALL...)

nic, religious and professional origins from the Philippines, which can help find and/or fund potential citizens from their constituencies. The entire course is free but is charging a mere \$25 for registration and printing costs. Participants will receive a packet of documents, readings, forms and other materials that will be helpful in expediting the naturalization process.

If just 25 of these organizations can send at least two prospective candidates for citizenship to the workshop, that will already mean a pool of 50 future citizens after the end of every course. If we run the course twice a year, we will have at least 100 candidates ready to acquire U.S. citizenship.

I note that just about all the major organizations in the community like the Filipino Chamber of Commerce, Philippine Cultural Foundation, Filipino Nurses Organization of Hawaii, Oahu Filipino Community Council, the various women's organizations and so on have annual scholarship awards to deserving high school seniors entering college in Hawaii or on the mainland. In some cases, the awardees receive as much as

\$2,000 to \$3,000. These amounts are quite substantial, compared to other scholarships available to high school seniors.

But it's about time to also pay attention to other disadvantaged members of the community like the elderly and others who need assistance like filling out forms for citizenship and other social service purposes. The heads of these various organizations should attend at least the initial session of the Citizenship Course to familiarize themselves with the activity. Hopefully they can encourage some of their members who are not yet citizens to finally take the plunge.

FilCom president Rose Churma will try to contact as many organizations as she can to assist with this most worthwhile endeavor that will significantly increase the quality of participation of our community in the whole social and political system.

CONCLUSION

In my previous article, I also mentioned that this Citizenship Course over five weeks will not replace the Citizenship Workshop that is held annually and co-sponsored by the State Office of Community Services and

the Office of U.S. Rep. Colleen Hanabusa. This workshop is especially useful for those who are ready to file their naturalization papers but still have some final issues to iron out with the resource persons who are in attendance at the workshop.

In addition to the USCIS, Community Services and U.S. Rep. Hanabusa's office, volunteers also come from the U.S. Department of State Passport Division and the Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center at the Legal Aid Society.

The Citizenship Course at FilCom complements the annual Citizenship Workshop by familiarizing citizenship applicants with the various aspects of naturalization before filing their papers.

For further details, please contact Rose Churma at (808) 680-0451. The course will be on a first-come-first-served basis, so if you are really interested, contact her at once. FilCom's address is 94-428 Mokuola St. in Waipahu. ■

Dr. Aquino is Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawaii-Manoa where she was Professor of Political Science and Asian Studies and Director of the Center for Philippine Studies for 35 years before she retired.

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by Reuben S.
SEGURITAN

Pointers for DREAMers as they Get Ready for Deferred Action

As the Department of Homeland Security is set to begin implementation of the deferred action application process, undocumented individuals who came to the U.S. at a young age, commonly referred to as the DREAMers, should complete collecting documents to support their application. At the same time, however, they must be wary of immigration scams.

These DREAMers must document their history in the United States – their date of entry, physical presence, continuous residence, and educational history – in order to present as complete and strong a case as possible. Financial records,

medical records, school records, employment records and military records may be used to prove one or several criteria.

Documents that may be useful include immigration records, I-94 cards, driver's licenses, birth certificates of the applicant and any children born to him/her in the United States, marriage certificates, utility bills, tax returns, lease agreements and rent receipts, dated photographs, bank statements, cancelled checks, diplomas and transcripts.

Individuals who have a criminal history might be found ineligible and be subjected to deportation proceedings so if an applicant has a criminal conviction, he/she should obtain a certificate of disposition from the court and seek legal advice before applying for deferred action.

Prospective applicants should watch out for notarios and unscrupulous consultants who promise that they can already start the application upon

payment of a fee. Until the details of the application process are made public, a request for payment of application or filing fees may be fraudulent. The new policy is not an amnesty and promises of a green card or path to U.S. citizenship are false.

Only qualified lawyers can give legal advice and not notarios or notary publics, so make sure that your lawyer is a member of the state bar association before using his/her services.

In the days leading up to the announcement of the application procedure, more and more stories of immigration fraud become exposed. For example, there have been reports that a scam artist had been calling immigrants and identifying himself as a USCIS officer. He/she would ask for certain data such as the I-94 number and the "A" number and, supposedly in order to rectify a discrepancy with their records, ask for money to be wired via Western Union.

To avoid being the victim of

immigration fraud, everyone must be alert and proactive.

Many references are available online to help prevent immigration fraud, such as the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) which has a dedicated site at www.ftc.gov/immigration, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association-sponsored website www.stopnotariofraud.org. Those who believe that they were the victim of immigration fraud must report it to the FTC.

The new policy announced by President Obama last June is expected to spare some 800,000 individuals from deportation. Under the June 15, 2012 Memorandum, certain immigrants will be eligible for administrative relief in the form of deferred action for two years, subject to renewal, and eligibility for employment authorization.

Deferred action refers to the discretionary determination to defer removal action against

an individual as an act of prosecutorial discretion. It does not grant legal immigration status. The memorandum stated that the federal government would create a process for the application in sixty days.

To be eligible for deferred action, the following criteria must be met: (1) applicant came to the United States under the age of 16; (2) continuous residence in the U.S. for at least 5 years prior to June 15, 2012; (3) currently in school, graduated from high school or obtained general education development (GED) certificate, or honorably discharged from the Armed Forces; (4) not convicted of a felony offense, significant misdemeanor offense, or multiple misdemeanor offenses, and not otherwise a threat to national security or public safety; and (5) age 30 or below. ■

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

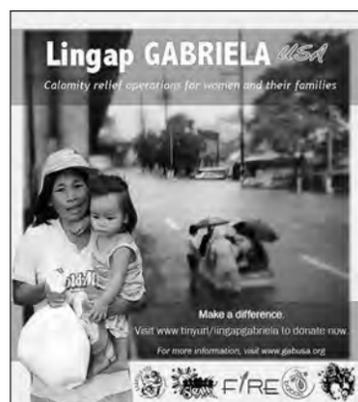
MAINLAND NEWS

GABRIELA USA Launches Relief Efforts For Philippine Flood Victims

RECENT MONSOONS HAVE UNLOADED torrential rains in Metro Manila and surrounding areas over the past two weeks, causing massive floods especially in poor urban communities. Local media outlets have likened the storms to Typhoon Ondoy, which hit the Philippines in 2009 and claimed the lives of over 200 people.

In many GABRIELA organizing areas, floodwaters have reached the second floor of houses, causing the evacuation of thousands of families. PAG-ASA, the local weather station, is forecasting more rains within the next few days. With nonstop downpour and with the dams around Metro-Manila spilling out water, flooding is expected to worsen. Initial reports from communities that GABRIELA serves estimate at least 6,700 families have evacuated, with families averaging of 6 members.

GABRIELA USA and its



member organizations are activating its "Lingap GABRIELA" relief program to collect monetary donations to provide swift support to affected communities.

"It is in times of extreme hardship that our people really show the meaning of lingap or compassion, says Valerie Francisco, chairperson of GABRIELA USA. "Our people survive because we help each other. We can count on the compassion of our kababayans to be there. We urge all our compatriots and friends to send monetary donations through Lingap GABRIELA. Their contributions will go directly to the communi-

ties that need it."

Actresses Angel Locsin and Monique Wilson, athlete Phil Younghusband and other celebrities have already volunteered their time to Lingap GABRIELA relief efforts.

To donate online via paypal, visit <http://tinyurl.com/lingap-gabriela>. Checks can also be mailed to: to GABRIELA USA, 4681 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94112. Please write "Lingap GABRIELA" on the memo.

GABRIELA stands for "General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Education, Leadership, and Action." In the Philippines, it is a grassroots alliance of over 200 organizations, institutions and programs for women seeking the liberation of all oppressed Filipino women. GABRIELA-USA is the first overseas chapter of the Philippine-based organization.

For more information on relief activities, please contact gabrielawomen@gmail.com. ■

Two Americans Honored for Exceptional Service to the Philippines



The Ferguson family members and Sergeant Andrews with Dep. Consul Castro

THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL IN CHICAGO recently honored two American citizens for their exemplary services to the Philippines.

Twin brothers Merle and Earl Ferguson of Pontiac, Illinois received the Philippine Defense Medal and the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge on behalf of their late brother, John L. Ferguson of the U.S. Army. John was serving with the U.S. army when he was killed in action in the Philippines during the Second World War.

The other awardee was Sgt. Christopher A. Andrews, a former U.S. marine who was sta-

tioned in 1991 at Subic Bay Naval Station. He was with the UH-1N helicopter unit HML-776 from Chicago, Illinois, which provided aerial services and assistance to the former U.S. bases in Subic Bay and Clark Field and Filipinos living within the vicinity of Mount Pinatubo, which erupted in 1991.

Sgt. Andrews was awarded the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge for his acts and services of exceptional gallantry and heroism rendered to the Filipino people in terms of aerial services and assistance on relief efforts during Mount Pinatubo's eruption. (DFA) ■


DAYASADAS

by Pacita C. SALUDES

Kasla narigat a panunoten ti kaipapanan ti pangulotayo, ngem simple laeng, ta no napasnek ti panangigaud tay pala ad-adu ti makausna. Kaaduan dagiti maobserbar, nga adu dagiti plano no dadduma a no napigsa ti layat ket ad-adu ti malpas no iyarig tay nalagan nga agdisso.

Ti panagidaulo no dadduma, kaaduanna dagiti adu a plano a maiwayat ngem pagmaayanna nakirang met ti maidasar, ngem kadagiti napinget, aglapunosan ti panakaitungpal ken panakaaramid dagiti naikudi a wayat, napinget ti iwayat a gandat, a saan pananggun-od laeng ti aspiraran a saad. Maysa daytoy a natan-ok a grupo a kanayon a makaitungpal kadagiti natan-ok a rusatna.

Ti Kinapinget Iti Rusat Ti Mamagbalin A Nasyayaat Dagiti Ganuat

KALAYAAN PHILIPPINES HAWAII INTERNATIONAL

Daytoy KALAYAAN naorganisar idi Julio 27, 1999 nga inrusat ti innem a nasaririt ken nabisked a tattao a makaitungpal kadagiti naindakan a gandat ti inrusatda. Isuda Ben Ranada, Nelson Menor, Joel Udarbe, Delia Bimbo, Jun Pagtulingan ken, Ben Pulido.

Ni Ben Pulido ti napili a Presidente - isu iti sibisked a mangitungtungpal kadagiti naseserbi a gandat ti grupo. Ti panangtarabayna kadagiti agtutubo tapno makaadalda, maipaagsep kadakuada ti kultura ti nagtaudanda. Kas kasagiti kaaduan a grupo, inrusatda met ti Mrs. and Miss Teen KALAYAAN Hawaii Filipina Pageant. Daytoy ti makatulong kadagiti adu a rusat ti Grupo ken maysa pay a wagas a mangipakita ti kinapintas ken kinasirib dagiti babbalasitang (beauty and brain).

Itay Julio 20, 2012 naidasar ti KALAYAAN HUWARAN AWARDS 2012 a naaramid iti Pacific Beach Hotel Grand Ballroom. Man-

mano daytoy a grupo a mangirusat iti kastoy a panangsakup ti pammadayaw kadagiti gulpe a komonidad. Ti GUEST SPEAKER ni Lito Alcantara, TAO AWARD ti 2010.

DAGITI HUWARAN AWARDEES 2012

Paul Raymond Cortes - TAO AWARD 2012; Fe Aguinaldo Garcia - FAMILY OF THE YEAR AWARD; ARTS AND CULTURE AWARD; Rafael "Pike" Velasco - ARTS AND CULTURE AWARD (Huwarang Filipino 2012 Musika, Sining, at Kultura); Elsa Talavera - LEADERSHIP AWARD; Froebel Garcia - COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD; Pacit Cabulera Saludes and Consolacion Cadiante - LIFETIME COMMUNITY ADVOCATES; Jay Raymundo - ANAHAW/ YOUNG LEADER AWARD; Victor and Rosemarie Aquino and Esther Visaya - KAPIT/ BISIG VOLUNTEERISM AWARD; Cesar Bonilla - RADIO BROADCASTING AND JOURNALISM AWARD; Renato and Maria A.F. Etrata

Foundation and United Laoagenios of Hawaii - PERSONALITY/ KABALIKAT AWARD and Don Alvarez - POSTHUMOUS AWARD. AWARD.

Dagitoy dagiti ROLE MODELS TI KALAYAAN PHILIPPINES HAWAII INTERNATIONAL 2012. TI ILOCOS SURIANS OF HAWAII ti sumaruno nga organisasyon a mangidasar ti role model. ■

Natikag A Kalman

MAALLINGAGKO TI AWENG TI NAIPATAYAB A DAY-ENG MANIPUD KADAGITI NAWANERWER NGA ANGIN ITI MALEM TAPNO AKASENNA TI LEMMA KEN ARINEDNED TI SAEM KET TI KINATIKAG DI KALMAN INNA PASAGNEBEN

NO UMAPIRAS TI NABARA NGA APLAW TI PUL-OY A SANDI TI SILUD DAGITI MAKABIBINEG NGA APROS TAPNO BUKRAENNA TI ALLAWIG TI BIAG A MANGBUNONG TI SARIKEDKED A NABISKED NAGBULIGANTA A BINANGON

NO AGDALIASAT PARMATAK KADAGITI NATIKAG A KALMAN PILIT NGA AGTIGNAYAK MANGDALUS DANA INNAK PAGNAAN

BARENG DAGITI NADAWIS A SIIT MAI WALINDA A MAKARUD-AK NAALIKAKA A DAPAN A MANGPANURNUR TO TI NAGNAAK

GANDATKO NGA IPASIRPAT TI NANGAYNGAYED A BIGAT KADAGITI SULBOD A DI PAY NATENNEB NAGKAADU A PADAS

TI KIRAY KEN TALUKATIK INDA KOMA MET PUMADPAD DAYTAT BITEK IYAR-ARARAW RUMUGAKEN A RIKNAK

TUNGGAL TIMUDEK ITA DAGITI KANTA TI LUBONG A NAPNO TI UBBAW, LUNOD, RAGSAK KEN SIMRON PADPADASEK A SURNGIEN DAGITI AGUS INNAK MASUBA NATIKAG A KALMAN MASAPUL A PASAGNEBEK IDA.

GLOBAL NEWS

U.S. Cites Gains in Philippines' Fight Against Terror

THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT has recognized the Philippine government's progress in the fight against terrorism.

In its 2011 Philippine Country Report on Terrorism, the U.S. State Department said that the Philippines remains a critical partner nation in its Anti-Terrorism Assistance program, which provides tactical and investigative training to support the transition in the southern Philippines from military to civilian counterterrorism authority in Mindanao.

According to the report, the Philippines has "maintained its strong counterterrorism cooperation with the U.S."

The conduct of terrorist activities inside the Philippines by groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiya have remained constrained, according to the 2011 country report.

The Aquino Administration's implementation of the 2011-2016 Internal Peace and Security Plan (IPSP) has contributed to the progress in the fight against terrorism. The IPSP adopts a whole of nation approach to achieve lasting peace, security and economic development, including the transfer of internal security functions from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to the Philippine National Police.

The shift from military to civilian forces in maintaining internal security in conflict areas will allow the AFP to focus on enhancing its capabilities in maritime security and territorial defense capabilities

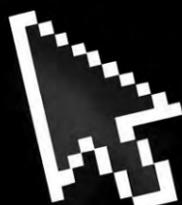
The creation of the Philippine Coast Watch System, which protects the country's maritime boundary against the transit of violent extremists was also cited as an enhancement of the government's anti-terrorism efforts. (DFA) ■

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GLOBAL NEWS

Phl 2nd Country to Ratify Domestic Workers Convention

by Pia LEE-BRAGO/
Wednesday, August 8, 2012

MANILA, Philippines - **THE PHILIPPINES' RATIFICATION OF THE DOMESTIC WORKERS CONVENTION** will bring the groundbreaking international treaty into legal force, promising better working conditions and labor protection for millions of domestic workers, according to the New York-based Human Rights Watch.

The convention takes effect one year after the second ratification.

The Philippine Senate ratified on Monday the instrument that was signed by President Aquino last May 18, becoming the second country to ratify the convention after Uruguay on April 30.

"The Philippines' ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention means that basic labor rights for domestic workers are finally becoming a reality," said Nisha Varia, senior women's rights researcher at Human Rights Watch.

"As the treaty goes into effect, millions of women and girls will have the chance for better working conditions and better lives," she said.

The Domestic Workers Convention sets the first global standards for the estimated 50 to 100 million domestic workers worldwide, the vast majority of whom are women and girls.

Domestic workers face a wide range of serious abuses and labor exploitation, including excessive working hours without rest, nonpayment of wages, forced confinement, physical and sexual abuse, forced labor, and trafficking.

Under the treaty, domestic workers are entitled to protection available to other workers, including weekly days off, a limit to work hours, and minimum wage and social security

coverage.

The convention also obliges governments to protect domestic workers from violence and abuse, and to prevent child labor in domestic work.

The Philippines has approximately two million domestic workers at home and millions more abroad. Remittances from Filipino migrant domestic workers, mostly women, constitute a significant source of the country's foreign exchange. Filipinos working abroad send home over \$20 billion per year.

Migrant domestic workers are often at heightened risk of exploitation due to excessive recruitment fees, language barriers, and national policies that link workers' immigration status to individual employers.

Human Rights Watch has documented abuses against Filipino migrant domestic workers in Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Singapore, including beatings, confiscation of passports, confinement to the home, overlong working hours with no days off and, in some cases, months or years of unpaid wages.

The Domestic Workers Convention includes specific provisions to protect migrant domestic workers, such as detailed requirements to regulate private employment agencies, investigate complaints, and prohibit the practice of salary deduction to pay recruitment fees.

The convention also requires that migrant domestic workers receive a written contract that is enforceable in the country of employment and requires governments to strengthen international cooperation to protect domestic workers.

"The Philippines' leadership in rat-



ifying the convention sets an important example for other countries," Varia said. "President Aquino and the Philippine Senate should be commended for the ratification. However, the government should move quickly to adopt national legislation to protect domestic workers at home."

A draft bill, the Philippines' Domestic Workers Act (the Kasambahay bill), would raise the minimum wage for Filipino domestic workers, require a written contract, extend social security, and improve protection from violence and abuse.

The draft legislation, originally filed in the mid-1990s, has been designated as "urgent" by President Aquino and was adopted by the Senate in 2010. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the measure in the coming days.

The Philippines chaired two years of negotiations on the Domestic Workers Convention. Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) administrator Hans Cacdac chaired the final negotiations leading to the convention's adoption by an overwhelming majority of members of the International Labor Organization at the International Labor Conference on June 16, 2011. The Domestic Workers Convention required two ratifications to enter into legal force.

Human Rights Watch has investigated conditions for domestic workers in over 20 countries around the world, documenting routine exclusions from

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national labor law, exploitation, and labor and criminal abuses.

Domestic workers who are minors, Human Rights Watch said, are nearly 30 percent of the total – and migrants are often the most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. (www.philstar.com) ■



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