

HAWAII

# FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ WEEKLY ◆ JULY 5, 2008 ◆

## SARILING GAWA: EQUIPPING FILIPINO YOUTH TO BECOME TOMORROW'S LEADERS

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## EDITORIAL

## Molding Leaders, Building Character

**Q**uietly but effectively, an often overlooked program has benefited thousands of Filipino youth by teaching leadership skills, instilling ethnic pride and involving them in community-wide service projects.

This remarkable program—Saring Gawa, or “our own work” in Tagalog—was launched in 1980 by a group of college students who were struggling with being young, Filipino and immigrants in Hawaii. Their numbers grew as other Filipino youth gravitated to the group and took a liking to the camps and numerous activities. Together with adult mentors, Saring Gawa’s student leaders developed initiatives that improved their social, educational and overall well-being. Today, Saring Gawa is widely-regarded as an effective and sustainable youth-run leadership development program and valuable community resource.

Perhaps one of the biggest impacts of Saring Gawa is their encouragement of young Filipinos to pursue higher education. While more Filipinos are now college-educated, they still lag behind the population at large when it comes to holding Bachelor’s degrees. But thanks to programs such as Saring Gawa, the numbers are increasing.

Saring Gawa’s youth leaders have used what they learned from the program to help them become successful teachers, educators, lawyers and other professionals. For many of them, life has come full circle as their children are not only involved with the program but are now leaders themselves. That alone is solid evidence of the program’s success and a good reason for the Filipino community to lend its support. Mabuhay, Saring Gawa!

## Engineering Professor Joins Mayoral Race

**P**anos Prevedouros—an outspoken rail transit critic and civil engineering professor—recently announced his intention to run for mayor. He joins eight others, including incumbent Mufi Hannemann, who want a shot at the top government job in Honolulu.

While the deadline to file formal nomination papers is still several weeks away, Prevedouros’ announcement makes him Hannemann’s most serious challenger to date. Still, the good professor is an absolute longshot, to say the least.

Loved by rail critics but a thorn in the side for many rail proponents, Prevedouros is a regular testifier at Council public hearings whenever mass transit legislation is debated and discussed. A supporter of HOT lanes, or high occupancy tollways, Prevedouros was the lone dissenting vote on panel of transportation experts tasked to select the technology for the City’s multi-billion dollar transit project.

His critics may remember the doom-and-gloom prediction he made regarding traffic conditions for the Wal-Mart store on Keeaumoku Street. He developed a computer simulation that showed traffic coming to a screeching halt by the Convention Center, along Kapiolani Blvd. and other surface streets in the area, if Wal-Mart was ever built. The good professor may have had better success in other engineering projects, but in the Wal-Mart case, he was dead wrong.

While we admire Prevedouros’ willingness to postpone his 18-year teaching career to fight for what he believes in, it will be an arduous, uphill fight. A newcomer to politics, he will have to brush up rather quickly on public safety, the environment, the budget and other pressing City matters. Can you imagine Hannemann licking his chops and relishing any opportunity to debate him on transit and other issues? Speaking of which, Prevedouros has denied being a single issue candidate but the fact of the matter is that he truly is. A vote for or against him will be a vote for or against rail.

As in past elections, the debates, personal attacks and smear wars will only intensify as November 4 draws nearer. We hope the good professor has counted the cost of running for public office. There will be no going back once he submits his nomination papers. As his opponent, Mayor Hannemann, recently said: “If you’re going to step into the big arena, you have to perform.”

## FROM THE PUBLISHER

**I**’d like to welcome our readers to yet another issue of Hawaii’s leading and only weekly Filipino newspaper. I hope you had a relaxing and fun Fourth of July! Many of you no doubt were among the tens of thousands of people who enjoyed the spectacular fireworks display off Magic Island.

This issue’s cover story was written by Caroline Julian and is about Saring Gawa, a long-running program that has successfully increased the number of Filipino leaders who have contributed to the Filipino community’s overall growth via service projects and on-going education. Please read more on pages 4-5. Congratulations to Saring Gawa and keep up the good work!

Speaking of good work, our very own Dr. Jorge Camara co-authored a study on the medical benefits of classical music during surgery. The results were recently published online by The Medscape Journal of Medicine. The study validates the mounting evidence that listening to relaxing classical music can have profound beneficial impacts on the physiologic functions of the human body. Please read more about Dr. Camara’s study on page 6. Also on page 6 is a brief article on the Oahu Filipino Community Council’s (OFCC) newly-elected president—Cirivalina “Lina” Longboy. Congratulations and best wishes to her as well as to OFCC’s officers and directors!

In news outside Hawaii, some of you are probably looking forward to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, which will be broadcasted to a worldwide audience. On page 13, we have a brief article on three Filipinos living and working in China, or “ex-pats,” who have been chosen by the Chinese government and given the honor of carrying the Olympic Torch. The three are understandably excited. Like others before them who have carried the torch for previous Olympics, it will be an event they’ll remember and cherish for the rest of their lives.

In closing, we hope you will also enjoy reading Legal Notes, Family Corner and Philippine language columns. And as always, thank you for supporting our paper!

*Aloha and Mabuhay!*

*Chona A. Montesines-Sonido*



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## LETTERS

### Remittance Story Unfair

*Over the years, banks have continuously improved the transfer of funds from remitter to beneficiary. Competition has made service fast and efficient, with beneficiaries receiving funds in a matter of days or in increasing instances, a few hours.*

*Today, a bank or bank-owned remittance company cannot afford to practice, if money there is one, “the hostage of money” as Clement Bautista quoted Dr. Belinda Aquino in your article. Regulars and savvy consumers won’t tolerate such a practice. That bank or bank-owned remittance company will close shop because regulators will force it to or because word would have spread.*

*Banks have been unfairly accused of “keeping money destined for remittance to another country frozen in limbo for several weeks before it can be withdrawn from an associated account in the Philippines.” A solitary experience or someone’s unfortunate account should not be a reason to generalize the entire industry.*

*Banks and bank-owned remittance companies strive hard to deliver good service and have helped the economies of the sending and receiving countries. Professionals manage these operations. In the Philippines, there is even an industry association that polices its ranks.*

*It’s time the media gave the remittance industry a fair deal.*

René de Vega  
RCBC Remittance Services  
Waipahu

## GOVERNOR'S COLUMN



By Governor Linda Lingie

## Why Voters Should Approve A Constitutional Convention

arguably one of the most important decisions facing Hawai'i voters this general election.

Leaving the con con ballot question blank will be counted as a "no" vote. Therefore, it is critical that citizens go into the November 4th election as informed as possible about what a con con is, how it works, significant accomplishments that came out of the last con con in 1978, and what types of issues might be considered if a con con were to be convened in 2010.

Briefly put, a constitutional convention is an organized gathering of publicly elected delegates for the purpose of reviewing and putting forth revisions to our existing state constitution. Any proposed amendments approved by the constitutional delegates would then be voted on for ratification by the public elec-

torate during the next general election.

Recognizing the need to modify the document as times change, the framers of the Hawai'i State Constitution included an article that calls for holding a constitutional convention every 10 years, if a majority of the electorate decides to do so. In 1996, Hawai'i voters cast more "yes" than "no" votes in support of a con con. However, that year the Hawai'i Supreme Court ruled that blank ballots be counted as "no" votes. Consequently, a con con hasn't been held in our state since 1978.

To ensure that residents statewide have accurate information on which to base their vote on November 4th, Lt. Governor Aiona recently brought together a bipartisan task force to study the costs of convening a convention. The

task force will release its findings in a public report no later than August 1, 2008. Lt. Governor Aiona also announced a new e-mail address, [concon@hawaii.gov](mailto:concon@hawaii.gov), for residents to provide their comments to the task force.

Several significant accomplishments came out of Hawai'i's last constitutional convention in 1978. Among them, the establishing of term limits for the governor and lieutenant governor and the creation of the Judicial Selection Commission and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The people of Hawai'i made these important decisions, and now 30 years later have a new chance to take a fresh look at how our government operates.

Convening a con con in 2010 would allow public discussion about important issues we face as a state today. Among other actions, dele-

gates could pass sunshine laws to hold state government accountable; give local communities more say over the quality of their children's education; and institute the power of public initiative and referendum so that the public can make their own decisions without having to through the Legislature.

When Hawai'i residents vote on the con con question this year, they will be voting for the status quo or for change. In advance of making this important decision, I encourage Filipino Chronicle readers to follow the task force's findings and read about the merits of convening a con con on Lieutenant Governor Aiona's website at [www.hawaii.gov/ltgov](http://www.hawaii.gov/ltgov). Government works best with public involvement.

## LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

## Remedies For What Ails Us: Long Term Care and Organ Donation

Center, and the Going Home Program.

As the number of frail and disabled elderly increases, so will the demand on the need for long-term care and the cost the state will incur for these services. The Legislature is cognizant of the pending long term crisis due to our aging population and has made it a priority to find solutions. The 2008 Legislature passed SB 3255, which requires the State to develop a comprehensive, solid plan for future long-term care needs.

The price of institutional care has escalated beyond what most elders can afford. The Legislature finds that public and private collaboration may be necessary to support payment of long-term care to both assist senior citizens to receive care at home and prevent the state from becoming fiscally liable for costs that will be difficult to sustain.

SB 3255 spells out the long term care policy goals for

Hawaii to make sure our senior citizens receive the services they need. The state's plan should:

- (1) Encourage planning and providing for a continuum of care through the end of life;
- (2) Coordinate referral, case management, and service delivery;
- (3) Strengthen family caregiver support to encourage aging-in-place;
- (4) Include workforce development and training to expand the number and capabilities of care providers;
- (5) Develop financial mechanisms to help families pay for the care;
- (6) Increase public resources to expand home- and community-based care options;
- (7) Encourage research and education on aging, long term care, and related subjects; and
- (8) Foster public understanding of caregiving issues.

The Legislature also established the following principles

to guide the development of a long-term care system for Hawaii:

- Families should have as much choice as possible in selecting and using services;
- Patients should be able to gain access to services to achieve the level of self-sufficiency desired;
- Programs and services should be accountable, cost effective and of sufficient quality;
- All services should be delivered in a way that minimizes state resources; and
- Information should be available to help people make timely, appropriate decisions.

SB 3255 also establishes a Long-Term care Commission in the University of Hawaii College of Social Sciences Public Policy Center, to implement the planning aspects of this state policy.

Many of Hawai'i's elderly

prefer to "age at home" rather than at an institution or care home. In-home care, however, does not yet have the financing options that nursing facilities do. The Legislature passed HB 2062 to give our kupuna independence and choice among the service options available, including admittance to a nursing facility, or receiving community- or home-based care. The bill requires the Department of Human Services to apply to Medicare and Medicaid to allow Medicaid-eligible persons to receive care at home or within the community. Unfortunately, the Governor recently gave notice of her intent to veto the bill.

A final issue, organ donation, is addressed in HB 2366, which the Governor signed into law in June. The bill provides for establishing a statewide organ donor registry through the Department of Health. An automated system will make organ donor information available to those who wish to register online.

Information in the centralized database will be available to authorized family members and doctors so they can know a person's wishes with regard to organ donation on a 24/7 basis.

**H**ealth care constitutes 26 percent of all federal spending. While social security is the big talk as the baby boomer generation steps into senior citizen status, their simultaneous entrance into the Medicare system will also take its toll on both federal and state governments.

Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair of the Senate's Human Services Committee, works hard during the legislative interim to keep current on the concerns and needs of our senior citizens. Her Kupuna Caucus brings together those who work with, are affected by or are senior citizens. Over the years, the Legislature has undertaken several initiatives to help our elderly, including Quest-Ex, Kupuna Care, the Aging and Disability Resource

# SARILING GAWA IS BUILDING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

By Caroline Julian

**"K**

*umusta ka!  
Masaya Ka  
Ba? Pumalak-  
pak pumalak-  
pak..."* The

delegates sang loudly at this year's Sariling Gawa camp.

Translated from Tagalog to English, it means, "How are you? Are you happy? Clap! Clap!"

It was one of the ice breakers used in the opening day of the camp. This year's theme, "Step Up...Step In," encourages camp participants to take a chance and step out of their comfort zone to become leaders in their community.

Nearly 75 high school students, along with 25 adult volunteers and leaders attended the four-day event at Camp Erdman on Oahu's North Shore.

It's a testament to Sariling Gawa (SG) members that after nearly three decades, the organization is still going strong.

Held during spring break, the camp is aimed at unifying Filipino youths, discussing important community issues, reinforcing pride in their cultural identity and in themselves, and building leadership skills.

Those values are taught through activities that are inte-

grated with cultural references.

"This year, I enjoyed what the energizers did throughout the conference. The dexterity check was always a blast, especially with the Jabawokeyez twist," said Aprilee Ramirez, a delegate from Farrington High School.

"I enjoyed every thing. Since this was my first year, it was just an amazing experience. This was my first time going camping and I can't believe it could be this fun, said Arbin Cabreros, a senior from Kapolei High School.

"I enjoyed the cultural experience at camp. The majority of the camp delegates and leaders were Filipino, which allowed me to be myself. I learned that if you network with other Filipinos, then you could break other people's stereotypes," said Candace Madela, a senior at Kapolei High School.

Over the past 28 years, many young adults have attended Sariling Gawa's camp. And some of them return as volunteers.

"Every year, I have fond memories of seeing new faces and returning faces, having fun, gaining confidence, learning to be leaders, gaining so much pride in being Filipino, and learning more about Filipino culture and history," said Milli



Asuncion, who has served as SG's vice president and conference coordinator. She is currently a board member.

"My fondest memories are when we see the youth come off the bus, and when we see them leaving—it's awesome to see the transformation in them," said Michael Dahilig, an attorney and urban planner who first got involved in Sariling Gawa during his first year in law school.

"What warms my heart is to see my son Aaron involved as one of the leaders. To see his enthusiasm and joy as he interacts with his adings is priceless," said William Domingo, who has worn many hats with SG—founder, past president and board member.

## The Organization

Sariling Gawa, means "our own work." The organization began in 1980 with a mission to coordinate and implement educational and cultural activities for young Filipinos.

It was formed by Filipino college students and community leaders.

Its goal has been to increase the number of Filipino leaders who can contribute to the growth of the Filipino community through service projects and on-going education.

Domingo Los Banos, a former superintendent of schools in the State Department of Education, led the charge with Uni-

versity of Hawaii students in forming an organization that would reach Filipino youths statewide.

Los Banos' core group of three college students quickly grew to ten. Together, they held community forums where several hundred youths participated in discussions on issues facing the community.

Milli Asuncion and William Domingo were part of the group that started Sariling Gawa.

"I was there in the beginning. A few members of the Filipino Students' Association in the late 70's were concerned about the image of young Filipinos. We were contacted by a group of Filipino businessmen who were interested in a project to mentor the best and brightest Filipino high school youth," Domingo said.

This was in connection with the 75th celebration of Filipino arrival to the islands. Seed money from the State Foundation on Culture and Arts led to mini conferences throughout the State culminating in the first conference at Erdman.

"Mr. Domingo Los Banos approached us to convene a youth congress to recognize high achieving youth in the community to be included in the 75th Anniversary celebration of Filipinos in Hawaii," said Asuncion, a counselor and test coordinator at Waiakea Intermediate School on the Big Island. "Our group decided not to recognize

the high achievers, but to create a venue to reach the Filipino youth who had potential to become achievers and leaders in the community."

"SG is different from other organizations at my school because it is our work. We are sprung from one root, we work together to put on Filipino cultural events, and represent majority of our population at Kapolei High School," said Madela, who has been a member since her freshman year.

## Challenges

Filipino youths today still struggle with many issues, including connecting with their cultural identity, stereotyping and pursuing higher education.

"I see the lack of cultural preservation and pride as a challenge for Filipino youths today," said Ramirez.

"I think the biggest challenge for Filipino youths today is the different stereotyping that are going around. For example, we are widely known to eat black dog, which is only a stereotype. I think SG is helping everyone to appreciate their culture while having fun," added Madela.

Simply put, Leon Florendo, president of SG said, "One of the biggest challenges for Filipino youths is how to be a proud Filipino-American."

Asuncion and Domingo have noted that many young Filipinos—unfortunately—

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believe higher education is unattainable for them.

"I'm a firm believer in lifelong learning and post-secondary education," said Asuncion. "Many Filipino students don't continue their education beyond high school; some don't even finish high school. They would rather get a job to earn money to buy material goods. I think Filipino youth need to be well-educated, well-rounded, obtain good jobs, and be role models for the future generations of Filipino youths."

"It is very difficult to live comfortably in Hawaii. We still need to increase the number of Filipinos in college. Education is still the key to success," Domingo added.

Through the years, SG has worked to address these concerns. Its goals and objectives are to coordinate and implement educational, health promotion and cultural activities for Filipino youths. Its various activities also inspire cultural appreciation and team building.

And it's making an impact on those who get involved.

"SG has given me a better appreciation of being Filipino. I've learned about the history of Filipinos in Hawaii and the United States. I also learned leadership skills," said Florendo, a counselor of Native Hawaiian at Honolulu Community College.

"Sariling Gawa's emphasis on the Filipino culture as well as leadership building makes it different from other organization at my school. In addition, it gives youth an opportunity to meet others who have the same determination to succeed," said Ramirez, a senior at Farrington.

"I wanted to join this organization because it was a good opportunity to network

with other Filipinos and to learn more about my Filipino culture," said Madela, who joined as a freshman.

"SG is about making kids today aware of the achievements that we have attained or could attain. They show us our potential and also teach us life lessons that we would need in the real world," said Caberos, a first year member who hopes to work in the medical field one day.

"SG has helped me on my path to discover my own cultural identity and to understand that I need to share in the ownership of our community's challenges and do something about it," said Dahilig.

"They also encourage learning about our roots and giving history bits during the conference," said Ramirez.

"During barangay time, we learn about each other and keep all information confidential and within the group. This teaches the delegates how to come out of their shells and to trust their group members with the information that is being shared," said Madela.

"My involvement in Saril-

ing Gawa has helped shape me as a person because I have learned to express myself and be much more open-minded. It has also made me a more understanding and appreciative person," said Ramirez, who aspires to pursue a career in speech pathology or digital arts.

"This year I learned that in order to get to where I want to go I need to take a risk and make the first step," she adds.

"I will apply what I learned at SG within my future goals to always break the barriers with my weakness or someone else's and build a bridge with them. This reveals our union and sense of networking," said Madela.

**The Future**

Sariling Gawa's delegates and board members hope the organization will continue its mission for another 28 years and beyond.

The founders believe in Sariling Gawa's mission to train successive generations in perpetuating its goals and objectives. For many of them, it's heartwarming to see the children of the original group of founders become delegates and then leaders.

"We have had many successes within SG. Just having successful Filipinos encouraging younger Filipinos is a formula that breeds more success. We need to develop a stable funding source to ensure that the cost for the camp does not deter participation by any student or leader," adds Domingo.

"To keep SG around for future generations, we must engage everyone who does not know about this organization

and inform them how SG prepares the youth for the future," said Madela.

"SG is an integral part of the Filipino community's fabric. I believe we're at one of those tipping points where there remains a critical mass of Generation X-ers and Y-ers who are willing to take on more responsibility and leadership.

"Our elders have left an in-

delible mark on the organization's past success. However, this is a prime opportunity to seamlessly transition leadership by engaging the next generation of leaders in the wings. I believe these young individuals need the opportunity and freedom to spread their wings and mold SG into their vision," said Dahilig.

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## New Study Touts Medical Benefits of Classical Music During Surgery

A new study on the medical benefits of live classical music during surgery was recently published in The Medscape Journal of Medicine, the web resource for physicians featuring peer-reviewed medical journal articles.

Noted Honolulu ophthalmologist Dr. Jorge G. Camara co-authored the study entitled "The Effects of Live Classical Piano Music on the Vital Signs of Patients Undergoing Ophthalmic Surgery."

Dr. Camara shared the results of the study during a news conference at the St. Francis/Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Medical Office Pavilion.

A classically trained pianist, Dr. Camara played the piano for patients as they were being transported into the operating room from the pre-operative holding area. He personally chose the piano pieces and played the music in a slow to medium tempo that he interpreted as relaxing or calming.

From May to August 2005, Dr. Camara played live classical music for 115 patients between the ages of 49 to 79 years prior to surgery. For this group,



Burns School of Medicine. "The study validates the growing evidence that listening to relaxing music has profound beneficial effects on the physiologic functions of the human body."

Laurie McKeon, a noted artist and one of the patients, said: "The music soared above me, swirled around me. It penetrated through my pores, beyond my ears, past my mind and somehow, into my heart. I felt at peace. I felt safe. I felt like everything was going to be just fine. And it was."

The study only included patients who were undergoing eye surgery for the first time.

Dr. Camara added that there was no incidence of complications during or after surgery due to the presence of a piano in the operating room.

The paper can be viewed online at [www.themedscapejournal.com](http://www.themedscapejournal.com) or <http://medgenmed.medscape.com/viewarticle/574731>.

Please contact Dr. Camara for more information at 533-0177 or via email at: [jordegcam@yahoo.com](mailto:jordegcam@yahoo.com)

music lowered their blood pressure, heart rate and breathing rate before any sedatives or pain medications were given. A control group of 88 patients with no live music prior to surgery showed an elevation of these same vital signs.

The study found that the blood pressure in the group with live piano music went down by a mean average of 21 percent, their heart rate decreased by 8 percent and their breathing rate by 20 percent.

"This is believed to be the first time in the world that a piano was placed in an operating room, with the surgeon performing for his patients prior to their having surgery," said Dr. Camara, who is a Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Hawaii-Manoa's John A.

## OFCC Members Elect New President

Over 100 delegates representing the 40 unit organizations under the Oahu Filipino Community Council (OFCC) attended the organization's annual convention and unanimously elected Cirvalina Longboy as president. OFCC's convention was held June 21, 2008 at the Ala Moana Hotel.

An active community volunteer, Longboy serves in various positions for a number of organizations. She also served as first vice president of OFCC and chaired the Miss Oahu Filipina Scholarship pageant 2008. Currently, she is currently chairing the Miss Hawaii Filipina 2008 to be held on July 12, 2008 at the Pearl City Cultural Center.

Other officers elected were Danny Villaruz, first vice president; Carlota Ader, second vice president; Myrna Daguio, secretary; Jean Jeremiah, assistant



Cirvalina Longboy

secretary; Faye Cudal, treasurer; Bernadette Fajardo, assistant treasurer, and Mario Palma, auditor.

The directors are Maria Etrata, Zhoynell Magaoyao, Veronica Esteban, Leo Gozar, Jesse Pascual, Amado Yoro, Estrella Pada Taong and Philip Alcanin.

The inauguration and installation of officers will be held in September 2008. Franklin Borromeo is the out-going OFCC president.

## New Website Eases School Supply Shopping

A local entrepreneur has announced the launch of a new website that allows parents to shop online for their children's school supplies.

According to John Kim, his website School Tools Ohana takes the hassle out of shopping for school supplies.

"The website was designed out of frustration from battling the back-to-school shopping crowds, not knowing if I was getting the correct materials or if the inventory that had run out," Kim says. "As a father of three children, I know just how hard and exhausting school supply shopping can be. But with School Tools Ohana, parents can save both time and money in gas alone when it comes time to shop for school supplies when school starts in August."

School Tools Ohana has collected information from a large number of schools in Hawaii, which has been used to create prepackaged school sup-

ply kits for each specific school, grade, and class. Kim

says that his packages on average are \$3 cheaper than when purchased from a regular store. These packages can be ordered online at the School Tools Ohana website: [www.schooltools-](http://www.schooltoolsohana.com)



sohana.com.

"Parents can simply select their child's school and class, and get the prepackaged school supply kit delivered to their door," Kim said.

School Tools Ohana currently offers specific school supply packages to more than 80 schools statewide. In the future, School Tools Ohana strives towards being able to collect information from every school in the state.

"Our vision is to offer prepackaged kits for every single school in the state," Kim says. "But even if a school is not listed on our website at the moment, parents can fax, call or e-mail us their school supply list and we will put it together and deliver it to them."

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

## GI Accused of Raping Pinay in Okinawa Faces Court-Martial

by Pia Lee-Brago

The American serviceman who allegedly raped a Filipina in Okinawa, Japan last February will face court-martial proceedings, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Wednesday.

DFA Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Esteban Conejos Jr. said no date for the start of the court-martial proceedings has been set but the scheduled trial shows that the US military is taking cognizance of the case.

"There is no date yet for the proceedings. But I was told that it could last from six months to one year. It means that the American military is taking cognizance of the case," Conejos said in a press briefing.

The DFA has also approved the recommendation of the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo to hire a second Japanese lawyer to represent the victim in the court-martial proceedings.

"They want a lawyer to be conversant in English since the lawyer will be representing the

victim in court-martial proceedings. So I told our consulate general to hire a lawyer before it begins," he added.

Conejos emphasized making representations with the US military authorities for the initiation of court-martial proceedings against the American serviceman was the option considered by the government and the victim.

He said that this was also the option resorted to by a Japanese woman allegedly raped by a US military person-

nel and whose case was also dismissed by the prosecutor.

Asked about the plan to file a petition for reconsideration or re-investigation of the case, Conejos said the government is carefully studying the legal measure after the victim's lawyer discussed the possible difficulties of overturning the decision dismissing the rape case against the US military personnel due to lack of probable cause to indict the suspect.

"It's not that we will not pursue that. I am still studying

the possibility of moving towards that direction, at the same time we want to make sure that court-martial will not prejudice the petition for reconsideration before Japanese prosecutors," he said, adding the government wants to make sure that the victim gets justice.

The Japanese lawyer hired by the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo is "studying the second option" of filing a petition for reinvestigation, Conejos said.

(www.philstar.com)

## CHRONICLE PULSE

## What is your assessment of the recent musical production of Butterflies &amp; Kisses?

I really enjoyed the show. I was really surprised how well it was produced. These doctors are so busy with their practice and yet they had the time to practice their parts. I salute these doctors-- they can really sing and dance!

JESSE KOPPEL, REALTOR ASSOCIATE  
Hawaii Kai

"This production was a remarkable community achievement -- in so many ways! It was entertaining and well done. But this was so much more than a good show! The talent on display offered by the "Doctors-on-Stage" and their families was truly impressive, especially considering what busy lives they all lead and how little time there must have been to practice music as well medicine! But more than this, the show itself, and its underlying message -- that love and family support are so essential for each and every child -- was priceless!"

"We were so inspired by the whole evening! The charitable purpose of this production was to raise public awareness for an outstanding community health project in Hawaii. The Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls was founded and supported by members of the Filipino Community of Hawaii, and is worthy of applause by every one of us who lives in our Aloha State. I was so inspired by this show, with its beautiful songs and spiritual overtones! For us, Butterflies and Kisses gave us chicken-skin! The whole concept was deeply moving and absolutely effective, and I commend everyone who was involved in its production and who have worked so hard over the years to support its purpose. As a former Peace Corps worker myself, I urge everyone to stay focused on improving the health of children throughout the world." Thank you, Doctors!"

KEN HARDING, PRESIDENT  
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This past Sunday evening, June 29, Butterflies & Kisses was shown to a capacity house of enthusiastic, appreciative well-wishers. They (the audience) were the cheerleaders of a very important event-- the Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls Fundraiser.

To bring this event into fruition, Dr. Charlie Sonido meticulously put together a heart-warming concept of children's growth all the way to maturity. Doctors-On-Stage and their family performed Sonido's concept with the greatest verve and sincerity. Pacing of both acts was carefully masterminded by artistic director JP Orvas. One number move effortlessly to the next with lovely narrations written by Dr. Richard Kua and eloquently delivered by Peggy Laurel. There were wonderful solos and ensemble singers, many of them sang over dramatic accompaniments. The elevating ballroom dancing and solo dancing were judiciously interspersed throughout the evening. This was good programming.

The many lights used were sharp and musical. The side projections and use of screen enhanced the overall picture of Butterfly & Kisses. Costumes were elegant and the full sound direction lifted the listener's spirit.

Many volunteers are to be congratulated and thank you to the much appreciated, needed sponsors.

DONALD YAP  
Retired and Former Musical  
Director of Punahou School & Diamond Head Theater  
St. Louis Heights, Honolulu

I really loved the show. It looked like a real Broadway presentation. Everything is good! One number moves smoothly to the next. The costumes are colorful and attractive. I look forward to another show in the future!

TESSE QUEMADO  
Administrative Assistant  
Pearl City

## Public Urged to 'Harvest' Rainwater

by Rudy A. Fernandez

The technology of catching rain is not new but has been practiced by ancient civilizations.

"The technique usually found in Asia and Africa arose from practices employed by ancient civilizations within these regions and still serves as a major source of drinking water supply in rural areas," stated a report obtained by The STAR from the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rice Research Institute (DA-PhilRice).

Rainwater harvesting has three components, namely the catchment area, the collection device and the conveyance system.

The importance of RWH was further emphasized in another PhilRice report, authored by Dr. Leocadio Sebastian, Dr. Rolando Cruz, Jovino de Dios, Jaime Manalo IV, and Marc Mar-

iano which said: "Asia receives 22 percent of the world's precipitation. "However, it is home to 53 percent of the world's population, which means that competition for water is very high."

PhilRice reported that RWH started in the Philippines in 1989 with assistance from the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada.

About 500 tanks made of wire-framed ferrocement were built with capacities varying from two to 10 cubic meters.

"Income-generating activities in Capiz prompted the implementation of RWH in the Philippines," the PhilRice report stated.

Under the system, a participant was lent \$200 payable in three years. The amount covered the tank, as well as income-generating activities like swine-raising and others.

This way, direct subsidies are avoided, unlike the case of financing rural water supplies. (www.philstar.com)

## Joseph M. Zobian, M.D.



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## COMMUNITY PARADE

**BUTTERFLIES & KISSES MESMERIZES AUDIENCE** They came to watch Butterflies & Kisses at the Farrington Auditorium last June 29 for different reasons. They either wanted to help Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls, given tickets by a friend, shy to say no to their favorite doctor, intrigued by doctors appearing in a musical, and so on. They were not expecting much but they came just the same and went home very satisfied and happy. They were mesmerized by the cast who sang a wide range of musical tunes, love songs, hymns and pop tunes. Surprisingly, they were also skilled dancers as they swayed, ballet, ballroom and line on stage. The clincher was that they were not professional performers but chances are they are your favorite internists, pediatricians, surgeons, ophthalmologist, geriatrician, psychiatrist, and their relatives. Equally notable were the special stage lighting and personal lavalier microphones for each performer which New Hope provided for the fundraiser giving the show a total Broadway-feel. Butterflies & Kisses, a Doctors-On-Stage production was simply awesome, riveting and expected to be back soon by popular public demand. Ultimately, however, it is the newly-arrived immigrant who has no medical insurance who is the biggest winner of them all.



\*Photo taken during dress rehearsal



PHILIPPINE NEWS

# Palace Serious in Taking Over Firm

by Marvin Sy

The government is serious about taking over the operations of Sulpicio Lines Inc. (SLI), owners of the M/V Princess of the Stars that capsized off Romblon last month, killing hundreds of passengers and crewmen, many of whom remain missing.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the proposed takeover would depend on the results of the ongoing investigation of the Board of Marine Inquiry (BMI) into the accident.

Ermita said the findings of the BMI, as well as the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina), would serve as basis for the decision for a possible government takeover of SLI operations.

He said BMI and Marina could determine how the owners are managing SLI.

Ermita noted SLI has been involved in other major sea accidents in the past, notably the sinking of the Doña Paz in 1987 that claimed over 4,000 lives, making it the worst peacetime maritime disaster in the world.

Ermita said the investigation would reveal what steps

had been taken to address the problems the company has faced in the past.

The Princess of the Stars sank off Sibuyan Island in Romblon with some 850 people aboard two weeks ago.

The 24,000-ton vessel is sitting upside down on a reef off Sibuyan, part of its hull jutting out from the water. Only 57 survivors have been found and it is believed that most of the bodies are trapped inside the hull.

Coast Guard and Navy divers, assisted by US Navy frogmen, were trying to retrieve the bodies from the ship but the already slow-moving operation was suspended after it was discovered that the vessel was carrying a shipment of endosulfan, a toxic pesticide, which might leak into the water.

The BMI was tasked to investigate the incident while the Marina is conducting an audit of all SLI vessels to determine their seaworthiness.

"We definitely have to do something, to take a look at the recommendations and prevent this debacle from happening again," Ermita said.

Ermita pointed out that President Arroyo and other officials are aware that taking over the operations of SLI would require an act of Congress, as stated by the Supreme Court.

Since Congress is currently not in session, Ermita said the executive has started discussing the possibility of taking over the operations of SLI with leaders of Congress.

Talk of a government takeover came following the suspension of SLI operations in the aftermath of the Princess of the Stars tragedy.

The proposal came during a recent Cabinet meeting and was discussed again in another meeting in Iloilo last Tuesday that was attended by Senators Manuel Roxas and Richard Gordon.

The discussions focused on the effects of the suspension of SLI's operations.

Officials noted that SLI handles 40 percent of the shipment of cargo in the country so the order to ground all its vessels has adversely affected the transport of various goods.

The government then al-



Exec. Sec. Eduardo Ermita

ics of government supervision.

Ermita said the government would be deploying safety marshals on board SLI cargo ships to ensure compliance with maritime safety rules.

No decision has been made yet about the resumption of SLI's passenger transport operations.

The President was in Cebu City yesterday where she attended a Mass for the victims of the Princess of the Stars tragedy.

Over 2,500 people, mostly relatives of the victims, attended the Mass held at the Cebu City sports complex.

It was reported that Mrs. Arroyo personally handed out envelopes containing P10,000 in cash to some 30 individuals, relatives of the victims who were able to present the appropriate documents to concerned authorities.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development is expected to release more funds to the other victims' families.

Most of the passengers on board the ill-fated ferry were from Cebu. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

lowed SLI to resume operations, but only to transport cargo.

Ermita explained the decision to allow SLI to go on with cargo operations was based on economic concerns.

He said they cannot wait for Congress to resume session in July before taking action to address the issue.

President Arroyo has ordered Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza to talk to the owners of SLI to come up with an arrangement regarding the resumption of its cargo operations.

The meeting was supposed to be held yesterday afternoon and, according to Ermita, was meant to work out the mechan-

# Gov't Says Pinoys Have Money to Spare Despite Rising Prices

by Mayen Jaymalin

Despite the continuing rise in prices of oil and food, the government yesterday maintained that workers, including minimum wage earners nationwide, have more money to spend.

The National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) reported that the newly signed law exempting minimum wage earners from paying taxes would help ease the impact of the continuing rise in oil and food prices.

"The new law would provide relief and additional money to spend for basic necessities, especially for minimum wage earners," NWPC executive director Ciriazo Lagunzad III said.

Under Republic Act 9504, minimum wage earners shall be exempt from the payment of income tax, including holiday pay, night shift differential, hazard pay, and overtime pay.

"It comes at a very opportune time because it gives our wage earners a larger take home pay to help them catch up with the rising prices of goods and commodities," Lagunzad said.

He added that RA 9504 is part of the non-wage benefits for workers being implemented by the government to augment the income of Filipino workers and



their families.

Once implemented, the law would also increase the allowance for personal exemption of individual taxpayers to a flat rate of P50,000 per individual taxpayer, regardless of status, and further exemptions of P25,000 per qualified dependent for up to four dependents in a family.

The law increases personal exemptions for individual taxpayers to P50,000 from P20,000 for single; from P25,000 for head of the family; from P32,000 for married; and from P8,000 to P25,000 for each qualified dependents of up to four.

"Thus, in the case of a family of six with two working spouses and four dependent children, who used to enjoy total exemptions of P96,000, the total amount of exemptions under the new law would be P200,000," Lagunzad pointed out.

He noted that more than half a million minimum wage earners in both the private and public sectors would benefit from new law. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## PHILIPPINE NEWS

### GenSan 'Generals' Ready Hero's Welcome for Pacquiao

by Ramil Bajo

**K**ORONADAL CITY – The “generals” of General Santos City will greet with honor newly crowned world boxing lightweight champion Manny Pacquiao as soon as he comes home after his scheduled return to Manila this Friday.

Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. yesterday said preparations are underway for a “grand hero’s welcome” for Pacquiao from the “generals,” the term residents of General Santos City use for themselves.

The mayor said they have yet to confirm when Pacquiao will head back to General Santos City from Manila.

“For now, we don’t want to disturb him since he is still busy with interviews after his win.”

“All the ‘generals’ are happy with the victory of Pacquiao... everybody is excited to see him again,” Acharon said.

Pacquiao is enlisted in the Reserve Army of the Armed Forces and has been promoted thrice after consecutive boxing victories. His recent promotion was as Reserve Army Master Sergeant, the highest rank for an enlisted man in the military.

As to security for Pacquiao, Central Mindanao police director Chief Supt. Felizardo Serapio said he has instructed General Santos City police director Senior Supt. Robert Po to ensure enough personnel would maintain order and supervise vehicular traffic, which is expected to be jammed from the airport to the city proper during the motorcade. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

### Pinoy Films in Focus at Festival Paris Cinema

Tondo, was filmed on site and starred real-life gang members.

The Lino Brocka classic Insiang will also be screened, but Segay lamented the difficulty in finding screen-quality prints of old films.

“In general, in the Philippines it becomes hard to find a good copy of a film even if it is only five years old,” Segay said. “We luckily found some copies of films more than 30 years old in the archives of the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila. However that’s quite rare.”

A forum on Philippine cinema will also be held during the festival. The Philippine participation is undertaken by the Film Development Council of the Philippines, in cooperation with the Cultural Center of the Philippines and Cinemalaya.

Chair of this year’s festival is actress Charlotte Rampling. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

**T**he Philippines is the focus country in this year’s Festival Paris Cinema, which opens today and will continue until July 12.

Over 280 film screenings will be held all over Paris. Forty films from the Philippines will be shown, according to festival programmer Jeremy Segay.

The festival pays tribute to Filipino filmmaker Brillante Mendoza, whose latest film *Serbis* was nominated for the Pal, d’Or at the recent Cannes Film Festival. There will also be a retrospective of the films of Joey Gosengfao.

Two Philippine films will be in competition: *Tribu* by Jim Libiran, which won the top prize in last year’s Cinemalaya independent film competition, and the short film *Rolyo* by Alvin Yapan.

*Tribu*, the story of a street gang in

### PGMA Inspects NAI A 3 Facilities Upon Return From U.S.

**U**pon her return from a successful 10-day visit to the U.S., President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo visited inspected facilities at the newly-opened Ninoy Aquino International (NAIA) Terminal 3.

The President, her delegation and about 350 passengers aboard a Philippine Airlines flight from San Francisco were the first to disembark at the controversial NAI A 3, which according to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita is undergoing “dry run” proceedings to prepare the terminal for its eventual opening.

“This is not the official opening,” Ermita said prior to the President’s arrival. “This is a dry run to test the remaining systems like for example, the air conditioning system, escalators, baggage carousel and others.”

The President spent nearly an hour touring the new terminal’s facilities and questioning Manila International Airport Authority General Manager Alfonso Cusi and NAI A 3 Task Force Head Mike Defensor on other topics.

The President was particularly curious about the flow of passengers from the aircraft, to the immigration and customs booth, to the luggage pick-up area and subsequent exit from the terminal. She accompanied several passengers and observed how long it took to deplane and exit the terminal.

With the “soft opening,” Defensor said NAI A 3 would be opened to domestic flights in three weeks time with international flights available within six to seven months. (*Philippine Consulate General*)

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

## 35 Filipinos Facing Execution Worldwide, Says Villar

by Aurea Calica

Thirty-five Filipinos are currently on death row abroad and Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. wants to look into how the government is addressing their plight.

Villar filed Resolution No. 421 urging the Senate committee on labor to inquire into the status of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) on death row, citing the need to ensure that all remedies are exhausted to help them.

Latest statistics indicate that there are 35 OFWs facing cases with capital punishment as penalty, including one in Brunei, two in China, one in the United States, four in Kuwait, nine in Saudi Arabia and 10 in Malaysia.

Villar said the Magna Carta for Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos or Republic Act No. 8042, the Labor Code of the Philippines, treaties on international labor and human rights conventions of which the Philippines is a signatory, and the guarantees of the 1987 Constitution on labor, were clear that the government must extend full assistance to distressed OFWs.

The assistance includes legal, social, economic, and other pertinent help, he said.

In his resolution, Villar

cited a number of OFW cases that should be looked into. The separate cases of Iban Tejano and Marijana Sakilan are being heard in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the public aspect tried in the Jeddah Grand Court and the private aspect on suspended sentence as promulgated by the Supreme Judicial Cases.

They are in similar legal stages.

May Vecina is currently detained in Kuwait and is being litigated; Rodelio Lanuza's case is also being tried and is pending before the Dammam Grand Court.

Rolando Gonzales, Edison Gonzales and Eduardo Arcilla are all part of the mass arrest of 72 Filipino workers in April 2006 in Saudi Arabia.

The Tamez Court in the Kingdom, an appellate court, is reviewing their cases.

### Framed

Migrant International raised the alarm over the fate of the Gonzales brothers and Arcilla who, it said, had been tried and sentenced without any lawyer.

"The three, all from Mexico, Panganga were sentenced to death on July 23, 2007 after they allegedly confessed to Saudi police that they killed three other overseas Filipino

workers in Jeddah on April 2006," said Migrant International chairperson Connie Bragas-Regalado.

She said the three were not provided lawyers, and "there was no representation from the Philippine embassy during the first hearing and sentencing on May 14 and July 23, 2007, respectively."

The three convicts insisted they were merely framed and had confessed to the crime because they were tortured, she added.

According to Migrant, Arcilla claimed he was blindfolded up to seven days while enduring heavy beatings. Rolando claimed he was electrocuted while blindfolded, while brother Edison said his feet, back and hands were repeatedly hit.

Nelson Diana's case, on the other hand, is being heard by the Malaysian High Court.

"An immediate inquiry into the status of our OFWs on death row, including assistance provided and the short- and long-term policies of the country, must be made in order to most suitably and adequately address the issue," he said.

Over eight million Filipinos currently work and live in at least 197 countries and territories, making the Philippines the top labor exporting country in the world, following China and India in 2005.

Five OFWs have already

been executed in the Middle East under the Arroyo government. Antonio Alves, Sergio Aldana, Miguel Fernandez and Wilfredo Bautista were executed in 2005 in Taif and Reynaldo Cortez on June 13, 2007 in Saudi Arabia.

As part of the effort to save the lives of these three OFWs and raise awareness about the dire situation of all OFW on death row, Migrant announced it will step up its campaign to pressure the government to act immediately. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## PGMA Calls on U.N. to Ensure Supply of Rice to Needy Nations



President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo called on the United Nations to help ensure a steady supply of rice to needy nations amid the global threat of rising oil and food prices.

The President issued the call during a reception for UN representatives at the UN Headquarters.

"We call on the UN to help ensure supply, promote research and continue to provide us with humanitarian supplies to the truly needy nations affected by the global phenomenon," she said.

The President noted that the challenges of rising oil and food prices worldwide have been felt by the Philippines and other nations, rich and

poor alike.

She said the Philippines has prevented a national crisis through several interventions that ensure a steady supply of low-priced rice, such as subsidies, effective distribution and punishment of hoarders and price manipulators.

"We've done double duty in the region to coordinate our efforts, but we still need strong, global leadership and coordination if we are to prevent this from becoming a perpetual problem," she said.

The President said the UN could very well provide much needed global leadership and coordination in other areas such as human rights, promoting peace and eliminating poverty. (*Philippine Consulate General*)

## Over 500,000 OFWs Globally Deployed, Remittances Reach US\$5.4 Billion

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) reported to Malacanang that more than 500,000 documented overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have been deployed globally in more than 190 host countries worldwide during the first five months of 2008.

At the same time, Labor and Employment Secretary Mariano D. Roque cited a report of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) that global OFW remittances have reached US\$5.4 billion (more than P240.89 billion at current rates) from January to April this year.

Roque said that the continued growth and strength of global OFW deployment reflect the distinct global preference

for Filipino workers.

He added that the strength of global OFW deployment significantly figures in the substantial rise in global OFW remittances, which are projected to surpass US\$15 billion by the end of 2008.

Roque cited the BSP's report that the growth in the number of deployed OFWs reinforced remittance flows, alongside the "upbeat prospects" in the global market for sustained OFW opportunities.

The BSP report mentioned that the number of OFWs globally deployed grew by 14.0 percent from 350,520 in the same period last year to 399,638 during the first four months this year. Prospects for global OFW

deployment remain upbeat due to the Philippines' efficient deployment system, reinforced by the country's continuing bilateral cooperation for OFW employment opportunities with emerging markets like Canada and other countries.

The Philippines, the same report said, had also been singled as the "Best Practice Country" by the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea) due to the efficiency of the OFW deployment system and the process improvements.

Roque added that the number of OFWs deployed during the first five months of the year alone, now represents some 51.6%, or more than half, of the total goal to deploy one million documented OFWs worldwide in 2008. (*Philippine Consulate General*)



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## FAMILY CORNER



By Grace F. Fong

## Pick Up a Book and Read

It helps stimulate their brain development and imagination.

Any time of the day is a good time to read! Make reading time part of your daily routine. For example, before bedtime, spend some time snuggling up close and reading a favorite book together. Here are some tips for making reading time a special time of each day:

- Find a quiet place to read.
- Turn off the TV and other noisy distractions.
- Select a variety of books that are of interest to your children (alphabet, stories, poems, rhymes, non-fiction).
- Read slowly, clearly, and with expression. Vary the volume, rhythm, and tone of your voice to match the mood of the story. For example, you can use a loud voice when there is a lot of action or a quiet voice when something sad or scary is happening. This helps the story come alive for your children.
- Talk with your children about the story as you read. For example, before you turn to the next page, ask questions like "What do you think is going to happen?" At the end of the story, ask: "What was your favorite part?" They may not be able to answer you, but this type of questioning encourages children's thinking.
- Talk about how things are the same or different using descriptive words. For ex-

ample, "Which one is bigger? Which one is smaller?"

- Count objects on a page. As you count, point to each object. When your children are able to, ask them to count along with you or count for you.
- Don't worry if your children want you to read the same books all the time. Children love seeing and hearing their favorite books over and over!
- As your children learn to read, encourage them to read to you and other family members, especially younger siblings.

### Tips for Reading with Infants (Birth to 18 months)

- Infants enjoy:
  - looking at bright, colorful picture board books
  - handling cloth books and books with different textures that they can feel
  - looking at books with photographs of babies
  - hearing rhymes and songs
  - having you name and point out items on the page
  - having you ask and answer questions such as, "Do you see the dog? The dog is brown. What does the dog say? The dog says "ruff-ruff."

### Tips for Reading with Toddlers (18-36 months)

- If Barack Obama becomes the U.S. president, America's national policies would be somewhat influenced by a Filipino—Charmaine Manansala, who has been selected as a senior adviser to the Democratic Party's candidate.
- Manansala is now the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Vote director for the Obama campaign.
- "The Obama campaign acknowledges the extraordinary contributions of the nearly 13 million Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders who have helped build a strong and vibrant America," Manansala stated in her message to the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Network. "We realize that despite the growth of our community, there are challenges we still face. For increasing numbers of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders,

Toddlers enjoy:

- choosing and holding books, and turning the pages
- being physically active while listening to you read
- reading books about food, trucks, animals, and children
- reading books with some words (one sentence for each year of your child's age)
- filling in the words to a story they know
- when you point to and name objects in the book
- when you talk about the pictures rather than read the story
- having you ask questions such as, "What's going to happen next?" and having you listen to their original and creative answers
- recognizing things in their environment that they saw in the book.

### Tips for Reading with Preschoolers (36-60 months)

- Preschoolers enjoy:
  - reading books that are silly, that tell stories, or are about body parts, families, friends, and going to school
  - saying words to familiar stories and making up their own stories
  - finishing the story with their own ending

- predicting what will happen on the next page
- "reading" stories to their stuffed animals and others
- responding to open-ended questions about the book characters such as "How...Why...Where...?" and "What do you think will happen if...?"
- pointing to words as you read them
- creating and "writing" their own books
- listening to you tell stories of your childhood.

### Make Use of Your Public Library

Having books readily available in your home gives you the opportunity to read more often to your children. Take your children to visit your public library to borrow books. It's a great place to find many books that your children will grow to love! Make visiting the library a regular part of your family's routine even as your children grow older. Provide them with library cards so they can borrow books on their own. Reading with your children and encouraging their love of reading are investments that will have a lifetime of benefits.

*Grace Fong is a professor in Family Resources in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences. Sylvia Yuen is the Director of the Center on the Family in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.*

## MAINLAND NEWS

### Pinay is Senior Adviser to Obama

If Barack Obama becomes the U.S. president, America's national policies would be somewhat influenced by a Filipino—Charmaine Manansala, who has been selected as a senior adviser to the Democratic Party's candidate.

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"The Obama campaign acknowledges the extraordinary contributions of the nearly 13 million Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders who have helped build a strong and vibrant America," Manansala stated in her message to the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Network. "We realize that despite the growth of our community, there are challenges we still face. For increasing numbers of Asian-

the American dream is in danger of slipping away.

"As president, Senator Obama will work with the AAPI community to ensure that all Americans have access to quality, affordable and portable health insurance that will also reduce the linguistic and cultural barriers that limit access to our medical system."

Born in Manila, Manansala's family moved to Orange County in Los Angeles in 1983 to join her grandparents.

She attended Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, where she majored in biochemistry and later earned her Master's degree in public health at George Washington University.

Manansala is a current member of the League of Policy Analysts and Political Strategists in the nation's capital. In 2007, she was on the Filipino

Women's Network's list of 100 Most Influential Filipinas.

In 2001, she was honored by PoliticalCircus.com, as one of the "Top 30 Under 30," which recognizes the most influential Asian-Pacific Americans 30 years and younger in the U.S.

Prior to her selection as AAPI vote director, Manansala, now based in New Mexico, was the state director for the New Mexico Blue Team, where she was in charge of developing a state plan for political organizers advancing Obama's candidacy.

Manansala worked in Guam from 2005 to 2006 as policy adviser and political strategist for then-Guam gubernatorial candidate Robert Underwood. Prior to that, she served as a policy adviser for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi from 2003 to 2005. ([www.philfortune.com](http://www.philfortune.com))

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## LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

## Latest H-1B Developments

Once again this year, U.S. companies faced the problem of not having enough H-1B visas for their highly skilled workers. This is particularly true of big U.S. tech companies such as Google which reportedly failed to get H-1B visas for 90 of its 300 H-1B applicants. That is roughly 1/3 of its total H-1B applications. Our office was more fortunate in getting about two-thirds of our H-1B applications selected in the random selection process.

Aside from not being chosen, some applications have been denied outright due to technical deficiencies in submission as well as duplicate filings which are prohibited. Some "duplicate" filings are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they were merely re-submitted due to courier delivery confirmation problems or mailed to incorrect service

centers.

The shortage of H-1B visas has recurred for the last five years when the annual cap for H-1B visas was exhausted even before the start of the fiscal year. The demand for H-1B visas has worsened over the years ever since the Congress reverted the H-1B numerical limits to 65,000 per year. Of these, 6,800 visas are set aside for Chileans and Singaporeans under Free Trade Agreements entered into between those countries and the U.S.

20,000 visas are allocated to advanced degree holders or those with Master's or higher degree from U.S. academic institutions. USCIS conducted the selection process for "advanced degree" exemption petitions first and those not selected were included in the random selection process with the other H-1B applications subject to the 65,000 limit.

This further reduced the number of H-1B visas to just about 58,200 visas to be drawn by random selection among the approximately 163,000 applications filed before the deadline of April 7, 2008.

Because of this unrealistic scenario, there is a renewed clamor for more H-1B visas to meet the severe shortage of skilled professionals. Technology companies have publicly complained of the need for more H-1B visas for them to be able to fill the labor gaps that are not being filled in the U.S. labor market so that they can hire more highly skilled workers to remain competitive and to prevent them from offshoring vital services.

Several proposals were made in Congress including the one by Senators Barbara Boxer of California and Judd Gregg of New Hampshire. Their proposal seeks to allow foreigners who graduate in

U.S. educational institutions to get their green cards provided they have a job offer. This was a companion bill to the one introduced earlier by Representative Zoe Lufgren that seeks to exempt STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) advanced degree graduates from the yearly limit of 140,000 for employment-based immigrant visa.

There was also a proposal by Congressman Anthony Weiner of New York not to lump international fashion models together with other specialty occupations to vie for the H-1B visas but to give them their own visa category since while they are considered skilled professionals, they do not require a Bachelor's degree in their profession.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 693-5281 or log on to his website at [www.seguritan.com](http://www.seguritan.com)

## GLOBAL NEWS

## Three Filipinos to Carry Olympic Torch

Three Filipinos, including CNN's Beijing bureau chief, will carry the Olympic torch in the on-going relay for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Sonia Cataumber Brady, Philippine Ambassador to China, identified the Filipino Olympic torchbearers as CNN Beijing bureau chief Jaime FlorCruz, his daughter Michelle FlorCruz, and marketing executive Marco Torres.

"It's a great honor for the Philippines to be represented in the Olympic torch relay through Jimmy, Michelle and Marco," Ambassador Brady said. "We also hope that during the Beijing Olympics, we will finally win our very first Olympic gold medal."

FlorCruz and his daughter, Michelle, 17, were selected by the Beijing government for their contributions to China.

FlorCruz, who was also former Time magazine Beijing bu-

reau chief, first arrived in Beijing in August 1971. He was one of the 15 Filipino youths who were invited by the China Friendship Association for a three-week study tour. He said that by a strange twist of fate, he stayed on and, 37 years later, he is still here.

"I covered the 1988 Seoul Olympics for Time Magazine and Sports Illustrated. This time as CNN's Beijing Bureau Chief, it'll be fun not just to report on it but to actually participate as one

of the torch bearers during the relay," FlorCruz said.

FlorCruz is scheduled to carry the Olympic torch on August 6, two days before the opening ceremonies, is daughter Michelle, a student at the International School in Beijing, will carry the Olympic torch on August 3 in Tangshan City.

"I was 'Made in China,' born in the Philippines and raised in Beijing. I guess that makes me a top quality product—a fusion of different cultures," Michelle said. Torres, 38, carried the

Olympic torch on July 5 in Lanzhou, Gansu province. He placed second among eight foreigners selected to carry the Olympic torch through an internet voting competition called "expats for Olympic torchbearers" last year.

"I love Beijing and I love the Olympics. Proof of this is that I declined an opportunity to move to Shanghai if only for the Olympics. I also know now that my destiny of being in the Olympics will be fulfilled," Torres said.

## RP Elected Vice President of UN Human Rights Council

The Philippines has been elected Vice-President of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, demonstrating the confidence of the international community in the Philippines' commitment to promote and protect human rights. Its term is for one year.

Erlinda F. Basilio, the Philippines' ambassador to the UN, representative was elected as vice president of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). She is the first woman vice-president of the HRC, which was established in 2006.

Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo reiterated the Philip-

pine government's strong commitment to uphold human rights and democratic governance.

"In the spirit of this commitment and in the desire to promote genuine international dialogue and cooperation on human rights issues, the Philippines shall do its utmost to serve effectively as Vice-President of the Human Rights Council," Romulo said.

Despite consistent moves by some groups to politicize the human rights situation in the country, Philippine officials are deeply honored by the vote of confidence of the international community in its active role in

the Human Rights Council.

During the Human Rights Council session, the Philippines partnered with Germany to introduce a resolution to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children. The resolution received co-sponsorship of 79 countries and was adopted unanimously by the Council.

The Philippines also co-sponsored the resolution on extreme poverty introduced by France that renewed the mandate of an independent expert on extreme poverty. The resolution was co-sponsored by 72 other countries and adopted unanimously by the Council. (DFA)



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## PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE

## ILOKO



By Amado I. Yoro

# No Sagiden Ti Ima Ti Dios Ti Puso A Makisinnaranay, Wen, Awan Ti Saan

awag ti panagtittinnulong. Nabunga ti Fundraising Typhoon Relief Drive a naangay idi Sabado, Hunio 28, 2008 iti FilComCenter,

Tallo nga oras a live broadcast ti inted ti KNDR Radio – Honolulu, kukua ken imatonan ni Leona Juna kas donasiomna iti pannakapitayray daytoy napateg a proyekto ti komunidad.

Inarak ti media, warnakan ken television daytoy a paskan.

Sakbay iti alas nuebe iti agsapa a pannakairugi ti kam-

pania daytoy a relief drive, addan dagiti masekan a dadaulo daytoy kas iti COVA a nagsisagana kadagiti lamisaan

Nakapuesto metten ti lamisaan ti KNDR Radio ket ni Flor Martinez ti mangiturong itoy. Adda met ti station engineer ken sumagmamano a DJs ken news reporter.

Nagsarita dagiti masnop a dadaulo ti komunidad kas kada Toy Arre, Juv Abinsay, Romy Minda, Eddie Agas, Sr., ken dadduma pay tapno ipekpada met ti kapanunotanda ken ti balikas a panangsuporta ken panangyaywis iti panagtittinnulong. Nagsarita met dagiti sumagmamano a donators.

Ti napaliwmi daytoy a panagtittipon ket inarak met dagiti agpangpanggep a kumandidato, aglalo iti maika-35 a distrito [Waipahu, Crestview, Seaview].

Sakbayna, naangay iti Emergency meeting idi Hunio 22, 2008 iti FilComCenter nga inatendaran dagiti nadumaduma a pannakabagi ti grupo ti komunidad a pakairamanan dagiti sumaganad:

Former Rep. Felipe Abinsay, Jr.-HIRO/Aloha Medical Mission; Former Rep. Romeo Minda -Romblon Assn of Hawaii; Hawaii State Senator Clarence Nishihara; Dr. Ramon Sy – Aloha Medical Mission; Dr. Inam Rahman; Dante Verdadero; Virgil Nagrampa – Bicol Club of Hawaii; Reyna Padilla Rahman; JP Orias – Hawaii Filipino Chronicle/Bicol Club of Hawaii; Milla Medallon – Fil-Am Courier; Philmund Lee – Fil-Am Courier; Toy Arre – Fil Com Center; Dr. Glorfin Belmonte – Philippine Medical Assn of Hawaii; Danny Villaruz, Ilocos Surian Assn of Hawaii/OFCC; Amado Yoro, Annak Ti Sinait/OFCC/Ilocos Surian Assn of Hawaii; Eddie Agas, Sr. Oahu Filipino Community Council/UFCH; Aurea Agas – Philippine Nurses Assn of Hawaii; Ilalo Parayno – Cabugao Sons & Daughters of Hawaii; Vergel Adonis ken dadduma pay.

Naam-ammomi ni DANTE VERDADERO, anak ti Gagayan. Naisem, naamo ken nabatad nga aglolkano gapu ta anak ti Ilokano, immay

ditoy Hawaii idi 1989.

Dati a kameng ti Filipino Chamber of Commerce. Agdama a kameng iti Allacapan Assn of Hawaii. Maysa kadagiti kandidato iti Dist 35. Waipahu, Crestview

Nalpasna iti AB: Political Science ken Bachelor of Laws

Deklarado a kandidato ni dati a Vice Principal ILALO PARAYNO, maysa met kadagiti adda iti HIRO miting idi Hunio 22. Nasurok nga uppat a pulo a tawenen nga agnaed ni Parayno iti Waipahu. Nag-presidente iti Filipino Professional Assn ken ti Oahu Filipino Community Council.

Itoy a Sabado, Hunio 28 iti FilComCenter. inyam-ammo kaniak ti Ben Vloria, ama ti nalatak a kampeon iti boksing Brian Vloria, ni HENRY CJ. AQUINO, kandidato met a para representante iti maika-35 a distrito.

Aktibo ni Henry iti Waipahu Community Assn kas community organizer. Nupay nayanak ditoy Hawaii, bigbigena ti nagapuan dagiti nagannak kenkuana iti Santa ken Narvacan, Ilocos Sur. Daytoy ti maikauda daras daytoy a pangkandidatona.

Adda namnang da Ilalo Parayno ken Dr. INAM RAHMAN.

Saan pay a naglatak no asino ti maikalima a kandidato. Ngem kadagiti uppat a deklarado [Aquino, Parayno, Rahman ken Verdadero] iti maysamaysa a partido Demokrat, dakkel ti gundaway dagiti agnaed iti distrito 35 a mangpili ti maysa kadakuada iti umay a Primary Election no Setiembre 20, [Sabado] no asinonto man dayta nagasat a makagun-od iti kaaduan ti botos a panagtaltek, isaudto ni pailayan iti General Election intono Nobiembre 4, 2008. [Marts]

Deklarado kunami kas iprangrang dagiti poster ken bannerda a nakabaskagen kadagiti kanto ti kalsada ken dagiti alad iti igid dagiti kalsada.

Ita nga isurusarmit daytoy, awan pay ti nagparang no asino ti kandidato ti Partido Republikano.

Ini pay la FilComCenter Hunio 28, 2008, ket sinagid ti Dios ti puso. Maysamaysa mangted ti donasiom, tseke

man wenno cash money.

Idi damagenmi ken ni Jun Colmenares no kuarta ken tseke laeng ti mabalin nga itu-lungon dagiti mayat a makisinnaranay. “Mabalin pay dagiti kan foods ken used usable clothings ta mabalinto nga ipaw-it sadiay,” kinuna toy General Coordinator daytoy a proyekto. Agtutuloy ti panagiondoringgana iti Hunio 15, 2008.

Ipakoreo ti donasion a kuarta iti Filipino Community Center 94-428 Mokuola St., Waipahu.

Dagiti grupo kas iti Hawaii International Relief Organization [HIRO] wenno dati a Hawaii Filipino International Relief Organization, ti Congress of Visayan Organizations [COVO], FilComCenter, Philippine Consulate General, nakidagang met ti kaaduan a opisial ken kameng ti OFCC ken UFCH.

Babaen iti mapagtalkan a damag, aganay a \$12,000.00 ti naurnos.

Ket manannamga a mapan ipersonal mismo ti napugnan a mangibagi ti FilComCenter. Maiwaras dagiti a gatad kadagiti napakaruan unay iti didigita. Adda pay dagiti maid-on nga ag-agas ken dadduma a kita ti medisina a mabalin a makatulog kadagiti nabiktima daytoy nadamsak a bagyo ken aluyo.

Malaksid daytoy a koleksion, mangiondang met ti Aloha Medical Mission ken dadduma pay a grupo.

Maipapan iti donasion a delata ken lupulot, Kontakan dagitoy nadakamat iti baba,

Hawaii International Relief Organization (HIRO), Filipino Community Center (FILCOM)

94-428 Mokuola Street, Suite 302 Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

Contact: Felipe “Jun” Abinsay, Ph. 428-8684 HIRO; Gemianino “Toy” Arre, Ph. 680-0451 FILCOM; Serafin “Jun” Colmenares, Ph. (510) 734-4491 COVO

Ipakoreo wenno itunda dagiti donasion iti FilCom Center, Suite 302, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797. Mainagan iti FILCOM Center, iti tsekeyo para iti PHILIPPINE TYPHOON RELIEF DRIVE.

**K**et sinagid ti Dios ti puso a mangipaay iti saranyan kadagiti nabiktima ti nadamsak a basnot ti alawig ti Typhoon Feng Shen wenno Frank.

Ket nagkaribuso ti komunidad a Filipino. Saanda a kideman lattan ti pasamak ken

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### SEPTEMBER 15, 2008 MONDAY

Oahu Filipino Community Council (OFCC), Inauguration and installation of officers • 6:00P.M at Ala Moana Hotel • For details, please call: Cirvalina Longboy 375-0828 • Danny Villaruz 778-0233 • Carlota Ader 688-3215

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